

THE TRIP TO ISLE-AUX-NOIX

By One Who Went.

When Corporal MacPherson passed quietly through the offices of the Regimental Orderly Room last Tuesday morning, telling various and sundry of the brilliant staff which daily prosecutes the war that they were to report at the wharf back of the hospital at 1.15 sharp for a trip up the Richelieu to Fort Lennox, no one pleaded a previous engagement. Being good soldiers, they obeyed promptly, and were there to the dot. And the party, which occupied two gasoline launches, had not been under way more than a few minutes when it was unanimously agreed that army life is, without fear of contradiction, the life.

The weather was of the made to order kind—a brilliant sun, a smooth river, and just enough breeze for coolness. And nothing occurred, from the time the boats were cast off till they were again at their moorings, to mar the perfect enjoyment of the trip.

Some excitement was furnished at the old fort by the discovery of a perfectly good skeleton. The original discoverer of this gruesome relic is a close connection of the late lamented Annanias; and he so far lived up to the reputation of his illustrious ancestor as to give out the report that it was nothing less than a human skeleton he had found.

The remains were cached at the bottom of the steep banks which fringe the moat around the barracks; and no sooner was this fiction promulgated than there was a rush and a roar, and the whole party swept down the bank bent on investigation. A good deal of poking and prodding, and much clearing away of undergrowth, with which the skeleton was covered, soon revealed the fact that these were no human bones. Those there were who insisted that the ribs had a familiar look; but the most cursory glance at the shape of the skull quite exploded the theory. Regretfully, therefore, it was finally decided that there was no evidence here of an Indian of former times having strangled his wife and thrown her into the moat, as was the habit of Indians at that time.

Some vandal has tripped the heavy copper sheeting from the doors of the old powder magazine: and one of the strap hinges—a solid piece of pure copper weighing probably fifty pounds, has also

been removed. Doubtless the prevailing price of copper has tempted some one to this almost sacriligious theft.

The old barracks, for the most part of massive stone,—the walls varying from two to four or five feet in thickness, are so replete with interest, both on account of its historical nature and also because of its present quaint-beauty, that an article might be written on this subject alone. In the present instance the demands upon space preclude the possibility of any adequate description at this time.

On the trip down, many expressions of pleasure and delight were heard from all members of the party, as point after point of beauty or interest was revealed by the turns of the river. In places the trees present a very stately appearance; and sudden splashes of brilliant red against a background of many shades of green served as reminders that fall is at hand, when the woods will be draped in their pre-mortem splendour.

Back to earth with a not unpleasant bump we come when someone mentions lunch. Whoever designed that lunch should have the V.C., and a permanent position in the mess hall—the two things being virtually synonymous. Tomatoes, fresh and ripe and red; sandwiches, any one of which was a meal, and cool, refreshing “softs”. Everyone ate all he could hold; and immediately thereafter a calm peace settled upon the party, such as comes only of a satisfied stomach.

It could not be ascertained who was responsible for this treat, nor what was the occasion of it. As a matter of fact, the really important thing was that it was accomplished, and everyone was too much taken up with the most thorough enjoyment of the trip to bother very greatly who or why. Though it was stated with emphasis and enthusiasm that whosoever conceived the scheme has the best thanks of those who benefitted by it. There was a strong rumour—such things have been noticed in camp on previous occasions—to the effect that on Wednesday afternoon the remainder of the staff would be similarly dealt with; but as this is written on Tuesday night, the writer respectfully declines to commit himself on this point.

Tuesday's party consisted of: Sgt. Wagg, Sgt. Hesford, Cpl. MacPherson, L/C Skidmore, and Sappers Behrens, Wheeler, Chubb, Graham (A. F.), White, Inman, Graham (J. M.), Macklin, Murphy, Raymond, Bayard, Best, and Keir.

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