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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Former Race Tracks In Province Recalled

I HAVE an interesting subject for this week's column. I've had it in mind since sometime last summer when I heard a CBC program suggest that horse racing is stronger than ever in this province. The chap who wrote the script, whoever he was, just wasn't aware of the history of the sport here. He couldn't have been when he made such a statement.

I started a few days ago to recall the many tracks that were operating in this province when I was a youngster. I had help from Frank Acorn, Charlottetown and George Hooper, who lives now in Stanhope.

Here are some of the tracks as we jotted them down. There was Summerfield, Marie, Montague, St. Peters, Alberton.

I remember driving with horse and wagon to Jim Perdergast's racing program at New Annan – my friend Willis Matheson was with me. Much nearer my Rose Valley home was the track at Kinkora where John P. Smith, a Kinkora merchant, added to the thrills of Island racing with such horses as Lacopia, Corwin Hal, Miss Eldred, and several others.

Another track was at Kensington which was only several miles away. Summerside was a well known track then as it is now.

### First Racing Under Lights

MILLIGAN AND MORRISON established the track at Northam which had the first race under lights in this country. I had heard it said that this was the first track in North America to have races under lights.

There were racing programs at Riverside and Covehead, Upton Farm had a track – it was on the Jenkins property now farmed by the Lanks in West Royalty, and part of the farm is now owned by the Research Station.

There was racing at Garfield and at Georgetown. Springfield also had a track though it was in comparatively recent years. This track was on the Nelson Matheson farm.

There was racing also at Charlottetown which was the biggest of them all, and this track is still operating, as is Summerside.

In former years the tracks I have listed here, and possibly others, were the training grounds for the horses that would later come to Charlottetown or Summerside, to try their speed and stamina against the better horses in the province.

### 60 Years At Charlottetown

MR. ACORN told me he had not missed a race at Charlottetown in 42 years.

But George Hooper topped that considerably when he told me he did not miss a race at Charlottetown in 60 years, not until this past summer.

Mr. Hooper told me, also, that he had raced horses on every track in the province during his days as a driver. And there's a record I challenge any reader to beat.

This is not a challenge, but I'd like to hear from someone who can tell me of a track I missed in my summary. There may well be other tracks, if so I'd welcome a letter, or call about them. What about Elmsdale?

### Breadalbane's Centennial Project

WORD FROM Breadalbane indicates that this coming Saturday afternoon a gathering in the new school will fittingly observe the village's centennial project. Their project has been to get signal lights established at the railway crossing. They'd like as many old Breadalbane friends as possible to come back to help them celebrate the occasion. Just in case a great number come, however, I suggest some of you bring some eats with you. The latter part of the afternoon will be given over to eating.

I saw many interesting old items at the Centennial gatherings I attended this year. In the Fortune Hall, at the district Women's Institute convention, I was shown Genevieve Opaquez Platter that was brought here by Mrs. Brenton (Marjorie) Stead.

THE PLAQUE was brought to this Island by Mrs. Stead's grandmother, Helen Henderson, and her parents when her father came here as a stonecutter to work on the Provincial Building.

Her parents brought it from Scotland and settled at Newcastle, New Brunswick. When fire destroyed Newcastle in 1825, the dishes were lowered into the Miramichi River for safekeeping.

Helen Henderson married William Harper and they lived on Fitzroy Street. Mr. Henderson had a sash-door factory on the spot now occupied by Central Creameries, Mrs. Stead told me, though the present establishment must cover more ground than the old factory did. Miss Hilda Harper, Charlottetown is another grandmother of the William Harpers.