

CHARLOTTETOWN STORE OPEN THURS. & FRI. NIGHTS 'TIL 9:30 SUMMERSIDE STORE OPEN SATURDAY 'TIL 5 P.M.

STORE HOURS: Charlottetown Store Open Thurs. and Fri. Nights 'til 9:30 - Mon., Tues., Wed. and Sat. - 9 to 5:30 - Summerside Store - Mon. thru Thurs. - 8:30-5 - Fri. - 8:30-9 - Sat. - 8:30-5 p.m.

ACROSS THE ISLAND

The Karl Fletchers Have Unusual Story

By NEIL A. MATHESON
Provincial-Farm Editor

ONE OF the many unusual stories that came my way concerns Karl Fletcher who was born at 16 Brighton Road Charlottetown and his lovely wife "Midge", the former Marjorie Andros, Victoria, B.C. His father, C. Pope Fletcher, who operated a music store in this City came from Orwell.

The late Charlie Williams first brought the story to my attention—Charlie's wife was Karl's sister—when he brought me a Victoria, B.C. magazine. Late last summer Mrs. Lyman Davison, City phoned to tell me the Fletchers were in Charlottetown, and I was able to arrange for an interesting interview with two charming people.

I should say now that this story will run over into next week's column. I find it too interesting to chop it up, just to get it into one edition.

One of the first events in an unusually colorful career came when Karl just happened to be in Halifax at the time of the tremendous explosion—a ship loaded with munitions was blown up in the harbor in December 1916. He had served overseas, been invalided home and charged with the mission of recruiting British nationals in the United States.

The recruiting mission was a success. "We ran a full train from New York to Halifax each week. Many were Jewish recruits who were headed for Allenby's army that was moving into Palestine.

Following the Armistice, in November 1918, Karl traveled to New York, went into the foreign service of the National City Bank, headed for Caracas in Venezuela, was sent several hundred miles up the Orinoco river to where gold had been discovered. It was jungle country and he purchased gold from prospectors amidst pumas, jaguars and other unusual animals.

Big Bank Deposits, For One Day
KARL FLETCHER next was with the American Foreign Bank Corporation and was sent eventually to China where they were creating a new bank branch in Tsananfu. And this leads me to one of the unusual facets of the Fletcher story.

When the bank opened its doors for business the Chinese brought huge amounts of silver. "They came with carts and rickshaws," he told me, "and deposited large sums with us." J. H. Thomas, vice-president of the bank was there and he was so delighted he wired back a colorfully optimistic story of how the Chinese had filled the vaults to overflowing with silver. It was a most auspicious beginning.

Next day, though, the Chinese came back with the same vehicles and carted all of their silver away. Mr. Fletcher was worried, he just couldn't understand it. He asked through an interpreter "What in H— is going on?"

He found it was an example of Chinese courtesy. They brought their money to get the bank away to a good start. Mr. Fletcher told me with a grin. It's easy to smile about it now. It was most disconcerting then.

Soon after he left the bank where he found the real decisions were taken by the Chinese co-managers, and headed for Fien-Tsin in Manchuria, where he managed a cotton plant. Then he was sent to the Chinese province of Szechwan where he had to invent the Stokes machine gun. At the time Sutchun was Chief of Staff of Chang-Tse-Lin, governor of China's three northern provinces. China was torn by civil war—the time was the early 1920's—but I'm going to skip the Fletcher-Sutchun part, because I think other facets of the story are more interesting here, though I'll mention that the two returned to Canada and formed the firm of Fletcher and Sutchun in Vancouver, B.C.

Helped Chinese — Then To Macao
THE BUSINESS melted away when the crash came that heralded the great depression of the Thirties and Karl returned to China. After a turn at helping the Chinese fight the Jap invader, we find Karl Fletcher in Macao, a Portuguese colony, founded in 1557 and some 40 miles from Hong Kong.

Karl managed a British-held electric light company, a British concession. Macao was not an internment camp, for China was not at war against Portugal, "but it was similar, for we were completely surrounded by Japanese", Mr. Fletcher recalled.

He had married his "Midge" in 1938 and she was with him through the troubled times that developed when the Far Eastern war developed into a world conflict.

In Macao they had been "completely surrounded by Japanese" who put pressure on the Portuguese to close out the British-owned light company. Karl had received orders from London to hold on, not to surrender—it was easy to wire orders from remote England.

The man who was born in Charlottetown resisted all pressures brought against him, until finally the Portuguese governor said they would take the concession "by force". That was a different thing—they had a warship in the harbor, and Karl surrendered—it was the only thing he could do.

It will be understood that his defiance of the Japanese had not made him popular with the Japanese army officers. "My wife and I were in a dangerous position," he recalled. "They might kidnap us, or even shoot us". They had to get out, or else.

Perilous Route Through China
THE ONLY escape route involved was a long, difficult and hazardous journey across the huge Southwest area, onto Tibet, across the Himalayas—but let me tell you about it, as Karl and Midge Fletcher told it to me.

First of all they virtually had to get through the Japanese lines, before they started on the long, tortuous road to eventual freedom. With the couple was their son Donald, who had been a university student in Hong Kong, had been captured by the Japanese, but escaped when he hid in the hold of a cargo ship which was coming to Macao. The students had been forced to load the ships. Donald is Karl's son by his first wife.

The Japanese were in all the lowlands, the Fletchers told me. "We had to keep to the mountains. We travelled by night and hid during the daylight hours."

Thanks to an old German friend, they had money to pay for most of their real needs. The German had warned Karl that war was coming. Buy up all the gold you can afford to get, he warned them, currency will be no good when the real trouble breaks, he had warned.

"We sewed the gold coins into our clothing", the Fletchers told me. Finally, as their funds dwindled, Midge sold her diamond engagement ring. She had had it tied in her hair. There were many scares as the Fletchers made their perilous way to Assam. Danger was never far away at any time they never knew when it might develop disastrously for them.

They had good guides, Chinese smugglers were adept at running blockades, they had to be to survive. They spirited the Fletchers away at midnight.

The Fletchers had helped others escape, now they were trying the same thing themselves. They realized their way was filled with perils, but they entrusted themselves to the canny smugglers and their methods of getting through.

Knives Cut Japanese Nets
THE SMUGGLERS used long, sharp knives to cut their way through nets that had been placed strategically to stop them. Finally they left the smugglers boat and headed inland.

The Fletchers finally fell in with a British convoy; they were actually able to ride for a part of the journey. The riding was on rough trucks, military lorries, but it beat walking, especially when the shoes were wearing off their feet. And they did just that.

It took 28 days to get from the Japanese lines to free China. Those 28 days were the worst. Certainly they were the most fearfully perilous, Mrs. Fletcher recalled for me. The entire journey took 73 days.

But the going was still rough, the unexpected often happened. Often they were sidetracked into small villages where they felt no white man had ever been seen previously. The adventurous travellers pedaled on old bicycles for almost a week, then went forward on foot.

Finally, though, they made it to Assam "where Tibet and China and India meet". Ahead was perhaps the most difficult part of their trip, across the fearsome Himalaya mountains. But luck was with them. There they met one of the "Yank Flying Tigers" who were flying supplies over the mountains regularly.

Sat On Floor Across Himalayas
A RESPONSIBLE officer told them they could be flown across the Himalayas if they would sit on the floor, and without oxygen. It meant flying at perhaps 25,000 feet in places. The lack of oxygen didn't interfere with their breathing, they told me, but they had no strength. "You just couldn't lift your arms, for example", the Fletchers explained.

Next week's column will tell the rest of the story of the Fletchers. Friends tell me they may return to live here, but that I know nothing.

ONE DAY ONLY - FRIDAY - DON'T MISS IT!

END OF MONTH SALE

Wonderful Savings On Discontinued, Counter - Soiled, Over - Age Merchandise. Look For The YELLOW PRICE CARDS! All Sales Final! No Refunds! Many Other Unadvertised Items On Sale - Be Early Friday For Best Selections!

Bringing You SAVINGS of 33 1/3% to 50% & MORE

LADIES' WEAR - - - Charlottetown

Quantity	Orig.	SALE
1 Pile Lined Tweed Coat with Hood, size 14	69.95	15.67
1 Black and White Tweed Coat, size 30	39.95	13.37
1 Wool Coat, navy, size 8	29.95	9.97
2 Rain & Shine Coats, blue, yellow, size 16	24.95	11.17
1 Arnel Maternity Dress, blue, size 14	19.95	9.47
5 Cotton Print two piece Dresses, sizes 12, 14, 16	6.98	2.37
5 Long Nylon Gowns, size 38, 42, 44	9.98	4.17
1 Flannellette Pyjamas (soiled), size 36	5.98	2.67
12 Antron Half Slips, white and nauterelle, size M. L.	5.98	2.67
17 Nu-Back Corsets, full lhip, assorted sizes	10.00	2.97
18 Girdles, panty and pull on, sizes S.M.L.	6.00	1.77
15 Long line all stretch Bras, sizes 34 to 40	10.00	2.37
8 Fibrefill Bras, size 32B, 34C	5.00	2.27
4 Pull on Girdles, size small	12.50	3.57
1 Lycra Panty Girdle, size small	11.00	4.97
14 Bandeau Straps Bra, size 36-40	7.00	2.17
2 Handbags, black & brown	7.95	5.27
3 Shoulder-Strap Handbags, black & brown	2.98	1.97

CHILDREN'S WEAR - - - Charlottetown

9 Viyella Weskits, sizes 8-10-12-14, blue & red plaid	4.98	1.47
2 Skirts, sizes 8 1/2 - 12 1/2, beige	5.98	1.17
4 Diaper Sets, M-L-EX-L, white & blue	3.98	1.77
4 Cotton Dresses, sizes 8 1/2 - 10 1/2 - 14 1/2, navy skirt, striped top	8.98	3.97
2 Cotton Dresses, sizes 10T & 14T, blue print	12.95	5.77
2 Dresses, sizes 10 1/2 - 12 1/2, pink & blue, lace trim	10.95	4.87
1 Boy's Coat & Cap Set (quilted lining), size 3X, beige tweed brown trim	12.95	5.77
14 Infants Stretch Suits 21-30 lbs. Ass't. colors (imperfect)	1.98	1.07
14 Terry Stretch Rompers M. & L., ass't. colors	2.98	1.97
2 Pair Snow Pants, size 4, brown	5.98	2.67
5 Dresses and Diaper Sets, M. L. & Ex. L., white with trim	4.98	1.47
3 Diaper Sets (boys) Ex. L. white	1.97	1.27

CHINA - - - Charlottetown

30 Lobster Butter Dishes	1.49	.97
4 Salad Sets	3.98	1.07
1 Evangeline Ware Vase	5.98	2.67
7 Oxford Petal Sugar Bowls	1.98	.87
3 Russet Glow Platters	3.25	1.47
1 Pair Book Ends (damaged)	5.50	2.47
1 Salad Set (damaged)	11.98	7.97
1 Pottery Vase (damaged)	3.49	2.37

HOUSEWARES - - - Charlottetown

1 Minute Timer	4.95	3.37
1 Hair Dryer	29.95	19.97
1 Electric Tooth Brush	19.95	13.37
3 Slip Safety Treads	3.69	1.17
1 Sugar Meter, Dripless Servers P & S	10.50	3.17
1 Electric Comb	8.98	4.67
5 Grapefruit Knives	2.19	.97
3 Clothes Dryers	5.98	2.67
1 Scales (yellow)	6.98	4.67
1 Plastic Garbage Can	4.95	3.37

MEN'S WEAR - - - Charlottetown

3 Men's Sweaters, 2-S, 1-M	15.95	6.97
4 Men's Pyjamas, 2-B, 2-C	4.98	2.67
4 Men's Under Shirts, size small	1.98	1.27
2 Men's Polo Shirts, sizes 1-S, 1-L	4.98	3.67
4 Men's Dress Shirts, ass't colors, 1-15, 1-15 1/2, 1-16, 1-17	5.98	1.27
4 Men's Dress Shirts, ass't. colors, size 16	5.98	2.97
2 Men's Drawers, size 34	4.98	1.97
2 Men's Work Sweaters, 1-48, 1-50	8.98	5.97
3 Men's Casual Pants, 1-40, 2-42	5.98	1.97
3 Men's Casual Pants, 1-30, 1-34, 1-36	5.98	3.67
12 Men's Work Shirts, ass't. colors, 3-S, 9-M	2.98	1.27
4 Boys Sweaters, ass't. colors, 1-S, 3-L	5.98	2.67
1 Men's Topcoat, color grey, size 36	44.95	19.97
4 Men's Hooded Jackets, 1-36, 2-40, 1-42	24.95	6.67
3 Men's Suburban Coats, color grey, 1-34, 1-38, 1-48	24.95	6.67
1 Men's Sport Coat, light blue, size 37	19.95	3.97
3 Boys' Sport Coats, size 20	29.95	6.67
4 Boys Suits, grey & blue check, 1-13, 1-14, 2-15	29.95	6.67
3 Boys Ski Jackets, color blue, size 18	11.95	5.97
4 Boys Orion Pile Sweaters, 1-S, 2-M, 1-L	10.95	3.97

HARDWARE - - - Charlottetown

40 E7697 Cupboard Door Hinges	.75	.17
20 427E Cupboard Door Pulls	.69	.17
10 E408-26 Cupboard Door Pulls	.89	.65
10 E444-10 Cupboard Door Pulls	.39	.27
20 E501-10 Cupboard Door Book Plates	.35	.27
1 Gal. Dri-Home Shingle Stain	8.98	2.57

FURNITURE - - - Charlottetown

1 Tea Wagon, tubular steel, white	22.95	10.17
1 Bookcase Bed, full size, walnut, damaged	39.95	19.97
1 Tote Bag, ivory	15.95	10.97
37 yds. Viscose Runner, multi colour candy stripe, 27" width	2.29	1.47
1 Carriage, lift off steed body, beige, damaged	44.95	19.97
1 Wood Rocker (damaged)	17.95	11.97
1 Table Lamp & Shade, tangerine (damaged)	14.95	7.97
2 Table Lamps and Shades	7.98	3.97
1 Box Spring, single size, (damaged)	39.95	19.97

HOME FURNISHINGS - - - Charlottetown

1 Window Blind, color green, 26" x 70"	3.98	1.37
1 1/2 yds. Durabina Flannel, color pink	1.98	.77
10 yds. Cotton Organdy, color green	1.19	.17
11 yds. Cotton, 2 colors peach & blue	.98	.17
8 1/2 yds. Crystal Charm, color pink	2.69	.77
6 1/2 yds. Tweed, color gray	3.98	1.37
1 Rayon Cottage Set (soiled)	3.49	1.67
1 Dacron Cottage Set (soiled)	5.98	2.67
1 Cushion (soiled), color turquoise	3.98	1.97

SPORTING GOODS and TOYS - Charlottetown

1 Body Conditioner Kit	9.98	4.47
1 Home Gym Outfit	15.98	7.67
4 Nursery Scale Toys	1.98	.57
1 pair Bauer Skates	10.95	5.17
5 Hallmark Heaters	24.95	11.17
2 Ironing Boards	2.98	.67
2 Dart Boards	.98	.19
1 V-R Room Motor	9.98	6.67

BUILDING SUPPLIES - - - Charlottetown

1 Sheet Barker Tile damg'd	16.95	11.37
1 Sheet Arborite damg'd, brown plaza	22.95	15.37
1 Sheet 4' x 8' Ranchwall, damg'd	7.29	4.57
1 2' 8" x 6' 8" x 1 3/8 R.S. Mogh. damg'd	12.29	8.17
1 2' 6" x 6' 6" x 1 3/8 R.C. Mogh. damg'd	7.98	5.37
1 2' 6" x 3' Panoramic Window, double glass, no screen	34.95	24.17
40 bags Cement (hard)	1.49	.97
1 sheet 1/4 R.S. Mogh. Particle Core	12.29	3.77
1 No. 24 Screen Door 2' 10" x 6' 10"	10.95	3.37
1 2' 6" x 6' 6" x 1 1/2 D. F. Door	14.90	4.47

BUILDING SUPPLIES - - - Summerside

1 Length Rite-Vent Chimney Section (damaged)	17.95	3.37
1 2' 6" x 6' 6" x 1 3/8 Mahogany Door (damaged)	6.98	4.67
1 2' 8" x 6' 6" x 1 3/8 Mahogany Door (damaged)	9.98	6.67
360 Sheets 16" x 48" Insulated Lath	.49	.37
2 sheets 1/2" x 4" x 10' Sheetrock (damaged)	3.39	2.27
1 sheet 3/16" x 4' x 8' Louan Prefinished Plywood (damaged)	7.29	4.87
2 1/2 sheets 3/4" x 4' x 8' Louan Plywood (damaged)	24.75	16.47

SPORTING GOODS and TOYS - Summerside

1 Doll Carriage (without hood)	11.95	6.97
1 Sewing Machine (damaged)	11.95	4.17
1 Highway Tow Truck (battery operated)	7.95	3.97
20 boxes Canuck Light Load 2 1/2 gauge shell	3.35	1.97
13 pr. Foam Shin Protectors	1.25	.57
9 pr. Foam Shin Protectors	1.25	.37
2 Gas & Oil Lamp Glove Heater	24.95	15.97

HOUSEWARES - - - Summerside

1 Sunbeam Waffle & Grill	42.95	26.97
1 Electric Comb	8.95	4.37
2 Cake Servers	4.98	3.17
3 Plastic Bins	4.98	3.17
1 Aluminum Pitcher	7.50	4.87
1 Bread Box	5.98	3.97
1 Canister Set	5.99	3.96
1 Drink Mixer	35.55	23.27

FURNITURE - - - Summerside

2 Lamp Table, two tier, walnut	49.95	11.07
1 Nite Table, elm	49.95	16.47
2 Lamp Table, two tier, walnut	49.95	11.07
1 Bookcase Bed, full size, walnut (damaged)	49.95	19.97
1 Chrome Table 36" x 48" extending to 60", grey, arborite top	49.95	28.27
1 Wall Shelf, brass	12.95	8.57
1 Table Lamp and Shade, porcelain base (damaged)	9.98	6.67
1 Triple Dresser, walnut scratched	79.95	35.37
1 Settee, foam cushions seat & back, tangerine	69.95	46.97

LADIES' WEAR - - - Summerside

1 Coat, size 7 in blue	79.95	26.67
3 Plastic Raincoats, sizes M & L	4.98	3.37
3 Coats, sizes 8, 12 and 14. Color navy	19.95	6.67
5 Girdles, size 5 & L. Color black	5.00	1.97
5 Wool Scarves, color grey	.97	.17
3 Coats, sizes 4, 12 and 22 1/2, color navy	39.95	13.27
2 White Uniforms, sizes 12 and 20	10.95	4.97
6 Brush & Brow Eye Make-up	2.50	.77
2 Jackets, sizes 10 & 12. Colors green & navy	16.95	7.97
8 Bras, color white in assorted sizes	9.00	3.97
1 Party Dress, size 11 in navy	24.95	7.97
7 Handbags, assorted styles	3.98	5.00
1 pair Lounging Pyjamas, color black, size M.	16.95	3.27
6 Longline Padded Bras, assorted sizes	5.00	2.27
1 Party Dress, size 9, color blue & white	19.95	3.37
5 Necklaces, color gold	3.00	.97
3 Hats, colors green, blue	3.98	1.37
2 Jackets, sizes 8 &		