

George H. Ham Dispenses Sunshine



O deny acquaintance with George H. Ham is to confess ignorance of Canada's greatest institution, the Canadian Pacific Railway, writes Robert J. Carron in the Railroad Man's Magazine. Who is George H. Ham? Why, he is George H. Ham, that's all. The poor man has not an official title to bless himself with, he never did have a title, and there are no present indications that he ever will have one. If he ever does get his deserts, he will be designated as ambassador-at-large for the Canadian Pacific Railway.

To Sir William Van Horne belongs the credit of discovering Ham. At the time of the discovery Ham was an alderman of Winnipeg and the editor of a paper of limited circulation, but unlimited nerve. Canada needed the Canadian Pacific Railway, and needed it badly, and a devoted band of men were risking bankruptcy and nervous prostration to make the great enterprise a success.

At the same time another portion of the population, whose names are now forgotten, were striving with an unreasoning vehemence that would have done credit to anything in that line which could have been gotten up on this side of the boundary, to nullify every effort of the empire builders.

Into this situation Ham threw himself with a pen that cut both ways in an effort to inoculate the obstructionists with the saving grace of common sense. So valiantly did he champion the cause of the railway that Sir William Van Horne, though he wasn't Sir William then stopped off in Winnipeg one day to see what manner of man it was who wrote such powerful editorials.

He saw, and immediately surrendered unconditionally to the charm of Ham's remarkable personality, just as so many others have done. Since then George Ham has been an integral part of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and a part of no mean importance.

He toils not, neither does he spin; yet no man connected with the company is more widely known than George Ham. Indeed, it would be within bounds to say that no man in Canada is better known than he.

No, he is not a lobbyist. On the contrary, he takes such extreme care to avoid even a suspicion of anything of the sort that he never goes to Ottawa while Parliament is in session. Yet the press gallery at the capital, abetted by some members of parliament, recently gave him a dinner and a gold watch as an inadequate expression of their esteem.

Ham has a desk in the great granite pile on Windsor Street which is the headquarters of the company. There is a legend that he was once seen sitting at it. If this is true, it must have been a chance meeting, just as two globe-trotters might happen to come together at Singapore or Ballarat, or any other remote spot.

For, whenever any one around headquarters has a moment to spare, he improves the time by ordering Ham's desk moved to a new location. That desk has worn out five sets of casters, according to official count, and is now on its sixth set in its peregrinations from room to room and floor to floor.

That is because Ham is not there to protect his rights. The last place in the world to look for Ham with any reasonable hope of finding him, is at his office. For paradoxical as it may seem, although he has no job, he is the busiest of men.

It is something not soon to be forgotten to see George Ham dart into headquarters and then, standing at his desk go through a stack of letters and telegrams with one hand, lay out soiled linen, and repack his travel-worn black bag with the other, dictate to his stenographer, entertain a guest, be interviewed by two or three rival reporters, and talk with sundry representatives of various departments on company business, all at one and the same moment.

It is one of Ham's idiosyncrasies to maintain that the only place in all the Dominion where laundry work can be done is Montreal. Whether he is at Vancouver or Halifax, his linen must go to the metropolis to be done up.

It takes close figuring at headquarters, sometimes, to make connections, but, thanks to the enthusiastic co-operation of the operating staff the parcels somehow always manage to get to him at the right point.

They tell a story about a period of torrential rains in Northern Ontario which nearly put the main line out of business for a few days. The Pacific express had been struggling west, held up every few miles at a washout by mud-bespattered, perspiring section-men, and delayed by slow flags.

Things were so discouraging that the engineer wouldn't hook her up even when he had a stretch of sound track. The conductor, impatient with this lack of enterprise, hit upon a ruse to spur the engineman on to renewed effort. Calling the flagman, he said:

"Bill, go ahead and tell Jim we've got Sir Thomas Shaughnessy's car on and he's simply got to get to Vancouver in time to catch the Australian boat, and hit 'em up a little."

This message being duly delivered, Jim turned with a scowl upon the flagman and thus expressed his sentiments:

"Sir Thomas, eh? Tell him to forget it! I ain't agoin' to ditch this here train, not even to please Sir Thomas."

When this was reported to the conductor that worthy official had an inspiration.

"Go back and tell Jim we've got George Ham's laundry in the baggage car, and he'll be expecting it at Sudbury as he passes through on his way to Toronto."

"Well, why in blazes didn't you tell me so long ago?" snapped Jim, upon receiving the second communication.

Whereupon he proceeded to roll them along at a gait which produced an epidemic of heart failure in the coaches. Spurred on by the responsibility of that linen, Jim is alleged to have made up three hours in sixty miles.

Ham is a haven of refuge for distressed newspapermen and a beacon of hope for those who would like to be newspaper men. Any past, present, or prospective employee of any publication who needs a pass, a job, a loan, or a confidant for a troubled mind is sure to have his wants supplied if he appeals to Ham, providing that gentleman can wheedle the pass out of the passenger department or borrow the money. At least the applicant can count on consolation and wise counsel.

But George Ham performs other functions which are regarded by the management as of more importance even than these. For instance, whenever the Canadian Pacific has guests to entertain it is Ham who acts as host. And it is surprising how many parties of Englishmen of various degrees of distinction there are requiring entertainment during the course of a year.

Also, there are numerous visitors from other lands whose achievements or position are deemed to entitle them to attention from the road. That is why Ham rarely sleeps two consecutive nights in the same town.

Wherever the strangers hail from, they always go home filled with enthusiasm for Canada, for that is the end and aim of Ham's existence. If there are any statistics, scraps of general information which lend local color, or good stories about the Dominion that Ham doesn't know, you may be sure they don't count. Also the visitors carry home a cordial esteem for their host.

His tact is boundless, his equanimity unsailable, his flow of quaint humor as inexhaustible as a mountain brook. His fame as a wit and an after-dinner speaker has been carried around the world by home-going travelers. He has even been made the hero of a poem by

Neill Munroe, which relates "How Laughter Came to Canada."

Ham's most famous speech was made under unique circumstances. He had been ailing for some time when one spring morning in 1905 the malady took a sudden turn for the worse. The physician who called in, after making an examination, said:

"Mr. Ham, you have a clearly defined case of appendicitis. You will have to be operated on at once if your life is to be saved."

"Not on your life, doc," replied the patient. "They say you are sure death with your little knife, and I am going to have one more good feed before I cash in."

"The boys are giving a dinner to Usher, the assistant-passenger-traffic manager tonight and I'm going to be there. After the dinner you may do your worst."

Incredible though it may seem, Ham actually did carry out his avowed intention to attend the dinner, though he was suffering great pain. Not only did he attend, but he made the brightest, wittiest speech of his life. Before the applause had died away he was in a cab on the way to the hospital, where he underwent the dangerous operation for appendicitis.

For a time his life was despaired of. In fact, a report was circulated that he was dead, and one paper, accepting the report without verification, published a touching obituary of the genial Ham.

On returning to his office, Ham's first act was to have this obituary framed in sombre black and hung above his desk with this legend in his own irreverent chirography beneath:

"Not yet, but soon."

He never fails to hang a fresh wreath of immortelles upon a corner of the obituary frame whenever he returns to Montreal.

In his capacity of vicarious host Ham, of course, must needs extend many invitations to partake of liquid refreshments. It need hardly be said that he exercises great discretion on his own behalf on such occasions, for otherwise he would scarcely have won fame for eminent fitness for diplomatic missions.

Yet, there came a time when even he, the

pink of discretion, felt the need of reform, and this is the way of it:

In St. John, New Brunswick, there was one particular barber who always got Ham's patronage when he was in that city. One day Ham rushed into his favorite's shop and requested a quick shave.

He noticed that the barber was haggard and that there was a strange look in his eyes, but thought nothing of it until the barber, after stropping his razor, began making vicious slashes in the air with it a few inches above his customer's nose.

"Here! What are you trying to do?" demanded Ham, not daring to move for fear of losing a few fingers or features.

"I'm cutting the heads off those snakes. Don't you see them?"

"Great Scott, yes!" replied Ham, springing from the chair. "Hold perfectly still for a minute and I'll help you. Watch 'em while I go and get an ax."

The barber was taken away in an ambulance with a fully developed case of delirium tremens, while Ham went for a walk to steady his nerves. Meeting three acquaintances, he greeted them with his accustomed hearty cordiality, winding up with an invitation to have something. On the way to the nearest place Ham suddenly stopped and said:

"Gentlemen, I have just seen a horrible example of what this fool habit of treating leads to. If I buy you some whiskey it will only fill your stomachs with pains, your mouths with folly and your consciences with remorse."

"I won't do it. I prefer to retain your esteem. I am going to treat you to something sensible. Come and have a necktie with me."

His three friends entered into the spirit of this chastened form of treat with great enthusiasm. Going into a haberdasher's shop, each of the three selected ties at two dollars and fifty cents each, the most expensive ones in the establishment.

Now it just happened, through perverse Fate, that at that particular moment Ham only had four dollars and eighty-five cents in

Japan's Smallest Prisoner During War



THIS is the story of the smallest prisoner the Japanese took in their war with the Russians. Over this smallest prisoner the Japanese prison wardens at Hamadora were more exercised than over the whole twelve thousand mujiks they herded into the stockade outside of Osaka after the capture of Port Arthur.

Tsi-Shore was his name, that is as near as the Japanese tongue could twist itself to the little prisoner's diction. He was 5 years old, wore a pigtail just sprouting out of the back of his head like a tendril on a pumpkin stem, and was precious far beyond his years, was this little Tsi-Shore, the prisoner.

A tiny bit of flotsam in the back-wash of a great war, Tsi-Shore accepted the sudden twist of fate that landed him a prisoner in Japan as calmly as he took his morning's rice bowl out of the hands of the prison cook. The essence of Oriental stoicism looked out from the moon slits of his winking eyes in a way that nonplussed even the Japanese stoics who found him in their charge.

Captain Omadzu of the artillery, one of the officers of the prison guard at Hamadora, was showing a foreigner through the spick and span barracks and neatly swept yard of the stockade one afternoon in March of 1905. As they passed from the barrack to another through a sandy stretch of field, Capt. Omadzu touched the arm of the foreigner he was conducting and pointed over to the corner of a cook house, where a midget of a boy garbed in blue denim jumper and baggy trousers was squatting on a sand pile busily scooping the sand into a mound in front of him.

"One of the prisoners of war," said Capt. Omadzu with a smile, and he led the way over to where the youngster was.

There the two men found the boy on his knees before a miniature fort, built up out of the sand. He had shaped a circular wall with escarpments and approaches all entire, sticks stuck through the wall in a line of formidable artillery, and on top of the highest wall flaunted as a flag a piece of parti-colored paper from a Japanese lantern.

The little Chinaman sat back on his haunches when Capt. Omadzu stopped before the fort and slapped his boot with his riding whip. He looked up at the Japanese officer with not the shadow of a smile on his moon face and his eyes staring frankly into the eyes of the man. For a minute he sat thus, and then he continued scooping the sand up into another flanking battery without paying so much as the compliment of a look askance at the uniform of the officer.

"That is his game," said Capt. Omadzu in his careful English. "He plays Port Arthur all day, and when the guard is changed he marches behind them with a stick on his shoulder. I'm afraid he knows too much of war for a little boy."

The captain then detailed the story of the capture of Tsi-Shore.

When terms for the surrender of Port Arthur were made in the opening days of that year and the battle thinned columns of Gen. Nogi marched over the hills and down into

the desolated city behind the circle of forts, the headquarters of Capt. Omadzu's regiment were made in the centre of the new town, where the shells of the invaders had done less damage than about the waterfront and harbor works. The captain had been detailed to orderly duty on the staff of his commanding general with the first day of the occupation and it was his duty to install the regiment headquarters in one of the deserted storehouses of the Russians.

The first night of the city's occupation, while the captain was superintending the erection of cooking tent outside the compound of the officers' headquarters came Tsi-Shore. He walked boldly through the stone gateway and over to the spot where the portable soup kettles captured from the Russians, were steaming for the first meal the Japanese troops were to eat in Port Arthur.

The little lad in the ragged jumper and tattered shoes did not ask for food. He simply sat down in a spot where the steam from the bubbling rise stem inside of one of the kettles swept over the side and down into his nostrils. His eyes were tinged with the mark of hunger and his face drawn askew into cruel lines.

"Well, that is the way Tsi-Shore came to my regiment," Capt. Omadzu said. "We gave him food that night, and the next night he was back there sitting down near the soup kettles, saying nothing, but looking a great deal. He came like a dog and kept silent like a dog. Only his eyes spoke."

Tsi-Shore attached himself to the regiment without a by-your-leave. After the first few days he did not go away at the finish of the evening meal, but curled up and slept with some of the soldiers of Capt. Omadzu's company, who possibly remembered their Tames and Tatzus back in Nagoya or Kobe, and accepted the waif on the strength of his child's face.

After a week of this Capt. Omadzu himself sent for a Chinaman to question the little lad and learn where he lived and why he did not stay at home. All that the wise youngster would say was that he had no home and that he was content to stay with the soldiers.

Capt. Omadzu made inquiries throughout the captured city, but could learn nothing more about Tsi-Shore. The sentimental Japanese sought no further; they reasoned that probably their little charge's parents had been killed during the bombardment, and they accepted his presence as a fact not to be further disputed.

Soon it came time to take the long roster of the thousands of Russian prisoners, the garrison of Port Arthur, preparatory to shipping them to Japan as prisoners of war. Then it was that the first of the serious questions concerning the status of Tsi-Shore arose.

The Japanese were caring for Russian and Chinese non-combatants within Port Arthur, but they had no idea of shipping them back to Japan as prisoners. On the contrary, arrangements were made for transporting the Russian non-combatants out of the city, and the Chinese were to be allowed to shift more or less for themselves.

Neither Capt. Omadzu nor any of the regiment wanted to turn the regiment's waif adrift in the desolate city. No Chinaman could be found who would accept responsibility for Tsi-Shore's keeping. No such thing as an orphan asylum existed in the captured stronghold.

The officers of Capt. Omadzu's regiment cut the skein of red tape that enmeshed the future of Tsi-Shore in a way strangely contradictory to the precise Japanese rule of obedience to the letter of the law. They enrolled Tsi-Shore regularly as a prisoner of war, captured with the rest of the garrison of Port Arthur, and his name was formally forwarded through the many channels of administration until it filtered into the war office in Tokio in course of time, where it stands today probably in the records of the war.

When the transports came to take the prisoners to Japan the little Chinaman was marched up the gangplank along with the big, bearded Russians, his kit of child's treasures on his back and a ticket marked with Japanese ideographs attached to his collar. To Hamadora, the whole 12,000 odd prisoners went, and there in the fresh pine barracks within the big stockade they were disposed of.

There were not many rules made for the government of the prisoners, for escape in crowded Japan was next to impossible for these bearded giants. But the only person among the thousands that lived for the rest of the months of the war in the Hamadora stockade who knew no rules save those of his own will and obeyed no discipline was Tsi-Shore. He refused to learn a word of Japanese, scorned the offers of friendship from the Russian prisoners, and accepted the attention of the Japanese prison wardens only with tolerance.

Little master of his own fate and sole guardian of his own daily scheme was this Tsi-Shore, smallest prisoner of a great war.

SCOTLAND'S PREMIER EARL

The Earl of Crawford, who celebrated his sixty-first birthday last week, is the premier Earl of Scotland, and one of the most interesting members of the Peerage. He is a keen scientist and biophile, an experienced traveler, and an enthusiastic yachtsman, and he is the possessor of one of the finest stamp collections in this country. He is also a great authority on astronomy, having been for two years president of the Astronomical Society, and some years ago he took part in an expedition to Spain to observe a solar eclipse. As Lord Balcarras he sat in the House of Commons as Member for Wigan, resigning the seat in 1880 on the death of his father, the twenty-fifth Earl.

The infant of the household was in its cradle. The head of the house was at home, peevish and fault-finding. At length he became unendurable.

"You've done nothing but make mistakes tonight," he growled.

"Yes," she answered meekly, "I began by putting the wrong baby to bed."—M.A.P.

his pockets. To make matters worse, the shopkeeper was not only a stranger, but he was cold-blooded and suspicious.

Ham was equal to the emergency. Putting his hand into his pocket as if about to pay for the ties, he suddenly concentrated his gaze upon one of them and requested leave to see it for a moment. With a great show of indignation he pointed out that the material was not silk but a cheap imitation thereof.

By judiciously accusing the shopkeeper of attempted swindling he contrived to provoke an angry retort which gave him the desired excuse for stalking out in high dudgeon without making a purchase. Ham turned to his friends and exclaimed:

"Gentlemen, this reform movement is indefinitely postponed."

The supreme test of Ham's tact came when he was detailed to conduct a party of fifteen Canadian women journalists over the line to Vancouver and back. A private car was assigned to the party, whereupon the officials who had extended the invitation began to borrow trouble over arrangements.

The knottiest problem, in their estimation was to assign the drawing room without arousing jealousies and heart-burnings which would spoil the trip; for, it was pointed out, fifteen women could not be assembled without giving rise to grave questions of precedence. Ham settled it all off-hand.

"Easiest thing in the world," said he; "I'll take the drawing room myself." And he did.

Soon after the party had started, some depraved person around headquarters conceived the idea that it would be a great joke to send this telegram, purporting to come from L. O. Armstrong, the colonization agent, to the Mormon bishop at Lethbridge, Alberta, the centre of a large Mormon settlement:

George Ham, rich Mormon from Wyoming, with fifteen wives in private car, will arrive Lethbridge, Thursday, 12th, looking for new location. Advise that he be treated well in hope he may decide to settle. He would be most valuable acquisition to colony.

L. O. ARMSTRONG, Colonization Agent, C.P.R.

When the train with the journalists' car attached arrived at Lethbridge, the entire Mormon population, attired in its Sunday clothes and headed by the bishop and the elders, was drawn up on the platform to receive the visiting brother and his fifteen wives. Ham was much perplexed by the unexpected warmth of his greeting.

Not until some of the brethren began to question him about his various marriages, desiring particularly to know just where and how he had managed to corral such an all-star consubial galaxy, did it dawn upon him that somebody had been trying to play a joke. But he was game. He carried out the role that had been thrust upon him and departed amid the affectionate adieus of the brethren, promising to return and buy some land after keeping an important engagement at Moose Jaw.

As for the lady journalists, being unenlightened regarding the incident, they resumed their journey enraptured with the striking example of true Western hospitality they had just witnessed. With such consummate diplomacy did Ham manage his charges that upon their return to Montreal they formed an organization, elected him an honorary member, and presented him with a gold-headed umbrella.

Last summer a large party of English newspaper men came over for a tour of Canada. They were not mere working journalists, but owners and publishers, and Great Editors with reputations.

Ham was assigned to escort the party over the Canadian Pacific. So anxious was the management to make a good impression that Ham was called into secret conclave and especially and particularly cautioned to be on his dignity and not to attempt any unseemly levity with such a notable assemblage.

When the party arrived in Montreal it was received by a party of distinguished citizens in the most approved English style with such frigid solemnity that ordinary travelers passing near involuntarily buttoned their coats and turned their collars up around their ears. The visitors looked as gloomy as true Britons might be expected to look on such a hospitable occasion, and conversed in monosyllables.

Ham, who had purposely arrived late, greeted each visitor with his accustomed easy cordiality, and when he had been presented to all horrified the anxious Canadian Pacific Railway officials by slapping the most sedate of all the great editors on the back and calling out a hearty invitation to:

"Come on, boys! This way to the dining car!"

With the refreshments Ham served out a continuous flow of jokes diluted to suit the British taste. Within an hour the gloom had rolled away like a fog-bank before a July sun. Everybody was calling him "George," and he was addressing them by any term that came handy.

Thenceforward for the eight weeks they were under Ham's charge, those Englishmen had the time of their lives. When they returned to Montreal they gave a dinner in his honor, presented him with an elaborate dressing case, and addressed a glowing eulogy of their vicarious host to the Canadian Pacific management in a round robin.

That's George Ham. And that's all.

THE GARDEN C.

Prepare Bor weeks by deep Perennials, Ros early.

Plant: Hard Hardy Climbers especially—Roses, Delphiniums, green Shrubs, Strawberries, P perials, Irises, Snowdrops, Scil Amaryllids, Pot Tulips, Pot Cro cinths, Cabbage Sow: A litt Mustard and C Salad, Lettuce.

HOW TO P



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