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I pray Almighty God that the words I write in this house may be pure and honest—that they be dictated by no personal spite, unworthy motive or unjust greed for gain; that they may tell the truth as far as I know it—and tend to promote love and peace—amongst men.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1928

GROUNDHOG DAY

While giving an evening lecture Henry Ward Beecher was interrupted by a loud imitation of a cock-crow from the gallery. Looking from his watch to the window the noted speaker replied to the embarrassment of his heckler:

"It cannot be that I have talked until daybreak and yet it must be. The instinct of the lower animals is infallible."

The Groundhog Day myth is no more a test of the infallibility of animal instinct than was Beecher's pun. If it serves as a test at all it is as a test of human gullibility and superstition. And if the test shows a high percentage of both gullibility and superstition it would not be surprising, for most people will believe anything about the weather, whether prophecy, almanac prediction, "sure sign" or "saying."

Nevertheless, the Groundhog Day fable is an interesting and valuable bit of folklore worthy of perpetration and of annual commemoration. The groundhog's shadow doesn't determine the weather one way or another, but it plays an important part in the traditions of the country. This weather fable is a part of the true American folklore. That some abide by the groundhog's forecast does not in any measure detract from the value of the tradition as folklore.

As the Groundhog Day story goes, there will be a return of wintry weather if the groundhog is frightened back into his hole by his shadow. In those parts of the country where the groundhog makes his burrow wintry weather persists several weeks after February 2 so the prediction is without value except to make a dark and dismal February day tolerable to those who trust that a sunless February 2 augurs an early spring.

Whether you believe in signs or not the fact remains that York County, Thursday, February 2nd, 1928, broke clear and fine, and the sun shone beautifully all day, so Mr. Groundhog had plenty of opportunities to see his shadow.

The tax rate for the village has been struck for the year 1928 and citizens who are inclined to criticize should acquaint themselves with all the facts of the situation before rashly finding fault with the council. A great deal of the expenditure is uncontrollable and a close examination of the estimates will show that they have been pared as closely as possible and that rigid economy has been practiced in their preparation.

In the interests of the preservation of LIFE and LIMB and in the interests of public safety, sidewalks are needed on Yonge Street. Millions are spent in building roads for the motorists and surely the pedestrian is worthy of consideration. We are delighted to know that the Townships of Markham and Vaughan in conjunction with the Provincial Department of Highways are contemplating some action in the matter this year and that walks in the neighbourhood of Thornhill, Langstaff, Richmond Hill and Elgin Mills are a possibility before the end of 1928.

A determined effort should be made in 1928 to beautify the town. In spite of the apparent commercialism of the age in which we live it is evident to any thoughtful observer that the Canadian people are rapidly developing a greater appreciation of the BEAUTIFUL. This is not by any means confined to the wealthier classes but extends also to the masses in the towns, villages and in the rural districts. BEAUTIFUL TOWNS, AND VILLAGES ATTRACT PEOPLE. They attract permanent residents, they attract tourists and they attract trade. It is only natural a person desiring a place to make a home will choose a town that is beautiful, well-kept, tidy and clean in preference to one that is dirty, untidy and unsightly. BEAUTIFY RICHMOND HILL IN 1928. Apart from the satisfaction it affords the eye it pays in dollars and cents.

Recent comment has drawn attention to the fact that there are three Fridays, the thirteenth, this year, one of which, Friday, January 13th, has already passed, and the others occur in April and July. It may also interest the curious to note that three of the recognized Dominion holidays fall on Sundays, namely:—New Years Day, January 1st; the King's birthday, June 3rd, and Dominion Day, July 1st. Three Easter, April 9th; Labor Day, September 3rd and Armistice Day, November 11th; fall on Mondays. Christmas Day, December 25th, is on a Tuesday; Victoria Day, May 24th, on Thursday, and Good Friday, of course, on a Friday, April 6th. No holidays fall on a Wednesday or Saturday this year. In regard to Armistice Day, which is celebrated by a public holiday on the Monday nearest to November 11, it may be pointed out that this year the true Armistice Day falls on Sunday, November 11th, with the public holiday on the following day.

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Letters From The People.

"AND THEY EAT"

Dear Editor,—
 We wonder if the following, taken from a secular paper, does not hit a pretty hard blow on the heads of some good religious folk who are too much disposed to connect the worship of the Lord and the Business of the church with good things to eat and who offer attractions for the stomach as an incentive to engage in formal worship. The "Supper Room" and the "Upper Room" are to have them amalgamated. People fool themselves when they attempt to fool the almighty by such a hypocritical program.
 The note to which we refer is taken from the Newburg (Oregon) Graphic, and reads on this wise: Behold! The lodge lodgeth together—and they eat. The club clubbeth together—and they eat. The church hath a social—and they eat. The young people elect officers—and they eat. And even

when the Missionary Society meeteth together—they eat. But this latter is in a good cause, because they eat in remembrance of the poor heathen who have not much to eat.
 Behold! hath man's brains gone to his stomach, and doth he no longer regard intellectual dainties that thou canst no longer call an assembly or get together a quorum or even a "baker's dozen" except that thou hold up the baker's dainties as a bait? Be it true, that the day cometh that to get a crowd at prayer meeting the preacher must hold up a biscuit?
 Year, verily, thou hast heard of the child races of the world. But, behold, it is nigh thee even at the door. For as one calleth unto the child and sayeth, "Come hither, Sweet Little One, and I will give thee a stick of Candy," even so must thou say to his grown-up papa and mamma, "assemble ye together and we will serve refreshments!" And, lo, they come like sheep in a pen.
 FREE METHODIST

"Way Back in Liberal Files"

DO YOU REMEMBER?
 This Week of 1890

When at his fathers residence, "Ellerstie Farm" Willowdale, Arthur Lang, Eldest son of William Wallace, passed away at the age of 24 years.

When about 200 members and friends of the Methodist Church and Sabbath School, Victoria Square, assembled at the Temperance Hall, to do honor to a respected citizen and fellow laborer in the Sabbath School, Mr. Geo. Querrie who was about to remove to Parkdale. The chair was occupied by Mr. Thomas Brown, short addresses were given by Messrs S. Woodard, J. Ellarby and W. Scott. Mr. Querrie was presented with a purse containing \$45.

When near Victoria Square, John Doner passed away at the age of 46 years.

When a meeting of the Richmond Hill Curling Club was held in the Council Chamber, Members present:—W. Trench, D. Boyle, J. Elliott, Wm. Atkinson, R. W. Neville, H. M. McCuaig, H. A. Nicholls, W. A. Sanderson, P. G. Savage, T. F. McMahon, Will D. Atkinson.

When the Metropolitan skating rink at Lansing was formally opened for the season. The Richmond Hill band as well as the band from the village of Weston were present. At the close of the rink the musicians were treated to luncheon by Mr. Thompson, the genius proprietor of the Golden Lion Hotel.

When revival services were held in the Methodist church, Thornhill under the management of the Rev. M. D. Kerr, of Toronto, assisted by Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Wilson of Toronto.

DO YOU REMEMBER?
 This Week of 1896

When a sleigh load of young people from above Richmond Hill drove to observatory Farm and spent a most enjoyable evening.

When a band carnival was given by the village band here. There were four horse rigs, two horse rigs, single rigs and rigs of all kinds, they came from Toronto, Markham, Stouffville, Thornhill, Maple and many other places. The following were the prize winners:—Gents, repres Costume—Armand Savage, a Turk; Lady's repres Costume—Miss M. Malbin, Indian Princess; Gent skater in costume—Cyrus Lyons, Grecian Soldier; Lady Skater in Costume—Miss Sara Clifford, White Mum; Boy Skater in Costume—Master W. G. Martin, Incroyable; Girl Skater in Costume—Miss Gertrude Cooper, Little Xmas.

When Mr. John Baker was married to the eldest daughter of Mr. John Snider, of Edgeley.

When a very pleasant time was spent at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Glass, the occasion being their 25th wedding anniversary.

When the young ladies of the village entertained such of their gentlemen friends as felt equal to the occasion to a treat in the shape of a Leap Year Party, having engaged Proctors largest van, they called at the houses of the gentlemen and took them for a short drive, after which they drove to the hospitable residence of Mrs. F. Jackes.

When the Queens Concert Company comprising Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Ramsay and Miss Sara Lord Bailey gave a pleasing entertainment in Thornhill, under the auspices of Patterson Lodge.

DO YOU REMEMBER?
 This Week of 1903

When the following stood first and second in their forms at the Richmond Hill High School:—Form I, M. Bowes, H. Francis; Form II, E. Reaman, S. McMahon.

When a hockey and racing carnival held in the rink here was a great suc-

cess. Mr. F. Ludford won the final beat for the locals. The hockey game played between Eatons and Richmond Hill was a fast and scientific exhibition on both sides. Mr. A. Savage acted as referee. The Richmond Hill line-up was as follows; Goode, Sims, Boyle, Trench, Glover, Ellston and Glass.

When John L. McDonald purchased the property known as the Concord store and Post Office. The new proprietor took possession the first of April.

When Dr. Carleton of Arthur started practice in Thornhill, having purchased the property of Dr. Dame late of that place.

When Mr. Thomas Lane, Thornhill, had for sale or to rent an improved farm 140 acres, being lot 30, con. 2, Markham Township.

When Miss Millie Trench passed her junior examinations with honors at the Toronto Conservatory of music.

When at Richmond Hill, Delia Vellie wife of John Palmer passed away.

When Miss Ethel Switzer sang at Massey Hall in the Mendelsohn choir concert.

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Canadian Athletes Leave For Olympic Games



Canada's representatives at the Olympic Games at St. Moritz, Switzerland, now on their way across the ocean, journeyed from their homes to the seaboard via Canadian National Railways. Most of the party were photographed by the Canadian National camera man at Montreal en route to Halifax. Photographs show: Lower left; The Varsity Grads hockey team, of Toronto; right, Lehan and Dupuis of Montreal and Ottawa respectively ski-ing representatives. Upper right, the party aboard the Maritime Express of the Canadian National Railways; left, Ross Robinson, Toronto speed skating champion, who will represent Canada in the speed skating events—Canadian National Railways photographs.