

Written for THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST.

A GHOST STORY.

BY H. E. O'NEIL.



WHILE I was staying with an uncle of mine in Southern New York it was that it happened. One day I was sitting on the verandah when my uncle came to me and asked me if I ever heard the tale about the old Leighton House; I told him I had not, when he related the following:

"About twenty years ago, when I first came here, there lived a man in that old house on the hill by the name of Leighton. He had lived there for thirty years I was told. He lived all alone, and people thought he had gold hidden in the house, and it did not change the belief much when he was found murdered, and the big oak chest in the garret broken into. The proper authorities took possession of the house, and a search was made for a will, but none was found; but in the great oak chest in the garret they found large bundles of letters, and on opening some of these they found they were ten years old, and all from a certain John Logan, who lived in L—. They at once went to L— to find John Logan, and all they could find out was that he left suddenly about ten years before, and that he never was heard of since that time. As the officers could not find any trace of his family, the house went to the State. The house was closed up and has never been opened since, although some people had enough curiosity to go in through the windows and look the place over."

As he finished, he left me, and I closed my eyes to think, and it did not take me long to come to the conclusion to visit the old house to see if I could get stamps, so I got up and started to go to the house. I soon reached it and found it to be an old-fashioned house. I also saw that it was a two-story house with a garret. I soon found my way to the rear of the house and had no trouble in entering it and finding myself in what was used as a sitting-room. From this room I found my way into the hall, and had no difficulty in finding my way to the garret.

Glancing around, I spied the chest in the farther end of the room; it was about six feet long, four feet high, and about four feet wide, and on close examination I found it to be made of oak plank two inches thick. After brushing away the cobwebs, I stepped in and began to undo one of the packages of letters, and the first stamp that met my eye was 5 Black New York, and in my excitement I did not notice that the cover was falling until it went bang and I was in total darkness. I forgot all about the stamps and began to think of a way to get out. I did not even have the pleasure of taking more stamps, as it was total darkness in the chest. I tried several times to open it, but it was a spring lock, and it locked very securely when it fell. At last, after many vain attempts to push up the cover, I fell exhausted on the bottom of the chest. Hour after hour passed, and all at once I heard a groan that made my hair stand on end, and I heard the regular dripping of something. All at once the story of the murder came to my mind, and I fainted. How long I would have stayed there in the chest I do not know if my uncle had not come and woke me up to go to supper.

Part of the above is true, and I did afterward visit the old house and found many stamps which paid me for the trouble of my trip.

CURIOUS STYLE OF ENDING LETTERS.

Anyone in the habit of perusing old letters is struck with the tone of great humility and deference which pervades the correspondence of our ancestors.

A few specimens of the style of beginning and ending letters may prove interesting as in striking contrast to the laconic "yours obediently," "faithfully" or "truly" of the present day. It would certainly be difficult to match the following subscription of a letter from the Duke of Shrewsbury to Sir Thomas Haumer, dated September, 1713; "I desire you will believe that wherever I am I shall always endeavor to deserve, and very much value, your friendship, being with a sincere esteem, sir, your most faithful and obedient servant—Shrewsbury."

Frequently one meets with bellicose subscriptions, as in the case of the Earls of Huntly and Errol, who, in 1594, threatened "awful consequences" to the magistrates of Aberdeen unless they released certain gentlemen imprisoned in their city, and subscribed, "Yours as ye will, ether present peac or weir."

The notorious Simon, Lord Lovat, who lost his head on Tower Hill for treason, was the most courtly of correspondents. Upon April 8, 1716, he concludes a letter to the Jacobite Countess of Seaforth, thus: "I am, with true friendship and a great respect, madam, your ladyship's most obedient and most humble servant—Lovat."

Gen. Cadogan, the officer in command against the rebels in 1716, writes to the same countess, threatening her tenants with military execution unless they deliver up their arms, and concludes: "I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect and consideration, madam, your ladyship's most obedient and most obliged humble servant—Wm. Cadogan."

Yet, notwithstanding his servility he does not hesitate, when writing to the secretary of state, upon the same day, to characterize the countess as a "veritable she devil who would get the better of Satan himself."

"IT PAYS"

To advertise in the CANADIAN PHILATELIST. The following firm had a 2-inch ad. in our December issue. Read what they say:—

Harriston, Ont., Feb. 3, 1892.

Mr. L. M. Staebler:—
Dear Sir,—Enclosed find advertisement for Exchange Department and payment for the same. We are more than pleased with the results of our advt. in your December issue. We have **already received 83 replies** from the same.
Yours truly,
CANADIAN STAMP CO.

Are your Files

Of THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST complete? If not, now is the time to complete them. The supply of back numbers is small. While they last they can be had at the following prices: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17 at 10c. each. Nos. 7 and 16 are 25c. each. Complete your files before it is too late.

The London Philatelic Club have decided to hold auction sales at each of their meetings. This will prove a special attraction and will very materially assist our growth.