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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Car Prices, Weather Marks, High Wages

By NEIL A. MATHESON

LAST WEEK'S column on automobile prices in 1931-32 proved popular and I have several comments from readers. Then I want to give you some temperature extremes, including a rainfall that I'm sure will surprise you.

First of all I'll go back to a column of Jan. 14, 1965 which said an old Trade Journal reported that a Ford Roadster sold for \$345 back in 1917. But that was a price in the United States and prices there were lower. Indeed they still are, I am told, despite a Canadian – U.S. agreement which memory tells me had the aim of reducing, or even eliminating the price differential.

#### Roadster At \$495

LEONARD MACDONALD, Charlottetown told me he recalls Ford Roadsters selling for \$495 here and Ford tourings for \$535 here back in 1914 and 1915.

A letter from Frank Jones, Southport is interesting. Mr. Jones recalls:

"I bought the first Ford V-8 four-door, Deluxe Sedan that came to Charlottetown in 1932. Poole and Thompson were the dealers and Lee Essory, Union Road was the agent who sold it. It was complete with spare tire and jack.

"The price was \$1,000 registered and ready to go" Mr. Jones adds.

"At the time I was farming in Pownal and this was the first car we ever owned. We decided to do without one until we could pay for it, and the time arrived in June, 1932.

My mind flashed back this week to the first time I ever had a ride in a car and I never did forget the thrill of sitting in something that went along on its own, without a horse pulling it.

#### My First Car Ride

THE DAY was Sunday and the driver was Dr. Alex LeFurgey of Bedeque. Mrs. Matheson tells me that he practiced in Hunter River while she lived there. Dr. LeFurgey married Lucy Todd of Rose Valley and memory tells me he was going to the Todd home the day he picked me up for my first car ride.

I am told that Dr. LeFurgey has died but his brother, Harold LeFurgey, lives in Bedeque, and he married Mary Todd of Rose Valley.

#### The Hottest Day Recalled

BACK TO record weather – actions for a time, I recall that the hottest day ever recorded officially at the Weather bureau at the Experimental Farm (It's now the Research Station) was the 98 degrees recorded on August 18 in 1935 – that was Exhibition Week.

A colleague here remembers that hot week very clearly and so do I. It was most uncomfortable working the exhibition that year. In 1960 there was a 95 recorded on August 19.

The coldest day ever recorded officially at the Farm was 23 below zero on January 18, 1923.

The heaviest rainfall ever recorded here was the 12:40 inches that fell in September 1942. The wettest day ever was one September day that year when 6.45 inches fell in one 24-hour period.

Measure 6.45 inches with your ruler, stand it on end on your table, or on your floor and try to imagine, as I have tried, how in the world that much water could fall on the land in 24 hours, without floating most loose stuff away.

Incidentally we had a high of 86 recorded last summer – in 1970. It happened once in July and once in August.

### Reading Since 1910

PLEASE NOTE that when I say the hottest day, the coldest day, etc. ever recorded, I am talking about the recordings at the Experimental Farm as we knew it until two years ago.

And we are talking only of the period since 1910. Records were doubtless kept officially prior to 1910, but I have no way of learning what they were.

My thanks again to Hector Arsenault, weather observer at the Research Station, as we know it now, for his patience and helpfulness. His smile never wavered as I asked him about the various things I wanted to check on for you readers.

Indeed Mr. Arsenault mentioned some of the records himself. Again Hector, my warmest thanks.

### Experts And High Pay

I was talking to a group of Calgary oil men who were coming to supervise drilling of exploratory oil wells, back in the late 1960's, if I remember correctly.

With a bit of twinkle in my eye I looked at one and observed:

"I suppose you chaps are experts."

Quick as a flash came back this reply:

"Mr. Matheson, an expert is a man who is a long way from home." They didn't feel that P.E.I. was far enough away from Calgary to pose as experts.

But it's profitable sometimes to be an "expert". I am thinking now of the reference in the legislature to the man who is setting up the government's public relations, or information division. He's getting \$100 a day and it was explained that this sort of thing – a "consultant" gets \$300 a day in some other province.

In another case another consultant was getting \$1,000 a month, but he only worked one week a month, apparently. That's considerably more than \$100 a day.

YOU KNOW what I'm thinking? With my retirement coming up, likely sometime next year, I think I'll go west, far enough away to pose as an expert, and grab some of that kind of money.

I'm kidding, of course. Mrs. Matheson and I are looking forward to settling down in our home at Mt. Stewart, and our lovely secluded summer cottage on Tracadie Bay in summer, for a life of relaxation and enjoyment.

But don't forget what the Calgary oilman said about an expert "being a man a long way from home".

I SHOULD have added that we'll be back in Southport this summer running our Summer Cottages. That's part of the sale deal.

But next summer we're going to start relaxing. We're looking forward to it.