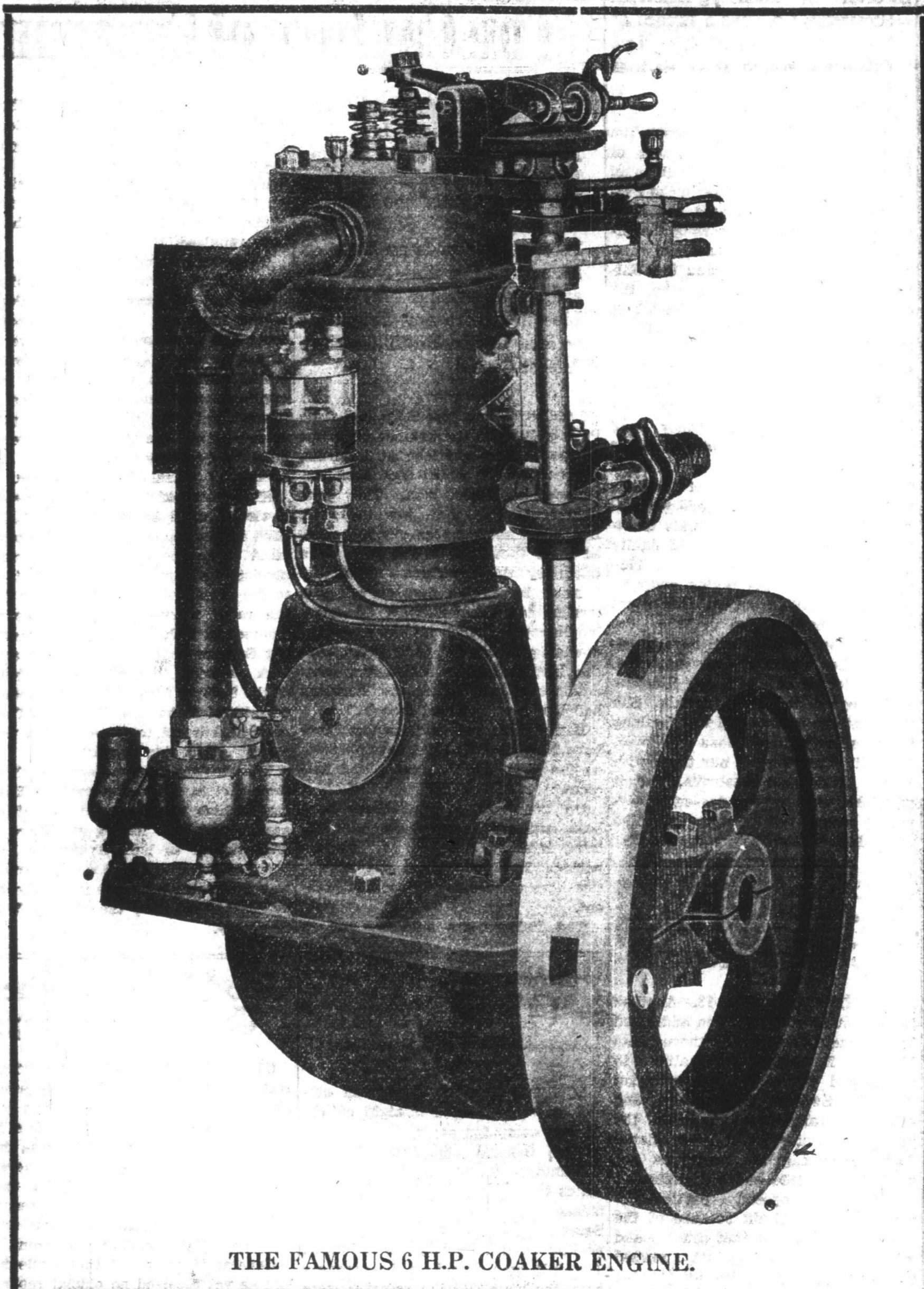


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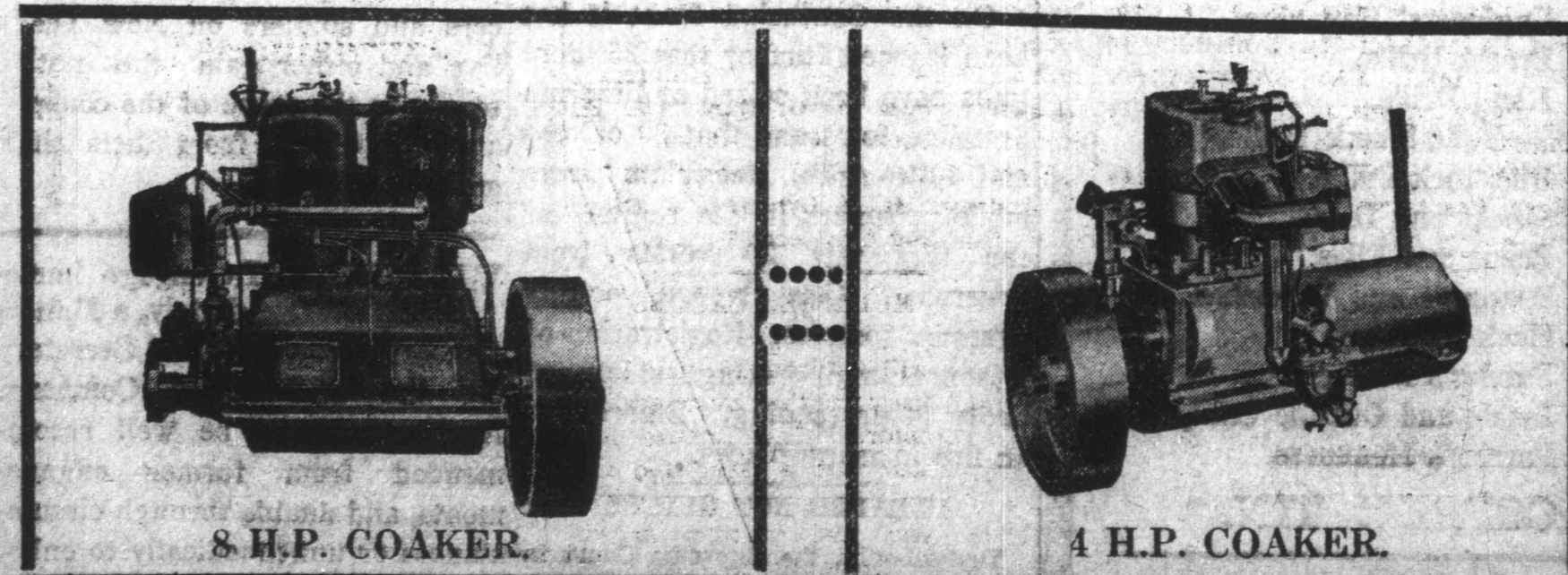
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TRYING EXPERIENCE OF A CANADIAN LADY

Who Went to France to Seek Husband Wounded at the Battle of Ypres

To feel the ground tremble from the discharge of the heavy guns and to hear the distinct crack, crack of the machine guns, on the firing line in France or Belgium, has been the experience of very few Canadian women. Perhaps few women would care for such an experience, but, however, that may be, such was actually the experience of the wife of Major C. J. Mersereau, who is now visiting her mother, Mrs. Weldon, of this town.

Mrs. Mersereau's visit to within a few miles of the firing line occurred last May, and at the time she was searching for her husband who had been wounded very severely, and from whom she had not heard for several weeks. This is how it all happened:

Major Mersereau went to England with the first contingent, about a year ago, and a little later his wife and children followed. They all spent the winter in the old land. The Major did not cross over to France until April, in time to take part in the second battle of Ypres in which it will be remembered General French declared "The Canadians saved the situation." It was during this terrible fighting, which lasted several days, that Major Mersereau was wounded and left for dead on the field. He and another officer had despatches to deliver, but shortly after they started out on their important and perilous journey, a shrapnel shell burst near them. Both officers fell, but Mr. Mersereau was much more seriously wounded than his companion. The latter after a short time was able to proceed, and left the Major on the field, dead as he supposed. How long Major Mersereau lay there unconscious he will probably never know exactly but he finally regained consciousness and finding that he still had the use of his arms and legs, he started on again. A strange thing is that at this time, he found he could run, but when he tried to walk he was unable to keep his limbs working properly. He had been wounded in several places slightly, but the most serious wound was in the left side of the head, just above the ear. Here a piece of shrapnel had entered his brain, and that the wound did not result in his immediate death, seems little less than a miracle. After wandering around for some time he finally arrived at brigade headquarters, where the news of his death had already been received. He received temporary medical attention here, but was almost immediately sent on to a clearing hospital several miles distant. For about ten days he remained unconscious, and while the nurse fully realized the seriousness of the case, she was unable to communicate with Mrs. Mersereau, as she could not learn where his friends were staying.

At last she wrote care of a well-known London banking house, stating the facts of the case briefly. This letter did not reach Mrs. Mersereau for eight days. All this time she had been wondering why no word from her husband had reached her, and naturally became much worried. Upon receipt of the nurse's letter she immediately decided to cross over to France and find him, but to make her task difficult the nurse had not been permitted to state where the hospital was located; she had only given a certain number.

Mrs. Mersereau soon made the discovery that to decide to go to her husband was one thing, but to gain permission to do so was quite another. Immediately she ran up against all sorts of obstacles. She appealed to friends, among them Sir Max Alkins, who knew Major Mersereau personally when both were living at Chatham, N. B. Sir Max did everything possible to assist his old friend's wife at this time, and finally with the aid of other high placed friends, whom Sir Max got interested in her case, Mrs. Mersereau was able to secure her passport etc. and was soon on her way to France. She was able to persuade a lady friend to accompany her. They landed at Boulogne, but even then they had no idea where they wanted to go, as they were still ignorant of Major Mersereau's whereabouts.

After a good deal of telegraphing, the travellers satisfied themselves that the wounded man was at a hospital about 75 miles distant and only a few miles from the firing line. Here another serious difficulty arose. The British official at Boulogne absolutely refused to permit them to proceed. He declared Sir John French had given strict orders to this effect, and that even if King George had given them permission, they would not be allowed to proceed. This was discouraging to say the least, but the ladies were not alto-

gether cast down. They determined not to give up. After considerable difficulty they secured an automobile and rode out to the Canadian hospital at Le Touquet, situated only a short distance from Boulogne. The head of this institution is Col. Shillington of Toronto. He heard Mrs. Mersereau's story and determined to help her. He accompanied her back to Boulogne and a telegram was sent to General French asking permission for Mrs. Mersereau and her friend to visit the former's husband. The General's reply was expected by morning but it did not arrive until evening. To their inexpressible joy the reply was favorable and shortly after seven o'clock that evening the little party set out in a fine car on their 75 mile journey north toward the firing line. They were frequently held up by officials who closely scrutinized their papers, but they were always permitted to proceed, and before midnight they arrived at their journey's end only to discover that Major Mersereau had been sent forward to another hospital about an hour before their arrival! To make the situation still worse the hospital authorities did not know where he had been taken! Speaking of the matter, Mrs. Mersereau declared that at this time she had felt very much discouraged. The strain had been very great and while she now knew her husband was still alive, yet she learned at the same time that his case was hopeless. There was nothing left for the little party to do, but to return to Boulogne and they did so the same night, arriving there about daylight. They had been told that it was just possible the Major would be sent to Boulogne, and they soon learned that a train with wounded had arrived about twenty minutes before. It did not take them very long to discover that what they had hardly dared to hope for had indeed been true. Major Mersereau had been brought in on this train and had been taken to a hospital and here in the early light of a May morning Mrs. Mersereau found her husband, bruised and battered, but still alive.

The next day the wounded man was operated on and a piece of shrapnel taken out of his brain. The operation was successful, but even the best doctors gave the wife little encouragement. They did not believe the officers would ever recover. However, he was soon moved to London together with thousands of other British wounded, and here he remained two or three months. Mrs. Mersereau visiting him daily and spending all the time she could with him. He received splendid treatment, and while he did not make rapid recovery his wife noticed a gradual and steady change for the better. A few weeks ago the Major and his wife landed at his old home on the North Shore where he received a most enthusiastic reception. He hopes to be able to return to the front next winter or early spring.

Speaking of the feeling towards Canadians in England, Mrs. Mersereau observed that before the Canadians distinguished themselves at Ypres, the English did not seem to think very much of our boys. They were generally referred to rather disdainfully as Colonials, the same as the natives of India, and other outlying possessions. But Mrs. Mersereau declares to-day the English people can hardly do enough for the Canadians. They are received everywhere enthusiastically. The part Canada is taking in this war will be a great advertisement for this country—Sackville Post.

Mrs. Mersereau, the lady mentioned above, is a sister of (Rev.) Mrs. A. Adams, Britannia, T.B. Her mother, Mrs. Weldon, of Sackville, N.B., is spending the winter with her daughter at Britannia. Mrs. (Rev.) Broughton, Freshwater, is another sister.

After Mrs. Mersereau got her husband safely across the English Channel, and into the Royal Free Hospital, she was granted permission by the management, to assist in nursing her husband back to health, and accordingly took up quarters in the hospital.

Certain days are set apart for the visits of Royalty, and shortly after Mrs. Mersereau had taken up quarters in the hospital, a visit was announced from King George and Queen Mary. Learning from the attendant nurse, of Col. Mersereau's hair breath escapes, they inquired about the woman who had braved so much to find him, and when told that Mrs. Mersereau was in the next room they requested that she be sent for. She thus had the pleasure of shaking hands to her own King and Queen. Some weeks later, she was presented to the Dowager

Queen and Princess Mary, during their visiting day.

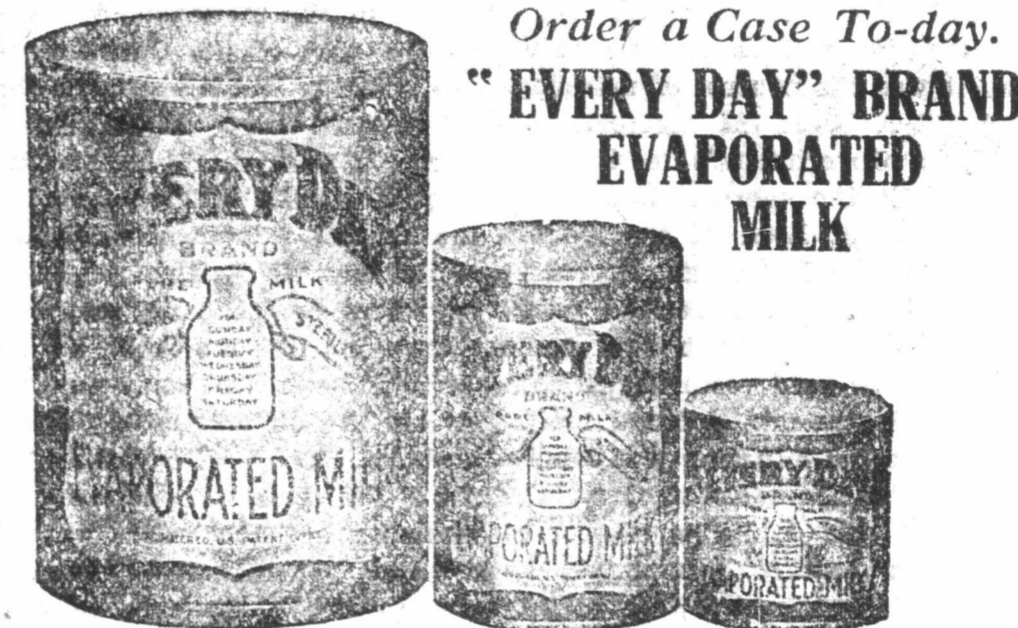
Colonel Mersereau is now convalescent at his home in St. John, N.B., except that his memory is a blank. He is every whit the soldier. Special lists contend that he will have to be sent all over again as a boy does at school, because of the former impressions on the brain; the training will be rapid, or possibly a sudden shock might bring back his recollection.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL AND PARTNERSHIP!

Hon. R. A. Squires, K.C., LL.B.
ANNOUNCES the removal of his LAW OFFICES to the New BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA Building at the corner of Beck's Cove and Water Street, and the formation of a PARTNERSHIP for general practice as Barristers, Solicitors and Notaries, with **MR. J. A. WINTER**, eldest son of the late Sir James S. Winter, K.C., under the firm name of **Squires & Winter**.
Address: Bank of Nova Scotia Building,
January 3rd, 1916. St. John's.

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