

ACROSS THE ISLAND

Maize Tales Are Most Interesting

By NEIL A. MATHESON
Front Page Editor

I HAD a most interesting chat a few weeks ago with Major Sobey, 86 a Seattle-born man who grew to young manhood in Alberta, went west on the barbed-wire mania in 1882—he paid five dollars from Albany to Winnipeg—and spent six years in the Arctic at the time of the Klondike gold rush, before settling down to the life of a contractor, more rewarding financially than the hunt for gold.

I have thought long since of tipping me off to this story and I found Major Sobey—that's his given name—at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Eileen Proffitt, Kensington.

He worked for \$40 per month in the harvest field and slept in a straw stack, or anywhere else one could find, and later went to Vancouver where he worked with a hardware firm in 1886.

THAT was the spring board to the Klondike, for the firm moved an operation there and material had to be seen into 100-pound sacks as it would be transported by human pack horses—and Sobey went along to check the material at the various transfer points. For that he was paid with six months, supplying, and he was on his own.

Sobey stood five feet six inches and weighed 130 pounds, and the healthy, spry and active gentleman weighs exactly the same today. He has always been healthy, with the exception of a period about six years ago when he had a heart ailment. "Doctors told me I was dead," he told me, but he's still going strong. He lives most of the time with his daughter, in Seaside, Oregon though he travels a great deal. A brother, Ed Sobey, lives in Wilmet, Wales.

Rough, Perilous Travel Described

DESCRIBING his first trip into the Klondike area, he recalls there were no docks and everything had to be lightered ashore. For this the company hired packers. Material was transported on scows which were 10 feet wide, and up to 18 feet long. Pilots were needed to take them through the most dangerous waters, "like Miles Canyon and White River" had to make a very risky and perilous journey, "but I was 20 miles at the time and enjoyed every minute of it," he told me.

There were more than 30,000 people in Dawson when he landed in August 1898, and he made "better than wages, although not much better one could say." Wages ran to \$1.00 an hour or \$10 a day in the spring of 1899, but living costs ran \$4.00 to \$6.00 a day.

At 1900 Major Sobey and two roadhouse owners joined forces and decided to build a roadhouse in Northern Alaska. They had a small flat-bottom boat—so it could be towed in shallow water—and it was lighted in color and across a chain of lakes. They portaged perhaps 15 miles in all.

Goldfod Said 'Damm Well Named'

THE TRIO had only a compass to go by, as there was no established trail. But they finally reached a village. "Damm Well" was the name of the gold mine. But the boat that was taking their supplies in had failed by 20 miles to reach the supplies, and they were stranded. Sobey and his partner and the winter with a dog team fighting them in the most for supplies dried and packed. It was the "damm well" that the roadhouse was built of logs and "all three of us at 20 were gone in the winter." The gold mine was expected for the summer and found nothing. The gold strike never came.

Finally Major Sobey sold his interest in the roadhouse and snowshed to Fort Yukon. They made 20 miles a day. They had to for their rations were dried and they would sustain them no longer. They always ate twice a day on the trail.

Two muskoxen for the trail were listed for a man. Many were careful not to start too rapidly in the morning. If he starts too rapidly in the morning, he told me, "when you start to quit at the end of the day," he told me, "when you start to quit, you're running down your energy to a point high enough to sustain the needed 'damm warmth,'" he explained.

Having heard of the gold mine at the cold in the North, I asked Major Sobey "just how cold does it get up there?"

His answer:

Ice Crystals in Hudson Bay Rum

"THE ORDINARY Mercury thermometer used to freeze at 30 below, so it wasn't much good, Kerosene froze at 40 below, and was inadequate. They sold a pain killer that was sort of a kerosene freeze at 70 below. The 30 proof Hudson Bay Rum would start to show ice crystals at 40 below."

Major Sobey told me "I've seen those ice crystals form." Then he added "in case someone thinks you are lying or that I am exaggerating, you tell them that the official government thermometer registered 85 below zero at Skagway, when they were making the Alaskan highway," and that's not so long ago.

"At 60 below, he continued, the ice crystals into a sort of fog and everything is quiet. The team power was his. Sobey had to stop his horse on the trail, otherwise it would stop because of the intense cold."

MR. SOBEY and two companions carried a fur robe each, for example, when they were on the trail. They would put the robe beneath them on top of snow banks, the others went over them as they moved close together for warmth. They carried a colander made of wood and about 20 pounds. And they could develop a warmth inside a tent soon after they had unclipped their sled dogs, and a tasty meal was in the making.

Bacon, beans and flapjack provided a favorite breakfast on the trail, though sobey was another standby.

Major Sobey hiked 165 miles later when a new gold strike was reported at Tanana, Alaska where he staked a claim. The man was a veteran of the North by this time, though with a younger in years, and he "let the fellow alongside go to digging. If he struck it rich, I could sell my claim for a big price. If he was a flop, it was likely mine would not be worth the effort of digging," he explained.

Indian Spurred White Man's Gold

THE GOLD was the currency of the Arctic in those colorful days, but it was no good in trade with the Indian. He wanted something his family could eat or tobacco to chew. He spurred the white man's gold.

The Island born traveller got back to Vancouver in September 1904 after enough excitement and adventure to last a lifetime. Soon after his arrival he married Fanny Leard, daughter of Elijah Leard who was born at Ticon, and was accounted a fortune for J. G. Stevens before he went west with his family. Mrs. Sobey was a first cousin of George Leard who was with him to this story and Elmer Leard was of Charleston, Mrs. Sobey died several years ago.

A word about his trip from the Northland to Vancouver. A traffic southeast agency was faced by heavy losses. Sobey and his partner were at first by the shipping company there was no accommodation for him on the ship. He made a bargain to sleep on the table—he was to travel with two companions—and the company would provide blankets to keep them warm. "I often awakened to find the blankets pulled off me, and I'd be freezing. But I'd simply grab a blanket from some other man and try for some more sleep."

"THE BOATS the shipping line used were shells and they were draughty and cold. The team power was generated from cordwood, and that meant frequent stops along the shore to refuel."

Major Sobey—he was christened Major Wright Sobey, after a Central Pacific merchant of that time—will visit a grandson in New York City and to Seaside, Oregon. Sobey is also scheduled in Quebec, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver along the way.

Jill Birtwistle Stars As 'Anne'

JACK MACARDER and a team of CBC camera people were in the province earlier this summer shooting scenes for the latest of Green Gables production. The star of the show which will be produced later this summer on 20-20, is Jill Birtwistle who "fits the part so perfectly she could have stepped out of the book to read an enthusiastic reference during a chat I had with her. MacArder a few weeks ago, Jack had mentioned to let me know exactly when the program would be seen and I'd pass along the information to you as soon as it is received.

Another daughter of Commander Ken Birtwistle and Mrs. Birtwistle, Charlottetown.

MORE BRASS tested in music. "The county's MAIDSTONE, England (CP) education committee has brass bands use to be found agreed to spend \$200,000 in 12 schools in Kent as "an instrument and to appoint a selective means of spreading brass band teacher."



JACQUES CARTIER'S BOAT AT ALBERTON

Among the large number of beautiful floats taking part in the parade on the opening day of the three day Prince Consort Exhibition in Alberton yesterday, was an interesting replica of one of Jacques Cartier's vessels which landed near Alberton in 1534. The float, entered by Clover Farm Stora, attracted a great deal of attention. The float, which is in the popular midway is seen in the background.

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2 The Guardian, Charlottetown, Thurs. Aug. 13, 1964.

Mayor Gaudet Says Reply Never Received From Gov.

Charlottetown Mayor A. Wallace Gaudet yesterday related his statement that the city had not received a reply from the provincial government to a city request for approval of negotiations with Central Mortgage and Housing for a feasibility study of a low-rent housing project.

Minister of Welfare and Labour Henry Henry claimed Tuesday the provincial government had replied to the letter in question, giving permission. Mayor Gaudet said yesterday that more than one reply had been made. If a government reply was written, he said, it was never received at city hall.

The controversy started after the city council session Monday. Government approval is necessary under the CMHC regulations before the city can go ahead with the planned negotiations.

Kinkora Clinic Has Higher Quota In '64

Quota in '64

Ralph MacFarville is the chairman for the Red Cross blood donor clinic for the Charlottetown area. The clinic is held at Kinkora School on Tuesday afternoon, August 18 between 2 and 4 p.m. with an objective of at least 120 donors. Last year's clinic for this area produced a total of 112 donors — 2 short of the quota — and the Kinkora Committee is striving to reach the goal of at least 120 at this summer's annual clinic.

From Kinkora, the mobile Red Cross blood donor team from Halifax, which conducts clinics in this province five times a year, will go to Eidon for an evening clinic being held between 8 and 10 p.m.

Fred Pantou, president of the Eidon branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, is this year's chairman of the Red Cross blood donor committee, and has his committee members "on the hop" to enlist as many donors as possible from each of the districts in the area surrounding Eidon.

The "Manning Trophy", awarded each year for the best results achieved by any centre in the province, was won by Eidon the first year it was up for competition, and

Courses Urged For Liquor Operators

It is the hope of Frank Ashmore, special services officer of the National Employment Service that a number of distillers will provide instruction courses for licensed liquor outlet operators at provincial vocational schools.

The provincial government has expressed interest in such a program, as has the P.E.I. Liquor Control Commission. Suggested courses for operators of licensed establishments would be of two days duration and would involve proper management. Longer courses would be offered bartenders and waiters and would deal with liquor serving practices.

NES Central Index Liquidates Form Backlog

Prompt service from the Central Index of the National Employment Service in Ottawa should come in two weeks time after a backlog of forms has been processed, a Charlottetown branch NES employee said yesterday.

It was explained that delays in receiving processed social security cards and unemployment insurance forms from the Central Index had been due to the fact that some processing equipment was delivered late to the Ottawa office.

"We are now making arrangements for the index to operate on day and night shifts, which we hope will enable them to liquidate their backlog, and we are also taking other action to overcome the situation," the employee said.

Confederation Centre

TODAY

Through Aug. 15th

DON MESSER

and

HIS ISLANDERS

Monday to Thursday 8:30 P.M. Friday & Saturday 6:00 & 9:15 p.m.

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Your Theatre under the Stars

DRIVE-IN THEATRE

BRACKLEY P.T. RD.

"It has glamour, sophistication, color, wit and sensuality!" - Bosley Crowther, New York Times

THE RAFFLE Starring the Academy Award Winner **SOPHIA LOREN**

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De FIPPIO Starring **MILIAN VALLI**

Three stories of the sexes... somewhat different, somewhat daring, somewhat delicious!

Accelero

Directed by VITTORIO DE SICA / FEDERICO FELLINI / LUCRINO VISCONTI

An Embassy Pictures Release in EASTMAN COLOR

For persons over 18 years of age

Duplicate Bridge Standings Listed

Following are the standings in duplicate bridge play at Monday night on 10 tables were in action.

NORTH-SOUTH		EAST-WEST	
Mr. and Mrs. Farmer	60.00	Trainer, Hammond	65.30
Dunbar, Willner	58.33	Coffin, Tombo	58.90
Larabee, Bell	52.33	Hines, Duffy	52.00
Duffy, MacMillan	49.68	Cauly, Ellis	51.50
		Miller, MacPhail	50.00

Two Covehead men, Emmet Leigh Robinson and Einar Everett Myers, had their cases adjourned to Sept. 2. Both are charged with fishing lobsters in closed season.

Allison Samuel Stewart, Dunstaffnage, was fined \$10 and costs for failure to report for reinspection of a motor vehicle.

A man was fined \$20 and costs or 30 days for illegal possession of liquor.

Impaired Driver Fined, Suspended

Wellington Alexander Nicholson of Coastview was fined \$100 and costs or 10 days for impaired driving when he appeared yesterday before Magistrate James B. Johnston, QC, in Queens County magistrates court.

Joseph Walter McInnes, Charlottetown, had his driver's license suspended for 30 days for leaving the scene of an accident.

CAPITOL

3 Shows Daily 2:30 - 7 - 9

SPECIAL CHILDREN'S MATINEE TODAY AT 2:30

Red Skelton in "THE FULLER BRUSH MAN"

TONIGHT AT 7 - 9 ONLY

Shirley Jones Rossano Brazzi George Sanchos

"DARK PURPOSE"

CENTENNIAL EVENTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13

CHARLOTTETOWN—National Boy Scout Sailing Regatta—Flying Junior Class Racing.

ALBERTON—Second Day of Prince County Exhibition—1:00 Sky Diving Exhibition—Midway—Meals—7:45 p.m. Band Concert with Royal Canadian Dragoons Band.

NORTH BUSTICO—7:30 p.m. Highland College Scottish Festival with Sandra Bald Jones, World Champion Highland Dancer and Lovell Scott Pipe Band and dancers.

CHARLOTTETOWN—8:00 p.m. Horse Racing, Driving Park.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 14

CHARLOTTETOWN—National Boy Scout Sailing Regatta—Flying Junior Class Racing—Presentation of awards by Viscount Amery.

ALBERTON—Final day of Prince County Exhibition—Midway—Meals—9:00 p.m. Mammoth Dance with Lowell Hiestia Band.

NORTH BUSTICO—7:30 p.m. Highland College Scottish Festival with Sandra Bald Jones, World Champion Highland Dancer.

STANHOPE—4:30 p.m. Band Concert by Royal Canadian Dragoons Band on grounds of Ranch House Gift Shop.

TYNE VALLEY—8:00 p.m. Centennial celebration—Fiddling and Step Dancing Contest—Preliminary judging for Oyster Queen Contest—Old Time Dance.

Metropolitan

"FLIPPER"

The story of a little boy and his underwater friend.

NORTH RIVER Drive-In Theatre

UNPRECEDENTED PUBLIC RESPONSE

YES "Tom Jones" is really "Packing" them in so

Plan NOW To See The Movie Everyone Is Raving About

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"BEST ACTOR" "BEST DIRECTOR!"

Albert Finney Tony Richardson

NEW YORK FILM CRITICS AWARDS

THE WHOLE WORLD LOVES TOM JONES!

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Sundays 12:00 noon - 9:00 p.m.

RESTAURANT OPEN

Monday to Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Sunday 12:00 noon to 7:30 p.m.

Watch for the Centennial ESSO Ticketmobile touring the Island daily.

COMING MONDAY ANOTHER TOP MOVIE

AN ALL STAR CAST—IN IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD