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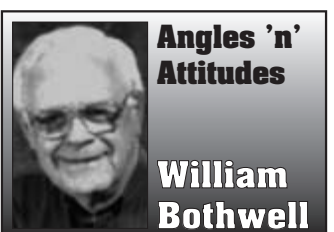


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Your Weekly Chuckle . . .
By KEITH HUNTER

There's nothing like horse-back riding to make a person better off.



Angles 'n' Attitudes
William Bothwell

Dipping Into the Past
Winter storms blocked railways near Collingwood



125 YEARS AGO
Thursday, January 24, 1884

Many of the railway lines have been blocked with snow the last few days. Although no complete blockade has taken place on the Toronto-Grey & Bruce, the trains have been running somewhat irregularly. The Northern RR, northwest of Collingwood has been completely blocked for some time, and the mails have been carried by stage to and from Thornbury and Meaford. A train on the Hamilton and Northwest got stuck near Nottawa and the line was at last accounts still blocked. A despatch says: "The road will probably all be opened this week." From reports published it would seem that the eastern portion of the province has suffered more from snow blockades that we in Dufferin have. Kingston, where snow fell to a depth of four feet on the level, is said to be on the verge of a fuel famine.

100 YEARS AGO
Thursday, January 21, 1909

A recount in the Orangeville election before Judge McCarthy has confirmed Dr. W. H. Riddell in his seat as Reeve, by a majority of two votes.

A change is being made in the usual routine of Sunday services at St. Paul's church, Shelburne, Sunday next. A children's service will be held at 3 p.m. when the Sunday School boys' choir will take charge of the musical portion of the service. The 7 p.m. service will be held as usual. St. Thomas Church, Primrose, will have service at 11 a.m. that day. On January 25, St. Paul's Day, an anniversary service is to be held at St. Paul's at 7 p.m., when Ven. Archdeacon McKenzie of Brantford will be guest preacher and other clergy are expected.

The citizens of Priceville are up in arms against the mail service they are getting since the CPR took the contract of carrying the mail. It is said that mail for Priceville from Durham is taken through to Toronto on the evening train and returned the next day.

Rev. Kenneth Morrow, the newly appointed pastor of St. Peter's R.C. Church, Orangeville, assumed charge last week. Father Morrow has been connected with St. Michael's Cathedral, Toronto, prior to his coming to Orangeville. He is a young man and a native of Tottenham.

Continuation School Inspector R. H. Cowley and High School Inspector William Houston spent Monday and Tuesday inspecting Shelburne School. They are of the opinion that in view of the attendance, the school board would be justified in engaging a third teacher.

The inspectors later met with the board and said they were highly pleased with the work being done and the school's efficiency. They said another teacher was necessary in order to give the time required to the different subjects on the program. The extra grants that a third teacher would bring would materially assist in providing the salary. They also recommended creation of a school garden.

75 YEARS AGO
Wednesday, January 25, 1934

At the opening of the January session of Dufferin County Council at the Court House, Orangeville, on Tuesday afternoon, W. E. Tuttle, reeve of East Luther Township, was elected warden for 1934. Three names were on the ballot, the others being reeves Reginald Hoare of Orangeville and T. F. Brown of Shelburne. Reeve Brown withdrew his name after the second ballot, leaving Messrs. Tuttle and Hoare to battle it out. The final result was Tuttle 8, Hoare 6.

John Reburn, of Whitfield, will preside over the destinies of Shelburne fair this year as President of the Dufferin Central Agricultural Society, succeeding George Foster, of Honeywood.

CPR passenger trains have been so well on time this winter that it was quite out of the ordinary when the 8:18 from Toronto last Wednesday night did not reach Shelburne until nearly 11:30. A break in the engine somewhere down the line was blamed for the delay.

Where there once was light, darkness now reigns in Lion's Head. Lion's Head council is economizing, with the result that the village no longer has any street lights. The fact that less than a decade ago there were no street lights does not help and residents are firm in their conviction that having the light for a few years only makes it worse when there are none again. However, these are hard times and economy is the thing.

50 YEARS AGO
Wednesday, January 21, 1959

Fifty more donors are needed for a Red Cross Blood Clinic to be held in Orangeville Thursday of next week at the Legion Hall, the quota required being 150 donors. Only two clinics will be held in this area each year.

25 YEARS AGO
Wednesday, January 25, 1984

Edelbrock Bros., of Orangeville, hope to begin construction on a major apartment project in the spring. The five-storey building will front on Lawrence Avenue.

Quartoseptcentennial

Or should that be demiseiseptcentennial? There is a difference of opinion as to what a 175th anniversary should be called. Whatever! It is that many years since the colonial settlement of York, Upper Canada, was incorporated as the City of Toronto in 1834. Like it or not, the present metropolis is our political, commercial, cultural and social magnet.

Sir Guy Carleton, co-founder of York with Lieutenant Colonel (never Lord) John Graves Simcoe, was created Baron Dorchester in 1786 and made Governor of British North America. His base was Quebec City. The first intention was that what is now southern Ontario would form the western counties of the Province of Quebec. Because of an influx of English-speaking people from the separatist "states of America" it was decided to create two provinces, Lower and Upper Canada. The terms meant 'lower down' or 'higher up' the St. Lawrence waterway.

Where should the administrative centre of Upper Canada and the seat of Col. Simcoe, the lieutenant governor, be established? Kingston was one choice and Newark (later Niagara-on-the-Lake) a United Empire Loyalist town, another. Simcoe liked the idea of placing the capital at the garrison village of London which in Canada, as 'back home', was on a River Thames. But more important considerations intervened.

In 1787 the Toronto Purchase had been concluded with the Mississauga Amerindians who lived in the region. It was roughly halfway by land between Kingston and Niagara. There was a landlocked harbour between two rivers. A narrow, curved isthmus created a natural breakwater for ship building and commerce.

There was another advantage. A fortified French trading post had stood just below the present Dufferin Gate to the C.N.E. North of it lay the Portage de Toronto (the aboriginal name meaning a 'meeting place') over which lay the route to Lac Toronto (now Lake Simcoe) and the Upper Lakes. After the rebellion of the old colonies to the south, goods and military material could move that way at a distance from the narrow waters lying dangerously close to the continuing republican menace.

Governor Simcoe had convened the first legislature of Upper Canada at Newark in July, 1792. In August of the following year a 21-gun salute reverberated over Lake Ontario to initiate the new capital. The Duke of York's

recent victory over Napoleon in Holland suggested the renaming of the place from the "outlandish" Toronto to the more civilised York, popular with British Americans. The Holland River which led from the old portage to open water echoes the same event.

The site of the new town between rivers that also received Yorkshire names was drained, below a northerly rise of land, by several creeks. Above the lakeshore marshes was a dense forest of trees that were from 500 to 1,000 years old. On the 'forest hill' a few miles north of York they stood so tall and closely together that in leaf they allowed little sun to reach the ground below. They provided ample material for the construction of housing and other buildings such as the Parliament house and the town church (St James) on the streets that still bear those names. At right angles to Church Street was Court Street, site of the jail. The market square was across from the church and the Esplanade was a promenade along the old shoreline.

King and Queen Streets were the principal thoroughfares. The latter had for a time been known as Lot Street because, being the town's northern boundary, the posh residences built along its north side stood on multi-acre lots backing onto the wooded tract beyond.

Two highways were cut through the bush, one south-north and the other to carry the Kingston road westward. They would facilitate military movement and settlement. One was named for Sir George Yonge, the Colonial Secretary. The other followed an old Indian trail and commemorates Henry Dundas, the Viscount Melville, British Secretary of State for War.

The first chapter in Old York's history ended with the War of 1812-14. The town's scattered houses, shops, taverns and government buildings were for a time held by a hostile naval force of 1600 men led by General Henry Dearborn which landed in April 1813. The attack on Fort York west of the town coincided with an explosion of the powder magazine which killed General Zebulon Pike and 200 other invaders.

In retaliation Dearborn ordered the burning of the town's public buildings.

John Strachan, a young Aberdonian, rector of the church and later a bishop, confronted Dearborn, demanded whether he were a Yankee terrorist or a gentleman soldier and thus spared the church and private property. Nevertheless, in the ongoing insanity of war, a British commando force later landed in Washington and burned President Madison's executive mansion in reparation for the burning of York. The restored building is the core of the White House into which Mr Obama moved this week. One may hope that the U.S.A. has now substituted interdependence for its vaunted independence from the rest of the free world. Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are it partners, not its minions, in the world of the future.

175 years ago York, with a population approaching 10,000 had outgrown the mud, the swamp fever and the aversion to its aboriginal name. The City of Toronto was incorporated. Another Scot, William Lyon Mackenzie, was its first mayor. The Revd Henry Scadding published *Toronto of Old* in 1873 and with G. Mercer Adam wrote *Toronto Past and Present* (1884). Adam's own 1891 *Toronto Old and New* was reprinted by Coles in 1972.

Another book of interest, *Toronto in 1810*, by Eric W. Hounson, was published in 1970. In 1977 F.R. Benchem's *The Yonge Street Story, 1793-1860* appeared. The first three chapters of the classic Mono Township novel, *The Yellow Briar*, are a fictional recreation of life in Muddy York. Austin Seaton Thompson wrote Spadina: *A Story of Old Toronto* (1976) and *Jarvis Street* (1980).

Many residents of the Headwaters Region, which is to Toronto what Connecticut is to New York or Sussex to London, are natives of, or have continuing interests in, 'the City'. Its history, therefore, is part of our own.

'To cut or not to cut' is the question

Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff is in the midst of a coast-to-coast pre-budget jaunt which he describes as a "listening" tour. Perhaps he should start by listening to himself. That way, he could be as confused as the rest of us are about just, exactly, where he stands on tax cuts for middle income Canadians.

On the weekend, Ignatieff opened a two-day party caucus meeting in Ottawa by telling his party that Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Jan. 27 budget should stay away from tax cutting and focus instead of what he described as "three simple tests that it must pass" or the Liberals will vote it down.

"Will it protect the most vulnerable? Will it save jobs? And most important of all, will it create the jobs of tomorrow?" Ignatieff said.

Seems clear enough. But then, earlier this month, Ignatieff spoke to the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, at the first of his planned series of town hall meetings, and said that if he became prime minister, his priorities for the first 100 days would be fast stimulus spending, reforms to speed up access to employment insurance and - wait for it - tax cuts for low-and-middle-income Canadians.

"We may be looking at tax cuts very quickly, targeted at medium- and low-income Canadians, to boost their purchasing power," he said, responding to a question about Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's promise to put some form of tax cuts in the budget to spur retail and other spending to get the economy moving again.

So which is it? Or, as Shakespeare might have put it, "To cut or not to cut, that is the question."

Then, in a television interview after his Halifax speech, Ignatieff went on to say that he did not want to write a budget in a media scrum, "but I think it's important to give tax relief of a permanent kind, providing we don't increase our structural deficit problem. But I have said clearly I'm in favor of permanent tax cuts for low income Canadians, to increase their purchasing power permanently."

Then in addition, there is the question of whether there is some other stimulus measures that are one time in nature, but I want to make clear that the tax cuts I was talking about then in that answer I envision as permanent."

There, have you got that now? It's easy really. On the one hand, he's in favor of tax cuts because they would act as an economic stimulus. On the other hand, he's opposed to tax cuts, and will bring down the Tory government if it dares to include them in the upcoming budget.

You may find the two arguments contradictory, but hey, that's what being a successful Liberal leader is all about.

Remember, this is the same man who publicly supported the U.S. use of torture in interrogating prisoners in its' war on terror. And the same man who attacked the U.S. for using torture.

It's the same man who condemned Israel for "war crimes" in the aftermath of the 2006 Lebanon war - and who attacked Israel in one of his books for its "unjust occupation and illegal settlements" - only to turn around almost instantly, in the face of strong criticism, to declare that Israel had every right to defend herself against the terrorists.

This explains, at least in part, why even in the midst of the current economic turmoil - and with NDP Leader Jack Layton actually salivating to concoct a governing coalition with Ignatieff and separatist Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe - the latest Toronto Star/Angus Reid survey puts the Tories a full nine points ahead - bordering on majority territory - of the Liberals, with the NDP trailing well back. Indeed, in Ontario, the Tories were running at 42 per cent in decided voting intentions, up nearly five per cent from the election.

And in another result from that poll, only 20 per cent of respondents - compared to 34 per cent for Harper - felt that Ignatieff could manage the economy effectively, perhaps because they - like Ignatieff himself - can't really figure out where he stands on the major issues.

There is no doubt that the Harper budget will contain tons of new government spending - alas - which will make it difficult for the Liberals to precipitate another political crisis.

But it's equally as certain that the Tories will offer some tax cuts to beleaguered Canadian taxpayers, and if Ignatieff really thinks he could win an election by fighting against tax relief well, good luck on that one.



National Affairs
Claire Hoy

Where have all the great orators gone?

Orators may lament they have no orators as spellbinding as Barack Obama, but they once had and aren't making them any more.

Just listen to Elmer Sopha, a Liberal MPP in the 1960s, describe the often pointless debates and routines that take up too much of the legislature's time, then and now:

"One thing that bothers me is the pretence we engage in that is not worthy of reasonable adults - the sham, artificiality, mythology, fiction, trappings and antiques we surround ourselves with."

"It separates us by a wide gulf from the people and creates a lack of relevance, and I am desperately afraid the gulf will ever widen, so advanced opinion or enlightened thought in the electorate will get too far ahead of its elected representatives."

Or Sopha's strictures on the opening of legislature sessions, describing how the lieutenant governor and his spouse "risked pneumonia in an open horse-drawn carriage, covered only by a buffalo blanket, while cabinet ministers stayed in their warm offices and peeked from behind curtains."

"When they finally got here, accompanied by enough military to settle the problem in Vietnam, the lieutenant governor finally proceeded to read the speech from the throne with all the eloquence of a chloroform pad, while former premier Leslie Frost fell asleep - let us get rid of all this sham."

Lieutenant governors no longer ride in horse-drawn carriages, but still read the speech written by the premier and his political advisers.

Hear Stephen Lewis, when New Democratic Party leader, contributing to a debate on national unity: "This country has majesty and vitality to compare with any and holds together on a bedrock of two founding cultures, supplemented by those who already were here and so many additional peoples of so many origins, weaving a lattice-work of artistry, science, language, music, stability and joie de vivre. As long as I have energy and voice I shall strive to keep our Canada together."

When Lewis retired, he took a more charitable view of the legislature that still was apt, saying it

"has moments of disintegration, when the democratic process seems to have been forged at the anvil of anarchy and our mellifluous and lovely English language is reduced to guttural snapping, and I sometimes had to slide a nitroglycerin tablet over to a colleague to reduce his palpitations under the provocation."

"But this motley rabble sometimes has been followed by splendid debate and the strength of the parliamentary system reasserted. I am proud to have been a part of that and never doubted for a moment politics can be a profoundly noble profession."

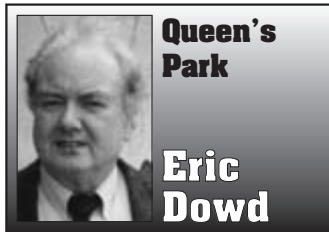
Bob Rae, when NDP premier and urging the Constitution be changed to strengthen national unity, said, "All of history teaches, and recent world events confirm, that states are fragile and have to be nurtured and renewed and sometimes changed significantly if they are to adapt and survive and prosper. We must never stop adapting to new ideas, new social forces and new economic conditions."

Rae has since shown his ability to adapt by becoming a Liberal MP and future cabinet minister, if his federal party gets elected.

The legislature's last great orator was Liberal Sean Conway, who suggested the circuitous speaking of Progressive Conservative premier William Davis was "like the route of the old Colonial Railway, which twisted and turned, chugged up hill and down dale and meandered through the remotest sidings before eventually reaching its destination."

Why does the legislature no longer have great orators? Reasons include most parents permitting their children to watch TV, where language often is banal, rather than encouraging them to read. Families are less prone to sit and talk together. Schools teach students the rudiments of language, but do not inspire them to relish it.

Newspapers report the facts they think matter and oratory only in rare cases where it influences events, such as Obama's, and above all, TV wants politicians to speak in 10-second clips. None of this nurtures great oratory.



Queen's Park
Eric Dowd

Land of Opportunity

We are a unique nation, continent wide with a vast northern expanse. I was asked as a southerner how we should develop northern Ontario. My career has taken me to northern Ontario and to many countries in the world. What do I see as being unique here? Food for thought.

Canada is huge, the world's second largest nation with a low population. We have a great potential for growth, starting at 3 people per square km. (Bartholomew, Miniworld Factfile 1993) most within a hundred miles of the U. S. border, a sparse population in a highly over-populated world.

Canada is a forested nation. We have harvested vast forest resources but Mother Nature is valiantly trying to re-clothe the harvested ecosystems. The new forest hasn't the same potential for extraction of paper and 2 x 4s as when we found it. Nevertheless, it remains 'green'. Photosynthesis ensures the storage of carbon and production of oxygen. We are major contributors to the world's atmosphere.

Green has a wide variety of meanings. The most practical interpretation is energy. The world faces a crisis as fossil fuel reaches a point of no return. Stored carbon is running out. There is a frantic search for alternatives in the field of renewable energy. Trees are a source of available carbon, of greater value as a future fuel than its current use for paper and lumber.

A fascinating development is the conversion of wood energy to biofuel. We have the Scandinavian experience using forest carbon for central heating and as electrical cogeneration. The first is a starting point for northern Canada. As yet we have no example of the use of cogeneration anywhere in Canada. At the same time companies are developing biofuel from waste wood, a transportation fuel for the future. Ethanol from wastes for farm use provides another direct benefit, a future basis for agricultural production as technology develops and costs are reduced.

Canada is a reservoir. We own a very high proportion of the world's available supply of fresh water. Obviously the various attributes interconnect. Forest areas provide a source of ground water, evidenced by the power of Niagara Falls. This is a drop in the bucket (pun intended) compared to the multiplicity of

rivers flowing into the Great Lakes system which have potential benefit as sources of energy. These again are products of the forests.

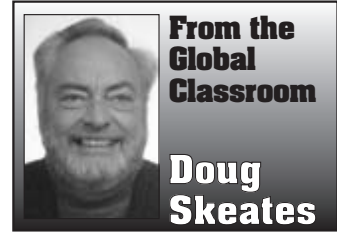
We have marginally explored the potential for energy from natural phenomenon such as wind and sun, controversial in more settled communities. Both have substantial possibility for relatively unpopulated regions. Industry needs energy and people.

Providing energy adjacent to our major water systems would be a precursor to developing manufacturing in northern Canada, which in turn would encourage migration to less populated regions of the country. Energy plantations would add to the equation.

Agriculture is a luxury land use in this context. Canadian agricultural development has concentrated on class 1 land, ignoring the potential of such northern areas as Ontario's clay belts north to Kirkland Lake and westerly from Cochrane to Hearst, Manitoulin Island, Sault Ste. Marie, Thunder Bay and Fort Frances. The key feature of global warming has been the impact on food production with the north being of increasing significance as productivity improves.

The above pertain to commercial exploitation without touching on the potential contribution of cultural diversity. Our native people represent a vast storehouse of traditional knowledge, and Canada as a young country has a wide variety of populations from around the world, each with a variety of skills. People from across the world could find a comfort zone in this vast land.

In a day and age when people are searching for new experiences, one should not overlook what a land of winter snow and summer recreation can offer. Putting it all together, Canada has a glorious future on the world stage which is struggling to find a place for 8 or 9 billion people to live and play. Canada and especially northern Canada, is the land of the future.



From the Global Classroom
Doug Skeates

Knocking back egg nog

Cheers, everyone! I am just embarking on my second year without the lubricating accompaniment of alcohol - and frankly it hasn't been all that tough. Oh, booze and I were a hot item for years, but there comes a time in a lot of relationships when one of you looks across the pillow or the dance floor - or the rim of a wineglass - and realizes: 'You know what? This ain't fun anymore'.

So far, not drinking has been strictly a losing proposition for me. I lost twenty-five pounds, the blear in my eye, the fog in my brain and my visceral hatred for alarm clocks.

Pretty smooth sailing - but there is one time of year that's a bit sticky for non-drinkers. It's the one we just passed through - Christmas/New Years. Chanukah. Yuletide. Kwanzaa - whatever you call it, it slides through all of our lives tumultuously and inexorably, gliding on a veritable Niagara of booze.

Booze is everywhere and virtually everybody drinks at that time of year. Heck, my abstemious Aunt Beulah has her annual bumper of sherry every New Year's Eve while we crowd around the TV to see if Times Square technicians can jump start Dick Clark one more time. There's even a dedicated libation for the season. Does anyone drink rum and egg nog at the cottage? On a picnic? After the Grey Cup parade? Of course not. You drink rum and egg nog in the stretch around Christmas and then you never hear of it until the next Christmas rolls around.

And people want you to drink the rum and egg nog. They expect it. Refusing rum and egg nog is kind of like repudiating Dickens or blaspheming Santa. It's not done.

"HOW DO YOU WANT YOUR EGG NOG, BUDDY - LITTLE NUTMEG? HOW ABOUT A CINNAMON STICK IN THERE?"

"Ah, no...just the egg nog please and ah...no rum."

"NO RUM??? WHADDYA MEAN, NO RUM!"

This year though, resisting the rum and egg nog wasn't much of a challenge because I was too busy

during most of the holidays. Busy with the snow dump. Then busy with the snow dump on the snow dump. And the power outages. And the dead telephone. And the downed Internet. And the non-delivery of newspapers and mail for five days. And the rain that followed the snow dumps. And the ice build-up in the eaves troughs that followed that. I've never actually seen rain come directly through the ceiling before.

What with being snowed in, iced over and rained on, dodging rum-laced egg nog at seasonal shindigs was the least of my problems.

Ah, but it was all worth it on Christmas morn, which dawned bright and dry. I lay in my bed thinking peaceful thoughts, listening to the dogs on the floor snoring softly. As Christmases go, it wasn't so bad, I thought. Only five, maybe six near-disasters. But that's over now, and here I am, with the sun shining through the window, the birds twittering in the cedars... and with just the vaguest, slightly unpleasant aftertaste of - what is that? Oh, yes - eggnog - in my mouth.

Which is when I realized that I had mere seconds to get to the bathroom before I would become violently, spectacularly ill. In Technicolor.

Let us draw the curtain of propriety on the rest of that particular Yuletide surprise. I will just say that not only was I sick, I was ricocheting-off-the-walls dizzy. Too dizzy even to rise from my place of worship at the porcelain altar for oh, forty minutes or so. So I lay on the tiles and pulled the bathmat around my shoulders.

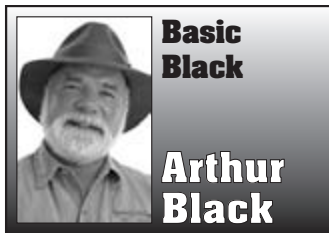
I was actually feeling much better by the time the doctor arrived a few hours later. "Sounds like food poisoning," she said. "What did you have last night?"

"Well, egg nog," I said.

"Ah hah!" she pounced, making a six-gun with her thumb and forefinger and metaphorically popping me between the eyes. "Did you have it with rum?"

No, I said. Just egg nog.

"Too bad," said the doctor. "Rum would have killed the bacteria."



Basic Black
Arthur Black