

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., Dec. 20, 1963

## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Montrose Gold Hunt Attempts Recalled

BY NEIL A. MATHESON  
Provincial - Farm Editor

RAMSAY HARDY, Parkdale told me recently of several attempts that were made to dig for gold on the farm owned originally by his maternal grandfather, Charles Ramsay, in Montrose. I understand the Hardys farmed there later.

The digging attempts there started with a dream that pictured a pot of gold for a man in a nearby community. There was a pine stump in a shore field, and a certain number of paces from that was an odd shaped, varicolored stone. The dream told the man to walk a certain number of paces toward the shore from the stone and dig there for the buried treasure.

The interest that flared from the dream finally led to action and a group of men started to dig one night in a spot eight to 10 feet from the highwater mark. One man, John MacMillan, was left to watch for prowlers and he did see something unusual.

MACMILLAN SAW a ship's boat coming around a nearby point propelled by four pairs of oars. The boat came closer as he watched intently and finally, forgetting the vow of silence that is present in so many of those old treasure digging yarns, MacMillan said aloud "Here they come".

The oarsmen presumably were the spirits of the dead pirates who had buried the gold there many years before, at least that is the story that goes with the yarn, and as MacMillan spoke, the boat, oars, and rowers suddenly disappeared, the diggers ceased their activity and the attempt was suddenly abandoned.

But there were other attempts in later years. "In my mother's time", Mr. Hardy told me, "a group from the Grand River area came to dig for gold." They left their horses at a nearby MacIntyre farm and word of the attempt reached the ears of some fun-loving young people, including one George Hardy, who wrapped himself in a large white sheet and stealthily crept up on the diggers. There's a creepy, ghostlike atmosphere always connected with these treasure digging efforts, apparently, and the diggers fled quickly for their home when they spied the white-clad figure.

### Farm Owners Were Not Impressed

THE DIGGERS left a hole in the farm shore field that caused Mr. Hardy's father to send word to some of the diggers - he had learned who some of them were - to fill the hole or he would prosecute them. Some of them returned and filled the hole with brush, and bits of wood, and threw clay over the top, Mr. Hardy told me.

An Alberton bunch came to dig a third time and that was in Mr. Hardy's boyhood days. They chucked out the bush and wood that had been tossed into the hole by the previous group, but they didn't find any gold either.

The whole thing was taken as a joke by the farm owners, apparently, for none of them ever did any digging on his own.

The scene of the treasure hunt was on the Montrose River about one mile from the bridge, on the east side of the river, said the former Montrose man who came to live in Charlottetown 12 years ago.

### U.S. Speaker Has P.E.I. Background

I THINK that Allison MacLeod, Charlottetown was the first to tell me that the father of John McCormack, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, was born in this province, and this week I talked with Mrs. Angus Lavie in Souris who is a first cousin of the man who technically is next in line for the presidency of the United States.

John McCormack who is a Democrat from Massachusetts is the son of Joe McCormack who was born in Souris River, and went to South Boston as a boy of perhaps 12 years of age, I was told by Mrs. Lavie whose mother, Mary McCormack, was Joe McCormack's sister.

Joe was an unusually big man, Mrs. Lavie recalled. The son, John McCormack, has never visited P.E.I., Mrs. Lavie told me.

Danny McCormack, Charlottetown recalls that he had John McCormack working back in 1938 in an effort to get an extension of a two-week visitor entry permit in the United States. Danny, who was a promising young boxer, had an idea at the time, of training under Johnny Buckley, the man who was manager of former world heavyweight boxing champion Jack Sharkey, and fighting out of Boston.

THE EFFORT to extend the visitor's permit was unsuccessful and I gathered that Danny was not too disappointed, for Buckley had advised him that "the fight game is pretty dead right now."

George Leard, Souris who is one of the Island's most active historians, told me he tried to get an interview with John McCormack only this year, but he was unsuccessful although he had spent considerable time waiting for the man whose father came from P.E.I. "If I had been one of his constituents he might have seen me", Mr. Leard observed smilingly. He had sent in word by the Speaker's secretary that he wanted to discuss McCormack's Prince Edward Island background.

### "Dr. Gus" To Write His Memoirs

DR. A.A. (GUS) MacDonald, Souris told me here this week that he thought John McCormack had made one of the finest speeches he heard on television at the time of President Kennedy's assassination. Dr. MacDonald has been in the Charlottetown hospital since the first of the week, but I understand he hopes to get home this weekend.

"Dr. Gus" told me that he is going to start writing his memoirs as soon as he gets back home, and I most certainly hope that he does, for the genial doctor has an inexhaustible fund of stories, and many of them are priceless, because as "the last of the horse and buggy doctors", he can relate experiences as possibly no other man now living could.

I have written two columns on stories he told me, and have told many others in other columns from time to time, but my genial friend has told me many others that he is saving for his memoirs, and has asked me not to use. I can guarantee that they will make most interesting reading, when he gets them down on paper.

#### Artist Said Born In Rose Valley?

A FRIEND of mine, R. Donald Stewart, Hartland, New Brunswick who regularly spends his holidays at Victoria, wrote me this week and asked a question I cannot answer.

Donald tells me "the Royal Trust Company sent me their desk calendar which has the reproduction of the painting of early Charlottetown, which hangs in the mayor's office. The accompanying description says the painting was supplied by Adam Andrew who was born at Rose Valley and spent his childhood days in Hunter River."

The natural question Mr. Stewart asks me is "Do you know the spot where he was born, and is the house still there?"

I remember that I did some research on that at the time my friend, Charles Bently, Royal Trust manager here told me he was thinking of recommending the picture for the company's calendar. But I failed to come up with any idea as to where the man was born.

Rose Valley is the scene of my own boyhood and I'm wondering if anyone can tell me where Mr. Andrew was born. I cannot recall a family of that name living there in my time. Or perhaps somebody in Hunter River can recall where the Andrew family lived there. The family name is still prominent in that part of the country.

#### With Appreciation And Best Wishes

CHRISTMAS comes before this column appears again, which reminds me that I must send season's greetings, and best wishes for the coming year, to the many hundreds of people who have taken a kindly interest in this column, and have helped greatly during the years it has been in existence with helpful suggestions and comment.

Some of you have brought me actual stories, and many others have put me on the trail of stories that have helped to keep "Across The Island" interesting. To all of you my sincere thanks and appreciation.

May I add an explanation that I have not been able to get around to research many of the suggestions that have been passed on to me. But I hope to see the people and things suggested in the New Year, so please do not feel that your helpful interest has not been appreciated.