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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

'Polly' Data Compiled By Lady In Montague

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Provincial - Farm Editor

A GREAT deal of detailed information gathered by Mrs. Rod Martin, Montague, concerns the vessel "Polly" that figured so prominently in bringing the Selkirk settlers to this country in 1803. She was one of the three ships that sailed into Orwell Bay.

I visited Mrs. Martin recently in their beautiful hill-top home on MacDonald Avenue, and Mrs. Matheson and I enjoyed the delightful accent of this lady who was born in Glasgow and whose father and mother came from Skye, as so many Island Scots, including my own maternal grandparents, have done.

A sense of history linked with the fact we are celebrating our own centennial of confederation next year, combined to stir the Polly history desire in the Martin hearts. Approximately one and one-half years later they had just about all the details of the Polly one could wish for. The voluminous information includes a log of the ship, her original and later dimensions, and plans of that type of ship.

She was built in Liverpool in 1795 for J. Clay of that port and she was a two-masted square rigger 79 feet in length, of 178 tons. Originally termed a "brig", she was later called a "snow" type vessel. She was enlarged at South Shields in 1845 to 91 feet in length, a 22-foot beam and depth of 14 feet which contrasted with an original depth of only five feet, six inches and a later depth of six foot, six. The Polly was lost in 1852 and her certificate was cancelled.

MRS. MARTIN, formerly Morag MacDonald - Morag is Gaelic for Marion, she told me - wrote first to a friend Dr. R. M. (Robbie) Heggie, a doctor with the Cunard Lines, who wrote in turn to his friend E. A. Worthy of Cheshire and he's the man who did most of the work, I was told, though a great many people were involved.

They include the editor, Sunday Post, Glasgow; Capt. Beard of the nautical research society at Liverpool, the society for nautical research; Mr. Osbon at the national Maritime museum and John Munroe, Lloyd's registry of shipping, all of London.

There was also the editor of the Sea Breeze, Liverpool; W. D. Lamont, Glasgow; Dr. J. M. Heggie, Middlesex, England; A. C. Gavin, Cheshire, England; the general register and record office of shipping, Cardiff, Wales and there are photostats from the Navy office, Admiralty at Whitehall.

May Go To Centennial Museum

FINAL DISPOSITION of the data has not yet been decided but there is a strong possibility it will be offered to our Centennial museum here.

Also of interest is a copy of a song "Oran Imrich", composed by one of the immigrants, Malcolm Buchannan, which was published in "Mac Talla" in Scotland in

1892 and again this year. The title in English is "Song of the Immigrants" and it tells the story of the Scots who were forced to seek freedom, and a chance for a future, in the land across the sea because of the treatment they were receiving in their homeland.

Mrs. Martin showed us a picture of the stone cottage, or "White House" as it was known, that her father had built for her mother. Col. E. W. Johnstone has a smaller replica at Burlington, she informed us.

A shepherd's crook made from a Hazelnut tree with a ram's horn for the crook, or handle, is a prized possession in the Martin home.

Her talk of oatcake bread baked on a peat fire in "The Highlands" was another of the tales that took me back to the days when I heard the older folk talk of Scottish customs and traditions as I listened as a boy at Rose Valley.

They still speak Gaelic in the Highlands, I was informed by Mrs. Martin who was home recently. Her grandmother in Skye had no English. Mrs. Martin has forgotten much of the language, though she can still follow a conversation intelligently.

### Wool From "Mary's Little Lamb"

I SAW this week a tiny bit of wool fabric from a fleece of "Mary's Little Lamb". Older readers, at least, will recall the verses that told how the lamb followed Mary to school one day, and what happened before the lamb was expelled. The little schoolhouse stood at the time in Sterling, Massachusetts and was purchased some years ago by Henry Ford and moved to Norden as a museum.

The wool was fashioned into a bow, attached to a small card and sold for 50 cents at a bazaar to raise community funds. This one was purchased by Mary Tyler, Somerville, Mass. on August 13, 1878 and given by her to Anne MacNevin, DeSable who was the sister of A. J. MacNevin who was a Conservative member of the legislature in 1915, and in 1923 when he defeated Cyrus Crosby. Mr. Crosby defeated him in 1919. Miss MacNevin worked at one time for Mary Tyler who gave her the souvenir. She later married Charles MacLean and the souvenir is now owned by their sons Allan and John, and daughters Ann and May who live on the old homestead. MacNevin won his first election from J. S. Cousins.

It was shown to me by a relative, Reagh MacLean of Parkdale along with a framed photograph of a drawing of the old school house.

The information on Mr. MacNevin's political career came from Alex Matheson, QC. If there's another man on P.E.I. that has as much political information at his fingertips, I have never met him.

### Old Cemetery Is Washing Away

THIS IS to call attention of responsible people to the condition of the old cemetery at Wightman's Point, Lower Montague, in the hope they will do something to stop the steady encroachment by the sea, that is eating into the bank and taking out old graves that may be nearly several hundred years old.

John Clark who owns the farm on which the old grave yard is located, kindly came in my car and showed me the spot, also some of the more interesting headstones. I

asked a neighbour, John Aitken, how old the cemetery is and he suggested it must be at least 70 or 80 years since anyone was buried there, although that was only an estimate.

Incidentally, a John Aitken was buried there in 1799. Born in Scotland in 1729, he had come to this country in 1775. His grave and several others are well in from the shore, and are protected by a neat picket fence. What impressed me most about the Aitken headstone, and Harold Annear who was with me, was the splendid printing that was done by the stone masons of that day.

A nearby stone is to the memory of James Wightman, an assistant surgeon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Regiment who died in Washington June 16, 1863 of typhoid fever. Lincoln Dewar who also visited the old spot recently tells me the headstone also indicates that Wightman's body was embalmed and that is surprising for I was not aware the embalming art was known so early.

THE OLDER stones - there are a half dozen close to the bank and due to go over, I would imagine in a couple of years time - are made of ordinary sandstones that are stood on end. There are no names but have initials or figures to identify them.

I found a leg bone, a part of a pelvic bone and another I could not identify on the face of the bank, and I'm told that there have been many others appear there in the past. I haven't any bright ideas, but it does seem that something should be done to stop the destruction of this old burial ground.

#### Was Billy Bell An Island Man?

COMMENTING ON last week's reference to the Moose River mine disaster Rod MacNevin tells me he believes that diamond driller Billy Bell was a former Charlottetown man. The man Mr. MacNevin has in mind married the daughter of Alex MacKinnon who ran a boarding house on Richmond Street, moved to New Glasgow, N.S. where they ran the Goldboro Hotel. Mr. MacNevin boarded with them when he went to New Glasgow in 1918. He worked with the "I Matheson Foundry" that has been making ammunition in the First Great War. I'm wondering if anyone can confirm or disprove this for us.