

## Centennial Moment #11

A Charter Member of our club in 1921 was County Court Judge E.C.S. Huycke. (You read about his famous local opera composer cousin, Rotarian Asa Huycke, in my June 24/20 Centennial Moment.)

Judge Huycke's sister, Lulu, was tragically left paralyzed from the waist down from a horse accident when she was 16 or 17. The Judge's wife, Rose, arranged to bring Lulu to the famed Mayo Clinic in the USA, to see if they could help her. The Mayo Clinic could not help; Lulu never walked again.

Some years later, around 1910, both Rose and Lulu were travelling home from Winnipeg to Percy Township. Lulu was confined to a stretcher. The steam train stopped at the Percy Township station.

Rose was shocked to discover that their train car had not stopped at the station platform, but was ahead of it by about 15 feet. This made it impossible to take Lulu off the train on her stretcher.

Rose asked the conductor to please have the engineer back the train up to the platform so Lulu could be taken off. **The engineer refused.** Nothing Rose could say would budge him. He didn't care that Lulu was stretcher-bound.

Rose was not having any of that.

She marched to the front of the train and stepped onto the tracks. She planted herself directly in front of the cow catcher jutting out from the massive black locomotive. There she stood, defiantly, hands on her hips, as the towering engine steamed and huffed before her. She shouted to the engineer:

"If you refuse to back up 15 feet to allow my crippled sister-in-law to leave with dignity, Sir, then I too refuse to move! I dare you to move forward!"

A contest of wills ensued: the Iron Lady facing down the Iron Horse.

The engineer finally, reluctantly, backed up so Lulu in her stretcher could debark.

*(Rotarian Judge E.C.S. Huycke (1860-1934) was Great-Uncle to my neighbour, Gary Huycke, who let me read this true story in the family history book. Judge Huycke was a good friend of Canada's first French-Canadian Prime Minister, Sir Wilfred Laurier. He named his first-born son Wilfred.)*

Stay healthy everyone!

AG Bruce