

Mother waits for word



regional viewpoint

By Jim Irving

RICHMOND HILL — For most families, Christmas is a time for exchanging presents among their members, but for one Richmond Hill mother, a Christmas card from England would be the best present of all.

That would mean Mrs. W. Jefferis finally had word from her son, Ian, who, one night last month was presented with a one-way pass to England via Air Canada, and hasn't been heard from since.

The reason for the government's largesse, as you might recall, was that Jefferis picked up a criminal record a few years ago and so was returned to the land of his birth.

That he didn't know the latter from his vaccination mark when he left at the worldly age of three, and had considered himself Canadian since first becoming aware that the maple leaf grew on flagpoles, as well as trees, only made it easier for those in charge to get rid of him. For Jefferis never took out citizenship papers, which was his first mistake. Compiling a prison record was his second and also his final one, so far as the authorities were concerned.

For how long?

And while it's not the kind of thing that a family jots down as a joyful milestone — along with baby's first steps — should it always be held against someone?

"Nobody's going to influence me to do anything wrong," Jefferis told The

Liberal, prior to being deported. And he meant it. He knew what lay ahead of him, just as he regretted what lay behind him. He was determined his past would no longer linger there with the present, going to work with a vengeance, banking everything but the grocery money for the day when he would no longer be a citizen in thought only.

Not that he was entirely unprepared for that knock on the door from immigration that meant he was no longer welcome here.

"I want to have something saved up in case they ever send me back," he said, just before the knock came.

Had no notice

When it did come, however, Jefferis

wasn't even given enough notice to go to the bank and withdraw his money; his girlfriend had to get it and bring it with her when she flew over a few days later.

And that's the latest on it, so far as Mrs. Jefferis goes. Neither her son nor his girlfriend has been in touch with her since and she feels she is much to blame.

"He was very disconsolate when he left," she said. "There was a great deal of bitterness on his part; they were shoving him onto foreign soil and there was nothing I could say to him to lift his spirits."

Blamed mother

"He was put out with me, because I was the one who sent him to the police, (where he received his order of

deportation) because I answered the call.

"I thought it was just the usual thing." (Jefferis had been reporting to police regularly, as part of his probation.)

Mrs. Jefferis said she was hoping that, as Christmas drew near, she would hear from him.

"It's (England) such a different place — and the people are so different. It's so different from Canada entirely."

Did she think his bitterness and sudden change in countries would combine to send him off on a bit of a tangent again?

Changed in jail

There was no fear of that on Mrs.

Jefferis' part. "When he came back (from jail) that last time, I couldn't help but see how he'd changed; how he'd matured."

"I know he wouldn't do anything wrong; he worked too hard — seven days a week — putting all his money away."

"There are only two ways a person can go," Mrs. Jefferis said, "they can think of things in the right light, or go completely wrong."

And, even though she has yet to hear from her son, she feels he is thinking in the right light.

"I'm relying on the spirit of Christmas," she said.

And despite the irony of it all, what better place for that to flourish than in the land of Dickens, Scrooge and Tiny Tim?



sharon's sunshine

By SHARON BRAIN

THORNHILL — Because of my grandfathers, it never occurred to me men could keep their hair.

From the moment I first knew them they were both delightfully bare on top. In my innocence, I believed the only choice available was in the color of the fringe above the ears.

When Telly Sevalas first appeared on my TV screen, I hated his show but I loved his head.

Mind you I thought he had gone a little far. I'm not one to quibble over a little fringe.

But it didn't catch on. I still see ads that state emphatically: "No Man Wants To Be Bald."

Flaunt mats

Frank Sinatra is still wearing his toupee.

And Bobby Hull, whose head has had as much press as Bobby Orr's knee, is still flaunting that extravagant yellow thatch as if it is something to be proud of.

I guess men really don't like to be bald.

Perhaps they haven't given enough thought to the advantages.

Think of all those trips to the barber you could omit.

Who wouldn't like to be free of the irritation of handing over an outrageous sum to the mad man with the scissors who has just taken off so much hair you might as well be bald?

What's more, he expects a tip to indicate your gratitude for the havoc he has just wreaked.

Hairnets even

If your barber is one of the more

trendy sort, no doubt he is disappointed if you don't wish to don a hairnet and have your hair blown dry.

That's all very well, I suppose. But what if one of the guys on the ball team should come in mid-blow.

Some things are not easily forgotten or lived down.

Bald men do not suffer those

humiliations.

If you are bald, your hat always fits, regardless of how long it was since your last haircut. Never too tight nor too loose.

But you never thought of that.

Bald men do not end up with a half-white, half-brown forehead when they get their hair cut in August.

Everyone likes an even tan.

Women kiss

And now for the clincher. Women like to kiss bald heads.

I know most men don't believe that. But think about it for a moment.

Men's faces are, to be blunt, scratchy. Rough. Prickly.

Bald heads are soft. Smooth. Bare. In a word, kissable.

Any baby knows that.

As a matter of fact, there is no reason, in this uni-sex world, why the advantages of baldness should be granted only to men. Women too should

be encouraged to join the fight against the tyranny of hair.

Think of the time we waste brushing, combing, washing, drying our heads. Think of the trips to the hairdressers and the indignities we undergo while shrouded in wet plastic sheets.

Female advantages

Wouldn't there be advantages for everyone if a Bald is Beautiful campaign really took hold?

No longer would we be subjected to interminable ads about which shampoo really gets hair shiniest.

Morning traffic tie-ups before the bathroom door would be considerably lessened as the daily shampoo becomes unnecessary.

Dandruff would vanish from the face of the earth.

Think of all the pleasant dinners that would result when families no longer have to argue about the length of George's hair.

Some drawbacks

There are a few drawbacks of course. Girls will have to think of an alternate excuse for turning down dates once hair washing is no longer required.

Ears would become more important.

Those sneaky souls who have been passing for beauties while hiding unpleasant wiggles beneath their hair will be discovered and disgraced.

Tiaras would need to be glued on.

But these are small inconveniences. In this skin crazy world, the discovery of a new area that could either be covered demurely or flaunted provocatively, should sell the idea.

You were wrong, Bobby Hull. You should have left well enough alone.



yesterdays
by mary dawson

46 water mills

RICHMOND HILL — We are becoming more energy conscious these days as we begin to realize we are rapidly exhausting our natural resources.

Today we are looking to atomic-powered reactors to provide us with present and future energy needs.

Thus we are apt to overlook the fact that power from the rivers and streams of the province which made the first industrial development possible.

Writing for The Liberal in 1926, E. A. James recalled the days of water-powered mills in Markham Township. In 1840 there were 11 Markham grist mills and 35 saw mills powered by waterwheels.

Of these only the refurbished one at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area is in existence today.

Headford mill

One 1840 grist mill was located at Headford on Lot 20, Conc. 3, Markham (now in Richmond Hill).

That dam and mill were built by John Burr in 1842. He paid 400 pounds for the west 100 acres of the lot as a site for the mill.

John Burr operated a small mill until 1838 when he disposed of it to Rowland Burr, who enlarged both the mill and dam. In 1848 this second Burr sold it, with 14 acres of land, to Thomas Johns for 800 pounds.

Owners changed

In 1849 George Squires became the owner. For a few years the mill was operated by tenants, first by the Farris, father and son, then by a Mr. Ramsey.

In 1861 Squires sold the property to John Eyer, who added a woollen mill, which was in operation as late as 1872. Alex Mackie bought the mill in 1874 but was drowned on Good Friday of that year while chopping ice at the dam.

In December of 1874 David Hislop became the owner and for a few years the mill was operated by George Hislop.

At that time the grinding was done by two sets of stones. Hislop converted the plant to a roller mill in 1889.

Mills failed

The great mills of the West, along with Manitoba wheat, finally crowded out the local mills.

In later years the Headford establishment was simply a chopping mill, turning homegrown grain into feed for livestock.

In 1912 the dam broke and the mill was closed — to be torn down in 1916.

In the early years the miller collected a toll of one-twelfth of the grain processed. Still later the levy was one-tenth.

That is, for every bushel of wheat (60 lbs.) the miller took six pounds. He ground the grist and returned to the farmer the flour, shorts and bran produced by the 54 pounds of wheat.

After 1900

During this century the practice

became for the miller to supply flour, bran and shorts out of stock when he received the grain.

The usual exchange was 38 lbs. flour, 12 lbs. bran, seven lbs. shorts. Three pounds was allowed for waste for each bushel of wheat.

Eventually the farmer sold his wheat for cash and bought his wife's favorite brand of flour at the grocery.

Markham poem

The passing of Headford Mill was described in verse in 1916 by the Rev. T. Elliott, the first stanza reading:

The old grist mill at Headford,
Sturdy relic of the past,
Amid time's cruel changes
Has met its fate at last.
It has served its useful purpose
And ground the wheat for bread
By which three generations
Of Markham folk were fed.

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