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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Interest Runs High In Historic Items

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I'VE HAD many calls about interesting items since last week's column on the museum subject appeared.

A Regency table owned by Mrs. John Carr, Marshfield is unusual. It was brought to Canada by Prince Edward, then the Duke of Kent, who was the father of Queen Victoria.

Then the commander of British forces in North America, Edward imported furnishings from England to fit out his home in Halifax. The first shipment was lost at sea but the second arrived safely. When his time in this country had been served, the old story says that Edward divided his furnishings among his Captains of the guard.

One of them, a Major Gillespie lived later in Charlottetown, in a home owned by William Bishop Brehaut. He was the father of William M. Brehaut, postmaster in Charlottetown for many years, who was the husband of the lady we know now as Mrs. Mary Brehaut, who is so active in the historical society.

Mrs. Brehaut and many of the members of the historical society know this story much better than I do. I'm repeating it here for those to whom it may be new.

Mr. Brehaut owned the houses at 244 to 250 Grafton Street and Major Gillespie lived in one of the buildings. But the retired English officer got into financial difficulties and skipped overnight with what he could take with him easily. Some of the furniture was left behind, and it included a Regency table and six Chippendale chairs.

The chairs were lost in a fire when W.B. Brehaut took them to a repair shop and it burned. But the Regency table is still in existence and it's owned now by Mrs. Carr.

The table is a tilt-top and W. M. Brehaut said it was in the barn for years . . . children rolled it up and down the street; it was loaned as a kitchen table to Conductor John MacDonald who lived there for some years.

But the beautiful old piece of Mahogany is in good condition now. Mrs. Carr received it as a gift from her mother, Mrs. E. F. Coffin, Charlottetown, who purchased it at a sale of the effects of the late Wendall Beaton of this city. (see picture on page 3)

Clementi Piano At Gov't House

Christopher Gledhill, provincial director of music, called me about the old Clementi piano that is owned by the Historical Society and is now in Government House. It was owned, available information indicates, by Governor Patterson, the first governor of this Island.

Mrs. Patterson, the old story says, taught music and owned two pianos, one of them, apparently, was this one that Earle C. Baker purchased and gave to the society.

Musi Clementi, Italian pianist and composer, was born in Rome where his father was a jeweler. Later he moved to England where he became a success as a composer and

pianist. Later in life he became a partner in a pianoforte business which went bankrupt in 1800. He then established a pianoforte business of his own under the name of Clementi and company which became a marked success, available information indicates.

THERE ARE many valuable items of historic value in this province that are awaiting space in a suitable provincial museum. Some of the calls indicated interesting items I hope to see in the near future. Others were from people who are anxiously awaiting the opening of a museum so they can donate some valuable historical items.

Some of the callers are worried as to what will happen to items they have kept for years.

Before I leave the Charlottetown area, Wendall Barbour called to tell me that the building alongside his automobile business on Euston Street was the old Court House that was moved from Queen Square many years ago. It was the original court house here, apparently.

Miscouche Seeks Non-French Items

Sister St. Emmanuel is the secretary of Acadian Museum Association Incorporated which has such a fine French Acadian museum at Miscouche. She tells me that they have several rooms for items of a non-French background. So anyone interested can see those active people at Miscouche and probably donate, or loan, articles of historic interest to this museum. The people at Miscouche, incidentally, have their exhibit housed in a new building constructed for the purpose.

Amazing Lady Is 95 Years Young

MRS. JOHN BELL, South Milton is an amazing lady of 95, she's bubbling with life, and as quick to respond to a wise crack as anyone I've ever met.

I told Mrs. Bell the old story last Sunday, when I called on her, about the ladies who were at a quilting frolic and started to discuss men, as women often do. When the discussion came to the part about how old a woman is when she loses a desire for a man, they called grandma who was 90 years old. But grandma responded quickly "I don't know, you'll have to ask somebody older than I am."

"I agree with that, that's the way I am too," Mrs. Bell responded as she burst into laughter.

It's difficult to realize that this happy, lovely lady made candles regularly as a girl – she was Ada Stetson – for her family who lived at Freetown and later at O'Leary.

When I asked her if she sometimes made smaller candles for courting – they would have a more feeble light, I suggested, the ready wit and humor burst forth again. It was a delightful hour Mrs. Matheson and I spent with this lady and her friends. I told her "I'll be back for your 100th birthday" but I hope I'll get back long before that for another interesting chat with this lady who looks and acts like a very much younger person.

'Wooden Pumps' Story Is Coming

EDDIE HAMMILL writes from Granville to say the man who sold lobsters on market square for a cent each was J. H. Judson of Alexander. He also tells me that a wooden pump stood at the corner of Prince and Grafton Street and another at the corner of Sydney and Rochford Streets. And there was one close to the caretaker's house in Victoria Park. I have a really good story coming up on wooden pumps, as I was fortunate enough to be directed to a man whose family used to manufacture them in this province.

Mr. Hammill also told me about what he calls "the daddy of all Island storms". Fortunately I have been planning a story on that one too, and on the ship you mentioned, Eddie.

This will probably come as a shock to old Scots, but a scrap book item I've been reading this week said neither oatmeal nor porridge was available until the year 1820. If anybody believes that is incorrect, I wish he would call or write to me about it. The item was in a speech delivered in Charlottetown 82 years ago by Judge Alley.