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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Souris Brick Block Has Been Demolished

By NEIL A. MATHESON

A STORY from Dick Lyons, Souris sends the mind wandering in fancy back to the year 1901 when the "Brick Block", as it was known, was erected. Reason for the memories stirring on that one now is that the Souris building has been demolished.

The Lyons story indicates that the official opening was held April 18, 1902 and the huge crowd came on foot, by horse-drawn vehicles and by train to admire the new premises, take part in the festivities and make the occasion a memorable one in the town's history.

The Brick Block was built for C.H.S. Sterns, Souris. James MacEachern was the contractor, "one of the best known builders of his time".

Getting back into earlier days the story notes that Mr. Sterns started business in Souris, with his brother Samuel, at a downtown location in 1880, under the name of Sterns Brothers. The business was moved to the then new building in 1901.

The business was taken over by Frank Sterns when his father C.H.S. Sterns was forced to retire in the early 1920's because of ill health. Frank retired in 1947. Later he entered the insurance business which he continued until shortly before his death in 1963.

Had Had Many Uses

THE PROPERTY was purchased by Matthew and McLean, Souris in 1948, was leased for a time to Crockett and Storey of Charlottetown who operated a branch of their furniture and appliance business there for some years.

Matthew and McLean took over the building after the Charlottetown firm left it, and used it to house their expanding furniture, appliance and sporting goods departments until their new building was opened last year.

That left the old "Brick Block" for use as a storage area, prior to the decision to tear it down.

Like many other buildings and institutions that have outlived their usefulness the "Brick Block" was rated in its time as one of the finest and most modern business structures in Eastern P.E.I.

Life Back In 1901?

HOW INTERESTING it would be to talk to a person who could recall clearly just what life was like back in 1901. There was no Hillsboro Bridge at that time, for example. A well-informed resident could list many other things we have long since taken for granted, as non-existent at that time. There were no automobiles for example.

But as Mr. Lyons observes:

“The years pass quickly, their passing brings many changes and invariably take their toll of the lives of men and the fruit of their labors. The great majority of those who remember the proceedings on that April day almost 67 years ago have lived their allotted span and have gone to their reward. However, of those who survive, some, at least, watched this once imposing structure being demolished with a feeling of nostalgia as they recall events of an earlier era and the men and women associated with them, now, for the most part, relics of the distant past.”

Foreign Stones On P.E.I.

I HAVE several Prince Edward Island friends who pick up Indian arrow heads and other interesting artifacts from the shores of this province.

My son-in-law, Jack Crelling – he’s working on his doctorate in Geology – has sent me an item taken from Science magazine in June of this year. Due to the unusual stress I have been under, I mislaid this item until now.

It says here that flint pebbles and nodules found here were identified as having come from European outcrops of Upper Cretaceous chalks.

In 1965 Loring and Nota found many flint nodules on the intertidal part of a beach at Prince Edward Island, to the east of Cascumpec Point, about three kilometers south of Alberton.

About 100 kilograms of nodules were found and in size they were about two to eight centimeters in diameter.

Like England, France

FLINT IS foreign to the region and these nodules are similar to many thousand we have seen along the shores of England and France, gray to dark brown in color, the report added.

If any geologist reads my version of this reference, I am trying to keep the technical terms out of it, so it will not be so difficult to read.

I am wondering if some of my friends who hunt for arrow heads, etc., ever came across those nodules referred to here.

Roughly the suggested explanation is that the stones, or nodules, were carried in ballast by ships that had been carrying munitions one way across the ocean, and needed ballast for the return trip.

There are large pillars on either side of the entrance to our home in Southport and I have been told that the granite stones in them came from Newfoundland as ballast for sailing ships in the long ago, when they came back empty after carrying a cargo from here.

For the information of those who may not know, granite boulders are to be seen in some areas of the Western part of this province. I think the area of Belmont, Lot 16 is one of them, Memory tells me I saw some in the vicinity of Keith Barrett’s farm – actually on parts of his land. Those stones are not native to this province so they must have been deposited there many years ago by ice which moved across that part of the Island, or by some other means. I’m not learned in this sort of thing, I merely mention it in passing.

