

Jean Rivin

1963

by Beatrice McGovern

THE NEREPIS

The Nerepis in early spring
A fearsome and a raging thing
In June a fishermans delight
A tranquil and a pretty sight
In fall its scarlet mapled banks
The hunters vivid coat outranks
In winter, locked in snow and ice
Held tight like in a solid vise
Until once more when natures urge
Creates that violent lashing purge

The Nerepis River is not a wide river nor is it a long one, it starts as a small brook in Queens County and is fed by many brooks as it winds its way through Armstrongs Corner, Fowlers Corner, Welsford, Bayard, Blagdon, Nerepis and Sagwa. It reaches its end at Westfield where it empties into the St. John River. By the time it reaches Welsford it has changed from a gurgling brook into a peacefully flowing river, as it flows through the fertile valley of Welsford it gains in width and depth and passes through a rock valley at Blagdon and then tumbles down Sallys Rapids, spreads itself out again and flows smoothly through the interval lands at Nerepis. Once under the metal bridge there it follows the highway until it reaches its outlet, pausing once or twice to let its arms create penetrating waterways into the marshlands. As it reaches the Westfield bridge it is joined by Goose Creek. Goose Creek starts as an overflow from Keating Lake, a tiny brook fed by more brooks and drainage, it runs through Keating Corner and then circles south to skirt the marshlands. It gains in depth and width. Motor boats and canoes explore the enchanting ramblings of the Nerepis and Goose Creek and fishermen avail themselves of its

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tree hung waterways to spend leisurely hours.

On a map charted in 1759 the Nerepis was spelled Nirapis, whether this is the original spelling or was an error is not known. When the melting snows of the surrounding mountains begin the Nerepis changes from the peaceful stream into a rapid swirling menace, caught in the rushing waters are trees, pulpwood, boats, logs, small buildings, refuse and dead animals. When nature cleans house she does so with vengeance, huge cakes of ice come upending and roaring downstream, sometimes forming an ice jam at Sagwa. The catapulting ice tears at the sandy banks, it will take years to undermine a tree and then in a flash it is gone. The Nerepis very slowly changes its course, taking off one bank and adding to the other.

At Nerepis Station the river is wide and shallow, a delightful place for young swimmers in the summertime. A huge rock emerges out of the water called by the local people as Salmon Rock, it makes a wonderful place to fish from. In the spring when the freshet is on the decline, large trout are caught in this area, many a small angler displays with pride his catch of one or two pound trout. The sandy beach there, along with jumping perch and trout and pickeral lure many visitors, fishing from the bridge is a favourite pastime, an array of spinners and coloured floats entangled in the overhead wires cause many a young boy to stop and wish he could reach them.

Hovering over this area can often be seen a large bald

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headed eagle, it will sometimes alight on the beach, an eagle shot some years ago by the late Philip Nase measured nine feet five inches from wing tip to wing tip.

A covered bridge which spanned the Nerepis at this point for almost a century was swept away by an ice run in 1934, the present bridge was built on the same site.

It is on the east bank at this point that the late Dr. William McIntosh had his summer cottage to which he came early in the season and stayed late. Mister, as he was called by the groups of young people he took on canoe trips up the St. John River and its tributaries, was the Curator of the Natural History Museum of Saint John. When he passed away, over eighty years of age, in the spring of 1950, he was still planning a canoe trip for the coming summer. His cottage is now occupied by his niece, Mrs. Jean McCullum Sweet, who carries on her famous uncles love of New Brunswick history. Mrs. Sweet is the author of many stories with historical background and her "New Brunswick Story" was introduced to all New Brunswick schools. Next to this cottage stands the summer home built by Dr. S.A. Worrell, situated on the bank of the river with a background of unusually tall spruce trees, it looks out over the lovely valley and the surrounding chain of mountains. Dr. Worrell spent a lifetime teaching in New Brunswick schools and was for many years a Superintendant of Saint John city schools. In 1959 his home was put up for sale and he and Mrs. Worrell now make their home at Belmont, spending the winter

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months in Florida.

At the end of this short road stands the home of F.C. MacKenzie. The name MacKenzie has been prominent in this district for over a century. David MacKenzie came to the community in 1840. He was the son of one Peter MacKenzie who had emmigrated from Perth, Scotland and had settled in the vicinity of Belleisle. Peter and some members of his family lie buried in a small graveyard at MacKenzie Point. David MacKenzie bought a 240 acre of land from one James Reid. Mr. Reid had in 1817 purchased one thousand acres from the Hon. John Coffin. David took as his bride one Mercy Connors of Evandale, her home still stands there, they had ten children. Three of Davids sons remained in the community, Mose O., David W. and Malcolm. Mose O. remained on homestead living in the house built many years before by James Reid. Mose married Annie Kerr of Summerhill and later in life married Alice Estabrooks. Mr. Mose MacKenzie had nine children, Merrit, Fred, Roy, Otto, Frank, Maude, Kate, Georgie and Ethel.

The MacKenzies were prosperous farmers, large herds of cattle roamed the fields overlooking the Nerepis. The fertile intervals land grew abundant crops of hay, grain and vegetables. When the house by James Reid became in bad repair Mose bought an additional 175 acres across the river from one Alexander Reid and moved there to live. He died in the 1930's and his widow some years later. The old Reid house was used to store grain for many years and was later torn down to make way for the new home of his son Frank. Only Frank and Otto remain of that family and Otto's son, James

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will carry on the family name, he has two small sons.

Across the marsh from Sagwa lies the old Eccles farm, it stands on the bend of Goose Creek. The barn has fallen down and the house is deserted. This was once a fertile and thriving farm, a busy grist mill was operated here powered by water. Water rights were obtained from Daves Lake, Belyeas Lake and Anns Lake some miles away. Water trenches were built by hand from Daves Lake and Belyeas Lake into Anns Lake and Mill Brook flowing out of Anns Lake carried the water to the raceway which supplied the water to the mill pond. Huge granite grinding stones used in the grist mill lie half buried nearby and the wall surrounding the mill pond is still there.

George Eccles daughter, Mary was the first female child to be born to the Eccles families for many generations, he had six children, his wife Ealonner, died this year at the advanced age of ninety.

It was in this vicinity that the banks of Goose Creek that the Ferry Landing served the local residents years ago, from here they would go by boat to the St. John River to connect with the River Boat or row their own boats to the city. An elderly Maliseet Indian lived near here for many years, his name was John Pigtoe and he made a living trapping muskrats on the marsh and making axe handles. He seemingly had no near relatives and he and his "fiddle" dwelled alone in the lonely shack on the bank of Goose Creek. Indians still come here every spring and camp on the shore. For

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three or four weeks they roam the waterways through trapping muskrat before daylight their canoes can be seen gliding swiftly and silently to their traps.

An amusing incident took place on Goose Creek many years ago in the rum-running era of "Prohibition". A large motor boat laden with an illegal load of liquor was being pursued up the St. John River by a police boat, to escape the capture, the boat came through the draw of the Westfield Bridge and followed Goose Creek. The creek was high at this time and the fleeing boat ran aground on the flooded bank. To refloat the craft most of the cases or liquor had to be dumped overboard into the water. Efforts to find someone to hide the illegal cargo failed and as word spread through the community many availed themselves of a case or cases of the contraband, temporary bootleggers flourished until the supply was exhausted.

Two sawmills were operated on the Nerepis River, one at Sagwa by the Nerepis Lumber Co. and was run by Gordon Scott, the other was further upstream and owned by Fred Cameron. These mills have both been removed. A mile above here a water mill was built and operated by Arthur MacKenzie many years ago.

Occupying a large section of the marsh is the property known locally as the Hardin Farm. This was also part of the Coffin property. Consisting of eight hundred acres it was bought for the sum of eight hundred pounds for one George Harding by his father. The place was occupied by George Harding and his son

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William for many years, it has now passed into their hands, a large old house there, thought to have been built by the Coffins, burned to the ground. Plans have been made to build a summer resort. A bridge has been built about a quarter of a mile below the existing metal bridge to connect the project with the Broad Road.

On the Britain Road, about a mile east from the Nerepis, a Stewart family settled coming to New Brunswick in 1830 from the north of Ireland. David Stewart brought his wife and three daughters. He was a linen weaver by trade and had taught his daughters to weave also. Tragedy struck this pioneer family in 1860, David, returning from a trip to St. John to find the Nerepis River overflowed, decided to stay overnight at the Douglas Arms, an Inn then in use at Nerepis. The next morning in daylight he proceeded to cross the river in his horse and wagon, the force of the rushing stream carried them downstream. The horse broke free, swam ashore and went home but Mr. Stewart clung to the wagon and was swept away, his body was recovered later by one Frank Woods as he was booming his logs at Sagwa. Mr. Stewart was buried in the Mount Hope Cemetery nearby. The youngest daughter, Elize, married F.W.C. Nase of Nerepis, the oldest married a Fowler of Fowlers Corner and the other daughter married William John McIntyre. Mrs. McIntyre was the last of the Stewart family to live in the old house, she died in Wyoming in

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1925, the house fell down and a summer camp has been erected on the site. A few gnarled apple trees still grow around the site, a memory to a pioneer family. The William John McIntyres had five children. Annie, Jennie, Rankine, Rom and Eva. The oldest daughter, like her father, was an ardent weaver and when she moved to Fowlers Corner, spent much of her time weaving. Quantities of homespun cloth came from her loom, she wove blankets and coverlets that are still in use. She taught her oldest daughter Jane Eliza the intricacies of weaving, the rest of her family were not interested in the art. The Stewart family attended the little church above Nerepis, the Presbyterian Kirk, the building has been gone for many many years, large trees have grown on the site of the graveyard and a lot of the gravestones have fallen down. The highway used to run by this little spot but now it bypasses it. History seekers come to this little graveyard which is now part of the forest, the land these pioneers cleared to erect a place to worship has gone back to nature.

William John McIntyre sold half of the Stewart place to his brother David who built a little house near the Britain Road. David McIntyre married Julia Lyons, a young mid wife from Westfield, he died a few years later leaving Julia with one daughter Emma. Julia McIntyre later married William Waters of Westfield and went there to live. She sold her property to Arthur Crandall who also purchased the W.J. McIntyre tract.

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Emma McIntyre married a William Purcell and lived in Fairville for many years, she cared for her aging mother until she died at an advanced age. Up until her death Julia McIntyre Waters made yearly visits to the East Nerepis to visit with her old neighbours. It was from this grand old lady that I gleaned many scraps of information for this history, she died in the early 1930's but I never forgot the tales of the pioneer families she told me. In the year Arthur Crandall purchased the entire McIntyre properties which was the original Stewart farm and moved here from Albert County to live. He and his family lived in the old Stewart house for a while until a new house on the Britain road was built. Mr. Crandall brought with him the first steam mill to enter the east side of the Nerepis and he engaged in large lumbering operations. More mills followed and a siding was built on the C.P.R. to accommodate the big flow of lumber coming from this area to Nerepis. Edward Wheaton and his family lived some years in the David McIntyre house while lumbering for A.E. Crandall. In 1910 the Wheaton family moved to Clarendon where many of the children married and settled. Arthur Crandall died in 1943 and the David McIntyre property was sold by the Crandall estate but the W.J. McIntyre property is still in the Crandall name, Raymond Crandall, son of Arthur has a summer camp there.

In 1840 John Coffin sold a tract of land to one Robert J.

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Norin, this was sold in 1855 to Charles Doherty who in turn sold it in 1870 to D.W. MacKenzie. Mr. MacKenzie lived on the property for many years and did extensive farming, he later bought a farm on the highway but continued to farm the back farm. The Doherty house fell down as did the barns. On the far end of this property there is evidence of a house having been built before the Doherty house, this was on a high knoll overlooking the marsh and is now known as Dohertys knolls. The Dohertys were a musical family and provided much of the entertainment in the community. The Dohertys cleared a large amount of the land which was fertile and rich. One of Charles Dohertys daughters married John Blagdon of Blagdon and lived there until her death, another daughter, Lizzie married John Keating and dwelt at Keatings Corner. Lizzie and her husband lie buried in the little Catholic cemetery there. A son, John, died in Saint John in 1930.

The Post Office for the Nerepis district was always on the Broad Road and was kept at one time by David MacKenzie, later by Mr. M.O. MacKenzie. The mail was driven by cart, twice a week out the Britain and up to Cheney Settlement. One Hudson Belyea also drove that route with the mail, with the abandonment of the Cheney district, the route was changed and the cart went out the Campbell Road. James Greer drove the mail cart for many years and later his son George took over the route. When

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the MacKenzies gave up the Post Office, William Gibson operated it in his home for some years until all the mail was delivered from Westfield.

The east side of the lower Nerepis was a very busy section in the latter half of the 1800's. Logs cut on the district mountains were brought to the river and rafted on its banks awaiting high water in the spring to float them off and they would be taken to mills at Westfield where one George Crawford and Murray and Gregory had mills. Some were towed to Saint John to mills there, these would be streamdriven down the river and rafted at the bend of the river or taken in a boom. Stream-driving was a hazardous occupation and the young men of the community had a chance to show their prowess on logs. One Jack McGovern was the only man ever known to "ride" a log through Sally's Rapids. That feat must have been a clever piece of footwork for Sally's Rapids is a stretch of water tumbling through a narrow gorge.

Hunters and woodsmen often stumble on to the decayed remains of some of the old time camps, perhaps only a broken iron stove lays half buried in the ground or rusted sled runners and a worn down grindstone. Before the era of portable mills all the logs were brought down from the mountains by oxen or horse to the river or the marsh.

The winter cut of logs was probably the only means of making

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money these hardy pioneers had. When the logs were taken to the mills most of the ablebodied men spent some time in logging camps. At Keating Corner the noon whistles from four steam mills could be heard at one time. James Kennedy, The Downey Lumber Company, The Bay of Fundy Lumber Company, Murray and Gregory and McNamars had steam mills in the vicinity. Arthur Crandall, Arthur MacKenzie, Edgar Smith, Colin McDonald and Roy Stackhouse had steam mills in the Keatings Corner district. Diesel and tractor powered mills were operated recently by Freeman Ricker, Robert Kerr, Willard Worden, Becketts and H.C. Parker.

With the coming of the pulpsaw and the chainsaw logging chances have been cut into pulpwood and where old time loggers cut nothing under eleven inch stumps, now the pulp cutter cuts anything over four inches. The logging era has vanished along with the farming from this section of country. Only one mill operates here now, a diesel-powered mill owned by Freeman Ricker.

I remember an unusual incident occurring in Edgar Smiths steam mill which was in operation a few hundred yards from my home. During a "testing" period the blow-off valve had been tied down and left that way while the engineer when to the city, a young man thinking he was being helpful fired up the boiler and got up steam. The boiler began to dance and the

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young man thought it was for lack of water and tried to find a way to put water in the boiler from the nearby brook, luckily for him he didn't find out how or the boiler would have burst when the cold water hit the heated boiler, so the young man ran for help. The owners son arrived and seeing the situation jumped on top of the jumper boiler and loosened the blow-off valve averting what might have been a tragedy to the men working nearby. The pressure of the caged steam was so great that the ground trembled for hundreds of yards away, buildings shook and the rumble could be heard a long way off.

In the year 1830 one Patrick Flanagan and his wife Bridget came to New Brunswick from the County of Roscommon in Ireland. He purchased a three hundred acre tract of land overlooking the marsh. Patrick and Bridget had nine children, Patrick, William, John, James, Thomas, Bridget, Rose, Sadie and Margaret. Long hours and hard work soon cleared a farm and as the children grew old enough they left home to seek work away, only two stayed on the farm, Patrick and Thomas. In 1887 Patrick Sr. died and his wife lived to be 92. The sons Pat and Tom divided the farm and Tom married Rose Malone of Petersville and built a new house also overlooking the marsh. Tom and Rose had eight children and Pat and his wife, the former Marjorie Brown of Public Landing, had ten. The Flanagan families scattered and many of them made their homes in the United States. A son of Patrick Sr. was

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killed in the first World War. Only one member remains on the homestead, Toms son, Fred, he lives in the house Tom built to take his bride Rose to.

The Flanagans were a musical family and were the centre of all parties and dances held in the community. Many of the boys could "fiddle" at an early age and were in big demand for square dance fiddling for miles around. The young folks of the district would go by horse and buggy to Public Landing where dances would be held at the "Browns" and in Oliver Belyeas warehouse. No social gathering would be complete without a Flanagan and his fiddle.

Before the C.N.R. Valley railroad was built around the year 1916 the settlers from the upper Britain Road would come to Nerepis to take the C.P.R. train, this railroad was completed in 1869. Many of the residents of the lower Britain Road would take a boat across the marsh and meet the riverboat at Westfield.

Also in the year 1830 a McGovern family left their native shore and settled in the Wickham district, this family came from County Cork. The father died there and his widow remarried. Some years later two of the sons Bernard and Patrick and a half brother John Keating purchased adjoining properties east of the Nerepis. There was no cleared land at that time in the vicinity and they had to carve farms out of a virgin forest, they cut the logs to build their houses and barns. The first house was built at the head of Goose Creek which starts from the overflow

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of a nearby lake. A few years later the roof of this house was blown off in the Saxby gale of 1869.

As the three brothers married, they built houses of their own, one on the Britain Road near the lake, one at the cross roads and one on the lower Britain Road.

Bernard, the oldest brother married Roseanne McGovern, no relation and from a different part of Ireland, Roseanne's family had settled in Petersville, they were married in 1851. Of this union were born Thomas, George and Margaret.

A plot of land was selected from Bernards property for a cemetery. A hill top site was chosen, from which could be seen the whole district, this was cleared and fenced. With the settling of Catholic families in the district a place for Holy Mass had to be found and Bernard offered his home, the Priest from the newly settled Parish of Petersville officiated, Father O'Regan. In the years afterwards Father Farrell, Hannington and Carelton travelled by horse and buggy to say Mass twice a year and officiate at other occasions. It was not till 1932 that this practice was discontinued when Westfield was pronounced a parish by the Bishop.

Bernard McGovern had purchased a seven hundred tract from Peter Lugin in the centre of which lay a large lake, this was known as Lugin's Lake, it then became known as McGovern's Lake and in later years it became Keatings Lake, Bernard died in 1883 and lies buried in the little cemetery he had donated to the small

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Irish community. His descendants still live in St. John.

The younger brother Patrick had purchased a one hundred acre lot from one Thomas Haines, a tract of fertile land but a forest of virgin timber. He built a small house on the Britain Road and started clearing land. He married Anne O'Brien, an Irish girl who had come to St. John with a family of Connollys. His little home burnt down and a hastily constructed log house was put by the bank of Goose Creek. Patrick McGovern was a master carpenter, he forged his own building tools, hammers*, planes, and axes. He built the bellows and forge and many of his hand made tools are still in use today. Patrick and Anne had a large family, Patrick, James, John, William, Edward, David, Mary, Ellen, Annie and Margaret. The children all had to help with the clearing of land and "burning fallow" was a family job. In the summer the children of the community picked blueberries and sold them at Woodmans Point for five cents a quart. The third house Patrick built was a large well constructed one, he used the hand-hewn timbers he had ready for a barn before the first little house burnt down, a root-cellar was dug into the bank nearby and two large barns erected. The boards on these buildings were long and wide, some over two feet wide.

Hard work took toll on his health and when only fifty-four his working days were over. Tragedy then struck and his wife Anne was thrown from a wagon and killed, Patrick died a few

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years later. Strange superstitions abounded in the little Irish settlements, and Patricks wife Anne was credited with being able to cast spells over people of her pleasure. When a housewife's batch of cream would not churn, it was Anne that had put a "spell" on it, when a bull calf was born instead of a desired heifer, poor Anne again got the blame. But Anne was the best soap-maker in the community and they all sent their hog-fat and drippings to her to be rendered into soap.

The McGoverns half-brother John Keating settled on what is now known as Keatings Corner, the cross-roads of the Britain and the old Valley Road. He built a house on the corner and married Lizzie Doherty. They had six children, Jack, Andrew, Charlie, William, Sadie and Annie. Jack stayed on the homestead until his death in 1927. The little low ceilinged home has been torn down and the lofty "Balm of Gilead" trees that stood in front of the dwelling for so many years have either died or blown down. A little one room house stood at the corner of Keating property, this was built for a relative, Tommie Keating, a small man with poor health. After his death it was occupied for many years by a Mrs. Margaret Poley. She was a small white haired woman with strict principals and a cutting tongue, and many an unruly youth or an over imbibing man has felt the lash of her vocabulary. She was a well respected little person and very independant, she made her living by knitting and "helping out" the neighboring women

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until her death at eighty-four. After living for many years in what was called for years as the "Poley house" she took up residence at Sagwa where she died.

The old Valley Road crossed the Britain Road and wound its way through the mountain and emerged in the Welsford valley, for many years it was the only road to Welsford. The stone buttments over the brooks are the only remaining signs that a road ever was there. A small section of the road is still in use, woodsmen bring out their loads of pulpwood and firewood never thinking of the historic trail they are using.

A family of Lunneys lived at one time on this road, moving there with little means and winter close at hand, they built a little home in the side of a bank and used bark for the front. Jim, called Bishop by many, sold his holdings after a few years and moved to Blagdon, the section of the old Valley Road still in use is still called the Lunney Road. One of Jim Lunneys sons lived at Nerepis for many years and his descendants live in St. John.

Horse-drawn peddlers wagons travelled the Britain Road and the housewives welcomed the variety of goods these men sold, having a peddler stay over-night was a big event, for they brought news from the city and the neighboring villages.

Doctors were scarce before the turn of the century, a need for one meant hitching up a horse and wagon and driving many miles, and then maybe finding that the doctor was in another

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community. Word would be left for his need and one or two days may elapse before his arrival.

The roads were narrow, poorly built, almost impassable in spring, snow bound in winter and dusty in summer. In winter the settlers would put all their oxen or horses together to plow the drifted roads, an extra deep snow and an ice-storm would make them unbreakable and only the spring thaw would open them up. Mrs. Mary Brown, an aged person, dying in March after one such storm and to be buried in the little Catholic cemetery at Keatings Corner, was taken by handsled over the crust of the snow through the Cheney settlement district and down the Britain Road. The roads were impassable and unbreakable for horses, the funeral party walked behind the corpse on the sled. At the cemetery the whole community had taken time to shovel the graveyard and dig the grave in the frozen earth.

A little schoolhouse was built in the year 1860 on the Campbell Road, a tiny one-room school built under the wing of a hill with a never-failing spring nearby and lots of sheltering trees. The little school was halfway between the Campbell and McGovern communities and was known as the McGovern District No. 4. It burnt down in 1890 and the pupils from the district went to the Nerepis school, the two districts united officially in 1911. There was an unwritten agreement that one trustee from this No. 4 district be always on the school board. The one-room school method of learning has passed, in 1962 all the small schools in the

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area consolidated with Westfield and now school buses take the children to the Westfield Consolidated School.

Coming to New Brunswick from Scotland in the early eighteen hundreds was a Samuel Campbell, he settled on the old Valley Road, now called the Campbell Road. The Campbells had five children, three sons and two daughters. He divided his holdings among his three sons, William, Tom and Jim. William built a house off the road and married Amanda Parker of Public Landing, they had six children, Oattie, Jack, Arthur, Walter, Harry and Ada. Williams house is still in use, Harry Weatherhead and his family farm the property. Thomas married a Miss Cunningham and later in life married Francis Gorham of Browns Flat, he had a large family, many of them not surviving infancy, his house was on the lower side of the road. Jim built a house on the hill and had no family, the two daughters occupied the old homestead until their death.

North of William Campbells farm was another small farm, a fifty acre grant to one William Watson and joining it another fifty acre grant to Samuel Smith. William Watson came to New Brunswick from the southern United States with one Captain Coffin, he married Elizabeth Speight of Hartsgravel and had a family of four, Adolphus, George, Alice and Eliza. The Watsons were a coloured family and were highly respected in the community. As a youth Adolphus Watson was selected to fight for supremacy

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against the white candidate Will McBeath, such hilarity accompanied the fight that the issue was forgotten, and the fight of the black against white was forgotten. Adolphus went to the United States and settled in New Jersey. George Watson was lost at sea on the ship "Nonticello". Alice married Edward Williams and lived in Saint John until her death and Eliza stayed on the homestead. Eliza married one George Jacklin who, after a brief residency in the community returned to the United States. Eliza cared for her aged parents until their death. She then sold the little farm to Stanley Scott reserving one acre of land as the family graveyard for all times. She died in New Jersey one year after her sister Alice in 1934.

William Watson was spoken with affection as a coloured gentleman, Eliza, with small means, kept a scrupulously clean house and every visitor had to have a cup of tea with Eliza. The Watson farm had grown up in large trees and the little house has gone, a huge boulder at the grave site has been marked simply "Watson" by the Nerepis Womens Institute to show for all time the resting place of this pioneering family.

Sam Smith, also coloured, was said to have been the first settler to have lived here, there is no record of his burial. A narrow road, running by the William Campbell house led to the Watson and Smith properties. Near this road, now called "Weatherhead Road" lived one Joseph Belyea and his wife Susan,

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one of their sons, Jacob remained on the homestead after their death and married Jane Vail, the Belyeas later settled on the west side of the Nerepis.

Adjoining the Campbell property is Lonewater, now owned and occupied by Margarot Oland. When crossing the long Westfield bridge look to the north and you will see the old house with its clusters of chimneys rising above the trees. This six hundred acre property was once occupied by General Coffin. General John Coffin came to New Brunswick after a distinguished career as a British Officer in the Revolutionary Wars. He bought in all six thousand acres that had been granted to one Beamsley Glaisier in 1765. He built this huge house after his first house had been destroyed by fire at Woodmans Point. In 1811 he offered the entire property for sale, there were buyers. He made yearly visits to England but resided a few months each year at the home here until his death in 1838. He lies buried in St. Peters church cemetary at Woodmans Point.

Paintings dated 1839 shown in the New Brunswick museum in Saint John depicts the house as it was at that time and gives a fine view of the landscape.

David Eccles coming from England with his wife and two sons George and Sam, bought the property, another son William was born here. Some years after it was purchased by Robert Morris Hazen who named it "Lonewater". Years later it came into the hands of Richard M. Burden, a resident of Boston but a native

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of New Brunswick. Mr. Burden and his wife spent every summer here for many years, he planted eight hundred apple trees, and kept the place in excellent repair. In efforts to help the cause of the first world war, Mr. Bruden barrelled the entire crop of his apple orchard and shipped them overseas to the soldiers. In some of the barrels he would put a letter and he often got a note of thanks from the grateful soldiers. Mrs. Burden would knit the entire winter and bring huge bundles of socks for the Red Cross and the Canadian soldiers.

At his home in Boston in 1936 Mr. Burden was taken very ill and a special car on the railroad was to bring him back to his beloved New Brunswick, he died a few days later and was buried at the edge of his apple orchard on a little knoll. His wife survived him by a few years and at her death his body was taken back to the United States and laid beside her.

Lonewater house is an historic old place, built square and strong. The stone for the basement was cut stone brought as ballast by ships coming into Saint John for timber, the basement is divided into rooms with fireplaces and ovens, the coloured help stayed here in its early years. A root-cellar below the basement is entered by a trap door in the floor. A spiral staircase winds its way up from the basement to the upper floor. Large verandahs have been built on three sides of the house and a sunken dairy and a coach house are on the other side. In the two front bedrooms looking over the marsh and the Saint John

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River the windows are placed high, a small platform reached by a few steps is used to look out, the view well rewarding the shore. A huge windmill supplied the water to the farm during Mr. Brudens occupancy but this has long since blown itself in disuse. To the west of the house a huge mulberry tree drops its fruit every year to the ground and to the east, four extra large linden trees perfume the air in summertime and are alive with bees then.

Stories that Lonewater is haunted abound and claims of hearing chains rattling in the basement of the old house have been told, but some of the old residents, long since passed away, have told of the young men of the neighborhood, out for a little fun, dressing in sheets and setting out to scare the coloured servants, of moaning and groaning and rattling chains. This was most likely the start of the ghost stories to which time has added flavor. I lived four years on the property and never heard a chain rattle, but not believing in ghosts I possibly attributed the creakings of the old house to the ancient beams and flying bats.

Fire has taken toll of many houses in the district, the first McGovern house built in 1853, the little schoolhouse, the David McIntyre home, the Daniel Coughlan house, the Wilson's summer home and the big house built by Patrick McGovern that burnt last year, 1962.

The litte Catholic cemetary on the hill top is the resting

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place of most of the first pioneers of the little Irish community, it is kept in good repair and though it has been abandoned in favor of the new cemetery at Westfield many of the descendants will not forget it. The gravestones tell of the people dying young, of families of children dying, possibly of some epidemic. The names O'Donnell, Hanlon, Brown, Flanagan, McGovern, Keating, Shanes and many others show of the settling of many Irish people there. The Mount Hope cemetery gives evidence of many Scotch people coming to this section, names such as McIntyre, MacKenzie, Stewart, Campbell and Cunningham. The once flourishing farms are grown up in bushes and forest, buildings are fallen down, the farms east of the Nerepis have gone back to nature.

Power lines and television aerials adorn the few summer cottages built here on the Britain Road, near the Nerepis year-round residents commute to the city to work, no one makes a living off the land. All the hard work the pioneering families did to clear the land has gone for nothing and been maybe in vain. Worthless scrub covers a lot of the once productive farms, parts of horse-drawn machinery can be found laying in the bushes, relics of an era long past. They say that history repeats itself, maybe once again families may clear the land and farm.