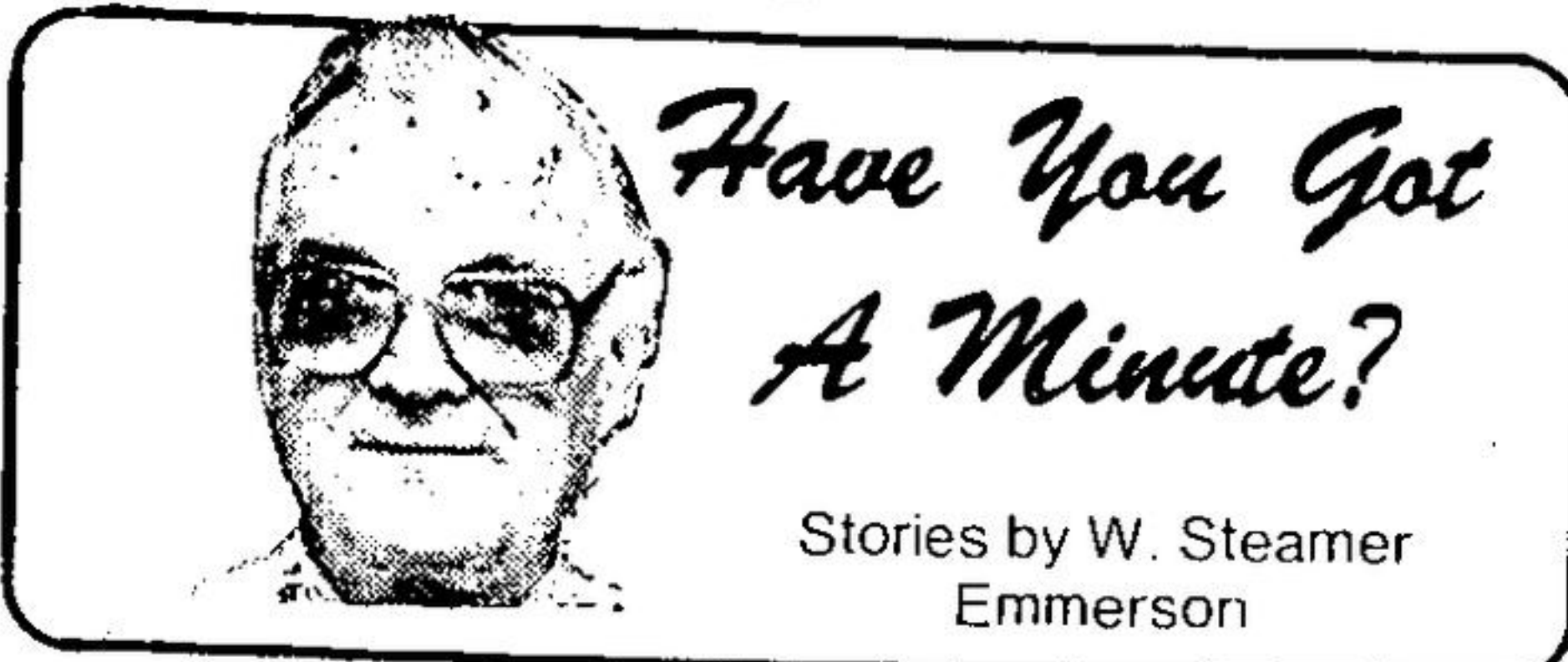


The day Steamer gave religion a black-eye



I gave religion a black-eye with one quick, undetectable, punishing butt-end. For a minute or so, I felt terrible. I thought I'd got the wrong guy. The referee missed it, thank God or else I would have been sent to the sin-bin for life.

If Don Cherry's "Rock em, sock em", videos had been in vogue in those days my butt-end would have been a "highlight".

To play goal in the old bush league, one needed the dexterity of a cat, the temperament of a wounded grizzly, and a wad of tape at the end of your goal-stick thicker than a politician's hide.

There were nights when it was team "wraslin", roller derby, championship boxing, knock-down, drag-them-out pier sixers in three spasms known as periods.

It was fun, exciting and we looked upon it as recreational. If you didn't like the sight of blood it was best to stay home. Some

nights the stands were completely empty.

Now I'm talking about the days when there was only one penalty box. Some nights there were more offenders than the old sin-bin could hold all at one time.

Heavens to Betsy, there were scraps some nights in the penalty box between competing gladiators that were worthy of a call to the home policeman.

One year Walt Richardson, his brother "poke-check" Smokey, and I decided to create the role of an arbitrator. This position would be filled by a highly respected citizen, knowledgeable in hockey, and one to be known as absolutely fair to all.

We chose Rev. Alex Calder, of Knox Presbyterian Church right away. When Walt, Smokey and I finished our sob pitch he agreed to serve gratis for the love of the game. At the end of his first term after arbitrating several stick

swinging infractions he told us how reluctant he was to leave but the Lord had called him away to other duties. He later became the moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

Although we had lost one staunch Presbyterian we still had one in the league playing regularly, the Rev. Len Self from Norval. Len could hold his own in the rugged going, and often gave as good as he got.

One night in a wild scramble around my net I received butt-end on the left side of my face. Hockey's ten commandments includes "always get the other guys number". Through my foggy eyes I saw his number. In the Boston "Gawden" the crown used to chant "number foa Bobby Oa!" Everytime I hear that old hockey tale today I smile and think of "number foa," as Bostonians would say at the Boston Gawden.

Now who do you think "number foa" was that night I took my lumps. None other than the Rev. Len Self. He liked the heavy going in hockey talk.

Well I staggered home opened the "good book" and discovered in St. Matthew, Chapter five, Verse 38 "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth!" Oh Lord, I could hardly wait till Len and I squared off again. I didn't let on to anyone I intended to loosen a

tooth at least, or maybe an eye. I wasn't going to turn the other cheek.

It was done in a matter of seconds. The big wad of black tape almost disappeared into his eyesocket.

After the game Len, and I met at the coffee booth by coincidence. He offered to buy the coffee, but I insisted, he insisted, and so on. As we raised the hot

coffee in sort of a toast to a good game I could see his eye was about closed. He smiled and said, "I guess we are even Steamer." I said "I guess so."

He never did tell me how the congregation accepted the shiner, but I was praying to God he didn't mention my name.

As Dizzy Dean would say, "Them Presbyterians was good sports".

Local libraries offer new insurance program

Halton Hills Libraries offer V.I.P. status to discriminating patrons...

V.I.P. status to library users means "video insurance paid" - and signing up for this optional, annual insurance program will provide coverage against charges for physical damage to the tapes they borrow. The \$12.00 fee covers the borrower for a full year and represents a very significant saving over the single transaction fee. Single transaction insurance will continue to be available for the occasional borrower.

This program will also speed video borrowers through the checkout process without hassle.

Library Board Chairman, Jay Jackson, noted that video use is the fastest growing library service. Both Board and staff are anxious to protect borrowers from the high replacement costs (\$50-\$500) of many of the library's tapes. The videos in the library collection tend to be more expensive than the mass market feature film titles available through commercial video rental sources. The insurance fees will create a pool of funds for the replacement of damaged tapes.

For more information, please pick up a video service brochure from the Georgetown or Acton branch library.

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