

Southern Ireland, Green And Neutral, Lives In Constant Fear Of Invasion

This is the 15th of a series of stories about a trip to London and return, taken by a group of Canadian newspaper men at the invitation of the British Government. It is written by Hugh Young, who represented the Canadian Weekly Newspaper Association.

Every day of the six weeks or more spent away from home seemed to provide something new and different, but nothing was quite so unexpected as a two-day holiday in neutral Eire, or Southern Ireland. It was not by choice of mine. I would rather it had been Scotland, but this short, peaceful interlude in the only part of the Empire which stays neutral, was not only interesting, but I look back on it with pleasure.

It was a Thursday afternoon when I left London, along with seven other Canadian editors. Our hosts put us on the train and bade us good-bye, sending us away with more presents—this time envelopes with enlarged pictures of ourselves during our travels in England.

That night a fever to be forgotten. Two large German land mines sailed down out of the air and arrived in Bournemouth at the same time as we did. That experience has been discussed more fully in another of these stories.

I was up early the next morning, having slept fairly well on a mattress on the floor, in spite of the rattling sound of shovelling broken plate glass off the streets in the darkness.

There was some difficulty about shaving in a bathroom full of broken glass and with only a dribble of cold, rusty water from one tap, but the host made sure I had enough organized to give me the best breakfast I had while in Britain.

The British Overseas Airways car picked me up at the hotel and drove through streets of stores without glass in the windows, and past English cottages looking out on the Channel. To Pool.

The next morning, while undergoing one more lengthy customs examination near the docks at Pool, the air raids again began to whip again. The natives looked on us with some suspicion. Air raids had been scarier in those parts, and this was the second in as many days.

But I don't share their idea that these few Canadians were important enough for the Germans to send over raiders just to get us. Still, it did add a bit of excitement to be going in a trim motor boat, through the waters of Poole Harbour, dodging the machine traps and mine fields, to catch the winged battleship of the air, the Short Sunderland flying boat, "Champion," rode at anchor.

In the draw for seats, I landed in what was called the spare compartment of the ship. I was all alone in a fair-sized room, full of baggage and sacks of mail. The seat was comfortable and the steward came and served an excellent meal on light plastic dishes. But though we flew for two hours and a half over what is probably some of the most interesting scenery in the world, I saw nothing at all; the windows were painted over with thick black paint.

I hadn't realized, on the trip from New York to London to England, how difficult it is to travel around wartime Europe, in a way that was little short of miraculous, as I learned later, the British Council had waved aside the difficulties on that trip.

The return voyage wasn't quite so easy. As I sat alone in the spare compartment of the huge "Champion," I read a little booklet issued to wartime travellers by the British Overseas Airways, and marvelled that I had got out of England at all. Our good ship would refuel in Ireland and take off for Portugal. The next morning, I would be in Lisbon, and by Sunday, I would be home in Canada—or so I thought.

Truly the Emerald Isle. It was early afternoon when the great ship glided down to the water so carefully that there wasn't even a noise in the cars. I stepped out into the daylight again.

We were in the estuary of the Shannon river at Foynes, Ireland. On the river bank, two hundred yards inland, was a big concrete and timber pier, with neat little customs house at the land end. Behind that were two or three buildings where a couple of railway cars were being loaded with peat. On both sides of the river were hills, just as green as ever they had been described. So this was Ireland.

I never ceased to admire the fast launches of the British Overseas Airways. It took only a few minutes to beach land. The wait in the customs house seemed unnecessary, but when a few chinks of metal were put into the club bag, already decorated with an imposing array of airline stickers and official seals. They made one more entry in my passport.

None of us knew that we were to stay overnight in Ireland instead of going on to Lisbon. When an official broke the news, we did not like it. The countryside was green enough, but uninviting.

An old Norman tower, now part of a Catholic church, past a castle built with stone blocks, and on down the main street of the village. The chief was full of Irish love and a bit of a poet. He said that Adare was the most beautiful village in the whole world. Probably he's right.

A Strange and Anxious People. I went to Ireland with a prejudice against the country. I had just come from England, where the people were fighting for their very lives and for the freedom of the world. Here, east of the Atlantic, was a neutral island, just refusing to see the use of ports to fight submarines. Yet these Irish still enjoyed the privileges of Empire.

I came away with the feeling that Ireland is beautiful and the Irish people are kindly, hospitable, but they lack the understanding of a Canadian with Scottish blood. There is a sweet Adare, the Irish people did not seem to understand what was going on in the world today. They lived in the far past. One might have thought that Cromwell had come that way that last year and laid waste the old black Abbey and the Franciscan Abbey and the White Abbey, not forgetting Diamond Castle, down by the stone bridge over the river.

Of course, De Valera boasts that Ireland will defend itself against any attack from any source. It is rather a curious thing to say. It is rather a curious thing to say. It is rather a curious thing to say.

In the last two weeks in England, the army had been in manoeuvres. The sight was impressive. In Ireland, too, the army held manoeuvres. Word had been sent to Adare to have food enough on hand on Friday for a couple of battalions, but they did not come. The following Monday, they arrived. There was no food. Asked why they didn't come on Friday, the colonel said it rained that day, so they postponed the exercise. Apparently the Irish don't realize yet that modern wars don't stop because it rains.

But though De Valera may speak of repelling any enemy, the people of Ireland know their danger, and admit frankly that they themselves are helpless to meet it. I talked with two mothers at the golf course, and they asked if I thought Hitler was going to attack Ireland. One of them said she had three little boys at home.

The constable, a veteran of the last war, said that 100,000 men from Southern Ireland are in the British Active Forces. They slip away to Ulster to see a football game and for sport to come back.

And down in the village pub one night Grahan O'Leary of Ottawa, a pure blooded Irishman of the third generation in Canada, steeped in the lore and poetry of Ireland, waded eloquently on my last night in the village. He said that Hitler was the Cromwell of today, going about burning churches. I missed that speech. I know how eloquent Grahan can be and I wasn't surprised that he had the men of Adare all anxious to enlist at once against this modern destroyer of religion.

The Most Picturesque Village. I have said that the village constable thought Adare the most beautiful spot in all the world. That statement needs to be amplified.

The bus that took us to Adare drew up in front of a picture inn. The Dunraven Arms, as the sign said. What a tiny hamlet like Adare did with a large inn like that was something of a mystery until I learned that it belonged to Lord Dunraven and was used in peacetime to accommodate his hunting parties. Now it houses the passengers flying over the broad Atlantic. In the pages of its register there are many famous names. The inn was comfortable and not too modern. Its lounge was full of easy chairs and Chesterfields.

Sitting in front of a peat fire, waiting for afternoon tea and cakes, one could talk with ferry pilots, with men who knew the airfields with LeGuardia and Croyden. In that little Irish village, I was surprised to meet a young American pilot, now taking planes across the Atlantic, who was quite familiar with the landmarks of my own little town of Perugia. He had flown over it often.

I don't suppose anything as lovely as Adare "just happened." I suspect that many Earls of Dunraven poured the profits of their Welsh mines into this village. I know that they rebuilt two of the ancient abbeys, presenting one to the Catholics and the other to the Anglicans. And they laid out their "demesne" so that there were views down elm-lined streets and past thatched cottages, with honeysuckle growing up the walls. I even suspected that the old thatched cottage that stood directly across the way from the inn could never have attained that appearance of extreme age and yet be so well kept, without being planned that way.

Whether the cottage was old or not, there were plenty of authentic ruins. The ancient stone bridge over the Maturge river had been there for six hundred years or more. No two of its seven arches quite matched the others in size or curvature, though they had stood through the centuries.

Beside the river, just upstream from the bridge, were the ruins of Diamond Castle. I like them best of all. In the library of the inn, I found a book with the plans of the castle, dating back to about 1100. From inside those walls, many a Fitzgerald or Desmond sailed forth to terrorize the countryside. Enough is left to see all the rooms of the old castle, with the help of Lord Dunraven's little signs on the wall, and a use of a bit of imagination. One rainy afternoon, I climbed to the top of the tower, looking out through the loop-holes where archers once shot their arrows—and stories like these.

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box, that I hadn't read since high school days, came crowding back. I picked a tiny fern out of a crack in the rock and put it inside an envelope in my pocket. Back home, three weeks later, I found it, all dried out, but when it was picked again, it grew.

There was just one thing in Adare that didn't seem to fit in the picture. That was the manor house itself. It dates back 60 years or so, and looks something like a wedding cake. On the front wall is an inscription which reads: "This house was built without selling, borrowing, or going in debt." And fortunately, I thought, the gothic house is well hidden from view from the rest of Adare.

Perhaps, if you're Irish, you know the poem by Gerald Griffin, "Oh! Sweet Adare! Oh! Sweet Adare! Oh! sweet retreat of my evening exile! Oh! sweet tower of my morning gale! For looking a scene more softly tender." Looking back, I recall the drowsy curls going past with ease of milk every morning, the brightness and kindness of the people, and Lord Dunraven's golf course, probably the most interesting in the world, with two castles, two abbeys and an old cemetery in its bounds, not forgetting a trout stream and an ancient forest.

GOOD HAY AND PASTURE ARE ESSENTIAL TO ECONOMIC MILK PRODUCTION

Haitian farmers are planning to sow the largest acreage to spring grains that they have sown in many years.

It is the consensus of opinion of the Haitian Agricultural War Service Committee, states Agricultural Representative, J. E. Whitlock, who is secretary to that Committee. In a recent survey, there was a much larger acreage plowed last fall than for a great many years.

That is due to the fact that we had an extremely favorable fall for getting this work done and is, unfortunately, also a fact that there were few satisfactory catches of seeds last year and furthermore, a large percentage of our old meadows were badly winter killed a year ago.

The farm survey recently completed by the Committee indicates that Haitian farmers are determined to produce to their capacity of food products so urgently required by the Empire. These include milk, bacon and eggs.

This survey taken from between 40 and 50 per cent of Haitian mixed farmers indicates they are planning to step up their number of milk cows 124 per cent over 1941. However, for this year alone an increase of 13 per cent over 1941 and here 28 per cent increase over 1941. This is most desirable and to be highly commended in view of the fact that our Federal authorities are asking for 500 million pounds more milk than we produced in 1941 in order to furnish the increased requirements of cheese and concentrated milk products for Britain.

While comparatively little of our milk in Haiti is made into those products, nevertheless, the more milk we produce here the more will be released elsewhere for the manufacture into those products.

The planned increase in milk cows while most desirable does, however, present another problem from the standpoint of the hay and pasture situation. Aside from our reduced acreage in these crops, our meadows certainly, in most cases, went into the winter in a weakened condition due to close grazing last fall and consequently it is the opinion of the Agricultural War Service Committee that some consideration on many farms should be given immediately providing it has not already been done, to stimulating the productivity of existing pastures, and meadows and also to supplementing existing acreages in hay and pasture with some question of stimulation of existing meadows and pastures by means of top dressing with manure or commercial fertilizer or a combination of both and the subsidies to be paid on such commercial fertilizer will be dealt with in another article.

At this time, they do feel it wise to suggest that many farmers should give consideration to planning some supplementary annual crops for hay and pasture. While such annual crops cannot take the place of more permanent stands, nevertheless, under favorable conditions, annual pastures can and do produce a tremendous amount of feed for stock.

The Animal Husbandry Department, A.O.C., recommends Sudan Grass which should be sown at the rate of 30 lbs. per acre about the end of May on a good firm, well prepared seed bed and should not be sown too deep.

The recommended depth being not over 1-2 inches deep. In Prof. Rathby's opinion it should not be pastured until well deep for cattle. At the A.O.C. last year 8 acres of Sudan Grass saved the day for them from the standpoint of their dairy herd stated Prof. Rathby and furthermore, their cows certainly milked well on it.

From the standpoint of hay, annual crops are not the best, nevertheless oats at 3 lbs. per acre and cut in the milk stage has real possibilities. Other crops for this purpose include millet at 20 to 30 lbs. per acre. Soybeans also make excellent hay, but curing owing to their sappiness and consequent tendency to mould in culls and even after being placed in the barn. If tripods are available soybeans can then be made into excellent hay.

In brief, officers of the Agricultural War Service Committee point out that late sown fields of grain are not as profitable and consequently on many farms consideration might well be given to sowing the last field to annual pasture or annual hay crop and consideration might also be given to sowing an extra acre or two of corn which can be utilized for green feed or silage as required.

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National Parks as Wildlife Sanctuaries

All Canada's national parks are wildlife sanctuaries. They serve as natural museums where visitors can enjoy the benefits of first-hand acquaintance with creatures of the wild living undisturbed and unmolested. In this way the parks not only make a noteworthy contribution to wildlife conservation, but also offer an unmissable opportunity to study ecology under favorable conditions.

Wildlife adds materially to the pleasure of the park visitor. However charming the scenery, its beauty and interest are increased a hundredfold by the sight of wild creatures in the still of wings skimming the surface of the water, or the leap of a trout from deep eddying pools. These wild life to the scene and are an essential part of the national parks idea.

This part has long been recognized by those charged with national parks development in Canada. Wild animals living under natural conditions preserve the park visitor a picture of animal life which never could be obtained within the confines of a zoo, even at large where no adequate protection is afforded. No doubt one of the most fascinating features of these national parks is the opportunity

they provide to study and photograph wild animals in their native habitat. A wilderness invaded by throngs of human beings may seem a paradox, but there is really nothing conflicting between the idea of a wildlife sanctuary and a spacious area of natural beauty where hundreds and thousands of people may go each year in search of beautiful recreation. Actually there is very little disturbance of wildlife in these parks, and it is remarkable how quickly the animals and birds have discovered that they have nothing to fear from man. Some of them have become tame to a point bordering on impudence. This is particularly true of the black bear—but here a word of caution. Visitors to the parks will be well advised not to feed or attempt to "pet" the animals. Mindless does not always bring kindness, and some of these animals have not yet learned what is expected of them under civilized rules of conduct.

Years ago Canada was the last refuge of many wild animals, but because of the advance of settlement, particularly in the habitations, particularly of big game, were gradually taking over and the animal life was being thoroughly wiped out. The story

of the plains buffalo is a case in point. A few years ago none but the adventurous, who were content to spend days and possibly weeks in the attempt, could see such animals as the mountain goat and the bighorn sheep in their native surroundings. Today, the visitor to the national parks may come across many of these animals, including sheep, goat, moose, deer, bear, elk, and in some of the parks, falcons and eagles, without having to go very far afield.

Canada's national parks are truly accomplishing one of the most important aims which was in the minds of those who first conceived the idea of great natural museums of wildlife. These parks are in the best possible position to preserve wildlife because they mandate to preserve complete the whole complex of earth and water, hill and dale, forest and plain, rock and snow that go to make up a part. As long as the national parks are kept as wildlife sanctuaries, they will continue to present a fuller picture of the primitive Canada and afford Canadians a chance to enrich their experience by unforgettable encounters with primitive nature.

BIGHORN SHEEP



The Bighorn Sheep in Canada is now only found amidst the high mountains of the Rockies and throughout British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, although certain other early writers make it clear that they used to frequent the foothill country for a considerable distance beyond the foot of the mountains proper.

Their natural range is on or just above the timber line, although they make many excursions high up on the rocks or down into the valleys. There are several varieties of the

measured around the outside of the curve, and 18 inches around the base, in which case they will weigh about 36 pounds or one-ninth of the animal's total weight. Ewes have small spirals horns. Bighorns are splendid climbers although most naturalists agree that they are not the equal of the Rocky Mountain Goat. Thompson Selous makes the distinction that the goat is essentially a climber while the sheep is a sure-footed boulder like the chamois.

CANADIAN BEAVER



The Beaver is closely associated with the exploration and history of Canada because its fur was the primary object of the fur trade and was made the medium of exchange in all barter for other furs or commodities. As a natural consequence the beaver became the emblematic animal of Canada, and a pictured beaver was included on the Royal Arms of Canada until 1921 when they were revised.

The Beaver is an amphibious animal with webbed hind feet and a broad, flat tail. It weighs from 30 to

55 pounds. It lives on the bark and twigs of many deciduous trees, its favorite food trees being the aspen, poplar, the cottonwood, balsam and other vegetation. It never eats down for dam building purposes. It was originally distributed over the greater part of North America, including the whole of Canada except the treeless barrens of the far North. The Beaver has vanished from much of its original range but there are still lots of them in northern Canada. It is one of the most interesting of the world's animal species, because it dams streams and the outlets of lakes in order to conserve water at a constant level in relation to their houses and to ensure a sufficient depth of water under any normal thickness of winter ice in which they can move about. Pond beavers build houses of sticks and mud with under-water entrances. Some beaver live on considerable streams, where there is no need to conserve water and are known as bank beaver.