

Devoted to the Literature, History, Folk-lore and best interests of the Province of Prince Edward Island.

THE MAGAZINE GUARDIAN

Succeeding to PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND MAGAZINE Issued Every Saturday Morning.

An Islander's Trip North of Hudson Bay

Extracts From The Diary of Trooper Leslie Sellar, Royal North-West Mounted Police

Herewith will be found the unpretentious recital of a trip to the frozen Northern waters of this Dominion; a journey made by a trooper of the Royal North West Mounted Police in obedience to official directions to visit Wager Bay and there collect customs duties from a vessel which was reported to be in that neighborhood trading with the natives.

The apparently insurmountable tasks which are often given to the troopers of the R. N. W. M. P. in the course of regular duty are well known. The obedience of the men; the splendid manner in which they carry out orders; their contempt of danger; their disregard of all the discomforts which less intrepid men would hesitate about, have given the force a world wide reputation which no other body of troops can surpass.

It is an exceeding great pleasure for The Magazine Guardian to be enabled to place this story before its readers; because the hero of the tale is an Island boy, Leslie Sellar, a native of Charlottetown.

Mr. Sellar enlisted some five or six years ago, and has spent considerable time in the West.

About a year ago, he with nine other picked members of the force was despatched on detachment duty to the Mounted Police post near Fort Pullerton on the Hudson Bay Western Shore.

It was from this place he started, with only two natives, "Harry" and "Lupelock," on the long voyage north which his diary tells about.

It may be added that the report of the trip handed in to the Commissioner of the Police after his return was thought to be such a splendid relation of devotedness to duty, that the Press of the Dominion published it widely, with flattering comments on the performance.

Wednesday Feb. 21, 1906. Left at 9.40 Good going; made about 25 miles; camped at 3.30; very fine day.

Thursday, 22. Left camp at 8.30 and made White Point at 2.30, staying in a house. Broke some mud off sleigh; staying over to-morrow to fix it. Fine day; travelling very rough last few miles. Travelled about 20 miles.

Friday, 23. Had a slight accident late last night; stepped on a rusty nail; rather painful to-day; am applying hot poultice. Harry and Lupelock fixing cometic [native name for dog-sleigh], and other little jobs. Weather very dull; expect to get early start to-morrow.

Saturday, 24. Got an early start to-day, 8 a.m. Weather very dull, with light snow; travelling very heavy and rough in some places. Made about 15 miles. My walk was rather painful, but I managed to foot O.K. Dogs are all in good condition. Our cooking apparatus almost useless

but by dint of much suffering we are getting to our bags [sleeping-bags] with a full stomach.

Sunday, 25. Very bad storm; unable to travel. Had a very comfortable ego [snow-house] and never moved out, all day. Foot O.K. again.

Monday, 26. Still storming, but not so bad. Had some trouble in getting out of



AN ISLANDER'S TRIP—In Camp at Headquarters Trooper Sellar is in Center

going on to-morrow. Travelled over 35 miles and made our ego on the place when we take to the land in order to reach the Wager. Expect to reach the Wager in two days if everything goes O.K. Saw numerous deer tracks this afternoon. Expect deer any time now.

Wednesday, 28. Had an early start this morning 8 a.m. The morning was very foggy with light snow, which cleared about 11 a.m. becoming very nice during the afternoon. Saw deer about five miles from ego on the trail. Lupelock wounded one but was not fortunate enough to get it. About 12.30 we saw two more bunches, and Harry and Lupelock started after them. They got one each; I had them skinned and fed one to the dogs and made a cache of the other one. We made camp where the deer were killed. We only travelled about 12 miles today, as the going was very heavy. Lost considerable mud by running on little rocks. Fixed it this evening by putting on the inside of the deer's stomach. While I was watching the dogs this afternoon two deers came quite close to the cometic but as I was down behind it out of the wind, I did not see them at first. One of the dogs scared them and I had three shots, wounding one of them in the right fore leg. My right foot, which I hurt at Whale Point is very sore, and my left one was jammed between the sleigh runner

and a piece of ice. So I am, nearly a cripple at the beginning of the journey. But after riding a few days I hope to be O.K.

March 1, Thursday. Very stormy in a.m., and we stayed in camp. Harry and Lupelock, after fixing cometic, started after deer this afternoon, which was fine. Lupelock got one some distance from camp and cached it. We will pick it up coming back. Expect to start early to-morrow and make a good distance as the sleigh is in fairly good condition. Very cold to-day.

March 2. Started early this morning but broke the new runner about 4 feet from the nose of the sleigh when only two miles from camp. The travelling was very rough and we had some nasty hills to tackle. We hitched the dogs on to the hind end of the sleigh and made about 10 miles, when we were unfortunate again, in having the remainder of the runner broken up.

Space will not permit of concluding in this issue. Next week we shall give the balance of the journey which details the successful outcome of the trip, the interesting visit to natives at the ship, and the return journey.

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BIOGRAPHY OF A STOVE

By Rev. F. A. Wightman.

Written for the Magazine Guardian.

In the comfortable home of Mr. Robert Muttart, Cape Traverse, there is a stove of unique build and history. This stove has been in the Muttart family for three generations, first belonging to the late George Muttart, then to his son, the late Captain Lewis Muttart, and subsequently to his son Robert, the present owner.

The history of this remarkable stove, I got from the late Capt. Lewis Muttart; and as the story is of considerable interest to many readers of this paper, I will here relate it substantially as it was given to me.

The chief interest attaching to this stove is found in the fact that it was among the first, if not the very first stove imported into this island. It is probably, also, the oldest stove in the Province now in active use. It was made about a century ago at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and has been in constant use during the greater part of the intervening time, and is still doing satisfactory work. It is said to have done service in three different centuries, no less than five generations having been comforted by its genial warmth; it is in an excellent state of preservation, and, to all outward appearance, good for five generations more.

Another point of interest, scarcely less in importance, is found in the additional fact that it was imported into this country especially for the Presbyterian congregation at Covehead. The fact that this congregation has recently celebrated its centennial anniversary also lends interest to the history of the stove as will be seen.

To the casual observer this stove would be regarded as belonging to the ordinary "box" variety, but a closer observation reveals the fact that while it is of the "box" type, it is "feistfully and wonderfully made". The castings are all a half inch thick, and are lavishly embellished with various artistic figures. Its width is nineteen inches, its depth two feet six inches, and its length the same. The bottom of the door is ten inches above the bottom of the stove; and hereby hangs a sale, as the history of this remarkable stove has been wonderfully affected by those ten inches of space below the door.

It seems that the congregation above mentioned had built a church about a century ago and the question of heating then as now, had to be grappled with. Fireplaces, even in churches, up to this time are said to have been the order of the day but these people with commendable ambition determined to be fully up to the es in all the equipment of their church;

and deciding that a stove would not be a serious innovation, they decided to have one installed. But a hundred years ago our province as well as early in the art of stove making. It was not, therefore, to be expected that the manufacturers of this infant colony would be in a flourishing condition, or be able to produce anything so complicated as a stove. Neither could the merchants of those good old days, even in the island's metropolis, be expected to keep in stock an article so really rare and uncalled for. There was nothing to do, therefore, but to have a stove brought out from the Old Country.

In order to accomplish their purpose the aid of a Charlottetown merchant was sought. This was a Mr. Brecken who was accustomed to order goods from "home" for his customers from time to time as necessity required. This Mr. Brecken is said to have been the grandfather of the late postmaster of Charlottetown. Be this as it may the order was duly executed, and in due course the stove arrived. These, be it remembered, were not the days of quick delivery or marvellous haste, and probably six months or a year passed before the stove reached its destination; at last, however, it was installed with due ceremony.

It can be imagined under the circumstances, what was the chief topic of conversation in that quiet neighbourhood. It is said that the merits of the stove were discussed pro and con as the innovation had its friends and foes. It may be inferred, therefore, that the day of trial was awaited with considerable interest. This would be especially the case with those who had inspired the demand for the stove as their reputation would be to some extent bound up with the success or failure of the enterprise. In due time ample opportunity was afforded for testing the new-fangled "fire-box." But alas! it also smoked and fumed and did about everything but warm the church. "The smoke of their former sacredness," though not forever, and not by way of the flame. Whether the minister improved the occasion by discoursing on the horrors of the nether world is not known, but tradition says that some were moved to tears. They were deeply affected, that is, their eyes were. Just how many meetings of the session were held to decide the fate of the stove, probably the ancient records may determine, but one thing seems clear, the offending member after much forbearance was finally given up in despair, and expelled from the church.

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Being cast out of the synagogue, however, did not consign it to perdition, which, I suppose, was quite orthodox according to prevailing views. Neither did this damper shut off its career as a stove; for notwithstanding past failures, a long life of usefulness was before the recent offender, though in a humbler sphere. This is a very important lesson for even a stove to learn; but well learned, it generally produces more heat and less smoke. But this is not a sermon.

It would seem that the apparent worthlessness of the stove did not prevent it being offered for sale, and ere long it found a willing purchaser in the person of Mr. George Muttart of Cape Traverse, the grandfather of the Mr. Muttart here alluded to. The data is not at hand by which we may learn of the first cost of the stove, but it is safe to assume that Mr. Muttart got it at a greatly-reduced price in view of its balky disposition. But a balky stove, like a balky horse, may be taught to draw, and Mr. Muttart was willing to pay a trifle for the sake of demonstrating this principle. In view of its questionable character, Mr. Muttart, for the slight consideration of fourteen pounds [\$38] took possession. Stoves, it is needless to say, have considerably depreciated in value since that time. But Mr. Muttart was a good judge of stoves; and his bargain proved a good one for himself and others.

Here is where the importance of that ten inch space below the door comes in. Now a stove constructed on this principle violates the first principles of stoveology; success under the circumstances was, a physical impossibility. Though this small but important consideration escaped the notice of the makers and the

Elders of Cove Head, it was apparent to Mr Muttart at the first examination, though probably this was the first stove he had ever seen. It would be an easy matter to fill up the bottom of the stove with bricks, thought Mr Muttart, hence his willingness to pay the trifling sum asked.

I believe the stove started on its new career by making the journey from Charlottetown to Cape Traverse on an ox team. At all events Mr Muttart proceeded to carry out his purpose of converting the stove, in the manner suggested. This proved entirely successful, and very soon the recalcitrant stove was giving perfect satisfaction in its new home. So much for a bright idea. The improvement in the character of the stove, he it understood, is not generally supposed to be altogether owing to the change from a Presbyterian to a Methodist environment; but on this point opinions may differ.

This venerable stove now heats two rooms at once by being inserted half way through a partition, thus doing double service in its old age. If the peculiar characters which adorn its sides could speak what tales they could tell. How many have met around its hearth during the period of its long life. For many years and especially during the time the late Mr. Lewis Muttart was at the head of the ice-boat service, it warmed the travelling public as well as the members of the household. Sometimes when heavy storms prevailed, both crew and passengers shared the comfort of Mr Muttart's home. During such times people from widely separated places met, acquaintances were formed, or business transacted, which had far reaching results.

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WHEN THE BRIG FANNY SAILED

By Archibald Mackay.

Written for the Magazine Guardian.

The California fever broke out in Charlottetown the latter part of summer and fall of 1849. It beat all, the excitement that got among the people. Some men were well off and getting along well with their good wives and nice families of children, and some of them were never from home in their lives and never thought of leaving till they took the fever to go and dig the gold up by the bushel or ton in California at the other end of sun-down, 17,000 miles away, and one of the roughest and wildest voyages in the world counted so by all sea men, the going round Cape Horn. But it did not scare them worth a cent. They had got gold on the brain. Well! what did they do? they called a meeting and talked business and decided to go. They then lost no time. They wanted to get a pile of the yellow stuff quick—all excited to go—first class people too—as good as any in Charlottetown. They were all keen to go but they could not all get the chance so they concluded to send so many to the mines of California—a six or seven month voyage. It was said the women and wives were just as keen for them to get away and load the brig Fanny of 250 tons with the gold and come right back quick with a big load. One old man I knew got excited and asked one of the party if they would lead her deep and said—

"Won't there be big picking on her when she gets back". They formed themselves into a company of 40 shareholders and bought the brig Fanny of 250 tons from Mr. Peake—a nice vessel.

Those forty owners had a strong agreement stating the business to go there and get the gold and if it paid, to sail the Fanny there to do so. They would have their crew and, also some who would learn to be sailors in going there, but if they did not sail and trade with the vessel when they got there, they would all go to the gold mines and dig up a fortune in three years time. That was the time given for them all to work and do business together.

They framed four houses and took everything to finish them with lots of boards and nails, windows and doors, all ready to stick those four buildings up as soon as they would land there, so as to lose no time. They could all live in them for the three years and make a fortune digging the fine yellow stuff.

My uncle, John Hawkins, was a shareholder and he was a framer. So he was the party who framed those four buildings

and put his mark and figures on them.

Everything was soon done and put on board. Next thing was the supplies of grub of all kinds for the voyage. There were several offers made right home in Charlottetown but they were not accepted an offer from Halifax, and the party furnished the supplies quick and they were soon ready. They got several offers from good men to take charge as captain. Several captains were talked of.

There was a captain Irving that had been gone fifteen years, come home again and he applied. He had been in the East India trade quite a spell it was said. This captain Irving was of a good stock of very fine people—a brother to those Irving that were in the Governor's employ crossing the straits in the ice-boats; and they stood O.K. So his chances were as good or better than the others.

All the captains that applied stood well and were well recommended, but after some talk Capt. Irving was taken.

They had a clause in their written agreement that no woman was allowed to go.

So after a time they were all ready, but in counting over their sailors they found they were two short. This was on a Saturday. My brother the late Capt W. H. McKay, of Princetown was one of the crew.

Well on Sunday morning I got up W. H. my brother was asleep on the sofa. He came that night about forty miles, for the two sailors wanted. He promised two men—neighbors of ours and relations that, if men were wanted he would get them in the ship. They had the fever bad and wanted to go. They were two good able seamen and nice men also, Duncan McQuigan and John Sinclair of Princetown were their names. They owned a vessel, the Margaret of about forty tons that they built and were coasting and trading with, and were across the Bay then taking in oats.

So W. C. got up and got his spy-glass and looked across the Bay at the vessel. We heard that they expected them and the vessel over that day [Sunday]. At noon we saw them hoist the main sail to come over; and they did come right over home. They knew nothing about my brother being up for them till they came up to their homes, and my brother was there.

The poor fellows had no time to think but they felt glad to hear the news and went right off that evening about 10 or 11

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AN ISLANDER'S TRIP—Detachment of Mounted Police in Winter Uniform.