

WITHOUT WARNING

Operation "Silver Thaw"

When the morning of January 5th dawned mild and moist over Prince Edward Island, few if any snowdrifts were raised. Everyone on P. E. I. has come to expect some sort of a January thaw on the island. It's more or less traditional, like lobsters, and oysters, and Island hospitality. And when freezing rain began that afternoon no one, least of all the personnel attached to RCAF Station Summerside thought very much of it. People went about their everyday chores in the usual manner and wondered when it would stop. Most went to bed that night expecting to find the usual crisp winter weather in the morning.

The first significant occurrence that foreshadowed the havoc to come occurred on the morning of the 6th when a complete power failure occurred at 8:30. The day dawned with the usual crisp weather to fall without letup, coating everything it touched with its incandescent whiteness. Covering power lines, cables, telephone poles and trees with its terrifying beauty. Telephone poles began to groan menacingly as the ever increasing weight of the ice on the wires linking them continued to build up.

Trees began reaching the earth, unable to support their parasitic burden. Slowly at first and then with a quickening pace they started to give way. Still the rain continued. The first pole crashed to the ground. Another and still more. They began to fall in groups of three, four, five and even more. Through the early morning hours of Saturday, the awesome sight continued, as whole streets of poles thundered to the ground. Trees, bent to the breaking point gave way under the merciless pressure and broke under the strain, littering the ground with their ravaged beauty.

By Saturday noon there was little left standing on the Station. Wire, cable and transformers were in a tangled disarray, lining the roadways. Mute evidence to the power of nature. Through Saturday afternoon the damage continued at a decreasing rate. Late Saturday a thaw set in, loosening the ice and sending it tumbling crashing to the ground. On Sunday rain began again, threatening several times to renew its attack, hampering the efforts of the workers, who were attempting to regain some type of order. At last after 55 hours of continuous freezing rain it was over and the gigantic task of cleaning up began.

The Station swung into action as soon as the extent of the damage was appraised on Saturday morning. Following a meeting called by the Commanding Officer which was attended by the key personnel of the station, a course of action was determined. It was decided at the meeting to first make barracks and PMQs comfortable and assistance was requested from Maritime Air Command Headquarters in Halifax. Calls went out for specialists to come in and help repair the damage. Messages were relayed by the station radio facilities requesting special equipment to aid in the tremendous job ahead. Oil stoves, lanterns, insulators, poles, protective clothing, power units and heaters were just some of the items requested.

The technical staff of the station were organized under the Chief Technical Officer, S/L Brant Howell, and portioned out to the various jobs to be done. Line gangs were organized immediately and began the task of re-stringing emergency lines in the PMQ area.

Equipment arrived at the station on Sunday. Oil stoves and lanterns were unpacked and distributed to the married quarters. Herman Nelson heaters whose normal function is to provide heating for aircraft engines, were set up and soon began blowing their warming air into barracks, messes and station hospital. Men were organized into patrols to ensure that the heaters were kept supplied with gas.

On Tuesday afternoon WO1 Clemens arrived from AFHQ and was placed in charge of the rehabilitation. A specialist in such situations as he found at Summerside, WO1 Clemens has been solving electrical problems on regular units, radar stations and northern outposts since the outbreak of

World War II. After sizing up the conditions at the station he decided to use a single wire system using the water pipes as ground. This method speeded up the wiring so that by Thursday all the homes in the married quarters had some form of light and the work shifted to the station proper.

Meanwhile, auxiliary power units of various types had been arriving at the station almost daily. A special gang of diesel engineers was set up to put the units in operation and airmen were put on round the clock shift to tend the power plants and keep them in operation. As fast as they were set up the construction engineering section erected shelters around them to protect the workers from the elements.

A/C Costello, Air Officer Commanding Maritime Air Command flew in for a personal inspection on Tuesday afternoon and returned to Halifax to confirm the need for additional assistance.

By the end of the week the station had been returned to semi-normal operation. Essential telephones had been hooked up and most of the station buildings had at least partial light. Heat had been returned to as many buildings as possible. On Saturday, January 14th, the single wire system was converted to a more efficient two wire type, with all ranks from Wing Commanders to ACs pitching in to help.

As poles, primary cables and transformers were repaired, thought was given to the setting up of a centralized generating unit. Power units were withdrawn from PMQs, and other station areas and placed side by side behind the Construction Engineering Section. By Saturday the twelve units had been hooked up into a single generating plant able to feed the whole station. That Saturday, the 21st of January, the Commanding Officer threw the switch in an informal ceremony and for the first time in two weeks the entire station had light. The back of the emergency had been broken.

From then on it was a matter of cleaning up the debris and improving the existing facilities. Since the station was at last in

dependent of outside power sources, they relinquished all claims to the services of the Summerside and Charlottetown lines until the power in surrounding communities could be restored, in addition, heaters, auxiliary units and technicians were made available to several communities, including Miscouche and St. Eleanors.

Looking back on the disaster there is much to be thankful for. If the weather had turned cold following the power failure many people would have suffered to a much greater extent. The almost negligible amount of damage to personal property and the absence of personal injury was a matter of relief to all concerned.

No single person on the station can be singled out for their efforts during the emergency. The whole personnel were organized into a smooth working team almost immediately and continued to work that way until the station was returned to normalcy. The silver thaw of 1956 will long be remembered as the time when the personnel were organized into a smooth working team almost immediately and continued to work that way until the station was returned to normalcy.

Ottawa Reports Fish Landings

OTTAWA (CP)—Canadian fishermen landed a smaller catch in April but substantially more in the first four months of 1956 than in corresponding periods last year. Seafish landings declined in April to 60,369,000 pounds from 83,297,000 but rose in the four month period to 519,529,000 pounds from 318,020,000 in the January-April period last year, the bureau of statistics reported Thursday.

Value of the catch declined in April to \$3,725,000 from \$3,943,000 but rose in the first four months to \$14,677,000 from \$10,998,000 in the January-April period of 1955. Landings on the Atlantic coast dropped in April to 35,651,000 pounds from 79,388,000 but increased in the four month period to 286,342,000 pounds from 186,212,000 last year.

TIMELY NOTES ON FUR FARMING

Good demand continued for standard ranch mink at the West-ern Canadian Raw Fur Auction sales. About 70 per cent of the 20,000 standards was sold with better sizes and good colors of ermine type males bringing from \$27 to \$31, females \$11 to \$13.75. Dark brown males were \$23 to \$26 and ordinary types in weaker sizes and better colors brought \$19 to \$22, females from \$10 to \$11. In mutations silverblues sold most of the 1,000 skins at unchanged prices from April sale. Better lots of males were \$22 to \$24, females \$13 to \$14. Pastels were 95 per cent sold. Stewart males were \$29 to \$34, weaver sizes \$24 to \$27 and females \$15 to \$17.50. Males of better color were \$35 to \$37, females \$20 to \$22.

The Hudson's Bay Company, Montreal, cancelled its special sale of beaver and muskrat which was set for last Wednesday. The Company's next Montreal sale will be a general auction which is opening on June 20th. At that time a wide selection of wild furs will be offered as well as ranch furs.

Ed Gold writing in Women's Wear Daily states that the insolventcies among American fur merchants for the first four months of the year approached \$4 million, close to 80 per cent of total insolventcies during 1955. Last year's total was in excess of \$5,100,000. This was one of the more depressing facts noted in a survey of the American Fur Merchants Association report, which was drawn up under the supervision of William Kolodney, executive director. American Fur Merchants Association records show that following a fairly modest January and February, the insolventcy picture grew much worse. Following one giant "bust" in March, the total for that month topped \$1,700,000. According to trade sources, the large March setback had a snow-balling effect, resulting in a serious loss total for April — more than \$1,200,000. As for the number of firms falling by the wayside via the bankruptcy route 1956 appears well on the way to toppling 1955. During 1955, 107 firms went down, resulting in a settlement of 250 mink, depending on circumstances. Such a ranch, with 3 1/2 kit average, will produce about 750 kits. He will lose, we'll say, 50 of those kits. With good luck, he could average \$25 a pel. At a production of free enterprise — our industry, faced with certain disadvantages. The smaller quantities of pelts produced makes it necessary for them to be partitioned, which usually means lower prices than if offered in matched lots. Not do the pelts carry the same prestige among buyers as those from well-known ranches. The small rancher cannot buy feed as economically as the large producers, and he must buy a feed grinder, mixer, freezer, etc. He has to figure pretty close to the belt when he invests in some new breeding stock. Yet, the one-man ranch is the backbone of the mink producing industry. Without this type of rancher — without this man fighting his way up by the grace of the American institution of free enterprise — our industry would be doomed to stagnation. We need this little man.

"The important thing for the small rancher to keep in mind is that he must produce top-quality pelts. There is no place in today's market for any other kind. Being small need not be a penalty here; many small ranches are producing top quality pelts. He should concentrate his efforts on two or three types. Keep the finest breeding stock that can be found. Buy good feed. Take part in field days, shows and association meetings. Never stop learning more about mink; it's still a comparatively new business."

ROUGH TRIP FOR H.S.T. BONN, West Germany (Reuters) Former president Truman arrived here Thursday after a sleepless night because spring broke on his sleeper from Munich.

SPIRITED BIDDING A feature of the Montreal sale last month that we failed to draw

attention to was the strength shown by white fox, muskrat and ermine at Hudson's Bay Company auction. Clearances for these reached from 82 to 98 per cent. There was spirited bidding for white fox and Quebec beavers were completely sold, but the offering of government Newfoundland beavers was mainly unsold. The attention directed to white fox means also that silver fox and its mutations will be in more demand. The fact that the Russian government has bought a large number of foxes means that they are sensing a comeback for these furs. We hope those who have had the courage to hold on to their foxes will be rewarded in the not too distant future.

A collection of approximately 37,000 standard ranch mink for the account of the Great Lakes Mink Association was 81 per cent sold at New York Auction Company last weekend. Prices on the GLMA were offered the last of the season were quoted by the auction company as very firm with fine goods in excellent demand and medium and lower qualities also moving well. On the 27,272 84 per cent was sold. Seasonal highs for the auction company were reached on both male and female lots. The male bundle brought \$75 and the females \$40.50. Both bundles were shipped by Wuestenberg Market Rates by Elmy Ritter Brothers. A collection of 7,675 UMPA straight types was 85 per cent sold with the highs of \$29 for males and \$13.25 for females.

GROWING FAST "Doc" Collins, editor National Fur News, in his editorial column has a warning to mink ranchers that one of the greatest dangers to the mink industry is over production. Both at home and abroad, the production of mink is growing too fast for the safety of the mink ranching industry. Too many mink — which is where we are headed — is entering the market, creating a glut of supply and demand. First to be hit will be the small and smaller ranches. Some 80 per cent of the nation's mink ranchers, according to National Board estimates, are of the one-man type. One man can handle 250 mink, depending on circumstances. Such a ranch, with 3 1/2 kit average, will produce about 750 kits. He will lose, we'll say, 50 of those kits. With good luck, he could average \$25 a pel. At a production of free enterprise — our industry, faced with certain disadvantages. The smaller quantities of pelts produced makes it necessary for them to be partitioned, which usually means lower prices than if offered in matched lots. Not do the pelts carry the same prestige among buyers as those from well-known ranches. The small rancher cannot buy feed as economically as the large producers, and he must buy a feed grinder, mixer, freezer, etc. He has to figure pretty close to the belt when he invests in some new breeding stock. Yet, the one-man ranch is the backbone of the mink producing industry. Without this type of rancher — without this man fighting his way up by the grace of the American institution of free enterprise — our industry would be doomed to stagnation. We need this little man.

"The important thing for the small rancher to keep in mind is that he must produce top-quality pelts. There is no place in today's market for any other kind. Being small need not be a penalty here; many small ranches are producing top quality pelts. He should concentrate his efforts on two or three types. Keep the finest breeding stock that can be found. Buy good feed. Take part in field days, shows and association meetings. Never stop learning more about mink; it's still a comparatively new business."

ROUGH TRIP FOR H.S.T. BONN, West Germany (Reuters) Former president Truman arrived here Thursday after a sleepless night because spring broke on his sleeper from Munich.

SPIRITED BIDDING A feature of the Montreal sale last month that we failed to draw



NORTHAM SCHOOL CHORUS WINS

Northam School Chorus winners in group singing, grades 4-5-6, in Schurmans School Parade for the 1955-56 season are, from left to right, Front Row: Valerie Ellis, David Moore, Linda Colwill, Elwood Ellis, Carol MacKay, Donna Colwill, Wendy Moore, Emily

Marion Ellis, Shirley Dymont, Betty Colwill; second row: Colwill, Bernice Rodd, Marjorie Paught, Lyden Ellis, Carmen Col-

Leary vicinity. Mrs. W.H. Forsythe, Springfield West, were recent visitors to Charlottetown.

R.C.A.F. Today Is Largest Of Canada's Military Forces

With a total strength of approximately 51,000 men and women, the RCAF today is the largest of Canada's three military forces. For the past year or so, the RCAF has been maintained at or near this establishment.

The taxpayer may well ask, "How are all these people employed?" At this point it might be well to note that all members of the armed forces are themselves taxpayers and are therefore interested in seeing our defence dollars spent wisely. The main job of the RCAF today is the defence of Canada but aside from this aspect, the Canadian public have in time of need, come to rely upon the RCAF Search and Rescue Units. Today the exploits of RCAF helicopters and other aircraft are well known in this respect. In particular, civilian flyers, hunters and fishermen have relied upon this service for their lives when in trouble, far from their aid.

AIR MAPPING The gigantic job of mapping all of Canada has now been nearly completed by the RCAF's Photo Squadron, an undertaking which, if attempted by some other means, would have taken infinitely longer to finish.

The transport and fighter branches of the RCAF are well known to the Canadian public at large and all Canadians take pride in the fact that their Air Division in Europe is second to none in quality of manpower and aircraft. In this area, the work of Maritime Air Command is very prominent. In wartime, it is this Command which would be responsible along with the Royal Canadian Navy, for keeping our sea lanes open.

These are just a few of the duties performed by the personnel of the RCAF. Thus it will be seen that there are many varied and interesting duties to be performed with Canada's Airforce. To those young men and women with the necessary qualifications, the RCAF can offer a satisfying and rewarding career.

Prince Edward Island is very

well represented in the RCAF. Each year a large number of young people from this province enroll and are now performing a real service to their country. Others are furthering their education under the Regular Officer Training Plan or the University Reserve Training Plan. These people are the officers of tomorrow, upon whom we will depend for our future security.

The past year has been no exception. The land of "spuds" has once again contributed many outstanding new enrollees into the RCAF.

O'LEARY

studies which make up the District Convention met at the school on Thursday night to make plans for convention. Mrs. Lloyd Wilkey of Alberton also attended this meeting.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Richards and family, have returned to their home in Duvar after spending the winter months in O'Leary.

Mr. and Mrs. Jackie Arsenault, O'Leary, were visitors to Glenagarry recently, guests of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Rogers.

Mr. James MacDougall of Halifax, is visiting his daughter, Mrs. Wilber Dennis and Mrs. Cecil Easton and other relatives in the vicinity.

Mrs. D.E. Brownrigg, formerly Miss Elga Ellis, is spending some time with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ira Ellis in O'Leary. Her husband is stationed with the R.C.A.F. in Winnipeg.

Mr. and Mrs. Milton Ashley and family of Summerside, spent the weekend with Mr. and Mrs. Erskin Silliker and Mr. and Mrs. James Silliker in Knutsford.

Mrs. Forest Phillips of Charlottetown, is spending a few days with relatives and friends in O-

Mr. and Mrs. Everett Coughlin and family of Rustico, are visitors to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Dalton and Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Dalton in Coleman recently.

The many friends of Mr. Edwin Caine of Springfield West, are very glad to see him home again after being a patient in the Prince County Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Rayner of Greenmount, spent Sunday at the home of Mrs. Rayner's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Dignan in Woodstock.

Mr. Ross Strang is still confined to the house with a very sore leg after the car which he was working on went down off the props and came to its full weight onto his leg. Luckily no bones were broken.

Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Luxton, Knutsford, motored to Central Lot 16 recently, to spend the day with Mrs. Luxton's sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Stirling Thompson.

Rev. and Mrs. W.H. Forsythe, Springfield West, were recent visitors to Charlottetown.

Mr. Gordon Carr of Charlottetown was in O'Leary recently, in the interests of the Boys Scouts and Wolfe Cubs.

Miss Ellen Cornish, Nurse in training in Prince County Hospital, Summerside, spent the weekend with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Cornish, Mill Road.

Miss Lois Malone, Summerside, spent Sunday with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Austin Malone in Unionvale.

Mr. and Mrs. Bloyce Ellis and family of Tignish, were visitors to O'Leary recently, guests of Mr.

(PHOTO BY WOTTON)

and Mrs. Ira Ellis.

Mr. and Mrs. Everett Coughlin and family of Rustico, are visitors to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Dalton and Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Dalton in Coleman recently.

The many friends of Mr. Edwin Caine of Springfield West, are very glad to see him home again after being a patient in the Prince County Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Rayner of Greenmount, spent Sunday at the home of Mrs. Rayner's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Dignan in Woodstock.

Mr. Ross Strang is still confined to the house with a very sore leg after the car which he was working on went down off the props and came to its full weight onto his leg. Luckily no bones were broken.

Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Luxton, Knutsford, motored to Central Lot 16 recently, to spend the day with Mrs. Luxton's sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Stirling Thompson.

Rev. and Mrs. W.H. Forsythe, Springfield West, were recent visitors to Charlottetown.

Mr. Gordon Carr of Charlottetown was in O'Leary recently, in the interests of the Boys Scouts and Wolfe Cubs.

Miss Ellen Cornish, Nurse in training in Prince County Hospital, Summerside, spent the weekend with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Cornish, Mill Road.

Miss Lois Malone, Summerside, spent Sunday with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Austin Malone in Unionvale.

Mr. and Mrs. Bloyce Ellis and family of Tignish, were visitors to O'Leary recently, guests of Mr.



At YOUR STORE or DRUGGIST

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

Kensington and District Club will commence operation on MONDAY, JUNE 11th.

The District will be the area from Travellers Rest along and north at Route No. 1 to the Rattenbury Road and Stanley Bridge.

For service 'phone S'side 8948. The inseminator is James Heffell.



DOUBLE CHECK As any flier will say, "Aircraft are only as good as the men who service them" Cpl. C.E. Stephens and LAC Ken Proctor are two of the ground crew who keep the Summerside based Neptunes flying. In this photo the two airmen are running a hydraulic test on one of the sleek sub-killers. Every aircraft at Summerside undergoes periodic inspections to ensure that they are kept in the best possible condition.

NEW FIRESTONE TIRES

600 x 16 — 670 x 15 TO CLEAR AT \$11.00 710 x 15 — 760 x 15 1/3 OFF LARGE DISCOUNT ON ALL TRUCK TIRES

WILLARD MacDONALD Ltd. SUMMERSIDE



I am banking again

on DITHANE for blight control!

DITHANE is manufactured only by Rohm & Haas Company of Canada Limited — your partner in crop protection.

ROHM & HAAS COMPANY OF CANADA, LTD. WESTHILL, ONTARIO Representatives in principal foreign countries.

CONTRACT BRIDGE

By B. JAY BECKER (Top record holder in Masters' Individual Championship Play)

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable. ♠ J 10 9 ♥ Q 9 7 6 ♦ K Q 9 6 3 ♣ A 8 3 2 N 7 6 4 W E 3 2 A K 8 3 ♠ K Q 8 5 4 3 2 ♣ A J 10 4

The bidding: South West North East 1♣ Pass 2♣ Pass 1♦ Pass 3♦ Pass

Opening lead — queen of diamonds. When declarer is playing in a suit contract, it is common practice in many hands for the defenders to attack in a side suit where he is weak, the immediate purpose being to force him to ruff. The long range purpose is to make the declarer use up his trumps, so that the defenders may then run whatever tricks their side has when they gain the lead. The effectiveness of this principle, when correctly applied, is shown in today's deal.

Three rounds of diamonds were played, South trumping the third one. A low trump to the rise held the trick, and a second round of trumps lost to the ace. A low

heart return was won in dummy. trumps were drawn, and four spades made.

However, the contract can be defeated if West refuses to win the second round of trumps. After the diamond is ruffed, West is on even terms with declarer in trump length. It is no great feat for West to know exactly how many trumps South started with, since East is known to have started with exactly one. West can capitalize on this knowledge by waiting for a more appropriate time to win the ace of trump. It roads point to the declarer's defeat, provided the spade is not taken.

Suppose West ducks the second trump lead. If declarer continues with a third round, West takes the ace, and leads a diamond. If declarer ruffs he is out of trump, and the four of spades is the setting trick. Should declarer abandon trumps after West's refusal of the second round of spades he will eventually have to let West make his little trump on the club suit.

West cannot beat the contract if he wins the second trump. A diamond lead at this point is ineffective, because declarer can trump it in dummy, while staying on even terms trumpwise with West. The more the question is considered the clearer the answer becomes — there is every good reason not to take the second spade lead, and no good reason to take it.

Outspoken Report On Home Missions

TORONTO (CP) — The Presbyterian Church is no "spiritual club" for expatriate Scottish and Irish, a Brantford, Ont., clergyman said Thursday in an outspoken report on home missions.

"There is no place in Canada for thinking of this sort," Rev. Dr. J.G. Deane Johnston, chairman of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. "Our door must not only be opened to men and women of all races, but we must have a welcoming handed extended to them as they enter in," he said.

Though Dr. Johnston was optimistic about what he called "a year of unprecedented activity in the mission field" he cautioned Presbyterians against narrowness in their outlook. The assembly started Thursday morning with a devotional service after which delegates were welcomed to Toronto by Controller Leslie Saunders. He told the session that the church should take a definite stand on civic issues, particularly moral problems, "regardless of public opinion."

Moderator F. G. Stewart of Kitchener, Ont., paid tribute to Alexander Hain of Toronto, 99, an active elder of Victoria Church for more than 50 years, who died Wednesday night as the assembly opened in his home parish.