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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Centenarian's Funeral Considered Unique

By NEIL A. MATHESON

I'M SUGGESTING today that the funeral of my old friend Charles S. MacDonald last Saturday was unique. I'm wondering if it was not unique in Canada. Here was a man 100 years old who was buried on Canada's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. I'm issuing a challenge to any other province to duplicate it. I'm very doubtful if any can.

I sat alongside Mr. MacDonald on his bed – he was also sitting at the time – three days before he went to the Kings County hospital where he died almost three weeks later. I talked at my normal voice level and he heard me easily. His eyes had been bad for some years. In the last three years or so, Mrs. MacDonald did the writing, as he dictated the material.

But the man's mind was as clear as a bell. He could talk of things long past. He could also talk of current developments. I remember he told me a little more than a year ago "I'd like to live long enough to see what happens to the war in Viet Nam."

### Town Crier And Gas Lamps

ON MY LAST visit he recalled he had seen the town crier – the name was Johnny Hatch, he told me – stop at the street corner and light the gas lamp for the street. There was one on each corner, as Mr. MacDonald recalled. The man had a long pole with an attachment, so he could reach up and open the glass door on one side. Then he'd light the lamp and go on to the next lamp.

I felt many people missed an opportunity to attend the funeral of this man. To me, and to many others to whom I talked, this was one of the most interesting historic items of Canada's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Mr. MacDonald told me last time I visited him, he expected he was going to die, though nothing about his appearance indicated to me that such a development was near. I shall miss my old friend. I always looked forward to seeing him and talking with him. He was a most interesting conversationalist. He was a most unusual man. Knowing him and calling him friend was a most interesting and rewarding experience.

### Phantom Ship Proof Was Sought

JACK KENNEDY, Vancouver, B.C. has been trying to make those Westerners believe that a phantom ship does sail off our coasts, and that he and others have seen it. Mr. Kennedy was home recently – he was born in Montague – and he tells me "even my own wife looks at me as though I had a couple of drinks too many, when I tell her about seeing this ship."

Mr. Kennedy has seen it many times. He spent several hours watching for it when he was on the Island this time but it did not appear.

I told him I'd give him a copy of a column on the "Phantom Ship" I'd written several years ago, so he could take it back as proof, and Mr. Kennedy was delighted. Then I told him I'd bring the phantom ship story up to date and mail him a copy.

I recall that the old story quoted Reg Eldershaw and two companions in a fisheries patrol boat seeing the ship off the Western end of the province one night. They had a fairly fast boat and started after the ship in an effort to get close to it. But nobody gets close apparently, neither did they.

I RECALL THE Carruthers girls at O'Leary had seen it, and many others. A lady at Canoe Cove told me she had seen the flaming ship not far off the coast there.

It must have been two years ago, that Carleton Hume, the general merchant at Little Sands, saw the phantom ship. A neighbor who was in the store at the time had also seen it.

I called at the store a few days ago and Mrs. Hume told me her uncle, Dan Daley, New Glasgow, N.S. had seen the ship and so had her father, Captain Abe Daley.

I asked Captain Angus Brown, Wood Islands about it and he told me first "No, I never saw it". Then he recalled that he and other seamen had taken the Prince Nova out one night from Wood Islands to bring aid to a ship that appeared to be burning. When they got closer to it, the ship disappeared. So another appearance of the Phantom Ship is chronicled, this time by a veteran seaman and a reliable gentleman at that.

There are many others who saw the ship. Most saw it as the outline of a ship on fire. Some saw men running up the rigging. But to Jack Kennedy of 6864 Ontario Street, Vancouver, B.C. there is no doubt, sir, that the ship has been seen many times off these coasts. Next time your friends laugh at the idea, show them this piece and you can laugh at them.

### Cigars In North Tryon Hayloft

Bert Thomson, North Tryon told me last week, of an unusual experience he had four or five years ago. When he went up into the loft one night to put down bales of hay for his cattle, he found a cigar. The thing was intact, it had never been smoked. The wrapper was off it, otherwise it appeared to have been untouched.

He naturally wondered if someone had been sleeping in his hayloft. The next time he found one, the cigar had tiny holes punched into it. Over a period of 10 days in two weeks Mr. Thomson found about a half dozen, or more, of the cigars.

Talking it over with Sheldon Dixon, a Tryon merchant, they decided they were "Merit" cigars. The only explanation they could come up with, though, was that birds had been carrying the cigars into the loft, through a small hole high up in the gable end.

Where the birds found the cigars, though, is a question that is left without an answer.

### A Century Of Women

"A CENTURY of Women" is the title of an interesting book that tells the story of perhaps 60 ladies who were either born in this province or contributed to Prince Edward Island in their lifework.

The stories are divided into three sections. One tells the stories of women before 1870 – I understand this means they were born before that date – another deals with

women between 1870 and 1890, and the third are those between 1890 and 1902, the introduction explains.

I am reasonably familiar with this book as my daughter, Betty Carol, edited the material. Indeed she wrote much of it. But the material was all gathered by the ladies of the Zonta Club. I found many of the stories most interesting. There is a great deal of informative historic data.

Zonta, I am told, is a service club for women. They have a scholarship going now, for example, for an Island girl at the College for the Deaf in Washington. They have another scholarship for a Charlottetown girl at a school for the performing arts in England. Retarded children represent another of the many efforts these people take to help make life more worthwhile for those in whom they take an interest.