

80 NIAGARA BLVD.

by MARY FITZGIBBON

I was born in Port Colborne 5Jan,1915 and moved to Phipp St in Bridgeburg at about 2 years of age. I do not know the exact date, but we moved to 80 Niagara Blvd whn I was about 4 or 5. I can remember walking with Jessie and my doll carriage to our new home. During my first years there I occupied the 2nd floor bedroom at the back of the house with all my dolls. Jessie Webb had come to live with us in Port Colborne shortly after my brother was born, and acted as cook Nanny etc . When I was a child she always wore a striped cotton dress with a full white apron.

It was before I began school that a gas stove in an attic room flared up as they sometimes did and set some clothes afire and much of the top part of the house. I know we lived at 96 Niagara while repairs were made but remember very little about it When we returned to 80 Niagara I found my father had had a special room built fo me over the front verandah.

I have drawn plans of the house as I remember it, as best I can, and enclosed pictures. Without leaves they seem very barren, but in reality the gardens and trees were really beautiful. A second lot to the north of the house gave plenty of space to play. Behind the lawn were four line of grape vines running east to west, and behind them a picket fence and then a large vegetable garden. Between the house and the barn just left of the grape vines were several fruit trees, and there were also apple and cherry trees farther back. Immediately behind the barn were two chicken runs and hen houses. where may father raised chickens, as did most of the people along the boulevard. Dad raised White Leghorns in one house and run, and Plymouth Rocks in the other. We also had Bantams and at one time rabbits.

In the north half of the barn Dad built large bins for the chicken grain, and kept the car. Behind this he had a work shop. When we did something wrong we were politely asked to see him in there aften supper. and after some discussion our punishment was set- sometimes a spanking with a sanded down wooden shingle which we had to get down for him. I cannot remember that we were ever spanked when he was angry! At one time John and a friend had the use of the south half of the barn to repair engines. They were teenagers at thi time and had an old chassis and 2 engines which they could repair and switch to keep the car running.

Because the barn had one been used for horses there were still trap doors from the second floor to drop down hay etc, and one of our pet games was to chase around the barn dropping down a chute ad running up stairs or up a ladder outaide. Later Dad made us a mini golf course above the car. A big family was a lot of fun and we had the Swanick children and another large family often with us.

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Verbits