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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Holman's Catalogue Interesting Reading

By NEIL A. MATHESON

THE MAIL this week has been particularly interesting. I have a Holman's catalogue printed for 1931-32 and a letter from a South Lake lady telling me of purchases she made from the Holman's Catalogue of 38 years ago.

Another reaction was to the Island Hotel on Holman's Island and two versions are quite different. One suggests the hotel did burn to the ground. It was in the book by "Tom A. Hawke" which was the name used by J.J. (Jack) Enman who wrote his book in 1906 but died in Summerside only a few years ago. Jack started his career in Charlottetown with the Examiner I believe, and finished it with the Journal.

The other Holman's Island reference came in a book "Historic Highlights" printed by the Island Historic Society, and edited by my friend Mary B. Brehaut.

Its story of the hotel is much different, and I am inclined to believe it for it quoted J. Leroy Holman, a nephew of the man who erected the hotel and tried to build up a tourist business there.

Speaking in the year 1957, Leroy Holman's story said that fire destroyed a portion of the hotel on Holman's Island, but that "the rest was hauled across the ice to Summerside where it still stands as part of the Queen Hotel" and the writer of that particular story added "no doubt accounting for the Queen's location almost at the water's edge".

Incidentally the Queen was destroyed by fire not so many years ago.

Hordes Of Mosquitoes

LEROY HOLMAN and Tom A. Hawke agreed on one thing which was not mentioned in the manuscripts I used for my column of last week:

The hotel site became (un?) inhabitable because of the hordes of mosquitoes that frequented the place. But the hotel did flourish, apparently, for a few years. I'll have more on the hotel in a later column. I want to talk this week about the catalogue which was kindly sent to me by Mrs. Chesley Clarke, Cavendish and the letter from Mrs. Louis Stewart, South Lake, otherwise known as Tuna land, or the world's Tuna Capital.

Mrs. Stewart tells me that she was married in the fall of 1932 and here is what she purchased from the Holman's catalogue of that year.

One iron bed, spring and mattress; one dresser and commode and a five-piece chamber set. She also bought an eight-day clock which is still keeping good time.

And what do you suppose our friend from South Lake paid for all that?

Well she paid \$34.95 for all of the stuff, except the clock, for that she paid \$4.50. Imagine those prices, but remember that this was in the time of the "Great Depression" as it is called, but there was nothing great about it to us who lived through it.

As Mrs. Stewart says, "What a change to what you would pay for those same articles today."

Interesting Prices

LOOKING THROUGH the catalogue here are a few items, and I'm sure you'll find the prices interesting.

For the men who hunt, a 12-gauge Ivor Johnson Hercules, double-barreled hammerless shot gun sold for \$23.50. A Champion single barrel gun by the same manufacturer sold for \$9.50.

A three-piece Kroehler suite "that will add charm to your home" sold for \$109. They were in high grade mohair.

A Chesterfield table cost \$6.45; another "Beautiful Kroehler 3-piece Mohair Chesterfield set" cost \$89.

A seven-piece dining room set sold for \$19 and it was made of Golden Oak at that.

Kitchen chairs sold at 90 cents, or six for a dollar. A rocking chair sold for \$1.75, another for \$3.25.

A walnut finished steel bed sold for \$8.75. A folding card table cost \$1.85. A Simmons Slumber King spring sold for \$12.00.

Double sided records were three for a dollar. The best white Scotch wool blankets sold for \$8.95 and flannelette blankets as low as \$1.55.

Ladies silk stockings sold for \$1.00 which was not so cheap, but yet those ladies "Fleece lined stockings sold for 29 cents". Wouldn't the fleece lined covering take away some of the glamour from milady's legs?

'Modern' Watches Advertised

RAYON, SILK and wool hose sold at three for one dollar. Montrose "Modern" watches sold as low as eight dollars each, both for men and the ladies models.

Stanfields heavy underwear, and boy were they heavy, sold at \$1.19 a garment. All wool, fleece lined combination sets cost \$1.75.

Stylish men's overcoats sold for from \$13.95 to \$24.50 for the top grades. And that reminds me I paid \$24.00 back in 1928 for the best and the most stylish overcoat I have ever had.

A four-buckle overshoe cost \$2.85, thigh-length rubber boots sold for \$4.35.

Milk Lunch biscuits in bulk were 15 cents a pound, the cream sodas sold for 14 cents.

Baking soda was five cents a package. Island cheese was 16 cents a pound. Magic Baking Powder was 15 cents a four-ounce tin.

Minards Liniment was 25 cents a bottle. Surprise Soap sold at 10 bars for 49 cents. Six stainless steel dessert knives were \$1.35.

Double-boilers were popular then and they cost all of 79 cents for a two-quart size.

A 36-piece set of Royal Ivory Marathon dinnerware cost \$4.78. A 50-piece set cost \$9.48.

Tire Prices Were Low

HERE ARE some prices on automobile tires in 1932-33. A 30 by 3 ½ inch tire – those were used on Model T Fords – cost \$5.50 each.

The biggest tire cost \$9.15 – it was 30 by five inches.

A Pitcher Pump cost \$2.60, a farm pump \$3.85. An improved force pump was \$14.95.

A driving harness of hand-made, Oak-tanned leather was \$19.75.

Ice cream freezers were popular then and they sold all the way from \$4.75 for a small size up to \$18.95 for the 12-quart size.

An Enterprise Iron King range sold for \$80. The Iron Duke was \$88. Ranges sold as low as \$49.79.

A galvanized range boiler sold for \$9.00. The old Queen Heaters cost \$4.95. Their commercial name was Victor Special Airtight and they sure could kick up heat in a hurry on frosty winter nights.

No Ladies Clothing Shown

THERE IS no ladies clothing in this Number 51 catalogue, but the index indicates there was another and larger catalogue put out the same year and it was Number 50. That one probably catered to the ladies.

There were 66 pages in Number 51 and more than one hundred pages in Number 50.

My thanks to Mrs. Clark for letting me have the old Holman's catalogue. I'm leaving it on the same desk I found it. Again, thank you, Mrs. Clark.