# THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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*"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink."*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1944


## McNaughton's Chances

According to the usually reliable *Letter-Review* General McNaughton has a poor chance at the moment in North Grey. "If the Liberal machine goes to work, regardless of effort and cost," it says, "his election would not be impossible, although, up to the present our informants, including many Liberals, tell us that it is improbable. An Ottawa suspicion is that the Government will not go actively to his rescue. He seems to have served his purpose, but not too well, and, if he is defeated in North Grey, he will be permitted to resign."

This opens up some interesting possibilities, not least of which is the prospect of Colonel Ralston being offered his old job back again, as the only Liberal Defense Minister in whom the people have any confidence. But would he take it? Surely not after his openly expressed distrust of his leader's veracity and integrity.

Meantime, trial balloons have been issued at Ottawa, to the effect that the present Parliament will be dissolved as soon as it meets on January 31, and that there will be an election by the end of the winter. This would leave the Government with no money voted by Parliament after March 31. The scale of present expenditures would make it most undesirable to have the country financed by Governor-General's warrants for several months. "It is quite understandable," says the *Letter-Review*, "that Mr. King would prefer an election, during which he could drag a lot of very aged red herrings across his trail, to another active session of the present House; but we doubt the political wisdom of any such trick. Public opinion is becoming quite roused over national affairs, and should his opponents campaign intelligently, the leaving of the country without a Parliament for two or three months, at a very critical stage in our affairs, would be a great blow to Mr. King and his followers, if he actually proposes to head his party again in a political campaign."

## Why Gasoline Rations

One need not go beyond the figures given by Secretary Ickes at Washington to understand why gasoline rationing for civilians must continue.

Airplanes consume literally oceans of gasoline. To take 1000 four-motor bombers on a six-hour mission requires 1,800,000 gallons. In addition there are millions of ground vehicles, such as tanks, trucks, self-propelled artillery, jeeps, bulldozers and tractors. There are gasoline engines which furnish power for field hospitals, radio and telephone stations, pipe lines, refrigeration equipment, and which drive patrol and crash boats. Gasoline stoves are used for cooking, heating water, warming tents and huts.

It is estimated that 50 gallons of various oil products are required monthly for each man in uniform. For Canada's enlistment of around one million, that means 50,000,000 gallons a month. A motorized division on the move eats up one gallon of gasoline for every 21 feet, or more than 250 gallons to a mile.

Such facts and figures make clear why we at home must continue on short gasoline rations.

## Desolation In Norway

The following brief report received by the Royal Norwegian Information Service in Washington, gives a partial picture of conditions which obtain as the vindictive Nazis are slowly forced to relinquish their hold on occupied territories:

All northernmost Norway, as far south as Lyngsfjorden, has been virtually evacuated by German troops who are now believed massing near the so-called Lyngen Line, where many observers believe a stand will be made. This does not necessarily mean that no Germans remain in the far north, where rearguard units of SS-troops are presumably still scattered about. It does mean the Germans have forcibly evacuated all Norwegian civilians from that wide and generally desolate region, and it also means that the Germans have burned down or blown up all homes, shops, sheds, factories or other buildings in that area. In northernmost Norway the Germans have applied the scorched earth policy with a vengeance; frankly their aim has been to make it unfit for human habitation. Residents of small coastal communities have been torn from their homes with little or no notice and forced aboard evacuation vessels, or compelled to set out on foot on the long and arduous overland journey to Tromso and Narvik. In most cases they were given no chance to take along supplies or even to dress properly for the journey.

About 250,000 persons, representing the total population of the provinces of Finnmark and Troms, have been affected by the forced evacuation. The main tide has reached Tromso, now hopelessly overcrowded, and is moving on to Narvik, where the congestion is equally bad. In addition to the Norwegian civilians, there are German troops from northern Norway and Finland, and swarms of Russian prisoners-of-war who had long been employed on German construction projects in the north.

Several hundreds of evacuees have succeeded in eluding the Germans and crossing the border into Sweden. Some of those first evacuated have been reaching Trondheim and even Oslo. Among those arriving at Oslo were 50 men and women, aged from 60 to 90 years, who had been resident of the Old Folks Home at Honningsvaag; they had made the first stage of the journey by boat, and the rest by rail—44 hours of sitting on straight-backed benches.

It may be that some Norwegians are evading the evacuation by going into hiding, but the announced penalty for attempting to do so is immediate death by shooting.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

The shortest day.

* * * *

The war news on the western front is disturbing, but only by comparison with recent tremendous gains which the Allies have made. It is just four years ago since Prime Minister Churchill reviewed the offensive in Western Egypt, warning that a threat of invasion of Britain persisted.

* * * *

George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans), English novelist and poetess, died this date 1880, her place is among the greatest writers of English fiction; just as Jane Austen excelled as a delineator of upper class life, she excelled as a painter of middle class life and character, her work being marked by much pathos and humour; *Adam Bede* and *The Mill On The Floss* are considered her finest works: "Animals are such agreeable friends—they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms."

* * * *

December 22 marks the winter solstice. The sun will continue to set later until the last week of June. As for winter mornings in this latitude, however, they will continue to become darker until the middle of January. The weather bureau, in its calculation of the length of the average day, figures the time between sunrise and sunset in mid-December as about 9 hours, 15 minutes. There is a crumb of comfort in the knowledge that the period when the day will begin to be longer at both ends is but a few weeks away.

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The unusually bad summer weather has raised agricultural problems in Great Britain beginning with spring frosts that wiped out quantities of food, continuing through a sunless middle summer which harmed the milk output and the sugar beet crop. On the bright side, however, a new variety of wheat has been developed by British agriculturalists that outyields the old varieties by 50 per cent, particularly in a wet year. Even this summer the new wheat yielded 14 sacks to the acre compared with a national average over the ten pre-war years of about 7 sacks.

* * * *

A Norwegian underground newspaper called "Krigens Gang" (The Course of the War) has the following to say about punishment of war criminals: "The settlement with the Nazis will demonstrate to the world on what cultural level the Norwegian people stand. There is no doubt that the Nazis must be punished for their treason, and all war criminals must be brought to book regardless of nationality, but this must be done through legal procedure in Norwegian courts and according to Norwegian law. It has always been the practice in Norway to allow the accused to defend himself—this right was not denied the worst criminal. The Nazis shall have this right, even though they denied it to us during the occupation. For our own sake we must not descend to the same level as they and take revenge into our own hands. Punishment must be left to the authorities so that there will be no doubt but that every individual's case will be carefully tried."

* * * *

Among Scotland's post-war industries which may be greatly expanded is that of bagpipe making. Mr. Donald Shaw MacKinnon, secretary of the Association of Highland Societies of Edinburgh, is confident that it will be quite a substantial line of business for years to come. This war has given bagpipe music a tremendous filip. Time and again war correspondents have recorded deeds of derring-do performed by troops whose courage has been stimulated by the skirl of the pipes. The players were often young men trained as pipers since 1939. On demobilization many will be keen to possess a "stan' o' pipes" of their own. A corporal in an Army pipe band is booked for West Africa when the war ends to tutor a contingent of natives keen to become proficient players. A desert army of Bedouins are proud of their pipe band "equipped not with native reed instruments but with the true Scots brand of bagpipes specially imported from their land of origin"—Jordon Highlanders evidently. The pibroch, while "sounding o'er mountain and glen" as of yore, is also shrilling its stirring, animating notes in distant lands which have taken enthusiastically to "the wail and birl" of pipe music.

* * * *

"Tell my wife I'm okay," radioed R.A.F. Wing Commander Robert R. P. Davidson of Vancouver, from his flaming typhoon one day last May. Then he crash-landed in a field in northern France and disappeared into the standing wheat to spend a period, disguised as a French peasant, studying the launching methods of robot bombs. He learned about them—but even more about the nature of the German. Then news came of the invasion of France and by this time Davidson had seen all he wanted of the Germans and their ways. "I was in a town awaiting the Allied advance," he says. "The Germans had given orders to shoot anyone who appeared in the streets. Watching from upstairs, I saw a little girl run into the street from a doorway. Her mother ran to bring her back and fell, wounded by a German rifle shot. The Hun ran out of another doorway to where she lay. Shuffling to her knees, she pleaded for mercy. He finished her off with his bayonet and killed the child. I saw it myself." Davidson has been in the R. A. F. for seven years. He has flown against the Japanese in Ceylon, and against the Germans and Italians in Greece, Crete, North Africa, France, Flanders and Germany. Now he is on leave home.

## Notes By The Way

**A horse's tail is worth $12.50,** according to a Montreal judge who awarded this amount to a horse dealer who claimed the tails of 16 of his horses were docked when being shipped by rail. Maybe this is all right for the dealer, but how about the horses—especially in fly-time? — (Ottawa Journal).

**Old-timers may wag their white** beards as they will, Toronto is satisfied that we witnessed yesterday the greatest snowstorm of all time to hit this district. It was the kind of storm until then we had only read of. It was the urban counterpart of the story of the great snow in Lorna Doone.—(Toronto Telegram).

**Farm land in the vicinity of** Hamilton is said to be just about the highest-priced in Canada. This is a condition of wartime, but it is not based on sound economy, and a day of reckoning may come when farm values are suddenly deflated and some people will wonder how they ever got so far out on a limb.—(Hamilton Spectator).

**When Douglas "Wrong Way"** Corrigan's 11½-year-old son twice drank poison out of bottles he found in the home, it was remarked that he seemed to take after his father. It should rather be said that dad is living up to his reputation for doing things the wrong way, by leaving poison about where a baby could reach it.—(Windsor Star).

**Navigation on the lakes for the** 1944 season is about over, but it is not passing without its last touch of drama. Sixteen large carriers, with 3,755,000 bushels of grain and a quantity of flour in their holds, have cleared the lakehead, and are on their last dash for lower lake ports. This is a scene that never fails to make pulses beat faster all along this waterway. It is a race against time, and happily the big freighters nearly always win.—(Windsor Star).

**"Logistics" is a good term,** no doubt. The Greeks had a word for it. In fact, "logistics" comes from the Greek. But why should one use an unfamiliar and obscure term when a common one would do? If military experts, commentators and writers want to use "logistics," well and good. But for the average citizen who finds it inconvenient to carry a large dictionary about with him, why not say what is meant, namely, "having to do with transport and supply"?—Brantford Expositor).

**Figures of hog production in** Canada for the first nine months of 1944 show that Alberta is still far in the lead. Up to the end of September, Alberta had contributed 2,261,000 to the flow of hogs into commercial channels, eventually to feed allied armies overseas. Ontario stood second with 1,533,000, Saskatchewan third with 1,484,000 and Manitoba fourth with 636,000. Alberta's marketings increased 640,000 this year over last, or about forty per cent, but there are signs that production is now falling off.—(Lethbridge Herald).

**An experiment in pre-fabricated** schools is being made at Welling, Kent, where work will begin shortly on a bungalow type school to accommodate more than 200 children. The school is to be a permanent structure and is being erected in Kent to deal with overcrowding problems, says The Fort William Times-Journal. Once the drainage and foundation are installed, it will be a matter of days to piece together the concrete sections of such a school. The design is the result of an invitation to leading architects to submit plans. House construction will take priority over all other types of building, so a special committee was set up to explore the possibilities of such pre-fabricated school houses.—(Windsor Star).

**Use of The Hague in Holland as** upon England brings the irony of a site for launching V-2 rockets World War II to peak, we should think. That's the town where the World Court used to sit in Andrew Carnegie's Peace Palace. There met the great conference called by Czar Nicholas II to establish universal peace in 1899, just as the twentieth century was about to dawn—a century of peace nearly everybody said except that old curmudgeon, William T. Stead, who said it would be the bloodiest of all the centuries. One sturdy remnant of those world peace visions of 1899 is still with us. Every year we are edified to read the annual report of the Carnegie Foundation for Peace, presided over by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler.—(Chicago Daily News).

**One of the unforeseen results of** the aerial attacks on the British Isles is that searchlights are the indirect cause of the death of a huge number of birds, particularly starlings. When the powerful beams are thrown into the sky in certain areas the starlings fly around and around in vast numbers, one light in the County of Suffolk attracting as many as 100,000 birds, and keep on flying until they fall dead from exhaustion. In such numbers do they fall that special crews have to be sent out afterwards to sweep up the corpses from the road because of the squashed bodies which would make the surface slippery for army vehicles. One humane officer asked permission on one occasion to switch off the light for an hour to enable the starlings to rest. They alighted on trees in such numbers that the branches broke under their weight.—(St. Thomas Times-Journal).

**Hugh refrigerator barges are be**ing built in Australia for food shortage in the tropical war. They are called "Reefers". Each barge holds a day's food rations for two divisions. The "reefers" can be shifted from base to base as troops move forward, and can store food for indefinite periods. Their supplies are replenished by mother ships. Each barge displaces about 300 tons, with a net cubic capacity of 16,000 feet, and gross capacity of 23,000. Four miles of piping on each barge regulate temperatures. A crew of only four is needed. Australian, American and Chinese workmen assemble the barges from prefabricated parts sent from America. One centre employs 1,100 Chinese. They are efficient and christen each barge, when completed, with a Chinese character.—(Australian News-Letter).

## PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open for the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Charlottetown Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinions of correspondents.

### RURAL MAIL COURIERS

Sir,—Please allow me space in your columns for a word about our rural mail couriers, who labor along with top-heavy loads of Christmas mail and parcels which, as I read in yesterday's Guardian, have been the heaviest in years.

Our couriers go throughout winter on bad roads, half paid but reliable citizens, and less than half of their box-holders ever give them a thought. "Why is the mail late?" some may ask. There is work on cars to be done, and mechanics to be paid, and they ask big prices; also wagons and sleighs. By the time the rural courier is fitted up for driving the mail, his cheque is all gone.

Then he is supposed to oblige the neighbours. When asked to take a parcel for Mrs. Smith to Mrs. Jones, the mail man doesn't mind!

Christmas comes and goes; he gets up early and works late; he is only the mail man. But if he doesn't make his trip he is anotner kind of a man!

After reading about the large mail this Christmas season I began to think for a while of the work done by these loyal men all over Canada. Let us not forget them, though it be only with a greeting card.

I am, Sir, etc.,
A BOX HOLDER.

## He Spoke For The Dead

(Montreal Gazette)

Twenty-nine years ago—in December 1915— John McCrae's In Flanders Fields was published in London. These lines did not belong to that journalism of verse which war tends to foster. They brought a pause to all the excitement and stress of war. For the most terrible breeding thing in war is the silence of the dead. And here at last was a voice through which the dead spoke.

The poem was real because those who had lived with the men who had died knew that this was the way the dead would speak, if they could. For the dead in McCrae's lines remind the living of the stark fact of death in war—the swift shapeless with which it comes. Death in war is not like death in peace. It comes not to the sick but to the well not to the weak but to the strong not to the old but to the young. It separates a man in a moment from the full vigor of his life. So it is that these dead in McCrae's poem remind the living that the lives they gave up were just as real just as full and just as worth while as those the living still feel

We are the dead; short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders Fields.

It is just because those dead know that they have given up so much in dying that they make so searching a demand of the living. The words they speak are something more terrible than a plea or a challenge. There is almost a curse in the intense last lines:

If ye break faith with us who die.
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders Fields.

But this poem is made real by something more than the depth of its feeling and by something greater than the skill of its literary presentation. We cannot forget that the man who wrote it joined those for whom he had spoken.

## These War-Time Pipes

(Hamilton Spectator)

Pipe smokers are becoming wood conscious these days and something of experts as regards what is fit or not fit for that mellow affinity with tobacco which gives the utmost in solace and watts a man to the Elysian realm of Nicotania.

Almost every tree and shrub his been drawn upon since genuine briar root from the Mediterranean countries was cut off by the war. The results are little short of dismal for the man who demands coolness, sweetness and that elusive flavour which continues to improve upon itself with considerate use. Instead the average smoker has to put up with everything from beach wood to sugar pine, and often with some of the pitch and resinous gums for which those trees are noted. Some species of French cherry trees make excellent pipes, and only the French know how to produce them, but these have not been available since early in the war, although they should soon be coming back. Even the corn cob is not always as good as it used to be. Hence pipe smokers have been experiencing a hot rough time of it and are longing for the day when briars will again be in supply and at a price which does not wreck a week's pay.

The best substitute for genuine briar has been found in the roots of mountain rhododendron and laurel. The former grows in wild profusion in certain parts of North Carolina where mountain farmers are grubbing large quantities of burls and selling them to pipe factories at $20 a ton. The burl is described as being really only a botanical wart, and may also be found in the dogwood and other shrubs.

These burls are axe-cleaned at the factories, sawed into slabs and then into blocks. Machines make the bore and rough-shape the bowls. Sanding, staining and polishing follow. The finished product is not too bad. The shortage of cigarettes has brought a tremendous demand for pipes. Your discriminating pipe smoker, however, will not soon admit that anything can supplant real briar. "Give a man a pipe he can smoke," says he, and he is willing to bear almost any other hardship until this world crisis is over.

But as for some of the travesties now being offered, he wouldn't give his last charred and cracked remnant of a pre-war briar for a whole moving van full of them. These aren't pipes; they are just abominable libels, and might far better be used for the making of fruit baskets or stepladders.


**COULDN'T SLEEP COULDN'T WORK**

What a relief to settle down to a real night's rest, and awake fully refreshed, ready for the day's duties. I was tortured by fretful nights—tossing, turning — never comfortable. Half awake days —over-tired, driving body and mind to work when they needed rest. "Try Dodd's Kidney Pills," said a friend — "it may be your kidneys". I'm glad I followed his advice as now I'm sleeping like a top—thanks to !!!

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**To The Customers of THE FASHION SHOPPE**

Owing to an unprecedented rush Wednesday when our shipment of silk stockings went on sale there were probably some of our customers disappointed at not securing a pair, but this was entirely unavoidable and in no way due to any oversight by the firm, and we hope that those unable to secure them will overlook it.

We tried to do it the way we thought would be fairest to all by telling the customers when they would be available.

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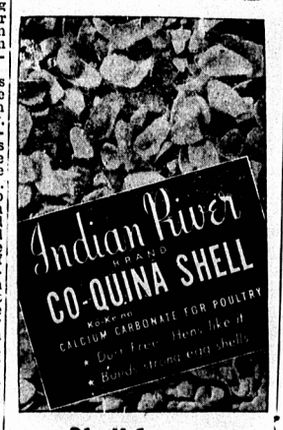
## The Poet's Corner

### AS IF THE WIND

Our neighbors left these hills
And winter songs, the snow and wind.
Left all these things, and the old house
Across the way stands empty and alone.
I can picture in my mind how the sweeping
Wind rattles the closed doors like friends
Just stopping by. But no one answers
Now, and paths are filled with snow
Like those the woodchucks wore
Last summer in the hill meadows
Lights that used to gleam from windows
Through the long dark hours have gone
As if the wind which took the softness
From the fields had blown them out.

—Lansing Christman in the Christian Science Monitor.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## Swiss Seek U. S. Raw Materials

BERN, Dec. 19—(AP)—A group of 50 American businessmen today concluded a visit to Switzerland during which they arranged to purchase Swiss products. It was reported Swiss officials urged the Americans to supply raw materials and to attempt to obtain Allied military permission to truck the supplies across France.


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