

annual ranch return. Lobbyists were hesitant to go along with this police suggestion lest it be used for other purposes, such as Income Tax, and the matter was continually shelved until they became actively alive to the situation confronting the Police when the Lockerby Ranch at Hamilton was raided and 34 valuable unmarked pups stolen. As the result of public feeling an act known as the Fur Farmers Act was passed, which called for statistics relating to ranch operations over a two year period.

Following the passing of this act members of the Force were prevailed upon to enter ranches in search of stray foxes suspected by owners of being held for reward but when this assistance was declined these losses were, for the most part, reported as outright thefts which materially added to the burden of the Police and served no purpose other than to confuse the overall theft picture.

Thefts from the Crosby and Dawson ranches in the South Shore area, occurring much at the same time, aroused considerable interest and when a reward of \$500 was posted for recovery of the Dawson foxes the Police received many and varied types of information. Continuous investigation followed the report of these thefts with attention being more or less concentrated on locating the marked foxes from the Dawson Ranches, feeling that with the solving of one case a conclusion would be reached in the other, a surmise which proved correct.

Early Police efforts were disposed toward ranch inspections but were abandoned as the marketing season approached in favor of inspections of fur houses, during which it is estimated that 25,000 pelts were examined during a two-month period—no small task. This program brought results, the first clue coming while investigators were inspecting a fur cleaning establishment in Charlottetown where a mutilated-eared pelt was

recovered. Mutilation had been so effected that difficulty was experienced in raising the marking sufficiently for identification purposes. However, following X-ray, infra red and chemical re-agent tests which were to no avail, it was found that by simply placing the pelt underwater the markings could be read with ease, and it was in this manner identification was established in the subsequent Supreme Court Trials.

Ownership being established the Police were able to trace this pelt to one Fred Beaton—a former Dawson Ranch employee—but this subject maintained mistaken identity on the part of the fur buyer and pleaded not guilty to subsequent charges. However, he was convicted of “receiving” before Judge J. G. Duffy and remanded for sentence.

During this remand period the Police learned of other fox dealings Beaton had had with a fur buyer of questionable reputation and pelts handled by these persons were traced to a London, England, fur market. Following their return to this country they were identified as being from the Crosby Ranch—identification being established through an injury mark appearing in the stifle of one of the animals. Beaton was re-arraigned on a further charge of “receiving”, convicted, and again remanded. During this remand period Beaton suffered a change of heart and indicated he was prepared to talk.

Beaton's disclosures brought to light many interesting features, probably the most interesting of these being in respect to an ill-fated expedition of revenge planned by Beaton and two others to clean out the fox ranch of this same fur buyer at Portage, 80 miles distant. When one realizes that this same buyer maintained a ranch of nearly 200 foxes at that time the magnitude and seriousness of their endeavor can be fully appreciated. Clubs were made for killing these animals in the garage of one of the trio—Louis Berrigan—at West River, and the