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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

Horse Is Spry At 35, Store of 50 Years Ago

By NEIL A. MATHESON  
Provincial - Farm Editor

JOHN CURLEY, Elmwood showed me last week a horse that is 35 or 36 years old, and he's the liveliest old horse I ever laid eyes on. The old fellow gets grain all year round, a gallon a day on the pasture and one and one-half gallons in winter. He was nibbling a lush pasture growth with apparent relish when we strolled through the field for a look, and he put his tail over his back and took off at a smart gallop when two strangers - Jim McClosky and I - tried to approach him.

For horsemen who have good memories, the old fellow was sired by Bustin, I was told, though I am not sure that is the correct spelling. Frank McQuaid, Southport who is widely known for his skill in moving buildings, owned the stallion at one time.

I RECALL a horse in Peakes that was 35 years old but he showed his age and died a few weeks later. This fellow seems to have all kinds of life in him. Mr. Curley hauls wood with him and does other odd chores, but he is evidently kind to the old animal.

At the house I saw a dog that is 21 years old and I didn't realize that dogs live that long. The dog is also spry looking and shows little evidence of the infirmities that normally appear at that age.

### Old Store At Victoria Was Interesting

IT WAS several months ago that I dropped in to visit Miner MacNevin in his store at Victoria, and I got the impression momentarily that somebody had turned back the clock a half century, for there before my eyes was the same old store where I went as a young lad with my mother perhaps 50 years previously.

I recalled clearly that Miner MacNevin was then a young red-haired chap who seemed smart as a whip and I remembered that most of the other people in the store seemed to be always asking him the price of certain commodities and where to find others.

When I suggested that groceries were comparatively cheap in the days that are gone, and that we used to consider \$10 was a great deal of money, Mr. MacNevin observed "You couldn't carry \$10 worth of groceries then". That value in groceries would present no carrying problem now.

MINER HAS sold his store since then and it had reopened, I am told, under new ownership, but I want to tell you something of what I saw and what I recalled from my visit.

The store has changed so little in the intervening years that I could close my eyes, as I did, and virtually imagine my mother there by my side and experience once again the hustle and bustle of that far off time. I could scarcely believe it as I walked into the

shop. I had naturally forgotten what it looked like, but the sight of the interior brought back vividly what I had seen as a child.

I'm not knocking the establishment for Mr. MacNevin told me he had purposely left it that way. Scores of tourists visited it each year and found it rich in relics and treasures of the past. Many of them donned some of the old-fashioned clothing and wearing apparel, and were photographed in them to send treasured memories back home. Visitors came from as far west as Vancouver, from deep in the United States, and Miner had several visitors from the United Kingdom, mostly people who were here as Royal Air Force personnel in the Second World War or their relatives.

LADY VISITORS liked to dress in the old fashioned hoops or bustles with the skirts that went over them with yards of material. Mr. MacNevin showed me some of the old items. One pair of ladies boots must have been 14 or 15 inches high and the leather was as soft and pliable as the finest kid glove. I saw a pair on one of the ladies who played in a 50-years-ago scene at the interesting and colorful pageant staged here at the Women's Institute annual anniversary celebration last summer.

### Lady Visited Famous Schoolhouse

When I asked, "what would footwear of similar quality cost now?" I was told "you just couldn't buy that quality." Tourists tramped the store from top to bottom and there are several levels over the main selling floor.

The store was known as Wright Brothers as I recall - the sign was still over the door when I was there - and Edward Boswell, father of Keith Boswell, was the owner at the time. I recall the tall gray haired man who to me at least, had a distinguished appearance.

### "The Finest Man I Ever Worked For"

I FOUND in some of the papers Mr. MacNevin showed me a letter from J. R. Brodie, 88, Calgary who said of Mr. Boswell for whom he had worked as a bookkeeper, "He was the finest man I ever worked for in my whole life."

Miner went to MacLean and Cameron's store in Crapaud in 1904, but decided to take a business course at the Charlottetown Business College which was operated by L. B. Miller, a one-time mayor of Charlottetown. He had been getting \$16 a month at Crapaud and had little left after paying \$10 for board. The course at the CBC then cost \$50 for the term.

They had an active millinery business at Wright Brothers in former years, with four or five girls working at it upstairs. The firm had its own schooners in those years. There was a good coal business and many people will recall hauling lime from there. Victoria was a busy port at the time.

"I HAVE seen truck wagons go on fire from the hot lime" Miner told me, and I recall that the unslaked lime would get most terribly hot when water was applied. Many farmers used to carry water-proof coverings to cover the load of lime in their cart or wagon box, just in case it rained when they were hauling it home. Mr. MacNevin took over the business in 1930 and sold it earlier this year.

When our talk turned briefly to the days of the fox boom in this province, Miner recalled that people would gather around the church steps after service and talk about the fox industry which was a magic word in those times.

He recalled, too, that farmers in the area called a meeting one night to discuss the idea of keeping breeding foxes here on the Island, but the idea was finally rejected. "Some of the ranchers," he told me, "would not agree to such a proposal." They thought that "we have made money on them , why not give someone else a chance."

### George Mayne Has Family Records

A FEW of our people keep accurate records that trace their family back for several generations. Such a man is George Mayne, Emerald who has traced the complete history back to his grandfather, Joseph Mayne, 1803-93 who came here from Oxford, England while he was still a young man.

Mrs. Mayne was Minnie Paynter and her husband has traced her family to Richard Paynter and his wife Anne Saunders who came from England in 1821 with one son and three daughters. The Pickerings are another branch of the family and their history is recorded back to William Pickering who came to this country from England in 1775 and settled in Bayview.

Mr. Mayne recalled for me the days when he used oxen on the farm and remembers that their slow, steady and powerful pulls were ideal for stumping. They also hauled wood in winter, among other things. Stir and Lion were of the Durham breed, weighed about 1,300 pounds each and were sold to John Dickieson, Stanley Bridge when they were six or seven years old.

"YOU DON'T believe in ghosts?" Mr. Mayne challenged me as we chatted in their farm kitchen, and he told me this story when I asked what he had in mind.

He was ploughing in the field one evening when he happened to look back and see his sister coming across the field after him. The field was a long one and he decided to complete the round with the team and meet his sister when he came back to that end of the field. But the sister wasn't here when he arrived nor had she been there at all, she assured him when he reached the barn with his team at quitting time, though he definitely had seen her coming across the field to where he was plowing.

But the sister did come for him at the same time next evening. She came to tell him that their father was dying. It's a story of a "fore runner" and many such tales were told in the past by honorable people like Mr. Mayne.

I HAVE room, I hope, for two short items. Phil Barlow, Charlottetown told me this week that the Billy Bell who kept the hotel or boarding house at New Glasgow, N.S. and had come from Charlottetown, was not the Billy Bell of Moose River diamond drilling fame.

And Mrs. Ernest Coles, Suffolk writes that she has visited "The Little Red Schoolhouse" of "Mary and her little Lamb" fame, and found everything had been preserved, even the old wood stove.

Mrs. Coles was told the first school books that were used are in the old school house which was built in Sterling, Massachusetts in 1708, and moved to South Sudbury, Massachusetts in 1927 to the Wayside Inn property by Henry Ford.

IT IS close, she explains, to the Martha-Mary chapel that Mr. And Mrs. Ford built to the memory of their mother, and, she adds, the steeple was designed by Christopher Wren.

The Suffolk lady also visited the Ford Home and the mill and the “Wayside country store” which are all on the Ford property.

The reference here, in case somebody missed it, is to last week’s column which told of a lock of wool taken from the lamb many years ago, and owned by a DeSable MacLean family.