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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Island Lady Recalls Scenes Of Splendor

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Provincial - Farm Editor

AN OLD FASHIONED bath tub which was used by Col. John Hamilton Gray, the man who chaired the original Confederation conference here 100 years ago, brought back memories last week of a chat I had several months ago with Col. Gray's grand daughter, Mrs. W. C. Wright in Souris. The bathtub, of most unusual design, is on the lawn of Inkerman House where Gray entertained the Fathers of Confederation, and their families, at the last luncheon they enjoyed on the Island in September 1864 before they sailed for Quebec where Confederation was finally agreed on later that fall.

The Gray story and its connection with the Confederation conference of 1864 has so many facets, I scarcely know where to start. Gray was born in Spring Park which is now a part of Charlottetown and it was so named by his father Robert Gray, who was a United Empire Loyalist who remained true to England when the American colonies won their independence.

MRS. WRIGHT told me that Gray looking over his father's shoulder one evening saw the Malabar Coast and said "Daddy, I'm going to shoot me a tiger on the Malabar Coast one day"; which brought the answer "Hammy, my boy, you little know where the Malabar coast is". But Hammy did get his tiger in that area when he was in military service in later life.

His granddaughter also told me that Hamilton Gray used to fear that bears were chasing him sometimes, when he walked through the woods from Spring Park to a Charlottetown school. And that reminds me that someone told me recently that people coming to Charlottetown in those early days "came out of the woods where P. J. MacDonald's store stood later". It's Cudmore's Grocery now, corner of Prince and Kent Streets.

Gray went to England as a young man where he joined the Army and married Susan Pennefather, the daughter of an English general. He later saw service in India, in the Crimean War and in South Africa where he fought in the first Boer War.

### Home Named For Inkerman Victory

THE VETERAN soldier returned to the Island on retirement and built Inkerman House which he named for the battle of Inkerman where a combined British and French force besieging Sevastopol defeated a Russian force led by Prince Alexander Menshikov.. It was fought on Nov. 5, 1854, just 10 years before the Confederation conference.

The Grays had four daughters, each of them born in a different quarter of the globe, but it's about their second daughter. Margaret Stukely Pennefather Gray, I want to

speak about in this column. Margaret was born in South Africa at Fort Beaufort on the Orange River, and she was a vivacious young lady of 19 when the Confederation conference was held.

The conference delegates and their families had their last luncheon on the Island at Col. Gray's Inkerman House, and it was Charles Tupper, later Sir Charles, who observed kindly shortly before leaving, that Col. Gray should take his charming young daughter with him on the trip which was to end at Quebec to where the conference had been adjourned.

TRAINED TO the split second timing of military discipline, Col. Gray replied in the negative. "The ship sails within the half hour, and she can't be ready in time."

But Mrs. Gray, herself in poor health at the time, replied calmly "I'll get her ready in time, if you'll take her with you."

Getting Margaret ready was a simpler job by reason of the fact she had only recently returned from a visit to Halifax, and much of her best clothing was still readily available, I am told.

And so the vivacious young Charlottetown girl came to dance and jest, and talk and walk with the men who founded this country, and to share in most of the glitter and the romance of the entertainments on a grand scale which were a part of the activity which followed.

Margaret later became Mrs. Artemus Lord of Charlottetown - her husband occupied the post now known as district marine agent, department of transport - and she said in an interview published in this paper in July, 1939:

"I can still see the brilliant scene when Quebec City loomed in sight . . . the grand old city made a most interesting spectacle. It was a never to be forgotten sight."

Mrs. Lord, then 94, recalled some of the more brilliant events. How could she forget?

"There was 'the drawing room' held by Lord Monck in the Parliament Buildings, where all of the delegates from the British North America colonies met together."

#### Some 'Wonderful Old Lace'

MARGARET WAS dismayed at the thought of such a grand assemblage at first. The unusual finery, she felt, could not be matched by even the finest of the clothes she had worn on the Halifax visit

But her mother, Mrs. John Hamilton Gray, had travelled practically all over the world with her officer husband, and she knew about such things. And Margaret found that her mother had packed some things fit even for these scenes of splendor. In her trunk was "some wonderful old lace" of her grandmother's which suited the emergency.

There was some arrangement, and some sewing to be done apparently, for Margaret, then Mrs. Lord, told this paper:

"Deft fingers stitched the delicate flowers, tier upon tier, over a white satin frock and I had a stately court costume in which to make my bow before the king's deputy."

"ON FRIDAY", she said in the interview of 25 years ago, "there was a grand ball and some of the girls were lovely, but none, I thought surpassed Emma Tupper, daughter of Sir Charles.

“Then there was a dinner at Spencerwood, where Lord Monck lived, for the Tupper, Mr. Haviland, Mrs. Alexander, the Popes and father and me.”

Continuing she said “we had some delightful outings near Quebec. I remember I spent one morning reading Dr. Tupper’s speech to Mrs. Tupper.”

Margaret and her father Col. Gray, went to Montreal and visited with Sir George Cartier. They later went to Ottawa, Toronto and Niagara Falls which must have been interesting and glamorous even 100 years ago.

It was a wonderful and never-to-be-forgotten trip for the young Charlottetown girl, and one that had been made possible originally by the suggestion of Sir Charles Tupper. It was natural Margaret should have an unusually warm spot in her heart for this man. And that sets the stage for this story I want to pass on to you from her daughter, Mrs. Wright whom I talked to recently at her home in Souris.

### ‘How Dare You Hiss Sir Charles!’

SOME YEARS later Margaret was attending a political meeting at which Sir Charles was speaking. Noticing that a listener was hissing the speaker, Margaret poked him sharply in the ribs with her umbrella and challenged “How dare you hiss Sir Charles? HOW DARE you hiss Sir Charles?”

I said earlier that Margaret became the wife of Artemus Lord who was an employee of the federal government, and people with political ideas often looked to “get something on” government servants, particularly when a government would change.

This time a Liberal government had been elected, apparently, and the Liberals are watching the actions of Mr. Lord with unusual care. I don’t know what his politics were, but he was the perfect example of what a careful government employee should be. But it was natural that his wife should be a Conservative. Her father had been a Conservative premier 1863-65, and her admiration for Sir Charles would make the party ties stronger.

SO IT was interesting that one of the Liberals should tell her one day “We can’t get anything on your husband. But we have enough on you to hang you, if you were the government employee.” But of course she wasn’t.

On another occasion, her daughter told me, Mrs. Lord had become completely frustrated at something the Liberals had done, and observed with emphasis in his hearing “The brutes, the brutes, the dirty brutes.”

But husband Artemas Lord replied calmly “But remember dear that I get our living from the “dirty brutes”.

### Old House Is Interesting

I WAS shown through Inkerman House and over its spacious lawns a few days ago by Mr. and Mrs. J. A. (Jock) Lawson who are the present owners and use it as their summer residence.

The great dining room where the Fathers and their party lunched has been divided. One half is still used for dining, but the other is a kitchen.

The drawing room is still untouched and I thought as I looked out of the great windows at the spacious lawn, and down to the water, of the vista the Fathers had as they were entertained by the tall, distinguished Island premier of 1864. Col. Gray followed some unusual customs. Everything in the house stopped at sunset, I was told, and the family and the servants went down to the shore nearby for a sunset service. That must only have been in summer, though I did not think to ask my informant.

Practically all of the old furniture is gone, but Col. Gray's bed is still in the great attic. Much wider than the normal bed of today, it measures 64 inches across, we found as Jock Lawson put his tape on it. And that must approximate the "giant size" beds furniture people are pushing now. The pictures show a man and his wife sleeping several feet apart on the mattress, though I wonder why a man and wife should want to lie that far apart.