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By Sir John Willson

My First Political Meeting; The "Old Man and His Ways"; Blake and Thompson in Parliament; When Laurier Became Leader; Office and Patronage, etc., etc.

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TUMBLING INTO THE RIVER

GEN. U. S. GRANT'S ACCIDENT AT
PULLMAN'S ISLAND

In the Early History of the Thousand
Island Territory—A Southern Rom-
ance of the Seventies.

Observer in Clayton, N.Y., On the
St. Lawrence.

How many of my readers have ever heard or read of the time when General Grant tumbled into the river at Pullman's Island, opposite Alexandria Bay? Very few, probably, but several reputable persons who claimed at the time to have been witnesses declared it to be a fact, and, although great efforts were made to suppress knowledge of the humiliating accident to the great commander from going abroad, the news leaked out to be tattered about the country, and to appear in more or less exaggerated form in partisan newspapers that were glad of an opportunity to belittle the general on account of his political faith.

When at the time of the construction of the Thousand Island House at Alexandria Bay, in 1872, Staples, its promoter and builder, made his famous prediction that he would live to see the shores and islands from Alexandria Bay to Clayton the location of a great summer city, the lands on which are now located Thousand Island Westminister, St. Lawrence Parks and Fine View were cow pastures, the only building in sight being farmer's residences. Round Island or Frontenac, was cultivated as a farm, and Murray Hill and Grenell Parks were jungles of underbrush inhabited by every species of ferocious man-eating insects known to this northern climate.

With the completion of the Thousand Island House, the home, Water-town and Ogdensburg railroad, placed a boat on the river, the J. H. Kelly, afterwards renamed Islander, which was burned a few years ago, to run from Cape Vincent, then the only railroad terminal along the river, to Alexandria Bay, the only stop between those ports being Clayton, and passengers from along the river shores on Wellfleet Island from the present location of the river desirous of connecting with Cape Vincent trains, were taken out in row boats to mid-channel where the steamer would be halted, and muscular deck hands would lift the traveler and baggage on board.

The first cottage to be constructed along the river was a small affair owned by the late D. C. Porter, of Clayton, and used by himself and family as a weekend resting place, and that is still standing, being used as a kitchen attached to a cottage valued at ten times the cost of the original, near Mr. Rose's cottage at Frontenac.

During the summer of 1877 the small cottage was occupied by a young couple, but who and from where no one knew, and those dwelling together in this far-off locality neither associated with nor making acquaintance with others was suggestive of somewhat mysterious romance as viewed by sentimental ones, but that if the truth had been known there would probably have been revealed evidence of homesickness, regrets and tearful scenes in plenty. A daughter was born to them there, and not long after the child was adopted for a time by a local family and the couple departed as some who claimed to have learned their secret for Virginia, from whence they had eloped; the woman being the daughter of an old aristocratic former slave owning family, and the man a former northern soldier, with whom she became acquainted during the Civil war and that her maternal relatives had threatened to kill if he should return.

The mother came regularly every summer after with money and fine clothing for the child, departing every time with tears and lamentations, and when the girl was about eight years old she disappeared, no one here seemed to know where, and probably taken away by the mother.

The second cottage to be erected, was on Pullman Island, a moderate sized, boarded up and down, white painted structure, that today would be considered as very ordinary if located at any of the resorts. Mr. Pullman selected the site as a summer resting place, and in 1872 invited General Grant, with whom he had been acquainted from boyhood to become his guest for a time. The news of the arrival of the famous commander at Pullman's Island, home took passage on wings of wind, and a multitude of that familiar type of free-born Americans, who are ever ready to grovel in the dust at the feet of famous and successful men, and just as readily and cheerfully kick them if failures, gathered at the river banks to seek passage on anything floatable to Pullman's Island, which in a few hours was in such a complete state of blockade and siege as to almost make prisoners of the Pullman family and guests.

Everything imaginable in or on which the crowd could take passage across the waters was there; steamboats, sailboats, row boats, sail and rowing scoops, punts and even slab rafts constructed and manned by neighboring farmers' barefoot boys whose legal guardians, joining in the wild rush to extend welcome to the illustrious visitor, had forgotten and left them behind. On the arrival of each new addition to the flotilla of water craft the general arose from his seat on the piazza to silently greet visitors by simply lifting his silk hat, probably longing at the time for a lodge in some vast wilderness away from the gaping curiosity seeking crowds that would be equally entertained if a dog fight were going on in the vicinity.

There were several different versions floating about a few days before of how the general came to take an involuntary bath in the mighty St. Lawrence, the most likely one of which was that one day when the crowds had become thinned out, he walked down to where several row boats were tied to the dock, to place his foot on the gunwale or edge of one, that like a circus jacksaw slipped under and he descended between boat and dock to make a loud splash in the waters. The ladies on the piazza screamed, and the entire masculine population of the island frantically rushed to the rescue of the victim of misplaced confidence, who landed on the dock, with clothing dripping, presenting a sorrowful as-

pect of humiliating defeat that the momentary fright of the witnesses was succeeded by merry peals of laughter in which the general himself joined, and who was warned against a possible repetition of such disaster by Mr. Pullman who said, "General, you have led the greatest armies of modern times to victory, but allow me to caution you to not recklessly again seek open conflict with one of these rowboats, for they are treacherous as untamed army mules, and they are liable to bring defeat to you at any time."



BRIG-GEN. L. W. SHANNON
Who has retired from military service at London, Ont. is at present visiting Kingston friends.

21ST FORMS ASSOCIATION

AT BANQUET HELD IN OTTAWA
TUESDAY NIGHT.

Next Assembly to be Held in King-
ston—All 21st Clubs Are to be Em-
braced in New Organization.

At the re-union of the 21st Battalion (attended by over twenty ex-members of the unit from Kingston) which was held in the Russell Hotel at Ottawa on Tuesday evening an organization to be known as the "21st Battalion Association" was formed and it was decided to hold next year's assembly at Kingston. The date of the event and all arrangements relating to it were placed in the hands of the executive committee of the organization. The association will embrace the existing battalion clubs at Ottawa and Kingston, any clubs hereafter formed, and every officer, non-commissioned officer and man who served with the battalion from its birth in this city in October, 1914, until it was demobilized here in May of this year.


The dinner at Ottawa on Tuesday evening was a distinct success, ex-members of the unit being present from all over Eastern Ontario and as far west as Hamilton. It was a reunion in every sense of the word, for many present had not met since they served together in the ranks of the twenty-first in France and Belgium. Reminiscences were in order, and the talk throughout the excellent repeat dealt not only of tales of trying times for the battalion, but of the happier periods in billets in some of the spots now famous in war history.

Brig-Gen. W. S. Hughes, D.S.O., the first commanding officer of the unit, acted as toastmaster. "The King" was followed by the toast to "Our Fallen Comrades." Major (Rev.) W. E. Kidd, M.C., in proposing it, spoke feelingly of the memory of those comrades whose remains now rest in honored graves in France and Belgium. Those present had the distinction of belonging to a battalion which had been in every push, and which had taken its part so gloriously in all of them. Those who remained in France and Belgium were the ones who in the providence of God had made the great sacrifice and had given them the glory and distinction which had always been associated with the 21st Battalion. Men of all ranks had fallen, from the private to the commanding officer (the late Lieut.-Col. Elmer W. Jones, D.S.O.). The chaplain of the battalion referred to the deep feeling of the surviving members of the unit for the relatives of those of their comrades who did not or will never return from the war zone. So, with the thought of those who had so nobly lived and died, the company responded to the toast by standing for one minute in silence.

General Hughes gave an excellent address in reply to the toast of "The Canadian Corps," proposed by Capt. F. K. Ludlow, M.C. After speaking of the achievements of the corps, the first "C.O." of the twenty-first gave a resume of the exploits and successes of his own unit.

With a view of centralization, it was decided that the executive of the association will, from year to year, be composed of ex-members of the battalion who are located in the city or town where the assembly is to be held for that year, and that a general committee be selected by the executive from districts in the areas from which the Twenty-first was recruited and reinforced.

The invitation to Kingston for the "gathering of the clan" in 1920 was extended by the president of the local club, Lieut.-Col. H. E. Pense, D.S.O., M.C. The only officers elected on Tuesday evening were General Hughes as honorary president and H. E. Pense as secretary-treasurer. The Ottawa club deserves the greatest degree of credit for the faultless arrangements it had made for the event, and a vote of thanks was extended. During the evening an excellent musical programme was rendered by Lanetta's orchestra.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Singing in the Schools.
Kingston, Nov. 13.—(To the Editor): That man who said "Give me the making of a nation's songs, and I care not who makes its laws" is a man of his intelligent judgment; he could see into the heart of things; his was not a superficial insight he looked and could see below the surface.

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KINGSTON EVENTS

25 YEARS AGO.

A. McGuire, of Amherst Island, shipped 300 sheep to the New York market.
J. O. Connell, of Wolfe Island, has a White Leghorn chicken with four legs.
James McGrath says the porpoises are going to carry the country for the dominant house.
Connell Bros. are building a large dredge here to cost \$60,000. P. Haine is preparing the specifications.
A team of horses owned by Mr. Baxter, of Pittsburgh Township, backed a hay rack into the plate glass window of Miller's auction rooms.

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