

Tribute cont'd from pg. 11

The Major, who had been involved in many of the campaigns between the British and the French in the territorial wars and against the Americans in the early years of the War of Independence, decided to leave the army and return to his earlier career of barrister here in this new colony of Upper Canada. He would even come to establish the first newspaper, the Upper Canada Times, and go on to serve in the colonial government of Upper Canada. Perhaps, in Hilda's mind nevertheless, his most important contribution to history, had been his opposition to the

union under one government, of Upper and Lower Canada, saying instead, that these two disparate political and social colonies, should develop separately as their language, religious and social differences would always be contended. Hilda found herself smiling at the thought of how appropriate his arguments, expressed in his papers and letters, would sound in the present.

Was that the link? The thought came unbidden into her mind. Was there some connection between the murders and the historical information be amassed for publication as part of the bi-centennial celebrations? Surely not.

Digby Hensman was serving Jeremy his breakfast with the unobtrusive efficiency that made him all but invisible. "Will there be anything else, sir?"

"No, Digby, that will do me nicely," Jeremy acknowledged. "By the way, what talk do you hear when you're out and about?"

"About what, sir?"

"About the deaths of Agnes and Charlie Turley."

"Well some folks thought that Sam Monday killed Agnes, but when Charlie died too, they dropped that idea. I mean, why would Sam kill one of his best customers?"

Jeremy couldn't help but grin at such practical logic. "So now, who is the chief suspect?"

"Well, the thought now is that Charlie killed Agnes, then somehow killed himself. That puts it all right and tight, and everyone is back to getting ready for the Bi-centennial Celebration."

"Keep your ears open will you Digby.... and Mrs. Hensman too, if she would," Jeremy asked. "Someone out there," he waved toward the window, "has killed two people and is likely to kill a third."

"That's how I see it too," Digby nodded. "We'll listen. Mrs. Hensman has a doctor's appointment this afternoon. That's a great place to pick up bits of news." In his eagerness to be helpful, Digby forgot for a moment his self-imposed servant-master relationship allowing his interest in events to hold sway. "Both Mrs. Hensman and I are used to being invisible, so to speak, and it's amazing what we hear." The man couldn't help gloating over their talent.

"Speaking of which, I assume that you are wondering about Mrs. Hamstead, and what role she may play in our future?" Jeremy asked.

In the instant, Digby was again the self-effacing serving man. "I could not imagine myself speculating about your

personal life, sir."

"Oh! I find that hard to believe, but in any case, I hope that Mrs. Hamstead will become my wife," Jeremy explained.

"As you wish, sir. I'm sure Mrs. Hensman and I wish for your best interests, sir."

"How many years have you been with me, Digby?"

The man thought for a minute. "Thirty-two, sir," he replied. "Ever since we came to Canada."

"And in all that time, have you ever called me by my first name?" Jeremy inquired with seeming irrelevance.

"No sir...nor would either Mrs. Hensman or myself consider doing so." The man was truly the picture of affronted dignity. That his employer would even imply such a rupture of their relationship by the introduction of such a familiar method of address, was to horrifying to contemplate. And after all the years he and Mrs. Hensman had spent training their employer in the proper manner of relating to ones servants.

"You have been very loyal, Digby... both you and Mrs. Hensman. I would hope that you would include Mrs. Hamstead in that loyalty should she become my wife."

For a moment Digby busied himself with rearranging the cream and sugar to a perfectly balanced symmetry with the vase of flowers that gave a splash of colour to the centre of the table. "I am sure we would welcome Mrs. Hamstead as your wife. Mrs. Hensman and I have often thought that you should be married and Mrs. Hamstead is truly a lady and one that we would enjoy serving." The man made his speech in a rush of words.

"Thank you, Digby. That wasn't so difficult was itmaking a personal comment I mean?"

"I'll bring in fresh coffee, shall I?" and Digby was back on his dignity, the perfect servant, rather like the butler in the James Barrie play, "The Admirable Crichton", and Jeremy wondered what latent talents would surface if their roles were reversed, and Digby were in charge, then almost chuckled aloud as he realized that, to all intents and purposes, here in his home, Digby and Mrs. Hensman had been in charge for years.

"I won't have time for another cup this morning, Digby." He rose from the table and laid his napkin by his plate. "Keep your ear to the ground if you would."

"Mrs. Hensman and I will listen very carefully, sir."

Read Chap. 14 in the October "Mirror"

Uncle Thomas's gardening Column is not available this month, as Uncle Thomas is enjoying a well deserved vacation