

# C.I.H.S BULLETIN

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN IMMIGRATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at 5:30 PM on October 26, 2000 in the Jean Edmonds Tower at the corner of Laurier and Kent Streets in Ottawa. Members should enter through the Laurier Street entrance. This door will be locked at 6:00 PM so try to be on time.

## FROM THE EDITOR

It is becoming more and more difficult to find material for the Bulletin and I encourage everyone to consider submitting something for inclusion. Besides personal experiences, we can use letters, short anecdotes, book reviews and so on.

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This issue we have two special items: the MEMORIES of Charles Dagg and an appreciation of the late J.R. (Robbie) Robillard by his long-time friend Roger St. Vincent.

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## MEMORIES

by

C.J.(Charlie) Dagg, Enforcement Officer,  
1946 - 1979

Having reached my 80th birthday in 1999, I felt that it was high time for me to take my pen in hand and record some of the many memories of my 35 years service in the Enforcement area at Immigration Headquarters in Ottawa.

In August 1945 I returned to Canada after 68 months' uninterrupted service overseas as an artillery man in the Canadian Army. I enlisted in the army as a gunner in September 1939, and was discharged as a Lieutenant in September, 1945, after having seen action in the Mediterranean and North West Europe theaters of operations. Incidentally, I was one of a limited number of Canadians to get to France in 1940 - an in again, out again operation.

After a short period of employment with the rapidly shrinking Department of National Defence, I applied for a position with the Immigration Branch, Department of Mines and Resources in Ottawa. Following a two hour interview with Ian Stirling of Personnel, I was accepted. I must admit that most of the interview was spent discussing our experiences with the Canadian Forces in the Mediterranean as part of the famous British 81 Army.

I was assigned to work in the Deportation Section, a part of the Admissions Division at Immigration Headquarters in Ottawa. Little did I know that for the next 35 years I would be

involved in Enforcement work My supervisor was Foster Smith, an old soldier, and a veteran of the first World war. A.L.Jolliffe was Director of Immigration and C.E.S. Smith was Chief of Admissions. Leona O'Connor and Len Bryant were the other members of the Section. At that time, the Immigration Branch was housed in the old Normal School, a Teacher's College located at the corner of Elgin and Lisgar Streets. The building was quite old and badly in need of repairs. It was infested with rats and periodically a big one would race across the office floor. The Staff had names for many of them, exciting to say the least.

In those days we worked from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm with an hour and a half off for lunch. We also worked Saturday morning from 9:00:am to 1:00 pm. During the Summer months we finished working at 4:00 pm. On paydays, (monthly), we were allowed an extra hour and a half to cash our cheques, as well as a half a day to attend the Ottawa Exhibition and another afternoon in December to do our Xmas shopping - real cosy arrangement - no Union either. About two years later, we moved to the old Woods Building, which we shared with the Citizenship and Indian Affairs Branches. At that time, we were still part of the Department of Mines and Resources.

During my early years with the Immigration Branch I was privileged to work with and learn from a number of experienced old timers, people like A.L.Jolliffe, C.E.S.(Stan) Smith, Paul Baldwin, J.D.(Jack) McFarlane, Hugh Grant, Edith and Leona O'Connor, Ellis Butler, Bill Morgan, Jessie Reid, Florence Morgan, to name a few. Latterly I worked with many others including Wally Baskerville, Gene Beasley, Don Reid, Don Sloan, Jim Cross, Kim Abbott, Fenton Crossman, Jack Manion, Joe Bissett, Lou Lefaive, Robby Robillard., Al Gonnar, Joe Swales, Harry Cunliffe, Ken Davidson. There were many others. Probably

many of these names are unknown to today's Immigration Staff, but all of them were dedicated officers who lived and breathed immigration. In their own way, each one had a direct impact on the development, operation and activities of the Immigration Branch over the years.

In 1958 Foster Smith was appointed Registrar of Appeals for the newly constituted Immigration

Appeal Board and I replaced him as Head of the Deportation Section. These were exciting and heady times because in those days we actually deported many undesirable persons. We lost very few people who were under Order of Deportation. Over the years, a great number of exceptionally good officers worked with me in the Deportation Section. People like Tom Gill, Terry Moses, @old Patton, Peter Murray, Dalt Collins, Harry Donner, Tom Hierlihy, Marge McFarlane, Freda Greenlees, Bill Bernhardt, Art Vass, Don Pelton, D'Arcy Murphy, Bill Marks, are a few that come to mind. Many of these people later advanced to higher level positions in the Department.

In those days, before " decentralization" of authority and decision making to the Regions, most deportation cases were really hot issues in Ottawa, particularly when there was so much Ministerial involvement. These cases made it necessary to maintain extremely close liaison with field officers. As a result, I developed a close and personal relationship with many Immigration Officers across Canada. These included such persons as Ray Corbett, Frank Wragg and Claire Scatchard in the Pacific Region, Jack McLeod, John Harder and Ted Swan in Winnipeg, George Jeffs, Len Goddard and Ian Stirling in Toronto, Bob Lefevbre and John St.Onge in Montreal, Mac McKinnon and Bill Marks in Halifax and Fred Bragg in St. Johns, Nfld. There were a lot of others whose

names escape me. I often wonder how many of them are still with us today.

During the years I was with Immigration, we had our fair share of characters working in the Branch. One who readily comes to mind I will call Ray. He has been dead for many years. After he retired, as a matter of interest someone checked the Sick Leave and Special Leave Forms he had submitted while working in the Branch. It was found that over the years Ray had been granted time off to have 137 teeth extracted as well as to attend the funerals of 57 aunts and uncles and 13 grandparents. On another occasion, after a night's celebrating, he came to work with his gray hair dyed a shiny black, cut in an Elvis Presley style, complete with long black sideburns. We didn't recognize him.

Another old timer, Dave H., was required by his job to do a lot of traveling by train. Dave was the type of person who seemed to invite being made the butt of practical jokes. People were constantly hiding things like ladies lingerie, dead fish etc. in his suitcase. On one occasion in Halifax -someone hid two heavy cannon balls (from the Citadel I think) in his case. Poor Dave lugged them all the way back to Ottawa wondering all the way why his suitcase was so heavy. I know this story to be true as along the way I inherited the cannon balls and they have graced the landing in my condominium for some time now.

I wonder how many of the present staff in the Branch are aware that the famous old time hockey star of the Twenties, Fred "Cyclone" Taylor, was the Pacific District Superintendent of Immigration in Vancouver up until the early Fifties?

During my 35 year career in Immigration, I served under 19 different Ministers including such personages as The Hon. J.J.Glen, Jack

Pickersgill, Ellen Fairclough, Davey Fulton, Guy Favreau, Jean Marchand, Walter Harris, Dick Bell, Bud Cullen, Ron Atkey, James McKinnon, John Nicholson. There were others but I have lost my list and the old memory is not as good as it was.

Deputy Ministers must have been more durable as there were only 11 of them. The first was Dr. Charles Camsell and included such others as Hugh Keenlyside, Laval Fortier, Tom Kent, Claude Isbister, George Davidson, Alan Gotlieb, and Jack Manion. Jack was the only one in the Department to have started at the bottom and to have worked his way up through the ranks. I have missed three of the Deputies, but to use my stock excuse these days, "I can't remember, I'm old".

Incidentally, during my service, the Immigration Branch was in four different Departments. I started in the Department of Mines and Resources then it became part of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. Then it was in the Department of Manpower and Immigration followed by the Employment and Immigration Commission, I understand it has since changed again.

Back in the late Fifties and early Sixties, one of the big problems we had in Enforcement was trying to control the illegal entry to Canada of ship deserters. Many persons used this method to get into the country to avoid having to comply with immigration requirements and the delays associated with the processing of applications for Canadian visas.

Most of the deserters were of Greek nationality hoping to better themselves in this country. Invariably after deserting ship they would flock to Montreal where there was a large Greek population sympathetic to their plight and willing to assist them to become established. Many of them were put into jobs as cooks and

waiters in Greek owned restaurants in that city. As I recall, the usual method of apprehending these illegals was for our officers to work in teams of two. One of the officers would station himself just outside the back door of the restaurant. The other officer would go in the front entrance, identify himself as a Canadian Immigration Officer and in a loud voice ask if there were any illegals working there. If there were any, they would usually make a break for the back door right into the arms of our officer waiting there. This procedure would work several times until the word got around that Immigration Officers were in the area.

At one time, desertions were running between 1000 and 1200 cases a year. Eventually we were able to get the problem under control.

On one occasion we had 27 persons, mostly deserters, detained in jail awaiting deportation. Most of the delays in effecting their removals resulted from the individuals refusing to cooperate with us and provide information regarding their citizenship in order that we could obtain travel documents for return to their respective countries.

Under pressure from the Opposition and various ethnic lobby groups, the Government appointed the Hon. Joseph Sedgewick Q.C. as a one man Commission to look into the legality of these individuals' detention. After a lengthy investigation and examination of the facts, Mr. Sedgewick ruled that in 26 of the cases the Department was justified in detaining the persons. However, in the 27th case he indicated the Department had been tardy in its actions and should release the man pending completion of deportation arrangements. This man who was an alleged citizen of the U.S.A., had refused to answer any of the questions put to him by the Inquiry Officer. I knew the Officer quite well, and I understand he told the individual that if he would not answer the questions asked him as

required by law, he would suspend the Inquiry and let him "Sit on his ass in jail", until he agreed to cooperate. Fortunately this information did not come out during the investigation. All in all, we came out smelling of roses in the Commissioner's report.

Over the years, the Department was involved in a number of famous, perhaps notorious might be a better word, cases. Many of today's officers have probably never heard of them but in their day, they were all "Headliners". I think the first one I can remember was the DeMarigny case which occurred around 1950. He was the person suspected of having murdered Sir Harry Oakes, the discoverer and owner of the Noranda gold mine in Canada. We were eventually successful in deporting "Count" DeMarigny to the Island of Mauritius after a lengthy deportation Inquiry and court action.

Another well-known case was that of Reid Robinson. He was a high ranking officer of an international union and an alleged member of the communist party. In those days, membership in a group advocating the overthrow of the Government by force or violence was grounds for deportation under the Canadian Immigration Act. This was the first case in which we were able to use an Inspector of the RCW, who had served underground as a member of the Communist Party of Canada for many years, to give evidence of the aims etc. of the Party, and resulted in the issuance of an Order for Robinson's deportation.

Then there was the case of George Christian Hanna, described by the media as, "The Man Without A Country". He came to Canada originally as a stowaway at Vancouver and then refused to reveal or admit his true identity. When he was ordered deported, there was a Liberal Government and the Conservatives and the news media pressed to have him allowed to remain here on compassionate grounds. Under

the heavy pressure the Liberal Government reluctantly agreed to let him remain here under Permit. George was subsequently caught several times running around naked in his boarding house and convicted of indecent exposure. This resulted in the usual hue and cry from the public to have him deported.

Ironically, in the meantime there had been a change of Government and the Conservatives were placed in the very embarrassing position of having to deport the man they had pressed the Liberals to let stay. You can imagine the choice exchanges that took place during the Question Period in the House at that time. Eventually, a deal was made with the country in which it was suspected he had stowed away, to accept him back. At that time, the Minister of the day allegedly stated, "He had better be deported out of here this time or heads will roll." Needless to say, I sweated this case out over a weekend until confirmation of his acceptance overseas was confirmed through External Affairs.

It was around this time that the Department arranged for me to be interviewed by Arthur Hailey, the well known author, who was in the process of writing a book and wanted some background information about deportations and stowaways. I spent just over two hours with him answering questions. He subsequently published his book titled, "In High Places," which became a best seller and later a movie. One of the principal characters in his book was based on George Christian Hanna. At that time he promised to send me an autographed copy of his book, but never did. I got back at him though as I never read it.

Another highly publicized case was that of Onofrio Minaudo, an alleged mafia type, who was able to get a lot of prominent people in Canada to support his attempt to remain in this country. Eventually, after a long fight and numerous delays, we were successful in

deporting him to Italy (Sicily). We learned later that shortly after his arrival over there, someone blew his head off with a shotgun. At one time, Minaudo's name had been linked to that of a prominent Cabinet Minister from - guess I'd better not say where. In any event I can recall two members of the Department spending the better part of a Sunday with the Minister in question, briefing him on how to deal with questions in the event the matter was raised in the House.

Just one more interesting case, that of Guiseppe Catalanotte, known to the police and his underworld associates as "Cockeyed Joe". Immigration had been looking for this man for some time without success although it was known he traveled back and forth between Canada and the United States. Catalanotte had a previous criminal record and if apprehended in Canada would be subject to deportation- Out of the blue he reported in to our office at ---- where he was arrested and later deported.

An odd thing about the case was that Catalanotte claimed to have received a letter through a friend, signed by the Private Secretary to a Cabinet Minister, stating that his case had been reviewed and it had been decided to grant him citizenship. When asked to produce the letter he said he could not find it and that it must have been lost. In the absence of any proof, the authorities could not accept his cock and bull story and proceeded with his deportation to Italy. The story had a sort of funny ending. About five years later when discussing the case with an out of town associate, I actually viewed a letter very similar to the one Cockeyed Joe claimed he had received. . This was really too farfetched to be true though, and probably was just a coincidence. I won't say where I saw the letter.

Briefly, in passing, how many officers, active or retired, can remember such cases as Renée

Rebrin, Rosie Douglas (recently deceased), Joe Bonnano, Hal Banks, Professor Sibley, Umberto Pagan, The Violi brothers, Dr. Timothy Leary, Brooks and Stonehill, General Arturo Espaillat, Elizabeth McGarvie (Joe Bissett will never forget her) Xaviera Hollander., Gerda Munsinger (Ministers' friend) The list is endless. I could go on and on.

For many years DEPORTATION was considered to be a sort of dirty word by a lot of people in the Department as well as the Government. We were constantly faced with a sort of "Do your job as best as you can but for Heaven's sake don't get the Department's name in the newspapers" mentality. At times it was discouraging to try and do a job under this sort of constraint. Nevertheless, while we did get shot down on occasion, we still managed to get rid of a lot of undesirable persons from Canada through the deportation process.

Over the years, one thing I learned early was that when the Press became involved in a case, it seemed to be fair game for them to shade the facts to create sympathy for the person involved. This could create headlines, which in turn sold newspapers. Unfortunately, however, it often resulted in well-meaning but misinformed groups becoming involved on behalf of undeserving individuals and in many cases generated unfair and uncalled for criticism of the Branch in @daring to apply the law.

I left the Branch in 1979 with many memories. MEMORIES of the tremendously interesting work I was involved in over the years, MEMORIES of the many friends I made in Ottawa as well as across Canada, MEMORIES of the tremendous contribution Immigration including the little known enforcement side, has made to this great country of ours through the years.

Since retiring in 1979, my wife and I have been spending our winters in Florida. We certainly do not miss the ice and snow of a typical winter in Canada. I have kept up my interest in fishing, both here and in Florida, and this year started to play golf. I tell my friends that after I master this golf business I'll probably give tennis a shot.

While I think of it, I may be reached on the Web at <charinur@monisys.ca>

### **Yorkshire Studies Proposed:** **Yorkshire Celebration Planned**

(EDITORS NOTE: The following article is a bit out of date but provides information both on a little known movement to Canada and on a region which rarely gets mentioned in these pages. It is reprinted with permission from the Mount Allison Record.)

From August 3 -10, 2000, Sackville will come alive with the celebrations of Yorkshire 2000. Organized by the Tantramar Heritage Trust, the event celebrates the Yorkshire migration of the 1770s in which more than 1,000 emigrants from Northern England settled in the Chignecto region along the present day border of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The event includes reunions, ship gatherings, theatrical presentations and an academic conference.

**What is the Yorkshire Migration?** The Yorkshire migration was organized by Michael Franklin, the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, after the expulsion of the Acadians. He was looking for a larger English population to work the land. He first searched New England with little luck. In Yorkshire, he found tenant farmers who were fairly well off but who had no hope of ever owning land in England. He offered them land and the opportunity to freely practice their religion, which was for many,

Wesleyan Methodism. The rest, as they say, is history.

While a growth of 1,000 people in the area population today might seem insignificant, the addition of these settlers to the 1770's population of 14,000 had a significant impact on the regional history. Today, Sackville and the surrounding area boasts a large number of descendants of the original Chignecto settlers, yet little research has been conducted on them. The Tantramar Heritage Trust hopes to change that and, along with other initiatives, has proposed that a Yorkshire Studies Centre be established at Mount Allison.

**Renée deGannes** ('98) played a key role in the research and preparation of the Yorkshire proposal. A descendant of the early Governor of Acadia Michel De La Neuf de la Valliere, Renée spent six months researching the migration in local archives and in Yorkshire talking to academics and archivists about the feasibility of a Yorkshire program and possible exchanges and partnering between Mount Allison and Yorkshire universities.

Renée's internship was funded through Young Canada Works ... Internationally and the Heritage Canada Foundation, in cooperation with the Tantramar Heritage Trust. Other organizations involved included Mount Allison's Rural and Small Town Programme, Friends of the Dales Countryside Museum in Yorkshire and June Hall, Renée's overseas supervisor.

For Renée, the internship was rewarding. "The migration history of the Yorkshire people has largely gone unnoticed," she explains. "I was able to get a sense of what can happen in a small community. I certainly have a better awareness of the region's history-" She notes that it was the Yorkshire settlers who brought Methodism to the region and who played a significant role in

the establishment of Mount Allison as a Methodist institution. Many of the earlier faculty and students came from a Yorkshire heritage.

**Initiatives and Academic Study** Renée's work has been compiled into a document called *Toward Yorkshire Studies at Mount Allison*. A bibliography on early European settlement in the Chignecto Region will be available at Yorkshire 2000. The proposal contains feasible ideas and initiatives for encouraging academic study of the Yorkshire migration. Examples of ways to raise awareness range from student and faculty exchanges and interdisciplinary programs, to establishing a chair in Yorkshire studies or creating a virtual centre on the web. The possibility of an exchange program with an English university will be reviewed by Mount Allison's International Committee.

While the University considers the possibility of Yorkshire Studies, the Tantramar Heritage Trust hopes to raise awareness and leave a legacy from the Yorkshire 2000 celebration. They will work towards the creation of a centralized genealogical database and the erection of monuments and cairns to mark the contribution of this group of pioneers.

For information about Yorkshire 2000, visit:  
[http://www.tap.nb.ca/tht\\_york2000.html](http://www.tap.nb.ca/tht_york2000.html)

*Spring 2000 Record*

CANADIAN IMMIGRATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Form for Initial Membership, Membership  
Renewal, & Change of Address.**

Please note that the Membership Year runs from May 1 to April 30.

1) Please enter / renew my membership in the C. I. H. S.

Fee Attached \$ \_ \_ [ Life Member (\$100) , Annual Member (\$10) ]

Name:

2) Please fill out address etc. *only* if joining for the first time or if you wish to inform us of a change of address etc.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

The new membership year began May 1st and we would appreciate your cheque for \$10.00 as soon as convenient..A check of our records show several members have forgotten to pay their 99/2000 dues. Please check your membership card or last receipt and if it shows a (9) you are in this group. Our dues are our sole source of income and we would ask that you forward your 99/2000 dues as well as your 2000/2001 ,a total of \$20.00 as soon as you find it convenient. I would also remind each member that our BULLETIN Editor is always looking for material re personal migration for consideration in forthcoming issues. How about digging in your memory treasury and see what you can put into interesting print.

Best regards

Alan Troy, Treasurer

3) Please send this form with your cheque to:

The Treasurer  
The Canadian Immigration Historical Society  
P.O. Box 9502, Station T  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 3V2



## **J.F.R. Robillard**

### **The passing of a legend**

**...for so many, deserving of high honors, their place in history will be naught but a fond memory by those who knew them....**

**I met "Robie" for the first time, while in transit at the CGIM, Karlsruhe after he arrived in November 1948. He came after locating larger premises at Via Acherusio 9, Rome in January 1948-a much maligned office that processed upwards of 100,000 Italian migrants until 1964. He came to Karlsruhe for two purposes-a) to address the need for more "flying teams"<sup>1</sup> to select an increasing number of refugees; b) to open an office in Austria. At that time, there were two "permanent" team-one was at Munich, in the US Zone of Germany, and the other was at Hannover, in the British Zone of Germany. A few teams were already active and went to either place to assist or proceed to the larger IRO Camps in Germany and Austria to process refugees.**

**The need for increasing the number of "flying" teams stemmed from our Government's decision to increase the intake of Refugees/DP's. As the IRO accelerated the documentation of persons applying for Canada under various schemes such as laborers, domestics, sugar beet farm workers, workers in the needle trades, miners, etc., the additional "flying" teams could now respond with alacrity to requests from the IRO to proceed to camps in either Germany and Austria. The success achieved in this regard was due to his outstanding organizational and coordination skills.**

**In February 1949, after meetings with the Salzburg US Town Major and the Governor of Land Salzburg, he obtained office space on the second floor in a girls' school run by nuns at Franz Josef Kai 19. It marked the opening of the Austrian Office the "Kanadische Einwanderungs Mission." He stayed for a number of months processing sponsored Austrians, as well as refugees at the Salzburg Lehen Kaserne.**

**From Salzburg, he went to Brussels to find larger offices to respond to the increasing number of Belgians and Refugees applying for emigration. He returned in September 1950 to Karlsruhe to negotiate the site of new offices and supervised the move of the CGIM from Lusstrasse 4, Durlach to the Lutz Hotel at 94 Kriegstrasse, Karlsruhe.**



**He suggested I be appointed O-in-C Salzburg, from January 1951 to September 1951. His just reward came when, in September 1951, he replaced Phil Bird as the Chief of the Canadian Government Immigration Mission. My marriage in October 1951 delayed my departure for Canada to April 1952. In the interval, he asked me to go to proceed to the IRO Bagnoli Refugee Camp near Naples to process Istrian Refugees in October '51. Prior to my return to Canada, we were very close and so it was with Fritz and my wife. The assistance in arranging the shipment of my car and dog via Bremerhaven has never be forgotten.**

<sup>1</sup>-A "team" consisted of a doctor, a Security officer and an Immigration Officer who drove a new 1948 Ford sedan-sometimes, an Officer from the Department of Labor also travelled with the team.



'66 SPRING-"ROBIE" ROBILLARD AND FRITZIE TOGETHER VISITING ROME. HOPING TO RETURN A FEW COINS IN THE TREVI FOUNTAIN ON LAST DAY.

That friendship was maintained in Canada by visits to their home in Alta Vista, Ottawa and reciprocal visits to our home in Chambly, PQ. A phone call in October 1957 was an unexpected surprise-I was posted to Rome and they were our guests on their subsequent visits to that city. The same hospitality was extended when I was posted to Paris.

The success of the Kampala Mission led to my temporarily assignment to Toronto as Administrator, possibly through his recommendation. On a number of occasions,

he supported me during that difficult but short assignment. He was instrumental in appointing me Immigration Division Olympic '76 Coordinator in October 1973. I can never thank him enough for the faith he placed in my abilities to tackle that challenge.

On our many visits to Canada, we tried to contact "Fritzi" without success-it rings but no one answers. We knew through Andy Kaarsberg that "Robie" was in a home and that even Andy was unsuccessful in his efforts to get news. If only he could have left us some extracts from his achievements from 1946 through to his retirement. Maria and I did not know that he passed away last August. He was a pillar in having organized the immediate postwar movement of tens of thousands of Refugees/Displaced Persons and other immigrants to Canada. Throughout this period, he was closely involved in discussions with the Allied Occupying Powers in Germany and Austria, Officials of the International Refugee Organization and officials of the International Committee on European Migration.

His loss will be remembered by all those with whom he came in contact and experienced his sense of humor, his humane approach and genuine concern to solve personal problems. We owe him great honor.

Roger St. Vincent