

New Brunswick's King Midas A Review . .

By MARION WATHEN FOX — from The Maritime Advocate

A visitor to a tiny New Brunswick town, a number of years ago, was strolling about the little tree-adorned Square in the centre of the town. There was a group of school-boys playing in the Square and the visitor noticed that one of the boys suddenly left the game and darted off to a seat under a distant tree, and sat there alone for some time, stooped over with his head buried in his hands.

"What's wrong with that boy over there?" the visitor asked, curiously. "Why is he sitting there all alone like that? Why did he leave the rest of you?"

"Oh — nothin's the matter with him," grinned the boy. "He often darts off like that — just wants to be alone awhile — to think something out that's come into his mind."

"He's the minister's son you know," informed another. "He — he's — well pretty mischievous — but — but, we all like him. He's great fun, and about the smartest boy in school — when he likes."

"What did you say his name was?"

"Max . . . Maxwell Aiken. He says his father named him after a River in Scotland. The one the song's about — 'Max-welton's Braes are bonny'. His father came from Scotland."

The visitor left the Square and strolled into store. He asked the store-keeper about the strange boy he had seen—who left his play to sit alone with his eyes closed and think out something that was bothering him.

"I bet that same boy will be heard from some day, just the same!" informed the store-keeper, "if he does seem a bit queer at times now and inclined to be mischievous — he's different, but it's usually the 'different' folk who eventually do the big things."

Then he went on to tell of something that had happened in the boy's father's church, a few Sundays before. The church-organ, in the basement, had, for its motor-power, a sort of bellows contraption that had to be worked by hand. On this particular Sunday, a brother of Max had to blow (or pump) the thing. But, in the midst of one of the hymns (more likely a "psalm" or "paraphrase") the organ suddenly went dumb. In vain the organist worked his hands and feet. Max (sitting in the family pew second from the front, where the stern parent-preacher could keep a squelching eye on his restless offspring) was sent to the basement to see what was wrong. His brother — the organ-blower, was asleep. Waking him was a job after the mischievous Max's own heart. He did it with pins.

How He Practiced His Shorthand

When this "different" boy attained High School age, he learned shorthand. "I'll practice on father," thought the ardent Max. "I should be able to take down his sermon as fast as he can say it—if not, I'll keep it at it till I do." So, he slipped up to the gallery of the church and hid behind a pillar during the evening service, and "practiced his shorthand." Of course the Rev. James Aiken would have been horrified had he known. But a friend of the family spied Max, and on his way from the gallery whispered to him: "If you want to keep this from your father, there's at least one biblical injunction I'd advise you to practice: 'Watch and pray.'"

Little did the visitor to the little New Brunswick town of Newcastle hearing about this "son of the minister" dream that this seeming different-from-other-boys chap would one day, save the world—at least the civilized world. For there are few but who will agree, that only Lord Beaverbrook could have performed, or caused to be performed, that miracle of rapid plant-production that saved Britain from the German blitz, and saved Canada and the United States from Hitler domination—"Credit to whom credit is due." So — there you are! Let us never discount anyone simply because, perhaps even in childhood, he does not always conform to the same pattern as his fellows. It is altogether likely that the development of these very "different" characteristics in an individual are often responsible for the genius of the world, or, even the world's saviours—as in the case of the boy Max Aiken, who was the "father of the man," Lord Beaverbrook.

His First Newspaper

Suppose someone had pointed to that huddled-up boy sitting there, on that long ago morning, in the Newcastle Square, and said, "Some day he's going to be the Editor — and owner, of the largest newspaper in the world, with millions of readers in the largest city in the world!" Everyone would have thought it some joke — "What that kid?"

But, even as far back as when he took those isolation attacks during play-time and detached himself suddenly from the other boys so as to think out something, Beaverbrook must have possessed in his makeup the germs of newspaper acumen; for it was right there, in that Miramichi town, when he was probably not more than fourteen years of age, that — he produced his first newspaper, the great-grandfather, if you please, of the London "Daily Express" and "Standard."

It was a schoolboy's sheet, called "The Leader," selling at ten cents a copy to schoolboys and others who desired it. It was done in real printing; for, it happened, that Max had an Anslow boy for his chum and this boy's father was the owner of the "Union Advocate", the town's newspaper; so Mr. Anslow kindly allowed the boyish pair to run out their little two-folder newspaper on his press. And the make-up of that sheet was a wonder—showing the embryonic business acumen, versatility, ambition, push, get-there tactics and cleverness of the young lad who originated it — which characteristics continued to mark the

career of the man who later became "Lord Beaverbrook", one of the leading industrialists of the world, one of the richest men in England, one of the most picturesque figures of our age, as well as one of the greatest Empire Leaders, and that in perhaps the most important crisis in our history.

It is generally recognized that this so dominant figure has peculiarities — rather marked ones at that. Both boy and man. But, underneath is a strong streak of the christian virtues; kindness, unselfishness, truth, generosity, a loyalty to friends — the kind that will never let one down, and, of course, a patriotism which, in time of need — as in the last war, forgets self and counts no sacrifice too great for the country and Empire which he so loves. Of course, if one commented to him on this, he would perhaps ridicule the idea — as to his possession of such traits, for he often seeks to disguise or hide them under a gruff exterior.

But, now let us get back to the schoolboy newspaper. Wasn't it like the "man" that the world came to know, that he should even then name his paper: "The Leader!" and have the following caption under the name: "We Lead Let Those Who Can Follow!"

But, make no mistake, the "Leader" carried almost everything (in embryo) that the average newspaper is supposed to contain: editorial, social-items, news, advertistments, etc. But what I remember best of its contents (for I, myself, read the paper) was the "Miscellaneous Column" which read something like this:

"A virtuous life is the only happy one.

"Buy butter at Wyse's (town-grocer).

"There are (forgotten exact number) thousand of kangaroos in Australia — what if they would all jump at once."

Then came a startling item of news from england, I think. Next another — moral precept.

All very typical and Beaverbrookian. Of course, the grocer, Wyse had given, and paid for, an advertisement, as well as one or two other citizens to whom the clever boy-editor alluded (for good measure) in the Miscellaneous Column. And, make no mistake, the "Leader" was on a sound financial basis. And was out to lead.

His Scholarships

And, only last year — 1947, back to little old New Brunswick came the boy-editor of "The Leader". Gone a long way since then! He was then made Chancellor of the University of New Brunswick, at Fredericton, and that same year became fairy-god-father to ten New Brunswick young people, none of whom even in their wildest dreams, probably ever thought that they would be able to attend a University in London, for New Brunswickers, as a rule, are not by any means wealthy folk. But that is what Beaverbrook enabled them to do, for he inaugurated an entirely new Scholarship — open each year to University of New Brunswick graduates. This Scholarship is for one year post-graduate study in London University including — now please note the magnificence of this — all the traveling expenses of the winners, and even of their wives and children (if they have any) and also the upkeep of all while in London. The students have their tuition fees paid at the London University, living expenses, travel within the United Kingdom during vacation periods and even return expenses home! Beat that for a Scholarship! Of the ten selected that inaugural year, five were war veterans. Included in these was the son of New Brunswick's Premier, Hon. John McNair. Another was a young woman, a teacher in the Campbellton High School. Several of the ten obtained their former course at the University of New Brunswick by the aid of former Beaverbrook Scholarships. These earlier Scholarships are tenable for four years at the University and have been awarded for the last twenty-seven years. In the first year the award was given to five students but has since been increased to seven each year. These Scholarships have a yearly value of \$400 with an additional \$100 for those who live in the Lady Beaverbrook Residence.

This first Scholarship alone, has enabled some two hundred New Brunswick young people to obtain a University Course, made possible to them by the bounty of that . . . boy who sat in the Newcastle Square and who had initiative enough, even at fourteen years of age, to start his tiny newspaper.

I know, at least, one of the winners of these yearly Scholarships who lived in the Country and had to walk three miles to school each day to receive his early education. Think of what such a Scholarship has meant to him! And I know there are other similar cases.

Last year (1947) these original Beaverbrook Scholarships, which entitled the winners to four years attendance at the University of New Brunswick, were extended — for the engineering and forestry courses — to five years. Right on top of that announcement came the even more thrilling news of the new post-graduate course at the London University, to be given year by year to graduates of the University of New Brunswick. So, at least for once, it pays — to be a New Brunswick young person.

And, for good measure, New Brunswick's King Midas, is throwing in a park to his native Province. He has purchased land near his old home on the Miramichi for this purpose — the park in memory of the pioneers of that district. He pays for its upkeep — and has made over its title to the University.

Interesting to note that forty-eight years ago amongst the students listed for that year, at the University of New Brun-

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I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING is a delightful mixture of ancient Scottish legend and a modern love story. This British production is based upon an old and often-tried theme: shall a girl marry for an old man's gold or a young man's love? The presentation is so cleverly contrived, however, that this motif, which might easily be hackneyed is pushed into the background and our heroine is faced with a choice of much deeper significance. All her life she has known what she wanted and in selfishly pursuing her desires has usually succeeded in getting it. With the fulfillment of her best-laid plans almost within her grasp, fate intervenes in the form of the sea, and during a period of waiting for a storm to subside, she is beset by grave doubts. Hitherto foreign to her nature. In the final denouement the shallowness of her character and the callous nature of her aims is forcibly brought home to her in one terrific experience.

The leading roles are played by Miss Wendy Hiller and Mr. Roger Livesey, both of whom are seen all too seldom on the screen. Miss Hiller is perfectly suited to the part of the willful and high-spirited Joan Webster and Mr. Livesey is admirable as the young Scottish Laird. They are supported by an excellent cast including Pamela Brown, whom Canadians had the pleasure of seeing two seasons ago when she toured this country with John Gielgud's Company.

I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING was filmed in the wild, romantic beauty of the Scottish Western Isles and the photography is superb. This is important since the setting forms an integral part of the story. Nature, as represented by the sea and the Highlands is the real hero, or perhaps villain, of the piece. Eventually it is the elements which show Miss Hiller her true character when she pits herself against them. In so doing, they dictate her final decision in the hour of truth when she comes to a full realization that, as Pascal phrased it, "the heart has its reasons that reason does not know".

The skillful blending of subtle characterization and simple directness in this film is an accomplishment all too rare in the motion picture industry of today.

It's alright to tell a girl she has pretty ankles but don't compliment her too highly.

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