

THE LEAKY RAFT



JAMES DALTON

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Belleville, Ontario, Canada

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Dedication

No book or reflection of one's life on earth can ever be complete without the recognition of those special people instrumental in instilling meaning and purpose for one's life. James, David, and Donna Dalton remember and honour and dedicate this book in memory of our parents:

- Harold Ivan Dalton (1900-1979)
Auditor for the M.J. O'Brien Gold Mining Company
Secretary-Treasurer of the Deloro Smelting and Refining Company (1939-1952)
- Dora Evelyn (Mobley) Dalton (1906-2012, at the age of 107)
A special dedication and thanks to the Marmora Historical Foundation:
Anne and Andre Philpot (web researchers and writers)
Cathie Jones (Heritage Centre curator)
Gerald Belanger (researcher)
- For their meticulous and dedicated research and history:
1866—The Founding of Deloro, a Mining Town and
Deloro—Life in a Company Town
- Thanks to Brenda Brooks Skof for her description in
Deloro—Life in a Company Town.
- For the Foundation's extensive collection on the history of Marmora and surrounding communities, without which

the essence and completion of this book would not have been possible.

- To the special people of Deloro and Marmora, who through their love *raised a child*.
- For my wife, Reverend Brenda S. Bell, for her ideas, encouragement, and support in writing this book.

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Foreword

In the last scene of the musical Camelot, King Arthur spins out a song filled with memories of what had been the most idyllic place on earth. Alone on stage, the broken, forgiving king begs us to remember:

*“Ask ev’ry person if they’ve heard the story,
And tell it strong and clear if they have not,
That once there was a fleeting wisp of glory
Called Camelot!
Don’t let it be forgot that once there was a spot
For one brief, shining moment
That was known as Camelot.”¹*

Keep the story going, begs King Arthur. Pass it on to your children and your children’s children; and in the very remembering, you will keep the dream alive. In the midst of the despair around you, recall this time, this special place. And, perhaps—who knows—perhaps this one brief, shining moment will come again.

Recall this time—recall this special place. That’s what *The Leaky Raft* is all about. This story is about a village—a time and place where the story of being human is unfolded before our very eyes in the lives of two boys, James and David. It’s a larger story of how a community, a village, an idyllic but real place in history,

The Leaky Raft

through its many characters and events shaped the lives of James and David. *The Leaky Raft* is a symbol of what holds us together, or we sink. The raft will always leak, representing the growing pains, the insecurity, and the innocence of childhood, while the solid cedar rails, any old plank, or even an old door of the raft, held together with fence wire or old ropes, represents the community, the village, the support and care of the child.

Well, hop on the raft with us! It's going to be quite a journey.
James