

**Toronto Telegram, Aug 15, 1953**  
**Schooner Days, MCXVIII (1118)**  
**By C.H.J. Snider**

### **Happier Bride's Diary - Shopping in New York**

Of course Mrs. Anne Smith MacDonell of Toronto, went shopping in New York, in 1805. Didn't you, madam, in 1953? To your duty-free limit? Over?

"1st July, Shopping all the morn...

"2nd Visiting and shopping...

"... we walked to Greenwich a-shopping

Ann's diary has many such entries, all stubbornly spelling shopping with one p.

In the back of the little book now so precious, which she took with her 148 years ago, are four pages devoted to accounts. The entries are undated, but neatly kept. They prove that the young bride of the High Sheriff of the Home District of Upper Canada was as careful with her eminent husband's pounds, shillings and pence as he was of the affairs of the province, or of Lord Selkirk's Highland settlement at Baldoon of which he was the superintendent.

For their light on long ago prices of "ships and shoes and sealing wax" – the items adjoining are worth reading. A laundress, it will be learned, got 5 shillings and a parasol cost 30, but a hair-do could be had for 4.

Canadians of 1805 were accustomed to £.s.d. and \$ and c. The boat hired from Oswego to Schenectady, four or five men and a large boat for a week, was "50 Doll" it may be recalled from the diary entry, and the charge was considered excessive.

But Anne was not niggardly. Her tips of three or four shillings for porters and servants seemed out of line with the general thrift of the time. They were the equivalent of a day's pay – and perhaps all the wages the recipients ever got. Many worked for "board-wages" in 1805.

The entries cannot all apply to this 6 months' journey from Etobicoke to New York and back. From the totals, given progressively, it seems plain that half of the £26-19-6 accounted for was spent before reaching Oswego, and therefore in the first five months of the year and presumably in York, U.C. As Anne was married about New Year's 1805, these expenditures may have been made in Toronto in preparation for the journey and for Anne's first house-keeping.

One item baffles the annotator - "Carmen" on page 3. Proper name? "Carmine" Car man? The equivalent of the express man or baggage handler?

But we may be certain that the "1 oz. gum, 1 shilling" under the shirt buttons, on page 1, was not for chewing but for sealing.

Apparently it was not the thing for a young lady to go shopping alone in 1805. Anne's diary mentions her shopping companions – usually an older matron, sometimes a girl friend, occasionally a mere male, but only when sager companionship was not available. She bought bonnets and fans and white kid shoes and black shoes, silk stockings and veils and earrings and a swell lace coat. Also shirt buttons and drawing paper and spice and ribbons and needles and thread. And thimbles whereby hangs a further tale.

## IN THE BACK OF THE BOOK

	£ s d
1ST Page	
Court plaster	0-2-0
Shirt buttons	0-1-0
1 oz. Gum	0-1-0
Green & yellow paper	0-6-0
Drawing paper	0-1-0
12 yd bed ticking	2-14-0
1 lb orange peel	0-6-0
1/2 lb. Cloves	0-6-0
1 oz. Nutmeg	0-4-0
2 oz. Cinnamon	0-6-0
Orange & basket	0-6-0
Comb brush	0-6-0
A pair of white kid shoes	0-12-0
1 yd white bedstring	0-10-0
1 thimble	0-4-0
Tambou cotton	0-2-0
Pink bonnett	0-3-0

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2nd Page	
Bro' over	6-15-0
40 yd of dimity	6-10-0
Pink riband	0-3-0
White do	0-3-0
Stage	0-8-0
Servant girl	0-4-0
Porter	0-3-0
A small pocket book	0-5-0
Nife	0-4-0
Comb	0-3-0
Top cottin & fine linen	0-4-0
2 1/3 yd bed ticking	0-13-0
20yd bed binding 4d	0-6-8
16-1-8	
2 small crocks	0-1-4
1 skein silk	6
2 do silk	1

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3rd Page	
Green veil	0-7-0
Oswego girl	0-3-0
Do	0-3-0
Servant man	0-4-0
For figs & c	1-0-0
Carmon	0-2-0

1-19-0	
Straw bonnet	2-8-0
Fan	0-12-0
4-19-0	
Ear ring	1-0-0
Comb	0-16-0
For dressing hair	0-4-0
6-19-0	
Silk stockings	1-4-0
Lace cloak	5-12-0
13-5-0	
Washer woman	0-5-0
6yd embossed cottin	0-5-0
6yd cambric cotton	1-17-6
Half yard muslin	0-12-0
2 lb darning cotton	1-8-0

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Page 4	
Bro over	18-5-6
Three thimbles	0-9-0
1yd. Hook muslin	0-12-0
A parasol	1-10-0
6 yd wire	0-1-0
1 yd peeling	0-9-0
A pair black shoes	0-9-0
Bean's	0-2-0
22-3-6	
6yd. India Muslin 1	1-10-0
12 skeins worsted	0-6-0
Salt spoons	0-6-6
4 skeins black thread	0-1-0
Needle 3/1 hld	0-10-0
Slides for decaten	0-13-0
1 oz. Silk	0-5-0
6 oz thread	0-12-0
1 small bonnett	0-12-0
pair of curling tongs	0-2-6
26-19-6	

*[Note: this is the seventeenth episode of Mrs MacDonell's voyage.]*