

Page 80 - Sheriff James C. MacKillop Remembers the Hanging of Emmett Sloane ISSUE : <u>Issue 65</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1994/1/1

restaurant. So I told him about the last supper, that he could order anything. I got my pencil and sheet of paper, and he wrote out what he wanted. So I got a taxi and I went to the restaurant and ordered the meal. I passed them this sheet of paper and I said, "This is what I want." And I came back for it, went up with it, to his cell, and I passed the tray in. At that time there were two guards on. The last two weeks they had two guards to a shift, which meant 4--4 all told. (They were just temporary guards, were they, hired for Sloane?) Just for Sloane. So I passed the tray into him, and I sat down. I sat down in the cell with him. And he had--there was even, the last dish he had was ice cream. He ate everything that was on the tray. I'm telling you, it was a lovely story. And then he even picked the crumbs up and ate them. And he passed me the tray. "Well, Jim," he said, "she was a good one." And the night he was hanged, I topk his suit of clothes up for him--the suit he had when he was arrested--stockings, shirt, and everything, when he got dressed. And Mac? Kay, the warden of the jail then, came up with me, and he said, "Emmett," he said, "you have to get dressed." "Oh, yes," he said, "Hughie, we're going to the show." "Yeah, we're going to the show," MacKay said. But he said, "There's your clothes, now, you get dressed." So, we went back to the office. And the guards were on duty, two of them. And I went back up an hour later. He was sitting down, humming a little song to himself. And I went in. "Emmett," I said, "you didn't dress." "Aw, gosh, no," he said, "I forgot." "Well," I said, "come on and get dressed." He did. So, I went back to the office. And about an hour before they hanged him, I went back in the cell. Now I knew this was my last trip. I wouldn't see him any more alive. So I walked in the cell, and I said, "You're all dressed up." "Yes," he said, "all ready," he said, "Jimmy, all ready." So. "Well," I said, "I'll see you later." And I started to walk out, and I locked the door. And I started to go out the other door--that would be locked be? hind me. He said, "Come here, Jimmy, come here." I went back in. "Come on in here." I went in. He looked at me. He said, "You're not going to see me alive any more." I said, "I am." "No," he said, "this is the last trip you're going to make up here. I know it, Jimmy, this is the last trip." And he threw his arms around me, and he cried on my shoulder. And of course, I started to cry, too. In a couple of minutes I said, "Emmett, snap out of it. Snap out of it." "Oh, hell," he said, "what's wrong with me?" And he did. He stopped crying. "Now," I said, "Emmett, you're right. I'm not going to see you any more." And we shook hands. He said, "Jim? my, if it wasn't for you, I don't know how I could have done my time." He said, "You were just a wonderful man to me." We shook hands, and I walked out. That's the last time I saw him. BOOKS ARE A GREAT GIFT ANY TIME OF THE YEAR Cape Breton Books First-Rate Literature A Wide Range of Books from Popular to Scholarly "THE DOWNTOWN BOOKSTORE" 361 Charlotte St. SYDNEY B1P1E1 (902) 539-8551 and Lewis Parker Cards: PORTRAIT OF CAPE BRETON HISTORY (Did you often make friends with con? demned prisoners like that, or was this unusual?) Well, this was the first hanging I ever witnessed.... I had fellows in for murders. Some of them were acquitted and some were sentenced to a long term in peniten? tiary. This was



the first hanging. (I see. And clearly, you were not afraid of him. You were not afraid of Sloane.) Oh, no. In those days I wasn't afraid of anybody. I was a wow VAN f 00 Licensed Restaurant A Warm Weicome OPEN DAILY 11 A.M. to 1 A.M. FRI. and SAT. till 2 A.M. SUN. till MIDNIGHT Major Credit Cards Accepted Gift Certificates * Ample Parking Oriental and Canadian Cuisine in a relaxed and elegant dining atmosphere Daily Luncheon Specials Banquet Facilities Available Take Out Orders Delivered Excellent Service and Fine Food 460 Grand Lake Rd,, Sydney 562-0088 or 539-2825