

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., May 19, 1961

ACROSS THE ISLAND

Kings Reports Are Confusing

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STORIES FROM the Kings byelection continue to be a bit baffling. From one group I get stories of large and enthusiastic meetings in some of the main centers. From others I get the story there is practically no interest shown in the coming contest.

One man reports a trip through Morell, St. Peter's and Souris shows much more interest in the coming voting on the proposed regional high school setup, than in the struggle for the vacant House of Commons seat.

I KNOW that interest is normally low in byelection campaigns and that is understandable. The party stalwarts, and the rest of the faithful get stirred up in a general election campaign. There is danger that the government may change and that their favorite party will win or lose, as the case may be.

The byelection situation is much less exciting. There is no danger of a change. Normally the advantages are with opposition parties. They argue that loss of a seat will mean little or nothing to a government with a top-heavy majority. The addition of one voice to the opposition could be advantageous. I've heard that argument in many byelection campaigns over the years.

Liberals Stressing Experience

THIS TIME the Liberals are adding that their candidate, Tom Kickham, is an experienced parliamentarian with eight years in the House of Commons and two parliaments of practical politics behind him, on top of previous experience in the provincial legislature.

Normally that advantage might be enough to swing the tide in favor of the Opposition, particularly if the government was putting up only a normal scrap.

But the PCs are putting some of their top flight people in tiny Kings. They're even sending Mrs. Diefenbaker into the contest. I know they say she's "not actually participating in the campaign" but the attractive and charming wife of the Prime Minister isn't coming all the way to P.E.I. just to drink a sociable cup of tea with the party faithful.

HER EFFORTS are added to those of several cabinet ministers, and visiting MPs from as far away as Ontario. Just what effect this high-priced help will have on the result is another of the imponderables in the campaign.

The Liberals also have top level people coming but their list of National Leader Lester Pearson, former cabinet minister J.W.Pickersgill and Hedard Robichaud, MP from Gloucester, N.B. is modest compared to the PCs list of notables who are visiting Kings these days.

MacLean Athletic Feats Recalled

THIS WEEK I met Daniel MacLean, the DeGros Marsh man who is the Kings County returning officer. I find he's a first cousin of W.A.(Billy) MacLean, the man who is remembered by many veteran track and field fans as a hammer thrower who used to compete at Caledonia Club games and other athletic events of former years. Jim Pendergast recalled only yesterday that "Billy MacLean was one sweet hammer thrower".

Daniel MacLean was also a track and field athlete. He was too light for the weights but he did compete successfully in the jumps and sprints. Right now he's planning to help some of the boys in his community prepare for the Kings County track and field meet David Boswell is planning at Souris. It was back in the early Twenties that Mr. MacLean was a competitor but he's as straight and trim now as he was as a youth.

Mr. MacLean will be remembered as the PC candidate in 5th Kings at the last provincial election. He ran against S.S.Hessian, QC in 1959.

Gormans' Island Connections

THE DEATH this week in Ottawa of Tommy Gorman reminds me that the man who seven times managed National Hockey League teams to Stanley Cup triumphs, was born in this province. I met Mr. Gorman in his Ottawa Auditorium several years ago between periods of a game in which I was watching our own Forbes Kennedy play with the Junior Canadians.

I do not recall much of what he said about his boyhood days except that he did warm up perceptibly when I told him I was from "The Island".

Somehow our talk swung to some of his major attractions and the famous negro basketball team, the Harlem Globe Trotters, who were barnstorming at the time. No sooner had I voiced a desire to see them in action than he told me they would be playing in the auditorium and asked me to be his guest to see them.

CHECKING through old records here I find that his brother, Larry Gorman, was much better known along the Atlantic coastline. Apparently Larry was born in Tyne Valley, but he moved at a comparatively early age to the Miramichi area in New Brunswick where he was famous as a ballad composer and singer.

A decade ago, a New Brunswick writer said "Larry Gorman is still a legend on the Miramichi for his songs and ballads". His sharp wit made him at once "the terror and delight" of the Miramichi woods and later in Maine where Yank writers called him "The Maine woods balladeer".

"Porridge To Cake" Change Is Noted

BEST STORY I got here yesterday about him came from Jim Pendergast. It seems that Larry was having supper with a companion in a Miminegash home. The supper table was laid with plates of porridge, and other humble fare, when suddenly two young men came to court the young ladies of the house. The table was rapidly cleared and a

new menu appeared. When they were seated and Gorman was asked to say grace, he looked directly across the table at his companion as he said:

“The Lord be praised , I am amazed how quick things are amended, there’s cake and pie for you and I , when porridge was intended.”

The Gorman boys’ father, Thomas Gorman Sr., was a one-time editor of the Summerside Progress, a paper that was later succeeded by the Pioneer.

Beef Cattle Are Sold Rapidly

INTEREST CONTINUES to mount in the production of high grade beef cattle here. Ralph Adams, O’Leary brought in two carloads from Ontario recently and Livestock Director L.W.Roper told me this week “they sold so rapidly, Ralph could have sold four additional carloads if he had them”.

It wouldn’t be surprising if Mr. Adams went back for some more of the Ontario cattle. He’s deeply interested in the beef promotion here, he feeds a number of cattle himself each year and he’s a pretty keen businessman.

MR. ADAMS is a member of the 9-man executive of the P.E.I. Beef Producers’ Association. They made several attempts during the winter to meet so they could elect officers. The selection of a secretary is a main objective as he co-ordinates the work of the association, and keeps packers informed as to when and where finished beef cattle would be ready for purchase. A uniform supply of quality carcasses is a prime objective of the organization.

Previous attempts to hold their meeting failed because of wintry storms. Now the rush of spring work is holding up the announcement of the meeting date.