

DRUMMOND TOWNSHIP HERMIT

A Canadian Hermit—Naked for Forty Years.

Incredible as the following may appear, it is an authentic fact, to which hundreds can bear testimony :

About 40 years ago, a young man named Wilson, residing near the town of Perth, conceived the lunatic idea of leading a hermit's life. The youth had from an early age showed symptoms of derangement, and this proceeding on his part was not considered strange by his friends. The chosen place of his hermitage was about three-quarters of a mile from his parental homestead, in the recess of a dense bush, where he erected a small hovel, and furnished it with an old log canoe, which he used as a couch to sleep in. Divesting himself of all clothing, he has ever since remained perfectly nude, with the exception of a tattered remnant of a shirt, which his fancy leads him to retain. In this nude state for forty years he has lived, walking in the depth of winter through the snow, and yet he has never been known to have received a frost-bite. When he requires a drink, he walks deliberately into the river, it mattering not to him what season of the year it may be, and wades out till the water reaches his waist, and then he stoops and quenches his thirst.— His food is brought to him by his friends, and when given to him is eaten with the voraciousness of an animal, which he now resembles more than a man, his body being as heavily covered with hair as that of a cow. He never shows a dangerous disposition, and chatters in monosyllables. When people cross his path, he invariably begs for tobacco, for which he has an evident partiality, and in chattering tones will utter "bacca" until his request is granted. His hair is long, gray, and unkempt, falling over his shoulders, and his beard, which is similar, reaches below his waist. He is now between 60 and 70 years of age; and is possibly the only living being ever known to have lived year after year perfectly naked, and exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather which mark our Canadian winters.—*Carleton Place Herald.*

Perth Courier January 21, 1876

The following item first appeared in the Carleton Place Herald in early January 1876. It was reprinted in the Perth Courier a few weeks later, and over the following months appeared in newspapers and journals across eastern Canada and the USA, including such unlikely publications as the Fanciers' Journal and Poultry Exchange of Hartford, Connecticut.

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