

She's been marooned in her car, axle-deep in treacherous sand flats on an incoming tide; and justifiably terrified when some recommended "clients" in isolated places have turned out to be quite mad.

BELIEF IN SUPERNATURAL

Close beneath the gaiety and nostalgia of Nova Scotia folksongs, lies an impenetrable belief in the supernatural. So, one of the first things Helen Creighton found when she probed under the entertaining ditties of old characters like Hartlan and Henneberry, were the scary tales of unworldly intrusions from the supernatural.

The routine acceptance of ghosts and witches in everyday life, of course, had a profound influence on the living habits of Nova Scotia folk, particularly in the past century.

When the master of one Grand Banks fishing schooner left the fishing grounds for home, and crewmen reported inhuman footsteps on the deck, the captain took account of the ghostly presence and changed course. He reckoned it was the ghost of a seaman who died and was buried at sea though his expressed wish was to die at home. To be rid of the disconsolate ghost, the schooner captain sailed to the dead man's home village, and rowed ashore in a dory. Knowing from the folklore that ghosts can't cross water, he waited long enough for the man's spirit to go ashore, then rowed back to his vessel. According to this folk tale the ghostly footsteps were never heard again.

With all her years of exposure to Nova Scotia's tellers of folk tales, have any of their beliefs rubbed off on the Lady of the Legends? Does Helen Creighton in fact believe in ghosts?

It's a little unnerving perhaps, but she doesn't always accept this question. She just sits there nicely composed in her elegant living-room with its fine period furniture, fixes you with curious eyes and asks very quietly: "Don't you?"

(From an article in a recent issue of *Nova Scotia Magazine*.)

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The consumer price index (1961=100) for Canada rose by 0.4 per cent to 126.4 in July from 125.9 in June. The July 1969 index stood 5.0 per cent above its level of July 1968. Most of the latest month's increase was attributable to a 0.8 percent rise in the food index, and to a 0.4 percent increase in the housing index. Among other goods and services, substantially increased tobacco taxes in Alberta accounted for a 0.4 percent upward movement in the tobacco-and-alcohol component. Transportation prices edged up by 0.1 per cent, while sale prices on selected apparel items helped reduce the clothing index by a similar amount. The indexes for health and personal care and for recreation and reading were unchanged.

FOOD

The food index advanced by 0.8 per cent to 128.8 in July from 127.8 in June. The increase in the level of food prices since June was less than normally expected during this period; much of the seasonal increase was recorded in last month's 2.2 percent advance. A major factor contributing to the increase was notably higher prices for restaurant meals. The July food index was 5.1 percent higher than that of a year earlier.

HOUSING

The housing index rose by 0.4 per cent to 125.2 from 124.7 in the preceding month. Increased mortgage interest rates in the latest month were chiefly responsible for a 0.6 percent upward movement in homeownership costs, while rents increased by 0.4 per cent in the same period. Higher wages for domestic help, together with increased prices for broodloom, household textiles, utensils and supplies contributed to a 0.4 percent increase in household-operation costs. Electricity prices were higher in Saint John, Hamilton and Halifax, the increase in the latter city being attributable to a new service tax. The July housing index stood 5.4 per cent above its level of a year earlier.

CLOTHING

The clothing index declined by 0.1 per cent to 124.8 in July from 124.9 a month earlier. Sale prices on a few selected apparel items outweighed a number of minor increases, but for the most part men's and women's wear items were unchanged in price. Footwear prices edged up by 0.2 per cent, while quotations for piece goods were marginally lower. The July clothing index was 3.1 per cent above its level of July 1968.

TRANSPORTATION

The transportation index edged up by 0.1 per cent to 20.7 in July from 20.6 in June. This marginal increase was attributable mainly to seasonally higher train fares. There was no change in automobile operation costs, as slightly lower new car prices were offset by higher quotations for gasoline and motor oil in a number of cities. The transportation index was 4.9 percent higher than it was in July 1968.

The health-and-personal-care index remained unchanged at its June level of 134.2 - 4.8 per cent above that of June 1968.

The recreation-and-reading component also remained stable in the latest month at a level of 127.4, 6.5 percent higher than it was a year earlier.

The tobacco-and-alcohol index moved up by 0.4 per cent to 126.3 in July from 125.8 a month earlier, with the entire increase being attributable to the imposition of higher tobacco taxes in Alberta. The tobacco-and-alcohol index was 4.1 percent higher than the figure a year earlier.