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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Week's Mail Is Interesting

By NEIL A. MATHESON

THE MAIL was particularly interesting this week.

First there is the letter from Dan Hughes, Millcove to tell me it was William Hughes who owned Dalvay and later sold it to the Mr. O'Leary from Montreal. Of course it was. I knew that but got the wrong name in there instead. Thanks for your letter.

And the interesting telephone call from my Mt. Stewart neighbor, Mrs. Frank Rose to tell me it was her mother, Mrs. Sarah Bryenton who hooked that large rug of which I talked in last week's column. The information came from Mrs. Wilfred MacDonald's historical manuscript, but the first name was missing.

Helping Mrs. Bryenton was her daughter Lottie. The daughter did the coloring and Mrs. Rose – her name also is Sarah – thinks the coloring was done with the "old Diamond dyes".

The mother and daughter combination hooked the huge rug in one winter. It was done in three pieces and sewn together, as I believe Mrs. Wilfred MacDonald said in her manuscript.

MRS. ROSE tells me that when it was finally put together the rug was so large "we did not have a room large enough in which to spread it out."

The scroll design was taken from a smaller rug in the Bryenton home and Lottie transferred the design to the much larger rug.

The hooking was all done by the mother and daughter. It was a fussy job and few people hook the same way, so that wiped out the possibility of having a hooking frolic as they sometimes did in earlier years.

Mr. Hughes also recalls the various carriages from Dalvay when the MacDonalds who had it constructed lived there in summer.

Letter Is Interesting

A NEWSY LETTER comes from A.D. Smith, Sudbury, Mass. who tells me he is a former Island man, then gives me some really interesting items. Here are a few of them.

First he noted my reference to Dan Morris of Poplar Point – this was some time ago – and tells me "His father, the legendary Dr. Morris (whom you have written about in past columns) brought me into the world, with some help from mother, of course. That was quite a few years ago but my two older brothers were boyhood playmates of Dan Morris and his brother Pat."

Sometime ago, he adds "My son purchased a house here in Sudbury from a 93-year-old lady . . . and he found in the attic an old journal belonging to her father who had been a paymaster for the British Garrison in Halifax. His name was J. Matthew Jones, and apparently he was somewhat of a naturalist and a very observant individual."

The notes in the old journal, Mr. Smith writes, were made in the period between 1860 and 1868 when he resided in Ashbourne, in the Dutch Village section of Halifax, and later at 75 Spring Garden Road in Halifax.

Here's one item I find intensely interesting. I never had heard how Falconwood – it's now called Riverside – originated.

"A.W. Grubb, Leicestershire, England came out some years ago (the number of years is blurred) and built a brick mansion about three miles from Charlottetown on the West bank of the Hillsboro River, but did not live to finish it. It remained untenanted for years and became dilapidated, then was sold to the Island Government for 3,000 pounds Sterling to be used for an asylum." This notation was made in the year 1874, Mr. Smith tells me.

Other notes are less interesting historically but they do make good reading. For example:

"John Berrigan, Charlottetown, P.E.I. brought to market June 26, 1886 nine eggs laid by one hen in successive days, that weighed 31 ounces, or an average of three and one-half ounces each."

### Politicians And Flies

HERE'S ONE that is fitting at this time with an election coming up next month:

"The two greatest nuisances in Nova Scotia are the black flies and the politicians. The one attacks the person and the other the character, and with such violence it causes the blood to flow in the former and the tears in the latter."

One note told of visiting Charlottetown and dining on sirloin steak that was purchased for nine cents a pound. There were also notes of observations on the market square.

In the old book is a delivery ticket for apples, and how about the multiple varieties. The ticket was dated for use in the period 1888 to 1890.

There were Baldwins, Spitzenburg, Vandevere, Ribston Pippin, Greening, King Tompkins, Box Russet, Northern Spy, Nonpareil, Pommegrise and Golden Russet.

Mr. Smith asks "How many of these can you find in Island orchards today?"

The old journal contains many things, one of them "an account of crossing the Northumberland Strait by the ice boats, which is a classic."

### Likes Eastern Kings Stories

MR. SMITH writes: "I left the Island in 1933 but get back for a visit as often as I can, and I do enjoy all of your articles but especially the ones about Eastern Kings."

Thank you Mr. Smith, letters from people like yourself help greatly to keep "Across the Island" readable as you have so kindly indicated.

I am sorry that I missed seeing you when you were home last year. Next time you come perhaps you will write and let me know, and we can arrange to meet. I know that a talk with you would be interesting to me. I'd be much surprised if it did not produce some more good column material.

I'll refer to your other items in a future column.