

Oulton pursued his work on Savage Cherry island, or as it is commonly called, Oulton island, of which he was the sole inhabitant. He managed to impress the public with the necessity of keeping away from his ranch, and his pens, constructed within an outside enclosure a quarter acre in area, were the models for the present system of ranching. Dalton joined interests with Oulton in 1896 or thereabouts, and, together, they used the present forms of wire enclosures which were first constructed by Oulton. In 1898, Dalton built a ranch at Tignish, still retaining a half interest in the Oulton ranch. He bought and sold skins and generally conducted the fur sales for the district. All Oulton's foxes were sold in Dalton's name. Dalton also conducted a general correspondence with the fur trade, and imported stock which proved of value for crossing.

Up to this time—1898—no very high prices were realized for skins. The prices paid for silver fox were not as high as at the present time and probably did not average more than thirty or forty per cent of present day prices. Moreover, the foxes of those days had not the advantage of good breeding and selection like the foxes of the present time. They were simply captured wild foxes or else, probably, not more than one or two generations removed from the wild state. The first high prices recorded were in London in the year 1899 or 1900—when it is said about \$1,800.00 were paid for a silver fox skin. This price of course gave a new vision to Messrs. Oulton and Dalton who up to this time had been operating with but meagre capital, and the expectation of only moderate prices for their skins.

The neighbours of Dalton and Oulton, who were their companions on hunting expeditions in Casumpeque bay, naturally chafed at not being able to participate in this profitable but carefully guarded fox-farming business. One of the most alert, Captain James Gordon, was able to purchase from Mr. Oulton, in 1898, a pair of silver foxes, which he reared at the remote and secluded farm of his friend, Robert Tuplin, of Black Banks. It is said that this pair were purchased for \$340, which demonstrates the value of the fur at that date. In the following spring, high prices were received at the London sales, and Dalton and Oulton attempted to buy back their former stock at a price \$100.00 higher, but Gordon and Tuplin would not sell. For several years Gordon and Tuplin lost their litters on account of not providing small well-insulated nests for the young, but they finally achieved success with a nest constructed of small barrels within larger ones, the intervening space between being packed with dry, insulating material. To Captain Gordon must be given the credit of inventing the modern form of nest, while Oulton must be credited with designing the form of pen. Frank Tuplin of Summerside obtained the foundation