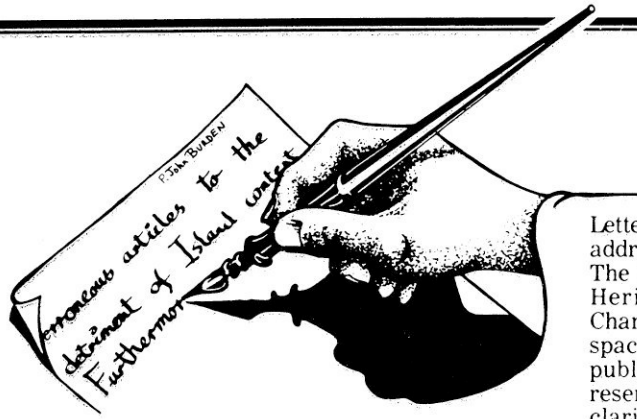


# Letters to the Editor



Letters should be mailed, with your name and address, to The Editor, *The Island Magazine*, The Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation, 2 Kent St., Charlottetown, P.E.I., C1A 1M6. Because of space limitations, it may not be possible to publish all letters. The Magazine also reserves the right to edit for length and clarity.

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## The Great Adventurers

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I read the article "The Great Adventure" in the Summer, 1985 issue of *The Island Magazine* with great interest as it brought back many pleasant memories of younger years.

The MacDonald farm was next to our own at New Perth, and although the buildings were long gone, the remnants of an old well and a cellar grown up with sighing poplars often gave me an eerie feeling on the way to school. George MacDonald moved to Brudenell near the school. When I taught there in the 1930s, I often visited the home where George, who lost two wives at an early age, lived with his four sons. Well I still remember the very good bachelor meals I enjoyed at their table.

William Kaneen, the third member of the trio which set out on the great adventure, was our next door neighbour right across the road. Bill, as he was known, was an interesting, almost a Pickwickian character, who, like Mr. Micawber, had an intellectual but impractical mind. He let his farm grow up in weeds and his only tillage was burning off the old grass every spring. He was a great reader and knew the Scriptures intimately. On frequent visits to our home for a free meal and social chat, my father and he would get into heated arguments on questions of religion and philosophy, on which they did not agree. He was of Presbyterian persuasion and accepted predestination in all events except murder.

He was a self-made artist and could draw a likeness in short order. He probably could have been a successful cartoonist.

On one occasion he went to Charlottetown and had a hernia operation, and came back with great stories about the doctors and all the good looking nurses who wanted to marry him, but

he remained a confirmed bachelor to his final days.

He became involved in a lawsuit with his neighbour at the back of his farm over a worthless piece of land along the upper reaches of the Brudenell River. With court and legal fees this ruined him and he was in poor financial straits.

How he survived for many years without old age pensions or welfare is a moot question. One morning, when he was quite an old man, the neighbours saw smoke on the hill where he lived and on going to the rescue found his mansard roofed house in flames and expected he would be incinerated. But no, he was sitting in a rocking chair in the yard watching the flames and bemoaning his fate. There were some unkind ones who suspected that with out a home some of his relatives would feel obliged to take him in. This did not happen and he survived for some years in a patched up outbuilding on the premises.

I left the area about that time and am not familiar with his final circumstances, but no doubt the Christian charity of his neighbours eased the journey in his last "Great Adventure".

L. George Dewar, M.D.  
O'Leary

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## Those Elusive References

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Thanks for acknowledging my very modest contribution to your recent article on passenger ship lists (Issue 18). There are a couple of minor errors and I thought I should point them out for the benefit of your own records.

I was your informant regarding the ships *Anglim* and *Jessie*. For the *Jessie* the article cites as a reference the book *Westcountrymen in Prince Edward's Isle*. I am stated to have been the reference for the *Castalia*, which I was not

(that is, the voyage before May 18, 1836). A second point about the *Jessie*: as far as I know, this ship came straight to PEI, not to the Island via Miramichi. Nothing from the newspaper indicates that there was a Miramichi stop.

Keep up the good work!

Earle Lockerby  
Mississauga, Ontario

*The error is the editor's, not the authors'; the wrong number of asterisks was inadvertently inserted in the footnotes in question.*

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## Islanders in Minnesota

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In reading *The Island Magazine*, the thought has come to mind that somebody could develop a story on Lot 31. There is a story to be told about its development and the mass exodus of pioneers that took place from this area to Northern Minnesota, USA.

First, I don't think it is just coincidental that the names Cornwall, Wiltshire, etc., occurred in the Lot 31 area. The circumstantial evidence is overwhelming that these settlers originated in the Cornwall, Devonshire, and Wiltshire areas of England.

Second, if you look at Island maps of the Lot 31 area, you will see the names of many families that later settled in the Humboldt, St. Vincent, and Orleans area of Northern Minnesota. It is surmised that these families were part of the Red River settlement and that at the time they settled in Minnesota it was still part of Canada.

I do hope somebody might develop the story of where they originated in England, why they felt it necessary to leave PEI, and why they all settled in the same area of Northern Minnesota.

Dennis L. Matthews  
Woodinville, Washington