

Excerpt from *Anne of Green Gables*—

“Anne dropped on her knees and gazed out into the June morning, her eyes glistening with delight. Oh, wasn't it beautiful? Wasn't it a lovely place? Suppose she wasn't really going to stay here! She would imagine she was. There was scope for imagination here.”

### prince Edward Island



No visit to PEI would be complete without a visit to Charlottetown, (population: 32,174) the provincial capital of Prince Edward Island. Charlottetown was first incorporated as a town in 1855. It is also the county seat of Queens County. The city is also called the "Birthplace of Confederation" after the historic 1864 Charlottetown

Conference which led to the Confederation. Before 1867, British North America was a collection of six separate colonies: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, the Province of Canada (now Quebec and Ontario), Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and British Columbia.



### Lighthouses Prince Edward Island

Only the first three listed here entered into Confederation at first, but all did eventually, the last being Newfoundland in 1949. The remainder of modern-day Canada was made up of Rupert's Land and North-Western Territory, which were owned by the Hudson's Bay Company and ceded to Canada in 1870, and the Arctic Islands, which were under direct British control and became part of Canada in 1880. Rupert's Land was sometimes called "Prince Rupert's Land", a territory in British North America, consisting of the Hudson Bay drainage basin, now mainly part of Canada, but also part of the United States of America. It was named after Prince Rupert of the Rhine, a nephew of Charles I and the first Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. Areas once belonging to Rupert's Land include parts of Minnesota and North Dakota, all of Manitoba, most of Saskatchewan, northern Alberta, eastern Nunavut Territory, and northern parts of Ontario and Quebec.

We drove back to the Confederation Bridge. I wanted a genuine PEI Dirt Shirt. Native legends of old tell of a Great Spirit that, during the creation of the earth, reserved a small

amount of red dirt. This red dirt was used to form "the fairest of all earthly places", Prince Edward Island. Today we now know that the dirt's rich red hue is due to its naturally occurring high iron oxide content. During the spring of 1997, Dr. Michael Wheeler, then an Atlantic Veterinary College student, founded The Original P.E.I. Dirt Shirt Company. The idea was simple. "The Island's rich red dirt has long been known to colour clothing, instead of trying to get it out, why not help put it in."

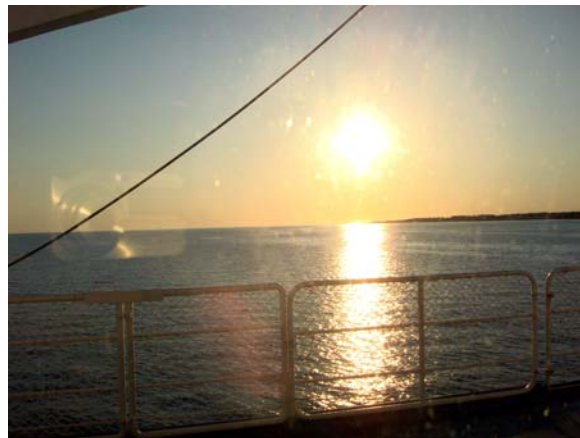
After hundreds of muddy trials, Michael eventually fine-tuned the dying process.



### **Northumberland Ferries Limited**



Late in the evening, 13 May, we arrived at Wood Islands, and waiting for the ferry to take us back to the mainland. Wood Islands is named for several small forested islands located several hundred metres offshore in the Northumberland Strait. These islands are linked by sand bars and form a sheltered harbour for ferry service to



Caribou, Nova Scotia operated by Northumberland Ferries Limited, as well as a small craft fishing harbour. There is no charge either by bridge or ferry to get on PEI, but they get “ya” when you leave, no matter if you depart via the bridge or ferry, \$64 in all. They charge by the number of axles. Can you imagine what it would cost for a “big” truck?

Quoting an advertisement—“Northumberland Ferries offers what is simply the best way for you and your car to travel between Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The Confederation and the Holiday Island Ferries proudly ply the waters between Caribou and Wood Islands in just 75 minutes and, in the process, offers you a unique opportunity to park the car, relax and enjoy the beauty of the sea and the sky. Best of all, no matter how many passengers are in your car, you pay just one great rate.”

Larry, who is afraid of heights, was rather skeptical about my ability to drive up the steep, narrow ramp to the top deck of the ferry, and as the first vehicle in line, driving right up to the exit gate. Occasionally, it was fun to drive close to the edge, just to give

him a wee bit of a thrill. You'd think, after all the time he has ridden with me, he would get over being scared, but time has not diminished his fear, and yet, he is fearless about some things that would frighten me to death. From the deck, there was a panoramic view of PEI and the lighthouse, while the great eye of the sun dipped into the sea, the sunset played on shimmering laughter-golden waves of the Northumberland Strait, and then the view of Caribou, Nova Scotia as twilight shadows deepened into night and distance lights twinkled on, flickering in the distance like some defective lamp. The cold wind crept in around a loose sleeve or an open button, leaving a damp chill on the skin. Uncovered hands quickly chilled. Soon passengers were seeking the warmth that radiated inside. Through the windows, it was still a breathtaking vista of glistened waves lapping gently against the boat's hull as she plowed the sea and the red, purples and oranges of the sky as a golden orb, sank lower in the water, and then as the last gleam of sunlight died, the sea turned black.

We spent the night in Stellerton, Nova Scotia, then went back to Pictou, whose port was the receiving point for many Scottish immigrants moving to a new home in northern



Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island following the Highland Clearances of the late 1700s and early 1800s. Consequently, the town's slogan is "The Birthplace of New Scotland"; the first wave of immigrants is acknowledged to have arrived on September 15, 1773, on the *Hector*. (a full rigged fluyt, originally designed as a cargo vessel) Norman McLeod led a group from Scotland to Pictou, and then to Waipu, New Zealand. The Hector Heritage Quay, along with the Ship Hector Company Store were opened on

the Pictou waterfront in the ensuing years. The marine architect firm J.B. McGuire Marine Associates Ltd. was commissioned to research the particulars of the original *Hector* and to develop blueprints for an accurate replica. Scotia Trawlers of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia were commissioned to complete the construction at the Hector Heritage Quay. After several years of construction, the replica *Hector* was launched with great fanfare and media coverage on September 16, 2000.

### Cape Breton Island

Monday, 14 May, we crossed the Canso Causeway into Cape Breton Island, pop. 147,454 (French: *île du Cap-Breton*, Scottish Gaelic: *Eilean Cheap Breatuinn*, Mi'kmaq: *Únamakika*). Cape Breton is an island on the Atlantic coast of North America. Its landmass slopes upward from south to north, culminating in the highlands of its northern cape. A saltwater fjord, Bras d'Or Lake, dominates the centre of the island. Cape Breton Island's first residents were likely Maritime Archaic Indians,



ancestors of the Mi'kmaq Nation, who later inhabited the island at the time of European discovery. Giovanni Caboto (John Cabot) reportedly visited the island in 1497 to become the first Renaissance European explorer to visit present-day Canada. Cape Breton Island is composed mainly of rocky shores, rolling farmland, glacial valleys, barren headlands, mountains, woods and plateaus.

Geological evidence suggests that at least part of the island was originally joined with present-day Scotland and Norway, now separated by millions of years of continental drift.

We spent three days on the Cabot Trail, approximately 300 km (185 miles.) long and completes a loop around the northern tip of Cape Breton Island. The northern section of the Cabot Trail passes through the scenic Cape Breton Highlands National Park. The western and eastern sections follow the rugged coastline, providing spectacular views of the ocean. The southwestern section passes through the Margaree River valley before passing along Bras d'Or Lake. Villages along the Cabot Trail include: Baddeck, the gateway to the Cabot Trail and the location of the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site, St. Ann's, Ingonish, Belle Cote, Chéticamp, Dingwall, and Cape North.

**Cape Breton Island**



Talk about wilderness. Cape Breton is among the most wilderness I have ever seen. There are only seven villages of any consequence on the entire scenic route, and only a handful or so persons seen once you leave the villages, some of which don't have a service station, but as Larry was quick to boast, no matter the size of the town, you can always be sure they have a hockey arena, just like every small-town Texas has a football stadium. To prove his point, he asked in every little burg we came to.

At Inverness, Larry had fish and chips and I had a seafood platter of scallops, haddock and clams. The fish was cooked to perfection, moist and flaky inside with a golden brown crispy batter. It tasted so fresh that we suspected that it had just been caught on the dock right out the back door. In fact, it was the best fish I have ever eaten.

We stayed at Merry's Motel, a bed and breakfast, in Chéticamp, awaking early to feast on a continental meal in the dining room of the owners' home. It was an adventure—other guests spoke very little English and we had a good time trying to understand each other.

At Pleasant Bay, we booked Captain Mark's Whale and Seal Cruise. Around 2 PM we boarded a Zodiac, not much more than an inflatable raft after donning special suits, designed to keep out the cold and also a floatation device in case one went overboard.

Then we put our very lives and stomachs in the capable hands of Mark Timmons, certified small



craft master and 20-year veteran of the sea. What was supposed to be an hour and one-half cruise turned in to three and one-half hours as Captain Mark took us 10 miles up the pristine wild and rugged coastline of the Bay of St. Lawrence along the northern wilderness of Cape Breton .

The Highland coast scenery is wild and breathtaking, with spectacular rock and cliff formations, mysterious sea caves (Captain Mark would take his Zodiac right inside on calmer days), cascading waterfalls, abandoned pioneer settlements, and fishermen at work. We watched the crew of the Kimberly Anne, consisting of father, son and the son's fiancée, hauling in lobster traps, some empty and others with lobsters. Our bodies remained warm, but the cold seeped into shoes and gloves, and soon you could feel the sting.

We first saw a group of seals that disappeared as quickly as they were spotted. Then it was just water as far as you could see and the roll of Zodiac through the waves of a wind-swept rough sea. Giving up on locating any whale, Captain Mark turned the Zodiac and headed back to shore. Captain Mark kicked the Zodiac in to high gear and was zipping at



**"Captain, there be whales!"**

break-neck speed, flying over the tempestuous waves, bouncing up and slamming back down onto the water, much like going over dips in the road with your heart in your throat. Larry was laughing and really getting into this roller coaster ride, and I was beginning to get queasy.

Then alerted by birds that follow whales, the Zodiac slowed and circled the area. These birds would dive-bomb into the sea at 60 miles-per-hour to catch the fish in the whale's wake. And then three minke whales came into view, but too far off for great viewing, but I did manage to get a couple of photos. One Minke came toward the Zodiac, dorsal fin breaking the water in much the same way as a shark.

The Minke Whale is the second smallest of the baleen whales - only the Pygmy Right Whale is smaller. Upon reaching sexual maturity (6-8 years of age), male and female Minke Whales measure an average of 6.9 and 7.4 metres (22'8" to 24'3") in length, respectively. Both sexes typically weigh 4-5 tonnes at maturity, and the maximum weight may be as much as 14 tonnes. Minke Whales are distinguished from other whales by a white band on each flipper. The body is usually black



or dark-grey above and white underneath. Most of the length of the back, including dorsal fin and blowholes, appears at once when the whale surfaces to breathe. The whale then breathes 3-5 times at short intervals before 'deep-diving' for 2-20 minutes. Deep dives are preceded by a pronounced arching of the back. The maximum swimming speed of Minkes has been estimated at 20-30 km/h. Minke Whales typically live for 30-50 years; in some cases they may live for up to 60 years.

Coming into the harbour, I lost it and got seasick, throwing up over the side. Of course, Larry had to rub it in, bragging about how Captain Wamp was born on the high seas, and had never been seasick in his life.

Back on the Cabot Trail, I regaled in scaring Captain Wamp, going around the 30 km curves in the road as fast as I dared. Gee, paybacks are hell. The scenery was awesome, and as we began to climb the higher peaks of the Cabot Trail, there was still plenty of snow in areas where there was very little sunlight and tiny waterfalls cascaded in frozen sculptures on the rock crags.

Summing up our trip in three words, “trees and water.” And then around the next curve, more trees and more water. I’ve never seen as many trees and so much water crammed into such a small area.



Approaching the halfway mark on the Cabot Trail, we were running low on fuel. The little settlement we had just passed through, had long since rolled the streets up for the night. It was getting dark, and we had only seen one or two vehicles and a couple of moose all afternoon. We stopped at a pull off near a stream

that roared over rocks in whitewater rapids, rushing under the bridge with little fingers of water splashing up, feeling, seeking and choosing the smoothest course on its way out to sea. Sleeping in the SUV again, we woke up to a wondrous world wrapped in a robe of purest white as snow fell and clung to boughs of the trees and piled up on every available surface. Feathery green spruce and pine needles peeked through the snow, while Larry and I sang “Walking in a Winter Wonderland” about as off-key as you can get as the wind swept away our song.



Descending the Cape Breton Highlands, the snow turned to rain and finally tapered off, shrouding everything in mist and fog. By the time we reached Baddeck, we were happy to leave Cape Breton behind.

Filling the SUV, we paid \$1.20 per litre, as prices of gasoline were increasing everywhere, just in time for summer vacations. It was the highest price we would pay. We saw so many things and yet missed so much, too little time and too little money.

Even though the day was cold and gloomy with heavy rain spinning out of the steel gray sky, the Yellow Cello was a ray of cheery yellow sunshine and quite refreshing and rejuvenating. We were fortified for the long day in the Annapolis Valley with a hearty breakfast of eggs over easy, two rashers of bacon, hash browns and whole-wheat toast. Soon our hunger sated and tummies full, we were off on another adventure.

Once we were on mainland Nova Scotia, it was on to Annapolis Valley and the area where Larry once live. He was all excited and wanted to show me everything. The town

### **Bras d'Or Lake**



of Windsor is just like every other town with its own claim to fame, the biggest this or the smallest that or the oldest thingamajiggy, and Windsor had Howard Dill's Farm and the Birthplace of Hockey, both of which we missed because of time. Maybe someday we will travel back and see Howard Dill's Farm and his giant pumpkin patches and seed centre. He is the four-time World Champion pumpkin grower and developer of Dill's Atlantic Giant pumpkin variety, which has produced

world record pumpkins weighing up to 496 kg (1,092 lb.) Mr. Dill is a previous Guinness World Record holder.

“Congratulations to Ron Wallace of Rhode Island on a New Historic World Record at 1,502 lbs. The World's first ever 1,500 lb. pumpkin! Also, big kudos to Brant Timm of Ontario on setting a new World Squash Record of 1,131 lbs. As we head into 2007, there is great anticipation of bigger and better pumpkins and our mission will continue to provide top quality seed. We are very proud of our "Dill's Atlantic Giant" heritage spanning the last 25 years, and the enjoyment it has shown. 1,500 lbs. has finally been conquered. Now the quest is on for the first 1,600 lb. pumpkin.”

The Township of Windsor was founded in 1764, and the next year, its first Agricultural Fair was held. This fair is still continued today, and is actually the oldest and longest running such fair in North America. Windsor maintains a claim as the birthplace of ice hockey, based upon evidence that boys from King's Collegiate School played "hurley" or a hockey-like derivative of this game, on the frozen waters of 'Long Pond' adjacent to the school's campus during the early 1800s. Students from King's-Edgehill School still play hockey on "Long Pond", the Cradle of Hockey, located at the farm of Howard Dill. Windsor also boasts the oldest hockey arena in Canada, the Stannus Street Rink, but no longer hosts hockey.

Windsor is also the birthplace of writer Thomas Chandler Haliburton, who is purported to have coined the phrases, seeing is believing, facts are stranger than fiction, you're as sharp as a tack, a stitch in time saves nine, I wasn't born yesterday, and the early bird gets the worm.

Larry, as member of the 1960's hippy culture also wanted to point out Black Bear Tavern when he once got busted for possession of marijuana, but “beat the wrap” as he put it when the case went to court.



At Hantsport, where Larry and his family once lived, I chose a nice, but crowded, restaurant, and this is how Larry relates this story—Because I wasn't taking my insulin, I had to pee just about every hour. I kept an empty bottle in the front seat, but had a hard time hitting the opening with Twyla careening wildly and bouncing around every crook in the road. Often, the front of my pants exhibited an indiscreet dark wet circle, and, wouldn't you know, Twyla picked a table way in the back with a nice view of the Avon River and Minas Basin at low tide. Tides can reach over 50 feet, lifting boats skyward as the tide rises and setting them gently on the muddy ocean floor as it ebbs. Thank goodness for my Redmen lacrosse jacket that I held in front of me, though it did little to alleviate my embarrassment. Twyla was quick to assure me that I was red-faced for nothing, that it was my imagination and that the wet spot had long-since dried. (This is one of the things I love about Larry, the ability to laugh at himself and unashamedly tell stories that most of us would just as soon forget.)



**Larry's House  
Hantsport, Nova Scotia**

I wanted to show Twyla where I lived on Maple Street, but the memory gets a bit faulty

**Wolfville, Nova Scotia**



after 28 years or maybe it is a touch of Alzheimer's, but after looking at three houses, and I was sure each of them, respectively, was it. Nope, this is it, but then someone had added another story. At the third house, I was finally absolutely sure I had it, where we often watched the tidal bore right from our own front porch.

Wolfville is a small town in the rural Annapolis Valley, Kings County, Nova Scotia,

located about 100 km (62 mi) northwest of the provincial capital, Halifax. As of 2001, the population was 3,658. It was a-buzz with activity, students strolling the main street and frequenting the local restaurants and visitors driving the narrow streets, there for the Acadia University graduation.

New England planters came to the Wolfville area in 1760, following the expulsion of the Acadians. It was first known as Upper Horton, then Mud Creek because of the lack of water at low tide in what was once known as the smallest registered harbour in the world. Some of the world's highest tides are seen in this area.

What can I say about Wolfville, except, it is possibly the most beautiful place in the whole world, ornate old heritage homes, immaculate lush green yards and parks, no litter and friendly, helpful people. Willow Park is in the center of town, featuring a crystal clear pond with fountain spraying water into possibly the freshest air on Earth, not one bit of smog here. Tucked here and there were colorful gardens of tulips and other early spring flowers. Several species of trees including stately willows tower overhead and shade the occasional picnic table and secluded park bench, while the scent of freshly mown grass lingers heavily on the breeze.

**Borden Monument  
Canning, Nova Scotia**



A self-guided walk will take you by 26 old homes, dating back as far as the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Randell House (apparently, the oldest) was established in 1780 by Thomas Caldwell, and has been operated as a museum since 1947. A step back in time to that by-gone era, when the rich and famous mingled at the elaborate parties and ladies paced the widow's walks of those old homes, waiting for loved ones to return from the sea.

It is also home to the Acadia University founded in 1838 with an enrollment of over 3,500. It is a liberal art school offering both bachelor and master programs.

We happened up on the small village of Canning on the way to Blomidon Look Off. In the center of the street (Highway 358),

stood a statue, dedicated to Lieutenant Harold Lothrop Borden. My Borden ancestors date back to 1350 in Hedcorn, English and since there is a strong probability that he is among my Borden relatives, we stopped and took pictures for later investigation. In the following paragraphs, it is noted that Harold's father, Frederick Borden is a cousin to Canadian Prime Minister Robert Borden, who is also listed as a Borden ancestor, though not in my direct line.

In the small town of Canning, Nova Scotia, lost in its leafy surroundings, are the "hallowed haunts" of the youthful Harold Borden. His father's mansion, and the tree, around which he played tag as a boy, are still there, scarce now, remembering the young boy whose laughter once echoed about the place.