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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Oyster Culture Gives Promise

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THERE ARE exciting possibilities in oyster culture and research in this province in the next few years. Part of it has been already accomplished, but the more exciting phases are still to be developed.

Let me say at the start I don't claim to know anything about oyster culture, but a talk recently with Al England and Roy Drinnan at Ellerslie stirred my interest in industry developments.

Mr. England is acting officer in charge of the Oyster Culture Station operated by the federal department of fisheries. Mr. Drinnan is investigator-in-charge of the Fisheries Research Board sub station there. Their functions are separate, but they join their efforts harmoniously in a bid to promote the oyster culture and development.

THE CULTURE station is distributing this year, for the first time, seed oysters to lease holders in the three Maritime Provinces. Some 200 barrels were made available, with 80 going to P.E.I. and N.B. and 40 to N.S. Distribution was made on a draw arrangement so that everyone would be treated fairly. There just wasn't enough to go around.

I was interested to find that oyster spat are collected on collectors made of old fashioned cardboard egg crate fillers, wrapped for sturdiness and durability in fox wire. The fillers are no longer used commercially so they are made specially for the job in Winnipeg, I was told.

But Mr. Drinnan has visions of a startling increase in production for seed oysters. He's said production can be increased one hundred fold and available facts seem to bear him out.

A 2 1/2 INCH female oyster can lay 4 million eggs - Americans say a large female lays up to 20 million - but mortality is so high - it has reached 99 percent - it drastically reduces the reproductive capacity.

Move the operation inside with temperature and most other conditions under complete control, and you see how great the possibilities for expanded production really are.

### New Developments Planned

MR. DRINNAN has been spawning, breeding and feeding oyster larvae - I saw a quarter-million in sterilized sea water on the bottom of a small plastic tank of perhaps 3 gallon capacity - in the old cramped laboratory at Ellerslie and a new and much larger laboratory is now almost ready for action. And action is intended. "We expect to breed

40 million larvae next year”, he said, “in a program unique to Canada.” Even in the old lab they had “the first larvae grown from eggs in Canada.”

Incidentally, those larvae are so small that the quarter-million were visible to the naked eye on the tank bottom, only as a slight discoloration, and I had to peer closely to see them.

NEXT YEAR they plan to build a new oyster hatchery just behind the new lab building, and it will provide facilities to investigate problems concerned with handling large numbers of larvae, and particularly such things as their mortality, and the poor growth of the young spat.

They have cultured natural food at the lab - they're very small plants 3-7 of a millimetre in diameter - which the larvae can take into their mouths which are almost infinitesimally small.

The feeding experiment is important, Mr. Drinnan told me, because if success is proven - and that is indicated thus far - the industry can buy packaged foods and raise the larvae themselves.

THE INDUSTRY could produce the oysters and bring them along as far as they wanted under laboratory conditions, or in areas where natural enemies could be controlled. They're doing that now in Long Island, he told me where a chemical is used effectively to control the Starfish, one of the worst enemies, in areas where the oyster can grow to maturity without any large-scale mortality.

Mr. Drinnan told me the day will come when there will be named varieties of oysters, just as there are of grain and potatoes now.

I spent a few interesting hours at Ellerslie with Mr. England and Mr. Drinnan and heard from two unusually courteous and friendly gentlemen an exciting story, which I've tried to crowd into these few paragraphs.

#### Red Point Park Is Admired

I SAW at Red Point a few days ago a park that will rank in natural beauty and excellent beach facilities with any in the province. Publisher Bill Hancox took me down to the park, in between some calls we were making at Souris nearby.

Mr. Speaker John MacLean was enthusiastic about it when we dropped in at his store for a chat. “The park is being used by a great many people,” he said, “although it is only in the early stages of development.” They were putting in water and tile drainage when we were there.

HON. MELVIN McQuaid, provincial treasurer and attorney general, said already there is need for extra space, and more land is being sought to enlarge the park. Mr. Hancox had visited the park earlier this year with his family and enthused to me about the excellent beach and the beautiful view, so it was “a must” on our hurried visit to Eastern Kings.

Mr. McQuaid says the “white sand beach stretches for miles, and there isn't a trace of a hole.” Another park is being developed at Campbell's Cove on the north shore, not far from East Point.

I have long considered the country east of Souris to rank with the most beautiful in the province. A drive that way is recommended to Islanders from other areas. When

Mr. Hancox and I suggested the area is ripe for more tourist visitors, we got hearty accord from Messrs MacLean and McQuaid.

### Rivernorth Champions Recalled

A SALE at North River this week dispersed Rivernorth Jersey cattle, cattle the late Edison Mutch built up some years ago into one of the best known herds in the country. He built the herd through shrewd choice of sires and careful selection, and while he experienced many thrills in the show ring, for he bred show type, he never lost sight of the performance at the milk pail, the quality that is needed to make the operation pay.

I think his greatest thrills came at the Royal Winter Fair in 1952 and 1953 when he took Jester's Standard Dreamer and Edgelea Beacon Jester's Standard to the grand championship in successive years, something a private breeder had never accomplished previously.

HE BRED Standard Dreamer in his own herd, and raised the Edgelea sire which he selected, in a barn near Toronto, for the P.E.I. Jersey Breeders Club. They turned the youngster down, but Edison fed and developed him, and took him to the top in Canada's biggest agricultural show.

We had many interesting chats at the Maritime Winter Fair, where he scored many a triumph. We used to meet late at night when he had his herd bedded down, and I had filed my copy for the day. He was always good copy and interesting to talk with.

I don't know how you feel about it, but I can't help feeling it is sad to see the dispersal of an enterprise that Mr. Mutch, and his good wife, put so many years of effort into developing.

### Matheson Rejects Ottawa Bid

ELSEWHERE IN this paper you will find a story quoting Alex Matheson as saying he is turning down the federal Liberal offer of a cabinet portfolio, if the party wins the next election.

Mr. Matheson's answer changes the position in Queens and leaves it without a single Liberal candidate in sight for the election, when Mr. Diefenbaker calls it, probably next spring.

It reminds me that my old friend Tom Kickham has a date with destiny October 25, when the Kings County Liberals name a candidate to represent them in the federal battle. Tom came close in a byelection, but apparently the man who won two federal battles and lost three, has some strong opposition coming up. I hear from several sources that John Mullally is favored although last night I was told of a development in one important area that favors Mr. Kickham. And Lester O'Donnell, a Charlottetown lawyer, with roots in Souris River, is also in the race. The three-way fight looks interesting from this distance.