

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., Dec. 6, 1968

ACROSS THE ISLAND

1911 Prices, Styles Prove Interesting

By NEIL A. MATHESON

NORMAN NICHOLSON, Montague sent me recently an interesting subject; it was the 1911 edition of Holman's catalogue. Prices and styles were interesting.

Screen doors ran from 89 cents to \$1.50, the latter in quarter-oak finish. "Perfect" screens were selling for 25 cents, Acme screens at 18 cents.

A home cobbler set cost all of 60 cents. It contained an iron stand, three lasts, hammer, knife, pegging, stabbing and sewing awls, awl handles, two packages of nails and a sheet of instructions.

Leather soles sold for 12 to 18 cents and rubber soles cost 20 cents. All rubber heels cost 25 cents.

An Iver Johnson bicycle, 1911 model, sold for \$30. A breech-loading shot gun sold at \$4.75.

Red Rose coffee sold for 40 cents a pound. Reliance blend tea at 25 cents a pound. A large package of shredded wheat cost 15 cents, or two packages for 25.

Bulldog paint sold for \$1.80 a gallon, Holman's barn paint sold at 89 cents a gallon.

The best horse rug cost \$2.00, the best set of harness, single harness, sold at \$17.50

Cannot Harness Horse

THAT REMINDS me that Frank "Duck" Acorn told me this week he would bet with anyone that there are more young chaps in the province who can take a tractor apart and put it back together again, than there are youngsters who could properly harness a horse.

A "Splendid Range" sold at \$25.00, a Kootenay steel range was \$41.50.

A Morris reclining arm chair sold at \$3.75. A five-piece parlor suite cost all of \$30. Accordions sold from \$3.00 to \$5.00. A "Stradivarius" model violin was listed at \$3.00.

A solid oak rocking chair cost \$2.40.

A lounge illustrated in the catalogue had a fancy carved wood back, finished in golden, strong spring bottom and shaped legs. It was upholstered in fancy linen tapestry, in green, red and brown. "As upholstered as shown in plain and fancy velours, assorted colors", the price was \$6.00.

A five-piece parlor set sold for \$27.00. It consisted of a large settee, arm chair, a spring rocker and two reception chairs.

A Golden Oak finished wooden bedstead with neatly carved top sold for \$2.75. Finished in surface oak the bedstead cost 25 cents more.

For an iron bed, spring and mattress the price was \$6.50. An iron and brass bed sold for \$4.25.

Hercules Bed Spring

HOLMAN'S ADVERTISED a Hercules bed spring. The story says "we had a spring at the Prince County Exhibition, put 1,800 pounds of nails on it, and left them there for two hours."

The spring showed no sign of sag when the 1,800 pounds of nails were removed.

For a No. 24 Hercules spring, guaranteed for five years, frames of best hardwood, double weave, best steel wire with six heavy steel wire supports and copper wire side supports, the price was \$3.25.

This is from memory, but I believe I can recall seeing a Hercules spring advertised in the Guardian some 50 years ago, with a large barrel of lime pictured on top of it.

A barrel of lime was just about the heaviest thing a farmer had to handle at that time, and the large barrel was awkward to handle as well as heavy. It was smart advertising I've always thought.

The best linoleum advertised in the old catalogue sold at 50 to 75 cents a yard.

A WOOLEN crib blanket sold at 50 cents.

A real hair puff sold at \$1.90, a real hair switch cost \$2.75 to \$3.75.

The fanciest ladies' hat advertised was priced at \$5.00.

Double width dress silks sold at \$1.35 a yard for the best quality. Others sold as low as \$1.00.

A Japan taffeta silk sold at 33 cents a yard.

The ladies dresses, skirts, etc. that were illustrated swept the ground.

Strangely enough one of the more costly items of women's attire was the "Black silk Moire underskirts" with 12 inch flounce and deep dust frill. They sold for \$4.00. A black taffeta underskirt sold for \$4.75. And this for an item that was never seen under the long, flowing skirts and dresses of the era.

Even in that period, close to 60 years ago, they were pushing "reducing corsets". One of the items said "one of the greatest corset inventions of later years, absolutely guaranteed unbreakable over the hips". It sold for \$1.50.

Another item said "The only ideal reducing corset, moulds the entire corseted part of the form into fashionable lines with ease and comfort." Wonder about the word "ease".

Men's Gloves At 10 Cents

MEN'S GLOVES ranged from a low of 10 cents to a high of \$1.25 for a really fancy pair.

Derby hats cost 98 cents, the "Royalty stiff hat" was priced at \$2.25. Genuine Panama went up to \$5.00.

Ladies Oxfords, slippers and pumps ranged from \$1.00 to \$2.50 per pair.

Women's patent leather boots were fastened with buttons.

Men's Kangaroo grain high cut boots went as high as \$3.95.

Men's single breasted, fine worsted suits cost \$11.00. A "very stylish suit" cost \$15.00.

Grain leather boots . . . with heavy tap soles, brass nailed, sold at \$4.50 a pair.

Goose Lays In Fall

KEN CRAFTER, Baltic writes that Glenwood Adams of Malpeque has a goose that performed unusually this year.

She laid 10 eggs late in the season, sat on them and brought out 10 goslings on November 17th. The goslings are doing fine and are as strong as spring goslings, Ken tells me.

I recall that Norman "Hawk" Larter of Winsloe told me earlier this year about a goose of his that laid a late clutch of eggs and hatched them. Perhaps Mr. Larter and Mr. Adams could get together and compare notes on their performing geese.

Christmas is getting close and next week I have a story on a Christmas Cactus that has been blooming for more than 50 years in the same flower pot.