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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Springton Cemetery Spook Story Locale

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Provincial-Farm Editor

CHARLIE TODD, Breadalbane tells me a rather unusual story and it goes something like this:

One Hallowe'en night it was, perhaps 75 years ago, four boys from Rose Valley went up to Springton, about four miles away, to play some tricks. They decided to take a sheep from a nearby farmer and hide it in the cemetery. Two of the lads went to get a sheep, the other two went into the cemetery and crouched down behind a monument.

Unknown to the Rose Valley lads, an old man in a nearby community had died of smallpox. Everyone feared the disease, of course, and nobody wanted to go near the place. But several neighbours came to bury him that night.

As they carried the body into the cemetery, the two lads emerged from behind the monument. In the darkness they thought this was their two friends coming with the sheep.

"Is it fat?" They asked innocently enough.

But the two men carrying the victim of smallpox through the darkness of the night, were startled into momentary terror.

Thinking it was "The Devil" coming up from the ground, they dropped the body muttering, "Fat or thin, here he is, take him."

If the story sounds unreal now, and it does, remember that in the period of the story, stories of ghosts, and of the devil lurking in the shadows were far from being uncommon.

I've heard a similar story in another setting, but this is the first time I've heard it about chaps from Rose Valley, a place which was familiar to me in my boyhood days.

Opinions Differ On Election

I WROTE this item for last week's column, but somehow it got mislaid and missed publication. It concerns two reactions I thought might be interesting. It was a day or so after Premier Shaw announced the May 30 election that one of the most ardent Liberals in the province told me: "Shaw will be returned easily; the Liberals can't win so long as that 'so and so Pearson' (the words are his) keeps making a mess of things at Ottawa."

A few days later a friend of mine called to see me at The Guardian office. He had tried on several previous occasions to find me, without success, which promoted his remark:

"You are almost as hard to find these days as a Tory."

And this man is a Conservative. How's that for directly opposite observations on the political situation here?

Here's A Flash-Back Query

I AM wondering if some of the “old sweats” of the First Great War, 1914-18 can help a lady who writes from Waterloo, Ontario for information on her grandfather, Austin Locke Jackson.

Mrs. D.E. Terriedea, Waterloo, Ont., whose maiden name was Jackson says she believes a story appeared in this paper about 1914 or 1915 about her grandfather and it concerned him piloting a submarine past enemy units and safely home. If any reader recalls such an item, or has any personal knowledge concerning this man, I shall pass it on to his granddaughter.

I HAD some references to horse whips a little more than a year ago, and that reminds me that Jack Hickox, Breadalbane told me that Bus Yuill, Truro has a horse whip that is more than 50 years old. Banford Yuill had the whip in Boston, Jack told me. This is an item I have often thought about since Mr. Hickox told it to me. We were talking at the Easter Beef Show and Sale and I believe it was back in 1964. It's about time I used it here.

#### Instant Coffee Idea Is Not New

IF ANYBODY thinks this instant coffee idea is something new – I confess that I did – an old newspaper clipping advertised a liquid coffee concentrate perhaps 60 years ago, I do not have the exact date.

“For a really good cup of coffee in a hurry, Lyman’s Extract of Coffee, Simplicity itself, no coffee pot needed.” I was telling this to Audrey Jenkins, Guardian Women’s Editor and she tells me stores were selling “Camp Coffee”, another concentrate, for many years.

#### Western Road Opening Date Sought

MY FRIEND Sophie Barbour of Alma is trying to find the date on which the Western Road was opened. That's the road that runs from the Miscouche area, through Portage, Elmsdale, Alma and Crockett's Corner to Tignish. If somebody has the answer Miss Barbour would appreciate hearing from you. Or let me know and I shall use it in this column, and pass it along to the Barbour home at the same time.

GEORGE MATHESON, Wheatley River, loaned me a bound copy of the files of the Broad Axe, Jan. 31 to May 30, 1871.

The railroad tenders are out and the general impression is that the time is too short. It sharply censured the fact that no survey had been made, and that tenders on the entire 120 miles were called at the same time. “Many say the contract is intended for friends of the government and the advertisement for tenders is only a sham, as strangers unacquainted with the Island cannot make a fair and honest effort of building the road,” the Broad Axe charged. It is also objected that the letting of the whole 120 miles in one lump job prevents local men who could take a section of the work, from competing at all. The issue ran a fake advertisement to this effect:

Wanted by the Gov't, a smart active man to sell railway debentures. A heavy discount and a liberal commission allowed. An active, energetic man can make a fortune in a few weeks in this business, apply to Grab, Sharper, Steel and Co.

Note particularly the name the Broad Axe editor gave to the fictitious firm he cooked up to harr the government people who were responsible for building the railroad.

I've found some interesting rules and regulations that were laid down at the time to prevent people from damaging or destroying any railroad property. I'll refer to them in a future column.

#### Painting Details Sought

MRS. LLOYD CLARK of Borden brought me an old painting, or a copy that is dated 1852. On the back is the signature Louise Tremaine. At least I think it's Tremaine – the writing is more than a bit faded.

The Borden lady is wondering if any reader knows that name. It may have been the person who painted the portrait which shows a comely young lass, bare-footed, with her back to the viewer. She's standing on a stone piazza looking out over a bit of countryside that appears to include a village. The other is a picture of "Little Queenie" and the distinguishing feature of it is that the coloring is so well preserved.

They were purchased at an auction sale held by Jenkins Transfer, Charlottetown several years ago, so she has no idea of the origin.

#### Dispersal Holstein Sale

I FORGOT to mention this in my farm column on Tuesday, but there are some really good Holstein cattle – they're all of milking age – at the dispersal sale of Noel Hooper, Rustico today. There is some extra good blood in this herd, and many of the cattle have really good production behind them. Reason for the sale is the ill health of the owner, I am told.