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## **Forman H. Craton - 1934 - 1935 - Diary**

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Regretfully we departed Quebec at 8:30 a.m. the next day, which was a cloudy warm Saturday. But first we breakfasted at "the place of the fat waitress." This is the first mention of the fat waitress and is a mystery; perhaps Mme. Hoeckx had one who had finally won recognition from us. We grabbed sandwiches and Black Horse ale at a combination grocery-druggist-tavern somewhere along the river and pulled into Montreal about 2:45 p.m. We first indulged in tea and sandwiches at the Mount Royal and then broke up, the ladies to do some "feeling" and the men to walk up to McGill University and give it a once over lightly. All I can remember about our visit to the University is watching a [[sic]]cricket match which was the most incomprehensible business in my experience--and I presume some of our games are the same way to the British if not the Canadians.

Because our objective that day was Ottawa, we spent only 1 1/2 hours in Montreal before pushing off once more. We did this at 4:15 p.m., expecting to arrive in Ottawa in time for dinner but somehow we got our navigation completely fouled up. To begin with, we'd estimated it was a 55-mile run from Montreal to Ottawa going up the north side of the Ottawa River on Route 8; instead it proved to be more like 125 miles. The ladies, however, had argued strongly for going via Route 17 on the south side of the river. And of course they gave us the razzoo on this. When it became evident that we'd be starved if we ate nothing until we reached Ottawa, we began to search for a likely looking spot along the road where we could at least grab a sandwich and an ale. Finally abandoning any idea of finding a Manoir Richlieu along this road, we stopped at a somewhat rangy but decrepit-looking roadhouse on the river bank. A somewhat blowzy young woman inquired our wants and although I couldn't remember the conversation, in some manner we conveyed the idea to her that we wanted to shack up there briefly. So, the first thing we knew, she'd escorted us upstairs and showed us a couple of private rooms, inquiring solicitously if these would serve the purpose. I'm afraid she got quite a letdown when we told her all we wanted was food and how about some sandwiches and Black Horse ale out on the second-story porch overlooking the river. But this was forthcoming in due course. The place was well situated on the river and we enjoyed relaxing for awhile with our food and drink before shoving off again for Ottawa. By this time it was dark which didn't accelerate our progress but we finally reached Hull across the river from Ottawa and crossed to the capital. Here again, we had a recommendation from Hermann Schaeffer--a place called "M. Smith's" which we looked up to be turned down. There was a big argument about where to go next, it being around 10 p.m. Everybody's nerves were shattered. We ended up at the Alexandra, an ancient fleabag, where Willie and I had a small, dirty room with a double bed and I couldn't sleep much. We had dinner at the Alexandra at 10:30. We'd have been better off at the roadhouse down the river. It was the only poor night we had on the entire trip.

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