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**FRED KITSON,**  
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### TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox And Mink Farming

During the 1961-52 season 42,654 skunk pelts worth \$59,745 were exported from Canada. Exports of ermine and weasel pelts totalled \$53,074 worth \$608,016. In the same period Canadian imports of Persian lamb pelts totalled \$40,292 pelts worth \$5,522,413.

In order to increase the popularity of furs Felix Lilienthal & Co., a buying organization in New York City, plans to get stores with small furs as a sideline. The ready to wear stores are good prospects for this type of merchandising. Among the suggestions are cape stoles, cape jackets and jackets in squirrel, split skin mink and American broadtail. Jap mink and probably silver fox, red fox and mutation fox. Mr. Cohen, a New Yorker with a lot of experience, states that the small piece fur business will continue active and will gain in strength this coming season. Small furs can be handled by any store with a good ready to wear department. With small pieces there is no fitting or alteration problem as there is with fur coats.

Direct evidence of the great expansion of the mink manufacturing trade is provided in the current edition of Women's Wear Daily 1953 fur directory. The listing shows 913 mink farms as compared to 636 in 1952 and 589 in 1951. Persian lamb rates second with 856 concerns now handling this item. Last year Persian lamb farms led in numbers with 728

Ranking third are muskrat manufacturers who now number 466 firms as compared to 457 a year ago. United Kingdom imports of raw furs from the United States during May totalled about \$140,000, an increase of 31 per cent over a year ago. The total United States exports to the United Kingdom during the first five months of this year was \$1,811,565. Russia exported to the United Kingdom in the first five months of this year \$2,534,164 worth of furs. The Coronation is one big reason for the large increase in value of furs exported to the United Kingdom the past season.

Annis Furs, Inc., states that fur business will be good in 1953 because to-day's fur prices continue to represent big value in relation to other things. (1) Most raw furs are today around the levels of the mid 30's. (2) Because continued high consumer income bolstered by continued government spending provides the basis of strong purchasing power for all the things the people want including furs. (3) The United States population is now growing at the rate of 2.7 million per year. This means an expanding consumer demand for all the things the people want including furs. (4) Liquid savings and the savings, accounts, bonds, etc. are being maintained at a record level.

A program of education to convince fur farmers not to market low grade "summer casualty" mink is being conducted by two of the biggest breeder associations—Great Lakes Mink Association and Mutation Mink Breeders Association. They are trying to educate the breeders to realize that when these very inferior pelts reach the market and are made up into garments they damage the reputation of better mink products and eventually harm the ranchers themselves. The mutation breeders are also in a similar drive and have acquired a ready made garment of inferior pelts to display at their meetings as a "horrible example."

The Hudson's Bay Company announces summer general auction sales for Tuesday, July 11, at 9:30 a. m. Among the many furs offered will be 2,500 wild mink, 5,000 ranch mink and 1,000 mutation mink. One of the big hits in Paris, France, pictured by the Paris Fur Bureau, is a lavish white fox wrap developed in tiers. It was worn at a benefit ball at Versailles for the benefit of the French cancer fund. The lady wearing it had a dress of white silk organdy.

A novel black fox neckpiece by Benny Wolfman & Bros. is featured in Women's Wear Daily of a recent date. It is wrapped to neck in a collar-like fashion, has a gold chain and whistle attached to a small red suede collar. Also featured are coats and suits with black fox or silver fox cuffs that are said to make a tremendous impression when combined with velvet.

"Doc" Collins, Editor of National Fur News, is conducting a campaign to have the fur excise tax drastically reduced or eliminated in the United States, and he also believes that something has to be done about establishing realistic quotas on fur imports from friends.

### -NEWSY NOTES-

By J. A. Clark, D.Sc.

#### The Lower Fraser Valley

One day early in June we visited that part of the Lower Fraser Valley which lies between Mission City and New Westminster. From Vancouver we followed the Lougheed Highway through the rapidly growing municipality of Burnaby. Huge stumps in a few places are all that remain of the giant trees that once covered this area. There are stands of younger trees, and most of the homes are surrounded by trees, flowering shrubs and lawns. Yellow broom, brought many years ago from Scotland, is used extensively with other flowering shrubs for decoration. Across Burnaby and beyond it has taken possession of many waste areas and filled them with its glorious colour. Its growth was much more vigorous and taller than that of its near relative, the gorse, that we have seen on the moors of Scotland.

As we neared Millardville we passed the great Fraser Mills with their booms of immense logs, along the shore of the Fraser. The Lougheed Highway turned north through Essondale, the large mental hospital farm, famous for its prize winning and high record Holstein cattle and outstanding Clydesdale horses. Our attention was drawn to a remarkable stone wall across the front of this hospital property. This had been built many years ago, without mortar, by an old master mason, a patient who died before it was completed. His part stands as

ly nations. There is always the threat of over-production, he says. Viewed as a whole though, he thinks the mink ranching picture looks good. That mink account for 70 per cent of the \$250,000,000 annual volume of furs at retail. In the United States ranchers who know how to produce fine quality mink are making money. Being good businessmen and perhaps former foxmen, however, they must occasionally ask themselves this question: Can mink continue to be the number one fur of American women? How long will it be until some other fur takes the lead? As all fur farmers know there have been cycles when first one fur then another ride the crest of popularity.

perfect as when it was carefully put together, while the work on the part completed later has not resisted the elements and now should be repaired.

There was good farm land around Port Couillard and along the Arterial Lougheed Highway which follows the north shore of the Fraser River to Agassiz, except for a short detour to fight out the length of Nicomen Island, between Dewdney and Deroche. There are many bridges on this great highway; the one across the Pitt River was so long that we thought we were crossing the Fraser, however, after we had driven through Pitt Meadows and came to Haney we saw that the Fraser River was still south of us.

It was at Haney on Sunday, June 21st that the Maple Ridge Senior-Junior High School, valued at \$500,000.00 was burned. This was a 24-room school with 1200 pupils. Nine hundred of these had written their end-of-the-term examinations which were burned. Word has since been given out that the teachers had taken details of the exams home so that they will not have to be rewritten.

From Haney the highway follows along close to the Fraser through Albion, Whomock to Ruskin at the west end of another long bridge across the Stave River. About a mile and a half above the town the Ruskin dam crosses the Stave River and it is only five miles up to Stave Falls, a short distance down the river from the large Stave Lake, another great source of electrical power.

A short distance from the Stave bridge we came to Silverdale, a fruit and vegetable center, with many prosperous homes along the way to Mission City. On a site overlooking this town there are now two mission schools, one for Indian boys and one for Indian girls; these stand on the original site of the former Indian Mission, that gave its name to the town. This was about midway to Hope or half way up the Lower Fraser Valley. We turned to the right and crossed the Mission Bridge to Matsqui.

This bridge had a span carried from its foundation during a former flood. It is a railway and highway bridge which uses the same roadway for both and reminded us of former traffic on the Hillsborough Bridge at Charlottetown, except that the Mission Bridge is so narrow that there can only be alternate one-way traffic. This is controlled by traffic lights; the trains and other traffic wait for the green light, then all cross in single file until the light changes and those going the other way have their turn.

At Matsqui we enquired the way to Clayburn. The directions given took us over several gravel roads, through a fine farming area to the paved Clayburn road and along it to the foot of the Sumas hills. The farm we visited there several clear mountain streams following swiftly over stones and boulders. It was difficult to believe that almost every year pass that way to their spawning pools, but the soothing pleasant sound of rushing water could be heard both without and within the white farm cottage.

The owner, a retired teacher, has as his assistants a young man and his wife who are both graduates in Agriculture of the University of British Columbia. They live in another white cottage up the side of a hill that slopes to the west. There were excellent crops on the level meadows and a silo had been filled with alfalfa. The hillside pasture was well watered and there was an abundant growth of white clover and pasture grasses. Fifteen Jerseys formed the dairy herd and among the foundation stock was one with a crumpled horn that gave promise of being an outstanding dairy cow. The comparatively low price for dairy products, however, had led the owner to buy a num-

ber of good quality Hereford beef cows, which will replace the Jerseys unless there is a change in the value of dairy produce. On our return journey we came through Abbotsford, Aldergrove and Langley Prairie, which are on the Trans-Canada Highway, south of the Fraser. We crossed the Pattullo, no longer a toll bridge, to New Westminster. The above area in general is very similar to the Fraser Delta in agricultural production.



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