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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Book Appearing On Don Messer

By NEIL A. MATHESON

“HERE IS THE story you have been waiting for. What is there about this quiet, talented man which has captivated the hearts of millions of Canadians.”

The brief excerpt is from a promotion sheet on “Canada’s Don Messer” a new book, expected to be off the presses this week, written by a former Island man, Lester B. Sellick, who now resides in Halifax.

“The story of Don Messer parallels the history of broadcasting, yet despite his hundreds of appearances on radio, television and before national audiences, the real Don Messer is not known.”

So says Lester Sellick, a man with whom I have talked several times about the work he has put into this new book of his.

This man took the time to read through some 40 years of scrap book clippings, and talk many times to the man we know and admire as Don Messer. The result should be very fine and most interesting reading.

“Canada’s Don Messer” is a book I shall read at the first opportunity. I believe many others will be similarly interested.

Museum At Alberton

A VISIT TO Lanrest Museum, Alberton indicates an ever enlarging collection of items used in the earlier days in this museum run by Mrs. William Oulton. Some of them are not so very old, but Eileen Oulton has shown good judgment in the type of articles she has chosen to save.

I was looking at one item last week when the name of Benjamin Rogers came up. He was born in Bedeque, but came to Alberton and was Lieutenant-Governor of the province in the period 1910-1915.

This man was instrumental in having the name of the town changed to Alberton, from Cascumpec, Mrs. Oulton told me.

Originally the place had been called Stump Town. The virgin forest in the area consisted of pine trees. The trees were cut down and the stumps were left, hence the name “Stump Town”.

It was also called “Four Corners”, at one time, she told me. Mr. Rogers thought it was time the town was given a proper name, so he had it called Alberton in honor of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales.

Albert Edward, father of Queen Victoria was served at a Nova Scotia meal by a dinner plate which is one of the many exhibits in Lanrest Museum.

The museum is a labor of love on Mrs. Oulton’s part, I understand. She does not charge admission to it. She does get a small grant from the town, and another from the province. But she pays an attendant during the busy summer months, and it is not a revenue producer, I gather.

This 'Albert Edward' is the man for whom this province is named, and he ate off the plate at a function in Nova Scotia, she told me.

### The Haliburton Family

MRS. OULTON lived in Mount Royal, Montreal for a time and there developed a friendship with a member of the Haliburton family – remember "Sam Slick" the humorist, who was a Haliburton. The plate had been handed down through the family and Eileen's friend gave her the plate because she was interested in "old things".

I should have added that the dish is a soup plate, or it was at the time. Some plates were very wide at the time, as indeed they were up to not so many years ago. My timing is vague here as I am merely recalling the dishes used for soup plates during my own lifetime.

An old book – it's from the Meggison collection - is written in longhand and it tells how to cure many human ailments, Eileen told me. I took a quick look and decided I did not have time to read the details.

But it reminded me of a look at some old newspapers, in Byron Burns' collection, and some of them had strange and remarkable claims for medicines they advertised.

### Epilepsy, St. Vitus Dance

DR. MILES Restorative Nervine, for example, cured epilepsy spasms, St. Vitus Dance was eliminated.

Zambuk was advertised as being used by the Princess Pats regiment. This was in a paper of First Great War days and the Pats had earned international recognition by their feats of arms.

The girl with a stick that featured Old Dutch Cleanser advertisement was prominent in a 1915 newspaper.

I liked this one directed at the ladies:

"We want to introduce at once to every lady in the land our delicious Royal Japanese Perfume, the sweetest perfume ever produced, big handsome bottles, for only 10 cents each. And they go like hot cakes."

It was available in "six delicious odors" and they were Beauty Rose, French Carnation, Wood Violets and others.

The Regal Manufacturing Company, Toronto would sell a maximum of 35 bottles.

### Corsets Said Necessary

I CAN'T RESIST adding this one from a 1910 Guardian. Ladies enhance the charm of your physique with a LaDiva corset. Try it and judge the merits for yourself.

"You cannot rival the chic and svelte figure of French and American women unless you wear a corset.

"Looks gracefully, fits comfortably. Without this corset no woman can expect to look as good as she would like to."

Another old newspaper carried this advertisement:

"Father Morrisey's Liniment relieves aches and pains."

How did they get a priest's name on such a claim, or was the name faked as one might expect?

I've wandered far from Lanrest Museum, but I'll come back to it at a future date.