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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Documents Mention Old Southport Plan

By NEIL A. MATHESON

WE HEARD various suggestions about what a Causeway construction would do to the ice in the Northumberland Strait, or what the ice would do to the causeway that was twice promised, many times discussed and finally the promise of Canada was broken by the present incumbents at Ottawa.

A hunt this week through some old documents indicates that something similar was discussed 86 years ago when zealous residents of Southport, and of Charlottetown also, proposed the idea of extending the wharf at Southport to the channel. That was before the Hillsboro Bridge was built and ferries ran regularly between Charlottetown and Southport.

One Henry Beer asked if such an extension were made, would the ice jam in the channel. "On the other hand," it was stated "when a westerly wind drives the ice over onto the Southport shore and it packs, no boat that can be built could possibly get through it."

The statement continued:

"The proposed extension, which seems to be the only means of overcoming this obstacle, will carry the wharf almost to the middle of the River (Hillsboro) and the swell and the spray which will fly over it on stormy days late in the fall may make it impassible."

To Bridge The River

Mr. Beer recalled that 10 years previously – that would be in 1873 – it had been proposed to bridge the Hillsborough (that was the spelling used then) River and the government of that day had obtained a survey and report from Bertrand Moore, at that time superintendent of public works, and John Boyd, C.E.

Mr. Beer suggested that the government should look further into the bridge possibility, though he did not necessarily endorse its feasibility.

The bridge across the river was finally built – it was completed in 1905 – and someday, just possibly there may be a Causeway, or some other means of permanent crossing placed across the Northumberland Strait.

But that's sometime in the future – it would appear to be a very long time in the future, if one can judge the possibility by the sort of thinking that prevails at Ottawa now.

After all, it took Ottawa from 1873 – when P.E.I. came into Confederation – until 1917 to make good on its promise of continuous steam communication with the mainland.

Maybe there's hope for a permanent Strait crossing yet, though none who is alive now is likely to see it.

Losing Pounds To Music

THE MAGAZINE was “Modern Priscilla”, it was published in Boston back in November, 1922 and it had some items which I found interesting. Sorry, I cannot recall who sent it to me.

One of them was the story of the magic of “Wallace’s Reducing Records”. One story told of a lady who lost 103 pounds just by listening to the record. Pictures, before and after indicated the woman had changed her figure, but nobody told what she weighed, either before or after.

Wallace was the man with all of the magic, but his first name was a secret, apparently. Here is some of his sales pitch:

“To get thin to music is really a ‘lark’, compared to any other method of reducing. The patient does not have to starve, there is nothing to take; just a few minutes each day, just a few movements with a thrill to each, the time seems short because of the entertaining music.”

Today’s advertising copy writers look good by today’s standards, but I wonder how they would shape up against some of those with the “miracle cure” pitch of the past.

And Kondon’s Catarrhal Jelly was “guaranteed by 30 years service to millions of Americans. “It works wonders for colds, sneezing, cough, chronic catarrh, headache, sore nose, etc.”

Some of the old cure-alls were really good, to hear the advertisers tell it.

And M. Triletty, Binghamton, New York was correcting the shape of a woman’s nose and, presto, she became a success.

Silk Stockings – 12 Months

AN OHIO FIRM was advertising silk stockings – they were called “hose” at the time – that were guaranteed to wear 12 months, or be replaced free of charge. How about that.

One advertisement reminds ladies that “Beauty has helped many a girl to success,” then noted that “Stillman’s Freckle Cream” was just what they needed.

Mart Goldman’s “hair color restorer” would not wash off. “It leaves your hair clean, soft and fluffy.”

Another pitch said that though the thermometer went to zero, or even below “You’ll be warm with Vellastic Underwear.”

The monthly payment plan was in vogue back in 1923 and a rocking chair that looks so comfortable, you feel rested even at a glance “cost only 20 cents a day”, the advertisement proclaimed.

TODAY’S MERCHANDISERS have not changed the customers appeal so much after all. One difference is that now some of the stores push the “You charge it” bit more. Indeed I recall seeing “Charge it” signs plastered over all at least one of the stores in Charlottetown. There may be more. I’m not an authority on that sort of thing.