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ISSUE : [Issue 63](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1993/6/1

made the crossing. When I viewed the "bad spot" the next morning I had another attack of nerves. Ugh! It still makes me nervous to think about it. But I admit my weakness. I have no head for high places and cannot cross an ordinary railway trestle without my stomach turning inside out. And so the heroes of the crossing were young McDonald and the sensible heavy stable horse of Johnny Owsen-bic. In those days I had much experience with livery stable horses and still have kindly memories of many that I have driven. They had courage, honesty and intelligence to a remarkable degree. I remember driving one dark, stormy night down in Lunenburg County with a big grey livery stable horse. It was wet snow that blinded me, and one would think blinded the horse. There was a large leather apron with the rig and in this were two slots to place the reins through. I was twelve miles from my destination when the storm struck and the snow was just blinding. I placed the reins through the holes, held on with my head and hands under the robe, and let the horse go as he pleased. There were various turns and crossroads on this highway but I rode on for a couple of hours, trusting to the animal that kept going at a good smart pace. Here and there from the motion of the wagon I could tell that he was making a turn or going over a bridge or railway crossing. After a time he halted and I was astonished to discover that he had carried me right to the door of his own stable. It must have been instinct that guided him home, for nothing having could see through that thick snow. On another occasion, in a neighboring province, I used to drive a little mare named "Lady," and she was just that, a perfect lady. I was always glad to see her and chose her when I was driving in that section • and she seemed pleased to see me. I used to 233 Esplanade • 562-7646 | An Historic Setting Overlooking the Harbour feed her sugar at the country grocery stores and I got the impression that she used to stop at these stores, expecting a treat. On another dark but stormy night I was driving in a section where the road was level and in good condition. Suddenly Lady halted and refused to go further, even when I touched her with the whip. This was very puzzling and, alighting from the rig, I went to her head and began to lead her by the bridle. Fifty feet from where she halted I learned the cause. There was a big tree across the road and Lady, not being a steeplechaser, did not attempt to jump. Certainly she could not see it. It was at a curve of the road and the night was very dark. A natural instinct, again, I presume. But as is the weakness of many old men, I am staying from the telling of my tale. MY SLEIGH, OF COURSE, had been left up on the mountain on the other side of the "bad place," so when parting from McDonald I led the horse by the bridle down the mountain and into the valley below. My destination was the home of Mr. Sandy Beaton. I had met Mr. Beaton on another occasion at the hotel in Mabou. We had shared a wee drop of Scotch and I had been urged to visit at his home at the first or any opportunity, and as I expected, I was warmly received. "Where did you come from, Fraser, man?" Mr. Beaton wanted to know. He was puzzled to see me, leading a harnessed horse with no vehicle behind him and in the dead of night. "Down over



the mountain," I replied. Now that the danger seemed past I was inclined to be a Uttie proud of my experience. "And is tiiat the way you ti-avel now • 'leading an animal with no sleigh or wagon?" "I left the sleigh up on the mountain." And then I proceeded to give some detail of my adventure. Coming to the defense of his mountain and tiie locality in general, Mr. Beaton pooh-poohed tiie idea tiiat tiere was any danger m crossing the Ben Verick. "I go over it to Inveness town most every weekend," he added. Sandy took care of my faitiifiil horse and the ladies prepared a good supper, after which there was a general demand that I "tell all tiie news." I have always found people in the rural districts very hospitable and easy to entertain. Any story or joke that would seem like a "thrice-told tale" in the town or city, would go over big among tiiese good people • tiie reason prob? ably being tiiat, busy witii the endless work of a farm, tiiey had Uttie time to read the papers or listen to the radio. But mine host, loyal to his homeland. WE'RE PROUD TO SHARE...

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