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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Did Mike Come Back To Say Last Goodbye?

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Provincial - Farm Editor

THIS TRUE story of an unusual happening was told to me this week by Capt. Wallace Smith, who is observing his 95th birthday anniversary at his home in Pownal today.

The story begins with a Jardine man who came from the Miramichi area in New Brunswick and farmed in Crown Point for many years. He raised a family of four sons: Joseph, Matthew, Richard and Samuel, and one daughter Catherine who married William Wood, Alexandra.

Joseph Jardine - he was the maternal grandfather of Harold P. Smith, MLA - married Margaret Long who was a direct descendant of the Duke of Chayton in England. The story is that Margaret's father, a young man named Long (first name unavailable) was employed with the Duke as his coachman. The young man fell in love with the Duke's daughter and they were married. They emigrated to this country when the Duke disowned his daughter. One of Mr. and Mrs. Long's children was a daughter, Clara Adella, who married Wallace Smith in 1900. "Mrs. Jardine (Margaret) was a splendid woman and I never heard her boast of her ancestry. In fact I never heard her mention it," Wallace Smith told me a few days ago.

But Margaret's brother Michael (Mick Long is the central figure in the story I'm going to tell you now, as Captain Smith told it to me. Mick had followed the sea, had risen to the position of mate in deep sea sailing and retired to live with his brother-in-law and sister, Mr. And Mrs. Joseph Jardine in Pownal.

A new brigantine had been built by an Island firm and she was loaded with produce for "The Old Country" and was laying at a Charlottetown wharf, ready for sea, when it was found her first mate was missing. The captain persuaded "Mick" Long to sail as mate. The ship sailed out of the harbour here and was never heard of again.

Sometime after the brigantine sailed, Joseph Jardine was awakened one night, after midnight, by the unmistakably peculiar, halting sound of Mick walking on the hard frozen ground - it was November in the Jardine yard. Also he heard Mick calling "Joe, Joe" from the back door. Excitedly calling to his wife "Maggie, Maggie get up, Mick has come back" Joe arose swiftly, went to the back door and opened it, but there was nobody there. The yard was empty.

"As Mr. Jardine told me," (Captain Smith recalled this week, "Joe had observed Mick did come back to bid adieu to his loved ones". And, observed the 95-year-old Wallace Smith whose hair is still sandy and clear of grey hairs, "it could be that his last thoughts had been of home, as he sank into the sea forever, wherever the brigantine went down."

Livestock Prices Back In 1939

I NOTED some low prices for produce and livestock when I was reading some of the 70 essays entered for competition in the Centennial Essays competitions, But Wellington McNeill told me this week that he ran across an old invoice for livestock he had purchased for shipment in 1939, and the prices are interesting.

Veal calves were six cents per pound live weight, good steers were five cents alive, hogs were nine cents, eggs were 32 cents per dozen for Grade "A". A good cow to freshen brought \$50 and a cow with calf brought \$55. All prices listed were those paid to the farmer, Mr. McNeill told me.

Incidentally this man was reported to be one of the fastest and most skilled butchers in the business when he was a young man, and I hope to do a story on that part of his operation in the future.

NOBODY KNOWS how many cattle he has handled through the years - he's been in the business since he was a boy, but they must number well up in the tens of thousands. I've seen him drive his car through a field of cattle and pick out the ones he wanted, and put his price on them. There may be others who do the same thing, but "Well" is the only one I've ever seen do it.

Prices Of 106 Years Ago

LOUIS STEWART, manager of Stewart's Bakeries Limited which has closed out after more than 100 years of operation, loaned me an old day book last week which had some interesting entries.. It was back in 1858 and an entry indicated that Governor Daley had been a frequent customer. Bread, apparently sold for the equivalent of 12 cents per loaf - everything was listed in English currency, and I am translating the pound to dollars and cents in terms of the worth of the English Pound Sterling. If it was the Island pound to which reference was made, my dollars-and-cents valuations are much too high.

Tea sold at approximately 80 cents per pound. One gallon of molasses was worth 75 cents. Sugar ran 16 to 17 cents per pound, which seems terribly high for those days; and one pound tobacco was two shillings and five pence or about 56 cents. There was a sale of two pounds butter to Heath Haviland for 28 to 30 cents per pound.

An interesting entry was that of purchasing four yards of home spun cloth at three shillings per yard, from John Cameron of West River.

As I've explained already, the translation from pounds to dollars and cents was on the basis of the worth of the Pound Sterling. If the currency used was the Island pound, the values would be much lower.

Walkathon, Quartet Competition

I LEARNED sometime ago that Karen Eldershaw, daughter of Mr. And Mrs. Reg Eldershaw was one of the three ladies who finished recently a 42.5 mile walk sponsored for employees of MacLaren advertising people in Hamilton, Ontario. Thirty-six employees started, only seven men and three ladies finished.

Since then a MacLaren bulletin reports that “at 9:01 the youngest person on the walk, and one of the smallest, Karen Eldershaw marched over the line suffering from one blister and a ringing in her ears”. The “ringing” reference was a wisecrack at another employee, who kept repeating “never again, never again” as he just managed to finish the long hike.

Mrs. Eldershaw who keeps Guardian readers in touch with Tignish news, adds that the Tignish people are sponsoring a ten-mile walkathon on May 18, which is Monday for those who are over 35 years of age.

INCIDENTALLY I hope that Don Wood will send me a note on his success in getting male quartets to sing in the music festival at Kensington this summer. I’ve heard that there are around 20 entered. If that is correct I’m going to make a real effort to hear them.

I don’t believe there was one male quartet or a male chorus participating in the P.E.I. Music Festival this year, at least not in Charlottetown, which is regrettable. Good luck to the Kensington effort and I hope every quartet entered shows up for the performance.

Territories’ Lieutenant-Governor

HEATH MACQUARRIE, MP has written me on the issue I raised about David Laird being the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwest Territories. My objection was taken to a Fathers of Confederation series which said Sir George Adams Archibald was “the first effective Lieutenant-Governor” of the Territories.

The problem was one of terminology and of time. Archibald was Lieutenant-Governor from May 1870 to 1873 of an area that included Manitoba and the Territories and the “effective” reference was used in comparison with Archibald’s predecessor, MacDougall, who had not even reached the Territories in his term.

Laird who was born in New Glasgow in this province March 12, 1833, was asked to become Lieutenant-Governor when the Northwest Territories were set up as a separate administrative unit. (I am quoting from Dr. Frank MacKinnon’s “David Laird of Prince Edward Island”) and Mr. Laird took the post as well as superintendent of Indian Affairs.

RELUCTANT AT first Laird had agreed, after Alexander MacKenzie had emphasized the government’s view that the new Lieutenant-Governor should be one who was perfectly familiar with the West and on good terms with the Indians, and Laird filled this requirement from his previous experience as Minister of the Interior.

As Mr. Macquarrie explains it, “ the problem comes from the use of the expression “Northwest Territories”. Before Manitoba was created a province in 1870, the whole Western region obtained from the Hudson Bay Company” - what a powerful outfit that must have been - “was known as the Northwest Territories”.

“After Manitoba was carved out, the Western portion retained the title until 1905 when the two new provinces were set up. Archibald was governor of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories as a separate administration was not set up for the latter until 1876. The use of the word “effective” is prompted by comparison not with Laird but with his predecessor, MacDougall, who had been appointed at the time of the first Riel rebellion. He never entered Manitoba but got only as far as an Penbina in South Dakota.

ARCHIBALD "DID a most useful job" reports Mr. Macquarrie who concluded "Everything you wrote about Laird is well borne out and he is one of our political ancestors about whom we can and should be proud."