

The First Bear

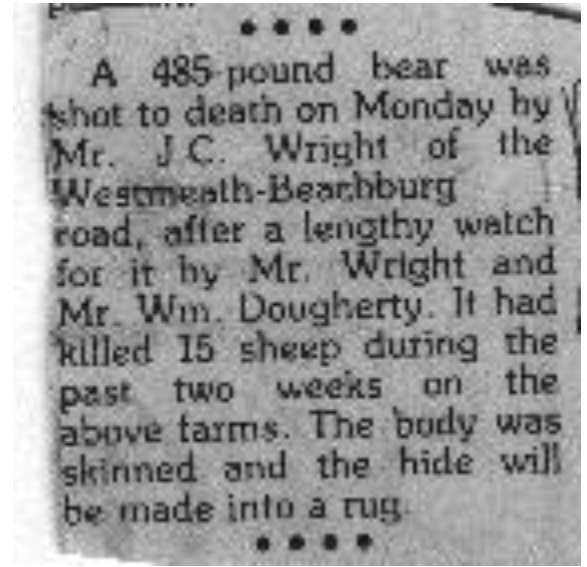
I have to re-tell the story as it was told
'Cause I can't remember - I was just nine months old.
That September day, word came to our farm
The something was doing a neighbour's sheep harm.
Our flock was on pasture, they called "the old place."
Dad checked, one had vanished leaving nary a trace.
So he brought the flock home, locked them up in a pen,
Whatever had happened wouldn't happen again.
The pen was a log barn, the roof long since gone
But the sheep would be safe through the long night till dawn.
But a big black bear stole in, in the darkness of night,
Broke in the door, t'was not a fair fight.
The sheep couldn't flee; they were trapped in their pen
And before he would leave the dead count was ten.
Dad's prize Market Lambs wouldn't get to the Fair;
He found that all had been killed by the bear.
Dad had no rifle so he borrowed for free
The gun of a neighbour, World War One 303.
And a headlamp from another who a miner had been,
If the big bear returned, he'd surely be seen.
Then Dad built a stand high up on the wall
Complete with a railing so he wouldn't fall.

Too long for one man to watch through the black,
So Dad called his buddy, a fellow named Jack.
Dad would take first watch from dusk until one,
Then Jack would take over till return of the sun.
But Jack overslept, it was going on two,
Dad faced a dilemma, what should he do?
Should he leave to awake him? abandon his sheep?
No, he stayed on his watch and fought off the sleep.
Then of a sudden the sheep cowered in fear,
Dad knew right then that his target was near.
He strained his eyes peering into the night,
Then blacker than black a form stole into sight.
The bear went straight to the sheep corral door,
The very same place he had entered before.
Dad snapped on his headlamp, (not very bright),
Hardly enough to see the front sight.
But the eyes they reflected and my father took aim,
With a little luck, he would wind up this game.
Was it one shot or six? I do not recall,
But Dad made sure it was dead 'fore he came off that wall.
Word spread like wildfire; people traveled from miles around
To see this monster, nearly five hundred pound.
Someone said, "Why not skin it? It will make a fine rug,"
So they did, and for the rest, a big hole was dug.
The hide was nailed to the sheep corral wall,

Only to rot there, (hot weather that fall).

But Dad earned the name: "Bear Hunter of Note."

There would be no rug, not even a coat



J.C. (Jack) Wright farmed on Lookout Road and dispatched this enormous bear, -no date is given.

"As usual the paper got it wrong, Wm Dougherty was not in on the kill though the bear had killed sheep on Dougherty land who lived on the farm north of the Desjardin Rd. That is the neighbour referred to in the poem," says John D. Wright, son of J.C. Wright.