

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., Nov. 22, 1968

ACROSS THE ISLAND

Fox Ranching Days Promotion Recalled

By NEIL A. MATHESON

Many of our older readers have heard a great deal about the fantastic proposals made to the public by people who were promoting the sale of stock in some of the larger fox ranches in this province back in the boom days, and even after that period. This one was printed in 1927.

This week I have the story of the proposition that was offered by the Rosebank Fur Farms at Southport. When I bought the property some 23 years ago I saved some of the brochures the ranch used in its best days. That's how I happen to have this one now.

"Here is our promotion to you", this sales promotion effort said, and here is what is offered:

"We will enter into an eight-year agreement with you.

"We will guarantee you 15 percent per year for seven years on the amount you invest with us and at the end of eight years, guarantee to return you the principal.

"How can this be done?" the promotion blurb asks, then answers in this fashion.

"We will sell you one pair of foxes for \$500, the foxes to be registered or registerable under Canadian Government national registration.

Ranching "Free Of Charge"

"THIS PRECAUTION is taken to assure our investors as well as ourselves that the quality offspring will be in demand for propagation purposes and for pelt production.

"We the Rosebank Fur Farms, Limited agree to ranch foxes from year to year for a period of eight years, free of charge. We further guarantee an increase of one fox pup, with the proviso that this pup will be retained by the company and the sum of \$100 credited to the contract holder under the following terms and conditions:

"\$75 will be paid in cash, equivalent to 15 percent on your investment of \$500.

"\$25 will be retained by the company as a sinking fund, to be invested together with other moneys, derived from other investors, in such bonds that will net a minimum of five percent interest.

"At the expiration of the contract (eight years) the investor has the privilege of surrendering his contract, and the company the privilege of discontinuing the contract, returning the principal sum so invested, namely \$500."

Deal Is Explained

THE PROMOTION paper explains how the company can do that:

"At the end of eight years the foxes will have outlived their usefulness as breeders. We will, however, pelt them and allow you for their pelts \$210, a fair market value.

"The sinking fund into which \$25.00 a year has been paid will amount to \$190, including interest, at the end of seven years.

“\$100 is the value of the fox pup for the eighth year.

“The total of these amounts \$210, \$190 and \$100 is \$500, which we will hand back to you.

In another part of the promotional sales paper, it said in part:

“Remember that when you invest with us you are actually purchasing a pair of high class silver Black foxes . . . They are your foxes. The company has agreed to ranch them for you free of charge without any further risk or trouble to you.

“Here is our proposition in a nutshell. You pay us \$500, at the end of eight years you will have your \$500 back, plus your profits of \$75 for seven years, \$525, in all \$1025.

“Where can you find an investment equal to that?”

I do not know how many people bought this easy money idea, but I recall that Leo Frank, the man who managed the ranch, told me once before he left this province that the advertising, including literature like the stuff I have been quoting here, did sell shares in the ranch.

But it cost \$125 in promotion work to sell \$100 shares in the ranch, he told me. And you can't make money that way. You couldn't even do it in the fabulous days of the Silver Fox in this province.

Farm Column Missing

MY FARM COLUMN did not appear this week through a production problem which was unavoidable. I make this statement for those who told me last week at the potato meeting here “I'll be looking for what you say in your 'Farm Column' next week about this affair.”

Other things I was discussing included the several suggestions to consolidate the dairy manufacturing and processing business here.