

Rescue By Mother Noted In Clipping

By NEIL A. MATHESON
Provincial-Farm Editor

IT'S SEVERAL years since Frances (Mrs. Jack) MacRae formerly of Cherry Valley, told me to look into a Belfast story of a little baby girl who fell in a well, and her mother who went down the well and brought the child back to the top.

I've talked to several people about it since, but recently I was reading an old scrap book loaned me by Alf Egan of Charlottetown and I found the item. The clipping, so far as I can determine, was from a newspaper of 1876 or 1877, and it said the incident took place some 30 years before that, which would make it back in the 1820's. Of that, however, I am not sure.

Here is the story:
In August 1855, while William Ross, Flat River was away from home, his father came into the house and asked for a drink of water. A little girl gave him a tumblerful from the bucket.

But Mrs. William Ross said "That water is warm, go to the well and draw a cold drink." The girl went, let the bucket down, but finding it would not sink into the water, drew it up again. She ran to her mother and told her "something is in the well."

Little Head Seen Far Below

THE MOTHER suddenly missed one of her small children, rushed to the well and, on looking down, saw only the crown of the little head 25 feet below her in the water.

As quick as thought the mother fastened the bucket at the top of the well—she feared to let it down lest it would hit the little head below—and let the loop of the rope down as far as it would go into the well. It would only reach half the distance to the bottom.

For younger readers who do not know how the old well buckets were operated, there usually was a wheel hanging from the top of a frame fixed there for that purpose. The water was hoisted in a bucket, which was attached to a chain, or a rope—in this case it was a rope, apparently—and the bucket would be let down into the well where it would fill, then the bucket would be brought to the top, by pulling the rope, or chain over the circumference of the turning wheel.

Mrs. Ross slid down the rope as far as it reached, then she scrambled down the rest of the way to her daughter, lowering herself by getting her toes into the cracks of the stones on the side of the well, while she braced herself with her hands and her back at the other side.

At the bottom she raised her child out of the cold water, but the little one was stiff and cold! "Apparently it was quite dead," the old story said.

Teeth Used To Bring Baby To Top

QUICKLY LAYING the child across her own stomach the brave young mother, bending over caught the lower part of her dress in her teeth—it was actually wrapped around the child—and climbed back up, using her feet or toes to get a foothold in the cracks, or interstices between the stones, with her hands and back against the wall, bracing herself much the same way as she had descended—a few minutes previously.

As she reached the end of the dangling rope she worked her way to the top.

Racing into the house the mother bathed her child in hot water, as she tried to pour some spirits into the little throat.

Apparently it was a hopeless fight the young mother made as she tried to bring her little one back to life. "The jaws were stiff as death, the eyes glazed, upturned and full of sand from the well bottom."

Liquor—A Good Scotch Remedy

USING A SPOON handle between the teeth, the mother pried the little mouth open and poured in some liquor, a good old Scotch remedy for many purposes.

Then she wrapped the child in hot blankets. But there wasn't the faintest sign of life, so far as could be seen.

The mother dashed the child's body once more into the hot water—it was made hotter this time—and rubbed and chafed the little body through the moist and hot wrappings.

Under the little arms, and near the heart, the body was still as cold as ice, from the long stay in the chilly well water.

A third hot water bath was tried; though the young mother must have been torn by doubt, she refused to give up as she fought for the life of her loved one. More hot flannel wrappings, more diligent rubbing by the valiant mother and, finally, the child gasped for breath—there was a faint cry.

An hour later the little one was smiling happily in her mother's arms.

That evening, says the old story of 111 years ago, "the father came home to see his little daughter hale and hearty where he might have seen a little corpse and the family disconsolate in tears."

A Highland Mother's Pluck

AND THIS was, "thanks under God, to a Highland mother's pluck," the old news story observed with deep feeling.

The old clipping came from "The Presbyterian", one of the earlier newspapers in this province.

The lady who performed the brave rescue operation was Christina Marion Ross, wife of William Ross, who lived on the farm where Richard Knox resides now.

The late William Martin, Flat River was a grandson, which means that Mrs. Callum MacPherson, Flat River is a great granddaughter. And Scott MacPherson, who was associated with FCY for some years, is a great, great grandson.

FOR THOSE who read my farm column on Tuesday, there has been little change in Mrs. Matheson's condition, though we who are closest to her feel just a tiny shade better about the possibilities for her eventual recovery.

And that reminds me that I should explain why this column has not appeared for two weeks. It was a case of strict doctor's orders for a complete rest. The rest lasted two weeks. And that's why "Across The Island" did not appear, as usual.



FLORAL DISPLAY

The beautiful floral display exhibited at the Crapaud Fair yesterday drew many admiring glances from the big crowd.

Not the least interested was 8-year-old Heather MacKenzie, Westmoreland, who thought "they are beautiful."

Magistrate Adjourns Cases

Magistrate James B. Johnson, QC, adjourned two cases

against Morgan Edward Rhynes of Charlottetown until 2 p.m. Friday, September 2, when he appeared in Queens County Magistrate's Court yesterday morning.

Lester O'Donnell, QC, is charged on one count with assaulting a peace officer and on the second with care and control of motor vehicle while impaired.

Both cases will be tried in City Police Court quarters due to the space in the court house being occupied for other business.

Two persons pleaded guilty to charges of possession of intoxicating liquor in a place, other than residence and each was fined \$20 and costs or 30 days in jail. John P. Nicholson, QC, represented the Crown in all cases.

No Inquest Is Decision

SUMMERSIDE No inquest will be held into the death early Wednesday morning of Mrs. Ella Lawless, who died in a highway accident at Newton.

A post-mortem was held by Dr. L. E. Prowse, chief provincial coroner at Charlottetown Wednesday and he found that she died of multiple brain and internal injuries.

Mrs. Lawless was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident by Dr. Dan Stewart of Beedee.

Mrs. Lawless of Kensington, 69 years old, was a front seat passenger in a car driven by her husband, Wilbert Lawless. The car left the road on a bend in the highway at 12.30 a.m.

The deceased's husband was admitted to hospital with lacer-

2 The Guardian, Charlottetown, Thurs. Sept. 1, 1966.

ations to the face, while another passenger in the car, Mrs. J. A. Douglas of Norboro was reported in favorable condition in hospital with lacerations to the knees and minor injury to the pelvis. Mr. Lawless was released from hospital at noon.

Mrs. George Douglas, also of Norboro, who had been erroneously reported as being a passenger in the car, Mrs. J. A. Douglas of Norboro was reported in favorable condition in hospital with lacerations to the knees and minor injury to the pelvis. Mr. Lawless was released from hospital at noon.

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MARY ANN A GO GO

FROM CBC "FRANK'S BANDSTAND"

Allowance Forms Are Forwarded

According to information released yesterday by J.E. Green, regional director of family allowances for this province, youth allowance application forms for 3,783 Prince Edward Island youths between the ages of 16 and 18 years will be forwarded to their parents on Thursday.

Youth Allowances are paid in behalf of those in the 16-18 age group who are in full-time attendance at school or who are precluded from full-time attendance by mental or physical infirmity. "All of the application forms being mailed this week will have to be certified as to school attendance by designated school officials," Mr. Green explained, "and should then be returned promptly to the regional office in envelopes which are being forwarded with the application forms."

During the past school year, over \$400,000 was paid out to Island families through the Youth Allowances program, in behalf of approximately 3,500 children per month. It is expected that payments for the current year will be in about the same amount. Since the cheques issued in September will include payment for the summer months as well, it is expected that the total amount to be paid in September will exceed \$105,000.

Mr. Green stated that his regular staff has the responsibility of clearing the 3,500 applications, in addition to their regular work in the Family Allowances and Old Age Security program, and he urged that all parents cooperate by returning the Youth Allowances application card as quickly as possible. Much additional work and delays in issuing payment could be avoided by careful attention to the completion of the card which Mr. Green described as a "model of simplicity."

Driving Case Is Adjourned

A case against Henry LeClair of Summerside of driving without due care and attention was adjourned since civil action is pending in the case.

The case was adjourned yesterday morning by Magistrate R.S. Hinton, until Monday, October 31 at 9.30 a.m.

Milton Baglole of Summerside appeared on a charge of leaving a three-ton truck parked where it was offensive to private property. He pleaded not guilty to the charge under the town by-laws and trial was set down for Sept. 8.

DRIVERS --

Take These Precautions

1. Instill child safety in your own mind
2. Obey all traffic lights and signs
3. Be prepared to stop when driving near schools and playgrounds
4. Drive to suit conditions and situations
6. Use good judgment when picking up children in school areas.
7. Exercise extreme care on stormy and bad days.

STUDENTS --

Note These Rules

1. Cross only at corners.
2. Look all ways before you cross.
3. Stay from BETWEEN parked cars.
4. Watch for TURNING cars.
5. Walk on left facing traffic.
6. Be extra alert on stormy days.
7. Play away from traffic.
8. Wear white at night.
9. Obey the traffic signs.

This safety message inserted by:

DEPT. OF PROVINCIAL SECRETARY

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