



FIRST GRADUATES OF LOCAL COLLEGE

These five will be the first graduates of the Maritime Christian College, Charlottetown, at commencement exercises May 11. Left to right are: David Weale, Charlottetown, the class valedictorian; John Macdonald, Montague; Willard J. Walls, Montague; Donald Stevenson, Fredericton; Ivan Rayner, Greenmount.

Outlook Greatly Improved For Persons With Leprosy

By TOM HENSHAW
 CHARLOTTEVILLE, N.S. (AP) — It was last summer, in June, I think I was working on the Grace Line docks in New York City. I felt this numbness in my left hand. You couldn't see anything. It didn't show. It was just a numb spot right here."

Jack Cammack, former merchant seaman, and longshoreman, hitched up the sleeve of his tan wind-breaker and ran a finger along the heel of his hand. Except for a slight depression in the skin, it looked like the hand of any healthy 50-year-old man.

"Along about November, I found a red spot on my leg," he said. "It had no feeling in it, either. When I saw that spot on my leg I remembered those people I saw in the Cape Verde Islands during the war."

Cammack took his symptoms to New York's Bellevue Hospital. He suggested a possible diagnosis, a particular disease to look for, but the doctors thought the idea was rather outlandish. They ran preliminary tests and Cammack went back to the docks.

"Now, there were more spots on my body; on my stomach, on my butt. I went back to Bellevue. I was lucky. This time a young doctor decided I might be right. He had me admitted for more tests."

CONFIRMS DIAGNOSIS
 Dr. Robert G. Cochrane, an Englishman who possibly is the world's foremost authority on the disease Cammack suspected was visiting Bellevue at the time. He examined Cammack's hand, especially the nerves. He read the reports on his tests.

"Well, have I got it?" Cammack asked.

"Yes," said Dr. Cochrane.

Two days before Christmas, 1964, Cammack's worst suspicions were confirmed.

He had leprosy.

When he left the hospital, Cammack walked the cold city streets for a long time, just thinking. In 17 years at sea he had witnessed leprosy's ravages in many lands. Several times, sailing on tankers up the Mississippi to Baton Rouge, shipmates had pointed out the leprosy hospital at Carville, hidden behind the levee on an ox-bow bend in the river.

Seven or eight centuries ago, his future would have been cruelly simple. Dressed in black as one dead, he would have heard his last mass, felt the symbolic earth of the grave fall on his feet and listened to a priest intone:

"I forbid thee to enter at any time the churches, the market place, the mill, the bakehouse, the assembly of the people. I forbid thee to go abroad without the leper uniform, that you mayest be known by everybody."

Then, carrying a bell or a horn or a wooden clapper to warn of his approach, he would have lived out his days as an outcast, one of the living dead.

SENT TO 'COLONY'

Scarcely 30 years ago, he might have been locked in a compartment on a train and sent to what was called a "leper colony." There, behind a high fence topped by three strands of barbed wire, he would have taken an assumed name to protect his family, gulped down capsules of nauseous chaulmoogra oil (the curative powers of which are questioned by some authorities) and settled down among his fellow outcasts to await the probable onset of blindness or deformity.

It's quite different now, although few but leprosy patients and workers in the field are aware of it.

Jim McCullough, training officer of a "leper colony" at the U.S. Public Health Service hospital at Carville, the only leprosarium in the continent of North America,

holds seminars for visiting high school and college students. "What do you ask about leprosy?" he'll ask for openers and group after group will tell him: "It's incurable. It's highly contagious. Its victims inevitably are horribly deformed." To which McCullough will reply, with the air of a man about to impart a happy revelation: "That's not true!"

CURE NOT PERFECT
 The "cure" first tried 24 years ago at Carville and now standard treatment around the world, is a group of drugs called sulfones, distant relatives of the sulfa family. Sulfones are, far from a perfect cure. But, after centuries of neglect and years of chaulmoogra oil, the results can be called spectacular.

"We get satisfactory results in a third of our cases," says Dr. John R. Trautman, clinical chief at Carville. "Another third shows considerable improvement. The rest show no response, due in part to late diagnoses."

Carville, whose patient population hovers around the 325 mark, last year discharged 27 patients as "cured" or "inactive cases, terms that are used interchangeably by Dr. Edgar B. Johnwick, medical officer in charge. An additional 32 were discharged to receive further treatment at outpatient clinics or from their family doctors.

How contagious is leprosy? Since 1921, when the U.S. Public Health Service took over what was known as the Louisiana leper home, only one employee of the hospital, an orderly, has ever contacted leprosy. Instances of husband passing it on to wife, or vice-versa, are rare.

"In order to catch leprosy, one must first be susceptible to leprosy," says McCullough. "Apparently, not many people are. Second, the susceptible one must come in skin-to-skin contact over a long period of time with a person who has an active case. Of course, you can't prove that theory. But you can't prove any other theory, either."

ORGANISM BAFFLING
 The difficulty in proving any theory about leprosy is the difficulty in working with the uncooperative little organism that causes it. With most any other disease, once the germ has been identified, it is a simple matter to grow it in a culture, infect an animal with it and experiment on the animal with hopeful new drugs.

Theoretically, leprosy is a bone disease. There is a gradual shortening of the fingers or the toes. The greatest problems in leprosy today are those of ignorance—among both medical men and the general public.

"Leprosy has to be diagnosed early and we don't do that in the United States," Dr. Trautman says. "Leprosy is not a huge problem in this country. There are only about 2,000 to 2,500 known cases compared with an estimated 12,000,000 to 20,000,000 in the world. Physicians are not well acquainted with the disease. They don't see it often enough. Very little is written about it in medical literature."

A good deal of the prejudice against leprosy in the Western world comes from chapters 13 and 14 of Leviticus, in which the diagnosis of the disease and the social status of its victims are spelled out in excruciating detail. This is unfortunate because the Bible may not be talking about leprosy at all.

A large variety of skin diseases known today can be readily recognized from the descriptions given in Leviticus," says Dr. Oliver W. Hasselblad, president of the American Leprosy Missions, "but leprosy is not one of them. The most important characteristics of leprosy, such as anesthesia of the affected skin or numbness of the extremities with consequent ulceration and crippling, are never mentioned."

Mr. MacLennan told the annual meeting of the Toronto chapter of the Graduates' Society of McGill University.

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implied a recognition by them that they had no choice, save at long last, to accept on equal terms the French-speaking partner who was abandoned by its parent two centuries ago.

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French-English Isolation Is Seen Beginning To End

TORONTO (CP) — The centuries-old isolation between the English and French founding races of Canada may be ending, Canadian author Hugh MacLennan of Montreal said here.

A "silent" revolution is changing Canada's very nature, Mr. MacLennan told the annual meeting of the Toronto chapter of the Graduates' Society of McGill University.

Mr. MacLennan, whose widely-read novel *Two Solitudes* dramatized the split between the two races, said there were many signs that "at least the two solitudes are approaching one another."

Mr. MacLennan, an associate professor of English at McGill, said an indication of the changing attitude was the adoption by Parliament and acceptance by the majority of English-Canadians of the new Canadian flag.

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