

DEC. 18, 1948 - JUNE 4, 1949

# RECORDS

No. 442-R

654

Scary

Thomas H. Raddall. Dec. 18/48 to

We returned to camp nearly frozen at dusk. Almost forgot to mention that yesterday & today we enjoyed feasts of lobsters ("tinkers") supplied by the fishermen across the harbour. One of them, Bob Lloyd, rowed across & spent the evening with us spinning yarns. All the fishermen of Port L'Herbert are gunners from boyhood; it is their chief pleasure, & ducks & geese & rabbits form a prominent part of their diet.

SUNDAY, DEC. 19/48. Spent most of the morning taking up the rabbit snares (we got 5 hunnies) & setting the camp to rights. Bob Lloyd came over about 11 a.m. & took us across to the wharf in his motorboat. There we waited until the other boats came in, & got about 30 "tinkers" to take home. I had always thought of Port L'Herbert as a semi-deserted place, but I was told that 10 boats operate from the northern wharf, and 9 from the southern. Most of the houses are small, & some are mere hovels. The men swear with a cheerful continuity that does not abate a jot in the presence of their women & children. They fish on Sunday as on any other day; but of course with modern boats & engines, & having few traps to overhaul (fifty to seventy feet) compared with the lobstermen of Seal Island (who set 150 to 250 traps), they are back at the wharf by noon each day. I gathered

that the moral standard was low, & the standard of living not much better, despite the present-day prices for fish & lobsters. They are not ambitious & would rather, they cheerfully confess, "go gunnin' any day" than go fishing.

We set off for a pool in Bill Rawlings' old army truck, riding three in the open cab, a freezing business, & arrived home at 2 p.m.

MONDAY, DEC. 20/48

Snowing hard all day. Edith tells me of a disgusting incident at the Curling Rink last Saturday, when I was away. Frances & some of her chums went down to skate in the curling rink, whose janitor, one "Limmie" Whynot, stood chewing tobacco & watching them. Impishly, Frances puffed out her cheek & imitated Whynot & his "chaw". He said, "If you do that again, I'll spit in your face". Naturally she did it again, & he spat a mouthful of tobacco juice full in her face. She came home & wept for an hour. If I had been home at the time I think I should have killed the filthy brute. However, after a fruitless visit this morning, I finally found the man at the rink this afternoon. ~~He~~ He is a long-faced, hook-nosed fellow of 35 or 40, & I found him in the basement. I said, "Are you Limmie Whynot?" He answered "Yes". I said "You spat in my kid's face the other day", and punched him on the jaw. His

glasses flew off & his false teeth flew out. He fell ~~down~~ against a bin of some sort, with his mouth open, & staring at me with the eyes of a dead fish. He made no attempt to fight, stammering that I was mistaken; but his guilt was in his face. I punched his face twice more, not hard - I was too disgusted with the creature to beat him as I had intended - and told him "If I ever hear of you spitting on a child again, I'll come up here and kick your filthy guts out." With that I left.

TUESDAY, DEC. 21/48 Shovelled out my driveway this morning - about a foot of snow, with the usual drift at each end of the way. This afternoon drove down to the garage & got a new pair of tyre-chains fitted; then out to Five Rivers with ax and rope to get a Christmas tree. A rugged business, every tree & bush weighted with snow, & the snow on the ground up to the knees in many places. Had to tramp some distance in the Gull Island road before I found a suitable tree; dragged it out to the motor road, lashed it on behind my car, with the butt shoved down inside the rear bumper, & the tree upright, steadied by ropes to the rear door handle on each side. Home about 4 & put the tree in the cellar so the snow could melt off the branches. Plenty of Christmas mail, including a

copy of my new book beautifully bound in blue Morocco leather & this from McLelland & Stewart, who sent also a box of fine Havana cigars.

FRIDAY, DEC. 24/48 Crisp weather, & the snow remains. Walked to Milton & back. Noticed a large spruce tree beside the "Kiack brook" decorated with coloured lights etc. & was told that the Milton folk held an outdoor Christmas party there a night or two ago, with community singing of carols, etc. — the first time this has been done in Milton. (This tree was cut down in 1961)

McLelland & Stewart have sent the first batch of newspaper reviews, all with praise for my book. Apart from these, Premier Mac Donald mentioned the book in glowing terms at a Board of Trade dinner in Hfx. a week or so ago, & recommended it to the reading of every Nova Scotian; and today I have a letter full of praise for the book from Dr. H. L. Munro, head of the Dept. of Education, N.S.

This evening the Parkers & Dunlaps dropped in & we had a drink or two. Later on we gathered at Parker's house & feasted until 1:30 a.m. on fresh boiled lobster, etc. The Wickurics there, the Ralph Johnsons, Hubert Mac Donalds, & young Ann-Louise & her chum Beatrice MacDonald, & Jim Parker & Marilyn Inness.

SATURDAY, CHRISTMAS DAY, 1948

A fine cold day, temp.  $10^{\circ}$  above zero, occasional snow flurries. My family all well, thank God, & we enjoyed our Christmas. Marie Freeman, who is spending the winter at the Drew house in L'pool., came to spend the day with us, & I drove to Milton & brought Aunt Marie Bell. The "Empire" broadcast was not quite so elaborate as during the war years - it was called, the Voice of Friendship, or some such thing, out of deference, I suppose, to those touchy members of the commonwealth who do not like to consider themselves part of an empire. Nevertheless it was very good, & the King's message was, as usual, a model of simple and effective English, although I thought his stammer more pronounced than in previous years.

Went for a walk this afternoon, then took Miss Bell down to Hector Dunlap's for tea. Verence Freeman and family came down from Milton & had tea & spent the evening with us. After they had gone Cath & I went to Hector Dunlap's, where we were joined by the Parkers, ~~John & Jane~~, Hubert MacDonalds & John Wickwires. Home about 1:30 a.m.

SUNDAY, DEC. 26/48

Overcast, temp  $5^{\circ}$  above last night, rising to  $15^{\circ}$  at noon today. Walked to Milton & back - a rugged journey, with a keen N. wind blowing down the river.

MONDAY, DEC. 27, 1948

Fulfilling a promise to Tommy, I took him & young Paul Chandler to Eagle Lake for a day or two. Last night was very cold & I couldn't get my car started until Bruce Chandler sent up his light truck to give me a tow. Arrived at Big Falls about 2:30 p.m. & set off through the woods. I wore moccasins & regretted it, for the mid-day sun had put a moisture on the rocks & snow, & I made the 2½ miles to camp like a man on a tight-rope, & fell heavily several times. The kids had brought their skates & we spent the remaining daylight in clearing a "rink" on the lake ice, using canoe paddles & a broom to sweep aside the snow. After supper we played cut-throat "45" until bed time.

TUESDAY, DEC. 28/48

Spent the morning hiking down to the river and (as the kids had brought their .22 rifles) hunting rabbits just above the old burn by the river. Many rabbit tracks, & deer tracks, & one wild-cat track, all newly made in the light snow which fell last night; but the kids were so busy shooting at squirrels that we made too much racket to get sight of real game.

All afternoon the boys hunted squirrels in the hemlock woods east of the camp, & explored the west shore of the lake for some distance on the ice. (I



tested the ice first, in various places, with an ax; found it 2 to 3 inches thick. This evening cards & yarns, varied for an hour in the evening, when we played "hockey" on the ice by the light of the stars — the "goal" marked with two chunks of wood, the goalie armed with a broom, the attacking "team" with canoe paddles, & the "puck" a tin can. Lots of fun & furious exercise. Very cold again tonight. This is the first time that either of the boys has slept overnight in a camp in the woods, & they got a big kick out of the whole thing.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 29/48 Again a cold night, with everything cracking in the camp this morning when I got up to light the fire. The boys spent the morning squirrel-hunting, banging away merrily, & only rarely hitting anything — they have each fired about 100 rounds since we entered the woods on Monday — while I straightened up the camp, re-filled the woodbox, etc. We left at 1:10 & reached Big Falls about 2:30. The car refused to start. Fortunately Eric Anderson was there, & we were able to push it into the Power Commission's heated garage & get it towed out. One of the Commission's men, Merrill Whynot, was very helpful & obliging; he got a wrench & took out the spark plugs.

which Anderson scraped & adjusted. Finally we got "beverie" going about 3:30, & reached home without further incident.

In the mail I found a very annoying Christmas greeting — a notification from Ena Kenyon, Chambrun's English representative, that the British income tax authorities are demanding immediate payment of 50% (10/- in the £) of the royalties on my books sold in England in 1945.

I received the net amount of these royalties from Chambrun in June '45 and March '46, & assumed that all English tax deductions had been made. They amounted to £311, so I must remit £155/10/0, or Mrs. Kenyon will have to pay it.

Thus, after British income tax (50%), Kenyon's commission (10%), & Chambrun's commission (5%) I net 35% of the royalties. And of course I had to include them in my gross income for '45 & '46 which boosted the rate on my Canadian income tax as well!

What annoys me as much as anything else is that, amongst my many charities, I contributed a few weeks ago to a fund for "British Relief".

The chief provincial news is the announcement in today's Halifax Herald that on & after Jan 1/49 the Halifax Chronicle & Daily Star will merge their interests

with those of the Herald & Mail. The united morning paper will be known as the "Chronicle-Herald", & the evening paper will become the "Mail-Star". For a long time the wealthy F. B. McBurdy has owned the Chronicle & Star, but he has never provided the papers with sufficient funds to compete seriously with Bill Dennis's Herald & Mail, & the prestige & circulation of the Chronicle & Star have steadily declined.

Whether or not McBurdy has sold out completely, or retains a financial interest in the merger, has not been revealed. The combined newspapers will be published in the Herald plant on Mackville Street, & presumably McBurdy will offer the old building for sale. It is in a very desirable situation & must be worth a considerable sum.

The Herald & Mail, long the mouthpieces of the Tory party in N.S., have been very restrained in their criticism of Liberal policies in recent years, & it is announced that the newly merged papers will be "independent". As both Dennis & McBurdy are themselves Tories of the crustiest type, I am inclined to wonder.

THURSDAY, DEC. 30/48

Very mild weather - a moth fluttering outside my study window this evening. Tonight Edith & I went to the Hubert MacDonald's; others there

included the Austin Parkers, Hector Dunlaps, Maynard Colps, John Wickwires, Charles Copelands, Ralph Johnsons, MacDonald (new manager of Bank of N.Y. here, & wife; Clarence Williams, Bernadette Ratchford. Some good talk, & singing. Home about 1 a.m.

FRIDAY, DEC. 31/48 A furious gale from S.E. all day & evening, with torrents of rain. Most of the snow & ice has vanished.

The New Year's Eve celebration began at 8 p.m., when the Lengly Veinots, Hubert MacDonalds, & Austin Parkers dropped & Hector Dunlaps dropped in for drinks. Then to Parker's house, all of us, until midnight, when we moved on to Jack McLearn's, where there was a merry mob. The party finally removed to Veinot's house, where we had a buffet breakfast at 4 a.m. Home about 5 a.m.

Soon after getting into bed I heard the fire alarm but I was too sleepy to care a foot. It turned out to be Jim Bartling's place, a fine big house near Fort Point. I hear it was gutted.

SATURDAY, NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1949 Very mild, the roads all mud, hardly a breath of air stirring. Up at 10 a.m. Spent the afternoon washing the windows of kitchen & den, & putting on the central storm window of the den, which I like to leave off (for the benefit of full ventilation) until the really cold weather begins. Marie Freeman came in & had dinner with us at 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, JAN. 2, 1949

Still very mild. Patches of sunshine, & then black cloud & pouring rain, all day. Got out for a brief walk in the afternoon. "No. 1, Vol. 1" of the Halifax "Chronicle Herald", which appeared yesterday, is simply the old Herald with a new name. No trace of the Chronicle (except its name on the masthead) remains. According to a Hfx radio report, most of the old Chronicle staff have been discharged, although a few have been absorbed by the Herald-Mail plant. Speculation still rife about the merger. Latest rumor is that Lord Beaverbrook bought both newspapers & merged them.

MONDAY, JAN. 3/49

Resumed work on my novel this morning after a hiatus of six weeks or so, a kind of gnawing (and distressing) blackout of the imagination, which I have suffered before, but never for so long a stretch.

Weather still mild, roads muddy. Walked to Brooklyn breakwater this afternoon & watched the "Markland" enter the harbor & tie up at the dock. A letter from Jack McIlland says that the first edition of "Halifax" (presumably 3,000 copies) will soon be exhausted, & another printing must be arranged at once.

THURSDAY, JAN. 6/49

Mild weather for the past week, culminating in a downpour of rain all last night & today. No walk, except as far as the railway bridge, these three days; and no writing.

except to compile a list of corrections for the second edition of "Halifax". Letters of praise for the book continue to come in, & George Foster calls it "the Canadian Book of the Year". My mind still lethargic, refusing to be moved, except for one brief appearance of my daemon on the third.

FRIDAY, JAN. 7/49

Still mild, drizzling rain & mud — & no walking. Dewey Pickerson blew in this afternoon, like a breath of sea air, straight from Seal Island by boat & truck, with "a little mess o' lopsters" in a box under his arm. Brought greetings from the island folk, & insisted I must make another visit this spring.

Much less welcome, in the midst of my evening's work, was Bill Wilson, son of "Father John" of Trinity Church. Never quite normal, "Willie" seems to get worse every year. His chief weakness is megalomania. He is always convinced of his own brilliance as a "priest" (he assists his father at church services & in the parish); as an "electrical expert" (the old parsonage is a madhouse of Willie-designed lights & other fixtures, with wires strung all over walls & ceilings, & amongst other things a public-address system with a microphone & loud-speaker in every room); but chiefly as a business genius, a delusion which involves him (& his family) in all sorts of expensive deals & adventures like his current business "The Blue Anchor", a souvenir and

tourist-supply shop on Main Street. "Father John" himself is an amiable but weak-minded man, a boozier and gourmand who married a capable woman with a good inheritance of money & negotiable securities. Last year he announced that he was about to resign from the priesthood, & proceeded to purchase part of Fort Point & to let a contract for a house to be built upon it. The architect was Leslie Fair; but Father John & Willie grafted their own ideas upon the original plans & the result is a monstrosity, now disfiguring the point, which has cost so far \$35,000. Apparently this has strained the family funds severely, for Father John has announced that he intends to retain Trinity Parish for another five years, to the dismay of the parish. Willie (drinking my beer & smoking my cigars) told me all this with gestures & finally left about midnight.

SATURDAY, JAN. 8/49.

Still mild. Went to the Eagle Lake camp this afternoon with Austin Parker, Brenton Smith & Hubert Macdonald. Brooks are in flood & swamps flooded, every scrap of snow gone, & no ice left in Eagle Lake except a few broken pieces drifted in to the camp cove. Got there about sundown, cooked a hearty supper, & played bridge until midnight. Lovely night, with a three-quarter moon.

SUNDAY, JAN. 9, 1949. Calm, sunny, lovely weather. Parker & Smith had brought their '22's, went off after breakfast to hunt rabbits along the east side of the lake, & didn't get back until 4 p.m. Mac thought the perch ought to bite & spent most of the morning fishing (without success) in the camp cove. I took ax and a Swede saw down to the old log dam & worked till after 1 p.m. felling, sawing & splitting maple for firewood. Mac came along & helped me carry it down to the shore & pile it there to dry.

The sap was running freely in these maples, & my first ax-stroke sent drops of it flying as if it were a warm day in March. Back to camp & prepared dinner in a leisurely manner — Mac & I ate it 3 p.m., the others at 4. Packed up & hiked out, the last half mile in dusk.

This mild weather is general all over the Maritime Provinces. Travellers report the ground bare from Gaspé to Halifax. In Newfoundland the rivers are all open & in flood, & the great paper mill at Cornerbrook is still shipping by sea, although Humber Arm is usually frozen long before this.

MONDAY, JAN. 10/49. The first meeting of the winter season of the Queens Co. Historical Society tonight, in the Navy Room of Town Hall. About 20 people present, nearly all



of them women. I was in the chair. As usual the program committee had nothing prepared & I had to read two short papers of my own, one on "Old Wallpaper in N.S.", the other on "Norwegian Whaling Fleet in N.S. 1940-41". This naive reliance upon the President for the evening's entertainment is bad because it puts me in the position of running a one-man show, an unhealthy state of affairs in any society, & rather ridiculous in newspaper accounts of the meetings.

TUESDAY, JAN. 11/49 Colder today, & there is no mud for the first time since New Years, so I had a good walk to Milton & back this afternoon. Much excitement in Hfx. over the sudden & mysterious merger of Chronicle-Star and Herald-Mail. Apparently F. B. McLurdy made a quick decision to sell out at Christmas, & made little or no attempt to secure positions for the 150 employees of his newspapers, who were dismissed without mercy on 48 hours' notice & with one week's severance pay — the minimum required by law. Young David Maclellan has started a small two-sheet newspaper called the Halifax Free Press & is appealing for support from the Halifaxians on grounds that at present there is a newspaper monopoly in the city. The weekly Dartmouth Patriot is changing its name to the

Note: - Each employee of the Chronicle and Star received from boss F. B. McBurdy the usual Christmas card, wishing them a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. Enclosed in the same envelope, apparently at the last minute, was his notice of dismissal.

Halifax-Dartmouth Patriot, & seeking advertising in Halifax. It has taken on one or two of the discharged Chronicle staff, & its Jan. 6th issue contained a blistering attack on McBurdy (without mentioning him by name) & the Herald management. On the last night of publication (actually at 3:30 a.m. of Dec. 31st) some of the Chronicle staff attempted to hang an effigy representing the defunct Chronicle (or F. B. McBurdy) on the outstretched arm of Joe Howe's statue in the grounds of Province House - directly opposite the Chronicle editor's office - but were prevented by the police.

SATURDAY, JAN. 15/49

Cold weather for the past three days, with strong winds & squalls of snow - enough to whiten the ground. Bendelier, of the Book Room, reports sales of 237 copies of "West Novas" since the books arrived 4 months ago, leaving 401 on hand in his store. This is disappointing. The main difficulty is the fact that most of the men who served with the regiment are scattered all over the Maritimes, & many were from other parts of Canada. They don't know of the book's existence & there is no way to reach them except by widespread advertisements, which would cost a big sum. To my mind this would be merely dropping more money into a hole. At present the

book represents a loss of \$1100.00 in cash outlay, allowing nothing for the months I spent in writing it, & my expenses for stationery, travelling, etc., in connection with it.

Parker tells me that Mersey Paper Co.'s big logging camps on the St. Margaret's Bay & Mersey watersheds have been closed for the past two years. Lumberjack's wages, & the increased standard of board & accommodation (the St. M. Bay camps had spring beds & shower baths; these were built during the late war) have made it too expensive. The company is buying all its wood from farmers & small contractors, all over the province. These men, cutting on their own lands, and working as no hired labour will work nowadays, are able to make a good profit, while the mill gets the wood cheaper than "company camps" can produce it. This policy also conserves the company's own timberlands, which have been cut-over severely on the Mersey watershed during the past 20 years. The price of newsprint is high now, the mill has greatly increased its capacity since the war, & the Mersey Co. is making profits on a scale undreamt when I was on its staff in the "hungry '30's".

An RCAF crew of 15, flying a Canadian-made "North Star" transport plane, early this morning completed the first non-stop flight from Vancouver to Halifax, in

8 hours 32 minutes. The distance is 2,785 miles & they averaged 345 miles per hour.

TUESDAY, JAN. 18/49

Temp. 10° above at 8 a.m.; 20° at noon. Little or no wind. A mild turn yesterday removed what little snow was on the ground. The loggers (those who depend on sled-hauling, anyhow) are making long faces.

Party tonight at Hector Dunlap's. The women talked & knitted, the men played poker ("5 & 10") until 1 a.m. I seldom play this or any card game but managed to break even.

Late this afternoon Dr. H. V. Munro, Sept. of Education for N. Y. for the past 23 years, died in a Hfx. hospital ~~Wednesday~~. He had a brilliant mind & fine personality, & the school system was improved immensely under his regime. I met him some years ago when he & Sir Joe Bisholm & I had lunch together at the Halifax Club. Last ~~week~~ <sup>month</sup> I had a letter from his secretary, dictated from his bed, full of praise for my "Halifax, Warden of the North."

THURSDAY, JAN. 20/49

Rain last night. A fine sunny day today. Temp 50° at 2 p.m. Got my car going, & drove with Edith to Bridgewater for a bit of shopping - the asphalt highway bare & dry, not a speck of snow to be seen. C. W. Greene, who has a tobacco shop & magazine stand on the main street in Bridgewater, had sold only two of the 25

copies of "West Novas" I left with him last November. And this in a town which was the H.Q. of the regiment until it went overseas in 1939, with a majority of its young men in the ranks! I walked up to the Bulletin office & inserted an advertisement in the next edition. Tonight I wrote letters to 17 Canadian Legion branches in Nova Scotia, enclosing notices of the history for their bulletin boards.

FRIDAY, JAN. 21/49 Sunny & cold. The novel is going well after many fits & starts. A good walk to Milton this afternoon although the cars & trucks flicked up clouds of dust. My tomboy daughter Frances reports a fine day playing ice-hockey with the boys at the Fort bog, which is frozen again. She is quite a hoyden, skates extremely well, & loves the rough & tumble of all boyish games; yet at 12½ she still is firmly attached to her old teddy-bear. Tommy is keen on sports but is not aggressive enough to shine in actual play. At present he is taking a special course in signalling & first-aid, in connection with the cadet corps, under army instructors sent down from Halifax. This, plus his growing newspaper route, plus rehearsals for a school play, plus band practice, keeps him very busy in the hours after school, & cuts in sharply on his evening studies.

SATURDAY, JAN. 22, 1949

About an inch of snow fell last night & turned to slush today. Writing all morning. Spent part of afternoon & evening reading essays on Halifax written by pupils of St. Patrick's High School. Mrs. Brenda Curry, who put up cash prizes, asked me to pick the winners. There are 3 prizes of \$20 each, & apparently the teachers of St. Pat's were the only ones ~~to~~ with gumption enough to enter pupils in the contest, which was open to all the high schools in the city.

News from China indicates that the Communist armies are sweeping south towards Nanking & Shanghai, with the Nationalist troops joining their ranks wherever they come together. Chiang Kai Shek has resigned & is reported to be on his way to Formosa, where many rich Chinese are fleeing also. Madame Chiang, after a vain personal appeal to President Truman for military support for her husband's regime, remains in the U.S., apparently for safety.

SUNDAY, JAN. 23/49

Sunny but cold. First-rate skating everywhere & all the ponds were covered with kids this afternoon when I walked to Milton. Stopped in for a yarn with Brent Smith, who is still working diligently at his hobby, the genealogy of Queens County. Glen Crowell dropped in for a yarn tonight. He is chief inspector of schools for the counties of Queens, Shelburne, Yarmouth & Digby, & is a very

busy man despite a secretary & an assistant. He & Ester have a flat in <sup>Yarmouth, in</sup> one of the big houses built by sea captains in the days of sail, & are very happy there. Olem wants me to come & study life amongst the old well-to-do families in Yarmouth & write a novel on it. He gave some vignettes which certainly had piquancy.

MONDAY, JAN. 24/42

Light snow & then rain. The fire siren howls every day or night, sometimes twice a day - the usual chimney fires in "Whynot Town". The new fire hall in Liverpool is just about complete (much of the interior furnishing had been delayed), & the firemen now have a fine roomy building of brick & cement, with a good apartment for the janitor, main floor space easily holding their motor equipment (2 motor engines, 1 ladder truck, 1 hose truck, 1 ambulance), a clubroom equipped with radio, pool room etc., & a large auditorium equipped with movie projector & screen.

The fire brigade consists of 40 or 50 young men, whose only pay is the remission of their poll tax (\$2.00 per year). They are enthusiastic, & do much diligent practice with the apparatus, & hear lectures (illustrated by movies) by the provincial Fire Marshal & other experts. In addition they raise thousands of dollars each year by bazaars etc.; out of these funds they have purchased one of the fire engines, the hose truck & the ambulance, & they have provided all the

furniture & equipment for their clubroom. The new building itself has cost the town \$65,000; & the fire insurance companies are reducing their rates here & in Milton, which is now being serviced by the L'pool Fire Department for the sum of \$500<sup>00</sup> per year. All in all it is a fine example of community enterprise.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 26/49 Temp. down close to zero last night - our first really cold snap. Walked (or slid) to Milton this afternoon, the roads a glare of ice. The town bridge is under repair & all traffic had to go around Milton. The bridge, an iron affair with overhead trusses & a swinging span to pass ships up the river, was built in the 1880's & designed for the horse traffic of that age. It is a marvel that it has stood up so long under the heavy beat of motor traffic, including a stream of heavily laden pulpwood trucks. Lately the girders etc. have been showing signs of "iron fatigue" & in fact the bridge had become dangerous.

This is the season of the gas-hunters, the winter time when chairmen of clubs, societies, home-and-school associations & other groups find difficulty in getting speakers for their luncheons & dinners, & cast about in all directions. Throughout this month I have been getting phone calls & letters, inviting me



to speak everywhere from Shelburne to Sydney. I refuse them all, politely. I have neither the time nor the urge for public speaking. A writer should stick to his trade.

THURSDAY, JAN. 27/49 Sunny, cold. Walked to Brooklyn & back this afternoon. Rolfe Seabome, woods manager for Mersey Paper Co., picked me up in his car on the way & carried me as far as the mill gate. He reports that M.P.Co. is buying nearly all its wood, as I mentioned on Jan. 15; but he adds that he cannot altogether disband his logging force, for reasons of policy; & he has retained a force, now cutting in the region of Sobatic, which will log 5 million feet of pine & 10,000 cords of <sup>softwood</sup> wood this winter. The pine is to be used as ~~paper~~ lumber, & will work out at about 5,000 cords. Thus the M.P.Co.'s winter cut will be 15,000 cords, compared with an average of 60,000 cords in pre-war years.

The Dept of Lands & Forests announces a kill of 30,158 deer in N.S. during last Fall's hunting season, plus a kill of 9,494 beavers. This is the biggest kill of deer ever reported in the province, & the biggest beaver kill. The last open season on beaver (1945) yielded 6,144. The 1947 kill of deer was 29,280, the 1946 deer kill was 26,750. These rising figures are not due to an increase of deer & beaver, for they have visibly decreased in the past 10 years.

The big kills are due to a sharply increasing number of hunters & the continual improvement of the roads through the forest area. Another factor in these big figures is the government's demand (rigorously enforced these past four years) that every hunter report whether he killed deer or not. Before this undoubtedly a good many hunters failed to report the deer they shot. Of course illegal killing is never reported; if it were, the published figure for each year would be (at a guess) 30% higher.

FRIDAY, JAN. 28/49 Started out for a walk this afternoon, but the southerly wind suddenly blew hard, with heavy wet snow which quickly changed to rain; so I was glad when Irving Bain picked me up in his car. He is keen to sell me a new Ford (he is the Ford dealer in Queens Co.) but I balk at the present cost. A new coach costs \$2,000, a four-door sedan costs \$2200; & he would allow me \$500 for my old Chevrolet. Tonight is the night of the annual Grapes Ball, to which our daughter Frances was invited by Billie Sweetnam, the Baptist parson's son, at least five months ago, & to which she has been looking forward with rapture. On the other hand Tommy, & a group of the older cadets, have decided to ignore the Ball as a lot of silly girl-stuff. Also there is the expense. Each boy is obliged to order a rose corsage for his lady, to call for

her in a taxi, & take her home in another. All this, with the Ball tickets, cost him at least \$3. On the ~~same~~ other hand each little girl feels that she must have a professional hair-do, new dress, new slippers, & so on. The fond mammas, with that doll-dressing urge which no woman ever out-grows, enter into all this with gusto. As a result, tonight practically all the little girls (12 to 16 years) were dressed in "~~formals~~ formals", i.e. long gowns sweeping the floor, & with bare arms & low neck-lines, & all had their hair crimped & curled within an inch of its life — like a lot of little women matured five years before their time.

This, & the pangs of doubt & hope which go before — wondering if an invitation from some boy will be forthcoming — make the whole thing offensive in my eye. Why rob these youngsters of the best years of their lives, when they have grown big enough to enjoy existence & yet are immature? The Cadet Ball is typical of so much in our modern children's lives, which makes ~~so~~ many of them precocious numskulls at the age of eighteen. — too many movie shows & parties & boys-and-girl festivities of all sorts, at a time when they should have been studying schoolbooks.

SATURDAY, JAN. 29/49 Sunny & mild after yesterday's rain.  
Went rabbit hunting at Port L'Herbert this afternoon with Parker, Smith & Dunlap. In a steady 3-hour tramp.

travelling in a line about 100 yards apart, we came upon only one rabbit, which P. shot. This in an area where 20 years ago any hunter could pick up 10 to 25 rabbits in an afternoon. It is the same all over this end of Nova Scotia; the rabbits seem to be dying out, like the moose. A good deal of ice left in the woods, & a few crusts of snow. The non-appearance of deep & abiding snow this winter is causing grief to lumbermen all over New England & the Maritime Provinces. The ice merchants have no stock, & de luxe ski resorts are still practically deserted.

SUNDAY JAN. 30/49

Insomnia haunts me again. Gave up the struggle at 3 a.m., got up, & lit the stove in my den. Sat till 6 a.m. thinking up amusing things to say in a mock trial to be held in the Legion hall on Feb. 9th. (J. Ross Byrne, the lawyer, is to be tried for the murder of a barrel of oysters. I have been appointed "Prosecutor." Kevin Meagher is "Defence Counsel," & a chap named Dwyer, the "judge".) Turned in soon after 6, & then slept as if drugged, until 11.

A sunny but bleak day, temp. 10° above zero, with a whistling N.W. wind. I didn't venture out, nor did Edith. Even the kids stayed pretty close to the furnace. Marie Freeman came & had tea with us, & spent the evening.

MONDAY JAN. 31/49

Spoke to Kiwanis Club in the Mercury Hotel at noon today - my annual or semi-annual stink.

Talked ~~about~~ sea chanties & demonstrated by playing some of my chanty records on a gramophone lent for the occasion by Kossignol Sales Ltd. Walked to Milton & back later. Sky overcast & raw easterly breeze.

TUESDAY, FEB. 1/49 Two or three inches of snow fell last night & then turned to slush in rain. Walked to Brooklyn along the road & returned along the railway. Sunny, & water running everywhere, but a cold gale blowing down the river.

Tonight we went to the high school auditorium to see & hear the elocutionist, Phoebe Erskine McKellar, who came to see me last Sep. 27th. The programme consisted of narrative poetry, all Canadian, dealing with incidents ~~all~~ in history from B.C. to Nova Scotia. I found it dull, & it was not improved by her impromptu introductions & remarks between the acts - the woman never stopped grinning & talking. Her voice is high and rather thin, & she stumbled frequently over her lines. Her costumes very good, & that is the best I can say. I left in the intermission, when she had been rattling away for 1½ hours with brief pauses for a lightning costume change, & was glad to get home & pour myself a drink. The show was sponsored by the I.O.D.E. (after much prodding by la McKellar) who are obliged to pay her \$80<sup>00</sup> for the evening. She wasn't worth a tenth of it!

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 2, 1949

Premier Angus Macdonald, who recently returned from a holiday in the West Indies, held a meeting of his cabinet and Liberal party leaders last night, & some of those present declare that a provincial election will be held this year, probably in October.

The McKellar woman came to lunch today, talked a blue streak for 1½ hours, scarcely noticing the food on her plate, & departed, still talking, to catch the Hfx. train.

THURSDAY, FEB. 3/49

Temp. 10° above zero at 9 a.m., rising no higher than 20° at noon, with strong NW gale whistling through the streets. Walked as far as the railway bridge & thence across to Bristol - far enough in such a wind. Turned over to Lockward of the Royal Bank my Sao Paulo bond, for sale at 98 or better, on the New York market. This is the State of Sao Paulo Coffee Loan, floated in 1930, & supposed to be liquidated in ten annual payments. Originally I had two \$500 bonds, but fortunately one of these was drawn for payment just before Sao Paulo ceased to provide funds for the purpose about 1934.

SATURDAY, FEB. 5/49

Sunny & cold. Four inches of snow on the ground, which fell on Thursday night - the first real snowfall since Christmas. Parker, Smith, Dunlap & I went to Eagle Lake this afternoon. About 4 inches of ice on the lake, & of course the snow on top of that. We

got there about 4:30. Had a good supper, read & talked for a while, & then played bridge until nearly 1 a.m. crawled into our sleeping bags; & as we opened the door wide, as usual, on turning in, & the temperature went close to zero, everything in the camp was crackling by morning.

SUNDAY, FEB. 6/49

Another cold but sunny day. Woods lovely, every conifer heavy with snow, & hardly a breath of wind. P. & D. had brought rifles & went off after breakfast to hunt rabbits in the woods between Eagle & Long lakes. I took ax & saw & resumed my firewood operation near the old logging dam, felling small maples, sawing them in firewood lengths, carrying these to the shore, & then splitting & piling. The wood was cracking with frost, hard to chop down, but the chunks split at a single blow of the ax. This is work I like. It calls for all the energy I have, exercises every muscle right down to the toes, requires some skill (especially in felling the tree the right way) and provides a very satisfactory reward in the shape of firewood for next year's hunting. In these surroundings, & with the sun bright on the snow, it is really a pleasure. I quit at 12:30 & returned to camp to cook dinner. The others turned up at 2:30, reporting many rabbit tracks but no rabbits. During last night a big otter made a

W. long journey while we slept. He came from the open  
water at the outlet of Eagle Lake, got out on the ice  
just opposite our camp, travelled down the western  
& side of the lake (getting off the ice to cut across each  
small point of land) & went up the meadow to Long  
Lake. His track in the snow was like a Moose code,  
a for he seemed to take two or three hops & then slide  
on his belly for ten feet or so.

After dinner we sat with the camp door open,  
looking down the lake, & suddenly saw a wild-cat run  
out of the west side woods, follow the otter track some  
distance, then head straight out to sniff the tracks  
made by P. & D. when they went down the ice to hunt.  
He seemed extremely interested & began to follow  
the tracks towards us. P. & D. got their .22's ready,  
but something alarmed the cat when he was still well  
out of range, for he turned & ran swiftly back into  
the woods. We went down the ice to examine his  
tracks, & P. & D. followed them for an hour before giving  
it up. We saw two wildcat tracks on the way in  
yesterday, & P. & D. reported several in the woods  
between the lakes - which may explain the scarcity  
of rabbits. Left camp about 5 p.m. & walked out to  
Big Falls in a beautiful red frosty sunset.



MONDAY, FEB. 7, 1949

Temp. at 8 a.m. was  $3^{\circ}$  below zero on my thermometer; some in Liverpool report  $5^{\circ}$ , &  $8^{\circ}$  at Milton.

The day turned mild, & all evening there was a flood of rain & a S.E. gale. Had a short walk this afternoon, & dropped in with a couple of books for Jerry Pickerson, who is laid up in bed. Tonight Dewey Pickerson came in, with all the latest gossip from Clark's Harbour and Seal Island. Owing to the uncertainty of winter storms, the lobstermen take up their traps at the end of December & remove from Seal Island to their homes, until the end of February. This gives them a spell of "lee days" (i.e. idle days, owing to weather) & Dewey does quite a lot of visiting. He stayed all evening, sipping rum & talking with his usual gusto, & I enjoyed it all, though it meant no writing done. Another batch of reviews of "Halifax" came today; all very flattering; & Bill Deacon, in his column in Toronto's Globe & Mail, calls it "the all-round best Canadian book of 1948". The Reprint Society of Canada, which issues special reprint editions of books tested by time (to the extent of a few years, at least) wants to get out an edition of "Roger Huddyn" this summer. I have written my permission, & McCalland & Stewart agree. M. & S. still keep "Roger" in print, & have stock on hand, but they feel the Reprint Society's edition cannot hurt their

sales. Also under our agreement M. & S. get half the royalties from the Reprint Society's edition. This won't be large, for the royalty is only  $7\frac{1}{2}^t$  per copy, & the Society's editions rarely exceed 5,000 copies. Phoned Ross Byrne re the Legion mock trial (see entry Jan. 30) & found him very ~~well~~ unwell. He has been undergoing treatment for tuberculosis for years, & the doctors have now ordered him off to South America.

TUESDAY, FEB. 8/49

Sunny, mild, streets a mess, still coated with ice after yesterday morning's snap, but water running everywhere. No walk. Historical Society met in the Navy Room, Town Hall, tonight - about a dozen people including the secretary & myself. Officers were nominated & elected for the ensuing <sup>year</sup> & the old slate practically unchanged, including (much against my wish) me as president.

I read a paper of my own, "Early French influences in Queens County", & we had a discussion on it.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 9/49

Fine & warm, with a south wind. Walked along the railway to Gull Island siding, & back by the paved road. Had to take off my mackinaw jacket before I got fat. Clem Crowell sent me details & application forms for boys between 12 & 14 seeking to qualify for scholarships at Upper Canada College. He thought we might be interested in sending Tommy. I was much impressed with the

college & its product when I visited U.C.G. in November 1946. So I sounded Edith (whose mouth drooped at the mere notion) and Tommy, who at once began to recite the advantages of school in Liverpool - the cadet corps, the band, the basketball team (which he has just "made") & so on. I returned the forms to Crowell.

FRIDAY, FEB. 10/49

Hard north gale & bitter cold. Still no snow. Called on Jerry Nickerson, with another book. The doctor has decided to keep him in bed for several weeks. Margarine has come on the Canadian market recently for the first time in at least 28 years, having been kept under Dominion govt. ban all that time by pressure of the dairy interests. The chronic & periodical butter shortages in recent years, & the terrific price to which butter has gone (now 76¢ per lb) caused an outcry that could no longer be ignored, & the federal govt. had its ban pronounced *ultra vires* by the Supreme Court - & passed the buck to the provincial governments. Provinces in which the farmers control the legislature (e.g. Quebec & P.E.I.) have issued bans of their own. Others have done nothing official one way or the other. The first supplies of margarine reached Liverpool yesterday (made in Toronto by Canada Packers) & Edith got a pound. She put it on the tea table without comment. Frances & I noticed that she'd got a different

brand of "butter" (it is of a more solid consistency than butter, and a paler tint of yellow) while Tommy noticed nothing. All of us thought we were eating butter until Edith told us it was margarine. It costs 47¢ per lb. & is in great demand everywhere - everyone wants to try it.

Fuel oil price has fallen  $\frac{1}{4}$ ¢ per gallon - I now pay 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ ¢ for my stove oil. On the other hand gasoline has gone up again. The post-war development of the Alberta oil fields has begun to have a marked effect on supply. The prairie provinces are now "self-supporting" & next year they expect to supply part of the rest of Canada. With hard coal selling at \$26.50 per ton here, more & more people are putting in oil furnaces.

SATURDAY, FEB. 12/49 Temp. down to zero last night, with a northerly gale. Walked to Milton & back this afternoon; cold, but bright sunshine, & clouds of dust blowing on the dirt road up the west side of the river.

SUNDAY, FEB. 13/49 Mild, with drizzling rain all afternoon & evening. Went to morning service at the United Church with my family. Service was held in the Sunday School room in the basement (the church is undergoing a complete re-decoration inside, for the first time in 26 years) & congregation & choir sat on plain wooden chairs. These bore in painted white letters on the backs "banteen", or "Drill Hall"; the church

wardens had purchased them at Shelburne in '47 or '48 when the naval base there was finally dismantled & its materials sold. When we left at the close of the service the parson, an excellent chap named Macdonald, shook hands, grinned, & asked if I was feeling entirely well. (I got to church only once or twice last year.) I said Yes - and I might even come again soon.

MONDAY, FEB. 14/49

The kids are busy with Valentines. Still no ~~ice~~ snow, & most of the ice gone from the town streets, although there is still good skating on the ponds. Old Sam Glode, the Indian, begged me for money today - "just two dollars till my pension comes". I let him have it, & later saw him & a seedy white loafer, another veteran of War One, heading for the liquor store. This is the first time Sam has ever touched me for money, although I have helped him in other ways, including the getting of his pension when I was an official of the Legion.

TUESDAY, FEB. 15/49

Drizzling rain all day. I was much surprised & gratified today to receive a letter from Dr. A. E. Kerr, President of Dalhousie University, asking me to accept an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, to be conferred at a special convocation on March 8th. The offer had been authorized by the Senate of the University on Feb. 12th. March 8th. is Munro Day, when

Dalhousie commemorates George Munro, its greatest benefactor. I remember my father pointing out Dalhousie (then in the old Forrest Building) one day in 1913 or the spring of '14, & saying "Some day I hope to see you graduate there". That was not to be. But what strange turns & chances life brings forth!

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 16/49 Overcast & mild. Mud everywhere. Dined tonight with "Father" John Wilson & Mrs. Wilson & Bill in their new home at Fort Point. The house is a monstrosity outside, but within it is roomy & comfortable. It is still only half finished, due they say to a lack of funds. No knobs on the doors, etc., & the huge cellar has only an earth floor. But the cellar contains an enormous oil-heating plant, with all sorts of complicated attachments & electrical gadgets, & a forest of water pipes going to all parts of the house. (There are 3 complete sets of hot-water heating pipes, so that "downstairs", "upstairs", and "the ell" may be heated at different temperatures.) Willie's electrical wires & gadgets are to be seen all over the house, with the result that the household switch- & fuse board in the cellar looks like something borry of a wedding between Heath Robinson and a telephone exchange.

THURSDAY, FEB. 17/49 Went up to Hfx. today by train. Mowbray & Phyllis Jones, & Ruth Murray, were going also, & we had a lively partie-carrée, which made the long trip

pleasantly short. A light snowfall this morning made the landscape fresh & lovely. I found Mother & Hilda well.

FRIDAY, FEB. 18/49

This morning at 10 a.m. the Historic Sites Advisory Council of Nova Scotia met in Province House. The meeting had been called by chairman Will Bird, so that Hon. Harold Connolly, Minister of Trade & Industry, could present one or two ideas of his own. Forseeing fireworks, Bird adroitly left for Toronto, appointing me chairman (by letter a few days ago) in his stead. Dr. Harvey, Bruce Ferguson, Prof. Langley (of Acadia), & Prof. W. J. Belliveau (of St. Ann's) were present. I called the meeting to order at 10:05 & we transacted bits of deferred business until 10:20, when we sent our stenographer to phone & find out why Mr. Connolly was not there. Connolly appeared in a few minutes, striding in the door & announcing in a loud voice that nobody had told him of a meeting with our Board today - a palpable lie. He is a short brisk dark man of about 50, with a brusque, almost truculent manner, & a pair of very odd eyes, apparently a very light grey with yellowish glints, which are darted at you from under a pair of dense black brows. He announced that he had two matters for our Board to consider - the erection of a monument to Longfellow at Grand Pré, & creation of

an Acadian museum at Pubnico. Dr. Harvey at once demanded to know why Connolly had ignored every recommendation made by our Board during the past year - indeed had pointedly ignored the Board itself ever since it was created by Premier Macdonald to "advise" Mr. Connolly in the Fall of '47 - <sup>x</sup> <sup>who</sup> <sup>now</sup> came to the Board with two pet projects of his own. "Are we to understand," said Harvey "that the Board is now being told what it must recommend?" I pointed out that of the four historic-memorial projects so far carried out in N.S. - Fort Anne, the Port Royal Habitation, Grand Pré Park, & the Haliburton House - three were commemorating the French. "Now," I said, "You propose to add something more to Grand Pré, & build something entirely new to please the Acadians at Pubnico, making this historic-memorial business more lop-sided than ever! There is, at present, nothing to commemorate the New Englanders, the Germans & Huguenots of Lunenburg, the Loyalists - all of whom did more, actually, in building this province, than the French who preceded them. Is it any wonder that the average American tourist goes away convinced that the history of Nova Scotia ceased to be of interest after the French Expulsion of 1755?" Connolly came down



from his high horse considerably, assured Harvey that he merely wished to submit these new matters to the Board for study & advice, assured me that he had not realised that memorials so far completed were largely to the French, that he was very anxious to see the New Englanders & others properly commemorated - & so on. Finally, after much talk & a good deal of nonsense or pure falsehood (he said, for instance, that he had never seen our previous recommendations; yet these were incorporated in minutes of our meetings, copies of which were delivered to Connolly by Will Bird, an employee of the Department) Connolly declared that he would place all our recommendations before the government at the coming session, & advocate their adoption in the order of their importance as selected by ourselves. With that he left. During the meeting he gave us an illuminating demonstration of his quality. The negro attendant who guards Province House in a sort of police uniform, stuck his head inside our door, & said "Mr. Connolly, the Premier would like to see you in his office at once." Said Connolly, with typical truculence, "Tell the Premier I'm busy with this Historic Board & I will come as soon as I get through." The negro departed. A minute later Premier Macdonald himself appeared quietly outside our door, asking if he could speak to Mrs. Connolly for a moment. Only a "big" man could have done that. And by contrast

Connolly looked very small to all of us. We closed our meeting at 1 p.m. & I took Belliveau to lunch with me at the Lord Nelson, where, over clam stew, oysters, & fried smelts, we talked Acadian history until long after the other diners had vanished. We parted outside St. Mary's on Spring Garden Road, & I dropped into the Book Room to see Bendeliet, who told me he had sold 600 copies of "Halifax" but only a few copies of "West Nova" since I saw him last. Walked back to Mother's flat; the sun very bright on the snow.

SATURDAY, FEB. 19/49. Lovely mild sunny day. Caught the 8.05 train for Liverpool & the trip was slow & dull. (The usual 15-minute stop at Bridgewater turned out to be half an hour) Home at 12.45. Took Edith for a motor drive to Port L'Herbert this afternoon. Tommy arrived home with the basketball team at 5, by bus from Lunenburg, where they lost a game to the local school. They stayed overnight, & Tommy found himself at the home of Lace, the heroic young skipper of the trawler "Marie Brenda", who swam ashore with a line & so saved the lives of his crew when the "M-B" was wrecked near Guysborough a week or two ago.

MONDAY, FEB. 21/49 Sharp cold, after a bleak rainy Sunday. Walked to Milton & back. No snow on the road. Called in

to see Jerry Nickerson, & found him "up" but still confined to the house by doctor's orders. He spoke of the high profit to owners of fishing vessels at the present time. Much depends on the luck & energy of the skipper, of course. He quoted the case of the schooner (stump-rigged, with engine) "Alcala", which he & his associates had ordered from a Lunenburg shipyard in 1940. She cost \$52,500 equipped for sea - the cost being provided by ~~62~~ <sup>62</sup> shares at \$700 each. (and rest approved from the bank) In eight years of operation she has paid dividends of \$1050 per share. The dividend for 1948 was \$300 per share. This profit is divided after allowing 10% per annum depreciation, the effective life of a wooden vessel of this type being reckoned at ten years. Thus in addition to a sinking fund amounting to 80% of the original investment, the shares have paid an average yearly dividend of nearly 19%. Most of this was due of course to the unprecedented prosperity of the fishing industry for the past 8 years. Costs have risen so high since "Alcala" was built that it would take well over \$100,000 to replace her at the present time - & at the present time there is growing evidence of a coming slump in the fish business, which will cut the profits considerably. Nevertheless Jerry, who has steadily accumulated a fortune through many years of ups & downs in the fish business, says shares in a good fishing vessel will remain the best investment to be made in Nova Scotia.

THURSDAY, FEB. 24, 1949.

Cold & sunny, a good walk to Milton after two days of steady rain & mud. John Mc Blelland phoned from Toronto tonight, saying that Stanley Salmen, of Little, Brown Co. - the American publishers - will be in Hfx. next Monday & Tuesday on his way to England, & is anxious to talk to me, probably about my new novel. This puzzles me, for Little, Brown were not a bit keen when Chambrun, as my agent, approached them late in '47.

My weight today is 191 lbs, according to a machine in a shop on Main Street; about what it has been for the past 2 or 3 years.

SATURDAY, FEB. 26/49

Rain, followed by snow tonight & a sharp frost. The Palestine war seems ended (until the Jews are ready for the next move for liebensraum) with an armistice signed in Cyprus, by representatives of Egypt & Israel. In the fighting only the Arab troops of Trans-Jordan showed ability to cope with the well-armed & skilful Israeli forces. The Syrians contented themselves with a few border skirmishes, & the Egyptian army was defeated with absurd ease in the Negel Desert. The whole episode showed the weakness of the Arabic countries in the face of the clever & unscrupulous force which has been planted in their midst by the united efforts of world Jewry, especially the powerful

Jewry of America; and further Israeli wars <sup>of conquest</sup> are sure to come. The oil of Arabia is too rich a prize to remain long unattacked; & the threat of a Jewish march to the Suez Canal will assuredly be used as blackmail to secure non-interference by Britain, quite apart from the political pressure which the U.S.A. will undoubtedly exert in Jewish favor. Thus, less than 4 years after the last shot of the Hitler war, the United Nations have thrown aside the very principle for which the war was fought, & created a warrior state openly dedicated to conquest on the road from Europe to Asia. The Russians must be highly amused.

MONDAY, FEB. 28/49

Went up to Hfx. by train today. The train arrived on time at 5.45 p.m., & I found Stanley Salmen & his wife waiting for me outside the dining room of the Nova Scotian hotel. We dined together & then adjourned to the Salmen's suite aboard the Furness liner "Nova Scotia", at Pier Two. Salmen is an odd man of about my age, middle height, medium build, with an unusually large cranium. His hair is blond - almost white - & quite thin, his complexion extremely pale, & his blue eyes are framed in pink lids, all of which give him the look of an albino. His wife is slender, brown hair, grey-blue eyes, with a kind of casual friendliness that conceals a very acute brain, & a very warm heart. I gathered

that Salmen, who came from "Atlantic Monthly" to Little, Brown Co. last December, has been working himself to death on the new job, & now he is taking a "slow" boat to England to catch up on the firm's business there, & expects "to sleep the whole ten days" in perfect bliss. We discussed the theme of my new novel & the Salmen's made some acute criticisms & suggestions. Salmen also told me that Jacques Chambrun, (my agent in New York) is very clever & energetic, but is also a crook. I left the ship at 9.30 promising & that he should see my novel when finished. They are taking over a considerable quantity of hams, lard & butter, for gifts to their English authors. Mrs. S. ~~very~~ vows that she is going to walk up the steps, carrying a ham in each hand, when they call on H. E. Bates, who they say is always writing asking his <sup>American</sup> publishers to "send me another ham."

TUESDAY, MAR. 1/49 Snow & drizzling rain. Spent the day lazily indoors. At 4 p.m. walked over to South Street for afternoon tea with (Prof.) Lindsay & Helene Bennet. Bennet will "present" me at the Convocation on March 9th, & he insisted on a little rehearsal (with Helene as "Dr. Kerr") of the presentation ceremony. In the evening Dr. Kerr himself phoned Mother's flat, having learned I was in town. I was out at a theatre, but

phoned him on my return. He wishes to give a luncheon for about a dozen people after the ceremony, with myself and Edith as guests of honor, & wanted to know if we had another engagement. I assured him we would be very happy to come. He mentioned the forthcoming honour to me, in conversation with Premier Angus MacDonald today, & said the Premier was delighted & spoke of me in very high terms.

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 2/49

Snowstorm all night & still raging in Hfx. when the train pulled out at 8:05 this morning. Home at 12:30, & found my family well & happy. The forthcoming honor was announced in the Hfx press this morning, & over the C.B.C. network, & Edith said the phone had been kept busy by friends calling up with congratulations.

FRIDAY, MAR. 4/49

Cold nights, sunny days, the snow & ice decaying, & slush flying whenever a car or truck rolls past. Telegrams & letters are coming in from friends, congratulating me on the forthcoming honour. A quaint scandal has broken out in the city government of Halifax. John Lloyd, the clever young chartered accountant who became mayor of Hfx. during the late war, & later dabbled in national politics as an advocate of the C.C.F., has been exposed as a grafter who used his position & influence on the City

Council (he is now an alderman) to secure commissions from firms selling machinery, insurance, etc. to the city during the past 3 or 4 years. He has denied the charges, & the whole matter is now under investigation by a special inquiry under a provincial judge.

I made one of my periodical visits to the Perkins house today, to see that everything was all right. Next door, workmen are tearing down "Elmwood", the old wooden mansion built about 1803 by Joshua Newton, collector of customs. (His wife was Abigail, daughter of Limeon Perkins). For many years prior to 1943 the old mansion had been a hotel. Then it was taken over by the Canadian Navy & converted into a sort of hostel for the naval men in port, with several new outbuildings used as offices, drill hall, etc. Since 1945 it has stood empty, although the new outbuildings have been in use by the local Reserve Army unit - an artillery battery. Some say the gov't. intends to erect a large fire-proof armoury & drill hall on the site, as a permanent H.Q. for local militia.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5/49

Slush & mud. No walk. A great hullabaloo of dogs last night & tonight rendered sleep impossible for the whole neighborhood. For some time a number of dogs, mostly mongrels & strays, have



been running in a pack, haunting the school woods & gambolling in the Drew Field behind my house, but centering their activities about the house of Miss Marion Mack, whose own noisy collies have long been a nuisance. Last night, probably because one of the collies was a bitch in heat, there was a frightful uproar of dogs, barking, howling, snarling & fighting. Tonight Kelpard the policeman, & one of the male schoolteachers, managed to shoot 3 of the dogs, but the rest continued the racket far into the daylight hours of Sunday morning.

MONDAY, MAR. 7/49

Snow & sleet all day & night. Edith & I went up to Hfx. by train this afternoon, leaving Francie parked with the Seldons, & Tommy at home to keep Bachelor's Hall with young Paul Chandler, fortified by a refrigerator full of food. Found Mother well & very delighted about the great event tomorrow.

TUESDAY, MAR. 8/49

The weather today was at its worst - a freezing rain which covered streets & sidewalks with a treacherous coat of ice. I went over to Bennett's house on South Street by taxi-cab at 9:30 A.M. & was fitted with a gown or robe, a magnificent thing of black <sup>from</sup> and bright scarlet, of heavy material, & a sort of flattened "beef-eater" hat of black velvet with a yellow cord. Bennett said it was the first time the scarlet robe had been used

at Dalhousie for the L.L.S. degree. (These were made in Britain at a cost of \$150.00 each.) At 10 a.m. we made our way to the gymnasium - skating rather than walking. The going, afoot or by car, was so bad that Bennet thought nobody would be there except ourselves & the faculty; but the big gym. was about half or perhaps  $\frac{2}{3}$  full of people - an amazing thing on such a day. An outdoor procession was impossible under the conditions, so we formed up on the stairs behind the stage, a long procession in gowns & hoods, few of whom I knew, except Lieut. Governor McCurdy & his military aide (a young captain of the R.C.R. named Gregg), Commodore Adrian Hope, R.C.N., Col. K.E. Laurie of Oakfield (who is chairman of Dalhousie's board of governors), Burns Martin of King's College, & two or three Dalhousie professors. The college orchestra struck up "The War March of the Priests" promptly at 10:30, & the procession emerged, walking two-&-two (Bennet & I together), circling the lower part of the hall & then dividing at the steps leading to the right-hand side of the stage. The L.G., his aide, Dr. Kerr, Col. Laurie, Dr. Johnston (secretary of Senate, Dalhousie), Hope, Bennet & I went up on the stage, where chairs were arranged, with the name of each occupant on a large card lying on the seat. There was a small reading-desk for Dr. Kerr,

who of course sat in the middle, another at the side ready to be moved into place for my use, and a microphone connected with the loud-speaker system. Estith, Hilda & Mother sat with Mrs. Kerr in the right-front row (as I looked from the stage). Proceedings opened with the hymn "From Ocean unto Ocean" (which was written by Rev. Robert Murray, who died in 1909, & whose home, the old Murray homestead, still stands in the college grounds.)

Invocation was made by Rev. Harvey L. Denton. Dr. Kerr then rose & gave a brief address on the meaning of Munro Day, when Dalhousie remembers its many benefactors. He then spoke of me, & my work. Bennet then rose, & I rose as well (one each of side of Dr. Kerr). Bennet tipped his cap, I removed my hat, Bennet read his citation, Dr. Kerr conferred the degree upon me & shook my hand, while Dr. Johnstone slipped over my head the strap of my hood, which like the gown, is black & scarlet. We then resumed our seats, & Dr. Kerr made one or two complimentary remarks, & invited me to address the convocation. I had prepared a twenty-minute address on "The Importance of Things Past", which I then read, first of course thanking Dr. Kerr, & Bennet, for the kind things they had said; & the Members of Senate, & the University for the great honour given me.

The chief point of my address was that ~~past~~ history is our only guide to the future, & in the light of the past we have every reason to expect a long peace in spite of present glooms. I deprecated "the obsession with present fears which may prevent us looking clearly into the age which is to come," & said our chief problem in "the age of material progress which undoubtedly lies before us," will be the confusion of voices demanding that all our views be stark red or stark white, or black etc.

The orchestra then played God Save the King, & the platform group withdrew to the Faculty Room, upstairs, where Mother & Mrs. Kerr joined us, & several old friends came in for a chat. I was delighted to find two of my former teachers there, old Miss Sheaksten, & Mrs. Pond (nee Nicolle), who were on the staff of Chubucto School 30 years ago. Old J. W. ("Lucky") Logan was there, talking happily of old days at Nfx. Academy. Dr. Kirkconnell, President of Acadia University, was there. He was pleasant (I met him at the Canadian Authors Assn. convention in Toronto two or three years ago) although I knew his views differed somewhat ~~with~~ <sup>from</sup> what I had just expressed on the platform. (Kirkconnell is very much "obsessed with present fears", & spends a great deal of his time stumping up & down

the country, making speeches to clubs & other gatherings, enlarging upon the acknowledged evils of the Communist idea, & conducting a kind of one-man war with the Russians. He is very proud of the fact that he has been counter-attacked & mentioned by name in Pravda & other Russian journals. He is unquestionably sincere, although he obviously enjoys the publicity which follows his efforts; but he seems to me typical of the people who would have us think of nothing but the Russian menace, as if there were no other problems in the world.)

Finally Edith & I went on to Bennet's house, where there were drinks & hors d'oeuvres. Dr. Harvey was there, & Logan <sup>Don Frackling</sup> & Professor "Sandy" Mowat (who had been very kind in looking after Mother & seeing that she got safely to her taxi-cab), & some others. I had a glass of beer, nothing else. At 1 o'clock the Bennets, Logan, Edith & I went on in the Bennets' car to the Lord Nelson, where Dr. & Mrs. Kerr were giving a small luncheon in my honour in a private dining room. Col. & Mrs. Laurie were there; Mrs. Ahern, the mayor's wife (her husband was tied up in the present "snow-blower" investigation, in which he gave evidence this morning); Miss Henry (Dr. Kerr's secretary), Dr. & Mrs. Johnstone, Dr. Wilson, J. W. Logan, the Bennets. We had a good luncheon & some good talk, & departed at 3, with many compliments & felicitations.

Spent the rest of the afternoon with Mother, & had dinner at the flat with her & Hilda. Mrs. Kerr, with her usual kindness, had presented Mum with a huge bouquet of lovely roses & lilies. In the evening Edith & I went down to Don Mackay's & spent an hour or two chatting with him & Molly, & inspecting their collection of paintings (some very lovely old miniatures), pewter & silverware.

I had a glimpse of Andrew Merkel in the gymnasium this morning, & tried to get him on the phone this evening, but he had gone off with some cronies apparently. However I had a happy chat with Jilly, & with Peggy Thompson. Also chatted on the phone with Mrs. (Archibald) MacMechan, who is staying with her daughter, Mrs. Willetts, on Lower Road. Strange to hear everyone calling me "Doctor". I have an instinctive feeling, whenever I hear it, that someone else is being addressed.

WEDNESDAY MAR. 9/49 Rain & sleet all day for the third day in succession. Edith & I caught the morning train for L'pool, still in somewhat of a daze. When I stepped on the station platform at L'pool, & Archie Croft, the taxi-driver, stepped up & said "D'you want a cab, Tom?" I knew I was home. Evening at the Austins Parkers', where the Hubert Mac Donalds joined in congratulations & some good-natured "ribbing" about

my new dignity & title.

THURSDAY, MAR. 10/49

Drizzle all day & then heavy rain all night. Letters, messages of all sorts, coming in with congratulations, including two very kind ones from Premier Macdonald, and Judge Doull of the Supreme Court.

FRIDAY, MAR. 11/49

Pouring rain all day. I haven't had a real walk since Feb. 21st, for the weather & the walking have been uniformly bad. I got desperate for fresh air this afternoon, put on rubber boots & rubber coat, & hiked in the downpour to the railway bridge, thence to Bristol & home, stopping to see Jerry Pickerson on the way.

Today I received cheques from the Income Tax Department, refunding the "compulsory savings" added on to my income tax in 1943 (\$111.71) and 1944 (\$172.71).

These refunds are general, & the post office was swarming with people of the laboring class eagerly enquiring for cheques. Some had refunds due, of course. But there were others of the most ignorant sort who assumed that this was another gift from the gods, like the "children's allowances", & were indignant to find that nothing was coming to them. It is strange to see how, in the most shiftless folk, the notion has grown that the government has turned Santa Claus & that no one really needs to work any more.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1949.

On this, the 6th. consecutive day of bad weather, the rain changed to furious squalls of hard snow pellets, driven by a westerly gale. The incessant rains have left the dirt roads in a fearful state, & the "temporary" bituminous surface placed on the road to Brooklyn last autumn has gone to pieces & left that highway like a bombarded battlefield. Walked with Austin Parker along the main highway as far as Gull Island siding, & returned along the railway, in a bitter blast of snow most of the way. Looked for mayflowers in several "early" places, but found them barely in bud — a surprise after this mild winter.

SUNDAY, MAR. 13/49

Colder, squalls of snow, with intervals of sunshine very strange & welcome after so many dull days. Drove to Milton this afternoon & called on Aunt Marie Bell.

MONDAY, MAR. 14/49

A sunny day, though the wind was cool, & I had a grand walk (despite the mud) to Milton & back, & felt all the better for it. On my return I ~~felt~~ found waiting for me a young Englishman, Robert Kitney, a crippled veteran of the R.A.F. now living with his wife at Borgald's Point. His English father-in-law, Chaldecott, who has spent many years in this country, was with him.



Kitley hopes to make his living as a writer but so far has had no success. He showed me several short stories, all extremely morbid things involving child-beating stepfathers, sadistic husbands and cruel mothers, quite well written, but hopeless for magazine publication. To me, they revealed a queer twist of mind, & I told him to write about the more cheerful side of life, feeling that if he did so it must induce a healthier mental attitude, whether he sold his tales or not.

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 16/47

A sure harbinger of our bleak and treacherous spring — the usual cold & infection of my nose & throat — has set in very suddenly during the past few days, after a winter without even a slight illness.

Two days ago the mucous membrane at the back of my nose became very dry & painful. It seemed to get worse during the hours of sleep, for I was awakened each morning about 4 a.m. feeling feverish, & with a violent raw pain at the back of my nose. On rising, my nose began to run, & the pain eased & the fever passed off. Today my nose feels better, but the infection has passed down to my throat, which is swollen & raw. No walk today, although I paid a visit to the Perkins house & found that some urchins had smashed every pane in one of the upper windows. Tonight I took Edith & Franice to see an English

talking-picture, "The Red Shoes," a story of a ballet troupe. The play was in color, beautifully staged & photographed, & the acting & direction as well, were so far superior to the banal Hollywood stuff, that one seemed to be seeing a play performed in a new medium altogether.

FRIDAY, MAR. 18/49

A raw east wind brought a snowfall this afternoon & tonight. (We had one yesterday, & the day before.) At night the temp. drops to about 20°, rising to 40° or 50° at noon. The dirt roads are in a fearful mess. The text of the North Atlantic Pact has been submitted to the various parliaments for approval. This is the mutual defence pact created as an answer to continued Russian aggression in Europe; it will involve Britain, the U.S.A., Canada, France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Denmark & Norway.

SATURDAY, MAR. 19/49

Went to Eagle Lake this afternoon with Parker, Smith & Sunlap. River road very bad, nearly impassable on the mile above Deep Brook, where the Atlas Construction Co.'s big trucks, working on the new power development, have ploughed deep ruts. P's car scraped through, but only just. About 4 inches of snow on the level in the woods, but knee-deep in many places. This was a heavy wet snow which froze on trees & bushes, & has bowed many almost to the ground. Eagle Lake

is frozen almost to the wharf. Saw several hundred wild duck in the open water below Big Falls - unable to see what species. Reached camp about 4:30 & found it very cold, & with a pair of wood-mice running about the floor. A good fire soon thawed the place (with all the frozen tinned-foods going poonk! poonk! pink!, all evening) & after a big supper of baked beans & sausages we played bridge till after midnight.

SUNDAY, MAR. 20/49 Temp. dropped to  $15^{\circ}$  Fahr. in the night, & there was ice in the kettle on the stove when I rolled out to light the fire this morning. Just as the others were stirring, a fine big mink came lolloping across the ice towards the camp, & disappeared amongst the rocks at the foot of our radio pole. After breakfast we took axes & saws & worked till noon, felling, sawing, splitting & piling firewood near the old dam. Lovely in the snow, in the bright sunshine, although there was a bitter north wind. A leisurely dinner & a yarn, while P. whittled away at some pieces of ash he proposes to make into ax handles. Packed up, & walked out to Big Falls, thence home by car without incident, except that two deer jumped across the road just ahead of the car near Georgie's Brook. Tonight the temp. dropped to  $15^{\circ}$  in L'pool.

Monday, March 21, 1949

Black N.E. wind with squalls of fine snow. The Canadian Income Tax authorities have, as usual, calculated my tax on (1947) income and arrived at a larger figure. I am billed for another \$71.06 plus \$17.32 interest & penalty - total, \$88.38. As usual there is no explanation of how they arrive at this, & as usual I shall have to pay it promptly & without question if I want to avoid further penalties.

Tuesday, Mar. 22/49

No walk - except a short stroll via the railway bridge - yesterday or today, both grey & muddy days. No writing for weeks, although I steadfastly sit at my desk nine hours a day going over material & beating my brains for ~~an~~ inspiration that simply isn't there. It is clear to me now that I must set my novel aside & do several short stories or articles to augment my slim royalty income for this year. But even for these I can't find the vital spark. Such periods of mental emptiness are, I know, an occupational disease of writers; but this one has lasted five or six months at least - and it will soon be nine months since I last wrote a profitable word. After finishing a book there is a period when the mind is still full of the old, & it is impossible to get on with something new. This continues until the book is actually published.

and for at least a month afterward — one's mind goes to the book continually, seeking flaws, speculating on how this or that might have been improved or at any rate changed. Allowing for all this I should have been writing with new gusto by last December. Instead there has been this awful lethargy, which is so much more killing than mere work.

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 23/49

Desperate for exercise, I put on breeches, hunting boots & mackinaw this afternoon & walked to Milton & back in a gusty S.E. wind & driving rain. Got home soaked to the hide but feeling better. Finance Minister Abbott brought down his 1949 budget last night at Ottawa. As was expected (everyone is certain we are to have a federal election this year) there are cuts in the income & other taxes, increased exemptions on income tax which will take 750,000 taxpayers off the rolls altogether; and many of the "nuisance" taxes (e.g. on clocks & watches, candy, soft drinks, railway tickets) are sharply cut or eliminated.

Even so, the taxpayer will continue to bear a heavy load. Abbott is still budgetting for a big surplus, apart from the increasingly heavy costs of the new defence forces, social grants & payments, etc. The heavy tax on motor-cars continues without abatement. Newfoundland will not be subject to Canadian income tax until July this year, although Family Allowances & other services will be paid from the Canadian treasury, beginning in May.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 1949 At last a day not only sunny but actually warm! I had a truck-load of cinders hauled from Thompson's foundry & spent two hours spreading & raking them over my muddy driveway, pressing them smooth with the garden roller, & sweating profusely in the balmy air. Took my car to Thompsons to have the ignition system checked. I've had great difficulty in starting the motor this winter - & came away with a complete set of new spark-plugs, new make-&-break parts, etc. Had the valves adjusted also. Went up to Milton in the car with Edith this afternoon, picked up Aunt Marie Bell, & went for a drive to Port Moriton & back. The old car runs very well & should serve me for another year - its fourteenth.

FRIDAY, MAR. 25/49 Another sunny day, but with a cool westerly breeze. Edith went off with the Parkers at 7:30 a.m. for a day's shopping in Hfx. I got the meals for the kids & myself, & Francie washed the dishes. This afternoon I walked the ten miles around Western Head - the first time I have done this for many months. Heard the first song sparrow of the season near Herb. Tarr's farm. Stopped to watch his sheep, many of them with lambs born during the past 2 or 3 days & already feeling very frisky.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1949

Rain again, a drizzle all day. Drove with Edith & Franice along the Western Head road this afternoon so they could watch the lambs.

Tonight in Halifax workmen will remove or change-over the old wires for the trams along the main routes about the city, & tomorrow morning the new <sup>electric</sup> motor busses will commence operations. These busses run on ordinary tyres & swing alongside the sidewalk to take on or discharge passengers. This has forced the city to forbid parking by motor vehicles of other sorts on long sections of the main streets; and so the parking problem, always bad, will now be terrific.

During the past few weeks there have been several outbreaks of insubordination aboard ships of the Canadian navy on winter manoeuvres in the Pacific & Caribbean. According to officers, these petty mutinies have occurred amongst newly enlisted ratings who "objected to having to get up early in the morning, to doing certain kinds of work, to being limited on shore leave," etc. Apparently the post-war youth will not submit to the discipline of the wartime Navy.

MONDAY, MARCH 28/49

Mild & overcast yesterday & today. Saw the first robins - a busy pair foraging in the Drew field, but apparently the grey sky depressed them, for they were silent. Spent the afternoon raking up dead leaves & the winter's accumulation of rags, paper & other debris on the front & back lawns.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 1949.

Started for Hfx. shortly after 9 a.m. but car developed ignition trouble & I had to turn around at "Happy Landing" & return to the Rossignol garage. Got hold of the mechanic who allegedly "fixed" the ignition on the 24th, & he soon discovered something simple but very wrong with the new parts installed. Got away finally towards 11 a.m. & the engine ran very sweetly all the way to the city. Noticed ice covering most of the lakes along the way, even some sea ice at the head of Chester Basin. The city was bleak, with a fierce & cold N. gale blowing clouds of dust about the streets. Had lunch with mother. Phoned Dr. Scammell re the sundial presented to Dalhousie by Judge Patterson (Patterson wants me to make some sort of address at the unveiling); also phoned Bendeliet. Mark Livingstone of the Herald discovered I was in the city & phoned, & talked me into an address to the Kuwanis convention at Hfx next September. Spent the evening with Eva Knodell, old friend of my school days, who is now back in the old home after many years in the West.

THURSDAY, MAR. 31, 1949.

Walked into town this morning & found Bendeliet & a skeleton staff busy selling off the last of their stock, & looking very blue. So goes the only real book-shop in Halifax. B. is taking



a job with Ryerson Press in Toronto, but will probably be employed eventually as their sales representative in the Maritimes. Of the stock of my book "West Novas", which I left with him to sell on commission, he had 383 copies ~~left~~ remaining. (I don't think he had tried very hard to sell them.) I called on Jack Seville, of Connolly's Stationery Store, Barrington Street, and arranged to have 50 copies of "West Novas" delivered there, for sale at \$4.00, with 20% commission - the same terms as Bendeliet's. Arranged to have the remaining 333 copies removed from Book Room this afternoon & sold at Mother's flat. Bade farewell to Bendeliet & his staff; & went on to see Lane, of the N.S. Building Society; & Will Bird, at his govt. office. Bird has just returned from a trans-Canada speaking tour in his capacity as President of Canadian Authors Association; says a tremendous number of people writing in Canada, & this year's crop of Canadian books will be the largest in history. Dinner with Mother & Hilda. Casino Theatre tonight. At 10 p.m. listened to a radio broadcast of Winston Churchill's speech to a gathering of scientists in Boston. He spoke chiefly of the Russian hostility which had driven the Western nations into the Atlantic Pact. Said that Russia was

controlled by "13 men in the Kremlin" who "feared the friendship of the western nations more than their hostility." He declared that only the fear of the atomic bomb in the hands of the Americans had prevented the Russians from over-running the rest of continental Europe & attacking England since 1945. He said however that "war is not inevitable", recalled that once before a Tartar invasion of Western Europe had ceased, & the Tartars had withdrawn "because the Great Khan had died", & hinted that something of the same sort (Stalin's death, undoubtedly) might again change the course of history. He urged that every military precaution should be taken by the civilized nations of the West in the meantime.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1/49

On this day Newfoundland officially becomes a province of Canada. At almost the last minute Ottawa realized that the entry of the new province on All Fools Day might provide a bitter jest for the large and important minority in Nfld. who voted against this measure in last year's plebiscite; and so it was arranged that the transfer of sovereignty went into effect officially at one minute before midnight on March 31st.

I returned to L'pool this morning, bringing

with me, 158 copies of "West Novas", leaving 175 copies in Mother's attic. Stopped in Lunenburg to see C.H.R. Zwicker, found he had sold 18 of the 25 copies of "West Novas" I left with him. He expects to sell the rest soon & will then pay me for the whole 25. In Bridgewater, C. W. Greene had sold 13 of the 25 I left with him. He insisted on giving me a cheque for the 13 sold.

On arrival in Lpool I found the town agog over a bank robbery yesterday. A young accountant named Vernon Johns, (a veteran of the R.C.A.F. in the late war, a native of Bridgetown, employed by the Bank of Nova Scotia & stationed at the Liverpool branch for the past year) calmly walked out of the bank at 1:15 p.m. with \$10,000 in fives & tens, all old currency & not easily traced. He stepped into a waiting taxi, drove to Luro, paid off the Lpool taxi man & bought another outfit of clothes. Then he hired a Luro taxi & started for New Brunswick. In the meantime he & the money had been missed, the alarm had gone out, & Johns & his taxi ran into an R.C.M.P. road block near Parrsboro. The Mounties arrested him & found \$8,000 in his possession. Later they picked up the Lpool taxi-man, & both are being returned to Lpool for trial.

I also found that the provincial gov't. had at last begun work on the Simeon Perkins house. (One more proof that this is to be an election year!) The contractor, Charest, had a gang of men digging around the foundations (they had found the sills badly rotted) & electricians busy inside. All the Society's museum relics have been removed & ~~stored~~ secured in a shed at the rear.

SATURDAY, APR. 2/49

A grey day with a cold N. wind. A good walk to Milton this afternoon. Brent Smith called me in, & showed me a copy of the Champlain Society's publication of Simeon Perkins' diary, edited by H. A. Innis. Innis acknowledges my help in his foreword, & makes mention of "His Majesty's Yankees" there & in one or two footnotes. Charest called, & gave me the padlock keys to the shed at rear of the Perkins house, in which the Q.C. Historical Society's relics are now stored. Says there is a lot to be done to the house, & thinks the gov't. appropriation of \$5,000 very inadequate.

SUNDAY, APR. 3/49

Sunny & warm. Woke up to a full chorus of robins, song sparrows & a blue-jay - the first time this year that our feathered friends have really given us Reveille. Edith & I went to church without coats.

Drove this afternoon to Port Mouton & back. Stopped at Summerville & walked the length of the beach. Noticed many town-dwellers busy about their summer cottages, & four or five cars at the golf course. This is the second day of a self-imposed reducing diet for me - no sugar, butter, cream, <sup>potatoes</sup> potatoes, & very little bread. I have made a good many half-hearted attempts in the past ten years. This time I'm determined to get my weight down from 193 lbs. to something like 175. Nowadays a good many people fortify their determination in reducing by taking pills, which remove all desire to eat. Most of them look wrecks after a few weeks. I hope to get along on will-power.



This is the new stamp just issued to commemorate the entry of Newfoundland into Confederation of Canada.

TUESDAY, APR. 5/49

Working at my novel again, after another long period of mental emptiness. A fine warm day. Removed the storm windows from my den this afternoon, washed the den windows, & put on the fly screen - wonderful to have plenty of air again. Movies tonight with Edith & Frances. "Life" magazine this week has an account of the recent Communist gathering in New York, at which a large

number of American communists, "parlor pinks", & other "fellow travellers" were addressed by the Soviet composer Shostakovich. The magazine shows a rogues' gallery of American sympathizers who lent their names & support to the meeting, & amongst them was Kenneth Leslie, the Nova Scotia poet. I have heard little of Leslie since he called on me in August 1937 & presented two volumes of his poems. At that time he was very much interested in the Co-Operative Movement, sponsored by St. Francis Xavier College at Antigonish, & was eager to associate himself with Father Tompkins & other priests engaged in the work. He was a pleasant nice do-well who had married one of the Moirs (of Hfx), who divorced him, & then an American woman, a widow with a grown-up family & a fat bank account. Apparently he has clung to the second wife, who provided all the money he needed for his whims, & I don't think he has been in Nova Scotia since '39. A few years ago he became a violent anti-Papist, & established or took over a small magazine in New York called "The Protestant" which is devoted to the most scurrilous sort of attacks upon the R. C. Church. Evidently this preoccupation has led him into the ranks of the American communists. All this amuses me when I recall his conversations of '37. In those days he was very proud of his Gaelic ancestry, & full of

the wrongs of Scotland & especially of Ireland, quoting the English persecution of the Church amongst other things.

He had a fierce contempt for the late Dr. Archibald MacMechan, whom he denounced as "a typical Halifax Imperialist" - but I gathered that his chief grievance was that Archie had failed to recognise Leslie's poetic genius when he was a student at Dalhousie under MacMechan. Leslie won the Governor-General's Award in the early 1930's, & his poems from time to time received much praise from the critics, although to me most of it was mediocre. If he has written any verse in the past ten years I have not heard of it.

FRI DAY, APR. 8/49

Fine & warm this morning. In the afternoon I went with Edith to the golf course & played the first round of this year - score 113, & no lost balls. Course fairly dry but very rough due to frost-heaving. In the second half the sky clouded rapidly & a bleak wind blew hard from the sea, & I finished the 17th & 18th holes in a downpour of rain. About a week ago the Communist-controlled Canadian Seamen's Union proclaimed one of their frequent strikes & tied up many Canadian ships at home & in foreign ports. It developed that the ship-owners had signed an agreement with the Seamen's International Union, which is part of the American

Federation of Labor & recently established a Canadian branch. A day or two ago a party of S.I.U. seamen on their way to join ships at St. John were attacked in a McAdam Junction hotel by C.S.U. men armed with baseball bats; at the same time a C.S.U. party boarded one of the strike-bound ships at Halifax, kidnapped the lone two engineers aboard, & left them in a waterfront alley beaten senseless. Early this morning a special train bearing 150 S.I.U. seamen & about 100 railway police was run in to the Halifax docks where three Canadian National (government) steamers lay strike-bound. About 250 C.S.U. strikers were there, & a battle followed in which bats were used, stones & bottles flung, and at least one shot-gun fired. The S.I.U. men got aboard their ships, which at once moved into the stream. Eight C.S.U. men required medical treatment including the removal of buck-shot (or more probably, bird-shot), but the S.I.U. casualties are not known. This battle of 500 men on the Hfx. docks brings to a head a situation which has plagued the Canadian merchant marine ever since it came under the domination of the C.S.U. during the late war. Excessive demands for wages, for larger crews, shorter hours, almost



luxurious accommodation, food, & working conditions, have driven operating costs so high that during the past two years a large number of Canadian ships had to be sold to foreign owners. They could not compete with British or even U.S. shipping. A few more years of this would drive the Canadian merchant flag off the seas altogether. Nevertheless organized labor (led off, of course, by the Cape Breton coal miners) is making a great outcry over what it calls "strike-breaking" at Hfx., regardless of the fact that the S.I.U. is itself a recognized union in Canada & the U.S.

In my time the seamen in privately owned Canadian merchant ships were poorly paid & shabbily treated. Now the shoe is on the other foot; the fat pay, easy life & lack of discipline (due to Union rules) aboard Canadian ships have attracted all sorts of shady characters, most of them not really seamen at all, & all completely irresponsible except to their Union. The C.S.U. head at Hfx. is a fat pale man named Meade, American-born, an acknowledged & self-proclaimed Communist who appeared, in the mysterious manner of his kind, at the port during the late war. He & his wife have been busily fomenting trouble, not only amongst seamen but amongst the fishermen, ever since.

Jim Keside dropped in this afternoon & we went over blue-prints of the Perkins house, & a list of items from Perkins' diary in which he mentions building, repairing, changing, decorating, the house through the years from 1766 to 1812. Not much detail, however!

SATURDAY, APR. 9, 1949

I end the first week of my "reducing" diet feeling starved but no thinner & afraid to weigh myself for fear of disappointment. Developed another infection of nose & throat, accompanied by bronchitis — the result of my chilly round of golf yesterday. Professor H. A. Innis, who edited Simon Perkins' diary for the Champlain Society, sent me an autographed copy of the book. It covers the period 1766-1780 & is very good so far as it goes. Spent this evening wrestling with income tax papers for '48. My gross income for '48 was \$ about \$5600.00, but from this I am able to deduct travelling expenses, agents' fees, office fuel & light, stationery etc., amounting to \$1,316.94, exemptions for wife & kids, \$1,700.00, etc., leaving a taxable income of about \$2,500. On this I calculate the tax at \$466.00. Of this \$332.10 has already been deducted at source by the U.S. govt., leaving a net tax payable in Canada of \$133.90 — the lowest I have had in a long time. Probably the Income Tax Dept. will disagree & charge me much more, by one of those mysterious calculations which it refuses to divulge.

SUNDAY, APR. 10/49

Got out of bed this morning feeling a bit dizzy, & fell on the bedroom floor. I was not hurt, but all day I had a peculiar uncertainty of balance & felt

wretched. This is probably due in part to the sudden change of diet, but mostly due to the cold I caught on Friday.

I attended the United Church this morning with Edith - my third consecutive Sabbath observation, really a miracle for me.

I hear that the Bank of N. S. robbers ("Davy" Johns, the assistant accountant, & a local taxi driver named Balcom) elected speedy trial before a magistrate in Liverpool on Friday, & both pleaded guilty.

MONDAY, APR. 11/48

Fine & cool. Gave Blackadar, treasurer of Zion United Church, a cheque for \$25.00 as a contribution to the cost of church repairs.

Went to the Perkins house & found six men hard at work. Most of the sills & many of the ground-floor joists were found to be extremely rotten. These have been replaced with new timbers. In order not to disturb the flooring Charast had his men dig trenches under & around the house ~~in order to~~ so that they could get at the underpinning. The back slope of the main ~~roof~~ roof was found to be extremely rotten - ready to collapse.

Fortunately for all this <sup>sort of</sup> repair Charast has been able to get plenty of old wide boards from "Elmwood" next door, built by Simon Perkins' son-in-law Newton, & torn down last winter.

Walked to Milton & back. My head still giddy at times - I nearly fell, in the post office.

TUESDAY, APR. 12, 1949

Fine & cool. Had a strange night, head whirling every time I turned over in bed; & I lay much of the night between sleeping & waking, seeing from time to time a swift procession of diseased & hideous faces. I so rarely dream that this in itself was weird. Got up this morning with a feeling as if a giant hand was squeezing my skull, ears ringing, etc. Edith thinks all this is due to the sudden & drastic change in my diet. I think it due to that in part, but also to the infected nasal & bronchial passages which are giving me so much trouble. Anyhow, as an experiment at noon I ate a normal meal - fried scallops, fried potatoes, preserved peas, milk, preserves - for the first time in ten days. Then, for sunshine & exercise, I went to White Point & played 18 holes of golf (score 106).

Historical Society met in the Navy Room, Town Hall, at 8 p.m. The same faithful few. Discussion of the Perkins House & diary, & I read a paper on Hancock Island. Eclipse of the moon tonight - the moon is full, & at 11:15 p.m. the shadow is about 90%, having crept in from the lower "left" side.

WEDNESDAY, APR. 13/49

Went to bed about half-past midnight & awakened at 3:30 a.m. feeling more wretched than ever, sneezing & coughing violently. Got up, lit the stove in my den, & sat

playing solitaire, sipping hot rum, & watching the moon go down into the school woods, until six o'clock. Then back to bed, where I lay coughing & dozing until noon. Decided to set aside the semi-starvation diet which in twelve days has made no appreciable difference in my weight while making me extremely ill. Ate a substantial dinner & supper & felt a little better. When I have thrown off this wretched bronchitis, sore throat & sinus infection I shall resume dieting — but on a more gradual scale.

In Hfx. the city police & RCMP have raided the Canadian Seamen's Union headquarters & searched cars & taxis in use by striking seamen, finding large numbers of clubs, stones, cargo hooks & other improvised weapons. Meade (Atlantic Supt. of CSU) and "Gus" Genites, (port agent of CSU) were arrested for possessing weapons, & later released on bail. Seamen of the rival (S.I.U.) union in hotels & boarding houses were also raided & searched but no weapons were found. One S.I.U. seaman is under arrest for attempted murder as a result of the fighting on April 8th, when several CSU men were wounded by a shot-gun.

THURSDAY, APR. 14/49

A bleak easterly rain all day & evening. I stayed indoors, racked with bronchitis, except to run down to the post office in the car, & to make a visit to the Perkins House

Jim & his wife Fran, came to  
lunch with us

with Jim Beside. The new sills are all of hackmatack, the most durable wood in Nova Scotia. The east chimney was found to be in a dangerous state, the bricks loose from the point where it passed through the bedroom ceiling, to the point where it emerged from the roof. This evening, with many old friends, Edith & I, foregathered at Hubert MacDonald's house on Waterloo St., to celebrate the 25th. wedding anniversary of our friends Austin & Vera Parker. A jolly affair, culminating in the presentation of a pair of silver candlesticks & I was appointed to make the speech. Home & to bed about 2 a.m.

FRIDAY, (GOOD FRIDAY) APR. 15/49

Woke at 6 a.m. sneezing & coughing. No further sleep possible. Got up, lit the furnace, & had breakfast. Spent a wretched day, reading, lying down, gargling my throat (which is agonizing tonight) & so on.

SATURDAY, APR. 16/49.

Terrific thunderstorm (the first of the year) revolved about the town from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m. & kept everyone awake. Rain & drizzle all day. Very wretched. Drove into town for a haircut & the mail. Met Merrill Rawding, who spoke of work on the Perkins house, & mentioned that his Dept's estimates for this year include \$50,000 for purchase of the Uniacke mansion at Mt. Uniacke, with its entire contents, & the adjacent timber-lands.

EASTER SUNDAY, APR. 17, 1949.

A sunny dawn, a grey morning, a rainy afternoon & evening. My cold shows the first sign of improvement since Apr. 9th, but in view of the weather I stayed indoors. Edith & the kids went off to morning service in fine array, & the Rev. Macdonald gave Tommy, for me, a letter written by Simon Perkins in 1794. This evening, as on several evenings during the past, Len, Franice attended service at St. Gregory's with her Catholic chum, Anne-Marie Doucette. Tommy is scandalised at this, but I point out the virtue of an open mind in religious as in other matters.

The pair of robins which has nested near our back (garden) wall for several years, & which made our back lawn their jealously-guarded worm hunting ground, has failed to turn up this year. They came with great regularity between March 22nd and March 28th, year after year. So far no other robins have ventured to feed on our lawn, although the Drew field, on the other side of the wall, is alive with robins every day.

MONDAY APR. 18/49

Another grey day with a light but raw east wind. Couldn't stay indoors any more, so I walked to Milton, & called in to see Jerry Nickerson on my way back. Feel better, although the sinus trouble remains & I still have a ringing in my ears & a painful feeling of pressure within my skull.

Today Eire officially proclaimed itself the "Republic of Ireland", & one Irish senator declares that the next step is to forbid use of the English language.

TUESDAY, APR. 19, 1949

An easterly gale all day & night, with a flood of rain. A poisonous discharge from the sinus behind my nose keeps my throat inflamed & swollen, despite much gargling with Dobell's tablets, & my voice is so hoarse that at times I can barely speak.

Another box of the C.B.C. phoned from Hfx, wants me to do four broadcasts this summer for the national network - subject, the story of Halifax. I agreed, provided that I may make one "live" broadcast and record the other three at the same time, to save four separate trips to the city. She agreed, & the tentative date for the business is June 19th (Sunday, at 1:15 p.m.)

Dinner at the Mowbray Jones' tonight, with the Donald Smiths & Roly Seabornes.

WEDNESDAY, APR. 20/49

Fine & warm. Blair Fraser of Maclean's Magazine drove down from Hfx this morning & came to lunch. He is preparing an article on Joseph Howe & wanted to "pick my brains", as he said. He had been to the Archives & had gone over the usual material. I showed him my notes (taken from Howe's handwritten account in the Archives) on Howe's tour of the province in 1842, hunting up the scattered MicMac settlements, checking white encroachment on Indian reserves, & making plans & provisions to settle the wandering bands on tillable land. It is a phase of Howe's career not often mentioned, which shows <sup>time</sup> a very



simple human light. Fraser was delighted, & made good use of the notes. He left for Hfx. about 2.30 p.m.

Some time ago I ordered a Budgerigar from Mrs. Jerry Nickerson, who breeds these Australian birds, which are now so popular as household pets. This afternoon I got it. (She charged \$10 for the bird, \$6 for the cage.) Francie was delighted. The bird is a small green creature, quite silent, & apparently not very happy, but perhaps he will get used to us.

This morning I drove to Lower Great Brook, & dropped off Tommy, Gordon Macdonald, Jack Dunlap & Paul Chandler, with their sleeping bags, haversacks, grub & fishing gear. They plan to fish all day, bivouac in the woods tonight, & return to Liverpool tomorrow evening. The brooks are all in flood after the heavy rain, so I don't think the trout will bite.

My throat still very sore. Gargling with Dobell's at intervals all day.

THURSDAY, APR. 21/49

Fine & warm. The Liverpool-Milton-Brooklyn bus service was practically destroyed this morning when the bus garage & repair shop at Sandy Cove went up in flames, with 3 of the buses. Tommy & his pals got home in Chandler's truck at noon, reporting a good time but no fish except perch. Doug Inness phoned, offered me a berth as one of his 6-man crew in the Hfx-Marblehead

yacht race, which takes place in July. (I have been out with him in "Cygnet" but he has a new & larger yacht now, which he keeps at R.N.S.Y.S. moorings, Nfx.) It was tempting but owing to the nature of my work I can't commit myself for a two-week jaunt (they are staying for the Marblehead festivities) so far ahead. He said he would phone me early in July.

Walked to Milton & back. The river is brown with pulpwood all the way down to the booms above the railway bridge. The long walls of pulpwood which appear each winter on the west bank below Milton - the old railway bed makes an excellent piling-place - are pitched into the river about this time of year by gangs of men working busily with short pulp hooks or as they are sometimes termed, "~~the~~" hookaroons.

FRIDAY, APL 22/49

Spent most of the day with Jim Reside, discussing repairs to the Perkins house. In the morning we went all over the house from cellar to garret. There are two small trunk rooms or lumber rooms, one in the west rear of the second floor of the house proper, the other in a sort of garret of the kitchen-ell. Both are cluttered with old trunks & boxes - including two "cow-hide" trunks with the hair still on the hide - some empty, others filled with old magazines, school books & newspapers. I have investigated these before, as best I could; but this time I went to the

bottom of each trunk, with the aid of Jim's flash-light.  
Found a number of old ledgers & other account books of  
bygone L'pool firms in the 1830's & 40's; but of real interest:  
(a) a ledger kept by James Taylor, merchant of L'pool,  
from 1795 to 1801. Many references to the privateers; & the  
leading skippers & owners (e.g. Enos Collins, Benajah Collins,  
Simeon Perkins) all had accounts for merchandise, etc.  
(b) the Regimental Orderly Book, Queens County Regiment,  
Royal N. S. Militia from 1839-1861. Not much in it  
except a few general orders, & one or two "Field State"  
statements showing officers' names & the strength of their  
various companies.  
(c) a letter book kept by the partnership of Esel  
Seely & Patrick Gough from 1827 to 1833, when the  
firm dissolved. The firm was engaged in shipbuilding,  
logging & sawing, the West India trade, the Newfoundland  
& Labrador fishery; & during this period they seem to  
have been pioneers in the ton-timber trade to Britain, which  
rapidly became their chief activity. Seely was the keen  
young privateer skipper who commanded the famous  
"Liverpool Packet" during part of the War of 1812. He  
purchased Simeon Perkins' home from the heirs some time  
after Simeon's death in 1812, & continued to live there  
until his own death about 1869.

After much discussion with Charist, the contractor, & investigation by carpenters of the various "clues" left in wood-work & plaster, we discovered how the staircase had gone up from the front hall in Simeon's time. The stairs were removed to the rear, & the front stair well sealed up, probably in the 1880's or 90's, when according to a local legend, one of the spinster daughters of Moore French Cagnew (the jeweler-dentist who married Seely's daughter & inherited the house) became involved in disgrace & was confined to the upper part of the house, & never allowed to see visitors, for the rest of her life.

Chief difficulty now that the actual carpentry work is drawing to a close, is the matter of painting, etc, especially the interior. The clues Perkins left in his diary are too sketchy to be of use, & while I know something of latter 18th & early 19th century interiors I am not qualified to undertake an authoritative job on the Perkins house. That is a matter for a properly qualified interior decorator, & I have urged this on the gov'n from the first; but they persist in a belief that such a person is an unnecessary expense.

This evening Edith & I drove to Hunt's Point with the Parkers & Gladys MacDonald, & enjoyed a lobster chowder in the little church hall. All of

Liverpool seemed to be there.

SATURDAY, APR. 23/49 Pouring rain all day, fog in evening. The Royal Bank, through its New York agency, has succeeded in selling my Sao Paulo (Coffee Loan) bond at par, plus accrued interest for 6 years. I bought the bond in 1930, & the Brazilians ceased payments of interest about 1938 or 1937. For a long time it seemed worthless, but since the war things have been more prosperous in Sao Paulo & apparently they have decided to pay off this loan, now nine years overdue.

Canada's merchant marine strike continues, & the whole world is laughing at the spectacle of Canadian ships tied up in foreign ports, with the crews on board, defying orders, feeding themselves from the ship's stores. In some cases crews of the new Seaman's International Union have been sent by plane to take over the ships, while the old crews were arrested & jailed for mutiny. In one case, a Canadian ship anchored off the Cuban coast, in a dangerous situation, with the crew refusing duty & keeping the captain & officers intimidated by threats of violence, a Cuban naval craft finally boarded the ship & took the sailors ashore to jail. Here at home the political pot boils merrily.

Bruce Chandler told me today that the local Conservatives hope to get Capt. Ted Moore to run for the Queens seat in the provincial house, and Hubert Nickerson for the federal.

At midnight tonight all towns in N.S. put their clocks ahead one hour for the summer season.

SUNDAY, APR. 24, 1949.

Sunny, with strong west wind. Church (United) this morning with Edith. Old Miss Fannie Sunlap rather disrupted the service by falling in a fit just before the sermon. She was laid in a pew & presently Dr. Bird came in & arranged to have her taken in the ambulance to Bridgewater.

By that time it was nearly noon & Rev. MacDonald dismissed the congregation. Played 24 holes of golf this afternoon with Parker & Sunlap.

Bert Waters joined us on the final round. I played poorly, as always in a high wind, but enjoyed the sunshine & exercise.

MONDAY, APR. 25/49

Temp. only 22° this morning, & very cold all day, with a strong wind from N. Walked to Milton & back this afternoon.

Working on scripts for the four broadcasts promised to C.B.C. Throat still sore, & the sensation of a tight band around my head continues.

It is now more than 2 weeks since I was able to smoke even a cigarette, in fact I had smoked very little since March 16th, when my sinus infection really began.

In China, after pausing for a time to gather their forces, the Communist armies under Mao Tse-Tung have crossed the Yangtse River & seized Nanking, & now are pressing on towards Shanghai. British

two days ago

war craft in the Yangtze were shelled & hit with many casualties, & the sloop "Amethyst" is a total loss with half her crew killed or wounded. The Chinese Communist radio at Peiping declares that its forces will not tolerate British or U.S. naval craft in Chinese waters, & that Britain must give up Hong Kong.

Tonight Premier St. Laurent, at Ottawa, intimated that a federal election will be held on June 27th; and Premier Macdonald, speaking at Kentville, said that the provincial election will be held "when the apple blossoms are on the trees" - i.e. probably the first week of June.

The judge (Mr. Vincent Pottier) of the enquiry into the famous or infamous "snow-blower" bribery case at Hfx. has announced his decision - that deputy-mayor Lloyd did in fact receive a bribe, that he did represent himself as controlling the city council, that certain aldermen were remiss in their duties, & that Mayor Ahern should have called for an investigation long before. All in all it is a very pretty mess to be aired at the very beginning of the bicentennial celebrations. Lloyd, unabashed, has entered his name as a candidate for mayor in the forthcoming civic election.

WEDNESDAY, APR. 27/49

Rain all last night & all today until evening. Saw a small shark on Jerry Nickerson's wharf,

Probably a ground-shark.

taken on a trawl. About four feet long, with small teeth, & a mackerel tail — one of the fishermen called it a mackerel-shark & said they were fairly common, although it is unusual to find one on our coast before summer.

The N.S. legislature dissolved today, & Premier Macdonald set the election date — June 9th. (my wedding anniversary!)

In the Halifax civic elections today Gordon S. Kinley was elected mayor with a 2-to-1 majority over his chief opponent, Allan M. Butler, while the egregious John Lloyd ran a bad third. Several of the old aldermanic crew lost their seats as well, so that Kinley will have more or less a new broom for his sweeping.

THURSDAY, APR. 28/49

Rain. Spent most of the morning and afternoon with Jim Beside, discussing the work on the Perkins house. Charvett's men have now almost finished re-shingling the roofs with cedar shingles. They had to replace the boards beneath also, as they were too rotten to hold nails in most places. We have, I think, solved the problem of replacing the main staircase in its original position — leading up from the front hall, instead of from the rear as at present. The change is said to have been made during the years when one of the <sup>Sally or perhaps the</sup> Agnew sisters, a spinster (not Petitia) who had fallen into some disgrace in her youth, was kept virtually a prisoner in the upper storey for the rest of her life.



FRIDAY, APR. 29, 1949

Fine, after a frosty night. Saw the first tree-swallow of the season fluttering about my garage this morning. Spent all afternoon conducting a committee of ladies of the Historical Society over the Perkins house, & working out with them a painting schedule for the various rooms & halls. The Canadian Seamen's Union strike on the East Coast is definitely broken. All of the strikebound ships at Halifax have sailed, one by one, with ~~Seafarers~~ Seafarers' International Union crews, put aboard under police protection, & two of the three at St. John have sailed also. Edith had tea with Aunt Marie Bell in Milton, & says it is widely believed up there that "Tom Raddall will be a Conservative candidate in Queens in the forthcoming election." It is now 20 years since I did any political work but the memory apparently dies hard. What would astonish the local Tories is that my leanings have become strongly Liberal in the past 20 years & I intend to vote for them in June.

SATURDAY, APR. 30/49

Fine but a chill wind. Golf this afternoon with Hector Dunlap. Played badly (113) but enjoyed the round after several days without exercise. The extension of the clubhouse is now complete, & Manuge has several men working on the enlarged N<sup>o</sup> 9 tee & other improvements. The fees are

up this year from \$20 to \$25 for men.

~~The C.B.C. wants me to do.~~ The Montreal Standard wants me to do an article on Alfa for their June 4th. issue. Chique from McClelland & Stewart shows 2,448 copies of "Halifax, Warden of the North" sold to Jan. 31/49. I had expected at least 3,000 & possibly 4,000.

My infected sinus still bad; the discharge keeps my throat sore, & I have a headache which at times becomes terrific - a continual sensation as if there were a band about my head that someone was busy tightening all the time.

SUNDAY, MAY 1/49

Fine & warm. Golf this afternoon with Edith. Score 113. Many players out.

Hear that Roger Inness is suffering from angina & is selling out his business this month. Today, with a formal naval ceremony, the big naval training base at Cornwallis was re-commissioned. Its activity will be small compared with war-time; about 75 men will arrive there every two weeks until <sup>a full crew of 800 in regular</sup> September; but it will be maintained & staffed to take care of a much larger body in case of need. The base has been used since the war on a minor scale as a training (vocational) school for war veterans fitting themselves for civil life; & for a time the big base hospital was in use as a convalescent hospital for war veterans. Most of the

establishment has stood empty for three years.

The threat of war with Russia has, of course, caused activity of this sort everywhere amongst the western nations.

A few days ago the Russians suddenly offered to drop their land blockade of Berlin - on unspecified terms.

Discussions are now taking place. Today being May Day the Russians staged one of their tremendous military & air shows in Moscow. Foreign observers (so far as they were permitted to cable their views) were especially impressed with the air force; but the chief American officer cabled, tongue in cheek - "the most impressive front I have seen".

MONDAY, May 2/49 Warm & overcast. Golf this afternoon with Edith - we had the whole course to ourselves. Score 112.

Last week the stone causeway from Barrington Passage to Cape Sable Island was completed, after 2 years' work & great expense. For generations the large & industrious population of the island has had to depend on inefficient ferries for communication with the mainland.

TUESDAY, May 3/49 Fine & warm this morning. Showers this p.m. but I played 18 holes of (wretched) golf. Score 124!

Spread 100 lbs. of powdered limestone over my back lawn, which is becoming covered with moss in places.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1949

Fine, warm, our first summer day. Golf this afternoon with (Capt.) Charlie Williams. My score 109. Edith came out & picked a huge bunch of mayflowers behind N<sup>o</sup> 9 tee. A house-warming party tonight for Harold Doggett & wife, who recently bought a bungalow on Park Street; the party included the Sunlaps, Williams, Parkers, Johnsons & ourselves, & all had fun.

THURSDAY, MAY 5/49

A burning day. Places all over the eastern part of the continent report unusually hot weather for so early in the season; Ontario reports a heat wave of summer intensity & even Newfoundland has temperatures in the 80's. Golf this afternoon with Edith. Score 111.

A letter from Chamburn says an independent movie producer who ~~is~~ releases through RKO Pictures wants an option for 1 year on "Roger Sudden". This mysterious producer (RKO refused his name to Chamburn) apparently hopes to produce the picture in England; but the production depends on a number of things (including an English screen writer to prepare the script), & my pay will depend largely on the profits of the picture, if any. This sounds like other picture offers made by Toronto agencies with an eye on the J. Arthur Rank movie corporation in Britain, & I don't put much stock in it. My friend Hector Macleod, who is an ardent

conservative, has asked me to write an account of Ted More's career - giving me the details. This of course was a broad hint for me to write Ted's campaign manifesto. (The local Tories still persist in regarding me as one of their supporters, though it is 20 years since I engaged in political activity, & I have changed my political ideas a good deal since.) More phoned me. I like him; he is a blunt plain seaman who had a fine record in the navy during the late war. He is now employed in shore affairs by the Mersey Paper Company - whose politics are strongly Conservative - & More told me they had more or less ordered him to offer as a candidate. More has no taste for politics himself & is a poor speaker. His main asset is his war record, especially as Rawding, his Liberal opponent, stayed at home & made money as a government contractor during the war. Nevertheless Rawding is the better man for Queens County, & I don't think More has a hope of being elected. I shall write the requested account of his career & the Tories can do what they like with it, but I shall refuse to prepare any sort of propaganda.

SATURDAY, MAY 7/49

Rain at intervals all morning. Parker, Smith & I went to Eagle Lake this afternoon, intending to take a canoe & pitch a tent at the foot of Long Lake

for the night. This would enable us to walk S.W. through the woods to the upper reaches of Broad River (East Branch) & spend Sunday fishing there. (We have done this before.) However, I was wet to the hips when we reached Eagle Lake, the sky was still lowering, & a nasty N.E. wind springing up; I knew if I spent a night & a day in wet clothes in that atmosphere it meant another severe attack of bronchitis & probably I should be unable to smoke for a month. So I said No. P. & V. refused to go on without me, so we spent the night at Eagle Lake camp.

SUNDAY, MAY 8/49

Weather cleared in the night, which was sharply cold, with a frost, & gave us a burning hot day. We were up at 7, & hiked over to Kempton Brook by the trail. Blackflies are at their thickest & fiercest & I was glad to put on my head-net with its transparent plastic "window." We fished chiefly in the hole S.W. of No 2 dam where in past experience we had found the only fishing on the brook. I hooked & lost 2, hooked & landed 2 - ~~trout~~<sup>each</sup> weighing between  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb &  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. (Did all my fishing with flies - chiefly silver Doctor. P. & V. fished with worms & got 1 trout apiece.) All of which proved what we have known for some years - that there is no good fishing now within a mile of the Mersy River. Arrived back at camp very hot

at 4:30 & were glad to peel off shirts, boots & socks, & back in the breeze on the verandah. Saw a wisp of bush smoke rising far to the south - probably a forest fire in the vicinity of Port Joli. Home about 8 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 9/49

Fine, cool. Golf this afternoon - 108.  
My wild pear tree broke into blossom today.

TUESDAY, MAY 10/49

Jim Reside blew in for lunch, & we spent the better part of the afternoon in the Perkins house. The exterior carpenter work is all done, with the exception of minor repairs to window shutters, etc. Inside, various modern stuff like wall-board of various sorts in several places, & all the various layers of wallpaper, have been stripped away, revealing everywhere the original plaster or boards. Amongst other things revealed is a most interesting cupboard built into a side nook of the old kitchen chimney. The problem of the front stairs seems clear now. By taking up several boards of the upper floor we found the original stair entry; & we found where a cupboard & a bedroom (the west bedroom) door had been changed when the stairs were shifted (according to legend, in Seely's time) from the front hall to the back. Much other interesting old work revealed in various places - the old split laths; beams & boards bearing the typical toothmarks of the ~~horizontal~~ vertical gang-saws; wall boards scored & roughened to hold

a thin coat of mortar, etc. Cost of the work so far is about \$2500 - just half the Department of Public Works' appropriation. Reside seems satisfied with this, & says if the cost of the job runs over \$5,000 it won't matter to the Dept. A Colonel Biggs, here on some government business, called at four o'clock & stayed till 5:30; & just as I had settled down to an evening's work, Bill & John Wilson came in for a chat & stayed till nearly eleven. Result, no writing done today. Tonight, at a Conservative meeting in Liverpool, Ted Moore was nominated as the party candidate in Queens for the provincial seat.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11/49 Sunny but cool. Work all morning, golf this afternoon - score 102. Mrs. Amy Minard came in after tea, very anxious to get the job of hostess-caretaker at the Perkins house. A notion seems to have passed amongst several elderly widows that such an appointment will be made soon, & that it will be easy & lucrative. I told her what I have told the others - that the Department of Trade & Industry will have the administration of the house, & applications should be made there. She is the widow of Levi "Guy" Minard of Milton, & I boarded with them for a month or so when I first came to Milton 26 years ago. She was then a tall la-de-da sort of person, very superior (in her own view) to the rest of the folk



in the village, & rather ashamed that her husband, a once-successful lumberman, had come down to keeping cows & selling milk. She still has some of this manner, but she is quite hard up & would I think make a good hostess for the house when it is opened to public inspection.

Today the Russians ended the blockade of West Berlin which they started 11 months ago, & which the British & N.Y. air forces defeated by the tremendous "air lift" operation. Apparently the Russians have realised their mistake, for their blockade gave the western Allies a first-rate chance to demonstrate their air power, not only to the Germans but to all of Europe.

THURSDAY, MAY 12/49 Rain & a violent easterly gale all day, with a temperature down to 35°. Went down to the waterfront in the afternoon for a yarn with the Nickerson men. Hubert tells me he has refused the offer of nomination as Conservative candidate for the federal seat, Queens-Hellbourn. Arranged with Jerry for a trip to Seal Island, leaving here on the morning of the 23rd. Clem Crowell wants me to propose the toast to the bride & groom at his daughter's wedding in Yarmouth on the 23rd; so I can leave Jerry at Cape Island, run up to Yarmouth for the wedding, & return to Clark's Harbor that night. News: Today

trains & motor-cars from western Germany are rolling into Berlin. The Russians have a new air of cordiality, & some observers think that Moscow is about to propose withdrawal of all occupation forces from Germany.

In Canada, the election campaign is warming up. Prime Minister St. Laurent arrived in Digby today via St. John. He visited the French Shore, speaks in Yarmouth tonight, & in Liverpool tomorrow.

Friday, May 13/49 Fine & cool. This afternoon I attended the Liberal show in the Astor Theatre. The place was full & overflowing by 3 p.m. when the meeting opened and Irving Bain, president of the Q.C. Liberal Association, conducted the usual votes of confidence in Premier Angus L. Macdonald & Prime Minister St. Laurent. The platform was decorated with large flags & overhung by a long white banner bearing at the left end the N.S. coat of arms & at the right end the arms of the Municipality of Queens, with the large word Welcome in the middle. (This banner was very cleverly painted by Smith-Watts, a veteran officer of the West Novas, wounded in Italy, & now employed by the Thompson firm here.) At 3:15 Mr. St. Laurent arrived at the theatre from Yarmouth, with Hon. Robert Winters, in a big & shining Buick, accompanied by a number of press cars. The cadet

band (just back from Yarmouth also, where they had given a concert) were drawn up outside, & played "O Canada".

Mr. Laurent & Winters entered, & everybody stood up. The P.M. is a short grey man with dark eyebrows, a large gold tooth, a tranquil & kindly expression. He spoke for about 20 minutes. He speaks English fluently & without trace of accent, but he is no orator. He is given to long involved sentences, with parenthesis after parenthesis, so ~~that~~ that one loses the original subject until he comes up with it triumphantly at the end; and all this with many pauses & interjected "ah's". It is his personality that retrieves him; you like him instinctively. As he left the hall he shook hands with many people, including a number of delighted school-kids, our Frances amongst them. His record as a statesman so far has been very good, & his views are broad. (He risked the ire of his fellow French-Canadians by supporting conscription during the late war) On grounds of unity alone I think he is the man for Canada, whereas the election of George Drew would be in this sense a national tragedy. The rest of the show was rather an anti-climax; Merrill Rowding was of course nominated as the Liberal candidate

once again. He made the mistake of speaking too long, reciting too many facts & figures, & as the hour drew on towards teatime there was a steady outflow of house-wives, who comprised a good part of the audience. (I fled in a group of these.) The country districts were well represented, & it was like old times to see so many bald & grizzled characters applauding the speakers at every pause. I understand that neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives have as yet found a candidate to run in Queens-Shelburne for the federal seat.

SATURDAY, MAY 14/49. All morning with Jim Reside, going over work on the Simon Perkins house. Golf this afternoon with Parker, Smith & Dunlap.

SUNDAY, MAY 15/49 Church (U.C.) with my family this morning. Golf this afternoon with Brent Smith & Hugh MacMillan. Fine & warm. We watched the Mersey Paper Co's steamer "Markland" steam past on her way into Liverpool from New York, & knowing that Captain "Charlie" Williams would certainly have his telescope trained on No 6 tee, we paused there for a while, waving, & Brent performed a war-dance.

MONDAY, MAY 16/49 Fine & warm. Working steadily at the novel each morning & evening, but it goes very

slowly. I re-write almost every page, & some are re-written two or three times in the effort to get exactly the word, the phrase, & the effect that I want. Played 27 holes of golf (scores 49+55+50) this afternoon - the last nine with Charlie Williams. Afterwards I had an iced rum-&-coke in a tall glass at his house, & heard him declaiming the gastronomic virtues of (a) fried shad roe, (b) codfish heads split & fried, & (c) fried lump-fish. The notion of eating lumpfish (one of the ugliest & most shapeless in the sea) was new to me; but Charlie declares that at his home (Ostrea Lake, east of Hfx) the lumpfish is prized. The male fish are green in color, & rather tasteless. The females are fat & pink, & the flesh is filleted & fried. Oddly enough, (after seeing Charlie's ship come in yesterday) just as we held out at the 9th today we saw the M.P. Co's steamer "Vinland" heading into Liverpool, after a long voyage with newsprint to New Zealand, thence to Vancouver in ballast, thence to Cardiff with grain & lumber, & finally home in ballast from Cardiff in the smart time of twelve days.

TUESDAY, May 17/49

A hot day with a warm wind blowing strongly from the S.W. Played 27 holes of golf this

afternoon - scores 52, 52, 50. Back at 4:30 & enjoyed a long beer & a bath. After tea, wheeled pine slabs from the heap at back of my garage & put them in the cellar. They are just the thing for furnace fires on chilly mornings (it was 28° at 8 a.m. today) & in rainy weather. Howland White came with his ladder & took off the upstairs storm windows, & I ~~stuffed~~ stowed them in the garage. Much sunshine has given me a tan & what's more important removed some of my sinus infection, so that my voice is almost clear again.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18/49

My old insomnia turned up after a considerable absence, & I spent the time from 3:30 a.m. until 5 sitting in my pajamas in my den, reading another batch of manuscripts sent me for criticism by the young Englishman, Kittley, who called on me in March. The man has no talent & no judgement. What he called a story for children was a nightmarish mixture of Oak Island, Captain Kidd, & the lost continent of Atlantis, complete with weird bloodsucking trees and flying monstrosities, half man, half raven, which devour human flesh. Jim Reside called this morning & I went with him for another inspection of the Perkins job. Remby Hemeon, the carpenter foreman, went over things with us. The staircase is now leading up from

the front hall, as it was in Perkins' time; & now we can see more clearly what changes were made in the arrangement of the back hall, & its cupboards & adjacent partitions, when the stairs were shifted to the back. Repairs to the floors continue. The exterior of the house is now ready for the painters.

Played 18 holes of golf this afternoon (61 + 50) but it was unpleasant, with overcast sky & a bleak wind from the S.E. Only two other players out.

THURSDAY, MAY 19/49

The novel goes slowly but it marches well, or so I think. One thing is certain: it will be either the best or the worst thing I have written. Golf this afternoon, 18 holes (108). Caught the first show at the movies tonight, "Scott of the Antarctic", very well done in colour by an English company. I remember the stir over Scott's tragic death when I was a boy; & in later years, when I was seafaring, I saw his old ship "Terra Nova" back in the seal fishery out of St. John's, Nfld. The political pot boils merrily, the C.C.F. & Conservative parties promising everything from the chignecto banal to pie in the sky, the Liberals inclined to stand on their record but promising busily, just in case, ~~that~~ <sup>paired</sup> with the more chary manner of a party which really expects to be in power. Here

in Liverpool the Liberals yesterday nominated Donald Smith, dentist, to contest for the federal seat for Queens - Shelburne. He is tall, clean-cut, sensible but humorous, a son of Dr. J. W. Smith, who sat for Queens in the provincial house for years. He should win easily, no matter who the Tories put up against him.

SATURDAY, May 21/49 Nothing to record these days but work each morning & each night until twelve, & golf every afternoon except in actual rain. Reside called again this morning for our semi-weekly inspection of the work on the Perkins house. Tonight Dewey & Genevieve Pickerson looked in on the way back to Cape Island from a visit to their married daughter in Bridgewater. Dewey bubbling over with tales & quaint sayings, as usual, & enthusiastic over the forthcoming visit of Jerry Pickerson & myself. Today the telephone man installed a ~~new~~ French-type phone (with the transmitter & receiver in one piece) which I ordered originally in 1939. The six war years shut off all new telephone supplies for civilian use, & the post-war demand for new phone installations has obliged us to use the old thing, which consisted of a huge bell-&-battery box, a mouthpiece mounted on a vertical black stand, & a separate receiver which had to be held to the ear.



Sunday, May 22/49 This wonderful (& unusual) May weather continues. Golf this afternoon, & Edith went around with me. Score 104 (52+52)

Monday, May 23/49 Set off by car with Edith at 10 a.m. to attend the wedding of Clem Crowell's daughter Barbara at Yarmouth. Rain falling in a torrent, & towards Lockport the east wind rose almost to hurricane force at times, stripping new green leaves from trees in places & causing the car to swerve in the gusts. After passing Cape Sable we got out of the gale area & found Yarmouth wrapped in fog. Found Crowell's residence (after lunch in a <sup>cafe</sup> Yarmouth), & talked with him & his wife for a time. Ester said, "These modern girls! Here it's less than an hour before the service, & my daughter hasn't even begun to dress! She's sitting on her bed smoking a cigarette and chatting with the bridesmaids as calmly as you please." Nevertheless the wedding party arrived on time at the Central United Church, & all went prettily & well. The church was full & there was a great crowd at the reception at Green Tree Inn, a charming place just beyond Hebron on the road to Annapolis. I gave the toast to the bride & groom & we all had punch, & then sandwiches, cake & ice cream. Chatted with Spinney, who is mayor of Yarmouth, Bob Swin of the YMCA, Roy Lamm,

"Sammy" Kirk, Crowell's assistant Munroe, & a good many ladies whose names escaped my memory. A long talk with Davis, of R. H. Davis & Co., & his pretty wife. We got away about 5.15 & I drove fast while the daylight lasted, knowing that headlights would be all but worthless in the heavy fog. Stopped at Shelburne & had a very good dinner at Chelsea Lodge, after some delay. Home about 10 p.m. Today's Herald contains a long obituary of Col. C. H. L. Jones, my former boss at the Mersey Paper Co. plant. He had some excellent qualities including great energy & a knack of getting along well with his employees; but these were overshadowed by his over-weening vanity, his utter selfishness, and his almost bestial lechery & drunkenness.

Desmond Newell phoned from Hfx. soon after I got home. Wants me to autograph some of my books at Eaton's on the 17th, when I go up to the city for my broadcasting stint with the C.B.C. I said I would.

TUESDAY, MAY 24/49 Left with Jerry Nickerson for Cape Island at 4.30 p.m., & arrived at Clark's Harbour just in time for a community lobster supper in the new gymnasium. Stayed at the Seaview Hotel tonight. Eddie "Whiskers" Smith, who is to take us to Seal Island, came in & said the weather forecasts for tomorrow are all bad.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 1949

Howling easterly gale all day & sheets of rain. Jerry & I were pinned to the hotel in Clark's Harbour. We got out to visit old F. J. Nickerson and Arthur Nickerson, relations of Jerry's. Went to the theatre in the evening, a noisy place half full of youngsters. The gilded youth of Clark's Harbour hang about outside until the show has begun, & then come trooping into the theatre in rubber boots, breeches, mackinaw shirts, & long-peaked khaki caps, talking & laughing loudly, and displaying a manly disinterest in the girls. However we were not fated to see (or hear) the show, even when this row quieted down. There was a sudden shout of "Fire!", the lights came on, & the voice of the proprietor was heard urging everyone to leave quickly & quietly. This we did. The motor fire-engine arrived & the volunteer firemen rushed in with hose & axes. Apparently the electric wiring had short-circuited between the theatre ceiling & the bowling alley upstairs, in a space packed with dried cel-grass to deaden the noise of the bowlers overhead. Nothing much happened but the show could not resume & we went back to the hotel. Jerry knew everyone who came in & there was much talk of politics. His brother Hubert has accepted the Conservative nomination for a candidate in Queens-Shelburne under heavy pressure from his Conservative friends and from

the wealthy Ralph P. Bell, who is the head of the company which owns Pickerson Brothers Ltd. & most of the other fish plants in Nova Scotia. (Bell is an ardent Liberal in provincial politics but in the federal field, like most men of money, he is anxious to see a government headed by George Drew.)

The Cape Islanders are Liberals almost to a man, & the new causeway has thoroughly sealed their affections - provincially speaking. In federal politics Hubert's wide acquaintance about Cape Sable gives him a distinct advantage over St. Don Smith, who is unknown there. So we had plenty of politics from the stream of Jerry's friends. But chiefly, as always, they talked fish and the money to be made from it.

The ~~total~~ lobster fishery has been comparatively poor this year - "too many men fishing since the war" - the catch is only about half of last year's. And fish prices are falling heavily everywhere, after ten years of unprecedented prosperity. Many of the lobstermen have been clearing \$4,000 to \$9,000 a year. The older & steadier men have saved most of their gains (in spite of the income tax, which they ignore or circumvent) but most of the young men have squandered theirs.

THURSDAY, MAY 26/49 Got away at 7 a.m. in Eddie Whiskers' boat. Quite rough, spray flying, & the motor-boat leaping

✓ diving like a porpoise. I was glad of my rubber knee-boots  
✓ long rubber coat, but I enjoyed the trip. This time,  
to get full advantage of the Fundy flood-tide, we  
steered well out, ✓ came to Seal Island from the  
southward, around Mother Owen's Rock. Found the  
houses at West Cove populated with many more women  
✓ children than last year, ✓ in Dewey's house we  
found Dewey's teen-age daughter Lillian ✓ two school-  
girl chums who had gone to the island on the May 24<sup>th</sup>  
holiday ✓ were marooned by the subsequent rough  
weather. Made the acquaintance of Dewey's cook, a  
small wiry man named Cleveland ("Clev") ~~Hunter~~ <sup>HUNT.</sup>. He  
is about 55, with black hair, bright grey deeply-recessed eyes,  
✓ no front teeth. Stone deaf but with a pleasant smile ✓  
a high cackling voice. A real character. His hobby is  
watch-repairing, for which he has a cigar box full of small  
tools, mostly made by himself, including a remarkable eye-  
glass made from the tin cup-shaped cap of a ketchup  
bottle with a bit of magnifying glass inserted in the closed  
end. He is the butt of the lobstermen's jokes but they have  
a real affection for him. The humor is broad to say the  
least; ✓ the three school-girls join in the fun. So does "Clev".  
For example: the girls pinned a long strip of sheep-fleece  
on the seat of "Clev's" trousers as he bent over the table. It

was some time before he noticed the laughter & the tail. Then he grinned & said in his squeaky voice, "Well, I guess I've got my tail but I don't know where I got it," & the girls joined in the howl.

After dinner Jerry & I walked over to the East Cove & called on Mrs. Minnie Hamilton & her grand-niece Minnie, who is growing up as her daughter. Had tea there & Mrs. H. insisted that we stay for a lobster supper. Minnie & I went down to the slip with a wheel-barrow to get the lobsters when the boats came in. Saw the government steamer "Dollard" pick up a load of <sup>empty</sup> oil drums from the Seal Island lighthouse & depart. (I went to Seal Island in this ship in 1921 & had not seen her since.) The lighthousekeeper's horse died last winter & he now has (of all things) an old Bren-gun carrier, with which he tows the cart containing his oil drums & other supplies between the East Cove slip & the lighthouse, which is at the south tip of the island. The lobster boats were late getting in; they are hauling out the traps, as the season ends May 31st, & each of these small motor-boats comes in laden with 30 or 40 traps. (In smooth weather they carry as many as 70 or 80). After the winter's immersion each trap weighs about 100 lbs. (including 30 lbs. of rock ballast) and it is back-breaking labour to get the traps ashore & pile them

about the sheds. By the time we got the lobsters (a sackful of non-marketable "tinkers") it was dark, & by the time we had feasted the hour was getting late, & the way to West Cove is full of deep water holes & stretches of stony beach. Mrs. H. persuaded us to stay the night. We sat talking till midnight, young Minnie showing me her oil paintings & some of her short stories. Jerry & I slept together in a bedroom on the east side of the house. The chest-of-drawers in this room consisted of fine mahogany drawers with large brass handles, plates & locks, all salvaged from a wreck & later built into a soft-wood frame by some local carpenters. Much of the furniture in Mrs. H.'s house is from wrecks.

~~FRIDAY~~  
~~THURSDAY~~ FRIDAY THURSDAY MAY 27/49 Awakened to find rain slashing the roof & a furious gale blowing into the room. Had breakfast & departed. We visited old "Shan" Penny & his weird wife & half-wit daughter "Goldie", called on one or two others. Saw a fisherman with a young seal he had caught on the rocks. The sea to the east looked very wild, & there was a magnificent surf breaking on the beach past Big Rock. Saw a number of male bobolinks in a patch of marsh, & three of them got up on a spruce tree & sang beautifully.

Got back to West Cove in time for dinner, & of course came in for a barrage of Dewey's ribald humor for our over-night stay at the Widow Hamilton's.

After dinner Jerry & I called on "Charlie X" & his wife Josie, & on ~~Alfred~~ Orval Nickerson (Dewey's son) & his wife Marie. We had brought along some candy for the kids, & little "Bobbie" recited & sang for our benefit.

The rest of the afternoon & evening we spent in the "Dewey" menage, where the lobstermen sat about playing cribbage, telling yarns, playing tricks on "Clere" or the schoolgirls, listening to the radio broadcast of a night baseball game in Boston. Jerry & I bunked with the men upstairs. The girls had made a surreptitious visit previously, & I found a large glass net-float in my bed, & Jerry found a coil of rope in his.

SATURDAY, May 28/49. A fine day with a strong N.W. wind, & cold. Heard the lobstermen stirring at 3:30 a.m., getting breakfast & slipping off to catch the tide. We got up at 7:30. "Clere" had the following on the table for breakfast: - fried eggs, cold meat, fried lobster, porridge, stewed prunes, stewed apple, white & brown bread, fresh biscuit, toast, butter, coffee. The problem of getting home now arose. Jerry & I would have liked to stay over the week-end, but no-one was definitely going



from Seal Island between this afternoon & Tuesday afternoon, & even then it was dependent on weather. Reluctantly we decided we ought to go today while the chance offered. We walked around the Fresh Cove to the "North Home", where we had a yarn with the cook, a sly lean character named Levi ("Leaky" - even his wife calls him Leaky) Sewell, who is over 80. ~~Left~~ Shook hands with "bleve" & Sewey in the afternoon & left the island about 2:30 in Robbie Blades' boat. The schoolgirls also were passengers. The sea was choppy & the boat danced, & the girls with grim determination gnawed pieces of dry salt codfish - the Cape Island preventative of sea-sickness. All of us reached Clark's Harbour safe & well about 4:30. I found a tire flat & took it to the service station for repair. Supper at the Sea View, paid our bill, gathered up ~~up~~ our belongings & departed, with a sack of lobsters, the gift of Robbie Blades. Home at 10 p.m.

Monday, May 30/49 Very lame in my left knee, extremely stiff & painful. Must have given it a knock in getting in or out of the boat on Saturday. All afternoon working outdoors - getting down the garden seats from the overhead racks in my garage, taking off & stowing away the storm windows on the

east side of the house - left "on" until now because of the usual cold easterly rains & winds of May; put on the kitchen window screen - first washing windows & screen - and painted the screen door. "Des" Newell, Maritime salesman for McBlair & Stewart came to tea; says sales are holding up well. He is going to Newfoundland to establish connections there - says a horde of Canadian salesmen (& politicians) are descending upon Nfld. & so far he has found it impossible to get a plane seat or a steamship berth.

Dorothea Cox, of CBC, phoned from Nfld, wants to repeat one of my recorded talks on the short-wave to Britain, also wants me to do ~~the~~ "live" broadcast (June 19th) from the Nova Scotian Hotel, in the presence of a convention of the Canadian Press Club. I agreed.

The mail brought a package of essays, written by Bridgewater school children, on the 6888th Central Postal Directory, Nova Scotia Regiment. I agreed to be one of the judges some time ago.

TUESDAY, MAY 31/49 Fine, with a N.W. gale blowing. Working on the CBC scripts, each of which must be timed to read in exactly 15 minutes. Marsh Jeanneret, one of the editors of the Copp Clark Company, Toronto publishers, called this morning with his wife & small son David. They are making a motor tour of Nova Scotia, following a business trip to Newfoundland. Jeanneret, having in mind one or

two tales I wrote for children (which are now printed in some of the Copp Clark school readers) wants me to write a history of Nova Scotia for children. I promised to consider it but, as I pointed out, I shall be tied up with my novel until 1950.

Jim Reside appeared as the Jeannerets departed, & we made our bi-weekly inspection of the Perkins house. The main carpentry is now done, & the plasterers can start any time. A trench for the water & sewer pipes is being dug.

The "ell" has been transformed into a single room, where we can display relics of later vintage than those of the main house, which will contain nothing but furniture & bric-a-brac of the Perkins period 1766-1812. A small compartment at the end of this room will conceal a toilet bowl & wash stand for the convenience of visitors.

After lunch Edith went with me to White Point & I played 18 holes - score 108, which was good considering the high wind.

The first provincial election since Newfoundland became part of Canada has resulted in an overwhelming victory for Joseph Smallwood & his Liberals, who endorsed Confederation. The latest returns give the Liberals 19 seats & the Conservatives only 5, out of 28. The conservative strength was in St. John's & the rest of the Avalon peninsula - the

home of the commercial class which exploited the country  
so greedily in the past.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1/49

Fine & warm. Played 18 holes in 99 this p.m.  
Finished & sent off the C.B.C. scripts. This evening about  
7 o'clock the Rev. (Baptist) Harry Hill's son, a ne'er-do-well of  
about 22 who has been in various kinds of trouble before,  
committed the worst bit of vandalism in the town's history.  
Apparently drunk, he broke a window in Trinity (Anglican)  
Church & climbed inside. After hurling the communion  
plate & the altar crucifix into the nave amongst the pews,  
snapping or twisting the altar candles, etc., he tore almost  
the entire New Testament out of the great Bible on the  
lectern & used the leaves (and the gowns of the choir)  
to set the church on fire. When the firemen responded  
to an alarm half an hour later they saw young Hill  
staggering down to Main Street, with both hands cut &  
bloody. They put out the fire but not before the vestry  
& part of the chancel had been badly scorched.

THURSDAY, JUNE 2/49

Very warm. Edith & I worked part of  
the morning & most of the afternoon, beating & vacuum-cleaning  
the big livingroom rug. The kids' habit of tramping indoors  
without wiping their shoes, & going straight across the room  
to the radio, leaves a continual deposit of mud & grit. I

had to empty the vacuum bag twice, despite the fact that much of the dust blew away on the breeze, & altogether we must have removed three or four pounds of pure grit.

The sun beat down on the lawn & we found it hot work.

A pair of yellow warblers have a nest in the small weigela bush outside the south window of my garage, & this morning the hen laid three small greyish white eggs speckled with brown.

Letter from William Arthur Deacon to tell me that I am to receive the Governor-General's Award for the best Canadian book of 1948 in the "creative non-fiction" class. The awards will be made public on June 11<sup>th</sup>, & I shall receive the medal with the other winners at the dinner which closes the Canadian Authors' convention - to be held in Halifax this year. Bill (who is literary critic of the Toronto Globe) says handsomely "I don't wonder that your 'Halifax, Warden of the North' won the award in Creative Non-Fiction. In my opinion it was the best Canadian book in any class in 1948". He is the chairman of the G. G.'s Award Board for this year.

FRIDAY, JUNE 3/49 A hot day. Up at 5 a.m. & at work by 6, reading & judging the Bridgewater school's essays on the W.N.S. Regiment, reading Kitley's tales which he sent me for criticism, & writing a long letter setting forth what

I considered wrong with them & making suggestions for their improvement. Mailed both parcels at noon. Golf this afternoon in a strong warm westerly gale, score 99 for 18 holes, including three "pars". The Milletts, father & son, carpenters, came this afternoon & commenced building a new laundry platform for Edith. The Montreal Standard this week contains my article on Halifax, illustrated with old prints & paintings.

Much labour unrest in Britain especially in the dockers, railwaymen's & coal miners' unions. Nationalisation of mines & railways by the Labour government has not proved the panacea the labour theorists had been promising for years. As one miner put it to the press, "There's still the bloody boss". Less work for more money is still the cry, & as a general result British exports are falling because British costs are much too high.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4/49 The boisterous westerly gale continued blowing through last night, & today it reached real violence in the gusts. Very bad for golf, although I played 16 holes this afternoon with Parker & Dunlap. Very hot - even the wind was warm. The Milletts, father & son, finished repairing my front steps & making the laundry platform. The father did all the work, & the son went through the motions - & made up the bill. I had to pay



