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“Home groan”—compiled by GHMS members for the Fall Fair at the Commons, September 16, 2006

NANAIMO FREE PRESS: Saturday, October 23, 1886.

Monster Onions

Mr. Jonathan Martin, of Gabriola Island, sent to our office, on Thursday, some monster specimens of red and yellow onions. They are the largest we have seen and would bring tears to the eyes of an Ontario farmer. Gabriola keeps up its record.

NANAIMO FREE PRESS: Friday, September 13, 1889.

Large Squash

Daily is the Free Press in receipt of specimens that show, in the clearest possible manner, that our climate and soil are capable of producing fruit and vegetables that cannot be excelled on the North American continent.

Mr. Henry Petersen, a practical farmer on Gabriola Island, brought in a large, well-formed squash of one of the latest varieties, the name of which he has forgotten. It would “pull off” the prize at the Toronto Exhibition.

NANAIMO FREE PRESS: Wednesday, August 17, 1887.

Splendid Plums

Mr. D.S.R. Roberts, of Mudge Island, has laid on our table some magnificent specimens of plums grown by him on his farm on that island. These fine specimens are but another indication of what our

splendid climate, combined with pro-management, can produce in the shape of fruit. In a few years, importation of fruit from California will be as scarce as hail stones in July.

NANAIMO FREE PRESS: Wednesday, December 10, 1884.

Monster Turnips

Mr. Magnus Edgar of Gabriola Island has grown some monster turnips at his farm on that island this summer. They are of the Swede species and twelve of them “kicked the beam” at the enormous weight of 374½ pounds. Two of them brought to this office weighed exactly 30 pounds each.

This speaks remarkably well for the productiveness of Gabriola’s soil as well as the skill of Mr. Edgar. ‘Rah for Gabriola.

NANAIMO FREE PRESS: Friday, June 14, 1889.

Rhubarb that is Rhubarb

Mr. James McLay, J.P., of Gabriola Island, left at our sanctum today several giant stalks of rhubarb which he had grown on his farm on that island. The rhubarb is of the Victoria variety, and three clear stalks weighed 6½ pounds.

This is demonstrative evidence of adaptability of the soil and climate and judgement of the cultivator, Mr. McLay. Last year, Mr. McLay took several first prizes for fruit and vegetables, and the products of his labor are sure indications that he has made farming a science. Let those beat this rhubarb who can.

NANAIMO FREE PRESS: Monday, December 22, 1889.

Christmas Turkeys

Mr. H. Peterson, of Gabriola Island, has raised this season no less than 250 turkeys and geese for Christmas: 150 of these he sold and forwarded to Mr. L. Goodacre at Victoria, while the remainder he sold in this city. The birds are among the finest that we have seen in this province and will be a prime treat at many festive board. Mr. Peterson did not forget "ye editor", and we are looking forward to Christmas day and the beautiful turkey left at our sanctum.

It is stated that the importation of poultry from Ontario will not prove a success for, as soon as they are exposed to our mild climate, they turn quite black. With a few such skillful and progressive settlers as Mr. Peterson, importing poultry would be a matter of history. And so it should be.

NANAIMO FREE PRESS: Friday, December 13, 1889.

A Fourth Crop

Surely we live in a prolific climate and country when no less than four crops can be taken from the same ground in one year. Mrs. A. Hoggan, of Gabriola Island, brought to town today new potatoes representing the fourth crop for the year as follows: potatoes, tomatoes, corn, and potatoes again. The fourth crop of potatoes have been tested by a lady of this city and pronounced first class. Next.

NANAIMO FREE PRESS: Friday, June 21, 1889.

Monster Cherries

Mr. W.M. Flewett, of DeCourcey Island, arrived in town today with a large assortment of produce from his splendid gardens on that beautiful Isle of the Sea. In addition to his usual assortment of produce, he brought up, and laid on "ye editor's" table, a quantity of cherries of the Yellow Spanish variety that for size, flavor, and lusciousness capped the climax of anything we have hitherto seen in the shape of cherries.

Mr. Flewett says the continued dry spell is beginning to tell on his gardens. and a shower of rain would be gladly welcomed by the parched earth and the sun-burnt vegetation.

He says the crows are playing sad havoc with his fruit, and for clear audaciousness he never saw the like. He has been put to his wits end to save his crop from these "black robbers" and says that the old yarn that crows can smell powder is exploded. He says they know, as well as any human being, what the intention of a man is who has a gun in his hands. For, just as soon as he appeared with a gun in his hands, the "black sentinel" would give the danger signal, and their "cawships" were at once out of reach. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and Mr. Flewett, seeing that the crows took no notice of his moving about while he had no gun, adopted the plan of secreting the loaded gun in the bed of strawberries, and the crows would hop on to it and over it in search of luscious fruits. Mr. Flewett would then walk up to the gun and, quickly raising it, fire and kill the crows. This is a wrinkle for the farmers. ◇
