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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Morell Child Facing Her 50<sup>th</sup> Operation

By NEIL A. MATHESON  
Provincial - Farm Editor

KIM WEBSTER, pretty little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sterling Webster, Morell, goes to Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children early next month, to continue an intermittent series of hospitalizations that has produced upwards of 50 operations in the almost three years since she swallowed crystals of lye back in July 1960 at the age of 23 months.

Her mother, the former Edith Hawbolt, St. Peter's Harbour, was using a lye solution to cleanse the milking equipment when the tiny blond lassie tipped the container to her mouth, and apparently swallowed a few crystals of the strong solution that caused the serious damage.

KIM GRABBED at her throat, her mother recalls, as her tongue thickened in a few minutes, then became discolored and even bled. Taken to hospital here, it was found that her throat passage had shrunk and a stretching operation had to be performed on an average of every two weeks for approximately one and one-half years, Mrs. Webster told me.

A trip to Toronto 's Hospital for Sick Children and two major operations followed. The first visit for an estimated six weeks that lasted six months instead - November 1961 to May 1962 - was for an operation involving the area where the bowel is joined to the main passage, Mrs. Webster told me. The second hospitalization there involved the transfer of a piece of the bowel to replace the damaged section of the throat passage. The complete job involved two operations spaced about two weeks apart. The Toronto surgeon prefers human tissue to plastic tubing, it was explained.

She was fed liquid through a tube in her stomach after the last major operation. Not even a drink of water was taken through the mouth for six weeks, I was told.

Marked Improvement Is Noticed

DOCTORS IN the Toronto hospital have had a great deal of experience with this sort of thing - they have had many similar cases - but they haven't yet found the right answer in Kim's case, I was told by the mother who is hopeful they will. Actually there has been a marked improvement, she told me, as Kim has not had to have a throat-stretching operation since the last Toronto operation.

Dr. A.A. (Gus) MacDonald, Souris recalled for me recently that a little girl in Rollo Bay had had a similar experience some years ago but has completely recovered, and is now living in Ontario. Unfortunately the name slipped his memory. Kim's doctors in the Ontario capital suggest it may take her a long time to recover completely, perhaps not until she grows up, one man observed.

The hospitalization has been understandably expensive. The hospital costs for the first Toronto period were \$4000, but the Hospital Insurance looked after that part of it. Her mother stayed with her through the period and that was a part of the additional expenses.

KIM WAS a favorite of the doctors and nurses. They all loved her and said they "never did have a patient that was any better to work with." She helped with other children during the times she was not confined to bed.

All of Kim's solid food has to be finely ground. Meat, for example, is ground so fine it becomes part of a liquid like gravy, to which it is added. She cannot eat solid food any other way, as she would choke on it. But she knows her limitations and does not have to be watched. Not even a child's natural love for candy will tempt her, when she is offered it by other children.

This, said Mrs. Webster when I talked with her several weeks ago, is the first time Kim has been home more than three weeks at one time since the accident. Kim was in the P.E.I. Hospital early in January for 10 days and has been home since.

Kim speaks clearly and she can also sing, her mother told me, though she has trouble swallowing. She is looking forward to her return to Toronto, and talks frequently of the doctors and nurses who have been so good to her. She plays hospital a great deal and often has many of the chairs filled with her dolls, Mrs. Webster told me.

#### Daytime Electricity Start Recalled

RENDLE LARTER - most people know him as "Rennie" - brought me an interesting flash-back bit recently following the death here of George Medforth who came here from England about 1916 to set up the switchboard in the Maritime Electric Company. Particularly interesting was Mr. Larter's recollection that it was the first time that the electric light and power service was made available to Charlottetown people in the daytime.

Prior to that the City used gas lighting by day, when it was needed, and the electric current was available only at night. Mr. Medforth went overseas in the First Great War later, and I believe came back here briefly, before going to work with the Nova Scotia Light and Power people, where he served until his retirement about five or six years ago. His installation of the new power plant at Trenton, N.S. was perhaps his biggest job. He had been in Amherst for many years.

MR. LARTER has warm recollections of Mr. Medforth who married Belle Macmillan of Charlottetown. "He was a prince of a man" recalls Rennie, who is now the oldest employee of the Maritime Electric here in point of service. He'll be with them a half century early next year, he told me and has watched the plant grow from a small undertaking with only a handful of employees, to the present establishment which services the greater part of the province.

#### Certificate For Bonus Hogs

A CERTIFICATE that will go to owners of "Bonus" boars - from sows with a score of 85 or better in advanced registry tests - has been printed and will be going out to all

bonus boar owners in the near future. The boar owner will give a signed certificate to men whose sows are bred to the animal, so the sow owner can show the certificate to men who will be buying the weaning pigs.

The move is intended to stop, if possible, the drop in the percentage of Grade A hogs from this province that are turning up at packing plants, much of which is blamed on too many scrub boars. One man who got only two grade A carcasses out of 40 hogs recently said he will have to go of business, as he lost too much money on the operation. A man loses \$4.50 on a "B" hog and \$7.50 on a "C" hog, Harold Hertz, livestock products grader, Canada department of agriculture told me this week, and that's too much to lose on today's high prices.

MR. HEARTZ has also written a story explaining carcass grades for beef animals which has been requested by the officers of the Beef Producers Association. It appears on page five of today's paper and should be helpful to beef producers here.

Association president Daniel Gass has asked me to stress to all cattlemen the importance of dehorning calves that are to be raised as beef animals, and this is the time to do the dehorning when the calves are young. It can be done with an electric dehorner, or a paste that is available for putting on the young calves' heads where the horns will later make their appearance. Packing plants continually complain of damaged beef that is caused by horned steers, for example, and the loss must always come back to the producer. In this case, it is explained, the producer has himself to blame when the remedy is so simple.

### Super Salesman For This Province

I was interested this week to learn that one of this province's most distinguished sons, Rev. Dr. J. Sutherland Bonnell, has "a passionate love for P.E.I. and never misses an opportunity to boost it as a tourist attraction."

"I have been across the continent a half dozen times in the last year, I am always introduced as a son of Prince Edward Island . . . and I tell them this province is the last unspoiled fisherman's paradise on the North American continent", he told me as he added with a smile that he thought he would have to see the government and get on the salaried staff of the travel bureau.