

DIARY

Nov. 15, 1945 - May 8, 1946

RECORDS

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Diary.

Thomas H. Radford II

Nov. 15, 1945 to May 8, 1946

Nov. 15, 1945. THURSDAY. A cold bleak windy day. Drove to Hfx. this morning to fulfil a number of engagements.

At 1 p.m. I addressed the luncheon meeting of the Commercial Club in the Nova Scotian Hotel. A big crowd & the waiters had to bring in extra tables & chairs - a very unusual circumstance, the club secretary said in flattery. Andrew Merkel was chairman & introduced me. My subject "Halifax and the post-war tourist trade". (By a coincidence it was 30 years ago that my father addressed this same club. He was home on convalescent leave in the summer of 1915 & spoke about the battle of Ypres.) My main theme was that all the color & romance of Hfx. was lost upon the tourist unless there was someone to tell him about it, & it was up to every citizen to learn the story of his city & to be ready & willing to tell it, pointing out the various sites.

Bill Sclater was there, & Jim Martell, George Foster, Howard Bendeliet. Later I went on to Bendeliet's office in the Book Room where I autographed some copies of *Tambour* for him, then on to Jack Neville at Connolly's book store & did the same for him. No others - I turned thumbs down on any public autographing this year. About 5 p.m. drove to Mother's flat. She looks well although severely crippled with arthritis. My sister Hilda still stays with ~~Hilda~~ Mother - she has taken up her former secretarial job

at the Dockyard. Her husband, Bill Kibble, is still with the Fleet Air Arm in the Far East. Absorbed in family chit-chat, we sat down to dinner & about 6.45, just as I began dessert, the phone rang & reminded me that I had promised to dine with Bill Sclater at the Lord Nelson at 6. There was nothing for it but to jump into my car & tear down to the Nelson, where I found Sclater & Andrew & Sully Merkel champing at the bit. To make matters worse I was hailed in the foyer by kindly old Sir Joseph Chisholm, & couldn't break away before he had introduced five women & two men, with all the conversation this entailed, & invitations to dine, to lunch tomorrow, etc., which I had to refuse. But I joined Bill & the others at last, with apologies, & proceeded to eat another dinner - a heroic performance, which I carried off very well. Bill is still on the admiral's staff here, & offered me a trip to Sable Island in a minesweeper, sailing Sunday. I haven't seen the island since 1922 & would love to go but I had engagements for Sunday & Monday & had to decline. After this second dinner I withdrew, picked up George Foster & went on to Jim Martell's. I had my portable typewriter & a bottle of rum & we worked & sipped till 3 o'clock in the morning, hammering out a script for the radio "interview" Jim & I are doing tomorrow.

FRIDAY, NOV. 16, 1945.

At 10 a.m. set out for Salmouth in Andrew Merkel's car with Andy & Sully, Jim Martell & Don Mackay, head of the N.Y. College of Art. Weather cold & snowing hard.

At Windsor we picked up Miss Florence Anslow, who has charge of the Haliburton House, & drove up there. The big house had been shut up since summer & was like an icebox, all the furniture in winding sheets, & frost on the windows.

Miss Anslow, an enthusiastic soul, took us on a tour of the house from cellar to garret. The view from the belvedere on the roof was especially lovely - the ground covered with snow, the trees plastered white, & the vistas of the Avon valley, the neighboring farms & the site of old King's.

"Waddy" Waddington, head of King's Collegiate School, learning that I was in Windsor, invited us all to lunch "because I want Mrs. Radcliff to address the boys" but our time was limited & we declined. Lunched in Rustin's cafe - & got ourselves thawed a bit. Then on to Upper Salmouth to call on Emilie Church, a tall goodlooking blonde woman in the 30's, who makes beautiful pottery from clay dug out of her orchard. I had brought along some fragments of Micmac pottery for her inspection & we discussed them thoroughly. She showed us samples of her work, & her workshop, home-made electric kilns, etc. Then she got in our car & took us to see a neighboring farmer named Payzant, who

lives with a grandson in upper Falmouth. He was born in 1846 - he told us with a whimsical smile "I don't think I shall live through the winter but if I see the spring I shall be 100 years old." He is a direct descendant (through cousin marriages) of Lewis & John Payzant who with their mother were carried off to Quebec by Indians in 1756. The old man's eyes are bright & cheerful but his mind works slowly, & when we asked what he knew about the Payzant captivity he was able to tell us little that was not already written by MacMechan & others.

Miss Church then wanted us to see the site of "an old French fort" near the forks of the Arvon River, but the afternoon was now well advanced & a real snowstorm blowing, so we postponed the fort to another visit, bade our charming guide farewell, & headed back to Hfx. Very slippery on the Ardise Hills but we arrived in the city safe though half frozen about 6.30. We went to Mackay's for cocktails & met his tall quiet blonde wife, who is an artist like himself, & admired their paintings & their wee blonde daughter, & the electrically-lit glass tanks of small tropical fish, & I invited the party to dinner at the Lord Nelson but we lingered too long at Mackay's & eventually had to dine in a restaurant on Spring Garden Road.

Then Jim & I repaired to the broadcasting studios of CJCH, in the top floor of the Nelson, & found Foster & Bendelien there, also a pair of newspaper photographers, who took pictures

of Martell & ^{me} ~~it~~ doing our radio interview, & then one of Foster,
Bendelier & ^{me} ~~it~~ seated about the microphone. After this we
went on to Bendelier's house, met his wife & a girl whose name
escapes me, sat talking over rum-&-coca cola till 2 a.m., &
~~finally~~ I drove George Foster to his hotel & Jim Martell to his home
& finally tumbled into bed at Mother's flat, pretty weary.

SATURDAY, NOV. 17/45 Took Mother shopping this morning.
Lunched with Foster at the Nova Scotian. He suggested that we
draw up a contract for my proposed book on Halifax, but I
thought it too early to discuss that, for I have a contract for
the new novel & I cannot begin work on the Hfx. book
until the autumn of '46 at best. Foster then asked if
I would make a selection of Archibald MacMechan's tales
& essays for an omnibus volume to come out next year, and
write a foreword for it. I agreed, & suggested that Don
Mackay do the art work if chapter head-pieces etc. were decided
upon. I showed him three little block prints of animals, which
Mackay had given me. Later on, walking along Barrington
Street, we met Mackay & asked him if he would be interested
in the job if McIlelland & Stewart decided to decorate the book,
& he said Yes & seemed pleased. At 3 p.m. I went on
to a meeting of the N.S. branch of the Canadian Authors'
Association, which I had promised to attend. It was really a
sort of afternoon tea, at the home of Miss Lily Mitchell, a

pleasant, elderly spinster who is president of the branch.
About 15 women & 4 or 5 men. Andy Merkel & Bill Slater
there, also Harold Juell the Norwegian consul, who writes books
when he lives at home, and Juanita O'connor, & Laura
Garten ("Lornie Smith" of the Halifax Mail) & Doctor H. L.
Stewart who gave two or three book reviews as part of the
program, & tete-a-tete talked lengthily of international politics
quite in the manner of his celebrated weekly radio broadcasts.
He is a tall well built man with a handsome roman-nosed face,
twinkling grey eyes, & a high thin precise voice. He teaches
philosophy at Dalhousie, & those who do not like him say that
he is far too absorbed in magazine writing, broadcasting & various
other sidelines which bring him money. I was called upon
to say a few words, & since the Association seems to contain a
great many would-be writers & dilettantes who talk a lot &
write very little, I thought it appropriate to recite in a
pleasant way the jingle which has been my motto for so many
years: -

"A wise old owl sat in an oak,
The more he heard, the less he spoke.
The less he spoke, the more he heard -
I wish I were that wise old bird."

I then sat down & we consumed tea & sandwiches & cake,

playing a sort of Unmusical Chairs so that everybody had a chance to meet everybody else. At 6 I left for Mother's flat, had a bath & changed. Some weeks ago Dr. Burns Martin, who teaches English Literature at King's College & is president of the Haliburton Club, enquired through Jim Martell if I would accept a Fellowship in the Club. I said I would be delighted, & so I was asked to attend the regular meeting of the Haliburton tonight. Merkel & Martell are members, & they had invited Slater & Foster, so we all drove together to the college. The meetings are held in the Haliburton Room, a fine large chamber with a portrait of J.C.H. over the mantel of a huge fireplace. The room was full of undergraduates & alumni, about 50 or 60 I should say, seated in a wide half moon formation facing the head of the chamber & the long table where Burns Martin sat.

As soon as the meeting opened Martin called upon Dr. Martell, & Jim got up & gave a flattering account of me, & moved that I be admitted to a Fellowship in the Club. This was seconded by a fluent young undergraduate named Greer, & the president then called me to the table, where after a unanimous vote of approval & a heartwarming burst of applause, I was invited to address the Club. This I did, expressing my appreciation of the honor conferred upon me, & sketching briefly Haliburton's life & works & their influence upon my own. After this in the custom of the Club there were three papers read by

undergraduate members - one a most amusing dissertation on "The Art of Using a Broom" written & delivered by a clever youngster named David Roe. Between these were songs by an alumnae, a baritone, accompanied on the piano by Terry Breighton, who took lessons in music at Miss Hoyt's when I did. (I met his sister Helen, a keen graying woman of 40 or so, at the authors' tea this afternoon, & congratulated her on the fine job she has done in collecting old songs & ballads of Nova Scotia.)

Refreshments were served by undergraduates at the long table, & there were toasts to the King & to the college - the latter responded to by an elderly witty clergyman named Ambrose who said proudly that he, his father & grandfather were graduates of King's College. Toasts were drunk in ginger ale - Martin, the president, is a lively man with a fund of broad stories, but a rabid teetotaler who enforces his views in this respect; & some convivial Halifaxstonians sigh for the days when club dinners were very "wet" & people like the late Charles G. D. Roberts used to drink themselves under the table.

Finally, the members & guests formed a great ring, clasping hands, & sang Auld Lang Syne, & a stave or two of the college song, & gave the college yell. Then, the King, after which the assembly broke into groups, smoking & talking. I was introduced to many whose names I can't remember. A Colonel Mingo told ^{me} some amusing stories of Halifax 40 years ago. Bennett,

professor of English Literature at Dalhousie, brought some copies of Tambour for my autograph, & suddenly there was a spate of books & proffered fountain pens. We left about 11.30, & Jim said the night was still young, so he & George Foster, & Rev. Sycarb, dean of the college, a young & most likeable man, & I adjourned to Jim's house, where we discussed a bottle of rum & talked of witchcraft & Nova Scotia superstitions generally, until 2 a.m.

SUNDAY, NOV. 18/45 Slept till noon, & spent the afternoon quietly with Mother & Hilda & had dinner with them at 6.

At 8 I went to Martell's, where were gathered 12 or 15 people - the Merkels, Schlater, Prof. Morvat & wife, the Donald Mackays, John Lang, Mrs. Burns Martin & others. Martin was giving his weekly radio book talk at CHNS - he discussed my new book in glowing terms which made me blush, for Jim's radio blared it forth - & then came on to join the party. I find a certain constraint in parties like this; people who are naturally good talkers seem to feel that I should lead the conversation; & I, realising this, find my natural reserve closing down upon me like a blanket. A few drinks would have broken the ice all round but owing to Martin's presence none could be served. However, Jim & Mackay & Martin carried the talk well & the evening passed quickly. Martin is a short, slight wiry man, 60-ish, with a thin face, glasses & a shock of grey hair.

He is full of fun, keeps up a rapid fire of quips & stories, & speaks the most beautifully articulated English. Home about midnight.

MONDAY, Nov. 19/45

Shopping this morning for Christmas presents. Left a couple of photos & Mackay's block prints at Zwicker's for framing. Dropped into the Legislature library to say how-do to Miss Donohue. Saw Fred Fraser, editor of the Chronicle, at his office & had a chat. He is full of dominion-provincial government relations at the moment, sees the present Ottawa proposals as a dangerous business, & talks very fluently & well on the subject.

Bought silver ear-rings for Edith, \$6.25 at Coolidge's; also a cut-glass pitcher, \$8.50, at Birks', where I ordered a 56-piece dinnerware set in Hampton Court pattern. At 12 I joined "Father" John Wilson of Liverpool, in his suite at the Lord Nelson, having promised to lunch with him. He & Mrs. Wilson & Bill came up to meet son John, of a Canadian tank regiment, who arrived in Hqs. with a draft of homescoming troops on the aircraft carrier "Punisher" on Saturday. The "Queen Elizabeth" is due today at 1 p.m. & I hoped to finish luncheon in time to dash to Point Pleasant for a look at her - she has 12,000 troops on board. But Mrs. Wilson, Bill & John had gone off to Point Pleasant at 11.30, thinking the Q.E. was due at 12.30, & I didn't like to leave the parson - who didn't like to leave the hotel - & the truants turned up at 1.53 just before the dining room closed, having watched the Q.E. right in to dock.

As a result of all this I did not see the big ship - this is said to be her last trip to Hfx. - & a planned afternoon's research at the Archives was badly shot. However I got there about 3.15 & Jim Martell obligingly kept the place open until 6, so I got about 3 hours work done. Dinner at home with Mother & Hilda, then on to the C.B.C. studio to watch Martell & his group of players recording one of his scripts on Maritime history, for broadcast to schools. Directed very ably by one Lusty, a keen young man, & very well performed.

Then back to Mother's & my typewriter - I had promised a copy of my Halifax address to the editor of the college paper, & as I spoke without notes of any sort it was necessary to type the speech while I could still remember what I said.

TUESDAY, Nov. 20/40 Drove to the Archives this morning intending some further research, but on reaching the 3rd floor windows I saw every appearance of a severe storm coming up from the east, & as it was quite cold I feared a blizzard, which might tie me to the city for another day or two. So I bade Jim a hasty farewell, drove back to the flat, packed, kissed Mother goodbye, & set ~~off~~ off for Liverpool. A furious gale sprang up, with sheets of rain blinding the windshield but no snow, fortunately. On the stretches of shore the sea looked wild & magnificent, & terrific gusts of wind rocked the car & sometimes nudged it strongly towards the leeward ditch. Stopped on the hill

above East River, where an Indian, son of my late friend Mike Mo-ko-ne or "McCooney", lives with his white wife in a shack built in a gravel pit. I wanted to ask him about a brass medal, inscribed with tiny wigwams, moons, etc, which Mike once showed me. The son was a little vague about it - out of caution, I think - but said he was coming to Broad River in the spring & would let me know about the medal. He added that he knew where there was a stone tobacco pipe & a soapstone cooking pot. Too good to be true, I'm afraid, but I look forward to next spring with interest.

This is the time when Christmas trees are being shipped in thousands to the States, & all along the road there were stacks of tightly bound trees, & men & boys & even women busily cutting more & throwing them into trucks in spite of the wind & rain. Home about 1.30.

SATURDAY, NOV. 24/45

Grey crisp weather & fine walking.

Today we got a "Frigidaire" - made by General Motors - the first post-war model electric refrigerator to arrive in Liverpool. This is something we've wanted for a long time, & I really hope that by next summer we can thoroughly modernise our kitchen all round.

Tonight we attended a farewell party given by the officers of the frigate "New Waterford", which has been here several months refitting & acting as a sort of depot ship. This is a farewell of farewells - for next week "New Waterford" leaves for the Pacific

coast, & the 8 or 10 corvettes now being "winterized" here will be towed to Shelburne & laid up - the last naval work to be done here, we are told. It means the end of the naval establishment in Liverpool, which has been the foremost feature of the town's life for 5 years. The shore patrol - 10 to 15 men - is to be removed next week also, & they & other men of the shore establishment are having a farewell party in the recreation hall at Elmwood. (Behind Elmwood, really. It is one of the buildings erected during the war in what was the back yard of the hotel.)

The party aboard "New Waterford" was lively but not drunken - Mrs. ("Admiral Sell") Millard, the Parkers, Sunlaps, Dr. Son & Smith, Jim Donley, Helen Day; Marguerite, Gertrude & Althea Banks; a couple of Wrens from Hfx in party dresses, some navy wives & a large number of officers - Kemper, the nice young sub. from Bermuda, is getting his discharge next week: Al Kent is staying with the ship - he is a professional naval man. Delicious fruit punch, sandwiches & confectionery. Kemper tried to start a sing-song at the wardroom's little peans but everybody was too busy talking - the whole place jammed with people, a terrific hubbub.

About 11 p.m. most of the crowd moved ashore to the party at Elmwood but Edith & I called it a night & came home.

A pathetic sight at Thompson's shipyard gate - small, grey D. W. ("Sammy") Mackay, one time mayor of Liverpool, one time M.L.A. for Queens County, ruined by his fatal obsession the King

Fissure gold mine at South Brookfield in the 1930's, now reduced to working as a night watchman. Mackay mulcted many people, including all his friends, by making false statements about the mine after he had flung his own little fortune down the hole, & there are many fishermen & lumbermen in western N.S. who invested & lost their entire savings under Danny's blandishments, but nobody had heart to prosecute, & today Danny picks up a living where he can.

Monday, Nov. 26/45 Sunny after a sharp night. Today I took a few snapshots of the Thompson wharf, from town bridge & the oil wharf, & from the little point on Gamage's beach, showing 4 corvettes tied up abreast, & 2 or 3 others below, together with sundry naval tugs, pilot boats, etc. It was the last chance to get such a picture, & this scene, familiar for 5 years, will soon be gone forever.

For the 2nd. consecutive year the govt. is permitting the trapping of beaver for a couple of weeks, & as the skins fetch ^{\$40}~~\$20~~ or so each the woods are full of amateur, as well as professional trappers. Woodmen from Tobatic & beyond report beaver houses molested or destroyed far into the interior, & a great slaughter going on. I was one of those who protested against the opening of beaver trapping, but our voices were drowned by the clamor of those eager to kill & sell - all of whom were howling about the "damage" done by beaver every year. (A few wild-hay meadows are still cut; & beavers flood them & damage the hay; & the ponds kill a few swamp maple & wire birch, & the beavers fell a lot of poplar - but the hay & the wood are not

worth much, & what about the value of the beavers' water-conservation to our whole forest, & the fish & game therein?) It is the same with moose, a great clamor on the part of a few bloodthirsty fools who want to kill the last of them. They say, "The season on moose has been closed for ten years or so, & the moose are still dwindling, so we might as well shoot them & have a little sport."

So far the govt. has been firm in protecting moose. The beaver season was put through the legislature by our drunken local member Madden, to please a noisy group of his constituents, & thus the slaughter was opened over the whole province ^{of Ont.} _{in seven counties.}

TUESDAY, NOV. 27/45 Temp 20° Fahr. at 7 a.m. A cool sunny day, a good walk to Milton & back this afternoon, & later took in the movie matinee with Edith - a long & very dull picture called *The Valley of Decision* (God knows why) starring the charming Greer Garson & a lot of Hollywood characters with phony shanty-Irish accents talking incessantly about steel mills in Pittsburgh in the 90's. A matinee is one's only chance to see a picture without waiting in a queue for half a block. This seems strange in view of the fact that about 600 outsiders - ship-repair workers - have been laid off here & in Brooklyn since the war ended, & the navy has moved out except for a few skeleton crews on corvettes being "winterized".

Where do all the theatre-goers come from? Before 1940 the local theatre was rarely full, & most of the time one could

choose a seat almost anywhere in the house at any evening show except that on Saturday night. Another phenomenon: the pre-fabricated village opposite the railway bridge, built for & rented exclusively (so we are told) to shipyard workers from "outside", remains fully occupied. It was supposed to be "temporary wartime housing".

Last week the U.S. announced abruptly that it was ending rationing of every kind except that for sugar. Ottawa promptly declared that meat & sugar rationing would continue in Canada but that there "might be some revision" of the program - meaning butter perhaps.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 28/45 Sunny, cold. Harry Madden died suddenly today about 1 p.m., sitting at a table in the "Radio Cafe", the Chinese cafe on Market St. Heart failure it is supposed, though some think suicide by poisoning. He had been drunk for three years more or less, nearly ruined his business, lost his seat in the legislature & generally made a mess of his life. Tonight the I.O.D.E. canteen in Town Hall was open for the last time. Very few naval men left in Liverpool, & the shore patrol leaves town on Saturday for good. The ladies, including Edith (who has attended the canteen faithfully every Wednesday night throughout the war) put on a little extra show, - singing by Dorothy Wickwire etc. & special confectionery for the free 11 p.m. supper which has been a feature of the place. Mrs. Eleanor ("Admiral Nell") Millard presided. She conceived the idea of this canteen-service club-recreation room, & has been the life & soul of it throughout the war.

Friday, Nov. 30/1945

A furious easterly gale blew all day yesterday, & shook the house all night. Rain, sleet & snow. The town electricity failed at 4 a.m. & we had to heat the breakfast coffee on the oil auxiliary of our electric stove. The kids went off to school & returned at once in glee - no school today because the automatic coal stoker of the school heating plant runs by electricity. People with oil furnaces are in the same plight.

The power came on towards noon. The storm raged all day, turning to snow in the afternoon - everything plastered white.

Madden's doctor says death caused by coronary thrombosis.

The expected post-war crime wave is now sweeping Canada & the U.S. Halifax has had 3 murders in 3 weeks, & there have been several bold hold-ups of stores & a theatre office by men armed with pistols, in addition to a long list of burglaries etc.

The Ford strike at Windsor still in progress after 80 days. In the States it is the General Motors' employees who are "out".

The great trial of the top Nazi leaders at Nuremberg drags on. The object is to fix responsibility for the war on Goering, Ribbentrop, Papen, Admiral Doenitz, General Keitel & others, & presumably to hang them. The photographs of the trial reveal most of these German bully-boys as a hangdog lot, except Goering who is amused & sneering, & Keitel the poker-faced soldier. Most of the written evidence is from captured German records, but movies of the death-camps at Belsen etc. have been shown in court, & many witnesses have given evidence of atrocities in German-occupied countries.

SATURDAY, ~~Nov~~ Dec 1, 1945

The wind & snow storm which began on Thursday, raged all day yesterday, ^{today} & tonight, although the snow did not begin until this morning in any quantity. A tremendous sea running outside. On Thursday afternoon, after the gale began, a large ocean tug came into the outer harbor towing 3 empty colliers or wheat barges, each really a 1000-ton steamer, with a long steel hull & the engine, funnel & crew quarters aft, like a tanker.

Our harbor is a notoriously poor anchorage in E. or S.E. gales — it's a death-trap in southeasters. This gale hovered between E. & N.E., & the little flotilla anchored close in to the paper mill buoy hugging what lee they could while allowing room to swing. At that, it's only a miracle that they didn't fetch up on Fort Point; even this afternoon when the wind had slacked considerably there was a big sea running into the harbor, & from Coffin Island the sea was breaking half way across towards Western Head. I walked down to Fort Point & watched the 3 vessels pitching & rolling hugely, like 3 sea-saws, a queer sight. Bob McElean the town clerk came along, & L. G. Murphy, & Murphy said "I wanted to go to sea once — but whenever I see something like that I thank God I kept a grocery store."

Great damage all along the south shore, 30-odd fishing (motor) boats sunk at their moorings at Lockeport, Shellburne & the Cape. Three boats driven ashore & wrecked at Port Mouton. A corvette lately sold at Hfx. broke her tow & is a total wreck near York Redoubt.

Madden's funeral today; I didn't get there — working hard

at the new novel & forgot the time & everything else. The novel goes slowly (as they all do, especially at this stage) but I enjoy the labor - I've always wanted to do a slam-bang 18th century sea story.


SUNDAY, DEC 2/45 Sunny & sloppy. About 2 to 3 inches of snow here, much more in Lun. Co. where snow ploughs were used to keep main highways open, & the Valley is still digging itself out.

The worst early-season snowstorm for years.

MONDAY, DEC 3/45 Overcast. I received by express from Hfx. 2 photos of myself (taken by news photographers in CBC and CJCH radio studios) and 3 charming little block prints of deer, gnus & zebras (the work of Donald Mackay, who presented them to me in Hfx.), all of which I had left at Zwicker's for framing. Bruce Chandler tells me several thousand wild geese arrived at Port Joli during the past two days - the first large groups of the season. Rabbit hunters report bunnies very scarce.

TUESDAY, Dec 4/45 Overcast. The snow remains but the streets & dirt roads are too wet & muddy for pleasure in walking.

Tonight the Indian, Noel Mokone' (alias McEwan), son of my old friend Mike Mokone (MO-KO-NE) of Broad River, called at my house en route from East River to Broad River in a battered little Ford truck with two other men. Noel came in, & offered to sell me the brass medal I asked him about on Nov. 20th. Noel is about 45 or 50, a typical Micmac, stocky, round-faced, broad

nosed; greying black hair, a pleasant manner, with a stage Indian's trick of folding his arms & throwing back his head when making a statement. There is some white blood in him, said to come from a vague grandfather, an Ulsterman named McEwan who raised a family by a squaw at Bear River; but it does not show in his features & did not in Mike's. Mike was a dour independent old fellow, but Noel is a grinning wheedling person much given to begging - "Injun - you know - a leedle help, eh?" & warned me that he would be at my door from time to time. He produced the brass medal - on close inspection it was obviously a thing made for trade amongst the western tribes, probably in the U.S., the relief much worn on the medal itself, possibly a century old, probably less. I told him this but he was very anxious to sell it & finally I took it - the price \$2 and two bottles of beer. He had another thing which he said was part of a chief's regalia several generations ago - a thin white metal disc with a large hole thus , intended perhaps to be hung from ~~the~~ the neck as a gorget - extreme diameter about 4 inches. He said he didn't want to sell it & I didn't attempt to bargain for it.

WEDNESDAY, DEC 5/45 Sunny, cold. Some time ago Clark Murray invited Cutth & me to an informal dinner & reception at Caledonia, for the latest batch of returned service men of North Queens, at which I would be expected to make an address. So we set off in the car at 5 p.m. - just sundown. After passing the 10-mile the snow was quite deep

but fortunately the tractor plough had been over it, & barring a skid or two (I have no chains) we came along famously. There were drifts 2 or 3 feet deep in many places & we found the northern district enjoying the finest kind of sleighing. The dinner - an old-fashioned chicken dinner with pumpkin pie - was held in the vestry of the Baptist Church, which is not large, & the place fairly bulged with 30-odd service men & about 20 women & girls who had come to wait on them & entertain them. A fine healthy looking bunch of boys, two of them wearing the Military Medal ribbon; most in khaki, but J. C. Irving's boy was there, a navy sub-lieut, & two airmen - one of them an RCAF pilot officer from Milton, married to Clark Murray's girl Mona.

After the dinner & speech, a sing-song. Etty & I left at 10 p.m. & arrived home without incident except that I dropped a lit cigarette in the car - it appeared to drop in my lap - & couldn't find it despite a frantic hunt. I seemed to smell it burning when we got home, & made another thorough search, but no luck. Finally I left the car outdoors all night lest it burn up the garage when the hidden smoulder turned to fire. Nothing happened.

THURSDAY, DEC 6/45

There are now 6 or 7 ex-navy corvettes at Thompson's, for conversion into oil tankers - owners, Irving Oil Co.. I have the invoice for our new Frigidair - #275.

Forgot to mention that on Nov. 6 d. I had a set of red-trim "cane-weave" seat covers installed in my car to cover the shabby old upholstery. Cost, installed, \$15.85, of which \$1.90 was labor.

FRIDAY, DEC. 7, 1945

Another howling easterly gale, with rain this time, all last night & today. Tonight the Q. C. Historical Society held its first meeting since April, 1944 (which was itself a business session, the Society's activities were practically suspended during the war.) Sheriff D. C. Mulhall, who has been president for some years, & is now old & feeble & deaf, resigned for these reasons. I was elected president for 1946. Despite the long wartime hiatus, the Society has managed to pay off all but \$800 of the money borrowed to purchase the Perkins house, & has kept the house in fair repair. For several months I have been trying to interest the local M.P.s, provincial & federal, in taking over the Perkins house & making a show place of it as the dominion gov't did with the old barracks at Fort Anne, & the provincial gov't did with the Haliburton house at Windsor. Tonight I was able to report some progress, small but encouraging.

We appointed new committees & prepared for a vigorous resumption of the Society's work. I pointed out that I had dug out a description of the original coat-of-arms of our town, adopted by the Proprietors in July 1760. John Inglis has drawn it, Cecil Day has had dies & matrices made, & henceforth the old device will appear on the town's official stationery, advertisements, etc, surmounted by the town's birth-year, 1759. (When the town was incorporated in the 1890's, the device of Liverpool, England, was copied & has been used on town documents etc. ever since. I pointed out to our present mayor & council that the device uses the West African "liver")

bird, a reminder of the English Liverpool's unsavory slave trading days.

Yesterday's entry re corvettes at Thompson's incorrect; 4 or 5 of these have been purchased by a Jugo-Slav syndicate & are here for some refitting before their J. V. crews take them to Europe. Two more belong to an Egyptian firm who will send crews to take them over when ready. One belongs to Irving Oil.

Britain has negotiated a huge loan from the U. S., to be repaid over a period of 50 years, with interest at 2%. It is believed that Canada will have to extend a large loan also if she wishes to retain the British market for wheat etc.

SATURDAY, DEC. 8/45 Went rabbit hunting this afternoon with Parker & Dunlap on the ridge west of Port Joli harbor. Had a good tramp but saw no rabbits. Had one or two tantalising glimpses of wild geese flying over, far out of gunshot. Cold, bleak weather, with temp. at freezing, a high wind, occasional showers, a black sky.

For three months or so I have not smoked a pipe, in an effort to get away from the furrowed tongue, swollen gums & excessive hoarseness from which I have suffered so long. The improvement is great — but I miss the pipe, & smoke too many cigarettes, which make me wheeze like an old horse. My brand of cigarette is "Sweet Caporal" but I can't do enjoy any kind. I try to limit my smoking to 25 or 30 a day; but when I'm writing I reach for them automatically & never really know how many.

WEDNESDAY, DEC 12, 1945

Rough weather continues. A bitter easterly wind yesterday with snow; last night & today a N.W. gale, temp. at 7 a.m., 8° above zero. The current Saturday Evening Post shows the same size & model electric refrigerator that I bought at \$275 the other day — price in the U.S. \$188.25, deliv. to the home, & all taxes paid. Another example of the high cost & profit of Canadian manufacturers. How long, O Lord, how long?

The Mersey accountant who looks after Col. Jones' private books tells me in confidence that the patriotic Jones, his son Mowbray, & the other top-salaried officials of Mersey Paper, who have taken such a prominent part in Victory Loan campaigns throughout the war, actually invested very little in V-bonds themselves. They have been investing heavily in industrial common stocks, foreseeing the steady inflationary effect of labour's wage demands & the ultimate raising of sale price on all commodities after the war. A Victory bond payable in, say 1956, will pay off in dollars which are worth from 20% to 50% less than the original investment, as they see it. And their intimate relations with J. W. Kellam & his Royal Securities Corp. keep them in close touch with the stock market & the prospect in futures.

THURSDAY, DEC 13/45

Bitter weather continues, blowing hard, 8 to 10° above zero. With the town stoking its furnaces & stores there is the usual epidemic of fires — the siren has wailed 4 times in the past 36 hours, & two houses burned down or badly damaged. ^{ROBERT G. S.} ~~John~~ Kennedy, editor of the "Family Herald & Weekly Star," phoned from Montreal today with

a quaint proposition - he wanted to run "Roger Ludden" as a serial for a price of \$100. I said No. He said he could buy stones by leading U.S. novelists, through a syndicate of course, for that sum. I said I wasn't a syndicate & the answer was still No. He was very nice, said how much he admired my books, rambled on about authors & publishers & royalties generally, & finally rang off. The phone call must have cost his paper \$15 or \$20. (Kennedy is president of Canadian Authors' Association, which seems very quaint to me, like a hawk in charge of a hen-roost.)

The trial of the German general Meyer continues in a little town in ~~Freisland~~ ^{Freisland} called ^{AURICH} before a ^{banafial} military court. ~~German town where some of the Canadian prisoners were massacred.~~

Major Learment & others of the North Nova Scotia Highlanders, captured by Meyer's division, have given some terrible evidence; & 2 German soldiers have testified that Meyer's orders were to kill all prisoners.

At the Nurnburg trial of Goering et al., evidence was given regarding the great murder camps at Dachau & elsewhere, where Jews, Poles, Russians & others were scientifically done to death by thousands. The prosecution produced in court some grisly relics taken from the German guards - a Pole's head from which the bones had been removed & the flesh, skin & hair reduced to the size of a doll's, after the fashion of certain South American Indians; and several lampshades covered with "parchment" which was in fact human skin, removed from the corpses of tattooed men, presumably seamen. Goering et al. looked upon these things with the careful air of boredom they have worn all through the trial.

SATURDAY, DEC. 15, 1945 Fine & cold, the 5th consecutive day with temp. about 10° above zero morning & evening. Went rabbit hunting with Parker, Smith & Dunlap at Pat Joli this afternoon. Found a small spot of game between Louis Lake & the motor road - most of it right against the road, though we hunted down to the lake. I got 2 rabbits & 1 partridge, Parker 4 rabbits, Smith 1, Dunlap 0.

SUNDAY, DEC. 16/45 Snow fell in thick flakes all night & this morning. No wind. Every twig on every tree is white & the streets are lovely. Spent the afternoon with old Will Smith, going over details of square-rig sailing, ship construction, etc, for my current novel. I often drop in there for a yarn, or to settle a sea point.

MONDAY, DEC. 17/45 More snow last night & today, falling lightly - not a breath of air, with intervals of clear sky. I spent most of the morning tramping about the town with my camera. Shopping this afternoon, crowds on the street, queues in post office, banks & liquor store. I bought 2 qts. gin after a long wait. (Ration is 2 quarts of rum or whisky per month, but since Nov. 15 we are allowed 4 quarts of gin per month.)

TUESDAY, DEC. 18/45 Temp 3° above zero at 7 a.m., rising to 20° in the sun at sun, with a keen wind down the river. Andrew Merkel phoned from Hfx, says he is going on superannuation pay soon - & that his plan to conduct a sort of centre (summer, anyhow) for Nova Scotian arts, at Granville, is going ahead "like a house afire". He says the centre will have a broadcasting station of its own - Ottawa will grant a license -

& he wants me to broadcast talks on N.V. history, etc. I said Yes of course. Other N.V. poets, authors, artists of all kinds, will broadcast, & I gather that the whole thing is to be a miniature Cape Cod. Andrew is enthusiastic but I have grave doubts of the enduring success of the thing from a financial standpoint, & have tried before to talk him out of it.

Not a single naval uniform to be seen on the L'pool streets now except an occasional man down from Hfx on leave. Mercury Paper Co. have wound up their ship-repair business; Thompson's have 8 corvettes at their docks but these belong to private firms & the work to be done on them is small; the staff of Thompson's is now about 200. In spite of all this withdrawal of activity, the housing shortage in Liverpool remains acute, & the town is still full of "war-comers".

A small epidemic here of "virus pneumonia" - something new, or an old thing with a new name rather; the Victorian Order nurse tells me it is a communicable disease on which sulfa drugs have no effect, & this phenomenon has separated it from the generally diagnosed types of pneumonia. M. Jones phoned on behalf of Jack Kaye, president of the N.V. Society of Engineers (or whatever their exact name is), asking me to be the chief speaker at their annual banquet in Hfx in January. I said No. Can't spare the time.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 19/45 Temp just zero at 8 a.m. Tried to start my car this afternoon but no success - I had planned to go out the road for a Christmas tree. The radio warns of a blizzard tonight & tomorrow. Great crowds shopping - trying to shop. Clothing, candy, nuts, fruits, footwear etc. all scarcer than at any

time during the war. Xmas tree lights & decorations unprocureable.

In England, the traitor ^{JOHN} Amery was hanged this morning. A son of R. A. Amery, Secretary of State for India in the Baldwin cabinet, he was a noted pro-German & spent the war period in Berlin broadcasting Nazi propaganda. He is the 2nd. British subject to be hanged on this charge since Germany fell.

THURSDAY, DEC 20/45 Snow fell heavily all night, about 1 foot on the level & drifts 2 to 3 feet deep in my driveway & the road. The storm ended abruptly about 10 a.m. & I had a busy time digging out. The snow plow didn't get around to our street till 2 p.m. Town gangs busy all afternoon on Main St., shovelling & trucking snow down to the oil wharf, where it was dumped in the river.

The continuous stormy weather is playing havoc with shipping all over the North Atlantic. Another ex-RCN corvette, "Oakville", lost on Henry Island, off Port Hood. Her crew, French-Canadian & Yugoslav merchant mariners, got ashore safely. She was on her way to Liverpool for overhaul at Thompson's plant.

Major John Millard, of Liverpool, W.N.S. Regt, has been awarded the Order of Orange Nassau, with Swords, by the Netherlands govt, which has awarded the order to a number of other Canadian officers, & the Militaire Willems Order to a group of Canadian "other ranks".

The British Labor govt has taken over all the coal mines, also the Bank of England, in its latest legislation. Curious to hear B.B.C. news broadcasters & commentators nowadays, busy

explaining these matters to North America in a "There, there, don't let this upset you" manner that is really amusing. All the B.B.C. political news has a distinct Labor bias, & it is apparent that the gov't. has taken over the news-slant of the B.B.C. along with so many other things. In Windsor, Ontario, the Ford factory strikers have agreed to gov't. arbitration (a thing they rejected some time ago) & are willing to go back to work in the meantime. They have been on strike 99 days, besieging the Ford plant, commandeering citizens' cars to block the streets, defying the city, provincial & dominion police. The Ford Co. now says it will be impossible to start much work before early January, & the men will be taken on as the factory can absorb them.

FRIDAY, DEC. 21/45 A fine day & a fine walk to Milton this afternoon. The road cleared by snow ploughs. Towards Milton more snow than in town - at a guess, 2 feet on the level. Forgot to take my camera. (The snaps I took on the 17th. came out very well.)

SATURDAY, DEC. 22/45 The steady cold continues, temp. about 15° above at noon, dropping to zero at night. My car has been frozen up for two weeks - ice in the gas line, I think & so today I was glad of a chance to go out the White Point Road with Parker & Dunlap, in Dunlap's car, in search of Christmas trees. I took our old grey tomcat along, & my shotgun, & killed him in the woods. He had been suffering a long time with an abscess at the base of each ear, & lately developed some trouble in his hindquarters, so I decided to put him away,

without saying anything to the kids, who are very fond of him.

Getting a good tree was a job. All trees of the right size & shape with easy reach of the highway are cut every year by the men who ship Xmas trees to the States. I had to go some distance, with snow to mid-thigh & sometimes to my waist; & dragging an 8-foot tree out to the road proved a major operation. Got home about 3 p.m. caught another ride to Millon, taking along some medicine & some money to Aunt Marie Bell (I'd cashed her annuity cheque for her) & birthday presents for Grandma Freeman.

Walked back along the west side, which was in shadow, & the pink sunset falling on the east bank & slope, very lovely, though cracking cold. The river frozen down to the railway bridge, & there is ice on the bays & coves of the tidal basin.

A letter from Charles Gray, secretary, advises me that I have been elected a member of the 1946 executive committee of Canadian Authors' Association; & that I am expected to attend a meeting in Montreal Jan. 19th. All this without consulting me. I am working against time on my new novel & simply can't spare time or thought for anything else, least of all for the C.A.A., which seems to me largely composed of people who like to talk about writing & don't get much done.

SUNDAY, DEC. 23/45 A lazy day indoors, the weather snowing & still cold. Edith & the kids amused themselves with Christmas decorations, I in pasted snapshots & the appropriate typewritten

labels into an album. Andrew Merkel phoned. He & his Halifax authors' group put on a weekly broadcast of poetry, etc., over C.S.H. The program is called "The Harp of Acadia". They are doing a special broadcast on Christmas Night, & want permission to have Edward Roberts read one of my short stories. I was willing, but pointed out that most of my tales run to 5,000 words or more. However I have on hand a ^{short} piece called "Christmas at Sable Island", the Canadian printing rights of which have been purchased by Copp, Clark for their school reader series, but I retain radio rights. Andrew was delighted, but of course all will depend on being able to get the script down to Hfx. tomorrow. The mails will be too late.

Monday, Dec. 24/45 Phoned the hotel garages, Mersy Papesco — nobody driving down to Hfx today. Took the script to Walter Lovelace, stationmaster, who suggested sending it express, with a "value label"; he promised to give the express people special instructions. I then phoned Merkel to have someone meet the train & sign for the document.

He has already notified the newspapers & radio that my little tale will form part of the broadcast, so I hope there is no hitch.

Christmas Day, 1945. An old fashioned one, with deep snow everywhere & ice on the river, a grey sky & temperature about 25° above, — much "warmer" than at any time in the past fortnight. The Freemans came down by taxi (my car still frozen up) about 11 a.m. & spent the day with us. Turkeys were scarce in Nova Scotia (Montreal, as usual, reported "plenty" up that way) but Edith managed to get a

1½ lb. Grade B turkey & a 4³/₄ lb. chicken (both at 46¢ lb.), from our grocer Bobby Simms (who always gets solemnly drunk at this season & stays so till after New Year). As we sat down 9 to dinner & made another assault on the birds, cold, at tea-time, there wasn't much left of 'em by night. And of course there was a ham, & all sorts of vegetables & "fixins", & ice cream & 4 kinds of cake, & grapes & walnuts & pecans. The kids got skates & skating boots amongst other things, & Tommy was much absorbed in a telegraph set, with buzzers & lights. We all agreed that it was the best Xmas ever, with the war over & most of the boys home; a full happiness that we never felt during the war, nor in the five uneasy years before it.

I took a walk around the town in the late afternoon, & the view of it from the railway tracks across the river, at dusk, with the lights springing up, was romantic as always.

The Freemans departed for Milton at 9 p.m. & later on George & Margaret MacDonald came in & we had drinks, & tried to pick up the broadcast of my story from Hfx, without success. (CJCH has only 100 watt power & is very difficult to hear at night when the U.V. stations come booming in.) At 11 p.m. I phoned Mother to wish her a happy Xmas & New Year. She & Hilda had been out to dinner, & heard the broadcast, said it was fine.

Forgot to mention that on Christmas Eve there were very few "bell snicklers" - the custom was pretty well dropped during the war, when people had so little candy, nuts or fruit to give away.

The quiet seemed strange today & tonight — not a drunk to be seen or heard — after 5 Christmases (beginning with the Norwegians in 1940) of naval men staggering & shouting about the streets. The corvettes now at Thompson's have merchant marine crews waiting to take them over — they are staying at the Mersey Hotel, a polyglot crowd, and very well behaved, so far.

We heard the King's broadcast as always on Christmas, & the inter-empire messages & vignettes, one of which was from the bridge of the "Queen Elizabeth", 3 days out of Britain for New York with 12,000 ~~Canadian~~ troops aboard.

Wednesday, Dec. 26/45 The popular tune of "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas", which during the past 3 years has achieved the standing almost of a carol, & has been dinned in our ears by every radio singer & orchestra for the past month, today has some point — for we have a thaw, a S.E. gale with shells of rain, & our snow is disappearing fast. Spent most of the day writing letters. Ottawa announces that rationing of tires will end Dec. 31 st.

I shall make my old ones last as long as possible — until tires of natural rubber are available, I hope. Synthetic rubber doesn't stand extreme heat or cold very well, & it simply skates on an icy road — no grip at all. Two of the post war automobiles, the first to arrive in ^Vpool, both 1946 Chevrollets, are on display at the Rossignol Sales Co. showrooms. Just bait, of course — production is still very small, & cars ordered now may not be delivered until 1947.

THURSDAY, DEC 27, 1945.

Mild, overcast. Got my car going, & to charge the battery a bit took Edith to Bridgewater & back. Roads bare, patches of snow & ice remain in the fields & woods.

A party at B.J. Waters' house tonight - dancing, cards & chatter - I spent most of the evening at ping-pong in the games room in the cellar, with Parker, Larry Eldon & Doc Wickwire, but I performed one or two duty dances. Purpose of the dance was to announce Barbara Waters' engagement to a young chap, ^{BILL HALL} whom she met when he was a naval officer here. Waters is a tall bald man with a keupie face & a fringe of grey hair, an American from Ohio who joined Col. Jones' staff at the Spanish River (Ont.) paper mill in 1919. Jones liked to have a group of bright young yes-men about him, & Waters could say Yes louder & more often than the rest, so he rose steadily in the Jonesian favor, & when the Mersey paper mill was built here in 1929 he accompanied the stout Colonel to Liverpool. Now he is general manager of the Mersey mill at something like \$15,000 a year, which he saves & invests very carefully against the time when he can retire to his native Ohio. He takes no part or interest in local affairs, except the golf club, & has no conversation except business & golf, about which he will talk for hours on end. He is a good example of the man of mediocre brains who has worked himself into a profitable position by careful attention to the right people as well as to business, and has no illusions whatever about it. Mrs. W. is a petite

vapid blonde who has spent her whole life taking care of her looks, & is now crowding 50 & none too pleased about it. When a daughter becomes engaged they loosen the purse-strings, throw a party & invite a mob, all of whom later receive wedding invitations & obligingly respond with a wedding present - a typical stroke of the family acumen. I went to please my wife, but I couldn't help feeling that we were a lot of asses.

SATURDAY, DEC. 29/45

Keddy, the building contractor, called today, mumbling apologies for the bungled & long-drawn out job he did on our second floor in 1944, & said he would accept whatever I chose to pay him for it. (See entries from Feb. 28/44 to Oct 17/44, also July 9/45) He never finished the job, & in July/45 he sent me a bill for \$335, which was \$100 more than his contract figure for the whole thing. (There were two extra items which I figured at \$50, a generous figure; & I paid carpenters \$11.25 to finish the job.) I refused to pay the \$335, told him I owed \$273.75 at most, & wanted him to supply a detailed account for exhibition to the War Time Prices & Trade Board. I heard nothing further from him until today, when he took my cheque for \$273.75 in full payment of the work done. He is a wasp profiteer of the worst type, & I was prepared to fight the thing out in the courts. The simple job of creating an extra bedroom, which should not have cost more than \$300 including plumbing, has thus cost \$567 altogether, and it is a botched job at that.

This afternoon Smith, Parker, Burke Douglas, Dunlap & I went

to Port Mouton, rabbit hunting in the "railway cut". Hard going, the snow knee-deep in the green woods, & rabbits scarce - total bag 6, of which I got 1. A furious snowstorm began at dusk, just as we came out of the woods. Coming down the long stretch of railway track in the dusk we were puzzled by a light glowing at regular intervals in the tree tops far ahead. It was the lighthouse on Spectacle Island, in Port Mouton Bay.

My Christmas presents include the usual socks & ties (including a silk cravat from Aunt Marie that looks like an explosion in a dyer's plant), a 2-year renewal of my subscription to the "New Yorker", cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, gloves; books including Tom Costain's latest success "The Black Rose"; "Rickshaw Boy"; a fine copy of "Madame Bovary"; & "Cass Timberlane", Sinclair Lewis' latest caricature of dollar aristocracy in the Middle West, with emphasis this time on their married lives.

MONDAY, DEC 31/45

Pouring rain, a fine mess of slush & ice for the New Year's Eve celebrations. Our party this year held at Dunlap's house near Fort Point - Parkers, Williams', Veinots, Douglass', Johnsons, ~~the~~ Sheiss's, "Rah" Murrays, Radclalls. Plenty to drink & lots of fun. The R. Co. (Royal Bank manager) Lockwards were holding a general reception at their house on School Street so we all trooped up there after midnight to pay our respects. A mob there, all very merry, & following the New Year custom all the males kissed all the females, a notable task in such a crowd. We returned to Dunlap's

about 2 a.m. - I in someone else's hab, mine having vanished. - & the Copelins, Donleys & others came in. I finished the evening singing sea chanties very heartily with Charlie Copelin & Ann Copelin, Charlie Williams & other old & young salts. Home at 3 a.m.

TUESDAY, JAN. 1, 1946

The newspapers are calling this Year One of the Atomic Age. The revelation of atomic energy, so long known to science, has impressed the world very much - politicians, preachers, pseudo-scientific writers & lecturers have been dinning our ears with theories & prophecies ever since the first A-bomb fell on Japan. Generally they fall into two classes; the prophets of doom & the prophets of Utopia. Sic-hards & sceptics like me think the world will go along much the same. Everything that is being said of atomic energy today was said in less exalted terms about the invention of gunpowder, & probably the bow & arrow.

Took my family up to Milton this afternoon for the usual New Year's dinner with the Freemans & Aunt Marie Bell. Young Roger proved the centre of entertainment, a blond buster.

Should have mentioned under yesterday's entry that one of the New Year's Eve guests at Lockward's was an Egyptian; also that a group of Jugo-Slav seamen stood in Main Street singing songs in their own tongue & in very good voices. These people are here awaiting the refitting of corvettes at Thompson's, sold to their respective countries by the Canadian navy. They have purchased winter clothing here & look like any townsman outwardly.

THURSDAY, JAN. 3, 1946

In London (Wandsworth prison) this morning William Joyce, the traitor who broadcast anti-British propaganda from Berlin throughout the war, was hanged. His superlative Oxford accent caused British listeners to dub him "Lord Haw-Haw", but he was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., had an Irish mother, and no doubt was inspired by a De Valera-ish hatred of everything British. He was hanged under British law because he had claimed British citizenship in a passport application in 1933.

A fire in town tonight, & our volunteer firemen in leaving the fire station forgot to switch off the great howling siren in the tower - it screamed for more than half an hour & awakened the whole town. The fire was in the little Chinese laundry on Water Street, which burned to the ground. Firemen dragged Lee Foo out but he was dead of suffocation. (His body went to Halifax for burial next day)

FRIDAY, JAN. 4/46

Lovely sunny day, temp. 50° at noon. Took advantage of it to get the last of my storm windows out of the garage, wash it, Bon-Ami it, & put it on. It covers the centre west window in my den; I had delayed putting it on because the air slot is small & I wanted free ventilation in one window until the real cold weather began.

A great rush to buy car tires now that rationing is no more; local stocks are gone already, & manufacturers say they cannot keep up with the demand until the end of 1946.

SATURDAY, JAN. 5/46

Mild, overcast. Parkes, Smith, Dunlap & I to Eagle Lake this afternoon. The others had .22's & hunted rabbits (but

saw none) in the woods between Big Falls & the lake. I was unarmed, & carrying a sleeping bag, so I walked up N^o 3 pond on the ice (about a mile) to our boat landing. Walking up the trail in the crusted remains of the snow (about 3" in green woods, none in the barrens) I came upon 2 deer, one near the place where I shot a buck some years ago. The trail was cluttered with softwoods 4" to 8" in butt diameter, bowed over & in many cases snapped off by the weight of the big snows in December. Near the brook I came upon the track of a big moose in the trail, & was astonished to find that it had crossed over our bridge (3 slippery poles laid together) without any sign of hesitation & gone on.

At camp I was soon joined by the others & we busied ourselves in preparation for the night. Noticed that beavers have lately gnawed down & carried off a number of sapling maples behind our camp, had a go at the maple before it (on which we hang the heads & horns of deer shot), & completely girdled an oak 14" at the butt, just to the north of it.

Smith went to inspect our little privy, & found that a pair of chipmunks or squirrels (they skittered off & he couldn't identify them in the dusk) had made a fine winter den in a box upon the floor. They had torn a roll of toilet paper into long shreds for the lining of the nest proper, & outside that was a great mass of dry leaves & moss. A good sheet of ice in Eagle Lake, but open from a point opposite the camp down towards the beaver dam.

SUNDAY, JAN. 6, 1946 Turned out about 9 a.m. The weather still mild & overcast - I stripped to the waist & washed outdoors. Sunlap saw one of our beaver friends "with a head as big as a dog's", swimming in the open water by the dock "and snapping his teeth very fast."

Saying good-morning, probably. After breakfast we fell-to with axes & saws, cutting firewood. We felled & junked the beaver-girdled oak, carried the junk to camp, split & piled them. Then we tackled a big spruce windfall of last summer, east of the camp, junked it with the crosscut saw, carried, split & piled the whole thing. Also an old maple windfall just beyond the well. Finally we had a fine pile of fuel, & were tired & hungry - it was 3 p.m., so we had a dinner of tinned herring, potatoes, cake & tea. Then it was time to pack up, clean the camp, set the mouse-traps, put the shutters on doors & windows, & head out. Suspected the safety of the ice on N^o 3 pond after the continued mild weather, & all tramped out the main trail, arriving at Big Falls about dark. The river road muddy but passable - another day's thaw will make it very bad.

MONDAY, JAN. 7/46 Too warm to sleep last night. Mild again today, with showers. All snow & ice gone, & the town tractor & grader busy scraping out (& other) streets. Rosay Nickerson tells me there are only a few wild geese at Port Joli; the big flock which came there early in December is said to have been disturbed by illicit hunters at night, others firing rifles from the shore, etc.; anyhow the geese have

scattered westward along the coast & the largest group seems to be wintering in & about Port Latour.

Thompson's have begun making burners for oil furnaces, as part of their post-war business - this under an arrangement with Irving Oil Co., who are now adding 3 big fuel-oil tanks to their establishment at the north end of town bridge. People are thoroughly disgusted with the coal shortage during the war, (& now worse than ever) & there is a great rush to instal oil heating which is so much cleaner & more easily regulated. Unfortunately mine is a hot-air furnace, which would not function efficiently with oil. The coal miners & owners, eternally wrangling, have produced a situation which spells the death of their industry before many more years.

THURSDAY, JAN. 10/46 Went to Hfx this morning in the Rev. Wilson's big La Salle, Bill Wilson driving. A nasty day, snow & sleet blowing, & 2 or 3 inches of slush made the asphalt highway dangerous - a fact which Bill refused to recognise until we reached the sharp elbow in the highway just before Bridgewater. There, at 50 miles an hour, the car took a series of violent skids & swerves (3 times headed straight over a 5-foot embankment). Willy turned pale & thereafter drove with caution - we passed 3 cars being pulled out of the ditch, one of them quite badly wrecked.

Reached the city at noon, & had lunch & a long & serious discussion with Mother & sister Hilda - the subject,

Hilda's marriage, which is on the rocks like so many of the gay wartime weddings. She married an Englishman in the Fleet Air Arm at Hfx - Pay-Lieut. Bill Kibble, R.N.R. - on Feb 20/43, against my advice. I considered him a conceited & snobbish chap, having a very gay time on the shore staff at Hfx & very contemptuous of the Canadian navy & Canadian institutions generally; a type that seems all-too-numerous in the R.N.

Apparently the gilt came off the gingerbread with the Johnson affair (see entries Dec. 2 and 9, 1943) when there was (& still remains) a strong suspicion that "Kibby" was involved in his commander's speculations. A naval board of inquiry gave "Kibby" a bad time of it, & soon after he was transferred to a Fleet Air Arm training camp in Maine, & finally to the Far East. He has seldom written Hilda since he went East, & she has determined not to live with him again - & the other day wrote him to that effect. All this further complicated by a letter from him, written in Colombo, saying he was being discharged from the navy in January, & that he proposed joining Hilda here & looking for a job. She wanted my advice again (I didn't say "I told you so!") & I could only tell her to stick to her guns if she found a re-union impossible, & leave it to him to get a divorce on grounds of desertion.

In the afternoon I went downtown & got from Birks a Sheaffer fountain-pen & desk stand, a gift from Aunt Marie

Bell for services rendered in connection with her recent legacy.
(I write this with the pen, a beauty). Left at Zwissera, for
framing, a photo of Jim Martell & ~~me~~^{me} at C.J.C.H., also an
amusing drawing by Bob Chambers, Hfx. Herald cartoonist, showing
the Little Man, his favorite character, reading Lambour with
great avidity. While there I saw a charming "oilette" copy of
Nattier's "Madame Sophie", & bought it, framed, for \$12.50.

In the meantime Bill had picked up his brother John,
just discharged from the army, & we left Hfx. at 4 p.m.
Still drizzling rain but most of the slush gone, & Bill drove
at 50 to 60 M.P.H. the whole way to L'pool. I had dinner
at the Wilsons, & after cherry-brandy & a cigarette in their
study went on to preside over a meeting of the Historical
Society in the assembly room, town hall - which is now under-
going re-decoration after serving as the I.O.D.E. club for service
men during the war. Twenty five people present, all enthusiastic,
& we seem to be off to a good start for 1946

FRIDAY, JAN. 11/46

Moderately cold, windy, sunny - had a good
walk to Milton & back. Enos Ford, who died on the 9th. after
a lingering illness (cancer) is buried at Milton this afternoon.

Not a speck of snow or ice to be seen anywhere along the river
& about the town. News:- a serious state of indiscipline in
U.S. troops in Europe & Japan - large mass meetings of
"indignation" being held, officers bo'd, etc; they all want to go home.

SATURDAY, JAN. 12, 1946 Calm, snowing lightly all afternoon & evening. Went up to Big Falls with Dunlap, Smith & Parker to chop our grey flat-boat out of the ice - it was frozen in by the unexpected cold snap early in December. Fortunately it was full of water, which froze solid & thus offset the pressure around it. The ice about 10" thick. The boat was unharmed. We cleared the ice inside by careful ax-work, got it free of the pond ice around it, hauled it ashore & turned it upside down on skids.

Returned about 5 p.m. & all came into my den for drinks - gin & ginger ale - & a yarn. Parker wants Dunlap & I to join the Golf club next spring, & we thought we might.

SUNDAY, JAN. 13, 1946 A biplane circled over town this morning, a large flying boat this afternoon - the first planes we have seen in many weeks. They are searching for a motorboat containing 2 Liverpool fishermen, Kelsey & Cunningham, who put out for the Ledge fishing ground on Friday & have not been seen since. (They were never found.)

I spent the whole day going through "Lambous" & marking errors in the typesetting, which was very bad. Apparently the printers paid no attention to my proof corrections, & I wrote a pointed letter to McBllland & Stewart about it. M. & S. now want a list of the errors so they can correct the type before the next edition.

The United Nations Organisation is meeting in London to select its H.Q. staff & working committees. The permanent headquarters is to be in the United States & there has been great

competition amongst American cities for the honor - none selected yet. The great wave of strikes still sweeping over the U.S. - thousands of telephone & telegraph workers now, stopping all communication, & the vast steel industry about to "walk out". Here in Canada, with the Ford workers back on the job pending gov't arbitration, there is no major trouble at the moment, although the meat-packing industries are in a turmoil.

MONDAY, JAN. 14/46 Our long thaw has come to a bitter end; a westerly gale of great force blowing all last night & today, with temp. down to 4° below zero. The fire siren wailing at intervals, night & day - chimney fires in most cases. The fuel shortage has driven people to burning green wood & slack bituminous coal; result is pipes & chimneys full of inflammable soot.

General Eisenhower has been visiting Ottawa & Toronto. He got a great reception & paid glowing tribute to the Canadian troops he commanded in Europe. Ottawa rumor says U.S.-Canadian defence problems are to be discussed soon, with a likelihood that henceforth Canadian uniforms and equipment etc. will be closely related to the U.S. types rather than to British, as in the past. Good sense, I think.

TUESDAY, JAN. 15/46 Snowing slowly all day. Hope is given up for the missing "fishermen" - both amateurs, really, trying their hand at fishing because of the high prices now paid. One was a negro war veteran named Kelsey who married one of old Kate Warrington's

girls, & he owned the boat, an old pleasure craft of Ross Byrne's. The other chap was a near-do-well petty thief named "Bumbo" Cunningham who lived on the old back road, west Milton.

Some of the small boat fishermen are clearing as much as \$500 per month. Yesterday a new dragger, the "Marie Brenda", was launched at Millburne for a group of Liverpool fishermen, financed by govt. (federal & provincial) loans and subsidies. Equipped, she cost \$70,000. This is the first dragger owned in L'pool & I think the second in Nova Scotia. Most of the Boston & Gloucester fleets are ~~composed~~ draggers now - there was a great change-over during the late war.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 16/46

This is the pattern of my life these winter days. I wake at 5 a.m., or 6 more rarely, & lie abed till 7 thinking on my novel & a variety of matters quite unrelated. Then I get up, shake the furnace down, light the oil stove in my den, & make my breakfast - a small dish of prunes, & pieces of buttered toast, 2 cups of strong coffee. I am at my desk by the time Edith & the kids get up - about 8 a.m. I read over yesterday's work, look up various bits of information, write a sentence or two, ponder a good deal, write a little more, ponder again, walk up & down a good deal, look at the snow outside for half an hour at a stretch. Towards 10 a.m. I emerge from my den, still in pajamas & dressing gown, tend the furnace, go upstairs, wash, & dress. At 11 a.m. I return to the desk

& find that my mind has now gathered itself for a spurt. From then till noon I write perhaps 500 words, seldom more. At noon the kids come home from school & Edith knocks sharply on my door as she & they sit down to dinner. I join them & say grace. After dinner I listen to the 1 o'clock news broadcast, diffidently in none of the amacious wartime manner - & go upstairs & shave.

If the day & the road are fit, I put on walking shoes, my old fur-collared blue pea-jacket, my old brown felt hat (a cap on windy days) gloves or mittens, & sally forth. Usually hike to Milton, up the east side of the river & down the west, 1½ hours' smart walking plus time for conversation with acquaintances along the way, so that the journey usually takes at least 2 hours & sometimes as much as 4, especially if I stop at Turner & McKnight's forge. On wet or snowy days I walk uptown to the "pre-fab" village, cross the railway bridge & follow the long curve of the line to Bristol avenue, thence to the post office, where I collect my mail, & down to the waterfront for a yarn with the Pickersons & their fishermen, or to Wright & Chandler's mortuary where a perpetual game of 45 attracts a curious little group each afternoon.

(They used to play on the white-enamelled corpse table, surrounded by bottles of embalming fluid, but a year ago they fitted up a little room apart, with card table & ash trays & a heavy curtain shutting off the gaze of passers-by.)

I do my simple shopping, cigarettes usually - I smoke 30 to 50 a day & reach home some time between 4 & 5, read the newspaper & my mail, glance through the magazines (Blackwood's, Maclean's, Reader's Digest, Saturday Evening Post, Legionary, Time, Life, New Yorker - which usually arrive at convenient intervals) and write my letters, nearly always on the typewriter. Towards 6 Edith raps my den door & I emerge for supper - grace at this meal said by Tommy or Frances.

After supper I tend the furnace, dump ashes etc. The kids always wash the supper dishes, their single chore, & after that Edith conducts Francis's music lesson & the school homework of both.

About 7.30 I am back at my desk. The process of the morning is repeated - a few words, a long wait, more words, more waiting, studying, smoking, fiddling with things about my desk, taking down my rifle from the rack & sighting it at something in the room, walking up & down the shabby carpet. Then the gathered mind & the spurt, usually between 10.30 & 11.30 + midnight. I emerge, stoke the furnace for the night, sometimes eat a few crackers & a glass of milk, sometimes mix myself a nightcap if I have some rum or gin. Then to my bedroom, where I usually lie reading for an hour before turning off the light & opening the windows. I wish I could sleep more, but an early bedtime only brings my old enemy insomnia and ruins the next day's work. I am now in my 43rd

year & weigh 195 - which Doc Murray says is 25 lbs. too much.

When I look in the glass I see a bald long-headed man with clipped grey hair at the sides & back, bushy black eyebrows in which one or two white hairs have appeared lately, a pair of quizzical brown eyes, a fleshy nose, a long mouth intended by nature to be lax and indulgent but firmly held for the past 15 years & now a little grim. The face is lined & sallow, losing the summer's brown but reddened a little by the winter air.

When I look at my somewhat worn exterior I marvel that I feel so ridiculously young at times; at heart I am still the incurable romantic that I was at twenty, despite a lot of rather cynical wisdom picked up along the way, with the same vague wistful longings & the same queer restlessness.

My wife is now quite grey, with the gaunt & rather haggard look of her mother. She is utterly devoted to her children, who twist her round their fingers to her heart's content & theirs.

She seldom goes out - a family trait on the distaff side in later life. Our marriage, stormy in the first few years, has long since settled into an effortless give-and-take, with the friendly acceptance & indifference of a pair of horses, not very well matched, who have nevertheless grown accustomed to the harness. On the whole we go along very well, & if caresses are few, I daresay our marriage is no worse than many others where the husband does not offer what the wife does not invite.

THURSDAY, JAN. 17, 1946

Temp. at 8 a.m., 10° below zero. Walked to Milton & back this afternoon. Snowing slowly all day.

Ordered 2 suits from Marshall - brown tweed, single-breasted, and grey serge, double-breasted. He thinks he can guarantee delivery by April 1st. Marshall is a little grey-stubbled drunken man who peers at you over a pair of spectacles set well down his nose - the only "tailor" in town - actually he sends his orders & measurements to a big firm ("Tip Top Tailors") in Montreal & Toronto, & gets a commission. These suits cost \$35 and \$32.50, he has no other lines; you take 'em or leave 'em.

Thompson's plant very busy again, refitting corvettes for foreign buyers, 500 men employed. A. Snow has sold the Mercury Hotel & gone into the coal business entirely. Hotel is said to have been bought by a syndicate who own the Carlton Hotel at Ottawa. Goose shooting season ended Jan. 15th & a poor one it was for the gunners. No geese, or very few, at Port Joli until about the 10th, when a flock of about 2500 gathered there, but soon made off to Port Herbert & stayed. Much indignation in Canada against General Chris Vokes, who commuted the death sentence on the German general Meyer to life imprisonment. Meyer commanded the S.S. division in Normandy who shot at least 68 Canadian prisoners at various times. The Canadian military court proved that Meyer, in training exercises before the battle, suggested killing

prisoners; but he was found not guilty of issuing direct orders for the death of the Canadians. Meyer will be imprisoned in Canada in a penitentiary & will probably be released within 20 years under the usual "good behaviour" terms.

Liverpool had a surplus of about \$9,000 in 1945, which is good news after the successive deficits, real or apparent, & the successive jumps in assessment and tax rate in late years.

My town taxes for 1944 & 1945 were over 31% higher than in 1940. Partly this is offset by a slight reduction in the electric bills; the town for years had been making a fat profit on its distribution of electricity & applying the profit to general expenses, but the Public Utilities Board of N.S. forbade this practice after 1943. On the other hand the P.U.B. required the town to instal a separate office for electrical accounts, with two additional employees, & further persuaded them to hire an electrical engineer - so that the old profit dwindled sadly. There was increased the cost of town administration, especially in the matter of schools. But the chief cause of our alarming increase of taxation lately goes back over many years, a persistent refusal by successive mayors & councils to face the facts in various departments, putting off the evil day for this & that, until at last matters came to a head in the midst of the war.

FRIDAY, JAN. 18/46 Somewhat milder. A good walk to Milton & back, & a yarn in McKnight's forge with old Lew Coombs,

who told me some amusing anecdotes of the late Col. F. V. L. Ford. The N.A. Liquor Commission has taken beer off the ration system, limiting daily purchases by any one person to 2 dozen quarts however. Wine remains rationed at 4 quarts (domestic) or 2 quarts (imported) per month; and gin at 4 quarts per month, all other spirits at 2 quarts per month.

SATURDAY, JAN. 19/46

Snow all day - about 8 inches by dark.

The new fish-dragger (see Jan. 15) will operate out of Lunenburg or Shelburne for the time being; the Liverpool fish plant cannot find hands or room to handle her catch, owing to the large number of small-boat fishermen now selling their catch here.

Ottawa reports that ration-books provide a good means of guessing the population without waiting for the census of 1951.

Dominion total, 12,119,000 people. Broken down, the figure shows the changes since 1941 - the wartime shift to industrial and service centers. P.E.I., Man. & Sask. have lost population.

Ontario has gained 216,000 & is now over 4,000,000. British Columbia has the largest proportional gain - 131,000, bringing the total to 950,000.

SUNDAY, JAN. 20/46

The tractor snow-plow passed around the streets last night & this morning. Not much snow. The town had gangs of teen-age boys shovelling off the sidewalks today - male labor for casual jobs is still very hard to get.

Temp. at noon 15° above zero in the sun. I went with

Brent Smith to the Perkins House, & gave him permission to take the first two volumes of the Historical Society's copy of the Perkins diary, for study. Afterwards we tramped to Potanoc & back, good crisp walking, sun bright on the new snow, the river frozen below Salmon Island. Temp. dropped to 4° below at dark.

MONDAY, JAN. 21/46 Overcast, snowing heavily by 1 p.m., rain tonight. I addressed the Kiwanis Club at luncheon in the Mercy Hotel, speaking on brouse, the figurehead carver, & exhibiting Crouse's wooden bust of Capt. Sam Kempton; urged the club men to join the Historical Society & support its endeavors, particularly in the matter of gov't. money for the Perkins House. A poor meal - our table served by a young Indian woman from Two Mile Hill. The new manager, Pottie, from Hfx., is also part owner, & his partner is Traser, manager of the Carlton Hotel in Hfx. Pottie promises much improvement in the hotel in the next six months.

A number of Jugoslav officers staying there, waiting to take over corvettes now refitting at Thompson's. They are thickly built men for the most part, with cropped dark hair & light eyes, rather grim in expression, & dressed in shabby mufti.

Movies tonight, with Edith & the kids. Pouring rain, deep slush, a fearful mess.

In France, the temperamental De Gaulle has resigned as President of France, says he is retiring from political life for ever.

This because the deputies have objected to his military budget.

At the Speerberg trial it was revealed that the brilliant general Rommel was involved in the plot against Hitler in July 1944, & that after he recovered from air-bomb injuries received in Normandy he was given the choice of hanging or poison. He poisoned himself on Oct. 15, 1944.

In the U.S.A. the vast steel industry is now shut down completely by a strike, indeed the whole country now is in the grip of organized labor demonstrating its power, at the expense ultimately of the common people.

At the Kuwanis luncheon today the conversation at our table drifted to taxation, & the vast sums of currency being hoarded at home in order to escape it. Johnson, manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia here, declared "It isn't all being hoarded in shoe-boxes & mattresses. I've good reason to believe that large sums in currency - in bills of high denomination - are being hoarded in safety boxes in my bank, & for that matter in every bank in the country."

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 23/46 Cold & clear. An inch or two of snow remains & the roads are a glare of ice. Walked to Milton & back this afternoon. The latest fad for those who have plenty of money to spend is to have one's house insulated. This is done by a crew of men who pry off clapboards here & there, & fill the space between inner & outer walls

This method of saving fuel for heat perished within 3 or 4 years. It was found that the mineral-wool "insulation" gathered moisture, & eventually rotted all the timbers & boards in contact with it.

with mineral wool, blown through a hose by a motor-pump in a truck outside. Several houses in Liverpool have been so treated, & the agent (Cliff Millard) has quite a list of applicants.

The cost for a two-story house of average size, like mine, is \$500⁰⁰. Millard wants to do mine but I told him \$500 would buy a lot of coal. Tommy has been practicing with the junior section of the school cadet band, & today brought home in triumph a battered old nickel-plated cornet, his to use for the next two weeks, & has been tooting away, the music sheet before him, beating time heavily with his foot - the tune, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star". Francie does well with her music & I think will make a pianist.

FRIDAY, JAN. 25/46 A bleak east wind began yesterday & by midnight was a howling S.E. hurricane with sheets of rain. It blew all day today, shifting to W. about noon with no less violence, the rain changing to snow. A very stormy winter, & much privation from scarcity of fuel. There is the usual winter epidemic of fires - the fire siren howls almost every day, & on stormy days like this, often 3 or 4 times a day. Chiefly due to burning green wood, with resultant clogging of chimneys with soot and creosote, & then a chimney fire. Many little shacks have been put up during & since the war, with the stovepipe stuck out through the roof - fire-traps all of them - & there have been some

THURSDAY, JAN. 31, 1946

Since Monday I have been in bed with what turned out to be a sharp attack of influenza - I should have gone to bed on the 25th when I felt it coming on but as usual waited until it knocked me off my feet. A bad knock to my writing schedule but it can't be helped.

Tommy came home from school yesterday very distressed - the school nurse had found louse-nits in his hair. In a phone talk with Edith afterwards the nurse explained that the classroom seats are double & Tommy's seat-mate was an unclean child from the Whynot-Town slum; she had ordered Tommy to change his seat & thought there would be no further trouble.

Of course Tommy felt disgraced, & couldn't eat any dinner & very little supper. Edith washed his head with soap & water, & then soaked it in vinegar. - he complained that he smelt like pickles.

News from the West Indies says that the famous old Nova Scotia fishing schooner "Bluenose" has struck a reef off Haiti & is a total loss. She was built in 1921, & since this war began she has been owned in the West Indies.

10 a.m. Andrew Merkel phoned from Alfa, & my mother a little later, to tell me that Jim Martell died in the Dartmouth mental hospital at 5 this morning. A mental breakdown caused by overwork, and the pneumonia which followed his exposure. ~~The~~ Something happened in his brain last Friday, when he told his wife that he felt very strange & disturbed. He was soon in

a delirious state, & while the doctor his wife had sent for endeavored to quiet him, Jim broke away & escaped from the house. A search found him wandering about on the golf course (Gorsebrook) in the snow, & nearly naked. They took him to Dartmouth because he resisted violently all attempts to treat him, but I understand he was quite rational towards the end.

He was only 34, a fine mind, devoted to Nova Scotia, & a great loss to all of us.

FRIDAY, FEB. 1/46

My first venture outdoors since the 26th; went downtown this morning for a haircut etc. Streets & roads a mass of ice. Feel very queer still; nose still running & a hard cough.

At 1 pm. caught the train to Hfx. The parlor car only half full, a comfortable if monotonous trip. No taxis available outside the station when I reached the curb. Day wind.

I walked into the Nova Scotian Hotel to phone for a taxi but the switchboard girl told me it was useless - "They'll never send a cab to the hotel. You have to go outside & pick up one that comes along!" From all of which it was clear that the coming of peace has not improved the Halifax taxicab mess. I phoned Andy Merkel, who came down for me in his car. Dinner with Mum & Kilda. In the evening walked down to Pilchers, florists, & selected a basket of flowers for the Martell funeral - iris & chrysanthemums #15⁰⁰/_{xx}

Merkel arrived at 10 pm. after an evening vigil at

the "Halifax Funeral Home" where poor Jim Martell's body is lying & on view to friends. Andy talked a great deal about his forthcoming retirement as Maritimes manager of Canadian Press, & the restaurant-lodge-radio station which he proposes to run at Granville, N.V. He is still on a strict diet, has lost much weight & looks better, full of ideas & pep.

SATURDAY, FEB. 2/46 Cold, sunny. I kept vigil at the "Funeral Home" all morning at Andrew's request. The idea is to have some friend of the deceased present when visitors arrive. It was my first experience with a "funeral home".

The "Halifax Funeral Home" is on Dresden Row, directly across the street from a rival concern, "Mattatall's Funeral Home." Both have large painted signs advertising their business but the "Halifax" has also a large neon-lit sign. Dresden Row in my youth was a respectable little residential street (I remember Father taking me there to call on old Miss MacNab, the last of her line.) But it is now a semi-slum of drab, shabby wooden houses huddled one against the next and all crowding against the sidewalk. There is one large old residence in good repair & bright paint, taken over by the Belgian govt. during the war. A sign says "Belgian Merchant Seaman's Residence" & the Belgian flag flies from a short staff before it; the building is now for sale, like all the other hostels established for foreign seamen in Hfx during the war. The "Halifax Funeral Home"

is apparently run by two tall sleek youngish men named MacAskill, who live on the second floor with their families.

You enter a large parlour furnished with comfortable red plush armchairs & a cheap Persian carpet & divan.

The room has a high ceiling, & heavy & elaborate plaster cornices, & a drop-light in a white shade hangs from a point in the ceiling surrounded by concentric rings of plasterwork — exactly as if you stood on the bottom of a tank looking up at a flung stone just descending upon you & above it the water-rings made on the surface.

There are long drapes of deep purple in a thin cottony sort of stuff, & all the window shades are drawn. A plaster arch draws attention to an adjoining chamber, where in a subdued light & in a mass of flowers carefully arranged on a framework, the coffin stands on a bier, the upper half open.

Poor Jim had bitten his lips badly in the delirium of his fatal illness, & the "morticians" had sewn the wounds & plastered lips with rouge & the face with that awful powder they use, which makes a dead human look like a wax dummy.

Nevertheless he looked very peaceful & I am told he was quite rational towards the end. Visitors drifted in & out, looked at Jim & the flowers, signed the little "visitors' book" which afterwards is presented to the relatives by the

undertakers. Flowers arrived all morning. Dr. Murphy (former Minister of Health in the provincial gov't.) came & chatted with me for a while. His son is married to Jim's sister Fran.

I went home for lunch & a shave & walked down to All Saints' Cathedral, where the funeral service began at 3 p.m. The honorary pallbearers were Dr. George Wilson (who teaches history at Dalhousie), Fred Cross (editor of the Chronicle), Dr. Burns Martin of King's, Judge Elliott Hudson (of the juvenile court) John Laing of Dalhousie office, two men named Burnham & MacLaren representing the Credit Union movement; and Andrew Merkel & me.

I had not been in the cathedral since I was a boy but the old impression of chill & gloom & a reverberating emptiness came back. The building has always suffered from a sort of pernicious penetration of damp, & the big explosions at Halifax in the summer of '45 damaged it, particularly about the windows. There was a good deal of wooden scaffolding within & without.

The bishop (Kingston) & handsome cleric young Canon Ellis had charge of the funeral service. They & a number of other clergy & a small choir of men marched slowly down the aisle, followed by the honorary pallbearers, (8 in all) then the coffin on a quiet steel carriage trundled by 4 undertakers. The coffin was covered with a padded purple cloth on which a large white cross was sewn, & upon this stood a "pillow" of flowers sent by Olga & Jim's mother. The service was not long, & then we

went down the aisle in the same order that we came in. Olga looked ill as she & the family mourners emerged from the cathedral & walked down the steps between the waiting pallbearers. She & her mother gave me brave little smiles. What a terrible experience for both of them. There were many people in the cathedral; & the cortege which was as usual at winter funerals exclusively male, must have numbered 50 or more. We walked beside the hearse to Camp Hill Cemetery, no great distance. There we found an odd coincidence. A Dalhousie professor named Copp, who died on the same day as Jim, had been buried half an hour or less before we arrived - and the two graves adjoined. Both had stacks of flowers about them, & the artificial green-turf stuff that undertakers use to hide the earth heaps, & the only way of telling which was which was that Copp's coffin was lying in the bottom of his grave awaiting the shovelling-in. The graveside ceremony was brief in the Anglican manner. Afterwards I shook hands with Bill Martell, Parson J. W. A. Nicholson, Don Mackay. Tully had brought Andrew's car to the side street opposite the Summer Street entrance of Camp Hill, & he & I & John Raing went on down to 50 South St. There Tully mixed hot buttered rums to stave the chatter of our teeth - we turned down an empty glass for

Jim. A Miss Hollows who is staying with the Merkels showed us the charming little penguins etc. she makes out of sea shells. Bill Sclater arrived, & a Captain Morris, Indian Army Medical Corps, & his wife, a Hfx girl whom I met last year. Morris was one of the Singapore garrison & spent 4 years in Jap prisons. He returns to India next month. He told us some good stories of Jap naivety and stupidity in propoganda amongst prisoners; said that after the surrender at Singapore he had seen General Percival boo'ed by a large number of Tommies whom the Japs had quartered in a wrecked theatre. The general impression of the troops was that the brass hats had bungled the whole campaign & then sold them down the river.

The Morris's dropped me at Mum's flat at 6.30 & I had dinner there & a quiet evening reading & writing.

SUNDAY, FEB. 3/46 Snowing & blowing, a nasty day. Standing hatters in the porch of All Saints & later at the graveside yesterday made my cold worse again. All day snuffling & nose-blowing wretchedly. At 2 pm I phoned for a taxi & drove to 28 Oakland Road; had an hour with Olga & Jim's mother. Both hearing up well. I made them promise to let me know anytime there is something I can do for them. Walked back to Mum's flat.

At 6 p.m. Bill Sclater called for me with an R.C.N. car & chauffeur, & took me to dinner at Admiralty ("Ad") House.

Sunday night is visitors' night at the mess, & there were many sweethearts & wives, & a number of commissioned Wrens, & nurses, in the throng of young officers. Noticed several midshipmen of the new R.C.N. Met the famous Denis O'Hagan, who won the George Medal for dangerous mine disposal work. A little, cocky man of 35 or so, somewhat drunk, he told me he is now running a gang of stereobores on the H&K waterfront. A number of recently discharged officers like O'Hagan were there in mufti, & I seemed to detect a certain wistfulness in some of them. As Bill said as we left "Ad" House later - "This place is haunted now, it's full of ghosts."

After several rum-&-colas in the wardroom (a long high-ceilinged red-carpeted room with a large white mantel ornamented by an anchor-and-shell design in relief, ^{repeated in} a sort of gesso work ^{on the ceiling;} comfortable chairs & divans in brown imitation-leather; & with a small bar, & two busy bar stewards at the east end) we went on through the main diningroom to the glassed-in verandah, where a seemingly endless line of officers & guests gathered a tray, plates, cutlery & cold cuts, salads, baked sweet potatoes etc. from the long buffet tables. We had a fine dinner, then wandered all over the house inspecting the naval prints, etc.; looked in the library, mostly stocked with books on naval warfare past & present & all well thumbed. In one or two rooms the foul anchor & shell design is on the ceiling; but most ceilings are plain.

We sat in the wardroom until 10 p.m., drinking port &

chatting with a great number of officers whose names I can't remember (except "Rooney" Annersley, a short pudgy clever young man with small shrewd brown eyes, who is captain of the destroyer "Haida".) Contrary to the run of naval officers, who swear that Victoria B.C. is the most desirable place in the world, "Rooney" says that Victoria bored him. It was full of people with phony English accents putting on phony English airs, "All right if you like playing bridge & talking gardens - but bridge & gardens bore me to death. Vancouver has at least the virtue of being alive - they were having armed robberies in the streets, in banks & so on all the time - but frankly I was glad to get back to this coast." Annersley is from Montreal.

Home in an R.C.N. car - Bill seems to have these things at his command, & phoned Andy & Jully Merkel to say So Long. Andy is full of his tourist-centre scheme at Granville & a very busy man. Art Merkel is out of the navy, has a public-relations job with C.P.R. at Halifax. ~~Sh John.~~

MONDAY, FEB. 4/46. Bitter cold. Up at 6, taxi at 7, train left for L'pool at 7.25. Sam Campbell in the parlor ^{car} & we chatted all the way. My cold still nasty & uncomfortable. The influenza epidemic is everywhere & the railway ^{station & train} were full of sneezing, wheezing, coughing or nose-blowing people.

TUESDAY, FEB. 5/46 Fine & cold. I stayed indoors nursing my cold, which has now settled in the sinuses of my right cheek and

temple. Neuralgia, nose stuffed always (I have now been breathing through my mouth for ten days & nights, the longest session ever) and absolutely no taste or smell, a miserable existence.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 6/46 5° below zero at 6 a.m. My cold no better. Stayed indoors. Got in a good day's work at my novel - the first since Jan. 28th. At 5 p.m. went down to stoke the furnace & discovered a large & sudden leak in my fuel oil drum, the oil running merrily along the cellar floor towards the ash-pit of the furnace. Got it plugged for the time being. The drum was newly filled yesterday & is too heavy to move - a potential fire menace of a deadly sort. At 9 p.m. I took another look at my oil drum & found it leaking in 3 more places. The drum is kept on its side in a wooden cradle, & the inevitable water in the oil settles to "bottom" (i.e. the whole lower side of the drum) below the level of the tap, where it rusts the thin metal. The whole lower side of the drum (purchased new in 1935 & repaired in 1943) seems gone like a colander. Phoned my oil man (he was playing a match in the curling rink) & he brought over a new drum & we transferred the oil to it. By that time half the cellar floor was wet with oil & the whole place reeked of it - I was afraid of an explosion for a time. The oil is used in my office stove, a finer oil than that used in furnaces & much more volatile. The popularity of oil for

heating purposes has meant drums & tanks of this sort in a good many homes, some of them kept upstairs, even in attics. It seems to me that these treacherous thin-metal things, giving way perhaps at night & pouring a flood of oil across the floor to the furnace pit or register or some other source of ignition, are probably responsible for many of the mysterious fires which destroy a house & its inmates in one sudden rush of flame; there have been an extraordinary number of such fires in eastern Canada (& no doubt elsewhere) this winter.

In London the United Nations Organisation wrangles on. Persia accused Russia of interference in her internal affairs. Russia promptly demanded of U.N.O. what British troops were doing in Greece & Java, & so it goes.

Much ado over the careless dumping of war explosives in the Bay of Fundy; many of the containers drifted ashore & several people were injured by tampering with them. It is revealed that these explosives were shipped by rail from Ontario munitions factories to St. John recently. Which reminds me that about 2 weeks ago a huge quantity (3 trains) of poison gas, manufactured in central Canada during the war & never used, was shipped to Hfx in drums under careful guard, ^{then} loaded into an old naval craft & under naval supervision taken out to sea & sunk "somewhere to the north-east of Sable Island". (See Feb. 19/46)

There was an election in town today. D. W. Mackay opposed Edgar Wright for mayor. The result, Wright 461, Mackay 377. Mackay is a shabby little wreck of a man, once prosperous, & a swindler; his votes were testimony to the unpopularity of Wright amongst the employees of Thompson Brothers, I think.

THURSDAY, FEB. 7/46

Rain. I ventured as far as the post office this afternoon. I understand that a recent meeting sponsored by the local branch of the Legion decided to raise funds to build a community centre for games, meetings, etc, as a memorial to the dead of the 2nd. German War. The Queens County Hospital fund now stands at \$86,000 - objective \$125,000. The need for so large a hospital becomes less & less as the weeks go by. The original argument was that the small & overcrowded hospital at Bridgewater was the only one between Hfx & Yarmouth on the south shore. Since the local campaign started, however, Shelburne has acquired the big navy hospital there; Lunenburg has raised \$100,000 for a hospital of its own, & even North Queens has acquired a "cottage hospital".

9 p.m. Charlie Copelin called with his car & insisted on taking Edith & me down to his house for a chin, so we went. Ann Copelin had a cosy fire in the living room but Charlie carried me off to what he calls the "quarterdeck" where he has a little den with nautical wallpaper & souvenirs of his service in two wars. He is back at his old job of Marine Superintendent

writer. His greeting was, "My God, another one!" The yard had just been under visitation by a large party of journalists. Nevertheless he gave me half an hour of his time, striding up & down his office as if it were a quarterdeck, gave me the full run of the yard, & provided me with excellent guides; he impressed me as capable, irascible, very proud of the R.C.N. & every man in it, & ready to see that - by God! - every man deserved it.

TUESDAY, FEB. 12/46 Sunny, cold. Insomnia again last night. But had a glorious walk around Western Head this afternoon & a long soak in a hot tub afterwards, & this evening feel better than for weeks.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 13/46 Merrill Rawding, our M.L.A. for Queens, phoned this morning, asked me to come down to his house & talk to Robert Winters, M.P. for Queens-Lunenburg, on the old fort & the Perkins house, & the reasons why the federal gov't. should spend money on them. Winters is a tall blond man, 35 or so, a colonel in the administrative end of things in Montreal & Ottawa during the war; has determined on a political career & is busy cultivating his constituency in the off-session. He seemed dubious about the Perkins house proposition. I pointed out that the federal gov't had spent over \$100,000 on the fort at Amnapolis & the Champlain "habitation" nearby, & he laughed & said, "Of course, that's Illsley's constituency." However he promised to do what he could. (Liverpool business men also want a government wharf on the east side of the river.)

FRIDAY, FEB. 15, 1946

Thaw all yesterday, & all last night a howling S.W. gale with sheets of warm rain. Today most of the ice is gone, & the dirt roads are a sea of mud with cars ploughing furrows & making the water fly. Much excitement amongst the ladies; after four years of baggy "rayon" stockings & cotton & wool stockings, the longed-for "nylons" are to go on sale in a few days. None of the dealers have enough for more than a quarter of their customers, & to avoid a riot on sales-day most of them are now running a sort of registration system under which each customer gets one pair as the goods arrive & as her number is drawn. Tonight I presided over a meeting of the Historical Society in the assembly room of Town Hall. A good attendance but only one man. Ladies seem much more historically inclined. Membership committee reported 45 new members in the past month — excellent! The speaker for the evening couldn't get here so I substituted, reading a paper on the "Indian Devil" legends of the Mersey River. Also reminded the Society that our duties included the preservation of current history, & sketched various activities in Queens during the late war — Red Cross, A.R.P., Reserve troops, I.C.D.C., coastal watchers, etc., whose stories should be preserved. Closed the meeting at 9.30. Snow squalls blowing, the mud turned white in the streets.

SATURDAY, FEB. 16, 1946

A howling NW gale shook the house all night & most of today, temp. 2° to 10° above zero. The furnace had gone out & the house was like an icebox when I got up this morning.

Much ado on the radio & in the newspapers over Ottawa's announcement yesterday that Canadian gov't. employees & former gov't. employees had been supplying information to the Russian mission at Ottawa concerning Canada's "war potential".

R.C.M.P. have made at least 50 arrests in various Canadian cities. It was assumed that the espionage had to do with the atomic bombs, but cabinet minister Howe says No.

The big steel strike in the U.S. is over - the men have the extra $18\frac{1}{2}^t$ per hour they demanded, & the owners get another $\$5$ per ton for steel. Much of the wage & price system in the U.S. is based on steel, so that other firms in dispute over wages are following suit, & up go the prices all round. Here in Canada, as a result of the recent wage increase to Nova Scotia coal miners, the price of coke now goes up another $\$1.50$, making it $\$17.50$ per ton, the same price as American anthracite, a much superior fuel.

SUNDAY, FEB. 17/46

Gordon, Smith & I went to Eagle Lake at 9 this morning. A zero night but the wind swung SW and the sky was overcast all day, & everything thawing. We took axes & cleared out 3 miles of trail between Big Falls & Eagle Lake, & from the lake down to the brook mouth. This made

necessary by the heavy sticky snows of December, which pressed the saplings over & in many cases broke them off (see entry Jan 5/46) a terrible mess & a sad thing to see. Owing to the successive thaws during the past 6 weeks the brooks & lakes are very high, & the swamps flooded. We had lunch in the camp at Eagle Lake & returned to the car at 5 p.m.

Saw 2 deer on the trail down Eagle Brook, & 6 on the river road. One of these deer mounted another; presumably they were buck & doe, though of course none had horns; I never heard of such a thing so far past the mating season. We disturbed them as we came along & the presumed doe ran out from under, & both jumped into the woods. All these deer seemed to be in good condition. The winter has been unusually open this year, even for western N.Y.

Gordon says the Indians (Louis Glode et al) snared "the biggest wildcat they ever saw" near our camp at Eagle Lake last month. This must be the big old cat who has given us many a brief glimpse of himself during the 15 years we have been camping at the lake. We saw the tracks of a good sized fox on the trail near Big Falls.

MONDAY, FEB. 18/46

No walk today, except through town to the railway bridge & along the line to Bristol & so home. Roads are simply muck, & the sky alternate sunshine & snow squalls

TUESDAY, FEB. 19, 1946

Sunny, cold, (zero last night) dust blowing in clouds along the bare dirt roads. Had a good walk to Milton. B.J. Waters phoned, wanted me to suggest names for the 2 ships lately purchased by Mersey Paper Company through its marine subsidiary. I suggested Micmac names of some of the timberlands where Mersey pulpwood is cut - Tobatic, Pescawa, Pescaess, Molega, Potanoo, etc.

Region executive meeting tonight to consider disorders by one or two drunks at the last general meeting. Moved & carried that no intoxicating drinks be permitted on the premises from this date, & that disorderly persons be ejected & suspended from membership.

Afterwards Brent Smith, Sewall Sterns & I went on to Austin Parker's house for beer & a yarn. Edwin Parker was there, just back from army service in Holland. He & Sterns had been members of a "survy regiment" & told us some interesting yarns about flash & sound spotting, the various types of guns, shells, rockets & bombs in use during the fighting in France, Belgium, Holland & Germany, & the ingenious tricks of both sides in concealing guns, etc.

Today, 2800 tons of mustard gas (manufactured at Cornwall, Ontario during the war & never called into use) which has been stored at Halifax for some days or weeks (see entry Feb. 6/46) was taken out to sea in an old landing craft for tanks (LCT) & sunk in 1500 feet of water "somewhere near Sable Island".

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 20, 1946

A wild snowy day & night.

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics estimates Nova Scotia's 1945 population at 621,000 compared with 513,000 in 1931, { 578,000
1941 }

There was a decrease of 11,000 in the population in the decade 1921 - 1931 when there was a steady drift to the States, but since then the growth has been continuous. To a great extent this is due to the rigid immigration quotas imposed by the U.S. about 1931; & of course to the gathering of people in the province due to the war.

THURSDAY, FEB. 21/46

Snow, rain, sleet, freeze. The streets a mass of rugged ice, the worst yet, with a high NW wind & snow flurries.

No further official news of the Russian spy affair. Newspapers say that 3 executives of the Eldorado Mining & Smelting Co. (owners of the uranium mine at Great Bear Lake until the Canadian gov't took it over 2 years ago) had sold \$500,000 worth of uranium to the Russian military mission at Ottawa. One of these executives was a French scientist formerly associated with the Curies, another appears to have been an American of Russian descent. The gaff was blown to the Canadian police by one Gosenko, a coder in the Soviet embassy at Ottawa, who is now under police protection with his family. Moscow admits that "certain Canadian citizens had given information regarding materials used in atomic research, to the Russian military mission at Ottawa" Moscow adds that the information given was of no use to

Russian scientists, who are farther ahead in their own research.

The Russian military attache at Ottawa & the Russian ambassador returned to Russia by plane some time before the news broke. Comment in British & U.S. papers generally is that we might as well give up trying to "cooperate" with Russia, unless Russia changes her ways.

Elsewhere, the British are in trouble in Egypt, where troops have had to fire on mobs; in Palestine, where armed Jews continue to attack police, army & air force posts; in Bombay, where a large portion of the Royal Indian Navy is in open mutiny, & white people dare not appear in the streets without escort; and in Java.

FRIDAY, FEB. 22/46

Bitter cold, with a whistling W. gale. A Boy Scout rally tonight in the Legion rooms. A bean & doughnut feast first, then I gave a brief talk on the Indians of Queens County & exhibited some of my collected arrowheads, pottery etc. Tom Ratchford followed with motion pictures. A smart troop there from Mill Village, & a troop of Girl Guides from Brooklyn. The scout movement fell off sadly in Liverpool during the war for lack of leaders; it needs young men, & one or two are out of the service now who are former scouts & seem to be taking an interest. 60 kids present.

SUNDAY, FEB. 24/46

Cold, overcast. Walked to Milton & back this afternoon with Austin Parker, after being more or less housed since Tuesday by bad weather. Treacherous footing, the roads

like rivers of ice lightly dusted with snow. Just as we turned homeward a bleak easterly gale began to throw snow in our faces - a raging snowstorm by night.

One public service enormously improved by the war is our meteorological service. Forecasts are given twice a day; they are detailed for each part of the Maritimes (we are "West of Sable", i.e. Sable Island) & are accurate beyond comparison with those of pre-war days.

Heard a familiar sound on my radio last night - a loud hoarse "spark" wireless transmitter sending dots & dashes. I copied the message which proved to be from my old acquaintance the lighthouse supply steamer "Lady Laurier", telling the Marine & Fisheries office at Hfx about her day's work (replacing, overhauling gas & bell buoys at Port Medway, checking position of Liverpool fairway buoy, etc, and "anchored in Liverpool harbor for the night"). This is the ship which took me off Sable Island in the spring of 1922. I find I can read the code almost as quickly as ever, though it is nearly 24 years since I quit "pounding brass".

The Bureau of Statistics at Ottawa still insists solemnly that the cost of living in Canada is only 18.9% above 1939. An independent survey by an Ottawa newspaper shows that the cost of food is up 33%, clothing 22%. Here in N.S. hard coal & coke are up 25%; hardwood fuel is up 80% in Queens Co.

MONDAY, FEB. 25 1946

Last night's snowstorm turned to rain this morning, & after 1 p.m., just when all was slush, the wind swung NW & blew a gale, with temperature dropping like a stone. Result, more ice than ever on the roads & sidewalks.

TUESDAY, FEB. 26/46

Good walk to Milton & back; very rough going on the west side of the river, where the culverts have filled with ice & compelled the drainage from the slope to flow over the road, where it freezes in layers on layers.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 27/46

Snow all night, drizzling rain all day. Last night I worked till half-past 12, went to bed 12.45, awakened at 4 a.m. - no more sleep - lay till 5, got up & made breakfast & then to work. Caught an hour's uneasy nap on my office couch in the afternoon. No walk today.

For a month our family has been taking "vitamine pills" - the kids prefer them to cod liver oil - in the hope of getting some substitute for sunshine & green vegetables. A popular fad nowadays - some doctors uphold it, others say nonsense.

I know that I feel very well, apart from this damned insomnia. My novel grows steadily. For 8 months now my workroom has been littered with books, ancient & modern, dealing with Nova Scotia & the islands of the Caribbean (especially Haiti, in the latter part of the 18th century) & ships & sailors & dress, customs & speech of the period, the whole room dominated by a big chart of the West Indies north of Latitude 17°

THURSDAY, FEB. 28, 1946.

Pouring rain all day & a flood in the streets, for the roads & drains are covered with ice. The house gutters were full of Tuesday night's snow, softened a little by Wednesday's drizzle & turned to ice by a few hours of frost in the early part of Wednesday night. Result, they were plugged solid & the rain water backed up under the flashing & we had a small flood in our living room & a 6-foot long stain on the ceiling. What with the 'flu & the weather this has been the damndest February I can remember.

FRIDAY, MARCH 1/46

A lovely sunny day but a fearful mess of slush & melting ice under foot. I paddled (couldn't call it walking) to Milton & back. The people of Port Mouton are holding a reception tonight for their boys discharged from the services. They invited me to address the gathering & sent a car for me at 5 p.m. My old friend Alan Rangille, lightkeeper on Little Hope for many years & now retired & living in Port Mouton, took me to his comfortable home looking out on the harbor, & we sat down to a family tea - sauer-kraut hash, cold boiled meat, cookies & preserved blueberries. At 7:30 we went up to the village hall where on the second floor we found a large company of men & women, a small stage decorated with flags & a single framed portrait - Queen Victoria. I sat on the stage with three parsons - the chairman being a small elderly Englishman named

Locates who is the present minister of central Port Mouton; a lively little grey man - also English & a chronic H-dropper - named ~~Sweet~~ Sweetnam, former parson at Port Mouton & now living retired at Liverpool; & a blond whimsical hunched young man named Colpitts, parson at Rockport, who has under his temporary care the church at Table River. There were 30 or 40 young veterans present, from Summerville, Central & S.W. Port Mouton & Table River - all who could get there in the vile condition of the roads - many with their wives. There was a musical program; a young man & woman sang two duets to the man's accompaniment on the guitar; tall, white-haired, hook-nosed, merry-eyed old Tom ("Black Tom") Boyle from West Caledonia - now living at Port Mouton - took fiddle & played "The Road to the Isles" & then a jig. The piece de resistance was an "orchestra" composed of pianist, violinist, a girl with castanets, a young man tapping & rattling a washboard, another playing a musical saw, & two girls humming through combs - who gave two performances with skill & spirit.

I spoke on the theme of rehabilitation, pointing out the various vocational training courses, loans & other help available to the young veterans, urging them to make good use of them, & reminding them that a willingness to work was still the best asset in getting along in the world. The parsons spoke words of welcome, one after another - Sweetnam

dropping H's like the gentle rain from heaven & obviously enjoying himself in the midst of his old flock. Specially engraved certificates attesting the gratitude of the community for their gallant service were presented to the war veterans, & then came God Save the King — about 9 p.m. All went down to the lower floor where on long tables a feast was spread — sandwiches, all kinds of cakes, cookies & pies (representing a good deal of careful sugar-saving by the housewives of the district.) Everybody tucked in, & afterwards we all mingled, talking busily with old friends & new. A pleasant evening altogether. Home towards 11 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAR. 2/46. Overcast, mild. Parker, Dunlap, Smith & I went to Big Falls this afternoon in my car. On the way I stopped at a town garage & bought a Livestone 6-ply tire (size 600-16) & a tube to match — both synthetic rubber, of course. I had not bought a tire since before the war, when they cost from \$10 to \$20. My new tire costs \$22.00, the tube \$4.30. I wanted these for spares, distrusting my ancient tires & tubes. The river road still covered with ice in many places, with two deeply worn ruts full of water; where bare the road was rutted over its whole width but not deeply. Got to Big Falls about 2:30 p.m. & walked to Eagle Lake by following the west shore of N^o 3 pond to Eagle Lake Brook & thence up

the brook bank to camp. About 4 inches of snow in the woods & much ice & water flowing everywhere. (We took this route to avoid crossing Half Way Bog, which was probably flooded.) The power people evidently have a full head of water at No. 1 storage dam, for they are spilling a great quantity & the river is in flood, covering the flat at Big Falls level with the windowsill of Bern Freeman's shack.

Reached camp about 5 p.m. after a hot & tiring tramp & the snow crusty & breaking underfoot. Eagle Lake still frozen over but the ice looks dark & rotten. Had a couple of stiff gins all round & made a fine supper of a pot of home-baked (indeed, home grown) beans brought in by Smith. Saw a deer in the old burn on the way from Big Falls; in running away over the charred windfalls it made two jumps that were easily 8 feet off the ground.

SUNDAY, MAR. 3/46. Heavy rain all night. We made a late breakfast & then the weather turning merely foggy, went down to the river & carried up the skiff that Parker built last year & brought as far as the foot of the brook trail last autumn. We had been waiting for a heavy snow, planning to haul it to camp on some sort of hand-sled; but there was not enough snow

this winter to cover the rocks. It weighed about 200 lbs & had soaked up a good deal of water since leaving Parker's cellar-workshop. We carried it 50 paces & stopped for breath, repeating this all the way to the dam — about a mile, all uphill — where we launched & paddled it around to the camp. Dinner (after drinks all round) at 2 p.m.; came back to Big Falls about 5 by way of the trail — the Half Way Bog flooded but frozen over, & the ice sagged but bore us safely. Had a flat tire at Potanoo on the way home.

TUESDAY, MAR. 5/46 Sunny, warm. I walked to the railway bridge & along the track to Bristol Avenue — the Milton road is deep in mud & water. The boys on the waterfront tell me that frequently this winter a bald eagle has spent hours foraging in the town dump, across the river. The big flock of gulls, who scavenge there regularly, gave the eagle a wide berth but the crows had no fear of him & sometimes banded together & drove him off.

This afternoon Mr. Winston Churchill & President Truman were given honorary degrees at Westminster College, in a small Missouri town, "the heart of the United States." Churchill's speech followed an introduction by Truman, & was broadcast all over the world. His voice was grave & seemed shaken at times. His chief points were that Russia was

says it's impossible to get breeches to fit boys past that age.

Frances contributed one of her priceless remarks to the fun of the day. Her little Catholic chum Anne-Marie Doucet announced that she was giving up the movie show for Lent, so Francie announced solemnly to us at dinner "I've decided to give up going to church for Lent." She was annoyed when we howled.

TUESDAY, MAR. 12/46 Sunny, cold. Lovely brisk walk around the Head this afternoon. "Lady Laurier" lying off the outer fairway buoy, apparently at work. Gangs of men cutting a right-of-way for electric light lines along the shore from a pool to the Head.

THURSDAY, MAR. 14/46 Sunny, mild. Drove to Wentzels Lake this afternoon. Lake still covered with ice. Railwaymen setting fire to dead grass along the right of way, and lumbermen burning slash from the winter's logging, filled the air with that sweet charred smell which means spring. Lumbermen have been extremely busy this winter - logs everywhere.

The provincial gov't's rural electricity scheme seems in full swing: noticed new pole lines along the Liverpool - Switzer road, & on the road running off to East Port Medway & Vogler's Cove. Conducted a meeting of the Historical Society in town hall tonight. Few there. Too much competition, I guess: the curling club were holding some sort of season's-end party, there was a concert in the high

school auditorium with two imported singers under I.O.O.F. auspices, & something on at Masonic Hall. For a town of its size Liverpool has more societies & meetings than any other I know. Peter Jack phoned from Chester, extremely drunk, & wants me to come to lunch with him - "name a date." I said March 21st, for on that date I have to go to Lunenburg in any case to address a dinner of the Board of Trade.

Jack is head of A.M. Jack & Co - Hfx. insurance brokers, a director of Mersey Paper Co, former chairman of the Hfx. Harbor Commission, now living in retirement at Chester. I have had some correspondence with him but have never met him. He says he wants to discuss with me a theme for a novel. It sounds like one of Jones's propositions - but it will be interesting to study another specimen of the Big Business Man - Alcoholic Division.

FRIDAY, MAR. 15/46

P. Jack phoned early this morning, sober, & beat about the bush delicately to find out just what arrangements had been made last night. I told him & he rang off happily.

Fine & warm again today, hardly a breath of air stirring, a good walk to Milton & back. Heard the first song sparrow of spring, singing loudly, near Hill's Grove - the earliest I can remember. Edith went up to have tea with her family, her weekly visit, & I drove up at 7 p.m. to bring her back.

Much ado at Thompson Bros. plant, most of the 300 men again laid off, & rumors that Charles Smith, manager, & Bert Kempton, machine foreman, have been fired by the Royal Trust Co. which has charge of the works under Harry Thompson's will. Six or eight corvettes remain tied up at Thompson's & other wharves, supposedly sold to Jugoslav & other interests, & partly refitted. Rumor says that the owners are dissatisfied with Thompson's work, & that the whole flotilla is to go to a U.S. port for the completion of the refit. Something fishy about all this.

Tonight I heard Winston Churchill's speech broadcast from New York, where he was guest of honor at a dinner tendered him by the city, & attended by 2000 people. (Newspapers say the dinner tickets were \$15 each, & 10,000 people applied for the 2000 seats.)

Governor Dewey of N.Y. State spoke eloquently on the distinguished guest, also John Winant, U.S. ambassador to Britain. Churchill was in good form, spoke solemnly for the most part. He did not refer to Stalin by name. (After the Churchill speech at Fulton, Missouri, Stalin made a typical attack on him - which was broadcast from Moscow - calling Churchill a liar, a war-monger, etc. in the familiar manner of the Soviet press.) But Churchill re-affirmed all he said at Fulton, vowing that the

close association of Britain & U.S. in world affairs was the only hope for peace, & pointing out that Russian demands on Turkey & Persia were a grave affront to the freedom of those countries & the whole structure of the U.S.P.O. He sails for home in a day or so.

SATURDAY, MAR. 16/46 Another lovely day. Song sparrows in my garden & everywhere as I walked to Milton this afternoon. Jim Buchanan stopped me on the way & brought out a Tower musket (cap-fire) dated 1857, & bearing the British "W.D." & broad arrow, for my inspection. Also a packet of paper cartridges issued in Queens County for use in such guns during the early Fenian raids, the stout brown paper bearing the stamp "1861". The cartridge is of the sort which is said to have started the Indian Mutiny - a simple cylinder of white paper with the bullet sealed in wax at one end. Bullet is partly hollow, with a wooden plug to expand the lead & thus ensure good rifling when fired.

Parliament opened at Ottawa yesterday, but the big news from the capital was a further release of details of the great Russian spy plot & the arrest of Rose, our only communist M.P., at his home in Montreal. He was released on bail & intends to take his seat in the house on Monday. Other people under arrest include a professor of Montreal University, a Polish-born ex-officer in

the R.C.N., & foreign-born Munitions & Supply Dept man whose wife has relatives in Russian-occupied Rumania, & a former ground officer in the RCAF who served in Canada, on both coasts, in the telegraph service. The accounts of activities of these people & the busy Soviet military mission at Ottawa read like an old-time spy thriller, & all Canada & the U.S. are agog.

SUNDAY, MAR 17/46.

St. Patrick's Day. Set off for Eagle Lake at 9 a.m. with Parker & Smith. Gordon joined us on the road. A fine hot day. Some ice & snow in hollows in the woods. All the ice gone from Eagle Lake. We took turns rowing Parker's new little skiff about the lake & pronounced it first-rate. Smith & Gordon found a musty taste in the camp well water, so I bailed it dry - 100 bucket-fuls or more. Smith went down, found the walls & bottom clean, decided the taste must have come from bits of rotten wood from the old curb. Had our dinner sitting outdoos hatless & in shirt-sleeves, the thermometer showing 64° Fahrt. in the shade of the verandah. Lollid about in the sun all afternoon, left for home 4.30 p.m. At Milton I stopped to get from John Francis, Indian, a pair of ancient iron hatchets or tomahawks which I had asked him to keep for me. (I found the iron heads years ago, one at Indian Gardens, the other on an old hunting trail near Fourth

Lake.) Tonight my face & bald head are scarlet from today's exposure to the sun.

MONDAY, MAR. 18/46 Sunny, cool E. breeze, good walk to Milton & back this afternoon. Latest royalty returns show that total sales of my immortal works, beginning with Blackwoods' publication of the "Pied Piper" volume in 1939, amount to: -

	<u>COPIES</u>	<u>ROYALTIES</u>
"Pied Piper"	4,255	# 913.13
"His Majesty's Yankees"	15,262	4,468.60
"Roger Sudden" <small>(Includes 29,000 copies distributed in Canada by N.O. Book Club)</small>	53,456	10,595.01
"Sambour"	<u>4,245</u>	<u>1,404.38</u>
	77,218	# 17,381.12

This does not include money received for magazine rights in the short stories, before book publication, nor \$2500 received for the magazine serial rights of "Roger Sudden".

TUESDAY, MAR. 19/46 Another sunny day with cool E. breeze, another fine walk to Milton. The R'pool fire engine rushed past me hurrying to a chimney fire at Milton - Roy Gordon's house. Milton folk, after long deliberation (4 or 5 years) have at last agreed to tax themselves for fire protection on terms offered by the Liverpool Fire Dept.

THURSDAY, MAR. 21/46 The 12th successive fine day - marvellous. Drove to Chester this morning & had lunch with Peter Jack

at his home on Haddon Hill, which commands a superb view of the bay in a great semi-circular sweep. The house was evidently designed to make the most of the view, the whole front of it a well-furnished lounge with french windows. We had cocktails in a snug little sitting room beside a fire of two-foot birch logs, & luncheon in a large Elizabethan dining room served by a deft young woman named Ada.

Jack is a handsome white-haired lean-figured man of about sixty, with a ruddy complexion & kindly, tired, disillusioned grey eyes. He inherited a lucrative investment-banking & insurance business, & being keen, goodlooking, suave & bold, increased the capital a great deal during his own lifetime. He & his wife (an odd fish, I've heard, who combines kleptomania & dipsomania) were divorced some years ago, he lives in this beautiful place with two middle-aged manservants & two young maidservants, two cars & a chauffeur, slowly & pleasantly drinking himself to death. He talked continuously in the thick measured way of the seasoned alcoholic, & had nothing at luncheon but a small bowl of soup, a large glass of whiskey & a smaller glass of liqueur.

There was one other guest, grey-haired Gerald Bishop, twin-brother of Claude, the Liverpool druggist who died last year - for a moment I thought Jack's whiskey was giving me delusions. Bishop & I enjoyed our luncheon, & when I looked in the kitchen to congratulate the two young women on its excellence, they told

me almost tearfully that Mr. Jack had been this way for many weeks, eating little or nothing, drinking continuously. Afterwards Jack insisted I must write a novel about Chester, reeling off in a loud hilarious voice, studded with profanity, tale after tale of the idle-rich who inhabit Chester, their whims & foibles, their amours especially. I got away about 4 o'clock, Jack roaring after me that I must come back & stay longer - to get the proper story color. ("Glamour girls - you want glamour girls for a novel - I'll get some up here for you - etc.") I dawdled along the road to Lunenburg & parked for a time on Blockhouse Hill enjoying the fine day & the scene - the sky blue & cloudless, the sea as blue as any part of the Mediterranean. At six o'clock I went down to the banquet room of the curling rink, where 80 men, members of the Lunenburg Board of Trade, were assembled for their monthly dinner. We had a fine meal, including halibut steaks - "straight from the sea to the kitchen" - & a delicious salad. Vic Emerneau introduced me as the speaker of the evening & I talked for about an hour; my theme, the evolution of the Lunenburg settlers from a cluster of peasants of the interior parts of Germany & Lorraine, to one of the finest races of seamen the world has known. I urged them to start a marine museum, to preserve something of that story, which is passing & some day will be

only a legend. I pointed out that apart from its esthetic value, such a museum could attract thousands of tourists every year, & pointed out the examples of New Bedford and Salem.

They voted thanks & sang "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" & afterwards many came up & shook hands & seemed keen on the idea of a marine museum. Several had copies of my books, which they asked me to autograph. Lovely drive home, a three-quarter moon coming up like a bitten orange & all the stars very bright.

FRIDAY, MARCH 22/46

Another sunny, cool day, without a cloud.

Aunt Marie Bell had phoned wanting to see me, so I walked to Milton this afternoon. She was worrying about her income tax papers this time, quite unnecessarily, but ^{none} ~~not~~ of her worries are necessary. She lives like a prisoner in that big lonely house, imagines prowlers at night & sits near the telephone most of the dark hours, sleeping by day, with the doors locked & bolted.

I dropped in to the forge for a yarn & was delighted to find old Will Turner there, looking quite well & bemoaning the fact that he would never be able to work at the anvil again.

Much ado in town over the closing of the rubbish dump behind Manning's garage. ^{BRISTOL} Local property owners had objected to the smell, & in any case the available space had been filled. The town council in desperation have

The town dump was a harbor flat on the Bristol side of the river, near the end of the iron highway bridge, & behind what was (in '46) Walter Manning's garage. The ~~SAVING~~ Oil Co. later took over Manning's place, & erected storage tanks for fuel. Still later a government wharf was built east of the oil tanks & incorporating part of the old town dump.

acquired an old gravel pit 2 or 3 miles out of town on the White Point Road, to be the official dumps. This simply means that people without cars, or unwilling to pay truckmen to take their garbage so far, will dump their stuff in the river or along the roadside — several lots of rubbish have even been flung into the old Town Burial Ground, probably at night. There is some talk of a garbage disposal service. {The old Winters' gravel pits, just out of town on the White Point road, continued to be the town garbage dump for many years.}

SATURDAY, MARCH 23/46 A sudden change from the early spring weather this morning — a snowstorm which lasted 2 or 3 hours, and a cold & boisterous northerly gale that blew all day. Spent the afternoon driving about town & Milton in my car, returning books etc., borrowed in connection with the background of my novel.

One of the most useful was a copy of the American Coast Pilot for 1806, giving valuable detail of navigation in Caribbean waters at that time. It belongs to Wilson Kempton of Milton, & originally was the property of his ancestor Francis Kempton, one of the Liverpool privateersmen in '98 & a trader captain afterwards.

SUNDAY, MAR. 24/46 Sunny, but a strong cold NW gale. Drove with Edith to Port Medway via Beach Meadows. Dirt roads very rough although the frost is out. News: Russian troops have been leaving Manchuria for some time (except Port Arthur — Dairen, which they retain by the Yalta Agreement), having looted Mukden & other cities of all machinery first. Now

Moscow announced that all Russian troops will be out of Iran within 6 weeks & the evacuation has begun. This is what Russia agreed to do a month or more ago & it remains to be seen if the new pledge will be carried out. But on the face of it this looks as if Churchill's recent blunt speeches had born fruit.

TUESDAY, MAR. 26/46

Fine yesterday, a little rain in the night, & today a cloudless sky, no wind, & temp. 75° in the sun. Had a fine walk to Potanoc & back this afternoon. Edith spent the day in Hfx, shopping with the Parkers, so I was chief cook & bottle washer for the kids.

The familiar "No Beer" sign was displayed in the liquor store window yesterday, but this afternoon a shipment arrived & as I came through town along the railway track about 5 pm. there were groups of workmen sitting by the river & drinking "Moose Head" ale by the quart bottle. Drinking in public is forbidden by law, of course, but the police never go along the waterfront, & a good thing, too.

News: The war-guilt trial at Nuremberg drags on. Most of the culprits denied their Tushret vigorously, said they were pacifists at heart, & signed their names to various documents in the evidence because they were ordered to do so by the Tushret or his lieutenants. The pudgy Goering saw in all this a chance to present himself as a martyr, for the worship of future German generations. Therefore he affirmed

loudly his faith in the Luchers, boldly admitted that he ordered the air attack on Coventry which started the air-blitz campaign, indeed he admitted everything (except to deny in a lordly way that he knew anything of the horrors perpetrated in the concentration camps) & obviously intends to be the real hero of the whole show. Hitler, having vanished into thin air, will remain a myth.

Thousands of troops still arriving at Hfx. from overseas, but as most of them are men of comparatively short service - many of them "zombies" - there are no more public receptions. Thousands of British brides & children arriving also; & thousands of German prisoners passing through Hfx. by special trains from camps in the West, en route to Britain, where they will be put to work on reconstruction. Many of the Germans have expressed a desire to remain in Canada as citizens, but that was "out".

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 27/46

Heavy rain this morning but a lovely afternoon. At 5 p.m. I met the bus from Yarmouth & fetched George Foster up to the house - he is staying with us a day or two. Says the book publishing business, always a sensitive barometer, is beginning to feel a "recession" in sales. We talked far into the night. He hinted that Doubleday Doran were planning to establish their own publishing business in Canada, & in that case McCalland & Stewart

will form a connection with the U.S. firm of Little, Brown & Co. George hinted strongly that I change publishers & switch to Little, Brown. Doubleday, he said, had not given my books the "push" they should have, in the U.S.A.

I was non-committal. It is something to think over.

THURSDAY, MAR. 28/46

Lovely weather continues. Drove Foster to Milton, Western Head etc. this morning, showing points of interest. He says Mc Clelland & Stewart want to publish my proposed book on Halifax (to be ready for publication not later than autumn, 1948) also they want to bring out a volume of my historical short stories in 1947. Foster urged me to visit Toronto this summer & promised (as bait I suppose) that M. & S. would take care of all arrangements for entertaining me & my wife. He is a very decent little fellow & has certainly worked very diligently to promote the sale of my books. He left for Hfx on the 1 p.m. train.

I had a walk to Milton & back this afternoon.

This evening I attended a banquet of the Liverpool Board of Trade at which the chief speaker was C. Fred Fraser, editor of the Halifax Chronicle. He discussed the present proposals of the Dominion gov't to the provinces, which require the provinces to yield up their last remaining sources of direct taxation in return for a subsidy of $\$16$ per head of population and the assumption by Ottawa of all old-age pensions,

unemployment relief, etc. Fraser contends that this is an insidious offer, on the face of it a great bargain for Nova Scotia particularly but one which will place the province unreservedly in the hands of "a great bureaucracy one thousand miles away" to the ultimate detriment of every Bluenose. Fraser has been speaking in public & writing editorials along this line for some time, & has incurred the wrath of Premier Angus Mac Donald, amongst others.

FRIDAY, MAR. 29/46. Another lovely sunny day. Got out my fishing rod & gave it a coat of "glassite" shellac.

Edith & I got a belated invitation to a "christening" party on board Mersey Paper Co.'s new ship, this afternoon. (Charlie Copelin phoned in a great sweat at the last minute)

We went down to the mill wharf at 5.30 p.m. had a couple of drinks aboard & wished good luck to Capt. Ralph Williams, who is taking the ship to Australia on her "maiden" voyage. (See entries Feb. 7, Feb. 19) Her name, after much debate is "Vinland" — much like the "Vineland" of the company, which was torpedoed & sunk by a German submarine in the West Indies during the late war — Ralph Williams commanded her & has a good yarn to tell of that occasion. The "Vinland" is taking 5700 tons of newsprint — the largest cargo ever shipped by Mersey Paper Co.

TUESDAY, APR. 2, 1946

Our long spell of warm fine weather came to a bitter end this morning — a blizzard all day. I took my car downtown this afternoon, got home safely — & stuck in a drift right outside my back door. I have no chains so had to let the car stay where it was; the only time my car has been "stuck" all winter!

Capt. Chas. Williams of s/s Markland sent up a mysterious small gunny-sack yesterday, & since Charlie is a notorious practical joker I suspected an April Fool trick. But the sack contained 2 lbs. of delicious peanuts roasted in the shell, bought in New York last trip. Except for a few handfuls of wizened, doubtful things at Xmas time, we have not seen peanuts in the shell since 1940. Grocers here tell me our pre-war supply came mainly from China.

Tough Edith & I walked down to Mrs. Robie Millard's ("Admiral Nell") & spent a pleasant hour or two in talk with herself, son Eric, Commandet & Mrs. Hubert Macdonald, Lorne Campbell, Dr. & Mrs. John Wickwire, Mrs. Elsie Hemson. The Mac's are having a house built on Waterloo St. near the water, this summer.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4/46

A fine warm day that melted some of our unwelcome snow. A hungry flock of English sparrows, robins, juncos, song sparrows & starlings on the lawn this morning, feeding on Francis's crumbs. Working very hard to finish my novel.

Walked over to Bristol this afternoon to consult Will Smith on a nautical point. News:— The Pictou Highlanders, who

have been stationed in the West Indies on garrison duty, arrived in Halifax today in the transport "Mataroa", together with the Brockville (Ont.) Rifles. The United Nations Organisation, meeting in its temporary home - Hunter College, New York - has been in a great fuss over the continued Russian occupation of northwest Iran. The Soviet delegate walked out & refused to attend the hearing of Iran's protest. Today all seems well again - Russia agrees to evacuate the country by the end of this month. Terrific "tidal" waves raised by an earthquake somewhere near the Aleutians have done great damage in Hawaii & on the Pacific coast of the U.S. Nova Scotia's deputy minister of mines Cameron, declared in the legislature that the coal output of Nova Scotia mines in 1945 was the lowest since 1902, & warned that the whole industry was heading rapidly into bankruptcy despite high prices & an unlimited market, unless "a better spirit" obtains between management & miners. A great scarcity of butter all over eastern Canada; even the meagre ration cannot be obtained - the stores simply haven't got it. Agitation to have margarine given free entry into Canada, which would ease the situation a good deal, but the nation-wide dairy interests are against it.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6/46

This morning at about 11 o'clock I finished my novel, which I have decided to call "Windward Passage". I began it on June 15/45 & have worked steadily

at it, although progress was very slow in the first three months. I have wanted, from boyhood it seems to me, to write a slam-bang 18th century sea story, & this is it. Once I got my teeth into the thing it was fun.

Bleak weather, the snow going slowly by day, freezing each night.

SATURDAY, APR. 13/46 Sunny, cool NW breeze. Doubleday Co. are nudging me for copy of "Windward Passage" - they are putting the art work in hand at once. The Cllland & Stewart want me to consult Mrs. Archibald MacMechan & get on with my selection & foreword for their omnibus volume of MacMechan tales. And they want me to get busy as soon as possible, on their proposed omnibus of my own historical short stories, to be published in 1947. And they would like me to sign a contract for the proposed book on Hfx., to appear in the autumn of 1948. All of which spells a busy summer. Roderick Kennedy, president of Canadian Authors' Association, is writing letters urging me to attend the C.A.A. convention at Toronto in June, & to address the delegates.

This afternoon Brent Smith called & suggested a trip to Eagle Lake - object in general, "exercise"; object in particular, to clear out the old trail from Eagle Lake dam to Kempton Brook. We drove to Big Falls in Brent's car & did some work on the old bog crossway on the way in.

After supper we felled a dead pine on the knoll by the dam, jerked it, carried the lengths to camp in two trips, sawed & split & piled them for a supply of kindling. A frosty night with a $\frac{3}{4}$ moon.

SUNDAY, APR. 14/46 Ice on the north tip of the lake (& in our tea kettle!) this morning. Lovely sunny day. We were up at 7:30 & after breakfast set out along the Kempton Lake trail with axes & saw. Many windfalls, old & new, which we cut out, & trimmed out the undergrowth. In several places the old trail was almost lost in new growth & old windfalls - we have not used it much since 1938. By 1:30 p.m. we had cleared to within 300 yds. of Kempton Brook but hunger drove us back to camp. Dinner at 2:30. We rested in the sunshine on the veranda till 4:30, then packed up & came home.

MONDAY, APR. 15/46 R. A. Quinn & partner, of Halifax, who have been installing linoleum & tiles in the Mersey hotel and elsewhere in town, came up at my request & after measuring gave me an estimate of \$270 for covering the kitchen floor with "Kentiles" (\$55) and laying & gluing "marbleum" along the upstairs hall & all four bedrooms. I agreed, & they are to provide the material & do the work within the next 3 weeks, depending on the arrival of the stuff. It is expensive, but so is everything nowadays & we have waited years to have this done.

TUESDAY, APR. 16/46 Working furiously at my novel. Ethel Hulse of Doubleday & Co. writes me that the title "Windward Passage"

was used for a novel published in 1932, so that's out. It looks now as if the title will be "Lorey's Lancy". I took an hour or two this afternoon to drive to Lower Great Brook with Edith on a hunt for mayflowers. We got a fine bunch.

Dorothea Cox, of Canadian Broadcasting Corp., writes asking me to do another series of "Canadian yarns" over the national network this summer.

FRIDAY (Good Friday) APR. 19/46 Fine & warm. Walked to Potanoc & back. In Milton, Walter Weaver called me in to look at his handiwork. He bought the old Mark Curry house last year & in his spare time tore out the old huge chimneys & build slender new ones, utilizing the gained space for closets. He has made a modern kitchen & contemplates modernizing the whole interior. He is a skilled amateur carpenter, has a workshop equipped with all sorts of electrical power tools, & is doing a very fine job. I admired his electric stove, made by the General Motors people under their "Frigidaire" trade mark, one of the few so far received in E'pool.

SATURDAY, APR. 20/46. Rain. Weaver, who manages the local store of the Robert Simpson Co., phoned saying he had a bill of lading showing a latest model "Frigidaire" stove on the way from N'fx. Asked if I would like to have it. I said Yes. Much business of measuring & planning in the kitchen. I shall try to have our long-deferred modern

Kitchen installed this summer, although materials & labor are very expensive & hard to get.

Rackman, of Woods Bros., Hfx, called to see me this afternoon, wants me to write a series of short sketches of historical places in Hfx, to be used in connection with Woods newspaper advertisements. Offered to pay well. I put him off, saying very truthfully that I am much too busy at the present time. This sort of thing is out of my line anyhow. A wire from Ethel Hulse says Doubleday editors prefer the original name I used for the central family in my book - Pride - This because it makes a better title, Pride's Fancy. I forgot to record on Apr. 15th that I sent off the first 14 chapters of the book to Doubledays.

TUESDAY, APR. 23/46

Sent off the first 24 chapters (carbon copy) of "Pride's Fancy" to Jacques Chambrun this morning by registered mail. This will give him a clear month in which to negotiate with magazines for the first serial rights in U.S.A. before Doubleday's catalogue goes to print. If serial rights are sold, & the magazine insists on a clear field for a specified number of months, Doubleday agree to postpone book publication to the spring of '47. Hard driving at the typewriter from early morn to early morn (usually from 7 a.m. to 1 a.m. now). I

am such an insomniac when deep in a book that it is no trouble to keep awake. I quit yesterday's work at 1 a.m. today, slept till 3:30, woke up completely, lay an hour tossing & thinking, finally gave it up, came downstairs & got to work again at 5.

THURSDAY, APR. 25/46 Lovely warm day. Took the afternoon off with Edith & drove to Bridgewater, did a bit of shopping, then drove up the LaHave several miles past New Germany to the point where the Middleton road crosses it & plunges on through the woods. Turned back there. Lovely all along the river. Many farmers have their spring ploughing done. Poplar buds just bursting. The river very high. Supper in the station restaurant in Bridgewater, an uninspiring view - shunters thundering up & down past the windows - but as we found during the war, the best meal in town. The cost, 45¢ each.

Then drove down to West LaHave & along the shore & back to the main highway via Petite Riviere. Lovely sunset.

FRIDAY, APR. 26/46 Rain. Got a 3000-watt electric water heater from the town electrical dept. This to replace our oil heating outfit which I am selling to Howland White along with our old Gurney electric stove for \$100. (The whole thing cost about double that 10 years ago.) This afternoon Percy & his plumbers came in to remove the boiler from the kitchen & set it up alongside the furnace. A mercy job. I am having them make a brass heating coil for the furnace, & any new length

of water pipe required is to be brass - this to get away from the rust & scale which afflicts our hot water system with the common galvanised iron pipe. Wrote Norval Waddington, headmaster of Kings College School, Windsor, accepting an invitation to spend the week-end May 18-21 with him & to address the school.

SATURDAY, APR. 27/46 Fine after heavy rain. Electricians & plumbers at work all day fitting new water heating units & connecting them up. At 3 p.m. Weaver arrived with the new "Ingridaire" electric stove. A great business getting the old one out & carrying it over to White's. Weaver stayed to connect ^{the new one} ~~the~~ ^{up} & had supper with us. Edith delighted with the new stove.

SUNDAY, APR. 28/46 Worked all day & evening but took time in the afternoon to walk to Milton & back with Brent Smith. He is making steady progress with his careful compilation of Liverpool genealogies, a tremendous task & very useful. He is making a careful study of Perkins' diary in connection with it - a thing never done before.

MONDAY, APR. 29/46 Finished the final copy of "Pride's Fancy" this morning. Felt the need of some real walking this afternoon, so I hiked at a smart pace to Western Head & back. This evening I packed up the M/S copies & mailed them to Chamboun & Doubleday,

registered mail. Wrote & sent off covering letters to both.

The Haliburton Club sent an invitation to their annual dinner at King's College May 7th. — I sent my regrets pleading rush of work, though I confess I hope to be at Tobatic trout fishing about then. After my long labors I want all the exercise & fresh air I can get.

All the news from Europe is of starvation or rather semi-starvation — because the UNRRA (United Nations Rehabilitation & Relief Authority) is doing a valiant job in distributing food as far as supplies are available. The "UN" part is a misnomer because some nations like Britain have little or no food to contribute, others talk a lot & give nothing, & mighty Russia simply doesn't give a damn. Russian armies in east Germany, Poland, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, are still largely living off those countries — while UNRRA is trying to feed & clothe the populations. Heaviest burden falls on the U. S. and Canada. The country giving the least trouble of all is the one where most was expected — Japan. The people are accustomed to a low diet so they accept the hard facts with stoicism, they are genuinely cooperating with the occupation forces, & lately elected a thoroughly democratic parliament, with women voting for the first time.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1/46 Parker, Bain, Russell & I have been planning a fishing trip to Sobatic for some weeks now. The date was set for May 3rd. but since I had finished my book & could get away, Bain suddenly insisted this afternoon that we start at once. In the hurried gathering of my kit & tackle I forgot a suit of "long-handled" woolen underwear & later had cause to regret it. We left in Bain's car at 5 p.m. - Parker, his guest Sid Pasmore, Bain & I. The road from Ikaloria to Kejimikujik River very badly rutted. On the way in we met a chap named Waterman returning from an unsuccessful day's fishing on the K. river; he warned us that all the streams are in flood from last week's rains & the fishing conditions poor. The flowage from Lake Rossignol, higher than any time in history was actually touching the lower side of the logs of K. river bridge. Stopped on the far side by the gate which bars the Mersey Paper Co's. private road, but Parker produced a pass, & old Frank the one-armed watchman let us through. The road to the Mersey camps is quite good, they have their own bulldozer & plenty of labor now to keep it up. Since we were on "daylight" time & the camps, like the rest of the countryside are on standard time, we got to the base camp (Camp One) on time for supper, & Leo the cook provided us with a feast. Strange to see butter on the table in big slabs when it is so scarce & so

precious in town. Talked a little with Whitman & his wife, & had a round of drinks in the camp office with DeLong the foreman. We slept in four little cubicles in the rear of the log-built office, each with cot & mattress & sleeping bag, very comfortable.

THURSDAY, May 2/46. Up & breakfasted at 6. A clear sky but a violent & bitter cold NNW wind. We went out to hunt up the two forest rangers in their camp at the foot of Pollard's Falls but they were away & the camp locked. The Shelburne River a roaring torrent & the road flooded a foot deep for a hundred yards or more. "Picking up a few" (trout) on Pollard's" is an old joke with us & I didn't even put my rod together. The others fished a bit without a bite - the wind so strong, that it was impossible to cast properly - but soon gave it up. In the afternoon Bain & I took the car & drove towards Tobatic on a hunch, & met the rangers, Holburn, & Frank Crowell just returning to their camp. They agreed to take ^{us} up to their camp at the head of Tobatic as soon as the wind moderated, & prophesied it would go down about sunset & spring up again in the morning. So about 4 pm. we all got busy, took the ² canoes over to the Tobatic landing on the car, & all our stuff. About 5 pm. we set off in the rangers' little open boat, towing our stuff in the two canoes. Wind going down but still creating a heavy chop that made

the boat rock dangerously several times. Spray flew all over us & it was bitter cold. However once we were in the ranger's shack on the bluff overlooking the head of Sobatic, & a good fire in the stove, & a rum or two under our belts, we soon thawed. Bain & Parker rushed off to fish at the dam while the rest of us got supper. They came back at dark with 2 very nice trout but reported the water high & fishing slow.

Friday, May 3/46.

A howling & cold NNW wind all today. I had no underwear but a pair of light shorts & my teeth rattled all morning. I caught no fish, the others picked up a few. About 1 pm. I had to give it up & go back to the shack & thaw out the rest of the day.

Vic Scobey & R. Nieforth came along in a canoe & had supper with us - Bain's specialty, a stew. V. & R. were tenting at Supper Lake dam, reported the temp. last night 20° Fahrt. & half an inch of ice in their kettles this morning.

The rangers took V. & R. back to the foot of Sobatic in the motorboat this afternoon.

SATURDAY, MAY 4/46.

I was up at daylight, determined to get in some fishing before the wind sprang up again. I lit a fire in the stove & shut the door for the comfort of later rains & went off along the trail to Sobatic dam. Cold a heavy mist on the lake, the logs of the dam covered in white frost. My ood had stood outside the camp all night & the web line had

frozen on the reel. Breakfasted as I fished, on 4 or 5 of Edith's little oatmeal cookies. No luck fishing, but soon after the sun burned the mist off the lake I was lucky enough to see three otters frisking in the water, leaping like dolphins, & then engaged in a merry game of chase up the shore & through the bushes of a point on the lake. The rest of the party came along in the canoes & we all went up Little Tobetic Brook to get out of the wind. Very poor fishing. I caught 1 or 2 trout on a Montreal fly, the others fished with minnows & worms & got a few more. Returning towards camp I caught 3 on the fly at the dam. In the afternoon ~~was~~ packed up & the rangers took us in that boat to the Upper Lake dam at the foot of Tobetic. Parker & I set up the tent & made camp while ~~Bain~~ Passmore fished. The Rangers came along about sundown with Bain, who had gone to Camp One for more grub, plus Maurice Russell & Hector Dunlap, who had come in for the weekend. About this time I started fishing below the dam outlet & caught 5 beauties, two of the biggest on the line at one time, a fine spree in that heavy water — one had taken the fly half way up my cast, & the other the minnow at the end. That made ten fish I had — enough. I quit. We had a merry evening in the tent. Parker had brought along a kind of folding canvas bed & was well fixed. The rest of us lay on the hard ground — very hard

at Sobatie, where the soil is full of granite stones. The camping place is barren of softwoods - no chance to cut brush. Dunlap had no sleeping bag so Russell & Passmore, who had identical bags, opened them out, buttoned the edges, & thus had one big bag which held all three very well. I slept about 3 hours but the ground made itself felt after that.

This day was warm - our first warm day. SUNDAY, MAY 5/46 A grand warm day. I fished no more, believing that no man should take many trout nowadays when the fish are dwindling so fast. In the ~~afternoon~~^{morning} we loaded everything into the canoes & paddled across Upper Lake. With 3 men in each & so much gear we were very deep but fortunately there was little wind.

Dunlap & Bain walked over to fish lower Sobatie dam & the rest of us portaged the canoes & stuff over to the mouth of Sand Brook. I made 3 trips over the portage, the third time with a canoe on my back, a heavy 17-foot thing with the middle thwart out of balance, & awkward to carry. Had dinner at the feet of the portage by the old Morsey lumber camp. In late afternoon went on in the canoes into the Shelburne River. Stopped at Low Bridge so Dunlap & the others could fish a bit. Russell had ten trout & quit as I had. Reached the head of Pollards Falls about 4 pm.; went over to the ranger's camp & picked

up Bain's car, drove Sunlap back to Sobatie Landing to pick up his. A huge supper at Camp One. Altogether we had 77 trout - Parker high-liner with 16. We could have caught more had we wished. A grand trip though chilly the first 2 days & I feel much better after it.

Noticed one very encouraging thing - the woods around Sobatie & the Shelburne river, which looked so barren when the Mersey Co's operations denuded them in the period 1931 - 35, are coming back with a fine growth of young pine & spruce & fir, & in another 15 years will be quite beautiful again provided fire is kept away.

We left Camp One about 7 pm. & were home at 9.30.

TUESDAY, MAY 7/46 Old "Allie" Wright began to paint my den this morning - the first painting it has had since it was built in 1938. Showery weather. Telegrams & letters from Ethel Hulse of Doubleday & Co. full of delight over "Pidi's Fancy".

Yesterday I fetched old Mr. Locke in my car, to take measurements in the kitchen & elsewhere. He will make the kitchen cabinets, the clothes-closet door etc. in his workshop in Bristol, while his son Fred does the carpenter work on the spot.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8/46 Wright finished painting my den & started to tear off old wallpaper in the upper hall. He also painted the walls & ceiling of the clothes closets in Ethel's room and mine.

Today is the 1st anniversary of the surrender of the

