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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Old 'Script' Recalls Days Of Prohibition

By NEIL A. MATHESON

IT WAS BACK in the "Prohibition" days when one had to get a prescription – it was commonly called "a script" – from a medical Doctor to buy a bottle of liquor, a case of beer, or whatever else was available in the hard beverage line.

I saw an old "script" recently at the home of my friend Byron Burns, Charlottetown. The piece of paper which must already have some historic significance in this province, was not filled out. But the document had space for the doctor to address it "To the retail vendor" at a place to be designated by the doctor in his handwriting. Then it continued "This is to certify that I am attending professionally – the doctor's name would follow the word "I" – and that he requires a certain amount of liquor, whatever the doctor wrote in the space provided.

The script said it was "for medicinal use and not as a beverage". The year was 1940 in this case. And for young people who cannot remember, or for newcomers to this province, that was the way a person got to purchase liquor back in those earlier days. The number of this certificate was 9787.

Even more of a farce was the "Six month script" as it was commonly called, which came into use on the introduction of "The Cullen Amendment" into the Provincial Legislature and this time the doctor signed a piece of paper which said that Mr. Blank required a certain type and amount of liquor per week over a six-month period.

### West African Art

I LOOKED this week at a collection of primitive West African art work which includes brass, bronze, leatherwork, ivory, tapestries, etc.

Bernard Dale and Mrs. Dale spent several years in the African area – Mrs. Dale was the former Margaret Roberta Howatt, whose family lived in Cape Traverse and later lived in Summerside.

"I had intended originally to take the collection to Boston and open a gallery there where there would be more people who would be interested," Mr. Dale told me.

However, Keith Pickard and Mrs. Dale persuaded him to keep it here. Keith plans to build a round museum on the Trans Canada highway early this year. It will be on the Strathgartney Farm property, or close to it, that will house the interesting collection. The museum will be 60 feet in diameter.

One of the best groups is the one of Obejis, the special cult of the "Death Dolls" which has to be twins to attract interest.

Once one of the twins die, its spirit is contained in a wooden, doll-like carving "ere lbeji" which is washed, fed and cared for as though it were a living child, Mr. Dale told me.

The belief, or tradition, varies from tribe to tribe, but in the Yoruba tribe they venerate twin children. If a twin dies the Yorubas believe that the spirit of the dead twin returns to

keep watch over the living one and to be responsible for its well being, and to ward off any impending misfortune.

### Python Skin 18 Feet Long

A PYTHON SKIN is an attractive part of the collection, though it may not rank with some of the other items for value. The skin is 18 feet in length, which is large, although some of the huge snakes are larger. This one came from the Lake Shad area.

I was interested in the attractive coloring, and the unusual color patterns on the skin. The skin is soft and pliable and ladies like it for shoes, Mr. Dale told me.

A lot of the West African handicrafts depict the history of the tribe, or of the village from which the item came. Each village has its own tribal traditions.

A large ivory tusk is covered with intricate patterns which depict the life of the village, Mr. Dale explained.

A "Royal robe" is interesting in that its colorful and intricate patterns were woven on primitive hand looms. There is a great deal of fancy embroidery. The material is woven in four-inch strips which were laboriously and skillfully sewn together.

Several benches, or stools, intrigued me. They were cut and carved from a tree. The top is shaped as though it were milled, and some of the stool legs have intricate carving – in some cases the legs are almost intertwined.

### Nigeria, Biafra Pieces

NIGERIA AND Biafra are much in the new now. Some of this art came from Nigeria, some of it from the Biafra region. The Ibos are Biafrans, but not all Biafrans are Ibos, Mr. Dale explained.

There are many of the unusual items. There is something more than 1,000 items in all. They should add greatly to the interesting items that tourists will look at in coming seasons.

I should have added that in some cases, the carved heads have on the tribal sacrifices which are the passports to the hereafter. These are carved into the face in some instances, but in others the carving is on the body.

### Coal At \$1.90 A Ton

I SAW some interesting items recently in the office of Dr. D. Trevor Wayne, Dental Surgeon.

A Weekly Patriot bore the date September 17, 1895. Charles Lyons Coal Company was advertising Acadia Nut coal at \$2.90 a ton. International Nut was \$2.65, Sydney slack sold for \$1.90.

Carvell Brothers were advertising mustard at 18 cents a pound, rice was three and three-quarter cents. The prices would be at the wholesale level.

White sugar sold at four and one-half cents a pound, washing soda was one and one-quarter cents. Beans were two and three-quarter cents and raw sugar sold at three and three-quarters.

At Crapaud Curling Rink last week Charlie Thomson showed me an old ticket to the North Tryon race track that looked as good as new. The date was August 17, 1909. The track then was owned by Newt Dawson. The Thompsons own the farm now.

### Credit To The Community

INCIDENTALLY THE Crapaud Curling Rink is a real credit to the people of Crapaud and those in the surrounding areas who are responsible for this delightful development.

There are four sheets of ice and the club rooms and the surroundings are most attractive. Additions and improvements are being effected as time and funds permit.

I've attended a number of dinners in their auditorium and the ladies seem to be more attractive every time I dine there.

Yes, the meals are also good.