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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

Booklet From 1900 Recalls Celebration

By NEIL A. MATHESON

“AN EVENT, such as the Relief of Ladysmith, calls for more than a passing demonstration of joy, be that demonstration ever so loyal.”

This is the opening sentence to the “Preface” written to a 48-page booklet “The Relief of Ladysmith” which was published by The Patriot Publishing Company in 1900.

The event was regarded as one of the more important victories in the Boer War 1899-1902, or the South African War as most historians term it. Date of the victory was February 28, 1900.

It was widely celebrated in Charlottetown and the Patriot’s booklet told in detail the various events of the celebration.

Flags were flying in all directions, the fire bell was ringing, daylight fireworks were being set off, torpedoes were being exploded, church bells were ringing, many citizens decorated their residences and business houses did the same thing.

People “from the oldest veteran to the youngest child” carried flags, the Patriot said.

THE GUNS at Fort Edward were booming with a Royal Salute of 21 guns, and the “Long Tom” cannon at the railway was also firing.

A special engine was run over the tracks in the railway yard and it set off numerous torpedoes which had been planted on the rails previously.

Everyone, apparently, vied with the other in an effort to celebrate the most vociferously and make the loudest and most prolonged noise that was possible.

A bit of history was added in the fact that engineers who were at the time surveying for the Hillsborough Bridge joined in the noise-making efforts.

There were prolonged cheers “for the Queen, for the Empire and the British Army”.

### Window Decorated By A.A. Bartlett

DOZENS OF firms were mentioned as having joined in the celebration by decorating their windows and indeed their frontage. But the booklet said the window of the C.D. Rankin drug store was one of the handsomest in the city and it was arranged throughout by A.A. Bartlett.

One thing that doesn’t seem to fit into the historic revelation that followed was that General Buller’s picture was featured in many of the windows.

A standard Encyclopaedia indicates that Buller had wanted to surrender Ladysmith and that England had named Field Marshal Lord Roberts to supreme command with Major General Lord Kitchener as his chief of staff. Roberts arrived in Cape Town in January 1, 1900.

### Rifle Fire Continues At Night

GETTING BACK to the story of the Charlottetown celebration the story said rifle fire continued through the night and an old cannon built in 1794, and captured from the Spanish in 1814, roared from the roof of the Dodd and Rogers building.

“A big bonfire on Queen Square sent its signal of rejoicing heavenward”, the story added.

The booklet has pictures of Roland Dennis Taylor of Charlottetown who was killed on the Modder River February 18, 1900 and of Alfred Riggs, Charlottetown also killed on the Modder River. The date was February 27, 1900, the day before the victory at Ladysmith. Both young men were only 21 years of age.

There were many other details of life in Charlottetown, apart from the military, in the interesting booklet.

#### Island Magazine Issue Desired

THE BOOKLET the Patriot published in 1900 was close to the size of the old Prince Edward Island Magazine that was published monthly. And that reminds me that I would appreciate it very much if some reader could get for me a copy of the Prince Edward Island Magazine dated June 1899. I would pay much more for the magazine issue than it was worth originally. The reason I want it so urgently is that I borrowed a copy from a friend who has been kind enough to loan me many historic stories and other items for this column. His copy of the magazine got lost. I would like very much to return a copy to him. If anyone has a copy please get in touch with me. I would appreciate it very much, so would my friend, and I would pay well for it.

#### N. Zealand Lady Seeks Forebears

I HAD AN interesting call this week from Mrs. W. J. Winter, a New Zealand lady who is trying to trace some relatives in this province. Her great-grandfather, on her father's side, a Mr. Anderson – first name is not known – and her maternal grandfather, Donald MacIntyre, sailed on the Sea Gull which took Prince Edward Islanders to New Zealand many years ago. This is scanty information, I know, but if any reader should have any information on these people, a call or letter would be appreciated on Mrs. Winter's behalf – her maiden name was Anderson.

Mr. and Mrs. Winter left Tuesday for a visit to Expo, then they plan a month's travel across the United States, before they return to their home at 515 River Road, Hamilton, New Zealand.