

Ostrich Farming On The Upswing In South Africa

JOHANNESBURG, Jan. 14 — (CP) — The ungainly ostrich, once the key to a £2,000,000 industry in South Africa, and at a later stage considered better value dead than alive, is coming into its own again with increased world interest in the ostrich feather market.

The last ostrich feather sale of the 1948 crop season realized \$752,000. In addition many sales were made by farmers to speculators, and as the bulk of these sales were probably intended for export, a revival in the industry is indicated.

An interesting commentary on the fickleness of fashion is provided in the story of fortunes made, lost and partially recovered in the industry. Ostrich feathers were first exported from the Union in 1876, and 40 years later there was an unprecedented demand for feathers when more than \$8,000,000 worth were exported.

The industry continued to expand and in 1913 the maximum export figure reached was \$12,000,000. The First World War ended a period of prosperity in the industry. Changes of fashion and the unsuitability of feathers for motoring brought about one of the greatest slumps known to a South African industry.

Value Returned

As experiments in the tanning of skins proved successful, ostriches again began to be regarded of value. Just before the Second World War, skins brought a good price in the United States, where the curious market for feathers was well adapted for footwear, dressing cases, furniture coverings and other uses.

Attention is now being paid by ostrich farmers to further breeding as better prices for feathers are being realized.

The South African government has done much to promote overseas markets, and private dealers have made studies of the prospects in England. The English market is good, but is governed by an import restriction that says 75 per cent of the feathers imported have to be exported again, either in the original state or as manufactured articles.

Recently there has been a revival of American interest in the market, which may provide an additional source of dollar income for the Union.

In view of the prospects of increased demands both for feathers and skins authorities feel that more farmers may turn to the industry. Experience has shown that droughts have less effect on ostriches than on most "crops."

It is estimated that there are about 40,000 ostriches in the Outshoorn area. The total for the Union is not much greater, which means that the ostrich population has not shown any great increase over the past 10 years.

Butlin Extends Holiday Empire To West Indies

Britain's Vacation Camp King Was First World War Soldier In Canadian Army.

By R. D. BROWN

LONDON, Jan. 14 — (Reuters) — "Billy" Butlin, Britain's 46-year old holiday camp and entertainment king, has returned home with the deeds of a new Butlin empire overseas.

He told me recently of his plans to develop the big West Indian enterprises in which he is sinking over £2,000,000 (\$8,000,000). Dollars from this empire will flow to Britain, helping bridge its dollar gap and adding to the earnings which have made Butlin one of Britain's leading millionaires.

Butlin, South African-born, went to Canada with his parents when he was 14 years old. He enlisted in the Canadian Army at 15 and worked for a Toronto department store after the First World War. In 1921 he came to Britain and began his career in the entertainment field as a carnival Barker.

In his West End office Billy Butlin—short, round-faced, half hidden behind a great desk—does not seem to measure up to some of Britain's pioneers of the past. This impression soon disappears when he begins to talk.

He speaks quietly and precisely and everything he says is the product of a keen mind. He sticks to facts and rarely digresses.

These are among the qualities which have brought him success and made him almost a legend in Britain. He has gathered round him a talented team of executives and an organization with wide ramifications and big resources. With these ingredients, Billy Butlin is confident of his ability to turn private schemes into concerns into money makers.

The first is already open—the super-luxury Port Montague Beach Hotel at Nassau, Bahamas. "It is fully booked up for about three months and about 50 per cent of the visitors will be spending dollars," Butlin said. The hotel, 50 acres of lawns, lakes and tropical flora, cost him \$2,400,000.

Dollars For Britain

A second hotel, the Princess, in Bermuda, will open next month. This includes "cottage colonies" of private suites in separate buildings. Butlin paid \$2,000,000 for it and anticipates that it will prove a big dollar-earner.

The third new enterprise, and the most spectacular, is the "Vacation Village" now being built on a mile-wide coral island at Grand Bahama. Butlin bought 3,000 acres and took an option on another 20,000. He sent out 30 British workers to lead a team mobilized from among the 700 local inhabitants who have hitherto had the island to themselves.

When completed the village will accommodate 2,000 holiday-makers. Butlin has set Jan. 1, 1950, as the opening date. Then he plans to fly in the first of the United States and Canadian visitors who, he hopes, will provide Britain with another \$1,000,000 a month.

"I estimate that 75 per cent of those holidaying at Grand Bahama will be Americans and the other 25 per cent Canadians," Butlin said. They will each pay \$100 a week and, with the amount they spend in the shops, I expect monthly earnings to reach about \$1,000,000.

"All the money we are spending on these projects is in sterling and almost all the earnings will be in dollars, so they should play a valuable part in British recovery."

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UNITED NATIONS NURSE
Miss Elizabeth Calmers, 33, sits at her desk in the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, during a recent U. N. meeting. Miss Calmers is in charge of health conditions at the United Nations. With three nurses to assist her, Miss Calmers assures 24-hour-a-day service at the U. N. clinic.

QUICKIES BY KEN REYNOLDS

"If it isn't electricity in your hair — then it's fleas you caught from the puppy we got with a Guardian Want Ad."

Winter Closes Model Railway Near Winnipeg

WINNIPEG, Jan. 13 — (CP) — A railroad empire, its facilities crippled by cold weather and heaping snow drifts, has been forced to close down for the winter. It's not a major catastrophe; the railway is the Red River Valley Railroad, a string of model locomotives which operates only during the summer.

As soon as the snow is off the ground, the steam engines again will chug around 600 feet of steel track on a private lot off Henderson Highway in East Kildonan.

The railroad started by chance about seven years ago. Jack Woods ran an advertisement asking to hear from anyone interested in model engines. A group of eight men saw the advertisement and formed the railroad. It now has 12 members. They include machinists, clerks, draughtsmen and dentists.

The club has only a few engines, including scale models of the Royal Tour train engine and the Royal Scot. All have travelled miles around the steel track. The engine, one-sixteenth the size of the originals, take from 18 months to two years to build the club—but there's one catch. To qualify, the person joining has to build his own model with his own lathes. One of the club's founders is James Hewitson, a railway machinist. He has built several models and has had his model of the Royal Tour train engine exhibited at the New York and Toronto exhibitions.

Three-Cylinder Model

Mr. Hewitson's son, John, now in Montreal and a former member of the club, is building a three cylinder model. All models owned by Red River club members have two cylinders.

The elder Hewitson does all his building in his basement, where he keeps his models. He has a model of a London, Midland and Scottish Railway engine which has a coal and water feeder, a throttle gauge, boiler and furnace.

It weighs 200 pounds and can get up a head of 100 pounds of steam in fewer than 15 minutes. It has been driven more than 400 miles around the track and has carried hundreds of persons. The engine can reach high speeds and has travelled around the track in 33 seconds.

Each model carries a trailer for the engine and two or three passengers. Members take their models to the rail yard mostly on Sundays. Dozens of youngsters wait eagerly for rides on them.

The track has been built up on posts and, to keep it level, it is raised four feet off the ground in some places. The track is not dismantled for the winter.

The Red River Valley Railroad is not the only model railway in Winnipeg. Another club, called the National Pacific Railroad of Western Canada, has been operating for some time. This club, however, has its trains run by electricity in the basement of a members home.

Seven Kinds Of Death & Injury In Atomic Bombs

By HOWARD W. BLAKESLEE
Associated Press Science Editor

NEW YORK, Jan. 14 — (AP) — Atomic bombs carry seven kinds of death and injury. Three-and-a-half years after the first bomb it is safe to say there are no more kinds.

Five of the death-dealers are in the flash and the first few seconds afterward. The others come late and may hang around for years.

The first is concussion. This atomic blast knocks down nearly all kinds of present-day structures for a mile on all sides. It wrecks them for two miles, and sometimes farther. However, there is an "if." The blast does this if the bomb is exploded well above the tops of the tallest buildings. If it hits on the ground, the concussion won't travel as far.

The second is heat—millions of degrees in the interior of the bursting bomb. This heat spreads at the speed of light, but shrinks rapidly. There is still enough to set fire to anything inflammable within a mile. Some things blaze at two miles.

Third is the radioactive rays. These are instantaneous and come from the flash. There are two kinds, both equally deadly. One is gamma rays, which are the same as X-rays. The other is neutrons. The gamma rays are likely to be fatal at a mile. They cause hair to fall out at more than a mile. The neutrons travel not much more than a half mile.

Fourth is ultra-violet light, in the form of a flash of powerful sun-tan rays. These make bad burns at more than two miles on exposed human flesh. They do not kill, but a person sun-bathing could get a fatal flash burn.

Fireball Menace

Fifth is the fireball. This is a ball of white-hot air and other atoms, that forms at the spot

where the bomb exploded. It is a miniature sun several hundred yards in diameter and it can burn you badly at a mile away. It also emits tremendous doses of gamma rays.

The fireball is dangerous for probably not more than 10 seconds.

The long reach of these perils has been measured in the world's first five atomic bomb explosions. After the explosion, you face the sixth peril. This is from transmutation, i.e., the change from one element to another. The neutrons in the original flash hit billions of atoms on and near the earth's surface. These hits change the atoms into new chemical elements, all of them radioactive. The neutrons can change some of the gold in your teeth, or the watch or cigaret lighter in your pocket. They can transmute some of the carbon in your body and the phosphorus in your bones and brain. The gold teeth, watch, cigaret case or internal changes are not likely to kill you. But the teeth, watch and case will cause radioactive burns if you carry them for a few days.

The seventh death is speculative. Some authorities declare No. 7 is really the greatest risk of all. They say that maybe it can hurt more people than atomic explosions.

This risk is the radioactive atoms that rise into the stratosphere, and spread ultimately all over the world. Finally they fall to the earth and into the oceans. What a heavy fall can do was shown by Bikini's underwater explosion, where they fell in the rain.

Potent For Centuries

After they come down, these atoms in many cases will be just as dangerous 100 years from now as at the instant they were born in the atom-splitting explosion. The bomb's plutonium, most of which does not split, but vapor-

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