

CARDIFF COURIER

Editors and Publishers:
Stewart & Ann Smith

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Temporary Phone Number
(613) 332-3889
or 332-0785 to leave messages

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EDITORIAL**RACCOON RABIES**

By Dr. W.T.D. Maxwell, D.V.M.

Rabies is a disease very familiar to nearly everyone of us, probably because for so many decades there have been more rabies cases in Southern Ontario than elsewhere in North America.

This distinction as continent leader has now been lost to New York State. This dubious honour was gained by the introduction of so called "Raccoon Rabies" to the Northeastern States about 10 years ago.

Judging from the calls I receive involving suspect rabies cases, I'd say most people know as little about rabies as Eliza Doolittle knew about "the rain in Spain."

A little history to start: Southern Ontario's problem began in the mid 1950's when fox rabies was introduced from the Arctic. The red fox is the main vector (the species which spreads the disease) in this province. Across the continent other animals serve as the vector: all the great plains areas - where the buffalo roamed - the skunk is the culprit; in the Southwestern States, the gray fox; in the Southeastern States, the raccoon.

An observation was made: each of these vector species carry a slightly different "strain" of the rabies virus, each strain can be identified as being distinct from the others. All the different strains can infect all species of mammals.

It appears the virus strain has adapted itself to one species with the intention that a fox will transmit fox rabies to a fox. If perchance a rabid fox bites and infects a raccoon, the coon will die, but without transmitting the fox rabies to another raccoon, despite the fact that there would be ample opportunity for the rabid raccoon to attack other members of its family.

Conclusion -- fox rabies is poorly transmitted by raccoons to raccoons.

More history: Florida experienced rabies vectored by raccoons in the late 1940's. Involved areas slowly expanded to the north during the next 30 years.

In 1977 a sudden outbreak occurred in West Virginia as a result of moving trapped raccoons from Florida to West Virginia. Apparently they were in the incubation stage of rabies.

The spread north has been relatively quick - in the last four years it has moved north and west in New York State at about 35 to 60 kilometres per year.

(Continued next issue)

FLO ELLIOTT FROM WILBERFORCE

A HALLOWE'EN STORY

Thanksgiving being over, it's time to turn our thoughts to Hallowe'en phantoms: not the sweet little tots that come Trick or Treating to the door, but the real thing.

Down through the centuries stories of seeing ghosts and hauntings have persisted. Even here in this small place.

There is an old house near here (just a shell now) which has always been considered haunted. I never found out why this is so, but perhaps it's so long ago nobody remembers.

When my father was a boy, which was around the turn of the century, I guess, he and some brave friends decided to stay overnight in this house. They only had candles for lights.

But everything was going along quite well until they thought it would be a good idea to go upstairs. I suppose with all the noise and shuffling around they disturbed a couple of bats. When these bats flew at them they were so startled they dropped the candles and fell down the stairs in a heap, stepping on vital parts of each other as they went.

As they rushed outside someone got their fingers severely slammed in the door. If anything had been haunting that house it would have had a hearty laugh at these unlikely ghost hunters.

And what of famous ghosts?

An article I read in the Toronto Star said that the Chief Engineer of the Queen Mary swore he smelled cigar smoke in the private stateroom of Winston Churchill all the while it was being renovated to turn it into a tourist attraction.

Another one that was mentioned was Edgar Allan Poe. Each year on Poe's birthday, January 19, at 3 a.m., a man all dressed in black visits his grave and leaves a bottle of cognac and a note that says, "Edgar, I

haven't forgotten you." Poe died in 1849. Now, that's what I call a long memory!

I have heard from people who would not lie, I'm sure. They say they have heard footsteps where there shouldn't have been any. And some have seen people who have already died. I wonder if you have to be a certain type of person to receive these ghostly emanations - sort of "Ghost Friendly."

These hauntings didn't always happen on Hallowe'en, but that is when folks are more aware of ghosts and goblins.

So - keep your eyes open. You never can tell what you might see, can you??



Flo and Bill Elliott demonstrate Clogging, in the Lloyd Watson Centre

Letter to the Editor**The Solution**

At a time of Global social crisis, the question of what we do with God becomes more critical and urgent than ever before. That God can be ignored, side stepped, or rejected as having no part in the solution of the social problems of our days from a biblical point of view, a very perverted perspective.

God is the solution to the social problems of our world and any attempt at bettering the social life of any person or nation apart from God is nigh impossible.

Today the reasons for the social problems facing the Third World are addressed in terms of rich and

poor, North and South, the developed versus the underdeveloped World. The solution to these problems, we're told, is to bring political and economic liberation to those who are suffering and where rights are being violated. While political and economic changes can be part of the solution, they are not enough.

Jesus never reduced His message to the rich/poor polarity. His message - calling men to repentance - was to rich and poor alike, for it is man's relationship to God that lies at the heart of the social problems of our society.

The Bible condemns both personal sin and social evils. Both affect our relat-

ionship to God and both require repentance. And biblical repentance involves more than a weekly or even daily prayer of confession.

Biblical repentance involves conversion, a change of heart, attitude and behaviour. God, who is rich in mercy and ready to forgive, offers us His grace to begin living a new transformed life, filled with His love and compassion that can and does resolve the social problems of our societies if we allow them to.

The transforming power of the life of Christ is awesome.

John Newton, the Captain of a slave ship in the eighteenth century, played a horrendous role in delivering millions of slaves to a

living death, as well as the murder of thousands more - until he met God, saw his sin, and repented. Today his well known hymn "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound," is sung by millions who can testify to the same saving grace of Jesus that transformed their lives.

God is the solution to the global social crisis of our world. His grace floods lives with a new dynamic to work and live for a better world.

Yes, we must strive for political and economic freedom. We must deal with the issues of justice and human rights, and social structures. But to do so without God is not enough.

T.E. Deterling,
Tory Hill