



### HUNTERS' CORNER

The failure of Ring-necked pheasants to gain a foothold in eastern Kings and their disappearance from West Prince, I don't believe is a single pheasant west of the Miscouche swamp... has caused concern among the County Fish and Game Branches concerned. I noted with interest a recommendation was passed a few days ago at the Southern Kings Branch meeting at Moncton, N.B., that a season on hen pheasants and... as enthusiastic member remarked, "watch the pheasants multiply." I'm afraid boys that's not the answer. The conviction is growing in game circles in the States that too rigid protection of hen pheasants can be detrimental to a maximum production from the breeding stock available. If you enjoy good pheasant shooting in eastern Kings within the next 4 or 5 years close the season on pheasants. Period.

When the season on pheasants first opened the bag limit was five cock birds per season. This was changed a few years later to five cock birds per day. It was apparent we were getting a very heavy population of hens... one that was really out of proportion. In 1932 the bag limit was changed to read: "three pheasants per day... it seemed to give the birds an uplift and still further increased their numbers. In 1955 (last season) it is the consensus of opinion our pheasant population doubled over 1954. No pheasant hunter will deny we had a bumper crop of pheasants last season... the heaviest concentration on the island. Central Queens contains the cream of the pheasant crop. When individual hunters report seasonal bags of up to 60 birds that pheasants in a big way.

### PHASANT NEEDS

Certain areas of Kings county is eminently suited for pheasant needs. Bayfield-Big Pond and East Lake have had a fair population of pheasants for 10 or 12 years but don't seem to be able to get dug in properly. Five years ago Black Pond, a few miles east of Souris, held a promising nesting of pheasants... what happened to them? The same question applies to the Sturgeon district and the Curtis Road-Selkirk-St. Charles area. The birds are barely holding their own if they are doing that. Reliable information indicates that youths with 22 rifles shot the roosting birds off their perches at night and took them by whatever means available when they came to feed around grain stacks and barns in severe winter weather in the Curtis Road section.

In the Sturgeon district sharpshooters with 22s allegedly shoot them off while they glean food from snowy fields in mid-winter or crow and flaunt their colors in the spring. Too many juveniles, and some not so juvenile, like to play 'Cowboys and Indians' with old cock pheasants when their challenging crow rings out from spring woodlands and swamps. The birds are they play for keeps with 22 rifles. Don't make the mistake of thinking I've dreamed this up. I haven't. Confidential information obtained during the past year, replete with names of offenders, is on record on my private file. The information did not come from the same source either. It all dove-tails into an almost universal pattern. You cannot have your cake and eat it unless you have a lot of cake baked ahead... and this seldom occurs in the wildlife realm.

### GOOD TERRITORY

West Prince has some of the best pheasant territory in the province. The 'Grand Dig' Hebron, Glenwood, West Cape and other points west has thousands of acres of swamp and semi-swamp land unfit for cultivation and yet surrounded with cultivated areas. It is estimated this is known as swamp bottoms and a natural pheasant habitat. Approximately 15 years ago the late W.H. Dennis, Minister of Agriculture, made a determined effort to stock West Prince with pheasants. He traded Hungarian partridge for a hardy breed. The pheasants developed in Fredericton, N.B., and liberated quite a few in the 2nd. District of Prince.

A surprising number of coveys' dropped up in several sections but they couldn't stand up to poaching pressure. If Prince county sportsmen had have stood solidly behind him they wouldn't be faced with having to do it the hard and costly way now. If they had that section of Prince could well rival Central Queens as a pheasant hunting mecca at the present time.

The handwriting was on the wall two years after the introduction. I talked to a farmer one summer. He told me he heard noises like Indian war whoops in his woodlot while he was putting in his crop and wondered what kind of bird or animal was the cause. One morning two youths carrying 22 rifles came strolling along the border of his woodland. His query: "What are you hunting?" One of them answered: "Rhode Island Reds with long tails" then a sort of after thought he added: "They're wild of course". Within a week or 10 days the crowing of the pheasant was no longer heard in the land.

In another district a covey of 17 was shot down to the last bird. An old cock. He saved his life by moving in to a farmer's hen house and sharing the roost with the hens. The youthful hunters would probably shot him off the roost if the farmer warned them that he'd be plucking earned salt out

### BACK STRETCH

a coming sire. A local bird whose name is being figured so much in the race summaries of the Maritimes - Abner T. Clegg 2.04 1/2 - is by Jim Abbe, a son of The Abbe. It would take pages to show the tremendous importance of this strain and it was only one of many developed at Village Farm.

After the dispersal sale of Village Farm Mr. Geers opened a public stable and for many years was one of the top drivers on the Grand circuit, competing with Walter Cox, Tommy Murphy, Lon MacDonald, Vic Fleming and other greats.

One of the best horses he had was the racer Napoleon Direct 1.59 1/2, that in the stud sired Billy Direct, co-holder of the world's record of 1.55. Another horse that Geers had great success with was The Harvester 2.01, which August Uhllein of Milwaukee paid \$9,000 for as a colt and put him in Ed Geers' hands to train. He was always a winner in which he was always victorious. The Harvester was sold to C.K.G. Billings for \$51,000. He was taken by his new owner with other horses to Moscow, Russia, where he gave an exhibition of trotting, and the Czars government offered \$75,000 for him.

Mr. Geers died, as we may call it, in harness. His death was the result of an accident in a race at Wheeling, W.V. in 1924. The event was widely publicized and harness horsemen throughout the length and breadth of the United States and Canada mourned the loss of one of the finest gentlemen and best drivers that ever sat on a sulky.

In the Trotter and Pacer's annual blue book for 1924 is the last picture taken of Mr. Geers. Two ever offered him hens or cocks. A general increase of approximately 50 per cent was observed in our pheasant population in 1953 and the daily bag limit was raised to five of either sex. This is a very liberal daily bag on pheasants but rather than cutting down on their numbers... it seemed to give the birds an uplift and still further increased their numbers. In 1955 (last season) it is the consensus of opinion our pheasant population doubled over 1954. No pheasant hunter will deny we had a bumper crop of pheasants last season... the heaviest concentration on the island. Central Queens contains the cream of the pheasant crop. When individual hunters report seasonal bags of up to 60 birds that pheasants in a big way.

the last resting place of the revered "Pop" Geers in its original condition. Finally Mr. Murray recited this poem, written by Walter Palmer.

**THE DUSTY OLD JACKET OF BLACK**

I have journeyed afar from the sunset so gold  
And the mountains that reach toward the sky  
I've enjoyed the new friends and welcomed the old  
As I watched the fleet trotters pass by  
But, Oh! there's a feeling I cannot explain.  
A sadness I cannot denote.  
"Way down in my heart there's a throbbing and a pain  
For a black cap and a coat.

I see the contestants go rushing away  
With a thrill that no sport can exceed.  
The jackets of red and of green  
And of grey  
Each showing in turn in the lead.  
But though I may try, there's a mist in my eye  
As the struggle begins at the track  
For I can't find a trace of the furrowed old face  
And a cap and a jacket of black.

Ah! I miss the colors that the silent man wore,  
And I miss the applause and the cheers,  
And his rugged old form as he trotted at the score  
And the honest endeavors of Geers  
The trots have been thrilling and splendid  
But alas! There is something they lack.  
For I miss the old master the one who has passed  
And his dusty old jacket of black.

**BILL MURRAY**

And now we would like to say something about Bill Murray and his father could find counterparts all through the province. They were successful farmers but the father loved horses and that love was inherited by his son. They began breeding horses at their Bonnie Brae Farm in Wellington, Ohio. At first they had no great success but because of Bill's intuitive knowledge of pedigrees and his father's good judgement and his feeding and care of the youngsters, they gradually developed a reputation that has brought them the distinction of having their stallion The Widower lead all sires in the United States and Canada with the number of dashes won by his progeny in 1955. He had 140 starts, 99 of them were winners of 409 dashes. In 1956 he led all pacing sires with the number of dashes won by his progeny, having 132 starters and 86 winners of 323 dashes. He now has five 2.00 pacers, one of them Meadow Rice 3, 1.58 1-5 has won more money than any other pacer racing-\$203,111.

Another of his get, Belle Action 2, 2.01 2-5 m.t., 2.02 2-5 h.m.t., at Bloomsburg, Pa. (h.m.t.) last year won the \$12,410 Bloomsburg Stake, the time of the two miles being 4.11, which is a new world's record for two heats by a 2-year-old pacer over a half mile track. He led past the wire 19 lengths ahead of the next horse in 2.02 2-5 shattering the previous world's record of 2.03. It was her fourth victory in 2.05 or better on a half mile track, no filly previously having more than two. Her total earnings for the season was \$40,299.52. Her driver was Billy Haughton, leading money winning driver of 1955.

**CHARLIE BARRETT**

To complete this story we would like to go back in memory to the year 1914 when Charlie Barrett of Park Hill, Ontario, attended the fall sales at Chicago and bought a 3-year-old stallion called Grattan Royal by Grattan. Charlie raced him a bit over the ice that winter and the following year he showed so much speed that he sold him for a reported price of \$10,000. He won his first races on the Grand Circuit then met with an accident, broke a bone in his front leg and the damage could not be repaired and he was sold for a song to a breeder in the United States.

In the early months of his 4-year-old form Charlie had bred him to a few mares and when these became 4-year-olds they showed a lot of speed, every one of them, and from that small group came Louie Grattan 2.00, that Vic Fleming raced so successfully over the ice, on half mile tracks and on the Grand Circuit, also Roy Grattan 2.01 1/4 that was raced in Tommy Murphy's stable in the biggest stake on the Grand Circuit and afterward in the Maritimes. Every one of his colts from the mares he was bred to that year showed extraordinary speed. Charlie was quick to notice that he was a potent sire and hunted him up. He finally located him on a small farm in a little spot in Ohio, bought him and brought him back and in a few years advanced his stud fee to \$500.

In the spring of 1927 we paid a visit to the race track at Stratroy, Ont., to look over a trotting mare which we afterwards purchased. It was a lovely sunny morning and there appeared on the track one of the handiest pacers we ever saw. He had a jet black mane and tail and was a bright bay. We inquired the name of the horse and were told that it was Grattan Bars. After he worked a mile we went to the stable and introduced ourselves to

the owner, Fred Throver, and asked him if the horse was for sale. He said "Yes, but I want a lot of money for him. I am going to work him a mile in twelve and will let him step a bit the last half." The mile was in 2:12 1/4 and the last half in 1:02 1/4 and it was easy for him. Mr. Throver believed he was one of the greatest pacers in the world and his belief turned out to be correct.

That year as a 4-year-old he made 13 starts and they were old-time races at three heats. He won all of them except two and took a record of 2:07 1/4. Widow Grattan, dam Ima Widow by Widower Peter, made 15 starts and won 9 of them and took a record of 2:07 1/4.

The following year (1928) a \$25,000 New England Pacing Derby was raced on July 4th at Windsor, Conn. half mile track. From memory we believe it was promoted by Allen Wilson of Boston, a native of this province. It brought together 12 of the best pacers in the Eastern United States and it was also brought to Windsor one of the largest crowds that ever attended a race meet in New England. The celebrated Fitch Brothers had a large tent and auctioned the pools and the speculation was enormous. Here is the result:

2:11 Pace, Purse \$25,000. (New England Pacing Derby, (Eliminations.)

Grattan Bars, by Grattan Royal (Vic Fleming)..... x 2 1  
Widow Grattan, by Grattan Royal (Mabrey)..... x 3 1 2  
Chattanooga, by Napoleon Direct (McGrath)..... x 1 x 5 3  
Bonnie M., by Bonnington (Hodson)..... x 2 3 ro  
Jeanette Royal, by Grattan Royal (Wilson)..... x 2 x 10 ro  
Hollyood Jacqueline, by Great Britton (Brittenfield)..... x 3 6 ro  
Napoleon Star, by Napoleon Direct (Nickerson)..... x 4 4 ro  
Neil Frisco, by San Francisco (Mosher)..... x 7 ro  
Volo Rico, by Peter Volo (Crozier)..... x 5 8 ro  
Star Cochato..... 6-x ro  
Kinney Direct..... x-6 ro  
Gypsy Star..... Time-2:06 (track record), 2:06 3/4, 2:06 1/4, 2:09.

We can still remember the write-ups in the harness horse papers of the desperate struggle between Widow Grattan and Grattan Bars and we find that Grattan Bars just won by a head. He went on to win two more \$25,000 races that year but Widow Grattan was not an entry in them. However, she took a record of 2:02 1/2 and won five races. Later she reduced her record to 2:00.

Now we come back to Ed Geers and Village Farm and we find that The Abbe, son of Chimes, was bred there during Mr. Geers' regime and he sired Abbedale 2:01 1/4 and Widow Grattan 2:00 by Grattan Royal 2:06 1/4, bred to him produced The Widower p. 3, 1.59 1/2. Bill Murray's sire whose achievements have been chronicled above. Years after the New England Pacing Derby, several of the horses that took part in it came to the Maritimes. Bonnie M. 2:02 1/2, driven by Monte Gerow, raced in the free for all at Charlottetown, Aug. 31, 1931, which was won by Eula H. 2:06, owned by Ed Geers and Village Farm and we find that The Abbe, son of Chimes, was bred there during Mr. Geers' regime and he sired Abbedale 2:01 1/4 and Widow Grattan 2:00 by Grattan Royal 2:06 1/4, bred to him produced The Widower p. 3, 1.59 1/2. Bill Murray's sire whose achievements have been chronicled above.

**GAME ASSOCIATIONS**

It is encouraging to learn of the hundreds of new members joining the three Branch Fish and Game Associations. I understand the Prince County Branch has been augmented by over 300 new members just recently. In view of this I must admit I received a distinct shock to read in the local press this week where the Prince county Branch had passed a resolution recommending a revival of spring shooting for wild geese. To this columnist's was of thinking this is the most insane resolution, in respect to wildlife, to be recorded to date. 40 years ago this coming August Canada and the United States signed a Treaty known as The Migratory Birds Convention Act wherein, among other regulations, spring shooting of migratory birds, including geese and ducks, was prohibited. Spring shooting of wild geese could not be allowed in any specific area, etc. etc. etc. It is universal in both countries.

This columnist is not alarmed for fear such a resolution will be granted by the Department concerned at Ottawa. It could not, or would not, break an agreement with our neighbor to the south of the border. I am more concerned on why it should have been considered at all; especially so when last fall Prince county enjoyed the best goose shooting, both stubble and water, for many long years.

Just what would happen if certain groups of hunters had the power to pass game laws. I am old enough to know that many conservationists and lovers of our wildlife will ponder with deep concern just how deep seated the Fish and Game Revival that is sweeping the province at the moment.

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### Cape Breton Importing P.E.I. Hungarian Partridge

SYDNEY, N.S. (CP)—Nine Hungarian partridge have been imported from Prince Edward Island in an attempt to introduce the popular game bird to Cape Breton island.

E. A. Curtis, chairman of the Upland Game and Bird Committee says the association hopes to bring 60 more of them to Cape Breton, in exchange for chukar partridge. Hungarian partridge were introduced to Prince Edward Island about 30 years ago. Since then they have multiplied to such an extent that they warrant a hunting season.

### Canada's Olympic Hopes Boosted

KINGSTON, Ont. (CP)—Canada's 1956 Olympic hopes got a boost Tuesday with an army announcement that 90 soldiers are being groomed to belt their way into boxing trials for the summer Olympics in Australia this year.

For the first time in army history a country-wide boxing championship will be staged in Kingston April 4, 5 and 6.

The army said it hopes to produce some soldier-boxers of championship calibre in the meet. Open class winners will be concentrated at an army camp for three months of intensive training under expert instructors.

The survivors will compete in Olympic trials for the right to represent Canada at the Olympics. The 90 contenders, from Canada's five army commands, converge on Kingston, headquarters for the eastern Ontario area, next week.

**STAGE ELIMINATIONS**

The Olympic hopefuls were chosen in area and command eliminations in the Western, Prairie, Central, Quebec and Eastern commands.

Central command entries are to receive final warm-up training at Picton, while Eastern, Quebec, Prairie and Western teams will locate in Kingston.

The boxers will compete in nine classes by Olympic weights. They will also be separated into novice and open groups.

Eliminations are scheduled at Vimy barracks in Kingston April 4 and 5.

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**BREED TO THE BEST**

Since Harvester p. 2:04 1/4 by Lee Harvester 3, 2:16 1/4, is one of the best bred stallions offering for service in Canada. He had an unexcelled racing career, winning in 2:04 1/4—a new track record for Quebec Raceway when made. Good horsemen predicted that if raced on a mile track he would take a record of 2:06 or better.

With limited service in the stud he has sired some of the best trotters and pacers in the Maritimes. The fastest is Doctor J. A., that won at Inglewood, California, last October in 2:03 4/5. His progeny have style, speed and determination.

Make your bookings early. Stud fee \$25.00.

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# Sports

The Charlottetown Guardian, Saturday, March 31, 1956 7

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Pictured above is the B. Y. C. by defeating the Y. M. C. A. last night. They are (back row l-r) Murphy, Ray McCloskey, Ralph Pineau, Front row Wendall Gillis, Jim Flanagan, Alf Coady and Leo Doyle, Jim Coady, Wendall McGulgan. Guardian Photo.

### Ben Hogan To England Again

NEW YORK (AP)—Ben Hogan, championed the "Wee Ice Man" by Charonistic Scots when he won the British Open Championship in 1953 will make another golf foray to the British Isles this summer.

The four-time United States National champion from Fort Worth, Tex., will represent the United States in the international matches at Wentworth in Surrey, England, June 24-26, the International Golf Association announced Wednesday.

These will be the fourth annual matches of the association, founded by industrialist John Jay Hopkins in 1953 to promote international good will through golf.

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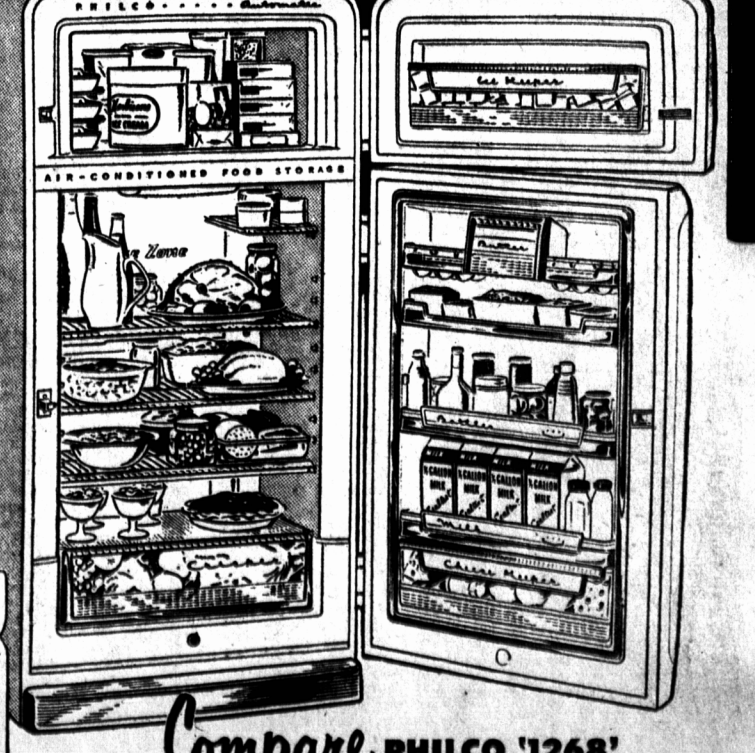
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