

### Twenty Years Ago

From the Porcupine Advance Files

Twenty years ago the ratepayers of the town of Timmins voted on a by-law to establish a public library in the town of Timmins. With the success of the library during the years it has been in existence and the remarkable benefit and pleasure it has been to so many here it is difficult to understand the indifference that seemed to obtain here twenty years ago in the matter. As a matter of fact one local man went out twenty years ago and begged ratepayers to turn out and vote, so that the by-law would have some weight. There were only 40 votes cast, only two of this number being against the by-law. About a hundred had to be turned away without a vote, as only property-holders could vote on the by-law. Had the vote been an open one for the people in general, the vote would no doubt have been larger. The council and others remembering the small vote on other similar by-laws thought the vote not bad at all and considered it decisive enough in favour. It was three years later, however, before the library was actually in operation under the by-law.

At the Caledonian Society meeting twenty years ago, J. Grieve was elected to the executive to take the place of Geo. M. Black, who had moved to Toronto. J. Coupar was appointed one of the auditors. W. McHugh gave a remarkably interesting and stirring paper on "The Covenantors." J. Cowan's paper on "My First Impressions of Canada," was notable for its originality and keenness of perception. The vice-president, D. Mackie, presided and there were many impromptu numbers on the programme.

The formal opening of the Timmins Golf Club twenty years ago was on June 4th.

The following reference was made twenty years ago to a recital given by the pupils of H. F. Schroeder. "There was a big crowd at the recital given by Mr. Schroeder's pupils in the Masonic hall on Friday evening last, and all present were delighted with this unusually pleasing event. The event proved so attractive that there was no sufficient seating accommodation for all attending, and a number stood up quite willingly rather than miss what they considered a genuine musical treat. The programme was a long one, but varied and attractive, and there was not a number—out of thirty items on the programme—that did not receive and deserve very hearty appreciation. All the pupils taking part showed a skill and knowledge that reflected the greatest credit on the talent of the pupils and the training of Mr. Schroeder. A particularly popular feature of the evening's programme was the playing of the Junior orchestra which made a decided hit. Previous recitals by Mr. Schroeder and his pupils have been very pleasing and successful, but the event on Friday evening exceeded all in popular favour and appreciation."

The Porcupine Mines League baseball twenty years ago comprised four teams—Hollinger, Timmins, McIntyre and the Dome-South Porcupine. The district league was expected to include teams from the Porcupine camp and teams from Ironopolis Falls and Cochrane.

Twenty years ago at this time of the season there had been several interesting baseball matches held in Timmins.

The Advance twenty years ago had the following paragraph of interest:—"During the time that the Presbyterian choir were preparing for their recent very successful musical programme, Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Williams showed particular attention and interest. A great number of the practises for the event were held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Williams, and all this time the choir members greatly appreciated and have remembered the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Williams in this matter. As one result of the appreciation, the choir on Thursday evening last paid a surprise visit to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Williams, taking a surprise "luncheon" with them ready for a pleasant social evening. There was a particularly large representation of the choir at this event. Mr. and Mrs. Williams during the evening were presented with a beautiful wicker flower stand together with an address of appreciation for the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Williams in giving the use of their home for the practises. Mr. Carl Mueller made the presentation on behalf of the choir. Though completely taken by surprise, Mr. Williams made a fitting reply. The party enjoyed a pleasant social evening after pleasant "business" of the occasion had been disposed of."

The census enumerators for 1921 census started work on June 1st. W. A. Gordon, of Halleybury, was the census commissioner for the District of Temiskaming. The following were

### WATER QUEENS HERE MONDAY



Captivating and capricious—that's a two word description of the lovely artist's models coming to Timmins, Monday, June 16th, with Conklin's huge "Frolic-Land" Midway. The mermaids will display what the peaches will wear at the beaches this summer and just by way of being different, all of them can actually swim. They are pictured above with Alf Phillips, Canadian water star and high diving champion who is not averse to beauties for company. The carnival will play at the old Ball Park all next week, with both matinee and night performances. Wednesday, June 18, will be children's day with all the shows and rides just a nickle to the youngsters.

### Canada and Britain Mourned Death of Sir John A. in 1891

(By Percy Ghent)

It was on the 6th of June, 1891—fifty years ago last Friday—that Sir John A. Macdonald died. Fifty years ago on Wednesday of this week, the 11th of June, he was buried. With his passing, Canada mourned her best-loved statesman; the Empire a sturdy champion and builder. Sir John the statesman adorns the pages of history as the triumphant leader of the founders of a nation, and the far-seeing prophet and advocate of the British Commonwealth of Nations. For Canadians everywhere, "Old John A." the man, has a rarer and a dearer fame. Among the great figures of the Dominion, he won for himself first place in the affections of the people. And the passing of half a century finds him still enthroned there, undisputed and undisturbed.

#### His Personality and Wit

There was magic, surely, in the makeup of a personality which could capture the hearts of a whole nation so completely; for even his political opponents—he had no enemies—admired the man as ardently as they battled the politician. Was it because he was so cheerfully frank about his failings that we have never been able to take them too seriously? One of the essentials of real manhood, according to Kipling, is the ability to walk with kings and keep the common touch; for him, was of greater moment than walking with the mighty.

In wistful mood on one occasion, Sir John declared that he had had no boyhood. He was remembering a long battle with the realities of life that began at fifteen. But was it not an irrepressible youthfulness that made the fight a winning one?

An opponent is on the floor of the

the enumerators for this immediate district:— T. H. Torrance and P. A. Macaulay for the town of Timmins; W. S. Macpherson, for the township of Tisdale; E. H. Hill, for Whitney township; Ralph Halliwell, for Mountjoy and twenty-six adjoining townships; Mr. Hammond, for Jameson and eighteen adjoining townships; Joseph Levine for Langmuir and fourteen adjoining townships.

Following a custom carried through during most of the period of its existence, the Timmins Football Club twenty years ago published a full statement of the finances in connection with the sports day put on by the club on May 24th, 1921. By this plan the public knew exactly where the money came from and where it went to.

Twenty years ago The Advance had a heading that a young man here was fined \$10.00 and costs for not spitting on the sidewalk. Reading the article itself it showed this suggestion was true: The young fellow spit in the face of a young lady he was passing.

### Vivid Description of the Sinking of the Liner Athenia

#### Kirkland Kiwanian Gives Timmins Club a Graphic Account of Tragedy of the Sea.

In Thursday's Advance there was reference to the address given by Kiwanian Blenkinship, of Kirkland Lake, at the inter-club meeting here last week, with the suggestion that further reference would be made in this issue. Mr. and Mrs. Blenkinship were passengers on the ill-fated liner, and Mr. Blenkinship's description of the tragedy was a most interesting and illuminating one and its graphic descriptions, lightened by flashes of wit and humour, impressed the gathering in special fashion.

Kiwanian Blenkinship commenced by telling how he and his wife decided on a trip to Europe in the summer of 1939. They motored from Kirkland Lake to Quebec and seven days later they were in France. He followed this with a most amusing description of what he termed some of his adventures in Paris. On August 22nd, however, he decided to leave France, as he found that feeling there was intense and there were the rumblings before a national, maybe an international, storm. They crossed to England, where things appeared more cool, but there seemed to be a feeling in the air that something was going to happen. In Scotland, there seemed to be still less tension, but beneath the surface there was the ominous belief that danger was in the offing. It was decided then to return to Canada, but Canadian sailings gener-

Nations that was to be. Canada was first ceasing to be a dependency, said Sir John, and assuming the role of an ally of Great Britain. Britain would be the centre, surrounded and sustained by an alliance not only with Canada, but with Australia and all the other units of the Empire. And there would thus be formed an immense confederation of free men; a mighty confederacy and bulwark of civilization.

House vigorously wagging a finger at Macdonald, who is supposed to have pilfered the other party's thunder: "Sir John has stolen the brains of the Opposition," he cries dramatically. On his feet like a shot, the old chief-tain appeals to the Speaker. His face is grave, but there's a twinkle in his eye: "Mr. Speaker," says he in an aggrieved voice, "the honorable gentleman has accused me of petty larceny." There, we submit, is a picture of a big boy having a good time. And it's a safe bet that "the honorable member," either at the time or later, joined in the laughter.

#### Canada Does Not Forget

But if by story and ready retort Macdonald established an oral anthology of anecdotes still in lively circulation, the news of his death created a volume of sorrow in Canada and Britain alike. Thousands of Canadians had taken him so completely into their hearts that his loss was like the loss of an intimate friend. To speak of him as "John A." was more than a popular familiarity, it was a sincere expression of affection. Nor was the official mourning of the Dominion less heartfelt. Parliament was in session when he died, but the House was adjourned for eight days as an expression of national sorrow. A state funeral was ordered. And while his body was lying in state in the Senate chamber, the pulse of a whole nation slackened to a slow and reverential beat. Sermons and speeches everywhere, extolled his worth; while all across the Dominion movements were at once inaugurated to erect monuments to his memory. In a poetic tribute, an English journal expressed the sympathy of Britain, and declared that in the unforgetting hearts of his country would be found his grandest memorial.

Unforgetting hearts! There is the true shrine of fame, and there is the secret of the abiding affection which Canada cherishes for the man who did so much to make her a nation.

#### Queen Sent White Roses

To Kingston came the little Scottish lad when the Battle of Waterloo was the news of the day, and the downfall of Napoleon created as much rejoicing as the doom of Hitler will ere long. To Kingston on that June day of 1891 was taken the body of the greatest Canadian statesman that he beside the grave of his mother in the Cataract cemetery. And on his breast as he rested in the casket was a wreath of white roses: "From Her Majesty Queen Victoria in memory of her faithful and devoted servant."

First of its kind for an overseas statesman, a memorial service in Westminster Abbey told of the sorrow and sympathy of the Motherland on Macdonald's death. In the congregation was his Queen; and many a Briton of prominence who loved the personality and admired the wisdom of the statesman from Canada, was there, too. In the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, shortly afterwards, a tablet was unveiled in his honor. One by one from Halifax to Victoria, memorials of bronze and granite have arisen to affirm his worth. But the "unforgetting hearts" of Canada are the memorials he would have loved most.

#### Sir John as a Prophet

And what do these hearts remember? A kindly, human soul; a great and courageous leader. They remember a prophet and a crusader whose ideals were British ideals; whose aim was a happy and prosperous Canada within a strong and united Empire. These were the fundamentals of his creed and policy, and he believed in them with an unfeigned sincerity. Fifty years have brought to the world and the British Commonwealth much of progress, much of experiment, much of chastening. They have brought nothing bigger, brighter or better than the ideals of Sir John A. Macdonald.

In a speech as far back as 1861 he spoke of the British Commonwealth of

ally were cancelled. It appeared to be impossible to get berths, but eventually someone cancelled their sailings and Mr. and Mrs. Blenkinship secured the two berths thus left vacant. They sailed from an English port the day war was declared. On the boat, the Athenia, there was the usual talk about submarines, but the general belief was that the real danger to be faced was from the air. On Sunday morning, there was church service, that many attended. There was little excitement on board the ship and as night came everything seemed to be normal, peaceful and quiet. About ten o'clock at night the Athenia was struck by a torpedo or mine. Mr. Blenkinship said that as the vessel was hit all lights went out. The feeling was one of being stunned by a blow on the head or the ears. He started down to try and find his wife, but was forced back by the surge of passengers seeking to reach the top deck. Soon Mrs. Blenkinship joined him on deck. There were about twenty life boats for use. Some of these had to be overcrowded as the listing of the boat made it impossible to use all the lifeboats. A vivid description of the waiting for a place in the boats was given, but even here Mr. Blenkinship hid some of the dangers and fears by humorous references. "There was no panic, no roughness. The rule of 'Women and children first' was followed with British courage and chivalry. Some of the women wanted to wait for their husbands, and let other husbands take their places with their wives and children in the lifeboats, but were eventually induced to follow the British procedure of the sea. Mr. Blenkinship waited for the last boat the captain's boat. The captain was the last to leave the ship. "Where's the old man!" asked a passenger on the captain's boat was ready to pull away. "The old man is coming," was the reply from the ladder as the captain made his way down to the last boat. The sea was very rough, and those in the boats suffered very seriously from cold and exposure and had the added torture of seasickness. At about two in the morning—after four hours of horror on the sea in open boats—lights were noticed nearby. They proved to be the lights of a Norwegian ship picking up survivors from the lifeboats. Some had perished from the horrible experience endured and

some were lost in effort to rescue them from the boats. Eventually a clever adaptation of the pulley and tackle variety was used to get the survivors from the lifeboats to the deck of the rescue ship. Twenty-eight out of thirty in one boat were lost when the boat drifted under the propeller of the Norwegian ship. The Norwegian ship took them back to Ireland, and Mr. Blenkinship spoke, in warm terms of the generous and kindly hospitality of the Irish people. At first there seemed to nothing supplied to the survivors but stacks upon stacks of bread and butter. "I never saw so much plain bread and butter in my life before. I don't know where they got it all. Anyway, I never tasted anything so good before," said Mr. Blenkinship. The Irish people went "all out" to entertain their guests, Mr. Blenkinship said. The steamship authorities were equally thoughtful. Clothes were supplied, a whole hotel taken over for the accommodation of the survivors, and the Admiralty added its kindness to that shown by the others.

### Story of Privation in Unoccupied France Now

Some weeks ago The Advance published a letter written to a Timmins lady and smuggled out of unoccupied France. It suggested that conditions in unoccupied France were even worse than in the part directly controlled by the Nazis.

The suggestions in the letter published in The Advance have been fully

borne out by other letters and information coming from unoccupied France. Under date of April 11, 1941, a French pastor's cultured wife (a former missionary in the Southern Pacific) writes Rev. W. P. Roadhouse of Toronto (a censored letter) as follows:

"The winter was so severe—so hard to get coal or wood or fuel—w... went to Nice." Returning to their home, Mme. B. writes: "We find that life is becoming more and more difficult, almost impossible for people who have not a piece of land, some fowl and vegetables, etc., which is our case. A pound of sugar a month, no tea, half a bottle of oil at the most for the month, no bacon, hardly any butter or cheese; difficulties to get some beef or other flesh once a week. We are just near starvation. We have so many millions to pay daily in goods to the Germans and Italians that there is hardly anything left for the French. And there are distressing cases in many places! People who lost everything in a few hours! Thank you for your prayers. We do need them. We are living in a time full of tribulation and darkness. But, thanks be to God, the morning is coming. May the Lord help us to stand."

#### WORRY FOR JOE

What most bothers Joseph Stalin these days is, if Hitler decides to march to the Middle East via Russia, will he be able to take over the necessary steps!—North Bay Nugget.

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## DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE CANADA

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