

Page 13 - Lobster Factories around Cape Breton

ISSUE: Issue 20

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1978/8/1

kept on fishing. And pretty well the same people got the jobs in the factory. (Did rate of pay go up?) No, not that much, no. Actually, nothing went good. Everything went wrong. Poor management, I would say. The co-op suffered miserably, (You mean, it didn't do as well as it had done imder the private people?) Well, it was believed that when we started that the two firms took 30,000 dollars out of the community for their lobster season, I suppose that was each. That was the previous season to the one we started up. We worked hard, but then we had to pay for the factory. And we had 100?' of the fishermen putting their lobsters in and not taking a cent. You should be able to run a business on that. The fishermen would not take anything out of the business until the pack was sold. The people working in the factory • they were paid. We'd always send enough of a shipment to the U.M.F. in Halifax • and they'd make a down payment which would pay your expenses. Say, if they figured they were going to get you 25 dollars a case, they might give you a down payment of 15 dollars • so everybody could pay their taxes and so forth. But when you went to the wharf, you just took a slip. We were waiting for our money. Sometimes the pack wouldn't be sold until as late as January. The idea was that it was all to go to the fisherman, less a little bit depreciation or what. But at the end of the season, you had to write off part of the purchase of the plant • which, when we divided it up, left you with about the same, or a little less, than what you would have received if we had just dealt with Bumham and Morrell. (So the first year didn't make • may even have lost a little?) Yes, The way you made it was on your assets. You were paying off a cannery. Then the volume of canners went down be? cause at just this time they changed the measure for the lobsters you could ship to the United States. It went to 3* inches on the body measurement. And a lot that the two previous operators could can as can? ners, were now marketable to the United States, So that cut your volume of canners down. So the cannery was giving little or nothing to the fisherman • just a matter of keeping it above, keeping a few jobs. We were being paid, if you look at it as in? vesting in the cannery. But that's not money. And just then the local merchant, who had to feed them, and a lot on cred? it • he started a cannery, started to buy lobsters and can. And there wasn't the volume for two. And we began to shake. And we began to lose more and more fishermen. And you didn't have to put them in for nothing, because you could go to his wharf and at the end of the week if you didn't owe him anything • even if you owed him something • he'd say. Take half. They could get money there. And we'd be losing fish? ermen little by little. We held on until about 1950 or 1951 • but we went. And in the end the local merchant became the only buyer. And is today. And that's a picture of co-op movements that failed in practi? cally all of Nova Scotia. Though some did succeed. AUTHORIZED SALES AND SERVICE KEN YAZER MOTORS LIMITED SYDNEY, NOVA SCOTIA 539-1500 We specialize in Camping Equipment and Clothing of All Kinds as well as Hardware, Plumbing and Electrical Supplies Reuben McEvoy's General Store Ltd. XNGONISH BBACR Open all year at the entrance to the beautiful Cape Breton Highlands National Park Speedy Propane PILLING STATIONS* Speedy



Propane Bulk Plant Kings Road, Sydney J.E.Benoit* Arichat Robin's. Cheticamp Eraser's Campground. Baddeck Inlet Campground. Baddeck Bob Wilson's Fina. Reserve Newly Renovated Grill at Sydney Riverl Town and Country RBSTAXJRANT Red and White FOOD STORBS Baddeck Port HaMkesbury Sydney River & Glace Bay Fort Hawkesbury