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ACROSS THE ISLAND

'Colman Boy' Achieves Goal

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IT WAS the thrill of a lifetime, I gathered from Solicitor General Watson MacNaught, when 'the boy from Coleman' walked into the federal cabinet room in the East Block at Ottawa along with the others who were chosen by Prime Minister Pearson to form Canada's new government. Politics has been Watson's ambition since he first recalls, as a boy of eight, hearing his father reading from Hansard just 50 years ago. Making the cabinet has been a dream for most of the intervening years.

But the real story of a one-time fellow student at Prince of Wales College and later a House of Commons colleague, is not in achieving his boyhood dream, but the obstacles and the discouraging, and at times heart breaking reverses he suffered along the way.

IT LOOKED for the last few years as though Watson had unwisely passed up several opportunities for political insurance, that had since, apparently, passed him by. He could have had a senatorship for the asking back in 1955 for instance, after Hon. J. Walter Jones had died.

There was another Island senate seat vacant in 1957 before he went to the country to suffer personal defeat with a great many others, as the Diefenbaker band wagon started to roll across the country. He went to the country that year with a promise of cabinet rank in the St. Laurent government on its return. But the PCs won instead and another hope had to be discarded. The personal defeat in Prince in 1958 was not surprising as the PCs rolled up history's greatest margin of victory.

Rejected By Own Constituents

BUT THE rejection at his own constituency convention in December 1961, by more than two-to-one, in favor of Provincial Highways Minister George MacKay, following an almost three-to-one defeat in the effort to win the provincial Liberal leadership less than three months previously, must have been about the most disheartening thing any one man can be asked to absorb. I want to list just one more thing. Watson was just one vote away from political oblivion the night of his nominating convention earlier this year. He won by only one vote from Alex Campbell, a young lawyer who was making his first bid for political support. A change of one vote would put him out. And it almost certainly would have been the end, for it would have been two defeats in a row in his own convention.

I WROTE the story of many a brilliant and unexpected comeback during the 10 or 11 years I was a sports writer, but I cannot recall a greater comeback than the one the Summerside man achieved when he walked in to take his seat between Works Minister Jean Paul Deschatelets and Health Minister Judy LaMarsh in the East Block cabinet

room. And I was glad to hear him give much of the credit for his perseverance in the face of so many setbacks, to Mrs. MacNaught who must rightly share in the credit for the comeback which I have tried to outline briefly.

Few P.E.I. Men Recognized

I WAS amazed, incidentally to learn just how miserly federal prime ministers have been in recognizing sons of this province as cabinet material. Watson is the first native Island member of parliament to hold a portfolio in a federal Liberal cabinet since Sir Louis Davies who made minister of marine and fisheries in 1896. Hon. Cyrus Macmillan, then professor of English at McGill University, was named fisheries minister by MacKenzie King, June 17, 1930, but he was not a member of parliament at the time, and he was defeated in the general election which followed 41 days later on July 28.

BUT I was even more surprised to learn that Angus MacLean was the first Island man named to a portfolio in a federal Conservative cabinet in more than 80 years when he was made fisheries minister in 1957. The last previous one I can find in the record was Hon. James C. Pope who was appointed to the cabinet in 1876. I know that we've had at least two non-portfolio ministers, Hon. John E. Sinclair, Emerald for the Liberals and Hon. John A. MacDonald, Cardigan for the Conservatives, the latter the father of the late John A. whom most of us knew, and there have also been cabinet portfolio members from outside the Province, but I'm talking about Islanders who held portfolios, and they have been mighty scarce.

Athletic Feats Are Recalled

ATHLETIC FEATS of former years came flashing back into my memory as I sat in this week on the annual meeting of the Amalgamated Dairies Limited in Summerside. I thought as I watched and listened to the smiling, soft spoken manager, John G. Wright, detailing business highlights of the concern from his complete knowledge of the development, of the Jack Wright I know as a bearcat of a scrapper back in the Twenties.

It was back around 1925 or 1926, I believe, that Jack Wright, Bedeque, as I knew him then, did most of his boxing in amateur rings here. I can't fill in the details but I know that the man many of you saw on the platform in the Canadian Legion Hall Tuesday night once won the Island heavyweight title, and he won by knocking out his man, though he normally fought as a middleweight or in a lighter division.

Mr. Wright has achieved outstanding success as manager of the company that last year passed the \$2,000,000 mark in volume for the first time. I know that many of the patrons learned with regret that he is talking of retiring before another year has rolled around.

IT WAS interesting to hear him tell of some of the successes the company has achieved. His story about the "important customer" who said once his people had tasted the company's cheese products they didn't want anything else, was particularly interesting.

I was interested in the discussion that developed concerning our future participation in the dairy industry. Nationally, emphasis is being placed on cutting back certain dairy production, butter in particular, in view of the large surplus that has developed across the country.

But asking the Island to cut back on its butter production would be the same thing as suggesting to any successful business it should cut down on the most productive and important phase of its business. Island dairymen have established an enviable reputation for the excellency of their products in past years. There is no surplus in the Maritimes and "we can sell all we can eat and more" butter manufacturers tell me. It just doesn't make sense that P.E.I. should cut back on its production.

Dairying accounts for 20 percent or more of total farm cash income. It amounts to the same percentage in some other provinces, I am told, but farming is only one phase of the economy of these places. It is the basic and by far the most important phase of our economy. That makes it that much more important here.

Marshfield Is Congratulated

CONGRATULATIONS to the ladies of the Marshfield Women's Institute, and to the menfolk and children too for it was a community effort, on winning the Carol Lane safety award that was up for national competition. Anytime an organization from this tiny province can triumph in a nation-wide competition, they deserve more than the usual commendation in my book, and that's what I want to pass along at this time. The fact that the triumph was achieved in such a practical and completely useful field as highway safety makes the achievement all the more worthwhile.

The Marshfield people were assisted by a number of persons outside the district, most of them people who work on a provincial level. I know the names of a number of them, but I'm not going to list them here, because I'd be sure to leave out some of them, and that would be grossly unfair.

Cattle Driven On Roads In 1895

I HAVE room for one flashback to former years and this one goes back to around 1895, and the days before the old Hillsboro Bridge was built. Art Moore, Pownal tells me his father, Alex A. Moore, bought a pure bred Holstein bull in Ontario, and the man who brought him down on the train arrived at their home with the animal one night, after leading him from the Southport ferry wharf.

THERE WAS no way of moving cattle at the time except to drive or lead them on the road, so that was the only way the man could deliver the animal. Incidentally I am getting material together for a story about the days when people drove cattle to market on the highway, and more particularly sheep. Alex Hamilton, New Perth has given me some interesting stories and I'm wondering if some other people can add to the information before I write the story.

I RECALL that a large flock of sheep used to pass our Rose Valley school each fall - there may have been more than one flock, I cannot recall - and Alex Munroe used to leave school and go with the flock to help drive them. I recall too that the rest of us

envied him for the privilege. I often wondered where the sheep were driven to, and perhaps someone from that area, or areas west of that can tell me

One more fact about the bull the Moore's bought. Poor health developed in the animal about two years after he arrived and a veterinarian suggested he had bovine tuberculosis, and should be shot. Wallace Smith who still lives in Pownal shot him with a .303 rifle and the animal was buried in a hole that had been dug previously. But what do you think they found when the animal was examined after death? His stomach was full of nails, I was told by Mr. Moore who remembers seeing the nails as they opened the stomach wall.