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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Herds Started From One Cow

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Provincial - Farm Editor

SOME OF the province's best Ayrshire herds, I learned recently, started with the purchase of one pure-bred cow and some of the breeders didn't buy a single female later. There are probably many others but today I refer to four men. Edwin Reid, Rollo Bay met the boat on the ice off Georgetown February 23, 1916 with a horse and woodsleigh and hauled his first pure-bred, Lone Pine Bell, 25 miles to his farm. Who would think of hauling a cow that far now with a horse in midwinter, or at any other time for that matter? Seven years later Sunnyslope Bonney Jean - Sunnyslope was his farm name - was calved on his farm and she and her daughter became the first mother - daughter combination in Canadian Ayrshire history to produce 100,000 pounds of milk or more.

Bonney Jean was sold to Edwin's brother Gavin and his Winswept farm at Victoria Cross when she was carrying the calf that became Winswept Betty, the other half of the history making combination. The mother produced 104,414 pounds milk, 4,241 fat in nine lactations which she finished in 11 years in 1937. The daughter, Betty, achieved the 100,000 mark in seven lactations and finished it at nine years with 102,662 milk with 4,221 fat, also in 1937.

LAST TIME I visited Gavin Reid he told me he had never had a better cow than Winswept Betty, though he has been carefully breeding and strictly culling his cattle since that time.

Both men have sold animals that have injected good blood into other herds. Edwin's Sunnyslope Faye was the foundation cow for the herd of the late John W. Lewis, Freetown and she produced more than 140,000 pounds milk in her career. Two Sunnyslope heifers went to the Experimental Farm here when it started its Ayrshire herd, and one of the heifers went to the Royal where she won second prize and best Canadian heifer in her class. The first Reid cow, Lone Pine Belle, came from the barn of T. H. Hawkins, Stewiacke, N. S. and she proved to be a good foundation animal.

### Two Herds From Cow and Calf

THE OTHER two men are George P. Matheson and his brother-in-law, John A. MacDonald, both from Glasgow Road. Mr. Matheson bought a pure bred heifer and her calf in 1918 from Steve Ackland, Hampshire for \$100. Mr. MacDonald bought the calf, and both men have built fine herds from that start. Mr. Matheson has only bought one female since then, Mr. MacDonald bought none.

Mr. Matheson's Kirkside herd - his farm is alongside the Glasgow Road Presbyterian church - topped two classes in Canada in the same month.

Kirkside Velma topped the Junior 4-year old class with 17,002 pounds milk, 829 fat and Lucky Lass topped the mature class with 16,651 milk, 712 fat the same month. Their Kirkside Lucky Lady was one of the foundation cows for the famous Bowater dairy farm Newfoundland, and another good one went to Cummings Brothers' herd in Lancaster, Ontario.

KIRKSIDE LUCKY LADY was one of the foundation cows for the large Bowater company herd in Newfoundland. But Velma, I gathered from Mr. Matheson and son Ralph who is now directing the breeding activities, was their best cow with more than 17,000 pounds milk in one lactation and 64,527 milk, 2,892 fat in four lactations. Two other cows, Lucky Lass and Lucky Rose, produced more than 16,000 milk

Mr. Matheson told me he used to truck cows with horse and vehicle to the Ayrshire farm of Andrew MacRae - grandfather of his namesake who is now Agriculture Minister - to breed them to good sires. It was recalled that the MacRae farm had bred and owned Milkmaid 7<sup>th</sup>, who was world champion as a two-year old heifer with 11,673 milk, 402 fat which was outstanding production then for the feed available at the time. That was about 1910.

### Days Of Fine Horses Recalled

MR. MacDONALD'S Meadowview herd have never shown at Exhibitions but they have bred and developed some excellent cattle. A bachelor in 1918 when he got his first cow, he recalls that he put the first calf on the cow and took what milk he needed for himself; the calf got the rest. When I visited the genial Mr. MacDonald last year, one of his second-calf heifers was apparently going for a good record with one test of 74 pounds a day and two of 72 pounds on record of performance.

All of the above developments belong for the most part to the horse-and-buggy days, and horses were just about the most important thing on the farm, as they provided transportation on the road as well as power on the farm.

Recalling boyhood days and the boasts I often heard farmers make about having Barrister blood in their horses, I asked Mr. MacDonald for his recollections. The original "Barrister" stallion was imported from Scotland but his sons were also famous sires of good horses, I was told. There was a Stead's Barrister that was used in the area I grew up, and Mac Stewart's Barrister on the Glasgow Road.

"THEY PRODUCED tremendously good horses when they were bred to blood mares, as the colts were big and strong, 1,200 to 1,300 pounds, and they could road like bloods which was a big asset in those days" Mr. MacDonald told me. Those were the days when Island-bred horses were famous for quality and horses from here were in keen demand. I've been told that some of our draught and express horses went as far as Montreal, where they were used on the streets before trucks took over as transport vehicles.

I chatted with Edwin Reid about his many years as County Sheriff and found he had some unusual methods for escorting prisoners to Dorchester Penitentiary for example. He often handcuffed the prisoner to a suitcase loaded with bricks. That looked after any attempts to escape and Mr. Reid had his own hands free, instead of being shackled to

the prisoner as most law officers handled the situation. He was sheriff for 14 years and returning officer for 20 years

#### Hillsboro Bridge Cost \$1,363,000

RECENT NEWS indicates the old Hillsborough Bridge will be demolished soon which reminds me that it cost \$1,363,000 to build in the first few years of the century. It was opened for traffic in 1905 and it was built after considerable discussion about a Hillsboro tunnel in the P.E.I. Legislature. The proposal was to build a tunnel for \$250,000 that would handle people on foot, horses and wagons and a railway train.

The bridge was proposed first on February 10, 1843 an old "Islander" copy shows. One suggestion was for a pontoon bridge across the river between long wharves projecting far out into the water at Southport and at the foot of Great George Street.

The old bridge had a total length of 4,600 feet and the 12 spans of steel were brought from near Newcastle on the Miramichi River in New Brunswick.

Most dangerous work, an old scrapbook in our library says, was under pneumatic pressure. Men working at 40 to 50 feet below the surface were paid \$3.25 for an eight-hour day and men working at depths of 90 to 100 feet were paid \$4.00 for working two 45 minute shifts - apparently they couldn't work any longer at that depth.

#### Laborers Got 16 Cents Per Hour

MASONS WERE paid \$3.00 a day, carpenters got \$2.50 and ordinary labor was paid 15 cents per hour.

The approaches were described as of 'solid earth embankment," protected on either side by cribs 16 feet square filled with Wallace sandstone, and protected by rip rap of large stone. The stones referred to are still there and none the worse for wear, so far as can be seen from the road level of the approaches which are still being used for the new bridge.

The bridge took three years to build and the first engine to cross was the railway contractor's small engine that came from the Southport side in 1904. The first railway operations commenced in November 1905.

A SOUVENIR of the old bridge, an old megaphone, was in the carmen's shop at the railway for many years. It was used to shout instructions to men on tugs and scows moving equipment and was kept in the carmen's wash house but was lost, apparently when the old building was torn down some five or six years ago.

A note on the equipment used is interesting. There were sawmills, schooners for hauling stone from Wallace, N. S., four tugs, one clam shell dredge capable of excavating to a depth of 90(?) feet at low water, four double scows and nine other scows for moving material to the site. There were six pier derricks for placing stone and timber, "as well as such other machinery that was required."