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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Feats Recalled Of Eating Eggs

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I PROMISED some egg-eating tales when the Easter season arrived, and here are a few which have come to this desk.

Myron Holmes, Kingston, recalls a tale his grandfather, the late Reuben Barrett of Kingston, told of William Beer, Kingston and another man whose name he has forgotten, having a bet on to see who could eat the most eggs at Easter. The other chap ate something like 24 or 25 eggs but he ate them on Saturday, Mr. Beer ate 22 on Sunday, but he challenged the legality of his opponent eating his on Saturday.

The argument raged for a time, and it was finally decided that the two men should race one-quarter mile to decide the winner. Beer won and he always maintained that proved the Saturday date was illegal for the Easter eating contest.

EASTER EGG eating was pretty general in former years, and Myron tells me it was always his job to see that hens were laying in time for Easter. Hens normally loafed through the months in those days.

WALTER O'BRIEN reports that Robert Lapierre drank 33 raw eggs one day in Alfred MacEwen's store at Bristol. He had bet he could drink three dozen and he was ready to drink the other three, stoutly maintaining he never felt better. But the spectators were afraid to give him the other three.

That was 70 years ago, says Mr. O'Brien, who got the tale as it has been handed down from that far off day

Most Fantastic Eating Feat

A ST. PETER'S man ate 16 fried eggs one Easter Sunday morning which is a pretty good feat with the fried variety. But the most fantastic egg eating feat of them all was told in a letter from a clergyman friend of mine who asked me not to use his name. But he did direct me to John A. Steele, a Little Pond man who is a patient in the Provincial Sanatorium at the present time, and he told me the details.

Bill Blackett and Joe Campbell, both of Little Pond, tramped one day at Easter time to Blackett's Creek about one-quarter mile away. They had with them 52 hard boiled eggs, but when they prepared for the meal, they found that they had forgotten the salt, although they had everything else. Campbell went back for the salt, but what do you think he found when he got back?

Blackett was just finishing the 50th egg and Campbell was so angry and frustrated, he grabbed the remaining two eggs and threw them at his friend in disgust.

The story is, perhaps, one hundred years old, and it has been handed down for gospel truth through the generations ever since. Blackett was not a particularly big

man, the old stories state, but he was a big eater. Once he got adrift on a floating ice cake and he is said to have eaten an entire wild goose, without even cooking it, when he finally drifted ashore on Boughton Island.

Causeway Announcement Greeted

I KNOW you expect me to say something about the Causeway, so here is a brief comment as space is limited.

Personally I think it will be a wonderful thing for the Island. I believe the Prime Minister was serious when he made the definite promise to build it. Now that he has made it, I only hope I live to see it completed, and have the pleasure of driving across it.

If I was a politician today, I'd probably be trying to grab credit for my party, as many are doing right now. That's the way the game of politics is played, so don't be too surprised at the tactics. But I suggest in all seriousness that 80 or possibly even 90 percent of our people don't care who builds it so long as it's built.

But I can't agree with the few who take a completely negative approach. Liberal politicians, I suggest, can still find plenty advantageous talking points for debate, even though it's a PC administration that stole the show this week with the sensational announcement that it will be constructed.

Potato Embargo Imposed In 1925

IT WAS back in 1925 that Britain placed the embargo on Canadian potatoes, I learned this week. The Guardian of February 21 carried the story which explained the British feared the importation of the Colorado potato beetles - we call them potato bugs.

Island potato growers had surpluses even in those days, it seems, for Hon. John E. Sinclair, a Queens County member of parliament, received a wire urging the "strongest possible protest" as "several ships now loading and know of no other outlet for large surplus still in farmers' hands".

The protests were made but they had no effect on the British, who had placed an embargo on American potatoes the previous December.

GROWERS HERE then did not think there was much danger of the potato beetle getting in on potatoes and Glen Ramsey, officer in charge, plant protection division here, tells me there seems no danger at all of the beetle being on the potatoes at this time of the year although he has seen the odd beetle on potatoes shortly after they were harvested;

The 1925 story suggested that with the British market shut out, the Cuban market "the only other market available" would be flooded.

A December, 1954 story had told of 1,200 tons of P.E.I. potatoes being shipped to Britain and at that time they were talking hopefully of "a regular outlet . . . for some of the best Canadian varieties" in Britain.

The embargo has never been lifted, apparently, except in 1947 when this province shipped the equivalent of 3,500 carloads under a special arrangement.

Ice Boat Trip Is Recalled

LAST WEEK'S story of ice perils in the Northumberland Strait in former years stirred memories of wintry storms, and the days of ice-boat travel between Tormentine and Cape Traverse.

Mrs. Howard Callbeck, who lives with her son-in law and daughter, Mr and Mrs. O.C. Johnson, Charlottetown, recalls the time in 1906 it took her eight days to get from Sackville to Cape Traverse.

The then Nellie Simmons left Winthrop, Mass., on February 22, arrived in Sackville February 24, stayed there one day before driving the 35 miles to Tormentine - Fred Chandler of Charlottetown also made the trip - and then had to wait until March 4 to cross to the Island. The weather was stormy and the crossing by ice boats could not be risked until it cleared.

The 35-mile drive was necessary because the trains were not running to Tormentine. They were not running on the Island either, not for three weeks, her memory tells her, though she is not certain.

SHE DOES recall that her brother, Warren Simmons of Crapaud met her on "the board ice" about a mile off Cape Traverse and that he flicked the telephone wires with his whip as they drove along the road, so deep was the snow.

The late Walter M. Lea, later premier of the province, and John Moore, a prominent Crapaud farmer, were others who made the trip, along with two hockey teams whose names she does not recall.

Miss Simmons paid five dollars to sit in a boat. The men hauled on the ice and paid for the privilege, and jumped in the boats when they struck open water. Capt. Tom Howatt was in charge of the operation.

There's one other interesting item. Her trunk left Winthrop in February when she did, but it was May 3 when the SS Harland landed it on the wharf in Victoria. There was no explanation for the long delay, she told me.

There was an error in last week's story about the icebreaker Earl Grey. It was a Navy crew that took her to Russia in the early days of the First Great War.