

**NOVA SCOTIA SERIES**

**UNIACKE'S SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON**

**and**

**Other Papers Relating to Cape Breton Island**

Edited

With an Introduction and Notes by

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## CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE.....	ix
INTRODUCTION.....	1
REV. RICHARD JOHN UNIACKE'S "SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON".....	36
Chapter    I—General Aspect of the Island.....	39
II—Climate and Soil.....	52
III—Sydney.....	71
IV—Wild Animals.....	86
V—Plants.....	97
VI—Native Indians.....	105
VII—Mining Establishments.....	117
VIII—Religion.....	130
APPENDICES.....	141
A. Lieut. W. Booth's Description of Sydney, August 1785.....	143
B. Lieut. (later General) William Dyott's Description of Sydney, 1788.....	144
C. A Letter Written at Sydney in 1789.....	145
D. T. C. Haliburton's Description of Sydney, 1829.....	148
E. John McGregor's Description of Sydney, 1832.....	151
F. Description of the Township of Sydney in the <i>Cape</i> <i>Breton Advocate</i> , 1840.....	153



G.	Lieut. (afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel) B.W.A. Sleigh's Description of Sydney, 1846.....	154
H.	Reports on Inverness County, 1861.....	158
I.	A Report on Victoria County, 1861-62.....	168
J.	A Report on Cape Breton County, 1861-62.....	173
K.	A Report on Richmond County, 1861.....	177
L.	A Report on Cape Breton Island, 1861.....	179
INDEX.....		184

## ILLUSTRATIONS

	facing page
Reverend Richard John Uniacke, 1807-1887.....	35
The Town of Sydney, 1864.....	71
Louisbourg, 1864.....	117
Cow Bay, now Port Morien, 1864.....	120
Little Glace Bay, now Glace Bay, 1864.....	126
Lingan, 1864.....	129
Lorway & Reserve Mines, 1864.....	130
Sydney Mines, 1864.....	138
North Sydney, 1864.....	152
Mainadieu, 1864.....	181

## **PREFACE**

This volume was prepared not only to make available in the first instance Rev. Richard John Uniacke's "Sketches of Cape Breton", which were written at Sydney, N. S., between 1862 and 1865, but also to present a number of additional descriptions of the Island from the pens of other writers at intervals between the founding of Sydney in 1785 and the year 1862.

I wish to thank Miss Winifred McFatridge, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, and Miss Gaylan Rutledge for the care and fidelity with which they helped in the preparation of this volume for publication.

C. BRUCE FERGUSSON.

Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

## INTRODUCTION

**1. Rev. Richard John Uniacke**

The Rev. Richard John Uniacke, the writer of *Sketches of Cape Breton*, was a grandson of his colourful and noteworthy namesake, Richard John Uniacke, "the old Attorney General", an Irishman who was the founder of the Uniacke family in Nova Scotia. The mottoes of the Uniacke family are "Unicus est", and "Faithful and Brave", and tradition has it that the origin of the family name is due to the heroic exploit of an ancient Irish knight called Fitzgerald, who was dubbed "Unicus" (the only one) for his brave deed. Be this tradition well founded or not, the fact that representatives of succeeding generations of Uniackes have had service in the army or the navy confirms the connection between one of the mottoes of the family and the peculiar name of the family itself.

Thus descended from a distinguished pre-Loyalist who carved for himself an important place in the early history of Nova Scotia, Rev. Richard John Uniacke was a product of that miniature melting-pot which helped to people this Province. His paternal grandfather was a native of Castletown Roche, County of Cork, Ireland, whose wife, Martha Maria Delesdernier, was a daughter of a native of the Canton of Geneva, in Switzerland. His maternal grandfather was Captain Jones Fawson, who had had service in the Royal Navy before coming to Nova Scotia, and whose wife was Dorothy, a daughter of Hon. Charles and Elizabeth Morris, who were of New England descent.

His paternal grandfather, Richard John Uniacke, after having been articled to a Dublin attorney in 1769, discontinued his legal training in 1773, because of a quarrel with his father, and left Ireland to seek fame and fortune beyond the Atlantic. After a short stay on the Island of St. Kitts, he proceeded to Philadelphia where in 1774, according to tradition, he met Moses Delesdernier, who was looking for settlers to place upon lands near Fort Cumberland, in Nova Scotia. Accepting employment with Delesdernier, Uniacke went to Nova Scotia where on May 3rd, 1775, at the age of 21, he married Delesdernier's daughter, who was then not 13 years of age.

In the autumn of 1776, when Jonathan Eddy and other sympathizers with the colonists in rebellion tried to storm Fort Cumberland, Uniacke, who was suspected of being implicated in this uprising, was arrested and taken as a prisoner to Halifax. Whether apocryphal or not, it is said that on this journey to Halifax as a prisoner, he passed close by Mount Uniacke, was struck by its resemblance to the family seat in Ireland and declared that he would like to own it. Thanks to the influence of Irish friends in Halifax, Uniacke was not brought to trial.

Shortly afterwards he took ship for the Old Country, where he completed his legal training, was enrolled as an Attorney of the Court of Exchequer and was admitted as a member of the King's Inns, in Dublin, in 1779. Upon his return to Halifax he was admitted to the Nova Scotia Bar early in 1781, and soon began to climb the ladder of official preferment. He was appointed Solicitor General in the same year. Two years later, when jealousy between pre-Loyalists and Loyalists became evident, Edward Winslow, one of the Loyalist new-comers, described the big Solicitor General as "a great lubberly insolent irish rebel"; and not long afterwards the rivalry and ill feeling which developed between Sampson Salters Blowers, a Loyalist who eventually became Chief Justice of Nova Scotia, and Uniacke began when the former was chosen in preference to the latter as Attorney General of Nova Scotia and heightened to such an extent a few years later, after Uniacke, then Attorney General, and Jonathan Sterns, then Solicitor General, and a Loyalist friend of Blowers, had come to blows in a street encounter, that Chief Justice Blowers challenged Attorney General Uniacke to a duel. Meantime, Uniacke had been appointed King's Advocate in the Court of Vice-Admiralty in 1784 and had succeeded Blowers as Attorney General in 1797. He was elected to the House of Assembly in 1783 and was chosen as Speaker of that body. Later on he was a member of the Council of Nova Scotia.

Although he failed to crown his ambition with the coveted Chief Justiceship, Uniacke attained prominence in public life and rose high in public office. He was a great admirer of the British way of life and a sturdy champion of colonial rights. His wit and humour were proverbial. He was interested in agriculture and gave much time and thought to the promotion of the fisheries and the encouragement of trade and commerce. In 1806 he recom-



mended two legislative unions, one of the Maritime Provinces, the other of the Canadas. In 1826 he drafted a plan for the federation of the British North American colonies. A grant of 1000 acres of land on the Windsor Road in 1786 became the nucleus of his future large estate at Mount Uniacke. There in 1813 Richard John Uniacke began to build his family seat, which is now one of Nova Scotia's historic houses. When Uniacke obtained an extra grant of 4000 acres of adjacent land in 1819, he had consolidated an estate of 5000 acres.

Rev. Richard John Uniacke's maternal grandfather, Captain Jones Fawson, was a midshipman in H. M. *Albion* in 1772-73. On June 30th, 1775, he was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Loyal Regiment of Nova Scotia Volunteers. Shortly afterwards he was appointed Captain and commanding officer of the armed schooner *Revenge*. On May 25th, 1782, he was commissioned as Captain in the Nova Scotia Volunteers. He accompanied the expedition which captured St. Pierre in 1793. In 1796-97, he was the commander of the armed snow, *The Earl of Moira*. From 1804 to 1810 he was Sheriff of Halifax County. On October 10th, 1784, he married Dorothy, daughter of Hon. Charles and Mrs. Morris and grand-daughter of Captain Charles and Mary (Read) Morris.

Through this line, therefore, Rev. R. J. Uniacke was a descendant of Captain Morris, who made a survey of part of the province before the founding of Halifax, assisted in laying out the town of Halifax in 1749, and was the first in a family succession as Chief Land Surveyor of Nova Scotia. Charles Morris, Jr., the oldest son of Captain Charles Morris, was probably born in Boston, about 1732, lived there and in Hopkinton, Mass., and then removed to Halifax, N. S., about 1761. In 1774 he was sworn in as a member of the Council of Nova Scotia. On November 3rd, 1781, he was commissioned as Chief Land Surveyor, in succession to his father, just deceased. He was also Registrar of the Court of Vice-Admiralty and Registrar of Wills and Probate. His third daughter, Dorothy, became the wife of Captain Jones Fawson, who was Rev. Richard John Uniacke's maternal grandfather.

The parents of Rev. Richard John Uniacke were Crofton, second son of Richard John Uniacke, the founder of the family in Nova Scotia, and Dorothy, daughter of Captain Jones and Dorothy (Morris) Fawson. Crofton Uniacke was born in 1783. Like his father and three of his brothers, he chose law as his profession,

and received his training in it at Lincoln's Inn, London. After his return to Nova Scotia, he was appointed Notary Public on August 30th, 1805; Receiver of Quit Rents for Nova Scotia, May 26th, 1808; Auditor of Grants and Receiver General of Quit Rents in Nova Scotia, November 15th, 1808; Surrogate Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court in 1815, in the absence of Judge Croke; and Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court, September 30th, 1817. On October 22nd, 1819, he was granted leave of absence as Judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty, in order to be absent from the Province for six months. For some years thereafter he was a Barrister-at-Law in London, England, and in 1835, when he purchased the half interest of his brother James Boyle in Mount Uniacke, he resided at Southsea, England. He married Dorothy Fawson, who was born at Halifax, N. S., October 22nd, 1786, on May 4th, 1805. His death occurred at his residence at Mount Uniacke, Nova Scotia, on October 26th, 1852.

Richard John, son of Crofton and Dorothy (Fawson) Uniacke, and author of *Sketches of Cape Breton*, was born in 1807 and baptized on November 8th of that year. He matriculated at St. Alban's Hall (which later merged with Merton College) Oxford, and was graduated with the degree of B.A., in 1832. After his return to Nova Scotia, he became a Church of England clergyman, as his uncle, Rev. Robert Fitzgerald Uniacke, who was to be Rector of St. George's Church, Halifax, N. S., for 45 years, had done earlier. The first six months of his ministry were served at St. Mary's Church, Aylesford, in the absence of the Rector, Rev. H. L. Owen, during the winter months of 1835-36. On Sunday, June 19th, 1836, at St. Mary's Church, Aylesford, he was admitted into the Order of Priests, at a service in which His Lordship, Bishop John Inglis, Rev. Edwin Gilpin, and Rev. H. L. Owen, all of whom had served in that parish, participated. Shortly afterwards Rev. Mr. Uniacke proceeded to St. Andrews, N. B., in order to assist Rev. Dr. Jerome Alley, the Rector there. Then he served for a time in Annapolis County, N. S., and later at Newport, N. S., being inducted into the rectorate of St. James Church, Newport, by Bishop Inglis, in 1841. After a successful pastorate of nearly 15 years at Newport, Rev. Mr. Uniacke was chosen to succeed Rev. Charles Inglis as Rector of St. George's Church, Sydney, Cape Breton. Taking passage in a steamer from Halifax, he reached Sydney on May 14th, 1853. He was the sixth Rector of St. George's Church, Sydney.



Settled ministrations of the Church of England had begun in Sydney, sixty-eight years before the arrival of Rev. Mr. Uniacke, in 1785. The first clergyman was Rev. Benjamin Lovell, the garrison Chaplain, whose son's baptism on April 18th, 1785, was the first one to be recorded in what was regarded as "the District and Parish of Sydney". In the same year Rev. Ranna Cossit was appointed by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel as missionary to Cape Breton Island. He visited Sydney in 1785 and informed Governor DesBarres of his appointment as missionary to the Island. But realizing that in the then infancy of the settlement no place could be provided for divine worship during the ensuing winter, Rev. Mr. Cossit obtained the Governor's permission to go back to his family in Claremont, New Hampshire, where he might minister to the people and assist some of them in removing to British territory. The following spring he returned to Cape Breton, reaching Sydney on June 6th, 1786. Shortly after Mr. Cossit became the first parochial clergyman in Sydney, the first attempt at a real organization of the parish was made. For five or six years it was known as the Parish of Sydney. In 1785 the Imperial Parliament voted £500 towards the erection of a church and in 1803 made a supplementary grant of £300 for the same purpose. Upon the completion of the exterior of this stone church, the whole Island of Cape Breton was erected into a Parish by an ordinance of Governor Macarmick and his Council, on March 30th, 1791. Thirty-seven years later the Parish of St. George was reduced to a more manageable size when, by order-in-council, authorized on April 7th, 1828, its boundaries were made to correspond with those of the township of Sydney. Meantime, an addition had been made to the old church building, which consisted simply of a nave, a plain building, constructed of grey stone, about sixty feet long, having three large circular windows upon each side, with a large venetian window at the east end, by the construction of a central tower or cupola in 1821. This tower having been so poorly constructed as to force one of the side walls out of position, it was decided in 1839 to remove it and replace it by a new wooden tower and steeple having a height of 96 feet. Rectors at St. George's Church from the departure of Rev. Ranna Cossit in 1805 to the arrival of Rev. R. J. Uniacke in 1853 were Rev. William Twining, Rev. Robert Ferryman, Rev. Hibbert Binney, and Rev. Charles Inglis.



At St. George's Church, Sydney, C. B., the Rev. Richard John Uniacke had an active, resident pastorate of 25 years. Its success is attested not only by the growth of his congregation and the increase in the number of his mission stations, but also by the erection of new buildings and the restoration or enlargement of old ones. Three years after his arrival in Sydney, his congregation purchased a new parsonage, and the Rector took possession of it in May 1856. It stood on the Esplanade, not far from Dorchester Street, between Dorchester and Pitt Streets. By 1858 the old stone church of St. George had become so dilapidated that the necessity for its restoration was obvious. The next year the work was begun and, upon the old roof being removed, the wall which had been leaning to an alarming degree, collapsed of its own weight. Restoration proceeded and the tottering structure was re-built in 1859. Four years later a chancel and a vestry room, both built of stone, were added. Other construction carried on during Mr. Uniacke's pastorate in Sydney included the building of St. Mark's Chapel at Coxheath in 1856, and the enlargement of St. John's Church, North West Arm, Sydney, between 1858 and 1861. By 1861 the Rev. Mr. Uniacke had opened a new station at Mira, about twelve miles from Sydney, and there he held a service once every two months. Thus progress continued, notwithstanding the fluctuations in the fortunes of the coal trade and the withdrawal of a portion of the grant provided by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

During his rectorate at St. George's, Sydney, Rev. Mr. Uniacke found time to take part in affairs of civic and cultural interest and to do some writing about the island on which he lived. On March 5th, 1855, he delivered a lecture on astronomy at a meeting of the Sydney Mechanics' Institute. On January 18th, 1864, he delivered an address on Cape Breton at a meeting of the same society, and extracts from this address were published shortly afterwards in the *Cape Breton News*. He also wrote his "Sketches of Cape Breton" between 1862 and 1865.

The University of King's College honoured Rev. Mr. Uniacke by conferring upon him the degree of D.D., in 1866. In the same year he preached the Annual Sermon before the University.

Winter travel in those days at times had its difficulties for Dr. Uniacke. On one occasion, during the month of March 1866,

while returning to Sydney from a late service at North West Arm, Rev. Mr. Uniacke broke through the ice in attempting to re-cross the Harbour. With much difficulty and with the aid of persons who lived nearby, he saved his horse from drowning and escaped himself with a partial but freezing cold bath. About seven years earlier, the Rev. W. Y. Porter had lost his life in trying to cross the ice on Sydney Harbour.

In 1875 Rev. Dr. Uniacke made a visit to the United States, and there he was warmly received by members of the clergy.

Two years later, after 25 years of faithful service in Cape Breton, Dr. Uniacke retired from the busy round of pastoral duties at St. George's Church and from Sydney as well, carrying with him the respect and esteem of the whole community. For several more years, however, he still retained his connection with St. George's Parish, where he was succeeded by the Rev. D. Smith, who had been assistant curate from 1872, and who took charge of the parish in October, 1877. Meantime, Rev. Dr. Uniacke acted as Rector of St. Paul's Church, Sackville, N. B., for 1878-79.

On June 1st, 1847, Rev. Richard John Uniacke, then Rector of Newport, married Ann Jane, youngest daughter of Rev. Robert Willis, D.D., Archdeacon of Nova Scotia, and Rector of St. Paul's, Halifax. The wedding ceremony, which was held in St. Paul's Church, Halifax, N. S., was conducted by Rev. R. F. Uniacke, Rector of St. George's Church, Halifax, and an uncle of the groom. Rev. R. J. and Mrs. Uniacke had four sons and two daughters.

Rev. Dr. Richard John Uniacke died suddenly at 25 Brenton Street, in Halifax, on Friday morning, December 9th, 1887, in his 81st year.

## II. "Sketches of Cape Breton"

Inspired by inquiries from his quondam tutor, Archbishop Whately of Dublin, who had been principal of St. Alban's Hall, 1825-31, begun as letters to him and completed in 1865, two years after the death of the Archbishop, these sketches were written by Rev. Richard John Uniacke, B.A., of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, and Rector of St. George's Church, Sydney, C. B. It was originally intended that the sketches would be published as a book. The earlier ones were addressed to the Archbishop of Dublin under

the title of "Letters to a Friend", and, pending the completion of the whole series, were inserted at intervals in the *New Penny Magazine*. Before the later ones were written, Archbishop Whately died, and, as a result, Rev. Mr. Uniacke's interest flagged, delay ensued and the original design of publication in one volume was not realized until now.

Just as Thomas Chandler Haliburton had earlier written his *Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia* (1829) in order to eradicate the unfavourable opinion of this Province then prevalent in Europe, so likewise did Rev. Mr. Uniacke seek by means of his "Sketches of Cape Breton" to contribute something towards making the Island better known, raising its reputation abroad and attracting immigration to it. Accordingly he described its geography, its climate, its natural resources and its native Indians; recounted something of its history; related its development in mining, fishing, lumbering, and agriculture; set forth interesting and first-hand portrayals of its mining communities; gave an account of new mining establishments in its coal fields, of its communications, of its needs and of its prospects. By so doing he hoped to draw attention to the natural advantages of Cape Breton Island and to show by contrast with developments in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and British Columbia that its backward state and comparative neglect in the eighteen-sixties were altogether unnecessary.

His "Sketches" are now presented in eight chapters, under the following headings: "General Aspect of the Island"; "Climate and Soil"; "Sydney"; "Wild Animals"; "Plants"; "Native Indians"; "Mining Establishments"; and "Religion". Rev. Mr. Uniacke's writing on Cape Breton Island is avowedly based partly upon works then available, for history, statistics, and other similar matter, upon private and recent information of good authority and upon personal knowledge gleaned from observant travel over a period of about ten years. Were Cape Breton Island a sterile and unpromising region, with nothing but the simple circumstance of its obscurity to recommend an attempt to describe it, Rev. Mr. Uniacke declared, he would never have thought of writing his account of it. But such was far from being the case, as he hoped to be able to show.

In the first chapter, entitled "General Aspect of the Island", Rev. Mr. Uniacke describes its position and physical features, its



natural resources and scenery; comments upon the means of reaching it and modes of travel upon it; refers to its lakes, rivers, settlements, and mining establishment; and mentions its lighthouses, fishing centres and ports. He foresaw the advantages and benefits to be derived from a railroad connecting Sydney and Louisbourg, a project which was completed in 1896, and referred to the St. Peter's Canal, upon which work had begun in 1854 and through which traffic was to run in 1869. The aids to navigation which he mentions included the lighthouse at Flat Point, on the eastern side of the entrance to Sydney Harbour, which had been established in 1832; the one at Flint Island, off Cape Percy and not far from Port Morien, which had been in operation from 1856; that at the north-eastern point of Scatari Island which had been set up in 1839; and one of the two erected on the North and South Points of St. Paul Island in 1838 and first lighted in 1839 and 1840, respectively. In this chapter also, Rev. Mr. Uniacke touches upon Sydney and its harbour, the mining establishments at Sydney Mines, Lingan, and Cow Bay (Port Morien), all of which receive fuller treatment in subsequent chapters; informs us that Arichat, which was then the chief community on Isle Madame, sending forth in Jersey vessels its exports of fish and produce to the West Indies, South America, Spain, and the Mediterranean countries, was also the leading commercial port of Cape Breton Island; and draws our attention to such places as Port Hood, Cheticamp, White Point at the southern side of Aspy Bay and its flourishing fishery, St. Ann, Mainadieu, Louisbourg, and Gabarus.

The second chapter, entitled "Climate and Soil", is an attempt to correct certain wrong impressions held in various quarters respecting the climate of Cape Breton, without denying altogether the truth of much that had been alleged against it, by providing such precise information about it as would enable strangers to form an accurate idea of it. It accordingly deals with the seasons of the year, temperature, relative humidity, Indian Summer with its soft hazy atmosphere, its mellow pinkish glow lending luminosity and softness to distant woods and hills, its blaze of gorgeous hues on leaf and tree, its lakes mantled with rich embroidery and its deep silence pervading all, as well as with the incidence of fog and drift-ice and winter frost, the Aurora Borealis and that remarkably lovely natural phenomenon, the silver-thaw. The climate of Cape Breton is compared with that of England, not unfavourably even with consideration being given

to the changeableness and uncertainty of spring. This chapter also has to do with farming, with the backwardness of late spring operations being compensated for by rapidity of vegetation, as well as with the different crops, produce and fish, the fertility of certain parts of the country, the opportunities knocking for farmer and settler, mineral wealth, and new agencies recently organized to promote immigration. Rev. Mr. Uniacke not only tells us of the people then living on Cape Breton Island, but also gives his opinion of the types of immigrants who would most likely be successful there. He reminds us that most of the settlers at that time in Cape Breton Island were "the poorer Scotch mostly from the Islands of Scotland" and adds that, while many of them were industrious and frugal and often succeeded in making themselves tolerably comfortable upon a small piece of land, they were not remarkably intelligent and did not come from that part of Scotland so justly famous for its husbandry, the consequence being that in their hands agriculture made slow progress. Yet even in their case Rev. Mr. Uniacke reported that during the ten years he had up to that time spent in Cape Breton, there had been a marked improvement on a small scale in the farms occupied by them. On account of the length and severity of the winter and the difficulties to be overcome, he was of opinion that "a sturdy frame" and "a bold persevering character" were very necessary for labouring men in Cape Breton. But mere labourers were not required: "hardy industrious men with a family of sons sufficiently grown to assist in clearing land and working their own farm would in time be sure of success"; there was a better opening for mechanics, although not for the time being in large numbers; and still more needed for the progress and prosperity of the island were enterprising merchants and men of speculation possessed of moderate capital.

The third chapter, with the heading "Sydney", contains an account of the beautiful situation and lovely surroundings of that community, as well as of its founding, its growth and the changes that occurred coincident with or resulting from its ceasing to be a garrison town. Its principal streets, its churches and its most notable private dwellings are described; its population and the number of its houses are given; the lack of business, industrial and agricultural enterprise and the resultant exodus of young men are lamented; its pleasant climate receives appropriate mention; its social life gets a passing notice; its seasonal amusements



and public recreations obtain some attention; and its contact with the rest of the Province and its relative isolation during the winter months are made known to us.

The fourth chapter, designated "Wild Animals", presents interesting information about the moose, the cariboo, the black bear, the porcupine, the loon and mink, as well as modes of hunting and the use of snow-shoes.

Next is the chapter dealing with plants which are indigenous to Cape Breton. It includes accounts of the Mayflower, the Indian Cup, the Bake-apple, the Blueberry, the Strawberry, the Sugar-maple tree and the manufacture of maple-sugar, as well as of the prospects for the production of garden fruit.

Then comes a chapter devoted to the native Indians. It has to do with their personal appearance and dress, their habits, occupations and modes of life, their characteristics and skills, their wigwams, their canoes and their language.

The second last chapter, entitled "Mining Establishments", provides information about the operations of the General Mining Association, the export of coal from the Island, the transfer to the Province of control of mines and minerals in Nova Scotia and the resultant opening up of new mines in Cape Breton; as well as most interesting eye-witness descriptions of Cow Bay (Port Morien), with its mines, shipping, breakwater, bustling activity and rapid transition from a forest, unbroken except for a few log cottages, to the almost incessant erection of buildings on land recently cleared, presenting a striking mixture of departing wilderness and approaching civilization; of Big Glace Bay and Little Glace Bay and of the marked changes then taking place in the latter which were eventually to transform it into "The Biggest Town in Canada", with a solitary log-house surrounded by a small stand of spruce, amidst rows of newly built houses, as an amusing feature of the changed scene and a conspicuous symbol of the rapid strides made by new enterprise in the coal fields.

Finally, the eighth chapter, under the heading of "Religion", is an account of the churches and missions of the Church of England in Cape Breton Island. It has to do with the work of the Church in Sydney, North West Arm, Cow Bay (Port Morien),

Glance Bay, Louisbourg, Sydney Mines, and Gabarus. Originally, Rev. Mr. Uniacke's manuscript included, or was intended to include, material on missionary journeys and an episcopal visit to Baddeck, as well as a conclusion. But these portions of his writing are now unavailable or missing.

Rev. Mr. Uniacke's "Sketches of Cape Breton" now takes its place in the literature dealing with that Island. It is not a comprehensive general history such as Richard Brown's *A History of the Island of Cape Breton* (1869); it does not give as much information on coal as Brown's *The Coal Fields and Coal Trade of the Island of Cape Breton* (1871) or C. Ochiltree Macdonald's *The Coal and Iron Industries of Nova Scotia* (1909); it does not provide a detailed account of the discovery and exploration of the Island; nor does it present a broad description of the French regime there as does J. S. McLennan's *Louisbourg From its Foundation to its Fall* (1918); or J. G. Bourinot's *Historical and Descriptive Account of the Island of Cape Breton* (1892); but in parts it is similar to portions of Thomas Pichon's *Genuine Letters and Memoirs Relating to the Natural, Civil, and Commercial History of the Islands of Cape Breton and Saint John* (1760), Charles Dudley Warner's *Baddeck, and That Sort of Thing* (1900), C. W. Vernon's *Cape Breton, Canada* (1903), and Clara Dennis's *Cape Breton Over* (1942), it supplements these with useful and interesting material and offers to the reader personal and on-the-spot information about Cape Breton in the eighteen-sixties, which is not available elsewhere.

### III. Cape Breton Island

It is fitting that with the publication of Rev. Mr. Uniacke's "Sketches of Cape Breton" there should be mention of the highlights of the history of the Island. In earlier days its position, its strategic location, its nearness to rich fishing grounds, its being in the fairway of vessels from Europe, its abundant natural resources, particularly of fish and coal and gypsum, and its decisive significance in the stirring contention between England and France for supremacy in North America have focussed attention upon it. More recently developments in coal and steel and fisheries, efforts to foster Scottish traditions and Gaelic culture, experiments in early aviation and other modes of transport, and the magnetic enchantment of its charming scenery have all served to make it widely known.

The first Europeans to see Cape Breton Island were undoubtedly Norsemen. Viking sea-rovers, bravely venturing upon the unknown waste of the Atlantic seas, had skirted its coasts or touched its shores five centuries before John Cabot made his landfall, probably on Cape Breton Island, in 1497.

Following hard upon Cabot came European fishermen and explorers. The former soon frequented the fishing banks of the New World and became familiar with the ports and harbours of Cape Breton Island; the latter scanned its coasts, sounded its harbours and prepared maps and accounts which benefited both contemporaries and successors. In 1520 Joao Alvarez Fagundes, under Portuguese patent, not only explored part of the north-eastern coast of North America, but also apparently made an attempt at settlement on Cape Breton Island. Four years later both Verrazano, on behalf of France, and Stephen Gomez, Portuguese commander of a Spanish vessel, explored the shores of Cape Breton and other coastal areas, the former christening the later Acadian region Nova Francia, and the latter dubbing the Bras d'Or "the river with two mouths". Twelve years after that Master Hore of London, England, and his companions made a voyage to Newfoundland and Cape Breton. In 1593 Richard Strong sailed from Falmouth, England, for the southern coast of Newfoundland, overshot the mark and reached Cape Breton Island, where some of his men landed, viewed the country and met a number of aborigines. A year later Rice Jones of Bristol made a voyage to the Island of Anticosti in pursuit of whales and on his return caught sight of the island of Cape Breton. Three years after that Capt. Leigh sailed from Gravesend in the *Hopewell* of 120 tons on a fishing and trading expedition to the St. Lawrence, and visited Cape Breton Island in the course of this voyage. Leigh and his men landed at Cibo (now Sydney), at New Port (Port Nova) and at English Port (Louisbourg). Ten years later Champlain from hearsay wrote a surprisingly accurate account of Cape Breton Island, in which he referred to such fishing centres as English Harbour (now Louisbourg) and Ingonish, and recalled the attempt of the Portuguese, who had spent a winter there, to settle on this island.

When Sir William Alexander in 1621 received royal approval of his design for creating a New Scotland in the New World, there was specific mention of the islands called "Baccalaoes or Cap-



Britton" in the Royal Charter of Nova Scotia of that year. Then Sir William conveyed Cape Breton Island to Sir Robert Gordon of Lochinvar, and Sir Robert christened his new domain New Galloway. Four years later Lochinvar published at Edinburgh a pamphlet entitled "Encouragements for such as shall have intention to bee Under-takers in the new plantation of Cape Briton, now New Galloway in America". In this volume he gives an account of Cape Breton, comments upon its "exceeding good" harbours, describes its natural resources of land and sea, which "shall sweeten our labours with her benefites", and calls attention to the shortness of the voyage to it.

Is not the navigation knowne to bee short, as sufficientlie experimented to have been performed with an ordinarie winde in eightene dayes, and in as much backe againe? how manie *Dutch, English* and *French* goe yeerlie there for fishing on the coasts, and backe againe to their great commodities and profite; and by the way wee neither shall have lee shoare, enemies, coast, rocke, nor sands, all which in other voyages and in our coastings at home wee are subject unto.

In the same year part of Cape Breton Island was granted to the town of Inverness in Scotland and in the meantime in efforts to promote settlement in Nova Scotia, Sir William Alexander sent out one vessel in 1622 and another in 1623, the former of which almost reached Cape Breton Island.

Efforts to create a New Scotland in the New World led to the formation of a short-lived settlement at Baleine Cove in Cape Breton Island in 1629. This was begun by Sir James Stewart, afterwards Lord Ochiltree, who had been made a Knight Baronet of Nova Scotia and who sailed from the Old Country in company with Sir William Alexander the younger. At Baleine Cove Sir James built a small fort named Rosemar, while Sir William the younger sailed on to erect the Scots' Fort at Port Royal. Shortly afterwards the little settlement at Baleine Cove was destroyed by Captain Daniel of Dieppe, one of the Company of New France, who had set out from France with aid for Champlain at Quebec and who now began a settlement at St. Ann.

Later in the century Nicolas Denys did his utmost to exploit the resources of Cape Breton. In 1650 he established himself at St. Peter's and his brother Simon settled at St. Ann. Shortly afterwards their posts were seized by Madame d'Aulnay's forces and they themselves were taken as prisoners to Quebec. Again

Denys set up a post at St. Peter's and again he was evicted, this time by Emmanuel Le Borgne, d'Aulnay's creditor. Then in 1653 Denys bought from the Company of New France a grant of the coasts and islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence from Cape Canso to Gaspé, a region including all of the St. Lawrence slope of the present Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, as well as Cape Breton and Prince Edward Islands. Early in the next year he received from the King of France letters-patent as Governor and Lieutenant-General over all this territory, as well as Newfoundland, with a monopoly of the shore fishery of Acadia as far as Virginia. Thenceforth for a number of years Denys engaged in fishing, lumbering, farming and fur-trading on Cape Breton Island, until the winter of 1668-69, when his establishment at St. Peter's was totally destroyed by fire, and he retired to his post at Nepisiguit.

Denys was one of the first to become interested in the coal of Cape Breton Island. In his *Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America*, which was published at Paris in 1672, he wrote:

There are mines of coal within the limits of my concession and upon the border of the sea; this is found to be as good as that of Scotland, according to the tests I have made of it, sundry times, upon the spot and as well in France, where I had samples taken . . .

Tidings of the coal resources of Cape Breton Island were soon received in England also. A memorandum of Sir Joseph Williamson written about 1667 and endorsed "from the mouth of Major Scott" is as follows: "Cap Breton—an Island with coale on ye very surface."

During Denys' sojourn at St. Peter's there was a small export of gypsum as well as of coal from Cape Breton Island. By an ordinance of August 21st, 1677, Denys' rights over the minerals of that island were recognized, and all those who took coal or gypsum from it were supposed to pay him a royalty of 20 sous per ton of coal and 30 sous per ton of gypsum. But it was evident to him that French settlers along the St. Lawrence often took those articles from his territory without paying him anything.

Subsequently French supply ships bound for Quebec occasionally called at Cape Breton on their return voyage in order



to take in a cargo of lumber or to carry coal to France for trial in the royal forges.

For its own special interest as well as for its significance for the sake of comparison, Denys' description of Cape Breton Island is included here as follows:

I return to the Island of Cap Breton before passing farther along. It is distant some ten leagues from the Cape of Campseaux. It is eighty leagues in circuit, comprising the Island of Sainte Marie [Isle Madame] which is adjacent to it, and situated in such manner that it forms two passages. One is between it and the mainland called the entrance of the Little Passage of Campseaux, of which I have already spoken earlier, while the other entrance is a stretch of six leagues between it and the Island of Cap Breton, by means of which one goes from the Little Passage of Campseaux to the Fort of Saint Pierre [St. Peter's]. The passage can only be made by longboats, and even with them it is necessary to be on the lookout for the channel or canal from the entrance of the Little Passage. Proceeding along the Island of Sainte Marie, on its outer side, one comes to a little island, quite round, [and] three leagues distant, called Isle Verte. To go there it is necessary to hold out to sea. This coast is strewn with rocks which advance a good league into the sea for three leagues continuously, where formerly vessels were lost. This being passed and coming to Isle Verte, it is needful to leave it on the right in order to enter into the Bay of Saint Pierre. There one anchors in front of a point of sand a little out from the land. Vessels cannot approach nearer to Saint Pierre than a distance of three leagues; longboats are able to come up to it. But it is necessary to be well acquainted with the channel, which winds about; and besides there is a quantity of rocks which are not visible. The fort is built at the foot of a mountain which is almost quite vertical. It is difficult to ascend to its top from that side. There is a pond on its top which gives rise to a number of springs at the foot of the mountain, which runs in falling on one side towards Labrador eight or nine hundred paces of length. On the other side, that of the entrance, it falls about five hundred paces to a cove, into which a little river empties. In this are taken in winter plenty of ponnamon; this is a little fish almost like a gudgeon, which is excellent. All the top of this mountain is of good land; the trees are fine, and it is there, on its top, I had my clearing made. I have here a good eighty arpents of cultivated land, which I had sown every year before my fire.

The land which is at the foot of the other side of the mountain from the fort extends more than ten leagues with nothing but Firs upon it, and with land of no value as far as a little river where good land is found, and in which Salmon are caught. There are also meadows there. The way is rather good, for approaching Labrador. That which is called Labrador is a stretch of sea, cutting in half the Island of Cap Breton, with the exception of eight hundred paces or thereabouts of land which remain between the Fort of Saint Pierre and the extremity of this sea of Labrador. It forms a kind of gulf with an entrance on the eastward of the Island of Cap Breton, while it ends on the west on the side of the Fort of Saint Pierre. I have had a road made through this distance in order to transport boats, by dragging, from one water to the other, and to avoid the circuit which it would be necessary to make by way of the sea. The tide rises even to the extremity of the gulf, and it is reckoned twenty leagues from its entrance up to within eight hundred paces from the Fort where it ends. When it is high tide in Labrador, it is low tide on the other shore opposite the Fort. The opening of this little sea of Labrador is at the east, exactly opposite to the other end. The cause of this difference of

tide is that the Bay of Saint Pierre has its opening directly towards the west, in addition to which it is never high tide in a harbour except the moon is directly opposite the entrance of the harbour, whether it be above or below the horizon. In Labrador, there is a great basin or pond of eight leagues in length and five in breadth, with coves on each side which enter a good way into the lands. All around Labrador is bordered with mountains, a part of which are of plaster. The lands are not very good, although the hills are covered with trees, of which the greater part are Pines and Firs mingled with Birches and Beeches. The fishery there is not of much worth. There are found only oysters, which are not good when they are first taken because they are far too fresh. But they have a peculiarity which is that one can keep them eight or ten days without their losing their water, after which they are salted, and lose the insipidity which is produced in them by the fresh water of the rivers at the mouths of which they are found.

Setting out from the port of Saint Pierre, in the direction of Campseaux, to make the circuit of the island, and turning towards its eastern part, one meets with the Isle Verte. Thence one goes to the Michaur [Michaux] Islands which are three leagues from it; these are rocks which are thus named. The fishery for Cod there is good. Thence to Habre L'Anglois [Louisbourg] is reckoned ten leagues. All the coast is nothing but rocks, and at the entrance of this harbour is found an island which must be kept on the left. Ships being once inside are in safety. The anchorage there is good. All the lands around it are nothing but banks of rather high rocks. At their feet is a little pond where are caught great numbers of Eels. The fishery for Cod is very good there. The men of Olonne came here in old times to winter in order to be first upon the Grand Banc for the fishery of green Cod, and to be the first back to France, because the fish is sold much better when first brought in. Three leagues therefrom is found the Port de la Baleine, which is another good harbour but difficult of entrance because of the quantity of rocks which are met with there. Thence one goes to the Fourillon which is behind Cap Breton. Cap Breton is only an island, and the part of the island which bears this name, and which looks to the south-east is all rocks; among these, nevertheless, ships are placed under shelter for the fishery, which is very good there. All the lands of this country are worth very little, although there are fine woods on the tops of the hills, such as Birches, Beeches, and for the greater part Firs and some Pines. Passing farther along one comes to the Riviere des Espagnols [Sydney], at whose entrance ships can anchor in safety. There is a hill of very good coal four leagues farther within the river. The land there is rather good. On the other side it is covered with Birches, Beeches, Maples, Ashes, and some few Oaks. Pines and Firs are also found there. From the head of the river one crosses to Labrador; it is necessary to pass two or three leagues of forest for this purpose. Leaving the Riviere des Espagnols to go to the entrance of Labrador, one travels three leagues where are nothing but rocks, and at their end is the entrance of Petit Chibou, or of Labrador. In this inlet there is also coal. Here begins a great bay which extends near to Niganiche [Ingonish]; it is eight or ten leagues in breadth. Within this bay are quantities of rocks where the Cormorants make their nests. Into the land of all these rocks, at the right, enters the Grand Chibou, which is the entrance of the Harbour of Sainte Anne. This is good and very spacious. Its entrance is between two points, and is not a hundred feet in breadth. Vessels of three or four hundred tons can enter there at all tides. The anchorage is good, and if the cables were to fail one would run aground only upon mud flats. The harbour can hold a thousand vessels. The basin is surrounded with hills, and with very high rocks. Ships can bring the bowsprit to the land on the right in entering, that is to say, can bring themselves so close to the land without danger that the spar of the bowsprit, which is in front of the ship, can touch there. The rock there is cliff-like. There are some little rivers and streams which fall into it and which come from all these mountains. At the end or extremity of the harbour there is a mountain of



rock, white as milk, which is also as hard as marble. In another place there is a deposit of fine gravel all mixed in several colours. Fragments of it of considerable size have fallen out on the coast, against which the sea beats without their being shattered to pieces. But on the contrary they harden so much in the air and water that tools cannot force out the least little piece, a fact which makes me believe that they would not be less beautiful to polish than marble, as would be also the white rock of which I have just been speaking, if one would be willing to make trial of them. There is fishing for Salmon in the harbour, but the Mackerel there is [especially] abundant. Some are caught there of monstrous bigness and length; they are taken with the line at the entrance of the harbour. This is a point of sand where is found an abundance of shellfish. There are also ponds at the foot of the hills where there is very good hunting for Wild Geese, Ducks and all other kinds of game.

Leaving there and going to Niganiche one passes eight leagues of coast having shores of rocks extremely high and steep as a wall. If a ship were to be lost, there would be no rescue for anyone, while Niganiche, which is two leagues from the point, is not a bit better. This is properly nothing but a roadstead, between islands which make a little out to sea opposite a cove of sand. Ships anchor there between the islands and the main land. Sometimes as many as three ships are there, but they are not in safety. It is nevertheless the place first occupied on all the coast, because the fishing there is good and early [*prime*]. This word *prime* is the same as to say that the fish abounds there and is caught early. From Fourillon or Cape Breton, it may be eighteen to twenty leagues to Niganiche, and thence to Cap de Nort [Cape North] is five to six leagues, the entire coast being of rocks. At Cap de Nort is a place for a vessel, which is able to make its fishery there. From Cap de Nort to Le Chadye [Cheticamp] there are about fifteen to sixteen leagues. All this coast is nothing but rocks covered with Firs, intermingled with some little Birches. There are found some sandy coves into which hardly even a boat can enter. This coast is dangerous. Le Chadye is a great cove which has about two leagues of depth. In its extremity is a beach of sand intermingled with gravel which the sea has made, behind which is a pond of salt water. This cove is bordered with rocks on both shores. The Cod is very abundant in this bay, and this attracts vessels there, although they are often lost because of the little shelter it affords.

Continuing the route along the coast, which is only hills of rocks, as far as four leagues from there, one meets with a little island opposite a sandy cove suitable for placing boats under shelter. Within this cove there is a hill of black rock which the Carpenters use to mark their materials. It is not of the best, being a little hard. After having made eight leagues more along the coast, one finds the lands low and flat and covered with woods of all sorts, such as Ashes, Birches, Beeches, Maples, Pines, and Firs, but all these woods are not of the finest. From there one enters into a little river for boats, where great numbers of Salmon are caught. There is also a mine of coal. I have been told that there is also plaster there, but I have not seen it. The woods are rather good in this river, and the country is not hilly. From the mouth of this little river, to the entrance of the Little Passage of Campseaux at its northern end, there are only three leagues. And from there to the other entrance at the south end [it is] about ten leagues. There I commenced to make the tour, and there is finished the circuit of this Island of Cap Breton. To it there is commonly ascribed eighty leagues of circumference, of which the margin and the interior contain almost nothing but mountains of rocks. But that which makes it valued are the ports and roadsteads which the ships use to make their fishery. Mackerel and Herring are very abundant around the island and the fishermen make their boitte or bait of them for catching the Cod, which is very fond of them, preferring them above everything else. This island has also been esteemed for the hunting of Moose. They were found formerly in great numbers, but at present there

are no more. The Indians have destroyed everything, and have abandoned the island, finding there no longer the wherewithal for living. It is not that the chase of small game is not good and abundant there, but this does not suffice for their support, besides which it costs them too much in powder and ball. For with one shot of a gun, with which they kill a Moose, they will kill only one Wild Goose or two, sometimes three, and this does not suffice to support them and their families as a big animal does.

Between the departure of Denys from St. Peter's in 1669 and the founding of Louisbourg in 1713, few white settlers were to be found on Cape Breton Island. When a census of Acadia was taken in 1671, there was but one French family at St. Peter's. By the time that Jacques de Meulles, Intendant of New France, took another census fifteen years later that solitary family had left St. Peter's; for de Meulles and Monsieur de la Boulais, Lieutenant of the French monarch in Acadia, then visited certain ports in Cape Breton, including the site of Denys' former establishment at St. Peter's, without mentioning any settlers. But a year or two after that time, when Gargas compiled a census of Acadia, the white population of Cape Breton Island comprised one man and five enlisted men, and seven years later Villebon referred to a colonist who wished to settle at Spanish Bay (Sydney).

Gargas sojourned in Acadia in 1687-88 and wrote an account of his tour of it, which contains the following description of Cape Breton Island:

#### **Cap Breton and Labrador\***

Cap Breton and Labrador are places where the soil is both good and bad, but where there is more good than bad. The place abounds in fish, seals, etc. There are a coal mine, a plaster quarry, an iron mine, which are known. The trading with the natives is fairly good.

#### **St. Pierre\*\***

At St. Pierre the soil is very good, with considerable pastureland, so that settlers could live here without much effort.

If St. Peter's were already familiar to the French as the site of Denys' post, Spanish Bay, the site of the future Sydney, was not altogether unknown to them. It would have been strange if it had not been known, for it possessed superb natural advantages which were apparent even to early visitors. When the fleet of Chevalier du Palais sailed into that harbour in 1692, Jean Albert, the pilot, not only surveyed it but declared that it was difficult

\*Bras d'Or    \*\*St. Peter's.



to find a place more commodious or more favourable for commerce, and *Sieur de Montegu*, the captain of a frigate, took soundings of the entire harbour, which he described as one of the finest ports one could see.

While white settlers were but few during those years, the Micmac population, although more numerous, was also sparse. According to the Gargas census of 1687-88, the Indian inhabitants then numbered 129—12 men, 12 women, and 28 children at "Cap Breton", where there were 10 wigwams; and 25 men, 18 women and 13 children at "Isles St. Pierre" (near St. Peter's), where there were 24 wigwams. The French authorities, realizing the value of their good-will and their active aid in time of war, were assiduous in efforts to keep the Indians friendly towards them, occasionally sending Acadians from the St. John River with messages for them, or having ships of war call at Spanish Bay to notify them of French designs and to embark them for raids upon English frontier posts.

Cape Breton continued not only as a place of call for ships of war and trade, but also as a resort for fishing vessels. On occasions the French Governor of Acadia reported the presence of English ships off the coast, and now and again English ships carrying supplies to English settlements in Newfoundland sailed on to Cape Breton Island in order to take in a cargo of coal for the return voyage. French fishing vessels frequented the bays and harbours of the Island, with Spanish Bay, Baleine, English Harbour, and Ingonish being known to the Governor of Acadia, who declared in 1699 that the rivers teemed with fish and especially salmon and that the Island abounded in lime and coal. The very place-names are evidence that fishermen of other nationalities also made use of bases there in their exploitation of the resources of the sea.

There is no doubt that the French authorities had some awareness of the potentialities of Cape Breton. Its strategic and commercial possibilities were apparent even before its natural resources were evident. Its position, its situation with respect to Newfoundland, Quebec, the French West Indies, and France itself, its strategic location at the entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence for the protection of Quebec and as a threat to New England, its nearness to rich fishing banks, and its advantages as a commercial entrepôt all gave it increased significance. It was pro-

posed as the seat of a French Viceroy with control over both Cape Breton and Newfoundland. A project for development of its trade envisaged mining Spanish Bay coal, importing and refining West India sugar and building ships with oak that grew to the water's edge on the Island. As the eighteenth century opened interest in Cape Breton Island mounted. French military officers sought a grant of it. Memorials to the French Minister increased to a spate.

The writer of an anonymous French memoir of 1706 not only advocated colonizing Cape Breton Island but urged that the main settlement should be built at Spanish Bay, the site of the future Sydney. His reasons for this proposal were that this Island had fine harbours, a mild and salubrious climate, fertile soil and excellent fisheries; and that Spanish Bay was the best place for settlement both on account of the goodness of its harbour and its roadstead and because of its easy communication with other ports on the Island, as well as with Acadia by way of the Bras d'Or Lakes. Vessels could come in and anchor, or weigh anchor and leave, night or day. There they could take shelter from wind and weather, or seek sanctuary from enemies. Everywhere there were six, seven, eight and nine fathoms of water in its roadstead, its harbour and right up to the land; the shores were of muddy sand; there were no rocks which might damage cables or anchors; and vessels could conveniently load anywhere. In 1706, just as after the English conquest Samuel Holland was to do sixty years later, this French writer pointed out that the town at Spanish Bay could be advantageously placed on the point of land which divided the bay into two arms about a league from the entrance. That site would be magnificent as well as advantageous. Provision for its defence would be easy; security from the enemy could be assured at small expense; and here on this spacious and commodious harbour a considerable town of large extent could be built in a short time.

In the opinion of the author of this memoir, the advantages of such an establishment would be many. But there would be four particular benefits from it. First of all it would make the fishing business certain rather than casual, as it had been up to that time. In the second place it would gather the whole business solely in French hands to the exclusion of the English who had encroached upon it for a long time. Thirdly, it would become the



bulwark and the warehouse of the colonies of Canada, Acadia and Newfoundland. Fourthly, it would be the mart and the refuge for vessels coming from the French and the Spanish West Indies, from the islands of America, as well as for those which frequented Canadian waters. Cape Breton Island was indeed the key to Canada and all the coasts of New France: while a post of this importance remained in French hands the English would never enter the Gulf of St. Lawrence to attack Quebec. Thus there was still time to foresee and prevent the otherwise unavoidable results of the superiority of the English Colonies in America by occupying Cape Breton Island.

Two years later the Intendants Raudot, father and son, emphasized the necessity for and the importance of such an establishment. France might have adopted this project then but for the fact that she was engaged in a war with Great Britain which absorbed all her attention. But when, by the Treaty of Utrecht a few years later, France lost all Acadia or Nova Scotia, with its ancient limits, the realization of this project became not only expedient but absolutely indispensable, for the security of Isle St. Jean (Prince Edward Island), the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Canada.

Meantime following the capture of Port Royal in 1710 the British, alarmed at French expansion in the Ohio Valley, resolved to attempt the conquest of Canada, and one result was the visit of Admiral Walker's fleet to Spanish Bay in 1711. In that year the Walker expedition set out for Quebec. Misfortune struck it in the St. Lawrence, with eight transports crashing on the rocks and hundreds of men perishing on the stony shores. It was thereupon decided, on account of the ignorance of the pilots and the rapidity of the currents, to abandon the undertaking and to proceed, in accordance with previous arrangements for such an eventuality, to Spanish Bay in Cape Breton Island. On September 4th, 1711, the bulk of the fleet, consisting altogether of 42 sail and probably constituting the largest naval armament ever assembled in Sydney Harbour, reached Spanish Bay.

At Spanish Bay Admiral Walker's men saw a number of Micmacs. At first these Indians seemed friendly. But their disposition soon changed when several of Walker's men, who were sent ashore to cut wood, began to cut up a wreck in order to carry

it off to the ships. Then the Micmacs, apparently regarding this wreck as their own property, surprised and killed a carpenter and two or three other men.

Upon hearing that across bearing the names of French naval officers who had been there stood on the shore, Admiral Walker resolved that a similar claim to the area should be made on behalf of Her Britannic Majesty Queen Anne. This Island "having been always in the times of Peace used in Common, both by the *English* and *French*, for lading Coals, which are extraordinary good here, and taken out of the Clifts with Iron Crows only, and no other Labour," he therefore thought it not amiss to leave something of the same sort to declare Queen Anne's right to the place. A sign-board bearing an elaborate inscription in Latin was accordingly made and affixed to a tree on an eminence where it could easily be seen.

Admiral Walker's description of the site of the future Sydney, found in a letter to Henry St. John, later first Viscount Bolingbroke, written at Spanish River Bay on September 12th, 1711, is as follows:

The place we are in is called Sparish River in the islands of Cape Breton, the best port I have seen, or may be, in all North America commanding the bay of the St. Laurence as that of Gibraltar the Streights. It has been designed to be settled by the French, they haveing made a friendship with all the Indians in those parts, while the English of our colony, by their mismanagement, and ill treatment have rendred (sic) them their enemys, . . .

By the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, at the close of the War of the Spanish Succession, France ceded to Britain her claims to posts on Hudson Bay, Placentia in Newfoundland and all Nova Scotia or Acadia "with its ancient limits", except Cape Breton Island, which she proposed to fortify, and the other islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Steps were taken to occupy Cape Breton Island at once. Officers and men set out from France in the *Semslack*. Upon her arrival in Newfoundland all but four or five of the inhabitants of Placentia, who wished to remain there and took the oath of allegiance to the British monarch, were evacuated. Then they sailed on to Cape Breton Island and, in company with a number of troops from Quebec in a vessel belonging to Boularderie, visited "all the ports" and chose "for the present" Port St. Louis, formerly known as English Harbour and soon to be called Louis-



bourg. The founders of Louisbourg, numbering about 150 persons in all, arrived there on September 2nd, 1713.

The story of the French regime in Cape Breton Island is told in McLennan's *Louisbourg*, Richard Brown's *A History of the Island of Cape Breton*, William Wood's *The Great Fortress* and in other volumes, and needs no repetition here. Suffice it to say that the founders of Louisbourg found only one French inhabitant and 25 or 30 families of Indians on the Island; that France soon built at Louisbourg a mighty fortress which became known as the Dunkirk of America and betokened French determination to compete with Great Britain for the supremacy of the continent; that other French settlements were made on the Island; that French control of the Island not only provided protection for the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the approaches to Quebec but also a convenient centre from which French influence could be applied to both the Acadians and the Micmacs of British Nova Scotia; that the nearness of Louisbourg to Canso placed the latter in jeopardy in the event of hostilities between France and England; that it was a French-inspired raid from Louisbourg which pillaged Canso in 1720; that it was French forces from Louisbourg which seized Canso in 1744 and roamed virtually at will over the peninsula of Nova Scotia and even right up to the walls of Annapolis Royal; that, stung by the capture of Canso in the preceding year, New Englanders with the aid of a squadron of the Royal Navy took Louisbourg in 1745; that the formidable but ill-fated D'Anville expedition of 1746 and that of LaJonquière in 1747 showed to what lengths France would go in efforts to recapture Louisbourg; that, to the dismay of the New Englanders, Britain gave Louisbourg back to France by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, and then salved the financial wounds of New England by reimbursing her for the financial cost of the Louisbourg expedition and took steps to found Halifax—a base on the ocean—front of the peninsula—as a counterpoise to Louisbourg; that Louisbourg was again captured by the British in 1758; and that at the close of the Seven Years' War Cape Breton Island became British, and France gave up all her claims to the whole American continent except for St. Pierre and Miquelon.

By the Proclamation of October 7th, 1763, Cape Breton Island was formally annexed to Nova Scotia, and it continued as a part of Nova Scotia until 1784. Meantime the fortifications of

Louisbourg had been demolished in 1760 and steps had been taken to incorporate the Island into the administrative and legal systems of Nova Scotia. George Cottnam was commissioned as Collector at Louisbourg on January 20th, 1764, and as Justice of the Peace for "the Island of Breton" in the County of Halifax on January 24th, 1764. Shortly afterwards, on February 10th 1764, Francis Albertus Strasburg (formerly Town Adjutant at Louisbourg) and William Phipps (a trader at Louisbourg) were appointed Justices of the Peace at the Island of Cape Breton in the County of Halifax.

On December 10th, 1765, it was resolved in Council at Halifax that "the Island of Breton" should be erected into a distinct County, to be known by the name of the County of Breton; that a Commission should be issued for holding a Court of Quarter Sessions for this County and also for erecting an Inferior Court of Common Pleas there; and that a writ should be issued for choosing two representatives for the County of Breton, and that they should be at liberty to choose non-residents.

Thereafter, on December 16th, 1765, Justices of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas and Justices of the Peace were appointed. George Cottnam, Gregory Townshend and William Russell were the Justices of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas; and the Hon. Jonathan Belcher, Benajmin Green, John Collier, Charles Morris, Richard Bulkeley, Joseph Gerrish, Edmund Crawley, Henry Newton, Michael Francklin, Sebastian Zouberbuhler, Jonathan Binney and William Nesbitt, Esquires, and George Cottnam, Francis Albertus Strasburg, William Russell, William Phipps and Gregory Townshend, Esquires, were the Justices of the Peace, all of the Quorum except Francis Albertus Strasburg and William Phipps. George Cottnam was named as Keeper of the Rolls. Thus, according to custom, the members of the Council of Nova Scotia were included in the Commission of the Peace for Cape Breton Island, but their duties in this respect were purely honorary. A year later Captain Samuel Holland, who was then engaged in making a survey of the Island, was also appointed Justice of the Peace for Cape Breton, and in accordance with the sanction of Council on April 30th, 1768, James Gethings was added to the Commission of the Peace also. Holland was merely a temporary resident, Gethings a transient, and the authorities at Halifax had trouble in find-



ing residents who were qualified to act as magistrates or judges, or even as jurymen.

If the organization of justice was difficult, the problem of representation in the Legislative Assembly of the Province proved to be insurmountable for years. In 1766 Gregory Townshend and John Grant were chosen as representatives for Cape Breton Island; and the writ for their election was presented to the House of Assembly on June 5th, 1766; but, after scrutiny of its validity, they were told that they could not take their seats, because it was the custom for Freeholders to choose representatives and it did not appear that there was one qualified Freeholder in that County. Actually the Governor of Nova Scotia had been forbidden to make free grants of land in Cape Breton until some definitive policy for it could be prepared. Thus, although a number of licences of occupation were made, there were no freeholders or qualified electors, and on April 2nd, 1770, the Council at Halifax resolved that no writ should issue to "the Isle of Breton", because of the want of Freeholders to make an election, and that the Isle be deemed to be represented by the members for the County of Halifax, "unto which it has been resolved and become a part thereof, as heretofore." Accordingly, as the Board of Trade continued to refuse to permit lands in Cape Breton to be granted, Cape Breton had to accept this principle of virtual representation until 1784 when Cape Breton became a separate colony.

Meantime Captain Samuel Holland, Surveyor General of the Province of Quebec and also of the Northern District of America, had carried out his survey of Cape Breton Island between 1765 and 1767 and submitted his final description of it to the Board of Trade in 1768. Yet the indecision of the Imperial Government with respect to Cape Breton Island persisted (with its timber being reserved for the Royal Navy in 1774) until 1784.

Eventually, after the close of the American Revolutionary War, policy was reversed. Cape Breton Island became a separate colony and grants of land were made. About four hundred Loyalists settled in the Island. From 1784 to 1820 Cape Breton Island was a separate colony, with a Lieutenant Governor and a Council, but no Assembly, as its administration. Only after Cape Breton was re-annexed to Nova Scotia in 1820 did it get representation in a House of Assembly. In that year Richard John

Uniacke, Jr., and Laurence Kavanagh, Jr., were returned as representatives for the Island, with the former taking his seat on December 12th, 1820, and the latter, the first Roman Catholic to do so, on April 2nd, 1823.

In 1835—by statute 1834-35 Cap. XLVI—Cape Breton County was divided into three separate and distinct Counties. The new Cape Breton County comprised the former North Eastern District; the County of Richmond the former Southern District; and the County of Juste au Corps the former North Western District. Two years later, by statute 1837 cap. XXX, the name of the County of Juste au Corps was changed to Inverness. Then, subsequently, in 1851—by statute 14 Victoria Cap. IV—Cape Breton County was divided into two Counties—the County of Cape Breton and the County of Victoria.

The coal resources of Cape Breton attracted attention early. While the French built their great fortress at Louisbourg, they commenced operations at the Block House mine at Baye de Morienne (later Cow Bay and eventually Port Morien) in 1720. Following the first conquest of Cape Breton in 1745 New England imported large quantities of coal from Spanish Bay (Sydney Mines). After the close of the Seven Years' War there was official discouragement of the Cape Breton coal industry, owing to the influence of British coal owners. In 1766 Lieutenant-Governor Francklin reported that the only mine then open was that at the Block House on the north side of Morien Bay, and recommended that coal should be exported and the revenue accruing therefrom be expended in making roads. But this proposal was turned down. Shortly afterwards—in April 1767—Governor William Campbell granted an exclusive right to Benjamin Gerrish, William Lloyd, James Armstrong and Peter Bard, Halifax merchants, to dig 3,000 chaldrons anywhere, except where the troops were digging for the use of the garrisons. They opened a mine at Spanish Bay, and in February 1768 petitioned for further time to ship the remainder of their output. In the same month the Secretary of State directed the Governor not to issue any more licences for taking coal from Cape Breton. Nevertheless trespassers plied an illicit traffic to such an extent that the Governor applied to the Officer Commanding for a sufficient force to put a stop to it, and the Council advised on May 4th, 1770, that the chief magistrate at Louisbourg should be directed to proceed to Cow Bay



(Port Morien) and require all persons there to depart at once. A detachment of troops was thereupon sent to Cow Bay. Coal continued to be dug for the use of the garrison. During the American Revolutionary War the mines at Spanish River were used. There was a detachment of troops there in 1776, and ships of war were required to convoy vessels carrying coal from Spanish River to Halifax. Nevertheless, on July 21st, 1781, an engagement took place between two French frigates and a frigate, two sloops and a cutter which were convoying to Spanish River sixteen vessels employed in the coal traffic. Subsequently coal-mining was carried on by the Crown by lessees, with the General Mining Association obtaining a monopoly control in 1827 and holding it until 1858. New mines opened in ensuing years had a piebald and fluctuating fortune. Later on the Whitney syndicate (the Dominion Coal Company) revolutionized the whole coal trade in 1893 by expanding markets in New England and along the St. Lawrence, from its mines in Cape Breton.

There was an allied development in steel. In 1900 the Dominion Iron and Steel Company established an iron and steel plant at Sydney. By 1904 a rod mill was in operation there, and in 1905 a rail mill had its start. Additional equipment was installed in ensuing years. In consequence coal and steel have meant a great deal to the provincial economy.

If, after the lapse of many years, Sir William Alexander's dream of a New Scotland in the New World was to come true to a considerable degree in Cape Breton Island, that was not to be the case immediately after its cession to Great Britain, in 1763. At the time of the deportation of the French from Louisbourg in 1758, there remained undisturbed in other parts of the Island several hundred inhabitants of French origin—perhaps as many as 700. In 1765 the population certainly did not exceed 1000, the majority of whom were of French descent. A year later, according to the first more or less complete census of Nova Scotia, the population of Cape Breton Island was 707, exclusive of Indians. Those enumerated included 271 Acadians, 170 Americans, 169 Irish, 70 English, 6 Scots, and 21 Germans and other foreigners. In the same year, Rev. Mr. Kneeland, missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, at Louisbourg, estimated the population of the Island to be 1,000, with Louisbourg having 500, including 120 under 14 years of age. Not long afterwards moreover Captain Samuel Holland, who made a survey of the Island be-

tween 1765 and 1767, reported that there were "upwards of 700 Inhabitants, of which Number about 500 reside at Louisbourg." He specifically mentions families of French origin then living at such places as Boularderie Island, Mira River, Gabarus and along Lennox Passage.

In 1768 Lieutenant-Governor Francklin of Nova Scotia reported that the Government of the Province had granted licences of occupation in Cape Breton to the following:

- To George Cottnam, Esq., for 600 acres at Lorambec
- " William Russell, Esq., for 60 acres at Louisbourg, fishing lots at Baleine and Mainadieu, and 50 acres of land at Little Bras d'Or, with garden, houses stages and flakes belonging thereto
- " James Gething and Lawrence Kavanagh, for 500 acres at Little St. Peter's, where they have built a house store-houses, stages and flakes, and have a large quantity of cattle.
- " John Reilly, for a lot 50 by 100 rods at Mainadieu, where he has built a house, fishing flakes and stages.
- To Captain Antrobus, of the Navy, for a lot of land at the head of the North-east where he has built a house, fenced in 8 or 10 acres of land, and was desirous of having 500 acres there.
- To Elias Gerrot, late pilot in the Navy, for a lot in a cove beyond the Grand Battery, where he has fenced in 10 acres and built a flake and stage. Gerrot was recommended by the late Admiral Boscawen.
- " Major Robert Milward, of the 59th Regiment, for a lot on the north side of the road leading to Mainadieu, where he had fenced in 15 or 20 acres, built a house and outhouses, and was desirous of having 500 acres.

At the same time Lieutenant-Governor Francklin forwarded the following list, which is obviously incomplete, of those who had made improvements without any title whatever:

At Louisbourg.—Lawrence Kavanagh, Thomas Wheeler, Richard Wheeler, Thomas Montho, William Brimigion, Mathew Roe, Gregory Townsend and William Russell, who had each fenced in small lots of 3 to 5 acres.



At Manadou.—John Gould, Cornelius Bollong, Richard Wheeler, Alexander Ley, John Neale, and Thomas Huxford, who had built dwelling houses, stages, and flakes.

At Baleine.—Thomas Meadoz, Benjamin Cann, and William Gerrot, who had built houses, stages and flakes.

At Gabarus Bay.—Richard Collins, Edward and Thomas Macdonald, John Clewly, Francis Joice, Peter Jervois, John Perry, and—Curdo, who had built dwelling houses and stages.

At Le Brasdor.—James Townsend, John Bagnal, Peter Jermaine, and Boniface Benoit, who had built fishing stages and houses.

At Miré River.—Francis Nairing, a discharged soldier, and Richard Mascall, who had built houses, and made some small improvements.

At Petit de Grat.—Charles Fougier, Charles Duga, Lewis Budro, Joseph Budro, John Peters, Peter Fougier, and Joseph Gaudein, in all 47 Acadian men, women and children, who were recommended by the late Governor Lawrence, and obtained licences to carry on the fishery in 1763, from Lieutenant-Colonel Tulleskein.

There were then 142 houses standing in Louisbourg—13 in good repair, 60 in tolerable repair, 66 in bad repair and 3 in ruins. Nineteen were of stone; the rest of wood.

Such was the state of Cape Breton Island about the time that Samuel Holland, who made a survey of it in the years 1765-67, wrote these words:

Perhaps if this Island was released from its Dependency, the Emulation that would hence arise, between this & Nova Scotia might turn, both, to their mutual Benefit, & to that of Britain tenfold; for certainly Nature hath bestowed upon few places, equal Advantages, with this Country: A Mine of Gold lays at its Doors, but wants Hands to gather!

When another census was taken in 1774 the population was given as 1012, exclusive of Indians, who numbered 230. In this census Americans, Scots, Germans and English are listed as English and number 304. The Irish number 206 and Acadians 502.

At that time the places of settlement were Louisbourg, "Le Baleine", "Mainaudieu", "Meray", "Little Bras d'ore", "Chapeau Rouge", St. Peter's Bay, Petit de Grat and "Aarichat." There were 238 persons at Arichat; 186 at St. Peter's Bay; 168 at Petit de Grat; 144 at Louisbourg; 131 at Mainadieu; 47 at Gabarus; 39 at Baleine; 30 at Little Bras d'Or; and 29 at Mira.

During the remaining years of the eighteenth century, several hundred new-comers arrived in the Island. These included Loyalists, Acadians from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, St. Pierre and Miquelon, Frenchmen from France, Channel Islanders, and Scots from Pictou and Prince Edward Island. Among these Acadians were those who came from Prince Edward Island in the middle 1780's to Cheticamp and who obtained grants of land there in 1790. The Loyalists, numbering about 400, settled mainly at Sydney, Cow Bay, Baddeck and along the Mira River.

According to Rev. Ranna Cossit, the population of a number of the Cape Breton Island communities on September 29th, 1788, was as follows:

Heads of Families at	No. of Men	Women	Childn	Men Svts	Women
Sydney.....	65	41	76	17	10
Spanish River.....	17	21	33	7	4
North Arm.....	19	13	21	7	1
Big Pond.....	4	2	1	0	0
Coal Mines.....	9	7	0	0	0
Indian Cove.....	3	2	3	8	4
Bradore.....	8	11	16	0	0
L'Indian.....	2	4	5	2	0
Cowbay.....	3	2	5	0	0
Luis Leroy.....	2	2	2	1	0
Main a Dieu.....	28	16	40	23	0
Luisbourg.....	16	9	26	0	0
Gaberus.....	10	9	14	0	0
St. Peters, Widow Peters	0	1	6	0	0
St. Anns.....	5	5	15	0	0

Shortly after Cape Breton Island was separated from Nova Scotia in 1784, Lieutenant-Governor DesBarres founded Sydney and made it the seat of government. From 1785 to 1854 it was to be a garrison town. Before John Meloney settled at Sydney in 1784 there had been a few people on the shores of Sydney Harbour on the site of Upper North Sydney for about four years. These were the Aberdonians, Adam Moore, and William Campbell. There is also evidence that John Cameron, who had previously been a Lieutenant in the King's Orange Rangers, which were stationed at

Liverpool, N. S., for several years, also may have removed his family to Spanish River as early as 1783. Captain Samuel Holland's expectations for Cape Breton Island as a separate colony were not realized and after enduring such a government for 36 years it was re-annexed to Nova Scotia in 1820.

After 1800, and especially subsequent to the Napoleonic Wars, immigration to Cape Breton Island assumed significant proportions. The total population in 1801 was 2,513. In the next year there was a revival of Lord Ochiltree's earlier and futile effort at direct immigration from Scotland, with the arrival at Sydney of 299 Scots. No further record of direct immigration from Scotland is known until 1815; but indirectly Scottish immigration by way of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island continued steadily until by 1813 the population had increased to 5,909. In ensuing years immigration from Scotland and other parts of the British Isles increased. Between 1815 and 1851 about 55,000 immigrants came to Nova Scotia: of those more than 12,000 were Scots who came to Cape Breton Island between 1815 and 1838 and several thousand additional Scottish settlers came to the Island between 1839 and 1851. Although Scottish immigrants formed the bulk of the new-comers during those years, there are also records of the arrival between 1815 and 1838, of nearly 1,000 Irish and a small number of English. By 1827 the population of Cape Breton Island had increased to 18,700. In 1838 it had risen to 35,413. By 1851 it had reached 54,878 and in 1861, just as Rev. R. J. Uniacke was about to begin his "Sketches of Cape Breton", it stood at 63,083, ten times what it had been in 1815.

#### IV. Appendices

For the benefit of readers a number of additional sketches of Cape Breton Island are provided. These accounts are not only relevant but interesting and informative.

Appendix A is a description of Sydney in August 1785 which was written by Lt. W. Booth of the Engineers during the course of a tour of inspection with General Campbell.

In the second place is Lieutenant (later General) Wm. Dyott's description of Sydney in 1788. It is taken from *Dyott's Diary*



which was originally intended for the perusal of no person but himself or his wife, if the Almighty should ever allow him to take one; "if that", Dyott wrote, "in threescore years I am able to entertain myself and family with perusing the transactions of my juvenile days (the sole purpose of this my journal, etc.), I shall be perfectly satisfied."

Thirdly is a letter of August 5th, 1789, containing an account of conditions in Sydney at that time.

Appendix D is the description of Sydney found in Thomas Chandler Haliburton's *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia*, (1829).

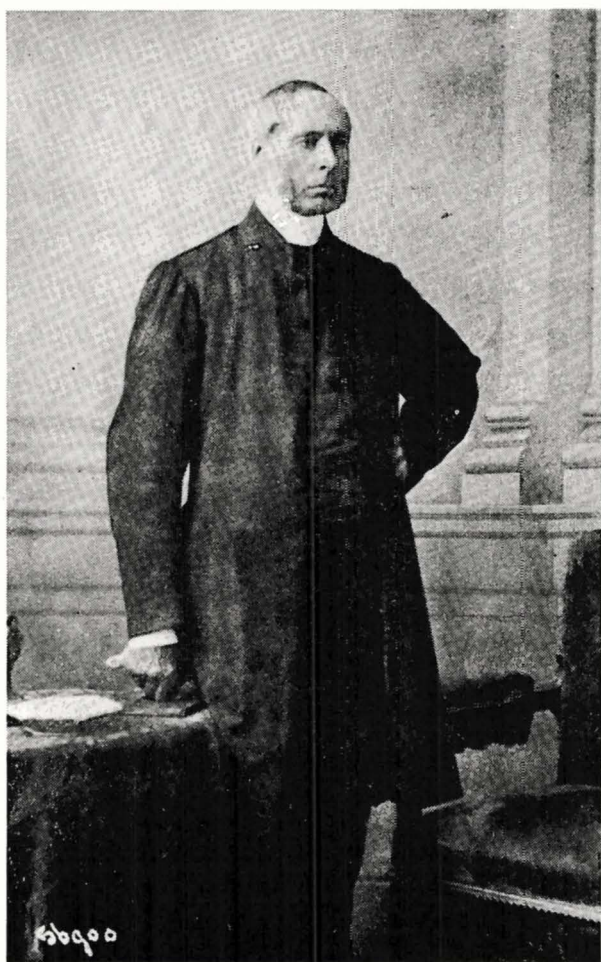
Next is John McGregor's description of Sydney as contained in his *British America* which was published in 1832. McGregor was a native of Prince Edward Island who went to England and became Secretary of the Board of Trade in London and representative for Glasgow in the House of Commons. He was born in 1797 and died in 1857.

Appendix F is a description of the township of Sydney which appeared in the *Cape Breton Advocate* in 1840.

Seventhly is a description of Sydney in 1846 which was written by Lieutenant, afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel, Burrows Willcocks Arthur Sleigh, C.M., of the 77th Regiment.

Then follow a series of reports relating to the counties in Cape Breton Island and the island as a whole in 1861-62. These were prepared in answer to a questionnaire from R. G. Haliburton, Secretary of the Nova Scotia Commissioners for the International Exhibition.

Appendix H contains two sets of answers on Inverness County to Haliburton's questionnaire. The first of these is unsigned; the second bears the signature of William McKeen. Hon. William McKeen was born in Truro, N. S., August 18th, 1789. As a young man he removed to Pictou and engaged in the timber trade. Later he went to Musquodoboit and then he removed to Mabou Harbour in Inverness County, where he carried on an extensive mercantile business. He was the first custos rotulorum and the first Legis-



UNIACKE'S  
"SKETCHES OF  
CAPE BRETON"



## PREFACE

The present work originated in some enquiries made by the late Archbishop of Dublin respecting this Island. At his own suggestions my descriptions were addressed to him under the title of "*Letters to a Friend*", some of which appeared at intervals in a recent periodical called the "New Penny Magazine", in which he procured their insertion. They were thus published with the intention of bringing them out eventually in the shape of a volume. But his death before the completion of the series, deprived me of most of the interest, which I took in composing these letters. Accordingly the later numbers have been written with sorrowful recollections upon my mind. And I cannot put forth to the public the fruits of his own suggestions, without a tribute to the memory of one, whom I have cause to remember not only with feelings of respect, but of admiration and affection. In this of course I am not singular. The fine intellect and the manly and Christian soul, which has been called away from its field of usefulness upon earth, was too extensively known and valued to need any tribute of mine to publish his worth: but to do justice to my own feelings, I could hardly here be silent.

Under his instructions, whilst a pupil at the University I learned many valuable lessons, besides the ordinary advantages of attending his lectures as a College Tutor; and received from him no little kindness. This indeed he was always ready to shew where he thought it would make way for instruction. From his public teaching in St. Mary's Oxford, when he was in the zenith of his intellectual power, it is needless to say that I shared in the gratification, which that crowded [audience] both young and old then derived. Many of the striking features of his sermons have never left my memory. Nor can I forget those pleasant moments, which his hospitality afforded us at his own residence in St. Alban's Hall, when surrounded by the undergraduates of that society, he dispensed the wit and attainments of his gifted nature, with a condescension and cheerfulness that cannot easily be forgotten.

All this, and much more, passes in review before me as I bring to a conclusion the work that was intended for his own perusal. His capacious mind delighted in all useful knowledge; not despising even that which many might suppose had no claim upon

his attention; but whilst he valued every information that was likely to be serviceable, his deepest interest was felt for subjects that related to a higher world, and were closely connected with the spritual improvement and advancement of mankind. This must be seen by every one, in the numerous publications which he has given to the world,—all more or less calculated to impress upon the mind in vigorous, clear and simple language,—the holiest truths and the most exalted hopes and principles,—that can influence the soul of Christians. I was in hopes therefore that in addition to the information which I had already communicated respecting Cape Breton, I might also have been permitted to communicate some tidings of the progress of the Redeemer's Church in this Island.

That he took an interest in Christian Missions throughout the world I am well aware; and although the field in which myself and a few brother missionaries are at work,—is humble and contracted yet such as it is,—I felt sure that he would have gladly received any true statement of what the word of God and the labor of his ministers have accomplished in this portion of the Great Vineyard.

But we ought not to regret that he is now beyond the reach of the limited knowledge of this terrestrial scene,—since he has been exalted (we truly believe) to that world where God's people, "no longer see" "through a glass darkly, but know even as also they are known".

May the example of his faith and patience and energy,—animate all who have ever been so happy as to know him,—and who are labouring in the same cause, though it may be in much humbler spheres.

R. J. U.

Sydney, Cape Breton

Septem<sup>r</sup>. 12 th 1865.

## SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON

## I General Aspect of The Island

Introduction, — features and outline of the interior — eastern Coast — harbours and mines, — Scatarie — Southern Coast — Mainadieu — Louisburg — Gabarus — Arichat — Canso — Northwest Coast — Port Hood — St. Paul's Island — resources and prospects of Cape Breton.

Information of every kind is so much sought for in the present day, and new Countries so eagerly explored that no apology perhaps is necessary for the present attempt to describe an almost unknown land. Were it a sterile and unpromising region, with nothing but the simple circumstance of its obscurity to recommend such an attempt to make it known, I should never have conceived the thought of giving to the public the present account of Cape Breton. But such is far from being the case, as I hope to be able to shew. Having been a resident of this Island for many years, with every opportunity of collecting useful and accurate information, I shall not have much difficulty in giving such descriptions of the Country as will supply the means of forming a fair judgment of its general character and importance. It often happens that Countries possessing great resources and many attractions remain long in a state of obscurity and neglect, before the public eye is turned towards them, and the fostering hand of enterprize and Capital are enlisted for the development of their hidden riches. Such has been the case with New Zealand, California and Australia, and in a more remarkable degree with British Columbia. The rapid growth and prosperity of these Colonies within the last twenty or thirty years, and of the last much more recently, is truly wonderful when compared with the tardy state of their previous advancement. And it can unquestionably be said of Cape Breton, that where its natural advantages and geographical position are considered, it seems difficult to account for its backward state, and the manner in which it is passed by in the tide of modern enterprize and research. In the present age, when practical science is so unremitting in exploring new sources of wealth and improvement, and where a quicker communication between distant Countries is so much sought for, the comparative neglect of this valuable island appears marvellous. At the same time from what is often exhibited in other quarters of the world, we should not be surprized at it; and must only wait for that due time to come, which in the mysterious course of civilization, visits unexpectedly



regions that possess long concealed and neglected wealth. In the hope however that this short account may contribute something towards making it further known, and may attract some little notice towards our fine island I shall cheerfully set to work to supply all the information in my power. For the history, statistics, and other similar matter I have been indebted partly to works already before the public; and where I have relied upon private and recent information, I have taken care that the authority has been good. Having visited many parts of the island my descriptions of scenery and other natural characteristics of the country are drawn almost wholly from personal observation.

In giving an account of Cape Breton a general outline of its features and position may naturally be looked for. This cannot, however, be well obtained without an inspection of the map,—where it will be found to constitute the northeastern extremity of Nova Scotia, of which Province it is politically a part, although separated from it by the narrow Strait of Canso. It is about one third of the size of Nova Scotia Proper; and generally speaking its soil and climate are very similar. Running up towards the north-east into the gulf of St. Lawrence, it lies between 45 and 47 degrees of north latitude, and between 59 and 61 degrees of west longitude. These boundaries take in three remarkable islands situated at opposite and extreme points of its shores,—St. Paul's at the north, Scatarie at the east, and Isle Madame at the west. The greatest length is usually given as 100 miles and its breadth about 80. But its whole conformation is very peculiar; and it is so intersected by water through the greatest part, that in looking at it upon the map it presents the appearance of a number of long narrow islands placed side by side, instead of one connected surface of country. There is however actually but one main island of any size; the rest of the country, although cut up by long channels and inlets of the sea, lakes and tortuous pieces of water, hangs together throughout its whole extent: yet in one spot towards the west it is only prevented, by a narrow isthmus of a few miles, from being separated into large islands. It may however be said to be distinguished by nature into two grand divisions, marked by different features, and easily discerned by the eye, when glancing upon the map.

The north-western portion of the island—which comprizes its longest extent—runs up from the extremity of Nova Scotia towards the shores of Newfoundland, in a north-easterly direction

for about 100 miles, and terminates at Cape North,—flanked by the rocky island of St. Paul, which stands off about ten miles in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This upper division of Cape Breton consists of a longitudinal extent of country almost entirely unbroken by in[ter]secting waters, and presenting a surface of elevated land sometimes rising almost to mountains, in many parts rugged and wild, but containing a large portion of highly productive soil. The other or lower division of the island is much more level, although abounding in undulating land and many high ranges of hills, but is cut up into long strips by inlets of the sea from the north-east, and by the branching arms of a large salt water lake situated near its western extremity. As these various channels afford the opportunity of easy water communication with almost every part of this portion of the island, it is not difficult to understand that at some future day, in a country abounding in mineral wealth and fine timber as well as fertile soil, these natural canals may be made the roads of commercial enterprize and prosperity.

The above description may assist in giving some general idea of the surface of the Country, leaving further detail of the interior to be afterwards supplied, when we come to speak more particularly of its various sections. We may proceed now to form some conception of the outline of the island, and of the nature of its coasts and harbours. This we shall attempt to do by taking a rapid survey of its whole shores, and noticing any particular feature of the country as it presents itself in our progress.

The whole circuit of the shores of Cape Breton may be stated as comprising about 275 miles. If we commence, then, from the extreme northern point of the island which is called Cape North,—we shall first pass the broad and open inlet of Aspy Bay, indenting the north-eastern extremity of what has been called the upper of the two natural divisions of Cape Breton, consisting of very high rocky land towards the centre, and composed of what is termed granite “sienite”, and thinly covered with soil, which however is considered productive. At “White Point” which is nearly the western extremity of this extensive bay, has long been established a prosperous fishery, which gives activity and bustle to that remote quarter of the island at least during the summer months. This is situated about ten miles from Cape North. Proceeding along the eastern shores of this great division of Cape Breton, upon whose elevated and rugged cliffs the Atlantic beats with un-



obstructed fury, and where little shelter is afforded to ships overtaken in a storm, you arrive at the splendid harbour of St. Ann's, distant about 30 miles from the last named point. Port Dolphin [Dauphin] was the original name of this harbour, given to it by the French, who in the early occupation of the country, marked this out for the Capital of the island; but afterwards, discovering it to be inaccessible to navigation for a certain portion of the year, on account of ice, they exchanged it for Louisburg. After rounding Cape Dolphin, which forms the eastern point of St. Ann's harbour, a long narrow opening presents itself, in width about one mile, and reaching about 25 or 30 miles into the interior, where it expands into various lake-like sheets of water, extending itself in various directions for many miles, in the shape of bays and broad winding channels. In conjunction with the waters of the Little Bras d'Or, which meets it here it passes in one direction through a narrow channel, and forms the inland sea called Bras d'Or Lake, which is so conspicuous a geographical feature of Cape Breton. The entrance of this strait from the Atlantic was once distinguished by a much more active and bustling scene than it now exhibits. A prosperous establishment once carried on a fishery upon this coast, and even engaged in ship-building, with a view to the British market. This flourishing state of things has however now sensibly declined. Saying nothing more for the present, then, of this large strait and its shores, we pass round the eastern extremity of a long narrow island called Boularderies, from 25 to 30 miles long,—which separates the two channels of the Little and Great Bras d'Or. This channel differs but little from the one already described, except that it is narrower in its first portion, and almost double the width for some miles before its junction with the twin channel. Upon this strait many fine and picturesque views are afforded to the traveller as he sails up this beautiful sheet of water, bordered on either side by high bold wooded inlets, and varied in other places by islands of romantic appearance. The entrance of this strait however is very narrow, and being obstructed by a bar of sand it affords no inlet for navigation to any but small vessels.

From the entrance of the strait of Little Bras d'Or about 10 miles further along the northeastern coast of Cape Breton, the broad estuary of Spanish River (now called Sydney Harbour) opens upon the Atlantic. At its mouth it has a width of 3 or 4 miles, and runs up into the interior to the distance of 15 or 18



miles in a south-westerly direction, in two branches, called the north-west and the south-west arms. Deep and sheltered water in almost every part of this capacious and beautiful port, provides excellent anchorage for the largest shipping. Upon a peninsula or tongue of land, in the south-west branch of this river, stands the town of Sydney, the present Capital of Cape Breton. But, as I shall again revert for fuller description to this spot, we may here pass on and continue the cursory survey, which we are taking of the sea-board of the island.

Although extensive fields of coal underlie a large portion of Cape Breton, yet we have only now for the first time entered upon that part of the island where mines are regularly worked to any extent. On the northern entrance of Sydney Harbour are the present establishments of the General Mining Association<sup>(1)</sup> of London, which has from the year 1826 continued to work these valuable beds of coal, not only immediately at this spot, but also in other adjacent parts of the island.

As we are now in the region of coal, almost every yard along this part of the coast exhibits, even to the inexperienced eye, plain indication of the existence of this valuable mineral. Turning the headland at the south-eastern entrance of the harbour, where a lighthouse stands and at a further distance of eight or ten miles you arrive at another establishment of the above Association, situated upon Lingan or L'Indian Harbour, as it was formerly called in the time of the French. From these mines a coal of valuable properties for the purpose of *gas* is exported in large

- (1) The General Mining Association was organized by Messrs. Rundell, Bridge & Rundell, a firm of jewellers and goldsmiths of London, England. On September 12th, 1826, the General Mining Association obtained a sub-lease of the Duke of York's rights to the mines of Nova Scotia. In 1788 George III had intended to grant the mines of this province, which was then only the peninsula, to his favourite son, the Duke of York. But for some reason or other the necessary documentation was not immediately completed. Eventually, in 1825, the unfinished grant was found in the Patent Office. As a result the Duke of York was enabled to square a jewellery account by transferring a lease for sixty years of all the reserved mines, with certain exceptions, to Messrs. Rundell, Bridge & Rundell. Upon the expiration of the lease of Messrs. T. S. & W. R. Bown to the Sydney mines, on December 31st, 1826, the General Mining Association also came into the possession of those mines, in 1827. Eventually, in 1857-58, the monopoly of the General Mining Association was brought to an end and the Government of Nova Scotia obtained possession and control of all the mines and minerals of the province, with certain specified limits.

quantities to the United States. This coast with the exception of some headlands, forming boundaries to bays and inlets, consists to a large extent of level table-land. Notwithstanding its exposure to the cold winds of the Atlantic, excellent crops are cultivated upon its fertile soil; and beneath its surface, for miles along the level cliffs, may be noticed dark seams of coal marking it in every direction. This coal is often so accessible, that in walking upon the beach I have picked up pieces among the stones, where it has been washed out by the waves at high water, and have extracted with my hands large lumps from the pits, out of which the farmers supply themselves with fuel.

I remember many years ago, in the summer of 1826 when quite a youth, being present at an interview, in London between a near relative of mine, who at that time held a government office in this Province, and a Mr. B. . . . . of the firm of R. . . . . and B. . . . . London.<sup>(2)</sup> The object of this interview was to ascertain the value of the Cape Breton Coal mines, and the practicability of their being worked to advantage, previous to taking a lease of them in discharge of the Duke of York's liabilities. Amongst the depositions taken down upon that occasion, I recollect the statement that the coal was so plentiful, and in some places so easily obtained, that at high tide and calm water, a vessel could be loaded immediately from the shore, by placing a plank from the cliff to the deck. This appeared almost incredible; but from personal observation I have ascertained that in certain spots, this might be accomplished. On the shores of Glace Bay and Bridgeport, this could be done with a little contrivance. Soon after the above interview the Mining Association was formed, and has continued to work the Cape Breton Mines for many years to great advantage, although of course not with the aid of such simple machinery as I have just alluded to.

(2\*) Apparently Mr. Bridge of the firm of Messrs. Rundell, Bridge & Rundell of London.



Besides the mines of the London Association in this direction, an American Company,<sup>(3)</sup> for the last 3 years, has been successfully engaged in carrying out operations of some extent at this latter place. These mines were first opened a short time before by an enterprising merchant of Sydney, E. P. Archbold Esq. under a lease from the Provincial Government; and who then invited Capitalists from the United States to co-operate with him in the undertaking. This has been the commencement of a new era for Cape Breton, in all that relates to her coming prosperity in the development of her wonderful mining resources.

About 18 miles from Sydney Harbour upon this coast opens another inlet called Cow Bay<sup>(4)</sup> running up for about five miles into the interior of an excellent farming country. A light house stands upon a dangerous rock at the entrance of the bay, which goes by the name of Flint Island. At the northern head of this bay, valuable coal mines of a superior quality also exist, which are now leased from the government of Nova Scotia, and worked by an American Company with increasing success.<sup>(5)</sup> Another Company formed of Cape Breton share-holders,—carry on operations in an adjoining [bay] with almost equal advantage. Turning round the southern head of this bay,—another broad inlet of the sea opens before you, running up for 30 miles into a picturesque and fertile country, after having the form of a broad river. This bay and river are studded with beautifully wooded islands, having deep water close to the shores. A bar of sand however forms some obstruction at the entrance of the bay.

- (3) In 1858 Messrs. Cadegan and McLeod took up the mining area at Bridgeport. In 1863 it was sold to the International Coal and Railway Company of New York, which sank and equipped a 96 foot shaft, connecting it by 12 miles of railway with a loading pier erected in Sydney Harbour. The lease of the Glace Bay area was first taken up by Mr. E. P. Archbold of Sydney in the spring of 1858. Three years later he induced J. A. Moren, H. B. Paulin, Peter Lynch and J. R. Lithgow of Halifax, and W. B. Parrott, James W. Emery, Estes Howe, J. H. Converse and Gardner G. Hubbard, of New England, to join him in the Glace Bay Mining Company, and to this company he transferred his lease.
- (4) Now Port Morien. The name was changed by Nova Scotia Statute in 1895.
- (5) At Schooner Pond. In addition, a colliery was also opened at the South Head, Cow Bay, in 1863, and another was opened at the north end of False Bay Beach in Mira Bay by Mr. Tracey and others in 1864. The mining area at Schooner Pond was taken up by Mr. Ross in 1862 and the mine was opened in 1863. Coal was mined there from 1863-1866 and also in 1869.



About two miles off the shore of this extreme eastern part of Cape Breton,—stands the large triangular shaped island of Scatarie, wild rocky and almost desolate,—presenting its rugged shores in great angles or promontories towards the north and east and forming a mighty breakwater against the whole force of the Atlantic. This island is about 5 miles in length and 3 in breadth. A lighthouse, as may easily be conceived, is a necessary appendage to this dangerous coast, and accordingly one stands in charge of a careful superintendent. But few permanent inhabitants reside upon this bleak and exposed spot; and most of those who frequent it in summer for the purpose of fishing quit it again towards the winter season.

Rounding the cape about two miles from the southern head of Mira Bay, and just opposite the third angle of Scatarie, which points in to the main land—you suddenly come upon a small bay or harbour, encircled by the houses of a rather busy village, depending chiefly for its support upon the fisheries and the coasting trade. A large number of Roman Catholics inhabit this settlement<sup>(6)</sup> and their chapel is a prominent object at the head of the harbour, particularly when viewed from the sea. When on my way from Halifax to Sydney for the first time I was much struck with the picturesque appearance of this village. Nestling as it does in a nook of the Ocean, with sheltering hills on all sides,—it is scarcely seen until you are abreast of the narrow mouth of the harbour; and as the steamer passed during a calm and beautiful day, close of this opening,—the little settlement presented itself at once to view,—the houses rising above each other like an amphitheatre, and the surface of the water alive with fishing vessels. As the schooner continued her course through the narrow passage between the mainland and Scatarie, which it can only do in calm weather, it almost seemed possible to throw a stone ashore from the deck—so close could we sail to the rocky coast on account of the depth of the water. Numerous small sterile islands dotted the shore on the Scatarie side; and whilst they added to the picturesque scene, in fine weather,—threatened destruction to the unwary mariner in foggy and stormy weather. A missionary of the Society for the

(6) Mainadieu. Rev. Francis LeJamtel, Roman Catholic priest, had Mainadieu as part of his mission early in the 19th century.

Propagation of the Gospel now resides at this place, called Mainadieu or Menadoo, and has a good congregation.<sup>(7)</sup> This inlet affords but little protection to large ships in very stormy weather.

About 15 miles from Mainadieu is situated the celebrated harbour of Louisburg. To reach this however you have to double the point of land properly called Cape Breton, which gives its name to the whole island. Cape Breton (or Puerto Nuovo, as it is generally called here) is the extreme south-eastern point of the mainland of this Province. After passing this, the shore trends away towards the west, and forms the southern coast of Cape Breton. About 8 or 10 miles along this shore then, Louisburg opens its safe and capacious harbour,—a welcome sight to the storm-tossed sailor. Louisburg is a place of so much interest and celebrity, that it merits a full and particular description; but this I shall reserve until I come to give an account of separate portions of the island. In the meantime one or two points may be mentioned respecting it.

On first coming to Cape Breton I saw nothing of this harbour,—although we passed close to it: its shores were enveloped in a thick fog, as the steamer passed, which is rather a characteristic of the southern shore of Cape Breton; but in a subsequent voyage from Halifax to Sydney, I had an opportunity of testing its value as a safe and comfortable retreat in tempestuous weather. We passed its shores in the night during very rough weather, in the Cunard Steamer *Osprey*. The intention of the Captain was to continue his course round the outer point of Scatarie; but after proceeding nearly as far as that island, the storm increased to such violence that he determined to return for shelter to Louisburg,—a thing rarely done by these steamers. It was about six o'clock in the morning when we reached this harbour; and whilst struggling with the winds and waves of a perilous coast all the discomforts of a sea voyage seemed to be at this moment accumulated upon me as I lay in my berth. No sooner however had we passed the entrance of this friendly harbour, than a sudden transition seemed to take place, from storm to calm. Coming soon after upon deck, I recognized the broad circular basin of Louisbourg harbour, with its lighthouse crowning the eastern entrance and the

(7) St. James' Anglican Church at Mainadieu was consecrated in 1856. It was within the mission of the Rev. W. Y. Porter.



celebrated "battery island" with its reefs and shoals guarding us from the ocean on the opposite side. As I had often been here before on professional duty I lost no time in landing at the hospitable house of C. MacAlpine Esq. where I was always sure of a welcome. On the following day, which was Sunday,—I turned my unexpected visit to good account by holding service twice in the Church, and performing a funeral, which otherwise must have been unaccompanied by the consoling rites of the church. But to return to the steamer, of which I had taken my leave. The storm continued with so much violence that she was glad to lie at anchorage in these safe waters throughout Saturday and Sunday; until at six o'clock on Monday morning, when the weather moderated, I saw her from my bedroom window, steaming out of the harbour on her way to Sydney,—where she arrived about 5 o'clock. Leaving Louisburg myself in a waggon at ten the same morning I reached Sydney a little before [the] packet, being a distance of 26 miles. The advantage of such a harbour as Louisburg at some future day, when rail-roads are introduced in this island must be evident: it can be reached by ships, from some points, under circumstances that would preclude their arrival for several days at Sydney. What a speedy transit then could take place from one to the other by rail.

Returning again to our unfinished circuit of the coast,—as we leave Louisburg with its ruined batteries and sod-covered mounds and proceed towards the west, we pass the dark barren heath, between this place and Gabarous Bay,—where the troops of the first and second expedition against Louisburg effected a landing, on their way to besiege the fortress. Gabarous Bay, where the larger shipping anchored, is a broad open inlet of the sea, inhabited chiefly by fisherman and one or two merchants: it is a growing settlement, but somewhat celebrated for shipwrecks. In stormy weather the whole of this coast presents a perilous array of breakers and the continual deep hollow sound of the Atlantic waves as they burst upon these granite rocks, is terrible and sublime. Gabarous is 12 miles from Louisburg. Around a curved coast, still continuing towards the west, about 50 or 60 miles further you come to the fine expansive bay of St. Peters, indented in several places by smaller inlets, and protected at its mouth, by the large and irregular shaped island called "Isle Madame". Arichat the principal town in this island, lies at the northern head of a beautiful harbour, and is without doubt at present the chief commercial port of Cape



Breton. Seldom obstructed by ice, which is too often an enemy to winter traffic in our otherwise noble harbours, this place sends forth throughout the year in Jersey vessels her exports of fish and country produce, to many parts of the West Indies, South America, Spain & the Mediterranean. The head of St. Peters Bay runs up into the country some distance where it almost meets the waters of the Great Bras d'Or Lake already mentioned. A narrow isthmus of a few miles alone separates the two waters. Works for the construction of a canal have already been commenced upon this strip of land, which when completed will open a water communication between the eastern and western shores of Cape Breton without the risk and delay of the present voyage round Scatarie.

Continuing our survey from Isle Madame for about 15 miles and passing several islands we arrive at the entrance of the Strait of Canso, which separates the island of Cape Breton from Nova Scotia. This strait during the greater part of the year is of immense service to trade and navigation. With 20 fathom depth of water, and a width of one mile, it forms a complete thoroughfare between the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and that part of the Atlantic, which lies to the south of Cape Breton. It may easily be conceived then how much advantage is derived from this natural canal of 15 miles length, in carrying on communication between countries to the north and south of Nova Scotia. This saves altogether the necessity of making a circuitous and sometimes stormy voyage round the promontory of Cape North and Scatarie. During the months of summer and autumn, a steamer makes frequent [trips] through this between Halifax and Charlotte Town, the Capital of Prince Edward Island, and touching on its way at Arichat and at Pictou,—a flourishing seaport on the northern coast of Nova Scotia. Passengers frequently take advantage of this accommodating conveyance. It has only been lately established; and is amongst several signs of the rising enterprize of the Province. The Strait of Canso forms an immediate communication between two capacious bays, which indent this extremity of Nova Scotia proper, St. George's at the north and Chedabucto at the south; and from these bays access is found to the great waters lying beyond.

Pursuing our northern course through this remarkable strait we shall arrive at the fine harbour of Port Hood, about 35 miles from the southern entrance of Canso. This Port constituting the

North west angle of Cape Breton affords ample room and safe anchorage, for vessels of the very heaviest burthen; and being well situated for the purpose, deals in exports of cattle and country produce to the coast of Newfoundland. From this place to Cape North, a distance of nearly one hundred miles, but little shelter is afforded for shipping against tempestuous weather; with the exception of one or two good harbours, and which lie principally towards the southward above Cheticamp,—an old establishment of Jersey merchants, the waters of the Bay of St. Lawrence rage unchecked upon the high, bold, but most inhospitable cliffs of this portion of Cape Breton. As I mentioned before about ten miles beyond Cape North stands the desolate island of St. Paul, measuring somewhere about two miles in length and perhaps a quarter of that in breadth. Its barren and rocky sides rise up almost perpendicularly from the edge of the foaming water, and could tell many a tale of unchronicled woe. The cries of shipwrecked and drowning seamen, for whom no hope remained when once driven upon this fatal rock,—must often have fallen unheeded upon its dismal cliffs. A lighthouse however now stands there, and gives some timely warning to vessels navigating this Gulf.

Here we shall conclude our [first chapter] which with the help of a map may [show that this island, though] comparatively little known to the [parent state, upon] closer inspection would develop information to raise it in public estimation, and perhaps to invite emigration. This it has been my humble purpose to attempt to do in the present work. In the succeeding chapters I shall give fuller descriptions of various parts of the country, together with its climate and productions. Nor shall I omit anything which may contribute to form an interesting account, including description of the aborigines, and some which belong to its wilder state, as well as a brief outline of some part of its history. The late visit of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who touched here for a few hours on his voyage from Newfoundland to Halifax, may perhaps add some thing to the interest of this spot; and increase the disposition of the public to make further enquiry. It is not without reason that the inhabitants of Cape Breton hope by and by for a brighter day in the prospects of their country. When it is considered that two of the most splendid harbours are situated upon its eastern coast; and that they form the most advanced and commodious havens for ships visiting this part of the western continent,—there may seem some grounds for hope that in the search for the speed-

iest passage,—the Atlantic steamers may one day find their way to Sydney or Louisburg. This will no doubt appear sanguine; but modern improvements are rapid and often take an unexpected turn. If she cannot look for this, however, her easily worked mines and her excellent soil, cannot fail in due time, to attract such an emigration to her shores as would make Cape Breton a prosperous and valuable Colony.



## SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON

### II. Climate and Soil

Wrong impressions — Winter — Snow — Spring — Autumn — Observations upon temperature — Indian Summer — drift ice — frozen rivers — Aurora Borealis — Silver thaw — Agriculture — fish — fertility of soil — new Clearings — encouragement for immigration — Minerals — Copper — silver gold — steamers and passenger ships.

In considering the eligibility of a country for residence or immigration, Climate is regarded as a point of great importance. And this no doubt is one reason why the extensive territories of Australia, New Zealand and Columbia have been preferred by British emigrants, and have been rapidly filled with rising Cities and increasing populations whilst the countries of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, especially the latter, languish for industrious hands to work their soil and for zeal and capital to convert their native riches into sources of prosperity. To natives of the milder climates of Great Britain, our ice and snow are repulsive; and the reputation which this province has unfortunately acquired for severe cold and fog will I fear, long act as a hindrance to the arrival of such a population as might materially benefit her. Without denying altogether the truth of much that has been alleged against our climate, I shall endeavour, in this Chapter, to correct some wrong impressions respecting it, and to give such facts and details as may enable strangers to form a juster idea of what it really is. I remember noticing in an Old Gazetteer not many years ago a very brief and unfavourable description of the Climate of these Lower Provinces, which much amused me. The words I think were,—that,—“These shores were enveloped in ice and fog during the larger portion of the year”. That fog and ice do for a certain season visit our shores is very certain; but not to the extent supposed; and the very cold which seems so terrible to Europeans is generally so dry and bracing, that many who have tried it for a while, prefer it to the raw damp atmosphere of England. The curling snowdrift and the freezing breath of a north-west wind have something grand and invigorating, notwithstanding their inconveniences; and although tedious to the farmer, who is withheld from cultivating his fields, yet these long winters might be exchanged for far less healthy though more agreeable climates. At all events a few years accustoms the residents here to their severity,—which is in some measure compensated for by

the return of a fine summer and autumn: And the dry carpet of snow, which lies so long upon the ground is gladly welcomed by the settlers as the opportunity for providing fuel and fencing and for transporting to market the produce of their farms.

The winter of Cape Breton may be said to last for five sometimes six months in the year. It sets in generally about the middle of November, and does not terminate till the end of April. During this six months of winter the climate varies much. December is generally very cold and often accompanied by snow, but occasionally is without it, liable however to storms of wind and rain. January also is a cold month, although usually attended with a thaw, which carries off the December snows and exposes the ground too often to the frost, which returns suddenly and penetrates the soil. This is a great disadvantage, as the roots of grass and clover are often injured, if they lie thus too long uncovered. In this month, however, a good covering of snow most frequently protects the ground. The rivers, harbours and lakes are now generally well frozen over supplying the best of bridges in all directions, and materially shortening the journey of the farmer, the traveller and the missionary, whose sleds and sleighs are now seen in full career over marble roads,—sometimes almost equal to railways. February is our coldest month. The snow during this month is very steady, and the cold, dry and even; locking the whole country up in one hard covering. To those who are well provided with fuel and comfortable houses, this state of things is not so dismal as may be supposed. The air is bright and clear, and many distant journeys are taken, whilst the farmer's sleds are very busy, and the forest rings with the woodman's axe, who clears away new fields and hews and splits the fallen trunks into cordwood ready for hauling away to sell or for his own use. Some of our deepest snow falls about the middle or the 20th. of March; this month, accompanied with high drifting winds. These for a few days will sometimes block up the road and cause delay to travellers; but they are soon cleared away by the neighbouring settlers, who are bound by law to turn out and break the roads. March is bright and cold. In April the sun has power, and towards the middle or end of the month breaks up the sleighing and opens all the frozen waters. Towards the end of April—the fields sometimes are fit for plowing and even for sowing. The sun is often so warm towards the close of this month that vegetation seems as if already about to burst forth; but in May a change takes place, and



chilling winds prevail a good deal so as to throw back and frequently injure the early budding that has commenced. The weather of this month is effected materially by the drift ice which comes from the northern regions and from the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The whole atmosphere is thus chilled for days and weeks together, so that no matter how bright the sun may be the north-easterly wind, which blows over this accumulated mass of floating ice renders the month of May to the inhabitants of Sydney and indeed of the whole Island—the most disagreeable month in the year. Our June is rather cold until after the 20th. being influenced by the ice which not even yet has drifted quite away from us. In July however we really have fine weather, clear and warm, which continues throughout the month, liable of course to showers and perhaps a thunderstorm. The same may be said of August. September is a beautiful month: the leaves have begun to turn and the air is dry and crisp. By the middle of this month most of the farmer's crops are harvested. With so short a summer, it may easily be imagined that vegetation in this Island is very rapid; which is the case. Finer crops of potatoes, oats, hay and barley are seldom seen; and yet they scarcely have more than three months in which to come to perfection. October brings along with it cold weather but very fine and healthy, with much soft balmy weather, varied towards the latter end, however, with some heavy rain. The Autumn leaves (for which America is famous) are now in all their beauty; and give the woods a painted look, so bright and variegated do they appear in all directions. November is often a very fine month, at least for the first fortnight, when we generally have what is called the "Indian Summer",—a short season of peculiar and lovely weather.

The following remarks upon the peculiarities of the climate of this part of Cape Breton I have received from a gentlemen residing in the neighbourhood of Sydney to whom I had applied for information. The accuracy of his observations may be relied on; and being a person of taste and scientific acquirements—I cannot do better than give his own words:

"Greatest observed height of the Mercury in the shade	96	Fa[h]renheit
"Ditto Ditto in the sun	130	"
"Lowest degree observed at night	30	"
"Usual greatest heat in shade	84	"
"Usual lowest temperature at night	20	"

"There are probably about *twenty* days in the year of the "greatest heat,—and about *seven* of the greatest cold."



"In ordinary years the greatest <i>heat</i> by day in the shade in <i>January</i>		
"is		52 F° T
"Greatest <i>cold</i> at night in ditto		4
	February	45
	"	20
	March	60
	"	20
"N.B.		
"From May to October	April	66 F° T
"inclusive the greatest depression	"	17
"of the Mercury at night continues		
"for a short time only:—In June	May	76
"July and August, probably not	"	20
"for half an hour.		
"From November to April,	June	84
"inclusive the highest point in the day	"	30
"time is often equally transitory.		
	July	87
	"	42
	August	89
	"	37
	September	79
	"	30
	October	75
	"	27
	November	63
	"	17
	December	57
	"	7

These data, however, give but an imperfect idea of the real temperature. "For instance, the much greater heat in each day should be taken into consideration. It was observed in April (1863) to be 130°; the thermometer being so placed that the sun's rays fell on it perpendicularly: at the same moment it was freezing in the shade and in the wind on the north side of the building. Of course in the hot months, the heat in the sun might be very much greater; but it has not been ascertained."

"A remarkable characteristic of the climate of Cape Breton is its liability to great and sudden changes of temperature."

"In the winter, if the Thermometer sink to 20° below Zero in the night—there is no certainty that there will not be a thaw next day with rain, and the mercury 40° or 50° above zero. In the spring, summer heat may be experienced one day, and a freezing temperature on the next. And on the same day, the mercury has been observed to stand at 32° in the early morning, and up to 90 in the shade before noon."

"One of the most surprising facts is the rapid advance of "vegetation in defiance of the night frosts. These continue "throughout June in some years every night, and occur occasional- "ly in July and August: and in September and October, tender "vegetables are cut down by them; although often reviving again "before their final destruction. But in May and June, with the "mercury at night at times  $17^{\circ}$  or  $20^{\circ}$  and in the day from  $60^{\circ}$  to " $70^{\circ}$  and  $80^{\circ}$ ,—the growth of herbaceous perennials especially ex- "ceeds belief. It would almost seem that the frost confers extra "vigor on those plants."

"It is not always however that even the native vegetation "escapes unhurt. The tops of the trees have been observed in "June, Birch, beech, maple Etc. in the forests entirely blackened "by the previous night's frosts: Yet in a few days afterwards, no "vestige of its effects remained."

"Even the fruit trees in bloom do not suffer from the frost as "might be supposed. Apples, pears, plums and cherries in full "blossom are not always affected injuriously by the nights frost. "Cold and wet weather at that period is more destructive to the "crop of fruit. Last year (1862) on the morning of the 30th. of "June the thermometer stood at  $27^{\circ}$ . The potato plants, half a "foot high, with stalks nearly half an inch in diameter were cut "down to the ground. Shoots of grape vines, then in bloom, wal- "nut, robinia, sumach, kidney beans, dahlias were cut off. At "that time much of the fruit was just set; plums and cherries about "the size of peas, and apples not larger than marbles:—Yet they "were not hurt, and the crop of fruit was excessive. At the time "of ripening the trees were so loaded that in many instances they "broke down."

I have spoken already of the "Indian Summer". I shall here give a brief description of it. This name is supposed to be derived from the opportunity thus afforded to the Indian of completing his hunting and laying up a stock of provisions for the winter which soon succeeds. It is said to be the fine weather, which comes after the first fall of snow in October; but this rule does not always hold good. This lovely season however takes place somewhere about the end of October or the beginning of November; and often lasts nearly a fortnight, sometimes scarcely a week. To give a just idea of it, by description, is almost impossible. It combines so

many peculiar beauties of climate and landscape that it can only be understood by actual experience. The most striking peculiarity is a soft hazy atmosphere at the same time quite transparent, attended with something like a mellow pinkish glow, which gives its tint to all the distant woods and hills. The deep blue of the sky, lakes and streams, and the painted leaves of the forest appear in striking contrast. The maple is of a deep crimson spotted sometimes with bright yellow and green; and the beech has a brown and saffron color. The oak and birch also have their peculiar hue and when mingled with the dark green of the pine and fir trees, they make up a gorgeous scene that delights the eye. A calm lake surrounded with such a variegated margin has often reminded me of a blue silk mantle edged with rich embroidery. A deep silence seems to rest upon everything; but distant sounds such as the barking of a dog are distinctly heard: and in the woods every noise, such as the woodman's axe, or the cry of a bird, echoes far around. There is a pleasant warmth in the atmosphere, with scarcely any breeze. Altogether the sensations produced by this weather are most delightful, and as it is quite healthy, it is favourite season for making journeys into the country either for recreation or business. The predominant feeling in the mind whilst enjoying this delightful weather is,—that "it is too lovely to last!"

The following verses, which I have selected from a short poem upon the subject, convey a good idea of this peculiar weather:

### **Indian Summer in America**

*By Charles Stewart.*

The bloom that erewhile decked the flowers  
Now flush the trees with hectic hues,  
That die (like rainbows after showers)  
In vivid but dissolving views.

The passage birds fly o'er the land,  
Swift heralds of the coming frost,  
Like flames the blood-red maples stand,  
From nature's grateful holocaust.

Hushed autumn's warm and perfumed breath  
Ascends, like incense, to the sun,  
Whilst in the noontide, still as death,  
Drop the ripe apples one by one.

From out her serried ranks of spears  
The golden wreath of Ceres gleams:  
Far woods, new-washed by cloud-wept tears,  
Glow through an Atmosphere of dreams.



A ghost-like haze hangs over stream,  
As though the summer's shroud it wore;  
The dews are summer's still I dream  
Although the morning mists are frore.

Far to the west, in fancy's eye,  
Yon line of hills that stretch away  
Seems but a portion of the sky  
That trees with spectral clouds array.

The unobtrusive meadow brook  
With sadder plaint now flows along,  
As if the wrath of winter shook  
The cheerful tenor of its song.

The Sun's slant arrows shattered blaze  
O'er Autumn's rubric leaves of blood,  
Down drifting through the purple haze,  
On the broad bosom of the flood.

Not a leaf stirs! the world is mute!  
Tired nature seems to silence awed,  
While all her tokens constitute  
Admonitory Oracles from God!

Poor, painted leaves! how glad ye seem  
To wear thy gorgeous garb. Dost know,  
Doomed Captives, it is but a scheme  
To usher in with pomp thy foe?

Oh, wherefore will ye try to cling  
With such despair to every bough?  
A few more blasts your fate will bring—  
If die you must, then perish now!

Farewell, ye Indian Summer days!  
A few more days will feel thy spell,  
And then with flowers, birds, and sprays,  
The dream will fade away—farewell!

This Province as I have said before has the character of being foggy. This is certainly the case during the month of May and part of June, even at Halifax, but the south-eastern coast of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton are liable to it more frequently. It is not however unhealthy, and is often dissipated by the sun at noon, even during its most prevalent season. The southeastern coast of Cape Breton, upon which lie the settlements of Louisburg, Mainadieu and Gabarous,—feel the influence of this fog a good deal; but after turning the eastern point of the Island you take leave of it altogether: it seems to be driven off into the Atlantic, after having thus far crept along the shores. It seldom extends far inland. The eastern coast of Cape Breton is almost altogether free from it; and the town of Sydney enjoys almost complete exemption from this unpleasant visitor.

The drift-ice however is what we chiefly complain of. This by retarding the advance of spring, and often checking vegetation after it has commenced is a great disadvantage to the country. As soon as the ice breaks up in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and further to the north—it is brought down upon our Island by the current and driven in upon our shores by the north-easterly winds. After our own ice is broken up and our harbours cleared it is very provoking to see these enormous plains of broken drift-ice coming down from their polar home to chill our atmosphere and damp our expectations of an early spring. Occasionally it passes without troubling us much; but generally from the middle of April to the middle of May we are liable to its influence. At times nothing is to be seen in all directions round the eastern coast but extensive fields of this ice,—white as snow, and sparkling in the sun's rays. If the harbour-ice is late in breaking up,—it is so far an advantage that it keeps out a colder and more disagreeable ice, which makes itself felt upon everything around. But when the way is unobstructed,—up comes the polar ice rapidly sailing into the harbour, and carrying its floating masses often as far as the very head of the river. It is curious to mark the specimens of ice that thus visit us,—and to see the glistening white blocks from the northern ocean mixed with the red of the Gulf-ice,—tinged of this colour from the clay along its shores. We have nothing now to do but to wait patiently till a change of wind takes place,—when the ice floats away again as quickly as it came. The name of "Glance Bay" (Ice-Bay) is still retained by one of the settlements on this coast, given to it by the early French settlers,—from the circumstance of the bay being frequently filled by masses of this drift-ice.

The freezing over of our harbours is in some respects an advantage as it makes an easy communication between distant places. But accidents sometimes happen from want of care, particularly towards the spring when the thaw commences. The advantage of this short road is so great that travellers often venture to the very last in crossing unsafe rivers and harbours. The Revd. W. Y. Porter,<sup>(8)</sup> late Travelling Missionary in this Island was in this

(8) Rev. William Young Porter, of Queens College, Oxford, was employed at Sydney, Cape Breton, by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel as a teacher from 1834 to 1840. He was then ordained as a clergyman and sent back to Cape Breton as a visiting missionary to Louisbourg and other places, including Cow Bay, Glance Bay, and Mainadieu. On February 18, 1859, Rev. Mr. Porter was drowned in crossing the ice from Sydney to Sydney Mines. He left behind him a widow and seven children.

way lost in the winter of 1859 from endeavouring to land at an unsafe place near North Sydney during a foggy or misty night. Several other cases have happened since I have been here, some very recently. I have myself been hitherto very fortunate although I have often ventured over the harbour in the month of April when two days after I have seen the whole ice float out of the river. Once only have I experienced the unpleasant sensation of finding my horse breaking through; but as I was at that time just returning from a funeral,—many of the neighbours happened to be near at hand, and quickly came to my assistance. The horse alone fell into the water,—the sleigh (from which I jumped) lodging upon one side of the chasm. It was soon however got out. To be caught in a snow storm upon these broad sheets of ice is also dangerous, as completely losing your way you may either drive out towards the open sea or spend the night in wandering about in search of your home. Serious accidents of this kind have been known to happen. To provide against this in some measure, rows of spruce trees are fixed in the ice every winter at the two principal crossings, one of which is five miles long.

A very beautiful feature in our climate during winter is the striking appearance of the *Aurora Borealis* or northern lights. These sometimes fill the whole northern part of the heavens far above the horizon with the most beautiful shapes of shooting light, changing their forms every minute; either spreading across the sky in large arcs or darting their silvery rays upward from the horizon. These lights sometimes appear dyed of a beautiful rose colour intermixed with their usual silver appearance. They produce a pretty strong light; and notwithstanding the opinion that they portend a storm, are of great service to the traveller. The stars and the moon during the winter are particularly bright and seem larger and closer than in the dewy atmosphere of England.

Another beautiful phenomenon of our winter, although to a certain extent not unusual at home, is the silver-thaw that takes place generally in January,—but sometimes in other months. As our storms of rain here are violent, and in the winter often accompanied by a freezing wind, the trees and bushes are thus covered with a pretty thick crust of ice, so clear and bright that the woods and shrubs appear as if coated with glass and silver. Under the weight of this icy coat the trees with all their branches bend down and assume the most elegant and fantastic shapes.



During the day when the sun is bright or under the light of a clear moon, nothing can be imagined more beautiful than the appearance of the woods as you drive through them over alabaster roads of snow. The shining and sparkling branches seeming to be multiplied a thousand fold by the reflexion thus occasioned,—look like feathers of glass and frosted silver; and as you pass along, changing the view and catching glimpses of different trees, partly shaded and partly glistening in the moon-light,—you have the most complete idea of what is generally understood by “Fairy-land”, of anything I have ever seen.

The climate of this country is altogether clearer and more settled than that of England. The rain falls heavier, but much less frequently. You are not liable as at home to be caught by sudden showers, and can tell better what is to be the nature of the weather through the day. But when rain sets in it often continues without intermission for one sometimes two days. The most unpleasant part of the climate is the spring which as I have already described it,—is changeable and uncertain: but during the autumn, summer and great part of the winter, in spite of its snow-drifts and northerly winds,—no healthier or finer weather can be wished than that which is enjoyed in Cape Breton.

On account of the backwardness of the spring agricultural operations begin late: but the rapidity of vegetation in the climate makes up for it. The latter end of April or the beginning of May is the season for putting in seed. New potatoes come in about the middle or beginning of August. Oats are reaped in September; and hay is cut generally in the end of July. The oats of this country are remarkably fine, and oatmeal of the finest description is often brought into market principally by the Scotch settlers, who raise a large quantity of it for their own use as well as for sale. A great variety of potatoes are cultivated here, notwithstanding the blight which for many years back has affected them. This root was formerly too much relied upon by the farmer, who fed his cattle and fattened his pigs almost exclusively upon it during the autumn and winter. It used to stand in place of the turnip so much cultivated for this purpose in England. Its liability to disease has of late years however checked this practice a great deal. A large supply of gourds or pumpkins are often raised in stead, and a great quantity of Indian corn or maize. These are generally planted together in the same fields; and after the corn has been reaped the

pumpkins are left to ripen in the autumn sun. They often attain an immense size. From this is made the pumpkin pie so famous in America. And notwithstanding English prejudice, it is a dish by no means to be despised. The pulp boiled and beaten is made a foundation for milk, eggs, cream, sugar and nutmeg, etc. and with a good paste is formed into a gigantic yellowish looking cheese cake, and served up sometimes at tea as well as at dinner. It is as common almost in parts of this province as it is in the states of America. When first I saw it upon the hotel table at New York, spread out in long array I eyed it with transatlantic prejudice, but having once tasted it my opinion altered very much in its favour. When well prepared it is excellent. One of the finest description of potatoes raised in this country is the celebrated "blue-nose", which has given its name to the inhabitants of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. This frequently grows about 3 or 4 inches long with a blackish coat, and when cut is seen intersected like marbles with broad deep blue lines, the tips or ends are quite blue. It is otherwise white and mealy, and of a most agreeable and delicate flavour. The early white potato, the red apple and the black kidney are much used for table, and a great variety of large yellowish potatoes are raised for the use of cattle. Wheat is not much cultivated in Cape Breton as American flour is so easily and cheaply obtained; but the soil is not unfavourable to it. In one farm particularly at Glace Bay I have been struck with the fine crops of wheat growing there in sufficient quantities to supply the family with bread through the year. As I have often been a guest in that house, during my missionary visits I can speak favourably of the bread which was made from it. Indeed in walking over this farm I have been surprized at the superior crops of oats, wheat and barley, which covered the fields luxuriantly in all directions. Kelp manure was used a good deal, which was easily procured from the beach just below. This industrious family, originally from England were doing well. Their fuel was obtained for nine pence sterling a load from adjacent coal pits,—having none easily worked upon their own farm. Many other farmers however in that neighbourhood enjoy this advantage.

Sydney is often visited in the Spring by vessels from Prince Edward Island with potatoes of the finest description. That Island is a famous agricultural country. Its soil is remarkably rich and in some places of a light nature well adapted to the potato: consequently abundant crops are raised there, which often supply



the deficiencies of the market both in Cape Breton and Nova Scotia. They are very large and mealy. Prince Edward Island is equally famous for her crops of cereals,—such as oats, wheat and barley, and is as much favoured by nature with remarkable fertility of soil, as Cape Breton is with abundant fisheries and mineral riches.

The waters of this country produce no turbot, sole or whiting, which so often supply the market at home: but salmon, mackerel, haddock, cod-fish, herring and shad are very abundant, as well as lobsters and oysters. Along the shores of Cape Breton, cod-fish particularly are found in inexhaustible quantity and of a large size, mackerel also are very plenty. In the rivers a little to the north of Sydney, salmon are found in great numbers. A place called Margaree is celebrated for this fish, as well as trout of a very large size. The Admiral and Governor of Nova Scotia, as well as other distinguished persons and sportsmen, make annual visits to this river. One sportsman from Sydney killed with his rod last summer as many as thirty salmon of the finest description in a very short time.

The following extract from the "Note Book" of a traveller who has very recently made an excursion to that part of the Island of Cape Breton will give some idea of the natural fertility and beauty of the country at Margaree: "Having made the necessary arrangements, we left Baddeck at noon for Margaree, a distance of 25 miles. The first part of our journey led us through "a rich alluvial section of the Island, laid out in beautiful farms; "then over a hilly country, with yawning chasms on either side of "theroad; passing in the distance the peaceful valley of Wagamatkook,<sup>(9)</sup> through which the Middle river flows. Then we gradually "descended a deep Mountain pass, through which we continued to "drive until we reached the forks of the river."

"The scenery through this narrow defile is wild and grand beyond description. Sometimes you pass by the margin of lakes,— "the mountains rising in terraces far above you, or rolling away in "yellow undulations to a great height.—Some are covered with "luxuriant groves of birch and pine; while others display to view

(9) The Wagamutkook or Middle River is a Micmac Place Name meaning little green water.



"only their naked and barren sides. The perfumes of multitudes of wild roses, and lilies, the warbling of birds, and the noise of rippling streams as they pour down the mountain crevices have all a pleasing and agreeable effect upon the tourist."

"A stranger is greatly surprized on ascending these table mountains (for such they are) to find a rich level farming country stretching away further than the eye can reach. As he looks down upon each successive mountain terrace in the valley below he beholds a few waving fields and grazing cattle the property of contented highlanders. Looking beyond, over the hills and valleys are lakes and streams, dotting here and there the beautiful landscape. As we gaze we wonder that a country so favoured is not the home of thousands and thousands."

Notwithstanding the length of the winter a really industrious farmer can gradually make himself comfortable in this country. Particularly if he takes up his position so as to avail himself of the combined advantages of the Island. Near some parts of the seashore he has abundance of fish, and fuel easily obtained from the coal pits,—besides the reward of his industry in the fruits of the soil. Even the sea yields up a manure in some places, which much lightens the labor of dressing his fields. The chief settlers in this country at present are the poorer Scotch mostly from the Islands of Scotland. They are many of them industrious and frugal, and often succeed in making themselves tolerably comfortable upon a small piece of land: but they are not remarkably intelligent and do not bring with them a very extensive knowledge of farming, consequently in their hands agriculture makes slow progress. But even in their case during the ten years I have spent in Cape Breton my own observation has enabled me to perceive marked improvement on a small scale in the farms, which they occupy. Of this I have been enabled to judge with tolerable correctness, from making frequent journeys at intervals over the same road upon my missionary travels.

It is curious to mark the progress of a settler in these American woods. Upon the road side, many miles from town, in a wood thick and dark, a short time before,—with beech and maple and birch,—you will suddenly see a large clearing of five or six acres or more. The trees thus felled are cut into manageable lengths after having their branches lopped off. These are rolled

together and burnt; some being selected for fire wood and the best pine and hemlock set aside till the winter, when they are hauled upon the snow to the nearest mill to convert into boards and lumber for the dwelling. The straight thin poles are picked out for fences. The ground thus enclosed and burnt (the ashes producing great fertility) is now planted with potatoes or sown with oats. This virgin soil is most productive; and to get a good "burn",—as they call it, with a favourable wind,—is considered a lucky event. The potatoes are planted in hills with a hoe amidst the stumps, and are very fine, almost invariably escaping the disease. The oats are put in with a harrow of peculiar construction. The plough of course is out of the question upon such rough ground. The harrow is formed of several angular pieces of wood cut from the forked branches of a tree, each being shaped something like the "merry thought" of a chicken. They are linked together one within the largest and two others at the extremities. These pieces all hanging together in a loose way are armed with the usual spikes, slanting backwards a good deal. In passing through the stumps therefore this harrow easily makes its way,—its several parts yielding and turning in a contracted spot without injury to the implement; and jumping up over the tangled roots, which the slanting of the teeth prevents their catching. It is a simple but ingenious instrument. When drawn along by a horse or pair of oxen it is amusing to see how easily it passes between the blackened stumps, its loose pieces jumping up and tumbling over, and falling again into their right places,—but doing its work admirably both as plough and harrow, in places that otherwise must remain uncultivated.

The log-house or cottage is a rough but rather picturesque construction; and when first erected is not uncomfortable. The logs of pine or hemlock are laid one upon another, with their ends let into notches, and the interslices filled with moss and clay. The chimney is of stone, built with mud or clay. Rough boards form the roof which is sometimes constructed of poles and layers of thick bark. Nails and glass are the only materials for which money is needed. There are many degrees of comfort and improvement in these log-houses. In the winter,—if in bleak situations, they are often protected from cold by spruce trees cut down and placed in an upright position against the walls most exposed to the winds. Here the hardy, industrious, and frugal settler enjoys comparative comfort and happiness: especially when in the progress of time he



sees the work of his hands telling upon the scene around him;—luxurious crops of oats and potatoes waving their heads above the black or crumbling stumps; some fields already cleared of these encumbrances, producing good crops of hay, which are well stacked in the “hay-barracks” (a roof moving up and down upon four poles). Cattle and sheep now browse about; rough but good fences, and perhaps stone walls enclose the crops; and the promise of an independent patrimony for the next generation, cheers the heart of the original settler, and repays him for his past toil. Horses and ponies are abundant and very cheap upon the Island, so that farmers easily supply themselves. They are of a hardy breed. The best are of French introduction, found chiefly at Louisburg and Margaree. Should the farmer be near the shore a boat for fishing is added to his stock.

Before I conclude this letter I will not omit to notice your enquiries upon the subject of emigration to Cape Breton. I am not sufficiently possessed of extensive and accurate information upon this subject to enable me to dwell at much length upon it, but such particulars as I have been enabled to gather from well-informed persons I shall gladly communicate. As the prosperity of this country is closely connected with the diffusion of such information as may lead to emigration in this direction. I shall therefore the more cheerfully do my best to make known a few of the most useful facts and suggestions relating to the matter.

I have already expressed surprize and regret that a territory so near the mother country and possessed of such fine resources should so long have been overlooked by the thousands who annually leave the shores of Europe in search of new homes and new fields of enterprize. Much as it is to be lamented however it is not impossible to account for it. The gold of Australia; the rapid development of everything in the United States, with its high wages and genial climate; the fertility and cheapness of land in Canada, and its great reputation as a rising country,—have all contributed to divert from our shores numbers of emigrants, who might here make themselves comfortable and even wealthy. The chief cause however of this great preference is,—that the above named countries are more known; more pains are taken to circulate information respecting them, and to make the way out plain and easy to the emigrant; and not only to invite him thither but partly to de-



fray the expenses of the poorer classes in their passage out. To this must be added no doubt as a very prevailing cause,—the false impression that exists of the severity of our climate and its long and rigorous winter; and perhaps the idea that rocks and barrens constitute the most prominent features of our soil. I hope however from what I have already said upon these points that this injurious impression may be in some measure removed. That the day is not far distant when these Provinces may find more favour in the eyes of the Parent country as fields of Emigration is I think, in some measure, indicated by the fact of an Association having been formed in London to promote emigration to the British Colonies; and in the commencement made by our Provincial Legislature in April 29th. 1863, to invite and provide for an influx of population by appointing an Agent to attend to the business. The object of this act<sup>(10)</sup> is to promote co-operation with the Association above referred to; which will best be explained in its own words: The Agent spoken of is to—"Correspond with the Secretary of the "Board of Land and Emigration in London,—and with the agents "appointed by the Board, with the officers of any associations, or "with public spirited persons desirous of promoting immigration "to the Colonies; and to furnish from time to time such information "as may be useful, to enable them to send out emigrants for whom "there is likely to be suitable employment in this Province." Cape Breton it will be understood is *a part* of the Province of Nova Scotia.

To correct the wrong impression of the sterility of our soil and the unfitness of our climate for the growth of superior field and garden produce,—our contributions of fruits to the "Annual Exhibition of the Royal Horticultural Society" in October last may possibly have had some tendency. What description and class of persons it may then be asked are likely to meet with success as emigrants to such a country as Cape Breton? In the first place it must be stated,—that as our winter is severer and longer than at home, and the difficulties to be at first encountered as a settler greater perhaps than in other countries alluded to,—a sturdy frame and a bold persevering character is essentially necessary in the labouring man; and consequently as a receptacle for suffering manufacturers, at present turning their eyes to the colonies, this country is by no means suited. Mere labourers indeed are not required. But hardy industrious men with a family of sons suf-

(10) Statute 1863, Chap. 26.

ficiently grown to assist in clearing land and working their own farm would in time be sure of success. This however would come slowly; and without great frugality and industry would never be attained. It is not therefore to the ordinary labouring peasant of England or Ireland that much inducement, generally speaking is held out. Many instances indeed could be pointed out of comparative comfort won under such circumstances: and these chiefly amongst the Scotch: Although unfortunately the majority of that people who come here are not possessed of sufficient general knowledge of farming or enterprize either to improve the agriculture of the country or to realize much more for themselves than a scanty living: they do not come from that part of Scotland so justly famous for its husbandry.

A better opening is presented to the mechanic, although not at present in large numbers. The carpenter, blacksmith, millwright and shoemaker, as the country becomes opened and settled will always (if industrious and sober) be sure of a comfortable living. But the class most completely adapted to this country, as well for its improvement as for their own success, is the small farmer, accustomed to an improved system of agriculture, and fortunate enough to possess a small capital so as to meet the first difficulties and delays of settling in a new country. These will always succeed. It may be said that such persons could not be induced to leave their country or would be as well or much better off at home. But the small capital of £80 or £100 sterling required for such an emigrant would do little in the old country towards establishing a farmer in anything like an independent position. Out here however the land at once becomes his own; and whilst working it, he feels that every improvement upon it is for his own permanent benefit and that of his children. Good Crown or Government land can be purchased for one shilling and nine pence sterling per acre often of the finest description, well wooded, and sometimes adjacent to coal-mines or possessing that valuable mineral beneath its own soil. Land from private individuals can be purchased for £40 or £50 sterling by the hundred acre. A number of such persons as the above coming to Cape Breton would soon help to change the face of the country, and lay up a substantial competence for themselves and family.

But further than this there is a class still more required in this country whose exertions would be upon a larger scale and would



proportionably advance the prosperity of the country. I mean enterprizing merchants and men of speculation possessed of moderate capital. These of course it would be hard to induce to come from favoured Europe, and therefore our chief hope in this respect is from the States of America. Still it is a subject not unworthy of consideration with those, who may be looking round for promising investment of capital, or for a field in which to exercise an enterprizing mercantile spirit. Every week almost brings intelligence of new mines of superior coal being opened by individuals upon a lease from the Provincial Government, whose supplies are in many cases almost inexhaustible, and for which a ready and excellent market is found in the cities of America. I could mention the names of several persons even lately who have realized a most encouraging return for their undertakings of this kind. A "joint stock company" however possessed of sufficient capital to connect these mines by means of a rail-road with the fine harbour of Sydney, would accomplish great advantages for the country. In working these coal mines and setting on foot other undertakings connected with the newly-discovered mineral riches of the Island, the most ample & lucrative field presents itself for the employment of mercantile zeal.

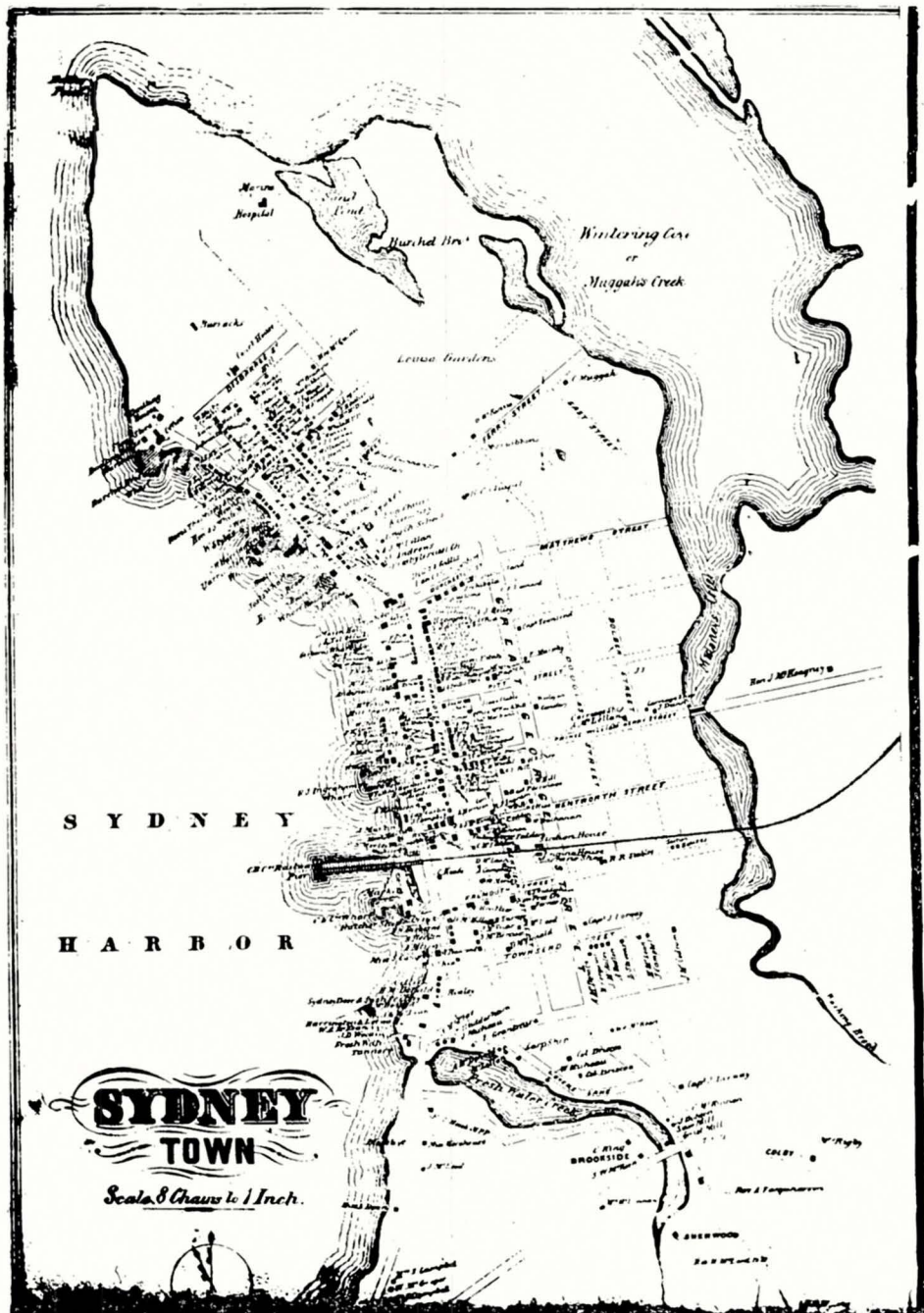
Whilst upon the subject of the soil and its productions as supplying encouragement to immigration and enterprize, the recent discovery of copper in this Island must not be overlooked. Copper mining has commenced at a place called Cheticamp on the north-western coast of Cape Breton, and quite sustains the expectations of those who are engaged in it; their claims to the number of four extend over  $2\frac{1}{2}$  square miles each. Silver is also now numbered amongst the hidden riches of the soil. Three claims are at present being worked at Grand Anse and Cape North, in search of this valuable metal, but with what success I am not able just now to state. Iron foundries it is said, amongst other improvements, might most successfully be carried on in this very neighbourhood, which we are in expectation may ere long be commenced by some enterprizing American, many of whom are now making researches into the various resources of Cape Breton; but how much rather would we see this taken up by the enterprize of Englishmen,—if it cannot be by our own less able countrymen! One great characteristic of the people of this province has always been that they possess a loyal spirit,—averse to American dominion, and priding themselves upon being born under the shadow of the British Flag.



This should be an additional claim to the notice of emigrants from home seeking better fortunes away from the land of their birth.

I may cursorily mention here (reserving a fuller account for my letter upon the mines) that that great incentive to immigration—the discovery of gold has recently been made in the Island of Cape Breton. Auriferous soil has very lately been met with in Middle River Mountain,—a high tract of land to the North of the Bras d’Or Lake. Claims have been taken up in this district; and the most encouraging prospects are entertained. I quote upon this subject the words of the gentleman, whose valuable observations upon the climate I have already inserted in this letter: “Quite “lately gold has been discovered to be a native metal and diggings “or washings are in progress. The precious metal appears to be “confined to the highland tract of country northward of the Bras “d’Or Lake. The Island is divided into two portions; a comparatively lowland tract lying to the south and east; and a higher “and somewhat mountainous country to the north and west; “which is rugged and hilly on the coast, but rises into an elevated “table land in the interior:—as yet the gold is found only in the “beds of the streams descending from the table land to the Sea and “to the Bras d’Or; and in the narrow vallies and clefts opening to “the coast.”

Thus far perhaps it has been fairly shewn that Cape Breton is not [to] be despised as a field for immigration but above all for employment of moderate capital and skill. The facilities of reaching this Island from home are much better and more frequent than they formerly were. The passage out in an emigrant ship would be from £5 to £6 sterling or only from £3 to £4 sterling if the passengers found themselves. The fine steamers plying between Liverpool and Central America and also between the same port and Quebec . . . . .



SYDNEY

HARBOR

**SYDNEY  
TOWN**

Scale 8 Chains to 1 Inch.

## CHAPTER III

## SYDNEY

Early Visitors — Settlement — Site — Buildings — Social and Commercial Advancement

In proceeding with my sketches of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton I purpose first to take some notice of the town of Sydney, of which I shall endeavour to give a brief description. And in doing this I cannot omit to mention a rather interesting fact connected with the early history of Cape Breton. It appears that this Island was the first spot in North America where the holy rite of our Lord's Supper was celebrated. Such a record will not be without its interest perhaps in the eyes of those who like to hear of every circumstance which marks the introduction of the Church of Christ into new countries. This occurred in the reign of Elizabeth as will be seen from the following extract from the *Church Journal*: "An expedition under Sir Humphrey Gilbert, half "brother to Sir Walter Raleigh came to this country in 1578. To "this expedition Master Wolfall was appointed Chaplain by the "Council of Queen Elizabeth. It landed on what is now Cape "Breton; and there we are told Master Wolfall celebrated a communion,—which celebration of the divine mystery was the first "sign, seal and confirmation of Christ's name, death and passion, "ever known in these quarters." *Church Journal* March 14th 1860.

A slow progress indeed has been made since that day,—when we consider the long period that has elapsed: and it is only within the last fifty years that any actual advancement has been made by the Church of our Redeemer upon these pine-clad shores; and not till very recently have the prayers and sacraments of the Church of England been celebrated in edifices consecrated to the purpose. But I shall reserve my remarks upon this subject to a future letter,—and will at present confine my account of the Island to what relates to its social and commercial advancement. I promised in my last letter that I would give you next some description of Sydney, the present Capital of Cape Breton. I shall therefore at once commence.

You will naturally be inclined first to ask for some account of the early settlement of Sydney. This took place in the year 1783.



Its superior agricultural neighbourhood, and its finer climate, its more central situation, and more extensive harbour, may perhaps have led to the choice of this spot for the seat of Government (Cape Breton being then a distinct province) in preference to the original site adopted by the French at Louisburg; but be this as it may,—Governor DesBarres had the honor of erecting it into a Capital and laying the foundation of the present pretty little town. No circumstances connected with the first erection of the principal buildings immediately occur to me; but I have in my possession the copy of a document kindly placed at my disposal by a gentleman of Sydney which gives a circumstantial account of the opening of the first British Court of Law ever held in this Island, and which is almost the first step of any importance that marked out Sydney as the new Capital of Cape Breton. Some of the details of the account perhaps may be tedious; but as it is an accurate description of a scene which represents the planting of a civilized community in a new region, accompanied by the tokens of that legal authority and powers, so essential to the well-being of every community,—I may be excused perhaps for giving it entire.

“Sydney, Cape Breton  
August 1785.”

“On Wednesday the 17th. August instant,—the Supreme Court “of Judicature, Court of Assize and General Gaol Delivery for this “Island and its dependencies was opened at Sydney,—the shell “of a house building for the Governor being fitted up for the occasion. The chief Justice (Gibbons)<sup>(11)</sup> dressed in scarlet robes “trimmed with ermine and full-bottomed wig and other parts “of a Judge’s full dress, with his Excellency the Governor on his “right hand and Governor Wentworth,<sup>(12)</sup> Surveyor General of the “Woods for the King’s North American dominions, preceded first “by constables, next the Tip staff and crier of the Court, then the “Provost Marshall,<sup>(13)</sup> with his sword on, and a white band, preceded from a house where the Chief Justice robed<sup>(14)</sup>, through a “road cleared and levelled for the purpose to the house prepared “for the court, attended by the members of the council, the Pub-

(11) Richard Gibbons.

(12) Sir John Wentworth (1737-1820). He was born in New Hampshire, educated at Harvard College and appointed governor of New Hampshire, in 1766. In 1783 he was appointed Surveyor-General of the Kings Woods in North America. From 1792 to 1808 he was Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia. He died at Halifax on April 8th, 1820.

(13) David Taitt.

(14) Richard Gibbons was for a time President of the Council.

"lic Secretary of the Island,<sup>(15)</sup> the Attorney General<sup>(16)</sup> and clerk "of the Crown in their robes and bands,—the officers of the 33rd. "Regiment,<sup>(17)</sup> military staff of the Island, with other gentlemen "of the Island, and merchants then at Sydney."

"The Governor<sup>(18)</sup> and Chief Justice ascended the Bench and "seated themselves in arm chairs covered with blue cloth as was "likewise the Bench front and the top of the Provost Marshall's "box, the table and the seats for the ladies. Governor Went- "worth, Colonel Yorke and members of the Council sat on each "side of the Bench on seats prepared for them. The ladies hon- "oured the Court with their presence, and sat on covered seats, "prepared for them in front of the Court. The Officers of the "Army and other gentlemen spectators were seated on benches "next to the ladies; the members of the Grand Jury were placed "on seats made for them on the right hand side of the room. A "number of other spectators attended and stood on the side and "behind the ladies and gentlemen.

"The Hon<sup>ble</sup> and Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Lovell<sup>(19)</sup> then read prayers and "preached a sermon adapted to the first establishment and open- "ing of a complete system of English Jurisprudence in this Island.

"After which the usual proclamation for opening the court "was made and the patents of the Chief Justice Attorney General "and Provost Marshall were read, as was the Governor's Com- "mission, constituting Thomas Ashfield Esq<sup>r</sup> Clerke of the Crown, "in the Supreme Court. The Attorney General, Provost Mar-

(15) Abraham Cuyler, formerly Mayor of Albany, N. Y.

(16) David Mathews.

(17) Col. John Yorke, commanding officer.

(18) Joseph Frederic Wallet DesBarres, Lieutenant Governor of Cape Breton 1784-87, and of Prince Edward Island 1804-12. He was born in 1722; educated in Switzerland and at the Royal Military College in England. He then entered the British Army, crossed the Atlantic and saw service at Ticonderoga, at the second capture of Louisbourg in 1758 and at Quebec in 1759. For ten years he was engaged in surveying the coast of Nova Scotia and later he published a magnificent collection of charts, plans and views, entitled "*The Atlantic Neptune*". He died at Halifax in 1824.

(19) Rev. Benjamin Lovell, military chaplain and clerk of the Council of Cape Breton. He was the eighth son of John Lovell, headmaster of the Boston Latin School, a Loyalist, who died at Halifax, N. S., in 1778. Benjamin Lovell took his B.A. degree at Harvard in 1774. He removed from Boston to Halifax, N. S., and then to England, where in 1776 he was admitted to Lincoln's Inn. Three years later he received an appointment on the ordinance staff at Woolwich. Subsequently he became a clergyman. After serving as a chaplain in Cape Breton, he returned to England, where he died in March, 1828, at the age of 73.



"shall and Clerke of the Crown then took their oaths of office. "The Chief Justice appointed Mr. Ashfield also to be clerk of the "Pleas, and Mr. Thomas Pitts to be his tipstaff and crier of the "court.

"The other usual proclamations being then made, and the "Grand Jury being called on and sworn, received a charge from "the Chief Justice.

"The Grand Jury then retired, and in about half an hour re- "turned into court, and having no presentment to make or bus- "iness to require further attendance received the thanks of the "Court and were discharged.

"No business occurring to occasion a continuance of the Ses- "sion the Court was then adjourned until next Michaelmas Term. "His Excellency the Governor, the Chief Justice and attendants "returned to the place of unrobing.

"The Bench, seats and accommodations for the Court were "then removed; and in their place tables and seats prepared for a "public dinner of sixty covers, which the Chief Justice gave to his "Excellency the Governor Des Barres, Governor Wentworth, "Colonel Yorke, the members of the Council, the ladies, the of- "ficers of the 33rd. Regiment and Garrison, the Grand Jury, "merchants and gentlemen transiently present.

"Colonel Yorke was so obliging as to lend the band of music "of the 33rd. Regiment to play on the occasion.

"The greatest harmony, festivity, good order and cheerful- "ness prevailed to the end of the entertainment."

No portion of the Island of Cape Breton, perhaps presents more striking advantages for the site of a Capital than Sydney; and so far seems to justify the transfer of the seat of Government to this place. The town is built upon a peninsula or tongue of land which runs out from the eastern side of a fine broad river, or Estuary of the sea,—extending about 14 or 15 miles from its mouth. This river (formerly called Spanish River) varies a good deal in its width, and at its upper extremity branches into two large arms. At its mouth it measures about two miles across having on its south Eastern side (called Low Point) a light house to indicate the entrance of the river at night. On this side, or on



the left as you enter, the land is low,—but to the right or northern side,—fine bold cliffs run along for several miles, exhibiting upon their dark and streaked faces,—evidence of the treasure, which constitutes the chief value of this Island. Here some of the finest coal abounds; and the tall smoking chimneys which appear not far off at the entrance of the pits, shew that the hand of industry is turning it to account. These are the principal works of the London Mining Association; a more particular account of which will be given when I come to speak of the Mines in general.

The highest part of these cliffs is crowned with a village or settlement made up principally of the buildings connected with the Mines. The neat & well-proportioned spire of the Church, and the steeple of the Presbyterian place of Worship at once strike the eye; and on the declivity of a hill rising just above them,—the commodious House and tastefully laid-out grounds and shrubbery of Rich<sup>d</sup> Brown Esq<sup>r</sup> Superintendent of the Mines,<sup>(20)</sup>—also attract attention. About two miles further up on the same side you reach the Loading Ground—called the “North Bar”, from a bar of sand, which runs across that part of the Harbour. At this place the coal from the Mines is shipped, and carried off to various parts of America. A bustling scene is here presented. Some fine ships are often seen upon the stocks; and besides the ordinary colliers, which are anchored around waiting for their freight,—large steamers plying between England, Central America and Quebec are often at the wharf loading for their voyage. British Men-of-War, and more frequently French Naval Steamers on the Newfoundland Station, continually call in here to replenish their fuel; bearing witness in this way to the value of Sydney as a coaling station. This part of the River and its neighbourhood is often called “North Sydney”. A little above this the waters of the Estuary are divided by a promontory called Point Edward,—one portion continuing its course to the North West for about two miles, under the name of the “North West Arm”, while the other of “South West Arm” reaches up to the town of Sydney, a distance of four miles, and still pursuing its course in a crescent like form three miles further,—gradually diminishes from a width of one mile until it dwindles to a narrow stream—which in a serpentine course of

(20) Richard Brown, F. G. S., was a mining engineer, geologist and historian. He wrote *A History of the Island of Cape Breton*, which was published in London in 1869, and *The Coal Fields of Cape Breton*, which was published in 1871. He was Lieutenant Colonel of the Sydney Mines Volunteers. He was born in 1805 and died in 1882.

several miles reaches the Great Bras d'Or Lake in the centre of the Island. On the western side of Sydney the water is very deep nearly close up to the shore; and being almost land-locked below the town,—no harbour could afford better or safer anchorage.

The beauty of the landscape in the immediate neighbourhood of Sydney never fails to make a favourable impression upon strangers. Standing upon the highest point of the Esplanade and looking up and down the harbour—the eye cannot but delight in the graceful curve of the shores, and in the beauty of the stream, which loses itself on one side amidst sloping woods & cultivated farms, and on the other carries its sweeping waters past the projecting curve of the town, and the wooded points on the opposite shore,—till it widens into a broad sheet,—reaching to the distant hills of the Mines, and turning again towards the Ocean in a still broader stream. At the back of the town and nearly parallel with the harbour, a small creek runs up and forms the Peninsula upon which the town of Sydney stands. This little harbour forms the resting-place of the coasting schooners which ply between Cape Breton and Halifax. The masters of these vessels reside on the shores of this creek, and cultivate their farms in the intervals of their voyages.

On an elevated point formed by the branching of this part of the river are built the Barracks, enclosed in a large Square, and flanked on two sides by batteries, now fallen into decay. A marked change however has taken place in this part of Sydney within the last few years. Even when I first came here (about 9 years ago)<sup>(21)</sup> an officer and 30 or 40 men, and a small detachment of artillery occupied their quarters in the Barrack yard; and, although not mounted,—the heavy guns were still lying within the mounds of the batteries; and the Union Jack of Old England was flying constantly from the staff; but now all this has entirely vanished. During the Crimean war, one after another of these military features were taken away,—till we have ceased to be a Garrison. A volunteer company however has been organized at Sydney with an artillery corps also; and their brass field pieces, which stand in the barrack yard, help to retain something like a martial air round the old spot. But those who remember when a whole regiment commanded by a Lieutenant-Colonel constituted the Garrison of the town, with Aides-de-Camps, and other officers connected with the

(21) 1853.



Government,—often sigh over the change which a few years has produced in this respect. Much however as Sydney has lost in gaiety and life since those days as well as in the outlay of government money,—it will no doubt gain substantially in the end by the effect of this loss in awakening the energies of the country to profit—by its own resources. This has been already felt. A slow but steady improvement has taken place in the agricultural parts: and the merchants and townspeople have lately made very successful efforts to work coal mines in districts hitherto untouched, and which are now speedily rising into bustling establishments. Their influence will no doubt, ere long, materially affect the prosperity of Sydney itself. The Mines of Mr. Marshall Bourinot at Cow Bay, and of Mr. Archbold at Glace Bay are evidences of this. Let but a fair influx take place of industrious hands, and of capital and scientific skill and Sydney and its adjacent coal mines, with the fruitful soil of the Island, would recall some of the prosperous days which distinguished Louisburg and the present town in former years.

The town of Sydney consists of two principal streets, which run parallel to each other along the course of the River and over the whole length of the Peninsula upon which it is built. A third street was also laid out, but has not been much built upon. These are crossed again at right angles by other streets running down to the harbour on one side and on the other to the small creek above mentioned. The breadth of the peninsula between the two shores is about a quarter of a mile or rather more in the widest part. The whole position of the town with its wide streets, and its neighbouring water scenery is very picturesque. The fine clear climate of this part of Cape Breton adds a good deal to the pleasing effect of the landscape. The most prominent object that strikes the eye is the tall spire of the Church of England place of worship. This is seen from some distance and shews well through the trees growing here and there about the town. It stands at the head of one of the principal cross streets leading up from the water. The present church (which is the only stone church in the Diocese) was rebuilt from its old foundation in the year 1859, in the Gothic style, with open roof and pointed windows, slightly ornamented with stained glass. We purpose next summer to commence the building of a chancel. The tower, which at present is of wood,—we also hope ere long to replace by one of the same solid material as the body of the church. Besides the contributions of the parish-



ioners, his Lordship the present Bishop<sup>(22)</sup> of the Diocese together with some members of his family in England were liberal contributors. The father of the present Bishop, the late Dr. Binney of Reading, England, having been formerly rector of this parish, an interest was naturally felt in its welfare by those, who in early days worshipped within the walls of the old Church. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and (I may perhaps be permitted to add) the present Archbishop of Dublin,<sup>(23)</sup> kindly aided us in the work. It was a glad day for its minister and congregation when on the 16th. of October 1859 the first service was held in the new church. A crowded congregation was present, and the rector was kindly assisted in conducting the service by the Revd Mr. Gelling,<sup>(24)</sup> Missionary at Mainadieu, who also preached one of the sermons. It holds from 250 to 300 persons without galleries. The cost of the present building, as it now stands without a chancel, and not including the tower,—was £650 currency. The stone of the old church however supplied a large portion of the materials for its re-construction. It was originally built by the British Government in the year 1785 and was chiefly intended as a Garrison chapel.

The Roman Catholics have a neat chapel<sup>(25)</sup> also built of stone in the gothic style with tower & cupola situated near the water upon the Esplanade. The Presbyterian place of worship<sup>(26)</sup> like-

(22) The Rev. Hibbert Binney, D.D., Fellow and Tutor of Worcester College, Oxford, was appointed Bishop of Nova Scotia following the death of Bishop John Inglis in 1850. He was consecrated at Lambeth on March 25th, 1851, and arrived at Halifax on July 22nd of the same year. Dr. Binney was born in Sydney, the son of Rev. Hibbert Binney, a clergyman of New England descent. On January 4th, 1855, he married Mary, daughter of Hon. William B. Bliss. He died in 1887.

(23) Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, 1831-63.

(24) Rev. William Edward Gelling succeeded the Rev. W. Y. Porter as Travelling Missionary in Cape Breton. He was ordained Priest on March 20th, 1860, and shortly afterwards placed in charge of this extensive mission. Previously he had been in charge of the mission at Beaver Harbour. He sailed in a small coaster from Salmon River to the Strait of Canso and then travelled by stage wagon to Sydney. Then he went to Cow Bay, where a church had been built at South Head and opened on July 26th, 1846. This was the first Episcopal church along this part of the coast of Cape Breton. In 1862 Bishop Binney consecrated the Anglican church and graveyard at Lorraine, within Mr. Gelling's mission.

(25) In 1842 three churches and an academy were under construction in Sydney. In 1855 the interior of the Roman Catholic church there was being finished throughout.

(26) The first Presbyterian church in Sydney, which was built in 1852, stood on the west side of North Charlotte Street and a little north of Dorchester Street.

wise attracts the attention in taking a survey of the town,—distinguished by its Gothic windows & light bell-tower,—which contains a fine toned bell. It is altogether built of wood. The Methodists and Baptists also have each a Meeting House at the extremities of the town, but although neat buildings, they do not form prominent objects.

Amongst the most conspicuous private dwellings of the place is the house of the French Consul J. Bourinot<sup>(27)</sup> Esq<sup>r</sup> also member of the Provincial Assembly. It is situated upon the border of the River. Several large trees shade it upon the land side; and a long and well constructed wharf with a commodious landing place, runs out in front towards the water. A tri-coloured flag hoisted upon a staff near the gable regularly announces the arrival of a French ship. From the balcony on the river front of this house you may occasionally look out upon a gay scene. It not unfrequently happens during the summer months that two or three French men-of-war are anchored immediately abreast of the Consul's Residence at a very short distance from his wharf. Their bright flags, the bustling sounds from their decks and the morning and evening bugle quite enliven our otherwise tranquil harbour. Sometimes the band from the Admiral's ship is added to the other gay features of the scene. The near neighbourhood of the French Station of St. Pierre on the coast of Newfoundland occasions these frequent visits. Here they obtain their letters by mail from Europe and easily replenish their stock of coals from the Mines of the Association. And in the course of several years I have had the opportunity of seeing many distinguished officers of the French Navy as visitors in our harbour; and sometimes at the same moment when our own Frigates, and Flagships have been anchored at no great distance from them. In the absence of Merchantmen, which at present carry on but a scanty trade in our harbour,—such ships are always welcome visitors. Amongst the ships of our Navy, we have recently been visited by the Indus, the St. George and the Nile.

(27) John Bourinot, of Norman descent, was born at Grouville in the Island of Jersey on March 15th, 1814, and died at Ottawa on January 21st, 1884. His wife was Jane, daughter of Hon. John G. Marshall, Chief Justice of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas of Cape Breton. Mr. Bourinot represented the county of Cape Breton in the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia from 1859 to 1867. He was made a Senator in 1867. He was the father of Sir John Bourinot, Clerk of the House of Commons, Ottawa, and the grandfather of Arthur Bourinot, the poet..



Upon the visit of the latter ship to this harbour a few weeks ago (In August last) our quiet churchyard became the resting place of one of her sailors, accidentally killed by a fall from a yard-arm. Missing his hold in some way,—he caught at a small rope to save himself, which being unsound gave way, and he fell backward. His fall brought him in contact with some iron upon the ship's side, which caused his death: a few inches further outside would have taken him clear of the ship, when he would most likely have been saved. The poor fellow was brought ashore attended by a large number of sailors and several officers in two boats. It is not often that a spectacle of this kind approaches our peaceful Sanctuary; and it did not fail to strike all, who witnessed it with a sympathy for the risks and dangers to which our hardy seamen are exposed in the service of their country. The coffin, covered with the Union Jack, was taken into St. George's Church and then to the grave. As it descended to its silent bed in the dust, it was a solemn and touching sight to see the hardy sailors standing round with uncovered heads and mourning ties round their necks,—gazing sadly into the grave of their late mess-mate. Rough and sun-burnt as they were it required but little penetration to read in the countenances of many, signs of grief, which did honor to their hearts. The chaplain of the Nile, at his own request, performed the burial service. She left the harbour a few hours afterwards.

Sydney at present contains a population of about 700 inhabitants or rather more made up originally of settlers from various parts of the United Kingdom and some from the neighbouring Colonies. It was remarkable some years ago for having, as residents a number of Gentlemen and retired officers of the Army, who had been tempted to make it their permanent abode, even when the Government and the Garrison, which brought them here, had taken their departure from Cape Breton. Some of these have recently gone; but there still remains sufficient to form a small and pleasant society. Amongst our more recent settlers from England (of whom we have had several within the last few years) is Lieut Colonel B . . .<sup>(28)</sup> who has purchased property, in the neighbourhood of Sydney,—which he has greatly improved at some expense and with much taste. The house is surrounded with a young evergreen wood intersected by gravelled walks and

(28) Probably Lieutenant-Colonel Briscoe, whose property was not far from Fresh Water Creek.



skirted with pleasant and well-cultivated fields. It is situated about half mile out of Sydney. Thomas B . . . .<sup>(29)</sup> Esq<sup>r</sup> also from England, is the owner of a fine farm at the opposite side of the Sydney River; which he appears to be cultivating with some success. I may likewise mention the property of Henry D . . .<sup>(30)</sup> Esq<sup>r</sup> about one mile out of town,—an English Gentleman who formerly occupied the post of Collector of Customs at this Port. His place exhibits the marks of English culture and taste. Amongst the dwellings in the neighbourhood of Sydney I must not omit to mention the pleasant cottage at Coleby,—the property of the retired Barrack Master<sup>(31)</sup> of this Garrison, who now lives there upon a snug and picturesque farm, immediately surrounded by a nice shrubbery and garden. Adjacent to Coleby is the large and commodious house of the late Captain Ouseley<sup>(32)</sup>:—at present vacant: but as it has recently been purchased by two English gentlemen—we look forward with pleasure for their arrival amongst us as occupants of this desirable dwelling. The grounds about it are plainly laid out, but it stands in a sheltered and agreeable situation: and we should think would quite satisfy the expectation of those who have lately become its proprietors. And while thus enumerating the residences of Gentlemen in the vicinity, I cannot overlook—the pretty place at Point Amelia upon the opposite side of the River owned by W. H. C. . . . .<sup>(33)</sup> Esq<sup>r</sup> late Surveyor General of Cape Breton. His property there extends some distance inland, consisting of productive soil, in many places covered with fine timber; but his residence is situated near the water's edge upon a green slope, and has a charming appearance as you approach the shore. A well-kept garden and orchard are prominent features in this pleasant spot.

The Rectory House stands upon an elevated part of the Esplanade overlooking the harbour. It was purchased by the congregation in the spring of 1856 from the above mentioned gentle-

(29) Perhaps Thomas Bown.

(30) Henry Davenport. Custos Rotulorum, who was appointed Collector of Customs and Landing Surveyor at Sydney on July 22nd, 1842.

(31) Samuel Rigby. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant of the 104th Foot on November 3rd, 1811, and as Barrack Master for the forces in Cape Breton on July 2nd, 1824. His residence, "Coleby" was near Fresh Water Creek.

(32) Captain William G. Ouseley. In 1835 he was one of the school trustees in Sydney. He had been a captain in the 94th Regiment and for a time was a surveyor in Sydney. In 1860 he was the head of a family of five.

(33) Henry W. Crawley.

man; who besides having built the principal part of it, laid out the adjoining grounds with his usual taste. It is built in the cottage style and makes a pleasant and comfortable home. The present Rector took possession of it in May 1856. In addition to this house he enjoys the benefit of two fields situated on the East and South side of the church, comprising altogether about three acres. Besides their value as Glebe land,—they add much to the pleasant appearance of that part of the town.

At the opposite corner of the street, upon which the Rectory stands, and upon the same part of the Esplanade, is the residence of Judge D . . . .<sup>(34)</sup>, also in the cottage style, with pleasant grounds and garden attached. I shall here conclude my enumeration of the principal private dwellings of Sydney, by mentioning a large & prominent house in the neighbourhood of the Barracks now owned by D. N. M. . . . .<sup>(35)</sup> Esq<sup>r</sup>. It is distinguished by two wings, and is surrounded by a beautiful shrubbery and a tastefully laid out parterre of flowers, with a terrace garden looking towards the creek, and affording a fine view of the distant mines and the entrance of the harbour.

The town of Sydney has not increased much of late years; and at present is about a half mile in length and a quarter in width,—without including many dwellings on the outskirts, amongst which are some of those I have just been describing. The number of houses at present constituting the town itself is one hundred and twenty. The Peninsula upon which it stands contains about 300 acres. The principal streets are the Esplanade running along the banks of the harbour or River,—Charlotte Street, traversing in a parrallel direction the central ridge of the peninsula, and George Street bordering upon the inlet called Muggah's Creek. A remarkably quiet air pervades these streets,—implying what is really the condition of the place,—an absence of mercantile and agricultural enterprise, and the want of Capital liberally expended to give a stimulus to the resources and capabilities of a country deserving a better fate. For the want of this the young men of all classes are obliged too often to leave for other countries, who if

(34) Hon. Edmund Murray Dodd, Judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. Before his elevation to the Bench he was a member of the House of Assembly, member of the Executive Council and Attorney General of Nova Scotia. He died at Cow Bay, C. B., in July, 1876.

(35) Probably Donald N. MacQueen, Barrister and Registrar of Probate, who lived on Campbell Street, near Amelia Street.



retained at home with opportunities of useful employment might devote their energies to the benefit of themselves and their native land. The day however we hope is not far off, when Cape Breton will assume the position which belongs to her. Although she forms but a part of the Province of Nova Scotia, yet as she possesses advantages peculiar to herself, we trust ere long that these resources will be recognized and turned to good account. In speaking of her Mines, which I propose to do by and by, lately opened in the neighbourhood of Sydney by the enterprise of her own townspeople, I hope to shew that some steps are even now being taken (with encouraging success) to call forth the dormant natural gifts of Cape Breton. Nova Scotia has lately made a respectable figure at the late International Exhibition from the size and fine quality of the productions of her soil as well as the valuable fish, which abound in her waters,—and which her superior Capitol and enterprise have enabled her to exhibit on that occasion: but it may be safely said of this Island, that, although inferior to Nova Scotia in fruits and corn,—she would lose nothing by comparison in the value of her fisheries, both ocean and inland; and would even surpass her, in mineral wealth, and in the natural opportunities of making these available.

The climate of Sydney is generally clear and bright. And in this respect has greatly the advantage over the settlements upon the south eastern coast of the Island. Fog very seldom visits the neighbourhood of the town; and consequently it enjoys the almost constant benefit of the sun's rays. The peculiarly dry and bracing nature of the air upon this Peninsula is one point, which must ever make it desirable as a pleasant and healthy place of residence. The weather is severe during certain months in the winter, as it is in other parts of Nova Scotia; and on this account is attended with a disadvantage to Sydney as a sea-port. The harbour is frozen over from the end of January to the middle of April; and consequently all its trade by water is restricted to eight months of the year. Although this is a decided drawback in a commercial point of view, it is not without its advantages; and it presents during the continuance of the frost some scenes that are peculiar to northern climates. An easy and pleasant communication is thus formed between the adjacent portions of the Island. Sledges (or *sleds* as they are called here) loaded with fire-wood, fencing-poles, hay and coals from the neighbouring mines, as well as other articles of traffic are continually taking advantage of this easy mode of



transfer. In visiting their different stations the clergy also regard the frost as a welcome friend,—shortening and smoothing many a long and otherwise tedious journey. This is the season too for exchanging visits between the residents of Sydney and of the Mines, and other settlements in the neighbourhood. One smooth level plain, after a little while,—is formed by the ice; and a convenient bridge, pleasant and easy to travel over,—thus connects the various settlements and shores of the whole Estuary. To prevent accident to travellers in the night or during a storm of snow,—the space between Sydney and the Mines is marked out at the commencement of the winter, by a long row of spruce trees, cut for the purpose and planted in the ice at the distance of about 20 yards from each other. They form a curved line of 5 or 6 miles, completely linking the two shores together, and forming a curious but picturesque feature of our winter scenery. A road soon becomes marked along this evergreen fence; and in fine weather, numerous sleighs of visitors and travellers, with their jingling bells, and warm buffalo robes may be seen passing rapidly to and fro through the pleasant frosty air. This frozen state of the harbour seems to make a complete change in the aspect of the whole neighbourhood. The road sometimes diverges from the ordinary and open route, passing in a winding course through neighbouring woods of fir, whose trees covered with flakes of newly fallen snow present a delightful picture. During this season one imagines himself suddenly transported almost to a totally new country. A similar chain of spruce or pine trees also connects the town of Sydney with the opposite bank of the River.

During the month of March and sometimes part of February when the ice is smooth and free from snow the curious spectacle of an *ice-boat* may be occasionally seen making its rapid voyages of pleasure over the harbour. It consists of a platform of planks shaped something like an ordinary boat,—mounted upon several large iron skates, with a movable skate at the point of the bow which acts as a rudder turning the boat rapidly in any direction. A broad mainsail and jib catch the breezes (which ought to be pretty strong) and carry a large party with amazing swiftness over the glassy surface of the River. I have seen as many as six or eight grown persons at a time thus enjoying a frosty sail.

Sydney and its neighbourhood is a good deal isolated during the winter months,—Although a mail three times a week travels

between it and the City of Halifax and affords a regular conveyance for passengers. The facility of moving in sleighs over the frozen roads keeps up a certain degree of communication with other parts of the Island and the Province. In the frosty evenings one of the chief public recreations of the inhabitants of Sydney is the "Mechanic's Institute",<sup>(36)</sup>—established for many years in this town,—always well attended and conducted with some degree of success, and it is to be hoped not without benefit. Lectures are delivered there once a week from November to the end of April, and discussions generally follow, in which the Ministers of different denominations and the more intelligent inhabitants and gentlemen of the town unite, in an agreeable and harmonious spirit, to contribute to the general amusement and edification. About the end of April the ice clears away, often very suddenly, and once more opens, the bosom of our fine harbour, to the steamers, and trading vessels that frequent its waters.

(36) The Sydney Mechanics' Institute was formed on October 20th, 1847.

## SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON

## IV. Wild Animals

The Moose—the Carriboo—the black bear—a bear hunt—the porcupine—the loon—the mink.

Cape Breton as well as Nova Scotia which is separated from it by the narrow Strait of Canso, can still boast of many wild animals, although they are by no means so abundant as they were about thirty or forty years ago. A few of these I shall briefly describe.

Beginning with some account of the animals which were found here upon its first discovery, and which still people its woods to a great extent I cannot hesitate which to select as my first specimen. The Moose is not only a native of Cape Breton and Nova Scotia but is in some measure regarded as emblematic of the Province. It is found also in New Brunswick and Canada, as well as in the northern parts of the United States; but Nova Scotians are apt to claim it (justly or not) as a very distinguishing feature in the natural history of their Province. At the Great Exhibition, in London, of 1862 they selected a specimen of this animal to shew to the world what their woods produced, and gave it a prominent place in the compartment allotted to our Province; and so did they at the Dublin Exhibition of 1865. The Moose differs very little from the *Elk*, if it is not altogether identical with this inhabitant of Northern Europe. It was once very plentiful in Cape Breton, but the frequent hunting of the Indians and of other sportsmen, especially military men, who are very fond of this species of the chase, has reduced their numbers so as to make them comparatively scarce, and has rendered them shy and much more difficult to catch. It feeds in its native state upon wild moss and various herbs and particularly upon the soft and pithy branches of a tree called the Moose-tree, which is a shrub very much resembling the *alder*; and which the animal selects by instinct as a favourite food.

I have never seen the Moose myself in its wild state; as they very seldom approach near enough to the haunts of civilization to be discovered without a toilsome journey through the dark and tangled forest: but I have often received accounts of



their peculiar traits and habits, from the lips of those, who have frequently been engaged in hunting them.

In the winter time they dwell several together in small open spaces of the forest usually called *yards*; marked out by themselves and trampled hard in a circular form. They pass the greater part of the cold weather in these abodes, travelling at short distances from their yards, and not breaking up their quarters until the opening of spring, unless disturbed by their great enemy the Indian hunter. These are frequently on their track, and they generally select the spring of the year,—March or the beginning of April,—as the most successful season for pursuing them. At this period the alternate thaw and freezing which the surface of the snow undergoes from the cold nights, and the succeeding heats of the day,—render it completely adapted to the purpose of running down and exhausting the heavy animal. The great weight of his body supported upon long slender legs make him liable at every step to break through the crust of the deep snow, which renders his progress slow and laborious. The violent efforts which he thus makes to fly from his pursuers only makes his capture the more certain, though protracted. He will in this way manage to escape the hunters perhaps for several days, travelling in a zig-zag direction; and indeed sometimes gets away from them altogether, although experienced hunters, when once they get upon their track, are not often foiled in their object. The same impediments however of the yielding crust would render the advance of his pursuers almost as difficult and makes it impossible to overtake the Moose,—were not this obviated by the use of Indian snow shoes. These are light oval frames of hardwood, about two feet long, with a sole of interwoven thongs—something like the racket used at *tennis*; a hole being left for the toe and part of the foot to sink through. With these loosely bound to the ankle, an Indian or practiced sportsmen can make rapid progress over the crust, avoiding the fatigue and delay of sinking into the deep snow. They are always accompanied by strong dogs; and these running easily upon the surface at length overtakes the exhausted animal and seize him by the nose or *moufle*, and thus hold him fast until the hunters come up, who despatch him with their rifles. He often however receives a shot from a distance, which disables him, and hastens his capture, marking his course at the same time by the crimsoned snow.

Another method of hunting the moose, is by creeping stealthily upon him, when the snow is soft and there is scarcely any wind to give notice by scent of the hunter's approach. They can in this way often surprise him and come near enough to wound and bring him down by a shot. The Moose shews great sagacity in his attempts to elude his pursuers. When he travels he sleeps to windward in order that he may smell his enemies, and know when they come near him; and for this purpose he makes his track zig-zag, and not always in a straight line: but the hunter is quite as cunning, and comes upon him unexpectedly, by crossing from one angle of their track to another according to the following diagram:



The Moose follows the zig-zag line and perhaps sleeps at C but the hunter instead of following his track crossed from B to C and takes him by surprise. Another mode of taking him which however is attended with some danger to the hunter is by calling him through a roll of birch bark made up into the form of a trumpet or horn, by which a sound is produced that has a powerful effect upon the animal. At this sound he becomes so furious that upon the hunter approaching he rushes upon him with the greatest violence, and unless dexterity and quickness are used to evade or shoot him, great risk is incurred of being trampled to death and gored by his powerful horns.

The flesh of the Moose although not containing much fat, and rather dark is very juicy and savoury, similar to beef, with a slight wild flavour, and is considered a great treat when it first makes its appearance in the spring or autumn. But the nose of the Moose called *Moufle*, which is very large and prominent is thought a great delicacy, and is sent sometimes from one part of the Province to another, packed in a box,—just as in England a haunch of venison or a basket of game is sent from one friend to another. The moufle is usually made into soup, which is esteemed almost as much as turtle. The skin makes excellent leather, and the Indians use it for their moccasins, and cut it into thongs for various purposes as a substitute for cordage. The hair is grey tinged with red, and very thick and bristling on the mane. The skin is used sometimes for throwing over the back of a sleigh, by way of ornament, but as the hair is very



short it is not particularly warm; and in this respect yields altogether to the bear skin and the buffalo robe, which are much more generally used for the travellers comfort in his sleigh. The horns are very large and heavy, weighing 30 to 40 pounds. In the long swinging trot of the moose, his hoofs clatter with a sound, which is heard a long way off.

The woods of this Province (Cape Breton and Nova Scotia together) produce another wild animal something similar to the Moose, —called Cariboo. Notwithstanding its general resemblance, however, the Cariboo has several points of marked difference, and comes very near in its general appearance and habits to the Lapland Rein-deer. The horns instead of growing out in a solid mass of palmated form, with deep serrated or jagged edges like those of the Moose, run up into several main branches, with smaller ramifications, which give it a less heavy appearance about the head. The Cariboo has what is called a frontal antler, which is not found in the Moose. The hoofs of the Cariboo present another peculiarity: they are very large and sharp at the edges, so that in pursuing him his track is easily distinguished upon the icy snow over which he passes. The foot spreads out as he travels and leaves upon the snow a wide circular print, with a break made by the cleft of the hoof. Unlike the Moose, which is generally found singly or few together, the Cariboo associates in troops. It travels very swiftly over a large tract of barren country, over wide bogs and marshes, which the peculiar construction of its hoof enables it to do without sinking; and as these bogs supply a large quantity of moss, which constitutes its chief food, they are often found near them in great numbers. Hence many spots through Cape Breton and Nova Scotia bear the name of "Cariboo Swamp",—from being so much frequented by herds of these animals. They are remarkably shy, and being swift of foot are difficult to come near. This together with the construction of the hoof, which prevents their sinking into the snow renders it impossible to run them down in the usual manner of hunting the moose. Stratagem is therefore resorted to; and the hunter endeavours to steal upon them unawares,—exercising much patience and ingenuity,—watching for them in defiles and accustomed watering places. Drawing over his head some light part of his dress so as to conceal his face, he creeps along with great caution, sometimes upon all fours—until he comes within rifle shot of the troop. So far from being frightened by



this singular mode of approach,—they have sometimes been known to stand and gaze in perplexity upon the curious spectacle of a sportsman thus creeping towards them in a light dress. The skin of the Cariboo is something of a fawn or light grey colour; and the hair is very short. It is a smaller animal than the Moose; and its flesh is rather superior,—being very delicate and juicy. Its hide is also manufactured into valuable leather.

We cannot omit to mention another animal, which still haunts the woods of Cape Breton, and Nova Scotia although in fast diminishing numbers: this is the *black bear*,—found also in the old Canadas and other parts of America. Although much frequenting our forests, it must not be understood that there is any great danger attending a walk into the woods, or that travellers are ever alarmed in their journeys through the gloomy forests, which the roads of this country often traverse. Civilization and the hunters' rifle have driven them pretty far back into the recesses of the thicket, and have materially reduced their numbers. At certain seasons however they do appear often very close to the habitation of man: in the spring particularly when hunger presses upon them, and in the autumn when attended by their cubs, they not only come near human dwellings, but are dangerous to encounter. At night they carry off sheep close to the farm houses; but when not impelled by hunger, and can satisfy their appetite with such food as they can find in the wilderness,—they have been known to live quite harmless even in the neighbourhood of a flock of sheep. The cravings of hunger however make them very daring; and a Missionary clergyman in a parish adjoining my own once lost a leg of mutton from the porch of his Parsonage, which one of these animals, in a ravenous state, had the impudence to steal.

Besides nuts and berries, one of their favourite articles of food are the ants and worms and other insects to be found in the decayed wood of fallen trees and stumps; and so fond are they of this species of food that it is a rare thing to find such old stumps and crumbling trees, that have not been clawed to pieces by the bears in search of these insects. Fish is highly esteemed by them, and they will snatch these dainties out of the brooks by a dexterous use of their paws. Fruit is also much relished by them, and particularly apples. The abandoned sites of dwellings containing

orchards will frequently be visited by them for the sake of the fruit left neglected upon the trees.

The general size of the bear of this country varies as much as it does with the hog; and its weight is usually from 150 lbs. to 700 lbs. Its skin is of a glossy black, sometimes tinged with brown. These are much in request as warm robes for sleighs, and when lined with woolen cloth and ornamented with a border of scalloped crimson, they form a comfortable covering or apron to the sleigh, which is sometimes almost quite concealed by an accumulation of these furs. Buffalo robes, however, are generally preferred for this purpose as they are much larger and warmer. Occasionally bears are to be seen in the yards of Halifax, partially tamed and fastened to a post by a chain. Soldiers sometimes keep them as pets in their barrack yards: and when we first came to Cape Breton, the Sydney Barracks were thus distinguished by having a fine tame bear as one of its inmates. It belonged to an officer, who was quite fond of it, and who allowed bruin to tumble him about upon the grass, in search of cakes and biscuits, which he usually carried in his pockets for his favourite. This play, however, at one time became so energetic and the bear's importunity so great for dainties, which the pockets did not happen to contain that the officer was obliged to call for help, and soon afterwards had his favourite shot.

The cubs when quite young are very pretty amusing things, and when taken at this age from their mothers in the woods for the purpose of taming are fed upon milk. In my visits to a distant station in my former Mission I often stopped to watch the gambols of a little cub, which was domesticated at the house of one of my parishioners. He was about the size of a very small dog, with thick body, pointed nose and ears, and rather short legs, and with no perceptible tail. He was generally fastened by a light chain to a small stake upon the grass near the house. And in this state he presented a pretty picture, so playful and innocent, with his dish of milk at his side, that you could scarcely imagine he would ever grow up to be one of those wild and growling animals that roam the woods. He seemed to amuse himself for a length of time together by a monotonous kind of gambol, which consisted of running round his stake to the full length of his tether, and then at certain points when the circle was completed, —making a somersault upon his head, and going on again as



before. This he used to continue without variation, much longer than I had the patience to watch him.

The accompanying sketch represents an incident that occurred at a place called Mount Uniacke about 26 miles from Halifax N. S. A sportsman in company with a friend left the house one autumn day and entered the neighbouring woods for the purpose of trying their luck in the chase of a bear. They continued their course without anything remarkable for two days; and at last came to a very dark forest situated upon low intervale ground: whilst traversing this dense thicket they kept up a constant watch for the game they were in search of; which are frequently found lying under old trees in the autumn season. The ground gradually rose into a hill covered with a thick forest of beech trees; which at this time of the year are loaded with beech nuts, an oily food upon which pigs, if suffered to run for anytime in the woods, will thrive and fatten wonderfully. It is a common food also of the bear. In making their way through this wood the two hunters at length observed numerous branches and twigs broken from the trees and scattered about upon the ground, whilst the bark of the trees upon the trunk bore deep and frequent marks of claws. They sat for a while to listen, and soon heard the distant sounds of crackling boughs. Proceeding further—they soon came to a bear's lair or den,—situated at the root of a large tree. The exposed roots and lower parts of this tree were completely polished and turned of a brown colour from the constant action of the bears in rubbing themselves against it. Still continuing their route along the border of the hardwood, they seemed to have lost the track of the animals; and one of them for a moment falling into a reverie was suddenly recalled to his presence of mind, by his companion laying his hand upon his shoulder. Looking up immediately before him, he saw the owners of the den, which they had just passed, and the cause of the crackling sound among the branches. A large bear and her two cubs were mounted into a thick and spreading beech tree,—busily engaged in helping themselves to the beech nuts with which the tree was plentifully supplied. The rapidity with which they thrust these nuts into their mouths and the peculiar motion of their arms and paws in doing so reminded the witness of this scene, of the action of a sailor's arms, in the quick overhand mode by which he hauls at the ropes and halliards of a ship. As soon as the old bear perceived the approach of her enemies,—after a moment's gaze,



she hastened down from the tree, — to make an attack upon them. Both fired at the same moment and the shot took immediate effect, killing the animal at the foot of the tree. The cubs also descended the tree not far behind their dam, and shots were fired at them, but they scampered off into the woods apparently unhurt. One was picked up the next day, having died of its wound. The difficulty now was to carry off the bear out of the wood, over the rough and uneven ground that lay beneath the thick trees; but one of the party proceeding a short distance to reconnoitre, suddenly to his great surprize came upon a turnip field in the midst of the forest. A path was soon discovered leading from this, which very quickly brought them to the house from which they had set out. Thus for two days they had been travelling almost in a circle; and shot their game after all in the very neighbourhood of their own dwelling. The bear's skin was properly dressed and hung up as a trophy.

These bears will not often attack a man unless driven by hunger or in defence of their cubs. Everyone is acquainted with the mode in which a bear hugs his enemy; but his usual method is I believe to finish his cruel work, by disembowelling his victim with his hind claws as a cat does its prey. Not many years ago, upon a back road, which ran through a part of my former parish, an Indian was found killed in this dreadful manner by a bear. The bear had made his escape; but the fragments of the Indian's gun lying about shewed that the unfortunate man had made a desperate effort at self-defence. The meat of the bear generally is rather coarse and dark, but the hams and chuck when cured and smoked are very highly esteemed.

The porcupine some years ago was met with very frequently in the woods of Nova Scotia, and although often found still, yet, like most wild animals of these countries it is gradually diminishing. It is a curious fact however which has never yet been accounted for, that although Cape Breton is separated from Nova Scotia Proper, only by a narrow channel of water, yet the Porcupine is never found in this Island. I had often heard of this circumstance before, but having interrogated some Indians for the express purpose of ascertaining its truth, I was assured that such was the case. They will not live on the Cape Breton side of the Strait of Canso, which is only half a mile broad. The

experiment has often been tried, as the Indians told me, of transporting the porcupine across the Strait but they have invariably died. As the two sections of the Province are almost exactly similar in climate and soil, — this fact of natural history seems extraordinary. The quills made use of for the Indian barkwood in this Island are brought from Nova Scotia. On the western side of Canso however, even close to Cape Breton, — the Porcupine still climbs the trees and sounds his rattling quills in the hearing of the Indian who hunts him chiefly for their sake. These quills are dyed of a great variety of brilliant colours, and are used to form ornamental patterns and figures upon the bark boxes, little canoes, baskets, trays and other fancy articles for the manufacture of which the Indian Squaws of North America are famous. I have not lately had the opportunity of seeing any of these animals, but as a boy I remember often encountering them, and have a perfect recollection of two being killed at different times in the garden of our house in the country. They generally take to the highest parts of a tall spruce or pine tree for shelter, when danger threatens. One was killed in this situation with a gun and the other with a long boat hook, which happened to be the nearest weapon. They uttered feeble sharp cries, and fell to the ground at the foot of the tree, rattling their spines or quills and curling themselves up, as if as much as possible to cover their exposed parts by this bristling armour. One was handed over to the cook, when its sharp quills were picked out, after softening the skin with boiling water. This was not done without much trouble; but with no other accident than some wounds inflicted upon the prying noses of the dogs, who ran howling away; and the result was that a very palatable dish was served up to table, not unlike the flavour of very delicate pork. The porcupine is remarkable for having five toes upon the hind feet, and only four upon those in front. The popular belief that this animal has the power of shooting its quills in self-defence has long since been corrected. They easily come out however at the will of the animal. The quills are grey tipped with black.

There is an aquatic bird to be seen upon the lakes of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton called the *Loon*, which imparts a wild charm to the solitudes by which these lakes are generally surrounded. The *Loon* is, I believe, sometimes called in other places, the *great northern diver*. Its body is very long and its legs short and



situated far behind; and in the upright position which it assumes on land, its height, I should think, to the crown of the head, would be about 3 feet. Its bill is straight and pointed and very strong. Its long and well shaped neck and head are covered with feathers of a deep velvety black, marked round the throat by one or two grey bands. Its eye is encircled with a ring of red. Its breast is of a pure white; and the rest of its body is covered with plumage of mixed white and black,— its shades softly blending into each other. The back and tail however are jet black. But the great peculiarity of this bird is its wild deep and mournful note, which echoes over the lake and throughout its solitary coves, with a watery melancholy sound, inexpressibly beautiful and sad. To stand upon the shores of one of these lakes, embedded as they often are amidst wild solitudes; surrounded by dark forests of pine, indented with numerous little shady coves, — with the water at your feet, perhaps, almost hid by the broad leaves of the water lily—floating their cups of white and yellow flowers upon its still bosom—and then whilst entranced with the peaceful but wild beauty of the scene, — to hear the voice of the *loon* sending forth its deep plaintive, warbling notes, — which are answered by the echoes of every cove, — such a scene affords a treat, which is scarcely surpassed in any country. To be sure in such a spot you must try to forget the sting of mosquitoes, which swarm around you at certain seasons; and notwithstanding its wild loveliness, you cannot help feeling something of the oppression produced by an unbroken and monotonous solitude; and wish for the day when the hand of industry and civilization would level these forests, and clothe the borders of these lakes with fruitful fields and villages. But still as specimens of Nature in her primeval charms such scenes cannot fail to delight those, who have a taste for natural beauties. And it must be admitted that the hand of civilization is already making great inroads upon these wild spots; for one of the lakes, which I had in view in the above description, — no longer fully answers to the picture; but is now broken in upon by the unsparing rail-road; and a cove once called "*Black Cove*" from its deep and gloomy solitudes, is at present traversed and enlivened by the rolling cars three times a day; and the monster notes [of] the steam whistle have succeeded to those of the loon. The cry of the loon indicates rain, and it is generally in a still humid atmosphere, that its voice is most heard, and its echoes are loudest. It is very difficult either to take or to shoot them; and such is their shyness, that the hunter,



either in a boat or on shore can scarcely come within reach of them with his gun; and when he does the loon dives so instantaneously at the flash, that he is gone before the shot can reach him.

Other animals might be mentioned in the catalogue of those who inhabit the woods of this country; but my object is not to attempt to furnish a complete account of its natural history, but simply to give such sketches of the most prominent and characteristic animals of the Island as will suggest the nature of the country and be at the same time interesting to the general reader. I will not therefore prolong this chapter; although I am sorry to omit some description of the beaver and of the black fox, whose skin is very valuable; and of the mink, a small species of the *otter*, — so destructive to the poultry yard, that I have known it to kill in one night, 15 or 20 of the finest poultry, — turkeys, ducks and chickens, — which it reached through the most unexpected inlets, and be ready for a similar feat the following night, — if the vigilance of the farmer did not thwart him.

## SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON

## V. Plants

THE May Flower—Indian Cup—Bake-Apple—Blue-Berry—Strawberry—Sugar Maple Tree—Manufacture of the sugar.

In proceeding to give a brief account, — as I intend to do in this chapter — of some of the various plants which are indigenous to Cape Breton, and abound in her woods and plains, — I shall begin with the Mayflower.<sup>(37)</sup> This has been adopted as the floral Emblem of our Province, and deserves to [be] noticed first on that account as well as from its peculiar beauty and fragrance. Its botanical name is "*Epigaea Repens*", which is well bestowed. It has something of the nature of the vine, and creeps along the ground in shady, mossy and wooded spots, concealed almost from view by its own broad oval leaves, and the moss and other wild creepers, beneath which it frequently grows. Rather moist spots suit it best, in a wild and even rocky soil, shaded by the spruce and fir-tree. When drawn out from its hiding place it emits the most delightful perfume; and its beautiful pink flowers mixed with its soft, pale green leaves and tied round by its own stalk or some neighbouring creeper, form a wild, sweet nosegay, such as any land might be proud of. When brought home and placed in a jar of water it will live for a week still preserving its freshness and scenting the room with its delicate perfume. Each single flower is about the size and form of the violet or lilac, growing in clusters, and as I have said before, of a pale pink colour. It has one defect (if it may be so called) and that is, that its leaves are sometimes defaced and partly eaten away by dark brown spots, occasioned by its damp situation, but which adds perhaps to its more picturesque appearance. As

(37) The mayflower was for many years considered to be the floral emblem of Nova Scotia, but it was not until 1901 that by Statute (Chap. 10) it was first declared to be so, in these words: "The Trailing Arbutus (*Epigaea repens*, Linn.), commonly known as the mayflower, is hereby declared to be, and from time immemorial to have been, the floral emblem of Nova Scotia." When *The Novascotian*, the Halifax newspaper, appeared in a new series on January 2nd, 1840, it carried a new device at its head, the name *The Nova Scotian* being surrounded by a long oval wreath of mayflowers, on top; with rose, shamrock, and thistles below. In 1856 Nova Scotian copper coins appeared with a spray of mayflowers on the reverse. Earlier than that, however, Nova Scotia's postage stamps of 1851, three penny, six penny, and shilling, bore a rose, a shamrock, a thistle and a mayflower, one in each of four compartments arranged about a crown in the centre.

the soil upon which it grows is wild and poor, this beautiful plant will not bear transplantation unless some of its native earth is taken with it; and even then the utmost care is necessary. On this account its sweetness is reserved for those who dwell upon our rocky shores; and strangers can only know it by description or by a visit to our land. It has I believe been preserved and sent over the water in dry sand. It produces no seed that has yet been discovered. The present Chief Justice<sup>(38)</sup> of Nova Scotia whilst recently travelling in Germany, once visited a Botanical Garden near one of its large cities, and what was his surprize, when roaming through parterres of the most beautiful flowers, to come suddenly upon the sweet Mayflower of his own Country! He found upon enquiry that its native earth had been transplanted with it. This is the only chance I should think of its surviving a change of climate. As its name implies it begins to bloom in May or the end of April. The copper coinage of this Province about three or four years ago was stamped with the image of the Mayflower.

The following Communication respecting the Mayflower appeared in [a] Halifax newspaper sometime ago.

Mr. Editor,—

Many of your readers will be gratified to learn that a very fine *double* variety of Acadia's own peculiar flower has been discovered a few days since by Mr. Francis Mackay of H. M. Naval Hospital, near Hammonds Plains. He very kindly submitted [it] to me, and to some other gentlemen interested in that sort of thing; so that this wonderful fact is substantiated by the clearest ocular demonstration. Mr. Mackay has named it Lady Milne's Mayflower. In all my experience of our native flowering plants, ranging at least over a period of twenty years, more particularly amongst our *ericacea*, I am unacquainted with a similar instance of *any single* flower becoming *double*, and I deem Mr. Mackay's fortunate discovery of so great value, as a fact to the science of Botany, that I shall shortly communicate the same to the Linnean Society, with the permission or rather at Mr. Mackay's request, and shall place the results thereof at your disposal for your columns.

J. R. W.

(38) William (afterwards Sir William) Young, who was born in Scotland in 1799, became Chief Justice of Nova Scotia in 1860, and died at Halifax in 1887.



A later communication to the same paper from another quarter (Pictou) corroborates this fact, with the additional statement however, that the writer had plucked such double mayflower several years back, and even this spring, but that they were very rare. The same writer adds that he has seen them having *three* rows of leaves upon each blossom, which is a still greater curiosity.

The "*Indian Cup*", — or as it is botanically called the *Sarracenia Purpurea*, — is another very curious and beautiful plant found in Cape Breton. This is a wild plant growing in wet marshy soil, in height from the root to the top of the flower usually about nine inches. The flower grows at the top of a slender stalk, quite bare of leaves and has something of the form of a *rosette*, the under layer of leaves being green turned over with crimson, and the upper of a rich crimson. But the great peculiarity of this plant is the hollow, leafy cup that springs from the root, — two or three round each flower, to the height of six inches. This cup is difficult to describe, but is something of the shape of a "*Cornucopia*", the slender end constituting the root, with the upper or wide end running up on one side to something of a point, and folding over in a graceful scroll-like shape. The body of the cup is green tinged with reddish brown, and streaked with veins of Indian red. Near the root it is of a dull red colour and the lips of the cup are tinged of a pinkish hue. It derives its name from the circumstances of its holding a good supply of rain or dew, which it is said the Indians have recourse to for quenching their thirst, — when no other supply of water is to be found. In the swampy mossy ground where these cups are usually to be found, they look very beautiful, springing up often in great numbers from the soil, surmounted by their bright green and crimson flower. Its root is supposed by the Indians to have great virtue in curing small pox and measles and they are in the habit of using it for this purpose.

The *Bake-Apple* is another peculiar plant which grows abundantly in some parts of the Island of Cape Breton, and is also to be found in some portions of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. I think it is called by the French settlers, — *Pomme de Pré* or apple of the prairie, — as it grows generally in wild and barren places. It bears a fruit not unlike the raspberry in shape, but of a yellow amber colour, growing to the height of five or six inches. Although I have often heard it described I have never

yet had the opportunity of seeing it in its growing state. It is not equally found in every part of the Island, but at Louisburg, Mira and Eskasoni, and many other places it grows in large quantities. Its leaf is not unlike that of the strawberry, but of a darker green. Ten or twelve berries closely clustered together form the fruit, which grows upon a long thin stalk branching from the stem, which holds the leaf, having but one cluster upon each stalk. It is much relished here as a preserve, being of a fine clear amber colour, very sweet and juicy, with a slight wild flavour not altogether unlike honey. When made into pastry it is very delicious; but as a simple preserve it is almost too luscious to a taste not quite accustomed to it. The accompanying sketch is a very correct drawing of the plant.

In describing the wild plants of Cape Breton I cannot omit a brief notice of the *Blue-Berry*, which in England I think is called the *billberry* or *whortleberry*. This berry is very common here, growing in immense quantities upon the barrens in the form of a low shrub, with a narrow pointed shining leaf, and covered with clusters of light blue berries about the size of a pea. It is used as a preserve, and chiefly for paste puddings, which is a favourite dish at the table of most classes, abounding in a rich wholesome juice; which however so stains the mouth immediately after, that your friends are all made aware of what you have had for dinner. I believe this berry is found in several parts of England; and I remember meeting with it only once during a long residence there, and that was in the North of Devon near Lynmouth, — where I think they were called *billberries* and were prepared in the same way for table. It seemed to be the identical berry. There is another species of the same berry found in this country, called the *huckle-berry*, once very plentiful, but now not so frequently found. It grows much higher than the *blue-berry* with leaves of a lighter green, and berries almost black, and about the same size, but affording a richer and pleasanter juice, and much more highly valued for the table.

The *Strawberry* in Cape Breton is found in immense quantities growing wild as it does in all parts of Nova Scotia, and affording a plentiful supply of fruit for a rich preserve as well as a grateful and refreshing repast when newly gathered. It is generally very much smaller than the English strawberry, but far more juicy and of a superior flavour, having a sweet wild taste that is never



found in its cultivated state. In some parts of the Island it grows much larger than it does in the neighbourhood of Sydney; and in one place I have been told by a gentleman well acquainted with the interior, that it reaches the size of an inch in length, growing wild in soil, which produces grass of immense height and luxuriance. This spot goes by the name of the "*Salt Mountain*" — situated in a part of the Island called "*Whykokomagh*" (pronounced Hookamah) which is a salt water lake or arm of the sea, — running far into the interior. Besides its luxurious grass and fine berries, this elevated tract of land or Island, as it is, — contains a richer treasure in its deep substratum of marble which crops out in different places at the sides of the hill. Although unworked and neglected now, this will one day no doubt afford a quarry of splendid building materials to the future generations of Cape Breton. To this interesting spot, I shall perhaps further allude in speaking of some of the beauties and advantages of the interior of this country.

I shall conclude this chapter with a brief account of a forest tree, which abounds in all parts of America and which affords a delicious sugar of very peculiar flavour, — chiefly used as a Confection. A great variety of wood grows in Cape Breton, amongst which the spruce, the pine and the fir most abound and supply excellent timber, apparently inexhaustible, and ready for the woodman's axe, whenever the influx of emigration or mercantile enterprise shall turn them to account. But fine hardwood trees (as they are called here) also clothe the rich and mineral soil of this island, such as Oak, ash, birch, beech and a great variety of maple. These are used in large quantities every winter for fuel, in all parts of the country, which are beyond easy access to coal mines. *The Sugar or Rock Maple* ("*acer Saccharum*") is the tree I allude to. It grows very tall and straight, with a rough bark, and supplies the best wood for fuel of any of our forest trees. The juice or sap which runs from it when boiled till it granulates makes a most excellent sugar, for which Cape Breton as well as Canada, and indeed other parts of America are famous. The sap begins to rise in the trees, and the process of sugar-making commences about the middle of the month of April. A large incision or notch is made in the tree, and a shingle or thin slab of wood inserted, to conduct the overflowing sap into a trough placed at the root of the tree. This is generally boiled down upon the spot in large kettles or cauldrons, to prevent the labour of



carrying it out of the woods, as a large quantity of sap is required to yield a moderate quantity of sugar. It is quite a picturesque sight to see these manufacturers [at] work. They regularly encamp in the woods for several days and even nights, building huts of fir trees and birch bark. Two gigantic forked stakes driven into the ground hold a third pole placed horizontally from which hangs the great kettle dangling over the fire, boiling and bubbling with its lucious contents. This is frequently stirred by the Indians or farmers who are at work; and at dusk or night, when the rough and gloomy forest is lighted immediately around the blazing fire, and these figures are seen busily at work or patiently watching the boiling sugar, it presents a picture of a very wild and peculiar character. When about half boiled away, the sap becomes of a bright amber colour and constitutes a delicious syrup, resembling the clearest honey, and is relished even more highly than the sugar. After boiling for a while longer it granulates and is poured in its hot state into moulds generally about the size and form of a small brick. It thus becomes portable, and when wrapped neatly in the inner bark of the birch tree and tied up with a slender root, it is brought into town by the Indians (who chiefly manufacture it) and becomes often a profitable article of trade to them. Its usual value is sixpence (sterling) per pound. The small country farmers and emigrants in some parts of the Province, make a great [deal] of it for their own use, employing it in the place of West Indian sugar. I have often tasted it in this way in my missionary travels when taking tea at their homes, and have liked it equally with the common sugar. It has the disadvantage however of turning the tea dark. But as I remarked before the more general mode of using it is an article of confectionery. The peculiarity of its taste cannot be described; but it is very delicate as well as rich and has a certain wild flavour, which seems to remind you that it has come from the woods.

Cape Breton does not [at] present exhibit any great progress in the cultivation of garden or orchard fruit trees. This seems to be a point at present, quite neglected by the farmers, whose time no doubt in this young country is more imperatively demanded in the fields. The climate being rather colder than in Nova Scotia, and its summer shorter, — the same opportunity is not afforded of bringing fruit to perfection as is enjoyed by our more favoured neighbours to the west of the Strait of Canso. This

Island cannot as yet bring forward any fruit to vie with the "Chebucto\* Beauty" or the "York and Lancaster Apple" of Nova Scotia, which distinguished themselves amongst the apples at the International Show of Fruit, in October 1862.

The following notice of the above named apples in the proceedings of the "Royal Horticultural Society" for January 1863, may not be uninteresting as it bears testimony to the favourable nature of the climate of this Province for the production of fruit.

"VI York and Lancaster Apple"  
(Seedling from Nova Scotia)

### Plate I

"Among the new varieties of fruit sent from Nova Scotia for exhibition at the Society's Great International Show of fruits in October last were two apples, which attracted especial admiration. One was called the *Chebucto Beauty*; the other was merely styled a *Nova Scotia seedling*, but as it seems worthy of more definite recognition, we have named it the *York and Lancaster Apple*, on account of its resemblance in colouring to the York and Lancaster Rose, — blotches and streaks of crimson on a nearly white ground. The apple is fine, large and well formed and not only pleasant to the eye, but also good to eat."

"In these days, when the one quality is almost as much sought after as the other, a new fruit combining both is worthy of every encouragement especially when its beauty is of a striking and unusual character. It came in perfect condition from Halifax, and may be expected to take a good place in the English Market."

"Above medium size, roundish eye closed by the segments of the Calyx, and placed in a slight depression. Stalk of medium thickness, rather short, inserted in a small cavity. Skin glossy, ground colour white, distinctly striped with crimson, and the surface is here and there marked with minute scattered specks of crimson, not larger than a pin's point, and consequently too small to be noticed in the figure. Very beautiful. Flesh

\*"Chebucto" is the Indian name for Halifax.

“white, with occasionally a crimson stain, more especially round the core. The texture is granular, moderately juicy and rich. The season appears to be from the end of September until November towards the end of the latter it is inclined to become mealy.”

As Cape Breton and Nova Scotia are comprised in the same Province and have much the same soil and climate, the above extract will shew what capabilities belong to these imperfectly known countries, for the production amongst other things of very fine garden fruit. Some endeavour has been already made by a gentleman in the neighbourhood of Sydney, which is very encouraging, in the cultivation of apples and several varieties of plums, which proves that the disadvantages of our rather colder climate, may be greatly overcome, and that we may entertain hopes of producing something at a future day that will give Cape Breton a respectable rank at least amongst fruit-bearing countries.



## SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON

## VI. The Native Indians

The Micmac tribe—personal appearance—dress—mode of life and occupations—lobster fishing—activity—canoes—character—Wounded Indian—language

The Aborigines of a Country never fail to afford a subject of interest to the philosophic mind; and indeed to almost everyone, who has any pleasure in contemplating the works of the Creator's hand, and who likes to inspect nature in its earliest stages, and under the influence of differing climates, and the simple traditions and habits of the untutored mind. But even as matter of mere curiosity the details of savage life have a fascination for almost everyone; therefore in making the Indians or aborigines of Cape Breton the subject of the present chapter I feel that I am not without materials for supplying some information that may be interesting.

The natives of this Island all belong to the *Micmac Tribe*. This tribe is not confined to Cape Breton; they extend over the whole of Nova Scotia, as well as Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick; and are to be found more or less frequenting the harbours and woods in the neighbourhood of the principal towns of the Province. This Island may be said however to be their headquarters for here resides their King or Chief who claims that title from a document (still extant I believe) which was conferred upon his ancestors by King Louis 15th of France. He with a large portion of the tribe resides at Eskasoni upon the east arm of the Bras d'Or Lake. Of this place and its Indian occupants, I shall give a particular account hereafter. The whole portion of the tribe inhabiting the Province, that is Cape Breton and Nova Scotia Proper, together, without reckoning those of Newfoundland, do not amount to more than 1400; and of these, less perhaps than 300 constitute the remnant of the once powerful portion of the Tribe, which in former days roamed through the woods and over the waters of Cape Breton.<sup>(39)</sup> Their general appearance and condition is calculated to awaken a sigh in the breast of the philanthropic. Although they still

(39) According to the census of 1871, there were 1666 Indians in Nova Scotia at that time. In 1881 there were 543 Indians in Cape Breton Island, with 98 in Inverness county, 89 in Victoria county, 249 in Cape Breton county, and 107 in Richmond county.

retain some marks of the nobleness and peculiar virtues of the Indian character, yet their nature appears now to be hopelessly sunk; and the probability of their ever constituting a civilized and industrious race is too little to inspire expectation even in the most sanguine. Some slight approach, however, is made in some cases to more improved habits, which may have the effect perhaps, of rescuing a small remnant from future extinction.

The Color of the Indian is a reddish brown. His hair is black and straight, rarely shewing anything like a tendency to curl. His eye is also black, with the white part of a dingy hue, as if it had become tinged with the smoke of the wigwam. The eye is generally of the long almond shape, but sometimes small and beadlike. The mouth is usually large; and the nose although often presenting the marked aquiline shape that we associate with the North American Warrior, is much more frequently of a flattened and inelegant form. The cheekbones are high and the face and head sometimes long and oval, but generally roundish; and the countenance of a soft and indolent cast. Occasionally, however, you will see a face that reminds you of the lofty and enduring savage, who once fought with the white man for his native hunting ground. The figure of the Indian is equally remarkable with his countenance; it is usually tall and very straight; slight rather than strong and admirably calculated for speed and activity. Their legs are almost universally of a bow or bandy shape; very spare and terminated by small ankles and feet, which incline inward at the toes, and sometimes almost overlap each other. When they walk or run this is particularly visible. The straightness of their figure and the ease of their carriage gives them often a dignified bearing as far as their usually degenerate countenance will allow. You will sometimes meet with short and corpulent Indians, but not frequently; height, erectness and easy repose of manner are so peculiarly their characteristics that you cannot help perceiving something of the air of the gentleman in their carriage. Particularly in youth this slender straightness is observable. The squaw or female Indian is sometimes pretty; but generally their appearance is not so prepossessing. The men have for some years back adopted a good deal the dress of the inhabitants of the country, — a coat and trousers and the ordinary round hat. They do however still partly retain their dress of former years; consisting of a blue tunic, with the seams inlet with scarlet cloth

and wings or epaulets upon the shoulders of the same colour. A leather strap once the wampum belt, keeps this tunic close to the waist. A woolen sash of divers colours is sometimes worn, or even often. — An ordinary round hat covers their head encircled by a coloured band of ribbon. Beads and tin ornaments usually decorate their breast, — and especially their moccasins or shoes, which are made of moose skin and highly adorned with patterns of bead work. They invariably smoke, and a pouch containing a pipe and tobacco is almost always carried at the waist. The dress of the squaw is much more peculiar and striking consisting generally of a coloured bed-gown and loose blanket thrown over the shoulders like a shawl; with petticoats of various colours. The head dress is very peculiar being a high pointed cap of blue or red cloth, with loose ends falling almost over the shoulders, — highly ornamented with bead work of various patterns, and adorned with ribbons. The Indian, particularly the squaw is very fond of beads and these she wears in strings round the neck, and often worked into her jacket as well as cap, and upon the sides and front of her moccasins. As they are all Roman Catholics, — a necklace of beads with a large cross frequently hangs from their neck. At Christmas and at Easter is quite a gay sight to see the Indians on their way to Chapel; for they then put on their gayest attire. Every variety of colour is exhibited in their dress: tin ornaments and beads of every hue glisten upon their persons, and give an appearance of tawdry and barbaric splendour.

In the summer and autumn the Indians are scattered throughout the country or upon the shores of the lakes and harbours, where they live chiefly by fishing and hunting: but towards the winter they draw near to the towns and villages, and pitch their camps in their neighbourhood. A number of wigwams thus assembled on the margin of a lake or river, or in the retired parts of the road amongst the woods, form quite a picturesque sight. The smoke of the tall rough wigwam, the barking of the red Indian dog with his pointed ears; and the wondering look of the little half-naked Indian child, running out to gaze with his swarthy skin and black beady eyes, — announce your approach to the aborigines of the soil, who are congregated here to profit by the favour and money of the more fortunate white man. As they are very ingenious and neat in many kinds of workmanship of wood, they thus employ themselves in the manufacture



of tubs, buckets, churns, casks, and such utensils, in great quantities which they dispose of to the neighbouring inhabitants and settlers. They are very clever at carving in wood, and out of beech they will manufacture very neat spoons, bowls, and troughs for various domestic purposes. Little sleds and bows and arrows for the use of children, also constitute a department of trade with them. Poles and sticks for garden beans and peas are likewise continually brought in by them for sale in the summer time. Indeed one cannot help being struck with the quickness and ingenuity which they exhibit in such workmanship. Their skill at cooper's work is so great that you can scarcely detect a seam, sometimes, in their buckets and tubs; and the neat and finished style of their ashen hoops quite exceed that of the white man. They come round constantly to the houses, with bundles of materials on their backs, — such as ash for hoops, and will sit down patiently for several hours and mend up any old buckets or tubs that may be brought to them for repair. I have often watched the exactness with which they measure and fit their work; by means of a pair of compasses taking the size and shape of the bottom or the segment of a tub with great mathematical precision. They will imitate the seat of cane-bottomed chairs so well that with split roots and slips of birch they can so repair them as to turn out an excellent substitute.

The ingenuity of the squaw is particularly remarkable. Their bark boxes indeed are famous. These are made of the smooth inner bark of the birch tree, with an inner lining of thin pine wood. The outside is generally covered with a variety of pretty mathematical figures, worked with the quills of the porcupine, which are dyed of the most brilliant colours for this purpose. In bead work also they are remarkably clever, and shew great delicacy of taste; ornamenting bags, belts and soft cariboo-skin moccasins in the most beautiful manner with little glass beads of every colour, which are provided by the merchants, for their express demand. They often exert this taste and ingenuity upon their own dress, and that of their papoose or child. But however clever and ingenious at this kind of work they are very averse to regular and steady employment.

Their Wig-wams are built in the form of a large tent strengthened by poles meeting at a point inside, and covered with broad layers of birch bark: a hole in the centre lets out the smoke.

Their bed consists of spruce boughs, neatly spread in one part of the wig-wam, and kept in their place by wooden pegs driven into the ground round the edge. They are almost always provided with stout blankets. This article constitutes their principal donation from government.

I have said before that the Indians live in some measure by fishing; and one of their favourite occupations as fishermen is the spearing of lobsters. These they are very successful in taking and bring in large numbers into the market, in places where there is any demand for them. At Halifax I have seen them paddling their canoes up to the fishmarket wharf, loaded with these shell fish of the finest description. Although they have not the same market for them in Cape Breton, still they often engage here in catching them. At night, or early in the morning when beginning to get dark, you will frequently see the shores of a lake or harbour, lighted up in different spots with the most brilliant bon-fire. The stranger sometimes fancies it at a distance to be a house in flames; but he soon finds upon enquiry that there is no cause for alarm. If he should happen to come up to one of these fires, he will find it to be caused by a bundle of the resinous bark of the birch tree fastened into a split at the end of a large pole with the other extremity stuck into the ground. This gigantic torch blazes away for great part of the night, attracting the lobsters to the shore, and making the water transparent down to the bottom. If he go a little nearer and look over the bank he will see the patient Indian in his canoe watching the crawling lobsters and striking him with unerring aim through the clear water with his curious lobster spear. The Indian stands with one foot upon each gunwale of his bark canoe holding his spear well balanced in his hand and the moment he sees his opportunity he drives his instrument deep into the water down to the bottom and seldom fails to bring up at every stroke a wriggling lobster, which he shakes off into his canoe, and then makes ready for another attack. These canoes are very light and readily moved; but are also dangerous and easily upset. You wonder at the dexterity of the savage boatman, as he twirls his canoe round, by a dexterous movement of his legs, and shoving it forward with its stern almost elevated out of the water. I have thought as I have watched him in this position, that he has presented a most lively image of the practised strength, vigilance and agility, which man's nature acquires in its wild state. His



long black hair shining in the gleam of the red torch-light; his wiry and supple limbs straining with ready action to guide his canoe; his swarthy face and dark eye fixed upon the bottom upon his crawling prey; and the contour of his whole figure, lithe and easy-poising the spear for a stroke, — seemed altogether a fine picture of savage dexterity and patience. The lobster spear is a long pole, split at one end, and kept open by a curiously shaped piece of wood, sometimes having a spike in the centre of the split. The open split strikes over the back of the lobster, and the spike penetrates and holds him fast.

Sydney harbour and its neighbouring creeks are remarkable for a very large description of eel, which frequents their waters: these the Indians often fish for. The winter is their best time for this occupation, when the harbour is frozen over. They cut holes about a foot or 18 inches in diameter through the thick ice, and fish for them with hook and bait. Large numbers are often taken in this way. These holes however are not very pleasant to encounter whilst driving upon the ice, for when slightly frozen over they are not readily perceived and will cause a horse to fall and perhaps injure himself. At other seasons the Indians spear these eels as they do lobsters. The eels thus taken are of immense size, and are much liked by the inhabitants; but they require to be cooked in a peculiar way in order to remove the strong oily flavour which they have; but if properly dressed are considered a very palatable and nourishing dish.

The Indian is a very swift and patient runner; and will keep up a long steady trot for almost any length of time. White men will often beat them in a short race in the point of speed, — as it was proved at Halifax at the games exhibited in honour of the Prince of Wales' visit in 1860; but their power of endurance in a long distance is astonishing. In running, they lift their legs high, with a bounding motion, which their spare forms and the bandy nature of their legs enable them to do with ease. The toes appear to overlap each other in this action, and their small moccasined feet, seem to rise from the ground off steel springs. I have often watched young Indian lads thus running at the side of a stage coach on the Halifax road, and have been struck with these peculiarities.



The Indian hunts with the fowling piece and rifle. The bow and arrows which he makes he sells as toys. His *tomahawk* is a very small light *axe* (not hatchet) well tempered and sharp, which they use dexterously in cutting and shaping their ash sticks for hoops and the framework of their canoes. The knife with which they work at the staves of their tubs and buckets is very peculiar. It is very narrow, small and curved, — but not in the way of a scythe or sickle with the sharp edge inwards, — but like a very narrow bent iron hoop, with its edge sharpened. The back is thick; and being of the finest temper and keenest edge, — it is astonishing how rapidly and neatly they use it; —shaving their sticks and scooping out the hollow parts of their work with the greatest ease. I have even seen them cut a narrow board in halves with two or three strokes of the knife, and then snapping it over their knee.

Besides the bark boxes made by the squaws, they also manufacture very pretty baskets of various patterns from birchwood, cut into very thin strips and woven together and dyed sometimes of bright colours. Their ingenuity however is most displayed in the construction of their canoes. These are formed of the bark of the birch tree, spread over a strong but light frame of ash or birch and smeared over with pitch. They are made from 20 to 30 feet long; and in moving them about, over land, from place to place, they are carried upon the heads of two or three or more Indians, with the bottom upwards. The outline of the Canoe is rather graceful; having a curl at each end presenting a sharp edge to the water, and gradually swelling out towards the centre to the width of four or five feet. Several narrow bars, upon which the Indians sit, keep the two sides or gunwales apart. It is flat-bottomed and impelled with paddles instead of oars. In no case, does the Indian shew his sagacity and skill so much as in the management of his canoe. Light as a cork upon the water it is a dangerous boat for any one who is not practised in the use of it. In stepping in and out or moving in it you must tread carefully, — placing your foot in the middle so as not to disturb the equilibrium. Those who are not engaged in navigating it usually lie or sit down in the bottom. I have seen a Canoe full of Indians (they will hold 8 or 10) navigating a rough piece of water, in the most astonishing manner, — but fearful to look at: as at every moment you might expect to see them engulfed. Rising upon the tops of the waves at one time, and then almost

lost the next moment in the hollow, they ply their paddles with a strong and even stroke, and in such unison that it has seemed like a living animal moved by one cautious and powerful instinct.

The Character of the Indian of the Micmac tribe has lost much of the hardy and stern virtue that belonged to it in his wild state; and his contact with the white man has infected his nature with vicious habits, that he was in a great measure free from when he reigned in his native woods. Indolence and intemperance are his besetting evil habits; and these together with the small pox and consumption make great ravages upon him. He is however generally honest, or rather disdains to steal. Although he dislikes regular labour he is very patient and persevering in work that suits his taste and is not heavy: and he still retains a large share of the fortitude and endurance that have always characterized the North American savage.

I once had an opportunity of witnessing something of this trait of the Indian character. In my former mission an accident happened one winter to an Indian in the woods; and hearing of it, I went to see if I could be of service to him in any way. A heavy tree, which he or a comrade had been felling, — came down upon his foot and crushed it dreadfully so as to render immediate amputation necessary to save his life. The surgeon had already been there with some neighbouring white settlers, to make arrangements for the operation. As this could not be done in his wigwam they had provided a stove and other things to fit up a neighbouring school house for the purpose. His resolution however or his want of confidence in the white man had failed him, and he had refused to comply. On my way there I met the men returning, and learnt from them that the intention was abandoned, and that the doctor was reluctantly compelled to leave him to his fate. I determined however to see what could yet be done, and went on to the camp which was about two miles from the Parsonage, and about half a mile into the woods. I found him in his wigwam with his squaw and papoose, lying upon his bed of spruce boughs, — but exhibiting no indication whatever of suffering, though his pain was great. His calm features would have led you to believe that nothing was the matter: his wife too preserved the same undisturbed composure of countenance. I tried to convince him how wrong he was in his determination, and that death must inevitably be the result. He did not how-



ever think so; and imagined that certain herbs were to be found in the forest, which if applied would effect his cure: "Besides how 'should he be able to go into the woods to get ash for his tubs 'and buckets; if he were to lose his leg?" I told him I had seen cases where a wooden leg in some measure supplied the place of the natural limb. This seemed to arrest his attention; particularly when I told him the name of the person to whom I particularly alluded. Still he could not make up his mind; and his wife contributed a good deal to his hesitation, as she had a decided dislike to go into a house built after the manner of the "white man." I told him however that no time was to be lost; and that death was certain unless he would submit to have his leg cut off. He at last turned away his face to the wall of his wigwam crushing a small chip convulsively with his teeth; and was silent for a moment or two, whilst deliberating with himself. He then turned round suddenly and said. — "cut!" I knew from the nature of the Indian that his mind was made up; and accordingly I had everything reversed. A swift Indian named "Lewis Paul", well known as a moose-hunter amongst sportsmen, — was sent off to the neighbouring town for surgical instruments. The surgeon of the Village, — a kind and skillful man attended; the patient was removed to the school house; and by the same night, or the next morning, the operation was over. His wife however could not be induced to live in the school house, but pitched her wigwam outside, as she (in common with the rest of her tribe) looked upon it as a disgrace to live in a civilized house. He bore the operation with stoical fortitude. Although a Roman Catholic he did not object to my offering up prayer for him after his removal to the school house. His priest however also visited him. He was one of the few Indians I ever met with who gave expression to feelings of gratitude. An absence of this is one of their defects; arising perhaps a good deal from the impression that the white man has deprived them of their inherited rights; and that the very land itself belongs to them. This Indian was often afterwards at the Parsonage. The expenses attendant upon this surgical case were defrayed by the Provincial Government; as is done in all other cases of urgent need; and regularly appointed Commissioners with a deputy in every County — attend to their interests; receiving applications for help, and making annual distributions of blankets and Indian meal or ground maize.



It has been supposed by some that these North American Indians are descendants of the lost tribes of Israel; and their high cheek-bones and aquiline noses and other peculiarities are pointed to as evidence. Of this however I pretend to give no opinion whatever; and more readily acquiesce in the usually received belief that they are of Tartar or Mongolian descent. One gentleman entertaining such views, formerly a resident of Nova Scotia, and now the rector of an important parish in the United States, — had studied the subject deeply, and was so convinced in his own mind of this fact, — that it was his intention when I last saw him, of putting forth his opinions and reasons upon this subject in a published work.

Something may be said here perhaps upon the language of the Mic-mac Tribe. Although frequently hearing them speak to each other, I have never attempted any acquisition of the language. Its sound however is remarkably soft and melodious; as vowels and liquids enter largely into its construction; but there is something in the pronunciation too drawling to be altogether pleasant to our ears. It seems to be much wanting in energy, — as far as I can judge simply from the sound. How far the language of the Micmac Tribe differs from those of Canada and the United States I cannot say: but if the names of places upon the maps give any just idea, — the localities of those Countries bear titles that have something of the melody and stateliness of the Spanish tongue: Such as “Toronto” — “Niagarah” — Cayuga — “Canandaigua” and in this Province, — “Shubanacadie”, — “Menadoo”, — “Escasoni”. The following are specimens of Indian words, written down as near as possible according to the pronunciation:

Shak-a-moo, — *King*  
 Ella-gah-weet, — *Queen*  
 Bibbano-jack-a-mah-dee, — *Looking glass*  
 Kis-a-wauk, — *God*  
 Arris-de-waug-whum, — *church*  
 Winch-e-gwaum, — *House*  
 Nabby-quawn, — *Ship*

In this intercourse with the “white man” they speak broken English. Very few words are used, but they manage to make themselves understood. Thus in expressing their repugnance to have their likeness taken, — they will say: — “*Me no like to be scratched upon paper.*” In declaring the identity of some

particular bird with the "Night-Hawk", — from which it was thought by some one to differ, — they will say "*All same "Night-Hawk"*". They are not without humour and readiness of reply, and enjoy a laugh and a joke. I once heard a gentleman, who knew their appreciation of fun, — and who at that time was driving a Carriage and three horses, — say to some Indians by the road-side: "*Why dont you Indians have such things as these, — fine horses and carriages?*" They laughed heartily and said: "Ah! no good for the woods!"

The following lines<sup>(40)</sup> which I copy from a recent work on Nova Scotia, — give some idea of the sound of the Indian language and at the same time sketch out some prominent features of our wild scenery, which have long been associated with these Micmac names. Many of the spots alluded to are in Cape Breton.

(40) Written by Richard Huntington, who published newspapers at Yarmouth and Sydney, including *The Cape Breton Advocate* and *The Spirit of the Times* from 1840 to 1846.

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**The Indian Names of Acadia**

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The memory of the Red Man  
How can it pass away  
While their names of music linger  
On each mount and stream and bay;  
While *Musquodoboit's* waters  
Roll sparkling to the main;  
While falls the laughing sunbeam  
On *Chegogin's* fields of grain.

While floats our country's banner  
O'er *Chebucto's* glorious waves;  
And the frowning cliffs of *Scatarie*  
The trembling surges brave;  
While breezy *Aspotogon*  
Lifts high its summit blue  
And sparkles on its way way  
The gentle *Sissibou*.

While *Escasoni's* fountains  
Pour down their crystal tide;  
While *Inganish's* mountains  
Lift high their forms of pride;  
Or while on *Mabou's* river  
The boatman plies his oar  
Or the billows burst in thunder  
On *Chikaben's* rock-girt shore.

The memory of the Red Man  
It lingers like a spell  
On many a storm-swept headland,  
On many a leafy dell;  
Where *Tusket's* thousand islets  
Like emeralds stud the deep;  
Where *Blomidon*, a sentry grim,  
His endless watch doth keep.

It dwells round *Catalone's* blue lake,  
Mid leafy forests hid—  
Round fair *Descousse*, and the rushing tides  
Of the turbid *Pisiquid*.  
And it lends, *Cheboque*, a touching grace,  
To thy softly flowing river,  
As we sadly think of the gentle race  
That has passed away forever.



# LOUISBURG

*Scale of Miles*

Mile

LOUISBURG HARBOR

### PROPOSED NEW TOWN

Recht und P...

## SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON

**VII. Mining Establishments**

Coal mines—London Association—Cow Bay Mines—Glance Bay Mines.

The Coal Mines of this Island constitute its chief riches. Other minerals it has in abundance; and some of these have lately been sought for in different parts of the country, —and incipient attempts made to follow up the work in systematic manner: such as the search for gold at Middle River, Baddeck, and that of silver and copper at Cheticamp. These however though not without success, have not yet attracted the notice of Capitalists sufficiently to carry on the operations in such a manner as to make them remunerative to much extent. The full development of these natural productions are reserved for some future day, — when Cape Breton shall be better known. But hitherto her Coal Mines have attracted the chief notice of those, who have the power of making them profitable upon a large scale.

In taking a general survey of the Mining Establishments of Cape Breton, we cannot omit first to notice that of the London Mining Association. This has already been cursorily mentioned: but a few more particulars may be added. Since the year 1826 this well-conducted establishment has been gathering the riches of that Coal field with great success and profit. It is the oldest upon the Island, and for many years pursued without any competition from rival works. Situated upon the northern entrance of Sydney harbour, it attracts notice at once. Its smoking chimneys and rolling cars are seen from a distance as the vessels sail up the broad Estuary for their load. At this place and at no other, the Cunard Boats and the French war-steamers receive their freight. Besides the loads taken at the wharf for the use of each individual steamer of the former line chiefly on their way from Halifax to Newfoundland, — immense quantities are transferred to the Cunard Depot at Halifax, to be in readiness to supply the Ocean Steam Packets, plying between that City and Liverpool, England. Not unfrequently also this wealthy and liberal company have come forward in seasons of scarcity of supply in the City, to prevent distress or inconvenience amongst the inhabitants. At the wharf of this Association at North Sydney, — as I said before, — the French steamers, which belong



to the Newfoundland station take in their regular supply, both in their way out and on their return to France. The Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, which are french possessions, are situated only a few days sail from Sydney, and consequently these ships are drawn frequently to this Island for their necessary supply of fuel; and often ascend the river a little higher to the town of Sydney, where their gay tri-colours are seen flying for several weeks in front of the residence of the French Consul. The high opinion of this coal by the French naval authorities may be seen by the following report of the Director of the Naval Construction at Brest, who describes the Sydney coal in these words to the Minister of Marine:

"The trial of the Nova Scotia coal, by la Perdrix, shew that, "like Newcastle coals, it ignites easily, and produces a long lively "flame, little coloured. It swells a little in the fire and does not "clog the bars. It gives but little clinker, and is not very brittle. "Its steam power is little inferior to Cardiff coal and equals that "of Newcastle. It leaves six per cent residue, and weighs 76, 60 "kilograms per hectolitre. (a kilogram is equal to 2 lbs. and 5½ "drams, and a hectolitre to 22 imperial gallons.) It is a fine "coal and completely assimilable to that of Newcastle." Inspector of Mines Report, 1860.

In addition to these English and French Steamers the line of steamers running between Liverpool and Central America, and also the Quebec line, stop at these Mines, both in their outward and homeward voyages for their supply of coal.

The mines at Lingan on the opposite side of the mouth of Sydney River are a branch of the Association's establishment. They were opened in the year 1854; and have been carrying on very successful operations since that time under the direction of Charles Barrington Esq. the resident Manager.

It was not till the year 1856 that any other Mines were regularly worked except by the London Mining Association: this Company having the Monopoly, I believe, of all the coal mines of Cape Breton up to that period; but their lease of 30 years then expiring, it was renewed under different circumstances, and a large portion of these valuable coal fields was delivered over to the Provincial Government of Nova Scotia. By this it has been leased in various portions to several enterprising



speculators, — who are now in different directions carrying on operations with varied success, and in some places changing neglected spots into prosperous and busy establishments. Of these I shall particularly describe two as being the most prominent, — and which give a good idea of the rapid improvement, which Capital and enterprize can cause in nature's apparently most barren and useless scenes. American Capital employed by American companies associated with some of our own merchants of Cape Breton, have been the chief cause of these improvements.

Having made a journey in the month of September 1864, — in the direction of these Mines, in company with His Lordship the Bishop of Nova Scotia, who was then upon a confirmation tour, I had a good opportunity of observing the change which had been effected in these shores; and accordingly a simple account of what I then witnessed will form the best description I can give. After performing service with confirmation at the little church<sup>(41)</sup> at Cow Bay, which is situated at the opposite side of a cove at the head of a bay, we re-crossed to the Mines side, and rested at the house of Widow Spencer,<sup>(42)</sup> — the aged mother of a large and respectable circle of Church families: constituting a portion of the congregation. Her house standing upon a retired part of the bay, afforded a good view both up and down this expansive piece of water. The view from this farmhouse, about three or four years ago, when looking sea-ward nothing remarkable presented itself except Flint Island in the distant entrance of the harbour: and the only appearance of any shipping were the masts of some fishing vessels anchored in a little Bay upon the left hand of the Spectator; but now quite a different scene was exhibited: no less than five and twenty or thirty vessels of all capacities from the three-masted barque down to the schooner, — were riding at anchor, under the cliffs of the coal mines, not more than four miles from where we stood. These were already loaded or waiting for their freight of superior gas-coal which these headlands produce. But not less remarkable was the change upon the land side of the picture. Instead of thick woods of fir and pine trees which a few years ago crowned these heights, with scarce a log cottage to break the monotony of the view, the attention is now arrested by the crowded and

(41) On the southern side of Cow Bay or Morien Bay.

(42) Mrs. Arnold Spencer. She lived on the north side of the Bay and on the seaward side of the Sand Bar.

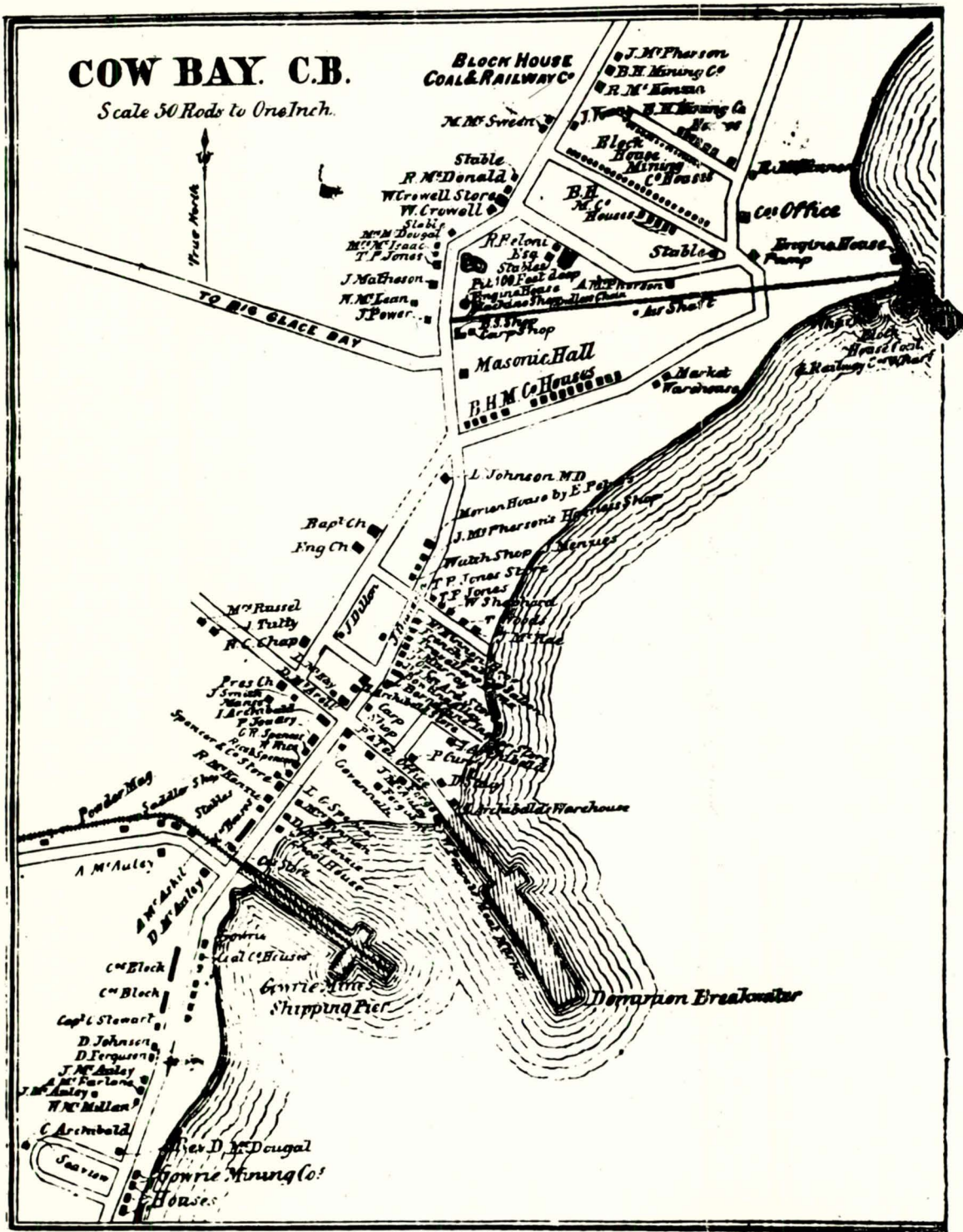
daily increasing buildings of a town or large village. Long rows of houses built for the accommodation of the Miners appear in all directions, with stores and cottages of all descriptions belonging to persons connected with the Mining department, and residences of the Officers, who direct its operations. I must confess I was much struck with the rapid change, which a few years will produce in the wildest localities of a new country, when capital and enterprize and industry are brought to bear upon it. The farmers in the neighbourhood are reaping great benefit of course from this new state of things. Now all their produce, particularly of a fresh kind, — such as potatoes, eggs, butter and poultry, — command an immediate and lucrative price at the mines, and amongst the shipping. Henceforth a new era has dawned upon a secluded section of fine farms, which were shut out, by their position, from a convenient market. The stranded hull of a large vessel upon the shoals about two miles distant, forming a prominent object between the eye of the spectator and the distant sea-horizon was the only unpleasant object that arrested the attention. This wreck lay upon her beam ends in the middle of the channel turning her deck and hatches toward the upper part of the bay. She had been recently cast away whilst taking in her load. The disadvantage of an unsafe harbour at these valuable mines, is in some measure now being remedied by the construction of a break-water,<sup>(43)</sup> which is nearly completed. But the most effectual and enduring mode of remedying this defect of the Cow Bay Mines, is the construction of a railroad to the splendid natural harbours of Sydney and Louisburg. Arrangements for this great work have already been made, and when this is carried into effect, a large and lucrative trade will be carried on between the Cities upon the sea-board of America and this portion of the Cape Breton coal fields. I have been informed that nine hundred men are at present employed at the

(43) In 1862 Messrs. Archibald and Company began the erection of this breakwater on a water-lot owned by them, for the purpose of protecting their wharf and loading ground and providing safety for the shipment of coal. Subsequently they extended it beyond the limits of their property and obtained legislation compelling vessels, under the direction of the Harbour Master, to deposit their ballast at the site of the break-water.



**COW BAY. C.B.**

*Scale 50 Rods to One Inch.*





mines of the two establishments at this place, viz: The Block House<sup>(44)</sup> and the Gowrie Mines.<sup>(45)</sup>

About seven o'clock in the morning I left the hospitable house of the widow Spencer to join the Bishop and the Revd. Mr. Gelling at Glace Bay church. The road between Spencers' and the Block House Mines is by no means bad; and as the day was fine I explored this part of the coast (hitherto quite new to me) with feelings of great interest. After travelling about four miles I entered quite a bustling scene. The road lay along the cliff; and whilst on the water side I could overlook a large assemblage of vessels of all sizes, receiving their load of coal or waiting at anchor for their turn to come; and beheld crowds of busy workmen engaged in the construction of the breakwater, — I was at the same time astonished at the unceasing erection of buildings upon both sides of the road. Long rows of dwellings for the Miners were already finished and inhabited, or were in the course of erection. Stores innumerable and many superior built houses and cottages lined the road, principally upon the land side. That portion of the road which connected the Gowrie and Blockhouse Mines, was only recently cleared; and in driving over the space lately occupied by the thick wood, whose stumps in many places, still hold their ground, and presented no little hindrance to the wheels of the waggon, — I could not help being struck with the mixture of approaching civilization and departing wilderness of which America shews so many peculiar scenes. I soon however emerged from this rough intervening spot, and suddenly came upon the older and more advanced settlement of the two. Here as before the carpenter and the mason were hard at work, providing new accommodations and buildings for the increasing little

(44) The Block House Mine, on the north side of Cow Bay, was leased to Marshall Bourinot, of Sydney, in 1859. In 1863 he sold it to a New York company. In 1720 the French took coal from this area to Louisbourg.

(45) The Gowrie Mines, on the north side of Cow Bay, were leased to Messrs. Archibald & Co., of North Sydney in 1861. Operations were begun by opening an old French working in the MacAulay seam near the shore and in 1864 a pit was sunk. Shortly afterwards another pit was sunk. Archibald and Company also sank two other shafts and erected a breakwater for the protection of shipping. Under these operators the Gowrie Mines steadily became one of the most important in Canada. Their operations created what C. Ochiltree MacDonald called "the thriving town and marine coaling station of Port Morien." The Gowrie Colliery was acquired by the Dominion Coal Company in 1893, but it was closed late in 1897. In later years operations were resumed for a short period early in the 20th century.

town. But in this place every appearance was presented of a more settled state of things. Quite an imposing row of Miners' habitations stood upon the high ground, whilst large warehouses and offices, with every other appendage so common in larger mining districts, struck the eye upon every side. Soon I came within sight of the pit, whence issued all the wealth that had created this prosperous state of things. Its sides however were barracked by gigantic mounds of coal, ready to freight the vessels at anchor; and the busy cars were rolling their loads without intermission along their iron track, till they reached the loading ground.

As this whole scene was the creation of but three or four years I stood and gazed with astonishment. Many neatly-built houses appeared here and there along the cliffs, and amongst the clumps of fir trees still left to represent the wilderness that once covered this headland of the bay. The most striking residence however was that of the manager Robert Belloni, Esq., which stood upon a partly cleared wooded plateau commanding an extensive and beautiful prospect, especially out to sea. The buff colour of this picturesque and ornamented cottage contrasted curiously with the dark green trees, which stood around it. It has two stories with projecting eaves, and gables, and tastefully constructed windows. A handsome verandah forms the entrance towards the south east; and the principal room, which formed the opposite wing of the building terminated in a large bow, giving variety and elegance to the whole structure. The inside is fitted up and furnished with costliness and taste. The view from the verandah of a fine day is really grand. The evergreen wood in the foreground, interspersed with cottages; the bay with its shipping just below; the opposite as well as nearer headlands that form this extensive bay; the curious Rock, with its light-house called Flint Island standing off at the distance of some miles from the entrance; and the rolling ocean out beyond stretching far to the right and left, formed a striking picture, calculated no doubt to relieve the mind of the occupier of this little mansion during his otherwise tedious and harassing duties. The Bishop and his attendant the Rev. Mr. Gelling, who then had charge of this Mission, had put up here the previous night, at the invitation of Mr. Belloni. In passing I called to report myself and had an opportunity of admiring some portion of the interior of this



charming abode. I then pushed on to Glace Bay, which was to be the next place for service and Confirmation.

In travelling along this coast I was surprized to find the road so good, although in many places rather hilly; but all along it afforded a fine view of the sea, with nothing very interesting however upon the land side. About half way a small bay indents the shore, called Schooner Pond. From what cause it bears this name I could not ascertain, and imagine that it simply expressed the capacity of the harbour for admitting vessels of that class only. A small attempt at mining has been made here;<sup>(46)</sup> but the only edifice of any consequence was a small place of worship with a cupola or steeple. After a journey of about ten miles from Spencer's I reached the little church or chapel at Glace Bay.<sup>(47)</sup> Immediately before reaching this chapel which was the object of our present visit, — you pass, in descending a hill, another incipient mining establishment, which judging from the shipping at anchor in the bay, appeared to be doing a promising business; but as this piece of water is much exposed, I could not imagine what would be done in case of a sudden storm.

At the confirmation held in this place, where nine rather serious looking young people presented themselves, of whom the majority of whom were young men (an unusual thing on these occasions) the Bishop adverted to the change which was likely

- (46) The mining area at Schooner Pond was taken up by Mr. Ross in 1862. The mine—Acadia Colliery—was opened in 1863 by means of a level driven from the seashore.
- (47) The Rev. W. Y. Porter, Travelling Missionary for the area between Glace Bay and Louisbourg, probably conducted the first services of the Church of England in Glace Bay. In 1858 a Chapel School was in operation in that community. After Mr. Porter's death, in 1859, Rev. W. E. Gelling took charge of this mission. In 1866 Rev. Alfred Brown began his ministry in Glace Bay and took up residence there. The little church or chapel, mentioned in the text, which was the first Church of England building in the Glace Bay area, was at Big Glace Bay. By 1869 Rev. Charles Croucher was in charge of the Glace Bay mission and other stations along the shores of Cape Breton for a distance of 30 miles. This area then included ten collieries, seven of which were in working order. He reported the population to be mostly Scottish Roman Catholics and Presbyterians, with a few Methodists and some Baptists. On November 11th of that year the St. Mary's Church of England congregation of Glace Bay began a Thank-offering fund for the liquidation of that church's debt. In 1865 a Roman Catholic church building was erected at Glace Bay. The Presbyterian Church in Glace Bay had its beginning in 1850, when the Rev. Hugh MacLeod of Mira Ferry visited a number of Presbyterian families there. In 1867 Rev. Alexander Farquharson was called from Leitch's Creek to be the minister of this new congregation.



soon to take place in their neighbourhood and which might compel them by and by to erect a larger church. In this case he advised them to pause before they completely finished their present place of worship, which had not yet been consecrated. A day might soon arrive when that would be totally insufficient for the congregation. They had been many years erecting it, and had, as I can testify much of a struggle through a course of ten years, in so far completing their present little building as to make it habitable for the summer. These simple minded churchmen then, who had done their best out of their indigent circumstances to provide for themselves what they [take] pride in regarding as a Church,—looked somewhat amazed to think that their past labors and sacrifices were now all pronounced insufficient. The advice however was good. Better times are about to visit their once isolated shores; and not only a new building but a new and different congregation may ere long take the place of that which now occupies this rough and bleak headland of Glace Bay.

In looking towards the north from the summit of the hill upon which this little church stands a fine bold prospect opens before you. On the right to the east is the wide ocean; a little nearer on the same side are the new Mines, and close at hand, the shipping waiting for their freight. At the foot of the hill upon which you stand, a broad smooth sandy beach<sup>(48)</sup> stretches in an easy curve of about two miles towards an opposite range of low table-land; inside the sandy beach towards the west a gigantic sandbank runs parallel with it in a corresponding curve forming a parapet as it were against the enroaching waters of a long inner bay situated to the westward. This bank in summer is absolutely covered with wild roses, and a coarse grass upon which cattle browse often in great numbers, well sheltered from gales from the sea. On the tableland beyond this beach, excellent farms are spread out to view; and still further about a mile beyond, appearing above the low hills are the masts of numerous vessels of all sizes snugly ensconced in the newly made harbour of Little Glace Bay, which we shall presently describe. To the right again, in the outer part of the same little bay other ships from the great Cities of America are riding at anchor, waiting for their share of Cape Breton's valuable Coal deposits. Further beyond again, bold and picturesque cliffs and headlands run away in succession

(48) Glace Bay Sand Bar.

towards the north east, forming a wide curved boundary to the picture, which altogether could not fail to delight a painter's eye. On such a lovely day as was then smiling upon sea and land (weather at this season, peculiar to America) it is needless to say that the beauty of this landscape was not lost upon us.

Descending from the chapel we drove along the curved sandy beach above described, which was equal to the best of roads, sometimes washing the wheels of our waggon in the salt water, which flowed gently upon the sand. Soon we came to a deep and rapid stream, which forms an outlet<sup>(49)</sup> for the waters of the inner bay or lagoon at low tide. Here was exhibited rather a curious scene, such as the Missionary from time to time encounters in this country, and in which the Bishop as well as the ordinary minister has to take his share. Before crossing this stream, we were obliged to empty the waggons of all their contents, carpet bags, cloaks and cushions, and, with the harness from the horses throw them down upon the beach. Two or three boats of narrow and light construction are always ready there to ferry over passengers and their equipages. After towing over the horses who swam to the opposite bank not without a little struggle, the next thing was to get over the waggons, or light four-wheeled carriages very generally used in America. Instead of putting these into the boat, as might be supposed, the waggon was run over the narrow bow of the boat, which poked its nose up as it were, upon the beach for the purpose; the wheels hung down upon each side, like the paddles of a steam-boat, whilst the shafts dangled behind in the water. In this way the boats with their curious freight were rowed across the stream by two or three men. The voyage was a very short one, as the stream was narrow, but the current being very rapid, the boat was carried down considerably and landed at the other side with its broadside to the bank. The waggon end of the boat was then hauled upon the beach, and by means of the shafts the vehicle was soon dragged again upon "terra firma". So expert are the boat men that the whole operation described occupies but a short time. The luggage harness and passengers are then transported over.

(49) The channel through the Sand Bar separating Glace Bay Lake from the ocean. In later years a bridge was constructed over it and the highway from Morien and Donkin to Glace Bay ran across the Sand Bar and over this bridge. More recently, however, big storms and high tides widened the channel to such an extent that the bridge collapsed. As a result a new highway was constructed around the Lake.



This goes on continually, as the neighbouring Mines have caused much travelling. But why it may be said is there no bridge here. This just at present would not be so easily accomplished, as the channel shifts: sometimes it appears at one end of the long beach, and in the course of two or three years it opens itself a passage at the other. But doubtless this difficulty will ere long be overcome. At present it forms an amusing episode in the Missionary and travellers journey. Nor is it altogether amusing; for during a wet or stormy day, the luggage and passengers would have an unpleasant time of it whilst exposed upon the open beach. This happily was not our case; so after reharnessing our dripping horses, we set out again upon our journey; stopping very soon however at the farm house of Mr. Hillier <sup>(50)</sup> and sons, which occupied a good situation not far from the cliff, upon the table land above alluded to. This is generally the Missionary's stopping place, where a hearty welcome and a comfortably served up meal, and a night's lodging also, if needed, is cordially provided. To this I can bear witness from experience in the course of twelve years past. The Hilliers are an English family. Their circumstances have much improved since the new mines have been opened in their neighbourhood. This part of Glace Bay with its fine sea breezes, and pleasant extensive sandy beach, will one day most probably become a healthy and favourite watering place to the inland inhabitants of Cape Breton. The influx of American capital now at work in the adjoining mines, will doubtless accelerate this step. No part of the coast have I seen better adapted to the purpose, and which seems so much to invite a good hotel and a row or two of houses, for the accommodation of health-seeking travellers.

Leaving this hospitable farm house, you very soon come upon the rapidly rising settlement of Little Glace Bay <sup>(51)</sup>, with its harbour, shipping and busy mining establishments. Here I must confess I was truly astonished at the change which had taken place within the last three years, which was the interval that had elapsed since my last missionary visit. Then not a vestige of its present prosperity and bustling occupation shewed itself. A little beyond a neighbouring hill Mr. Archbold, <sup>(52)</sup>

(50) The name of Hillier appears in the census records of 1860-1.

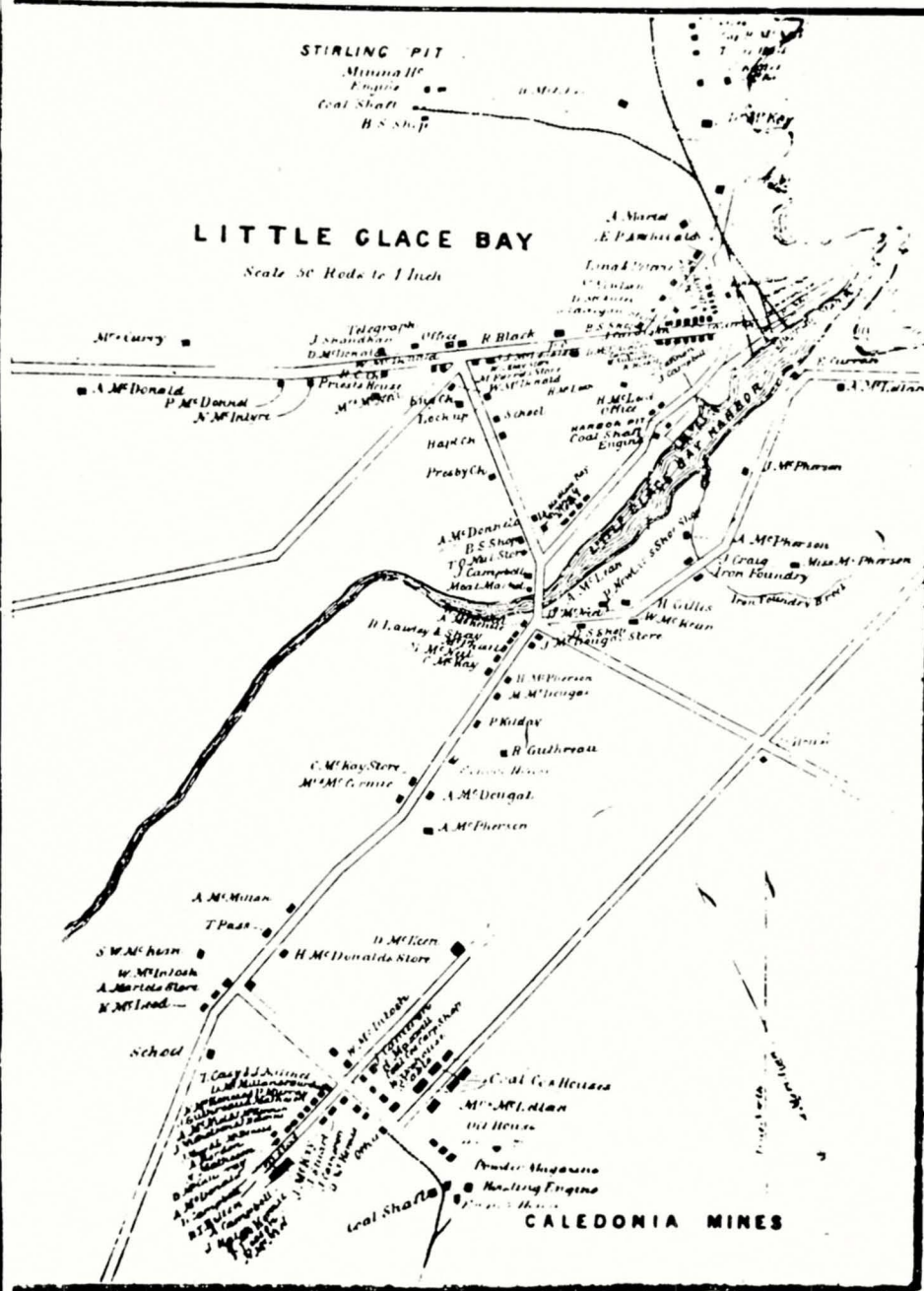
(51) This is now the town of Glace Bay, which is often called the biggest town in Canada.

(52) Mr. E. P. Archbold.



Scale 50 Rods to 1 Inch

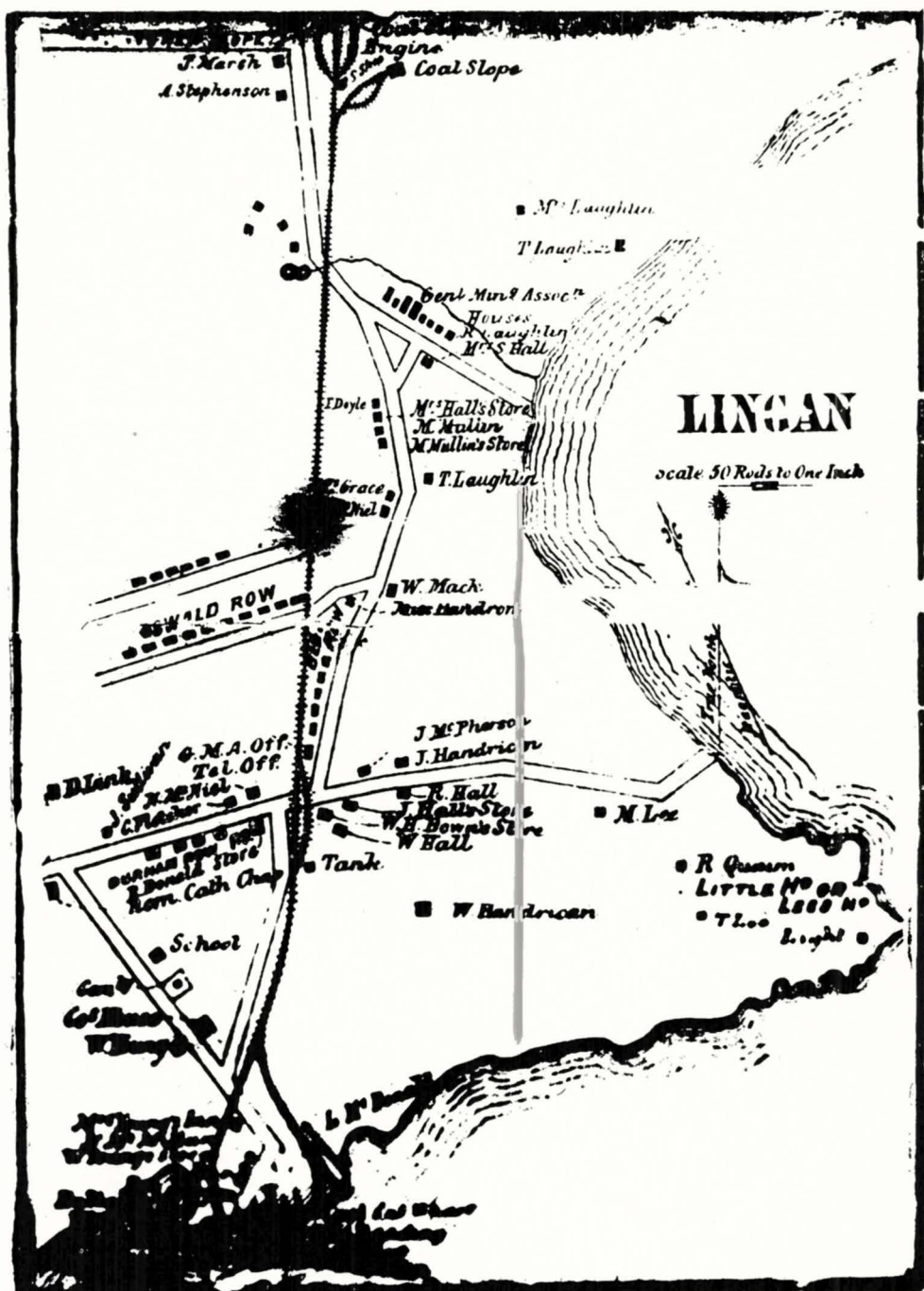
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an enterprising merchant of Sydney, had made a commencement at mining: but this (although the first step) was upon a small scale, and out of the traveller's view upon this road. His coal, dug from the pits close to the shore, was transported in scows on board the small schooners, which conveyed the freight to Sydney and Halifax. The smaller and less promising the beginning however, the more is the praise due to his zeal and perseverance, which drew notice to the neglected wealth of these shores, and opened the track for the present successful works, which are drawing wealth and prosperity upon the country. It was not however until he enlisted the aid of American capital that the present operations commenced which have so changed the appearance and prospects of this neglected shore. A handsome fortune to himself is the deserved result.

About three years previous to my present visit, in travelling this road, — I crossed over a small marshy brook,<sup>(53)</sup> running into a little silent bay, upon a pole bridge about a hundred yards long. The country immediately around was uncultivated and uninhabited, with the exception of one or two log huts upon the hills, and a few fields of fine oats and potatoes. Spruce and fir trees constituted the principal growth; and the sea outside broke upon dark and sterile cliffs, which seemed to present their inviting seams of coal in vain to the industry of man. But now I found this little brook widened to a great extent. Twelve or thirteen large vessels, Barques, brigs and schooners occupied its basin as a secure dock or harbour, whilst they received their freight of superior coal, by a succession of cars, rolling along from the neighbouring pit. Immediately at the mouth of this dock, you were struck with the appearance of a floating house carrying inside a powerful engine, whose machinery wielded a gigantic spoon or ladle at the end of a strong beam. This was the instrument for excavating the harbour and keeping it clear of mud. It dipped its immense bowl from time to time into the water and brought up a load of mud, which it emptied into several barges linked together. These were towed away, when full, by a small tug steamer about a mile or two out to sea, and their load deposited in the deep, by some contrivance through the bottom. They then returned for another load. By this method a good harbour was kept open. The drive beyond the dock, through the settle-

(53) Glace Bay Brook.





churches. Some of the desks and benches for the children were already finished, constructed after the new American model, — excellent for comfort and economy of space. Two children were to sit at each table, and a passage would thus be left between for the teacher to the number of five, up and down the whole school. This school-house was creditably erected at the Mining Company's expense. A piece of land in its neighbourhood has also been set apart for a church.<sup>(55)</sup> Again mounting our waggons we retraced our way through this interesting settlement, and set out on our way to Sydney, — much struck with what we had seen, and predicting in our own minds a prosperous future for Cape Breton. Near Bridgeport about 12 miles from Sydney we passed the Mines of the "International Coal and Railway Company".<sup>(56)</sup> A marquee was erected near the station, and the bright flag of the American Union with its stars and stripes was flying from a lofty staff. Here engineers were at work, completing their survey for the Railway to Sydney, which is very shortly to be commenced. When this is accomplished a great impetus will be given to operations, which have already made a most prosperous beginning.

(55) Apparently for the Church of England.

(56) It acquired this mining area in 1863.

## SKETCHES OF CAPE BRETON

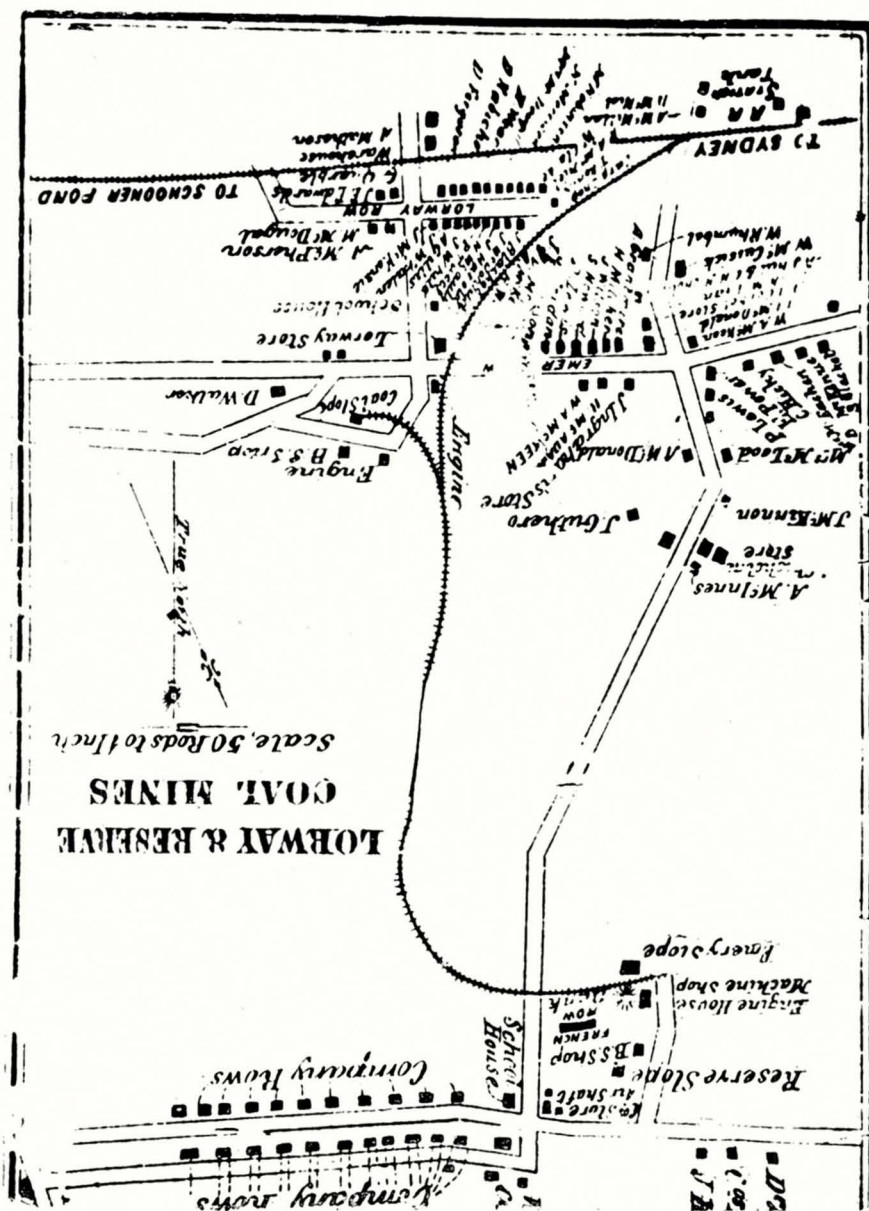
## VIII. Religion

Early state of the church in the island—St. George's Sydney,—Old Church—New Church—Other Missionary stations,—Sydney Mines—Gabarus—Missionary journeys,—Episcopal visit to Baddeck—Conclusion.

My description of Cape Breton would be incomplete without some account of the state of religion in the Island. In giving this, however, I must confine myself almost entirely to the labours of the Church of England; not that I undervalue the exertions of other denominations or am blind to the fruits that have followed their zeal; but to attempt to notice them all would carry me far beyond the original intentions of these sketches. Besides this, I have not the information requisite to give a faithful account; and I should be wrong to lay myself open to the charge of partiality or unfairness. With all that relates to my own communion, however, I may be supposed to be tolerably well acquainted, and of course have easy access to information respecting it, which may be relied upon.

I have lately had my notice called to an interesting fact connected with the early history of Cape Breton, which I shall briefly allude to here. It appears that this Island has the honour of being the first spot on the northern continent of America where the holy rite of our Lord's Supper was celebrated.<sup>(57)</sup> Such a record will not be without its interest in the eyes of those who like to hear of every circumstance, which marks the introduction of the Church of Christ into new countries. This occurred in the reign of Queen Elizabeth as will be seen from the following extract from the Church Journal: "An expedition under Sir Humphrey Gilbert, half brother to Sir Walter Raleigh, came to this country in 1578. To this expedition Master Wolfall was appointed chaplain by the council of Queen Elizabeth. It landed on what is now Cape Breton; and there we are told, Master Wolfall celebrated a communion, which celebration of the divine mystery was the first sign, seal and confirmation of Christ's name, death and passion ever known in these quarters." *Church Journal* March 14, 1860. A slow progress indeed has been made since

(57) It is doubtful, however, whether Sir Humphrey Gilbert visited the shores of Cape Breton.





that day, when we consider the long period that has elapsed: and it is only within the last fifty years that any actual advancement may be said to have been made by the Church of our Redeemer upon these pine-clad shores; and not till very recently have the prayers and sacraments of the Church of England been celebrated with any frequency in edifices consecrated to the purpose.

The Church of England in Cape Breton is almost coeval with the settlement of the Island by British subjects. In looking over the records which are within my reach upon this subject,—I find that, the whole Island of Cape Breton once constituted a single parish. The first missionaries who preached the Gospel here and administered the sacraments of the Church had to bestow some care upon the most distant portions of the Island. This of course entailed upon the early pioneers of the Cross many fatiguing journeys and much exposure. The roads then were very rough, and in many directions they were obliged to travel upon foot, or make their way from place to place in open boats. The following list of missionary stations, which were attended to by my predecessor, the Rev. Charles Inglis,<sup>(58)</sup> during the first years of his labours in Cape Breton, will give some idea of the extent of the field, which demanded his services.

Gabarus, distant from Sydney	26 miles
Arichat	70
Louisburg	24
Mainadieu	28
Cowbay	17
Glace Bay	16
Sydney Mines	7 by water, 17 by land
Bedeque [ Baddeck ]	30 by water
Mira	12
North West Arm	9
Coxheath	4

I have often heard the late Travelling Missionary the Rev. W. Porter speak of these distant expeditions, and of the fatigue of officiating in these out-lying stations. Whilst steaming over the waters of the Bras d'Or Straits a few years ago, on a confirmation tour, he once pointed out to me a desolate spot called Coffin Island upon or near which he was obliged to spend the whole

(58) Rev. Charles Inglis was rector of St. George's Church, Sydney, from 1824 until his resignation in 1853. He continued to act as Chaplain to the Garrison in Sydney till the final withdrawal of the troops at the commencement of the Crimean War.

night, with no other shelter than a boat turned bottom-upwards. This extensive field of labour, however was gradually diminished; and now four clergymen of the Church of England divide amongst themselves the duties and fatigues, which in the early settlement of the Island used to devolve upon one. Arichat, Sydney, Louisburg and the Sydney Mines, now constitute *four* separate parishes or Missions; leaving however many other spots only partially cared for. Distant country stations, and little harbours along the coast, as well as the newly-rising mining districts still demand attention to their spiritual interests, far beyond what can be supplied by the present pastors, without neglect of their own immediate flocks. All these stations, now forming special charges of clergymen, are increasing in population, and are gradually settling down into compact parishes; whilst remote portions of the Island are very sparingly reached by the consolations and warning words of the Gospel.

Commencing with Sydney, the Capital or principal town, I shall endeavour to give an outline of the rise and extension of the Church of England in this Island. The parish of St. George, with its stone church in Sydney, comprised as I have already said, the whole of Cape Breton. According to the earliest entries in the Parish Register, it was at first called the Parish of Sydney. This was about ten years before the church was actually built. The first entry was made in April 12th, 1785; during the incumbency of the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Lovell.<sup>(59)</sup> The Rev<sup>d</sup> Ranna Cossit,<sup>(60)</sup> however, soon succeeded him, and officiated as Missionary for the period of nineteen years. Several of the name still survive; and amongst them two daughters, who still within a few months ago have supported themselves by keeping school in the neighbourhood of Sydney. Some years ago they received assistance from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to the amount of about £450 sterling. The exterior of the church was finished in the year 1791. It was then a plain building constructed of

(59) Rev. Benjamin Lovell, the Garrison Chaplain and a member of Governor DesBarres' first Council.

(60) Rev. Ranna Cossit, the first rector of St. George's Church, Sydney, held that rectorship from June 1786 to July 1805. He was born on December 29th, 1744, in New England. He became an Episcopal clergyman and was ordained by the Bishop of London in 1773. After he returned to New England, he officiated in St. Andrew's parish, Simsbury, Conn. After the American Revolutionary War he removed to Sydney, Cape Breton. On leaving Sydney, in 1805, he was appointed rector of Yarmouth, N. S., where he died in 1815.



grey stone, about sixty feet long, having three large circular headed windows upon each side, with a large venetian window at the east end. The troops then stationed in the town attended service here regularly. The whole edifice was built at the expense of the imperial government. It was called St. George's church, although not consecrated for some years afterwards. Immediately upon the completion of the exterior of the church, the Island of Cape Breton was formally erected into a parish under the name of St. George's, by an order in Council during the administration of Governor Macarmick. This took place March 130th, 791; and on the 9th of the following month, the first Easter Meeting was held to carry out the above order, and to make a legal election of church-wardens and officers. The Rev<sup>d</sup> Ranna Cossit, being rector and chairman on that occasion, the Hon.<sup>ble</sup> William Smith<sup>(61)</sup> and Philip Ingouville<sup>(62)</sup> Esq.<sup>r</sup> being the first church-wardens. During the incumbency of the above rector, we find the newly-built church, frequently made use of for performing the occasional offices of the church. The parish register testifies to the general practice of solemnizing marriage in the sacred edifice: a custom which unhappily has for many years back lost favour amongst the congregation here, who seldom now can be induced to seek God's blessing in his house of Prayer, when such ceremonies take place.

This extensive parish was in the year 1828, reduced to a more manageable size. By an order in Council, of the Province of Nova Scotia (of which Cape Breton now forms a part) the boundaries of the parish were made to correspond with the limits of the present township of Cape Breton, — comprising        square miles. The Rector the Rev<sup>d</sup> Chas. Inglis regarded this as his special charge, while the outlying stations such as Louisburg, Mainadieu, Gabarus, Baddeck were delegated to the care of a Travelling Missionary. These two clergymen together continued for many years to officiate in the numerous congregations of the Island, and laid the foundations of several churches, which are now filled with interesting congregations, both in Sydney, and

(61) William Smith, military surgeon, was a member of Governor DesBarres' first Council.

(62) Philip Ingouville, a native of Jersey, obtained a grant of 1000 acres of land at Sydney Forks, eight miles from the town. There he commenced farming on a large scale, three years after the government was set up at Sydney. His dairy and farm products found a market not only in Sydney but also in Newfoundland, Halifax, and the West Indies. He died in 1818.



the country stations. Once more in 1850 another subdivision of the parish took place; and Sydney Mines and the settlements to the Northward, — such as Little Bras d'Or and Baddeck, were severed from St. George's and erected into a separate Mission.

Amongst the former rectors of St. George's Parish, who laboured arduously and successfully in the various sections of this extensive mission was the Rev<sup>d</sup> Hibbert Binney<sup>(63)</sup> father of the present excellent Bishop of Nova Scotia. His incumbency extended from the year 1816 to 1823. He made many missionary journeys through the Island; and many to this day testify to the benefits which they derived from his searching and impressive sermons. During the period of his incumbency, several changes were made both in the exterior and interior of the church in Sydney. It was in his time also that the landed property of the church was legally secured to her benefit, by the execution of Letters Patent to the Rector and his successors. This Instrument bears date July 2nd 1818. The seal attached to it is the seal of the Island of Cape Breton at that time constituting a separate Government. This seal has on its face a sketch of the rough promontories of the Island, enclosing a wide bay, in which numerous vessels are seen careering over the waters to and from a fortified town, bearing the flag I suppose of England. It bears above it upon a scroll the following Latin inscription:

“Sigil: ins: Prom: Brit:” and at the foot of the Picture is the following motto:— “Fortuna, non mutat genus.”

By the above Letters Patent 378 acres of church reserved land were legally ensured to the use of the Minister and congregation for which they were originally intended. But little of this land however is available at present for the benefit of the Rector. A large portion is uncultivated and just now of little value; but when the projected working of the coal mines in the immediate neighbourhood of Sydney, goes into operation, and the expected

(63) Rev. Hibbert Binney, son of Hibbert Newton and Lucy (Creighton) Binney, was baptized May 17th, 1795. His father was the son of Jonathan Binney, who was born in Hull, Mass., lived in Boston for a time, and then removed to Halifax in 1753. Hibbert Binney married Henrietta Lavinia, daughter of Hon. Richard and Martha (Weeks) Stout. He succeeded Rev. Robert Ferryman as rector of St. George's Church, Sydney, in 1816, and served in that parish for seven years. His first child was the Rt. Rev. Hibbert Binney, the fourth Bishop of Nova Scotia.

rail-ways find their way here from the mining districts on the coast, — the church will then reap much benefit from them. At present two fields close to St. George's church, comprising about 3 acres are alone productive of any advantage to the incumbent.

The present fabric of St. George's Church is quite new, with the exception of the wooden tower and spire. Some additions were made to the original building which I shall briefly mention, chiefly for the purpose shewing the readiness with which the Imperial Government of England listened to the appeals of the Colonial church in former days, when her congregations needed assistance. It is true that it is much owing to this generosity that our people here have been slow in exerting themselves for their own benefit. The original church erected in 1791, consisted simply of a nave; but in the year 1821, — the Colonial Secretary Earl Bathurst, sanctioned the appropriation of £250 from the Coal Mines Revenue, upon application from the Parish for the purpose of building a tower to the church. This was accordingly done; but it appears to have been injudiciously managed; for part of the tower or Cupola, resting its weight upon the roof, soon forced one of the side walls completely out of the perpendicular, so as to endanger the safety of the building. Upon a representation of this having been made to the home Government by the Rector and parishioners, — Sir Colin Campbell at that time Governor of Nova Scotia, was authorized by Lord Glenelg in 1839, to make another grant of £150 out of the Casual Revenue for the benefit of the church. This was expressly given for taking down the lately erected tower, for propping up the injured walls, and for erecting a steeple. After removing the whole of the former belfry or Cupola a new wooden tower and steeple was erected to the height of 96 feet, which is still standing, and adds much to the appearance of the building. The wall, however, which inclined outward to an alarming degree was left as it was; and remained standing until the new church was built in 1859, — when upon the old roof being removed, it fell to the ground by its own weight. As this church was used for many years as a garrison Chapel, it was on this ground that these various applications were made to the home government. Notwithstanding this, however, it is doubtful whether such grants were of real benefit to the congregation. They were made at a time when the Minister was altogether supported from home; when government money, through the military stationed here, and also from the



salaries of imperial public officers, circulated largely in the town, and the congregation in every way were in far better circumstances than they have since been; and yet when left chiefly to their own resources, as they have been of late, — a new church has been erected principally from the means of the congregation themselves, whilst a Parsonage House has been provided, and a portion of the Rector's salary also contributed. So true it is, that necessity calls forth exertions upon the part of the members of our church, which often slumber to their own injury, when exterior aid is too easily obtained.

In 1859, however the time came for making some effort either to repair or re-build the tottering structure. When the proposition of building a new church was first made, many of the congregation were somewhat startled, but they soon took up the work with proper zeal; and now have every reason to rejoice in the successful accomplishment of the work. Amongst the benefactions obtained out of the parish, must be mentioned £100 from the Bishop of Nova Scotia and his family in England. £20 sterling from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and £40 from a few other friends, amongst whom must be mentioned the late Archbishop Whately, who kindly contributed £10 sterling. The remainder of the expense about £700 was contributed by the people themselves. In 1863 a chancel and a vestry room were added, also of stone. One half of the funds for this purpose had been generously contributed by a single member of the congregation— Edward P. Archbold Esq<sup>r</sup>. The remaining half (£120) the congregation generally have provided. The building is in the Gothic style.

Service is held in St. George's Church, Sydney, by the Rector every Sunday morning and a night service is given once a fortnight and often much more frequently. Two other stations are alternately attended to by him on Sunday afternoon, at intervals of three weeks or a fortnight, distant from the parish church, four and nine miles respectively. The congregation in St. George's, Sydney, averages between 250 and 300, and the number of communicants are about 60.



At the nearer of the above two stations to Sydney a small chapel was built in 1856<sup>(64)</sup> which contains about one hundred: and in the other settlement at about 9 miles from Sydney is another little church first erected in 1818 and enlarged to nearly double the size in 1858. This will hold a congregation of 150. It is beautifully situated upon the fine broad sheet of water constituting the north west arm of Spanish or Sydney River, and is surrounded in all directions along its banks, by well-cultivated and productive farms.

These stations are altogether under the charge of the rector of St. George's Sydney. The Travelling Missionary attends to the villages and growing settlements along the eastern and southern coast of Cape Breton. These form an arduous but interesting field. The congregations at most of these places are made up of fishermen, who devote the spare intervals of their time in the cultivation of the soil. A few intelligent merchants also reside there; and at Cow Bay and Glace Bay, — stations, which upon my first coming to Cape Breton were quiet spots, scantily inhabited are now to be witnessed all the bustling scenes connected with vast coal mines, and rapidly increasing populations, growing at once into places of importance. Small churches have been built there for many years back, but these have become quite insufficient. And although many of the newly-arrived inhabitants are dissenters, — efforts will soon be made to furnish places of worship in connection with the church of England, adequate to the wants so suddenly created. Indeed an appointment has already been made of an additional missionary to officiate principally at Glace Bay. At these two latter stations service has hitherto been held only once a month by the Missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; but ministers of other denominations, besides the Roman Catholic Priest attend at stated times to their flocks.

Louisbourg, the site of the once famous French City is now recognized as the head of the Mission; and the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Jamison<sup>(65)</sup> now attends to the duties of this extensive charge. As a Com-

(64) St. Mark's Chapel at Coxheath was built in 1856 and consecrated by the Bishop during his visit there in 1861.

(65) Rev. William Henry Jamison was appointed to the charge of the mission of Louisbourg, Lorraine, Mainadieu, and Catalone in 1865. He resided at Mainadieu.

pany has been formed under the name of the "Louisburg and Sydney Rail-way Company"<sup>(66)</sup>, — by a number of American gentlemen for the purpose of constructing a rail-road in this fine harbour from some of the above mentioned neighbouring coal mines, it is to be hoped that it will not be long notwithstanding much delay before the quietness of this spot is exchanged once more for activity and bustling industry.

At the distance of 6 or 7 miles from Sydney across the harbour is another station or regular parish,<sup>(67)</sup> which has been long occupied by a Minister of the Church of England. Here are the principal works of the London Mining Association. The duties of this Mission were once attended to by the resident clergymen of Sydney; but in 1849 a church was built there and a separate Missionary appointed. In 1852-6 this Church was enlarged and very much improved. It was indeed quite remodelled and fitted up inside at much expense. Its elegant spire and Gothic windows make it an ornament to the neighbourhood. A comfortable Parsonage House was built in 1850, and the parish regularly divided from St. George's Sydney, during the incumbency of the Rev<sup>d</sup> Robert Arnold, of Trinity College, Dublin. At present the congregation numbers about 150 under the charge of the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Meek a pious and laborious missionary, lately from Prince Edward's Island, whose ministry has been attended with much success. Many of the miners originally from England attend the services of this church.

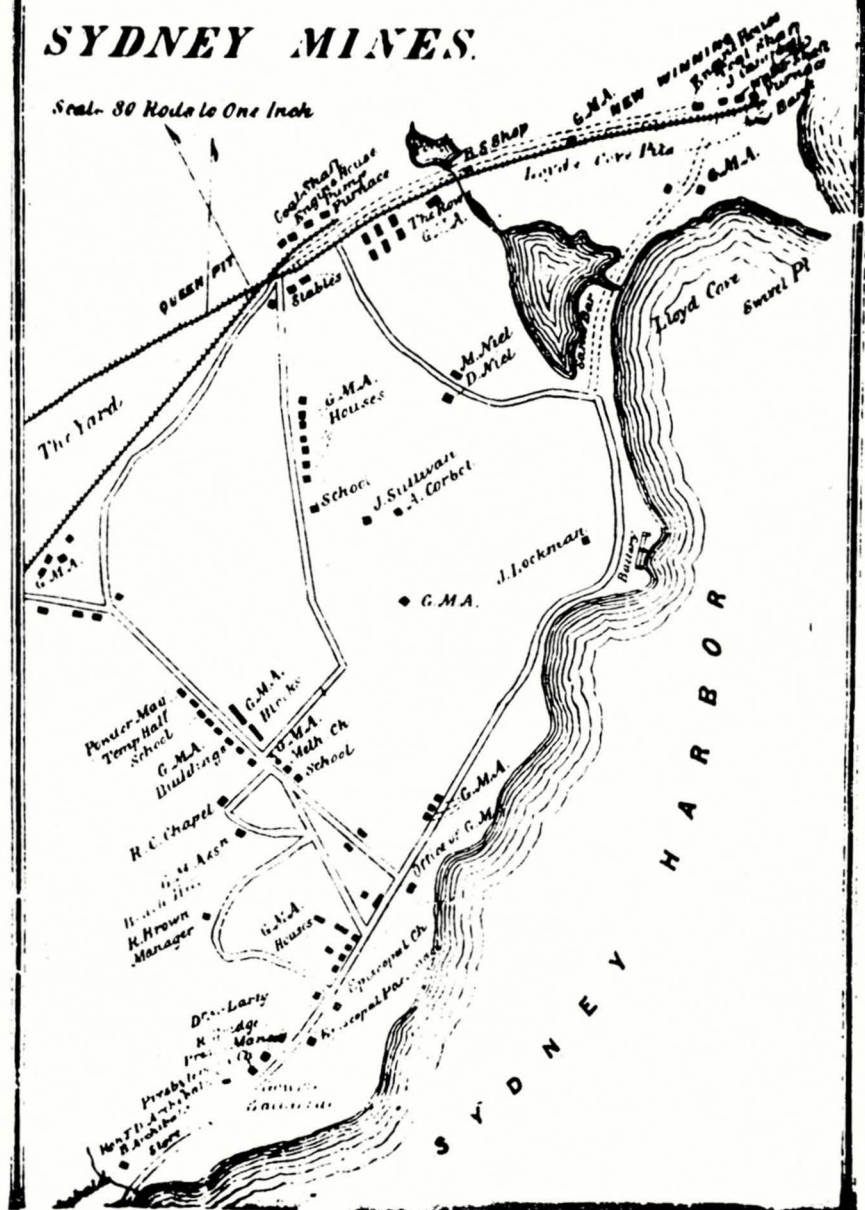
The thriving settlements of Little and Big Baddeck are connected with this parish and are visited by the rector of the Sydney Mines, four times a year. They are situated at the distance of 30 miles from the Mines; and in summer time can easily be reached by a small steamer, which plies between the town of Sydney (touching at the Mines) and Baddeck twice every week. A voyage up the Strait, and over the broad sheets of water, which intervene affords a highly pleasant excursion to those who rarely have the opportunity of observing the striking landscape and river scenery that is presented on all sides.

(66) The Sydney and Louisbourg Railway was completed in 1896.

(67) Sydney Mines. The exterior of Trinity Church there was completed in 1856.

# SYDNEY MINES.

Scale- 80 Rods to One Inch





The station of Gabarus<sup>(68)</sup>, on the southern coast of Cape Breton is one, which has only lately been occupied by the Church of England: Or rather I should say re-occupied: for although about 20 years ago occasional services were held there by the incumbent of Sydney and the Travelling Missionary, yet for some cause or another, it had been abandoned for the above mentioned period. In 1862 however the Methodist Minister of that place, from sincere conviction, left the Wesleyan Communion for the Church of England, and was appointed by the Bishop as catechist in that place, in connection with the "Colonial & Continental Church Society". Under these circumstances I was induced to make that place (celebrated in the annals of the Siege of Louisburg) a visit in February 1862. It is situated about 26 miles from Sydney. Although the few days I spent there were attended with snow-storms, and the roads almost blocked up with snow-drifts, yet fortunately Sunday was fine, — so that something like a good beginning was made by the first clergyman who had been there for 18 years. Two services were held with full congregations; many visits paid, and five baptisms performed, — all giving encouragement to the future labours of a Minister in that place. Several commodious dissenting places of worship were already built there, along the shores of a deep bay, surrounded by lofty hills, and containing about six hundred inhabitants, scattered over a picturesque country, chiefly upon the shores of the harbour. . .

(68) The Rev. Hibbert Binney, rector of St. George's Church, Sydney, visited Gabarus in 1819.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

**Lieut. W. Booth's Description of Sydney, August 1785.**

August 4th. Arrived at Spanish River, at one o'clock in the Forenoon. At the Entrance is a spacious Bay, and about 2 miles, from the mouth of the River, is a Bar of Sand, and Beach, with a Beacon upon it, and two, or three Hutts, with a small wharf. It is necessary to take notice, that before you arrive off this Bar, there is one on the Right hand, which is easy to be seen, tho' covered by Water at all times; you have not less than six fathoms water in the channel, between these points. On the right, again, is another River, navigable for seven miles up. At the distance of Eight Miles, according to the opinion of some, and nine by others, is the commencement of the new settlement, *Sydney*; at this part of the River you have 7, and 8 fathoms Water, and that, close to the shore, which renders it very commodious for Shipping during the Spring and Summer. The Town of Sydney will stand on an Isthmus of three quarters of a mile broad, and one and an half miles in length, according to ye Governor's plan—below the Ground, and immediately under the Town, is a projecting beach, that they say is designed for a *Dockyard*, or rather, that one is intended to be made there. This part of the River, I understand, is frozen up Four Months in the Year. The Eminence, when covered with Houses, and Inhabitants, according to their expectations will, certainly, form a beautiful appearance, as it cannot be doubted, but that they will possess many advantages, having a good soil around them, easily clear'd, together with Three Rivers, abounding with Fish. At present there are not a dozen Families, besides the six Companies of the 33rd Regt. encamp'd and Hutt'd, on this new Settlement. 'tis given out, that 150 Families are daily expected. I am sorry to find that the settlers, who venture into these unknown regions do not meet with the encouragement that they, with just reason, might look for, particularly the Inhabitants of the Island of St John who complain greatly, at not being allowed a possessional grant of any duration; but that they are totally at the disposal of the owner of the Land, so that after all their labour, and exertion to improve It, they are liable to be ordered to quit and consequently look out for another Lott: this must, and without doubt does, perceptibly, obstruct their endeavors, and in a great measure, confute the original intent of the proprietor. At 4 o'clock We dined with Governor



Debarres, at his half finished Hut, & which he says is merely Temporary; but that when the Ground shall be cleared, he means to build a good House, in one of the principal streets. We remained, off Sydney, till the 8th in the morning, when we weighed Anchor, and moved down to the Coal Mines, at the entrance of this river. We here met the Governor, who had an elegant dinner prepared for us. Before dinner the General examined the Ground and the state of the Coal Works. Great exertion has been used to clear the shafts of the water, but without complete effect. When this grand object shall be obtained, the produce must be very valuable, as the Mines appear Rich in many parts, and some of the veins, or Strata's, tolerably good. At the usual hour for dinner, we attended, and had the pleasure of meeting the Governor, his Daughter, and two of his Sons; one of the sons is of the Council. All the principal officers were at Table. I must observe, that on the General's landing, they endeavor'd to shew him every respect in their power, due to his rank by a Salute of 15 Guns, from the Battery on the edge of the rock, above the Road, and tho' these Guns were, seemingly, served by Coal-heavers, and Blacksmiths, and fired with red-hot poker, yet, the duty was well conducted. Having dined, and drank Several Loyal Toasts, we took our leave, and were attended by the whole party to the Barge.

## APPENDIX B

### **Lieut. (later General) William Dyott's Description of Sydney, 1788.**

October—*Wednesday*.—About three o'clock we came to an anchor in Spanish River (Cape Breton), having had a remarkably fine run from Shelburn. Immediately on our coming to anchor, the Prince sent for us to dinner. The entrance into the harbour has nothing very striking. In the afternoon we went on shore to the coal-mines, which were just opposite to where the ships lay. We all went down by the bucket into the pit, and to be sure a most infernal hole it was. The chief of the governors of Cape Breton's [sic] salary arises from a duty upon the coal got here. The next morning we weighed and went about nine miles up the harbour, and anchored off the new settlement called Sydney. The harbour from the mines is about three miles broad, and the shores entirely covered with wood to the water's edge. The French, I

believe, had a small settlement here at the time Louisburg was taken in '57 [58], since when it has been quite deserted till the year '83 [84], at which period a governor, etc., was sent out from England, a man of the name of Des Barres, a captain in the 60th regiment; a great surveyor, having published a survey of the coast of North America from Florida, but a most eccentric genius. He fixed the seat of government at Sydney, and I am sorry to say that their improvements have not a very propitious appearance at present. He dined with his Royal Highness; Lieut.-Colonel Graham, who commands a part of the 42nd regiment quartered at Sydney, dined on board. We got pretty hearty, and went on shore in the evening and supped at Colonel Graham's. The town of Sydney consists of about fifty houses situated on the banks of Spanish River, and surrounded to the very sides of the buildings by an almost impenetrable wood. There is a narrow path from the barracks just to keep up a communication, and that's all the clear country I saw. The barracks are shamefully bad; the troops have cleared a good parade and made themselves as comfortable as their situation would allow. The officers had no rooms in the barracks, and were obliged to build huts and log-houses.

Monday.—We dined at a Mr. Cayler's [Cuyler's], who has a small house and about an acre of cleared land on the opposite side of the harbour. He is an American loyalist, and possesses a considerable property in the province of New York. He is secretary to the Government of Cape Breton. We had a good dinner, and got outrageously drunk, Prince and subject.

### APPENDIX C

#### A Letter written at Sydney in 1789.

Sydney Island of Cape Breton Aug<sup>t</sup> 5 1789

My Dear Sir,

We sailed from Cove the 5th of June after an unpleasant Passage of 39 Days arrived at Halifax from whence we were directed to proceed to this place; Had our destination been made known to us before we left Europe, we could have reached it fourteen days before We made Halifax, but I presume the people

in power wishing to inure us to the sea kept us on board a month longer than was necessary—Our situation on Board the *Acteon* was also exceedingly uncomfortable, as the line between the two services does not seem to be ascertained with sufficient precision; However after one of two little skirmishes with the Lieut. who commanded her, we got on tolerably well. We have three companies quartered at the Island of S<sup>t</sup> Johns and seven here, and as I found the Ship was to proceed there first and being heartily sick of a man of war, I embarked on board a small brig, and got here several days ago. The *Acteon* is still at Sea and her arrival very uncertain. Tho I was well informed at Hallifax of what I was to expect, and had formed in my own mind as bad an opinion of it as I thought possible, yet the reality exceeded it a thousand fold. What the Island of Cape Breton may prove, fifty years or a century hence I am not qualified to determine, but I may venture to say that Sydney can never prove of any very essential service to the Empire at large, as its harbour is impenetrably shut up with Ice and inaccessible to the whole world for at least seven months in the year; I am also informed that the soil is but indifferent as well as the Timber; that the expence of clearing an acre amounts to six guineas, and very soon wears out as there is not a particle of manure to assist it. There is very little land cleared round the settlement and even that not cultivated in consequence of which it is covered with thick birch which will require as much trouble as ever to get rid of. The only end produced from having cut down the timber is to make our fuel both scarce and expensive and as there is no provision as yet of that kind made for the Reg<sup>t</sup> our men who are totally unacquainted with the use of an axe must cut down 1200 cords before the winter sets in—One would naturally suppose that when the coal mines were within nine miles of us in great abundance and excellent water carriage they would be cheap but the reverse is the case, for from various Impositions particularly a tax of  $5/6$  laid upon each chaldron by the Governour for his own use it is less expensive to burn wood, and I am given to understand that the foreign demand lessens every year, so that the only article almost in which nature has been bountiful to this Country will from bad Policy be soon rendered of no use.—What they dignify with the name of a town consists of about 50 Hovels and stands twelve miles from the Entrance of Spanish Bay, upon a very fine River which extends a considerable way up the Country. There appear here and there a few attempts to form settlements but as far as I can judge they



do not seem likely to succeed. In Sydney itself there is not the smallest trace of Industry as the Inhabitants live by selling Rum to the Soldiers, and were they to be withdrawn (which God Almighty soon grant) it would be instantly deserted. Tho the River and Coasts abound with Fish yet there is not a fishing vessel belonging to the place, so that another of our natural advantages is of no use—I have passed a great part of my life in America and been in many unpleasant and disagreeable situations but I do declare without exaggeration that I think Sydney by far the worst—Could one have patience and Philosophy enough to put up with Sydney such as I have described it yet there is one insuperable Bar to an officers ever being comfortable as the actual expense of existence must exceed what he can afford—The place itself produces no Earthly article but a few Vegetables, so that every thing for our subsistence must be brought at a great expense and risk either from Halifax and Boston and provision must also be procured to subsist the live stock during the Winter. Miserable as the place is the price of labour is intolerable as a drunken Rascal who himself an Artificer will not take less than a dollar a day, and the greater part of the materials for work are in proportion—The Barracks are very bad and in danger of falling down, but My Lord Dorchester's economy will not admit of their being repaired. Those for the few of the officers are so bad as not to be habitable in winter, so that absolutely to shelter my head from the weather, I have been obliged to give the enormous price of sixty guineas to an officer of the 42 Reg<sup>t</sup> for his hut—Twenty are to be paid down and ten paid annually for 4 years to come My Lodging money amounts to about 10£ per annum—God forbid that I should remain long enough here for my lodging money to amount to the price of this Hut— The only consolation I have amidst our misfortunes, is, the hope of being able to get to England next autumn; nothing but the most absolute necessity can possibly induce me to pass another year here. In this *Capital* we have a *Governour and Council* Chief Justice and attorney general &c &c who instead of remaining quiet and forwarding the unhappy settlement distract the inhabitants by their dissensions— At present the Chief Justice is under suspension and an Investigation into the conduct of the Secretary of the Province going on before the Council— You may judge how well their places are supplied. I am but just come from the Court of Oyer and Terminer, the present judges of which consist of the Surgeon upon the Staff the muster master and a gentleman who

was obliged to leave his own country for his good deeds. A gentleman of our Reg<sup>t</sup> who came round with me and was in the Court observing the villainous countenances and squalid appearance of the petty jury, held up his hands in amazement and audibly expressed his surprise at the great number of criminals to be tried— Had you seen them you would have thought his mistake very natural. Our Gov<sup>r</sup> you probably may have heard of; his name is McCormick a half pay Capt<sup>n</sup> who raised some kind of a corps last war.

I must not forget to tell you that the Master of a vessel from Dublin not thinking there were rascals enough upon the Island, thought proper to land 60 male and 18 female convicts upon the coast and left them to pick out their road the best way they could the consequence was that seven of them died immediately from the severity of the weather (it was about last X<sup>tmas</sup>) Two of them have since been hanged for robbery; two more under sentence of death for murder, seven in Prison to take their trials before the court I have mentioned, and the remainder are traveling about the country at large to improve the morals of the people—One is comforted however from the reflection that the danger of their being corrupted is not great— We were led to believe before our arrival that we might contrive to pass our time tolerably well in shooting &c but there is not the appearance of game of any kind except a few Spruce and Birch partridges who certainly are not worth the fatigue and danger of following. Some little time ago, one of the officers of the 42<sup>d</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> lost himself in the woods, and the whole country divided into parties in search of him by one of whom he was found just as he was on the point of giving up the Ghost.—

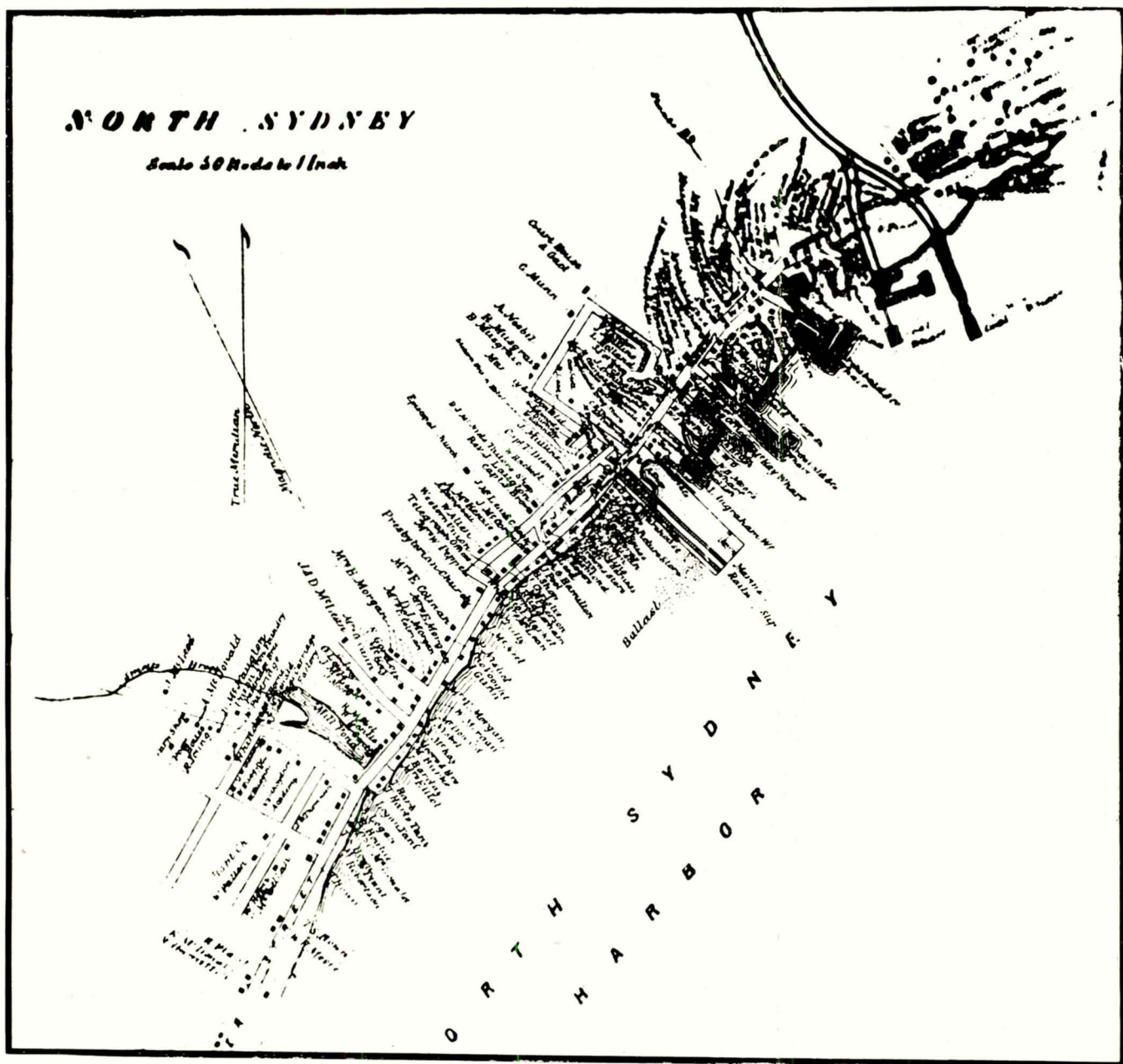
## APPENDIX D

### T. C. Haliburton's description of Sydney, 1829.

Sydney—is the next harbour on this line of coast, at nearly the same interval of six or seven miles; the intervening shore affording only two boat harbours, called the Little Pond and the Big Pond, settled by English and Irish. The harbour of Sydney, called sometimes Spanish river, and on some charts, Dartmouth harbour, presents an entrance of nearly two miles in width, four miles above which it diverges into two branches, de-

**NORTH SYDNEY**

Scale 50 Mm. dia to 1 inch





nominated the northwest arm and the southwest arm, each of which are protected from the sea by a low bar. The Coal Mines are worked on the western side of the harbour, outside of the bars, and are consequently in an exposed situation for shipping, which it is said to be in the contemplation of the present Mining Company to improve by erecting a pier. At present vessels are obliged to desist from loading on the approach of an easterly gale, and run for shelter into the northwest arm, above the bars. This arm extends four miles to its head, where it is entered by two small rivers, Leitch's creek and Ball's creek, the former issuing from a lake, and the latter proceeding from a distance of eight miles in the interior, through a fertile and well timbered tract of country. The arm preserves a width of more than a mile, and makes a fine appearance, its cultivated hills being thickly dotted with farm houses. Two or three miles from Point Edward, the place where the two arms of the harbour diverge, and on the eastern side of the southwest arm, a peninsula, of which 300 acres in area furnishes the site of the little village called the town of Sydney. The peninsula and front of the town, presents a crescent toward the west, the bank being here about thirty feet in height, and perpendicular, but level on the top, and the water is bold, offering through the whole distance, to its termination at Freshwater creek, favourable situations for wharves; and a low point in front of the town, under the batteries of the Garrison, lies most conveniently for a Dock-Yard. The surface of the peninsula slopes gently to the waters edge, on its eastern shore, between which and the main land a scarcely sheltered creek affords reception to vessels of small burthen. The southwest arm contracts two miles above Sydney, becomes winding and resembles a river, and at the Forks, about six miles above Sydney, it receives two small rivers, the northernmost proceeding from a little lake, encompassed by high wooded banks, termed the Portage lake. A low carrying place or portage, lies between this lake and the head of the eastern arm of the Bras d'Or lake, which here terminates in a landlocked Basin, known by the Indian name of Tweedporge [Tewitnochk]. Considered as one port, the harbour of Sydney is one of the most capacious and secure in the Provinces. The surrounding land is a fine agricultural tract; the advantages for carrying on the fishery excellent, its trade is opened to all parts of the Globe, by its late admission to the number of the free ports; and the materials for prosecuting that trade to be found abundantly in the prime articles of coals, fish, timber,

and agricultural produce: notwithstanding which capabilities, its advance has been very slow, if it can be said to have advanced at all, since its establishment in the year 1783 [1785], by Gov. Desbarres. At that time a regiment was stationed in Sydney, and until the annexation of that Island to Nova-Scotia, the Lieut.-Governor and other Provincial officers resided there. The incomes of these functionaries being spent in the place, together with the revenues from the mines, appears to have had the effect of withholding the attention of the trading classes from other sources of emolument. The cessation of these revenues, however, has not had the effect of creating a spirit of commerce. The tide of fortune has not yet set towards Sydney, and it appears, together with Louisburg, to be neglected for places that cannot vie with it in natural capabilities. It extends one third of a mile in length, and consists of about sixty houses, containing four hundred and fifty souls. The Courts of Justice are held, and the public offices are kept at this place, where all the principal officers of the County reside. Within a square at the north end of the town are situated the Barracks, Government Store and Commandant's house, which add much to its appearance. A Captain and 40 men are stationed for the preservation of the buildings and the protection of the town. The other public edifices are a Court House, Episcopal Church, (built of stone) a Dissenting Meeting House, a Roman Catholic Chapel, and a market house. The Roman Catholics have laid the foundation of a spacious stone Chapel, which, if completed according to the design, will be a great ornament to Sydney. The streets are regularly laid out, the private houses in general well built, the grounds in the vicinity cultivated with some taste, and the whole being interspersed with gardens filled with fruit trees, presents a very pleasing appearance. The Country around is settled by disbanded soldiers and descendants of American Loyalists, intermixed with some Irish and Scotch; and a settlement of French, from Prince Edward's Island, is formed at Ball's creek, already mentioned, at the head of the N. W. arm. Roads proceed from Sydney up the south shore of the S. W. arm, and along the southern side of the Bras d'Or lake to St. Peter's, and thence to Lenox Passage and Arichat, round the north-west arm, and thence to the Mines, French village, Great Bras d'Or and St. Anne's, across the country to Lingan, and along the eastern shore of the harbour to Low Point, an old Irish settlement opposite the Coal Mines; also across the country to Mira and Louisburg, continued from the latter



place to Gabarus Bay, and from the former to Menadou.— Between Sydney and Lingan, the next harbour on this coast, the soil is fertile and well timbered, both near the shores and in the interior. It is occupied chiefly by the Irish already designated, who give the name of Low Point to the whole settlement, from the eastern side of Sydney harbour, round the coast to Lingan, the settlers of which are likewise principally Irish or their descendants. Kilkenny lake, on the road from Sydney to Lingan, is a deep circular pond in the midst of this fertile tract, which rises gradually round this small piece of water with a very imposing effect.

## APPENDIX E

### John McGregor's Description of Sydney, 1832.

Sydney, which is considered the metropolis, or county town, of Cape Breton, was founded by Governor Desbarres in 1823 [1785]. It is situated a few miles south of the entrance to Bras d'Or, on a point of land lying between a small river which branches to the south, and the larger continuation of Dartmouth river; and about two miles above the junction of the latter river with the west arm of Sydney, or Spanish Bay. It was, previously to the re-annexation of Cape Breton to Nova Scotia, the residence of the lieutenant-governors. Its situation is very beautiful, having a steep bank, with deep water on the west, from which the site of the town descends gently to the east. The surrounding scenery, presenting woods, water, cultivated land, and some other picturesque features, is interesting and pretty, but not romantic; the town is regularly planned, contains from sixty to seventy houses, rather handsomely built, with gardens attached, and a population of about five hundred.

The government buildings are the barracks, stores, and government-house, at the north end of the town. There is a court-house, market, church, a Dissenting and Catholic chapel. The courts for the county and district are held at Sydney; causes are decided according to the laws of England, and the provincial statutes of Nova Scotia. A captain or subaltern officer, with a detachment of from thirty to forty soldiers, are stationed here for protecting the town.



The harbour of Sydney has a bar at its entrance, but there is sufficiently deep water over it for large ships, and there is abundant room and good anchorage at Dartmouth river on the west side of the town, and at the West Arm.

Few places have improved or prospered less than Sydney since it was first built, although it possesses many advantages. It is conveniently situated for the fisheries, and the adjacent lands are adapted for agriculture and grazing. Timber, suitable for building houses and fishing-craft, is abundant; and the coal mines in its immediate neighbourhood are another eminent advantage. It is probably not the most judiciously situated for the chief town in the colony; and in consequence of the island being now under the government of Nova Scotia, Arichat will continue to be, as it now is, the most flourishing settlement.

The coal trade has been the chief business carried on from Sydney; the mines, however, on the north side of the bay, and without the bar, are very inconvenient for shipping; and the mode of drawing them from the mines, and conveying them on ship-board, has hitherto been tedious and awkward. Proper machinery will, no doubt, be immediately used, and some safe plan to protect the vessels from the sea, adopted by the "Albion Mining Company," who now possess the mines, and who have also opened a coal mine at Lingan Bay, some miles to the southward.

The inhabitants around Sydney Bay and rivers are Scotch emigrants, some Irish, disbanded soldiers, and families of American loyalists. At the West Arm there is a settlement of Acadian French.

The coast from Sydney to Louisburg presents abrupt cliffs, low beaches, bays, rivers, and a few islands. The principal places are, Lingan Bay, which is scarcely more than a boat harbour, but the lands are good, and settled principally by Irish; Glace Bay, which has also a few Irish inhabitants; and Cow Bay, at which there are a few families of loyalists.

**APPENDIX F****Description of the Township of Sydney in the  
CAPE BRETON ADVOCATE 1840.**

. . . . Excepting the town of Sydney, as it is called, and the collections of houses at the Mines in the harbor of Sydney and Lingan, or Bridgeport, there is no semblance of either town or village in this township. Sydney is a small place, containing about five hundred inhabitants, and situated in a peninsula in the southwest corner of the harbor . . . . Though the buildings are few, the site is regularly laid out, over about 300 acres, and commodiously situated. It contains an Episcopal Protestant church, a Catholic chapel, and a Methodist meeting house, and has a garrison of one company of regulars. The trade of the place is trifling notwithstanding its capabilities for prosecuting the fisheries are admirable, and that being a free warehousing port, its commerce is open to all adventurers. . . . It is yet the station of the principal Custom House, and of the Land Office for the Island. . . . The Sydney Mines are situated on the west side of the harbor, near the entrance. The coals are put on board the shipping at a jetty at the North Bar, five miles below the town of Sydney. They are conveyed by a railway direct from the pit. . . . The principal chimney of the steam engine forms a conspicuous sea-mark. . . . The harbor of Bridgeport is adapted to vessels of small burthen, by which it is much frequented, the coals being of good quality, and cheaper than those exported from Sydney Mines. There is a place termed the French Village situated within the bounds of the township, in the strait called the Little Bras d'Or. It is merely a settlement of the original French inhabitants, who live on adjoining small farms, but not in a town or village. . . .

All attempts at cultivation for profit by persons having small independent incomes, laying out their funds in stock and labor, have resulted in disappointment. It has been invariably found that all articles of produce can be purchased cheaper than they can be raised in this manner. The cause of this state of things has not been satisfactorily ascertained; for markets are good and labor not very high. The climate is certainly against the farmer, the winter being long and agricultural operations are necessarily much hurried in the spring. . . . The principal harbors in the

township are those of Sydney, Lingan, or Bridgeport; at which places are the coal mines, worked by the agents of a Company in London. The export of this commodity, in 1836, was forty thousand chaldrons to New York, Boston, and other ports in the United States, including the usual supply of Halifax, and a few cargoes to St. John's, Nfld., St. John, N. B., and other colonial outports, and has continued steadily to increase up to this period. Both harbors are free ports, and the coal exported to the States is chiefly conveyed in vessels belonging to the Republic. The shipping owned in the township is greater in number than in tonnage, and is most employed in trading to the neighboring colonies. . . .

## APPENDIX G

### **Lieut. (afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel) B. W. A. Sleight's description of Sydney, 1846**

On Wednesday morning the weather cleared, and with a more favourable breeze, at three P.M., we entered Sydney Harbour, and at five, with a light wind, we hove-to off the town and cast anchor, having spent seven days in performing a voyage of about two hundred and fifty miles. I lost no time in landing; and finding accommodation in the small hotel of the place, I was soon located in a couple of snug rooms.

The men were disembarked on the following morning, and proceeded to the barracks vacated by the company of the Rifle Brigade, who marched direct on board the *Daring*, which set sail in the afternoon on her return to Halifax. I chose, for my quarters, a detached cottage in the barrack-field, which was prettily situated, with the river in the rear, the cottage being perched on an eminence, with the surge rolling on the pebbly shore, directly beneath. It contained a bed, drawing, and dining-room, and an excellent kitchen. A well-kept enclosure of grass lay in our front, while on the left-hand side of the cottage was a nice garden, well planted by our predecessors with vegetables, and on the other side was a large plot devoted to the soldiers, who cultivated it with great judgment and horticultural skill. A slight hill before the cottage shelters the barracks from view, which are placed on the summit. This building has wings, in which the men are located, while the centre contains officers' quarters, the "Mess



House," "Orderly Room," etc. On the right are the magazine, and the rear is flanked by stabling. On a line with my quarters, about a hundred yards off, is the guard-house and engine-house, while the barrack-gate, leading into the town, is in close contiguity. The barrack-field contains about five acres, enclosed by a high stockade, and four sentries, at the respective angles, keep watch and ward. The rooms of my quarters were all on the ground-floor, a long piazza running in front, while inside, another parallel passage, with doors leading off, conducted to the respective apartments. . . .

On the Sunday we marched to church. Before parade, not having received any orders on the subject, I put on my blue frock-coat and scales; but seeing the senior officer in red and gold, I of course followed his example, as he said, "we should not put on full dress in future, but for the first Sunday it would have a good effect." I was a married man, he was not: thus the difference in our ideas and tastes.

The congregation assembled presented a vista of young and elderly ladies, very flashily dressed, with airs of considerable pride and conceit. As new comers, we were the observed of all observers. A long, uninteresting sermon, urgently recommending subscriptions for some mission to Timbuctoo or other African locality, formed the theme of the clergyman's discourse. The Military pew, which was close to the altar, had an uninterrupted view through a door, which was open, over a fine expanse of well-wooded luxuriant country; and in gazing on that charming scene, my thoughts were far more impressed with the wondrous works of God, and my senses were more prompted to religious contemplation, than in listening to the vague, soulless, vapid nonsense issuing from the pulpit, which consumed above an hour and a half in its delivery.

The town of Sydney consists of two long straggling streets, with four minor intersecting ones, running up from the water. A few grocers' stores, numerous small drinking-shops, an odd cottage here and there, two stories high, the Church of England, Methodist and Catholic Chapel, all unpretending wooden edifices—and you have a full description of this rising spot. The grass grew luxuriantly in the streets, and the cattle were evidently divided in opinion, as to whether the town or country pastures

were preferable. Flocks of geese monopolized the roadway, saucily hissing at a stray wayfarer, as if such a human intruder was a novelty. An odd youth, in shooting jacket and slouched sailor's glazed cap, with a fowling-piece, gave occasional token of the place being inhabited; while the men of my company, with their red coats, sauntering about, as they continually do to kill time, forming the majority of the male kind to be seen, conveyed the idea of a military occupancy of some deserted village. . . .

The scenery around Sydney is very pretty, and a favourite evening's amusement was, to pull up the river in a boat lent to me by Judge Dodd, to whom we were indebted for many acts of courtesy. In the "Kitten" I could enjoy the cool breeze and the healthful exercise of rowing.

There were several encampments of the Micmac Indians in the neighbourhood, with their bark wig-wams situated in judiciously screened nooks of the woods. Take these Indians as a body, and they are the laziest, dirtiest, and most drunken set on the face of the earth; there is nothing of the old warrior left in them, and in dress and appearance they are not unlike our roving gipsies in England. Their wigwams look pretty at a distance, but within all is dirt. Of an evening, from my bedroom window, I would be attracted by a gleam of light passing along the wall, and on looking out numerous canoes were to be seen, with pine-torches burning, while the Indians were spearing salmon, which are attracted to the surface by the light passing over it. In the rear of the barrack-field was a swamp, in which snipe and plover shooting afforded an occasional day's excellent sport.

I purchased a couple of red foxes from an Indian, and chaining them up, they afforded me considerable amusement. I never saw animals so ferocious in my life; and when feeding on fish, a dainty dish of theirs, the manner in which they flew at each other was quite surprising. Cape Breton abounds in these destructive animals; but as a slight recompense, there are a good many black foxes about, whose skins are most valuable, and fetch a high price in the Halifax market.

There were a few very pleasant families in the town, and at hospitable house of the Collector of Customs, a most kind-hearted, gentlemanly man, with an amiable and lady-like partner, I spent many pleasant hours. The town Mayor, Sutherland, an ac-



complished officer, deeply read, and an exquisite artist in oil-painting and water-colours, and whose productions would reflect credit on our London Exhibitions, was a great acquisition to our little circle. His house, delightfully situated on the opposite side of the river, recently built in the Italian style, was a favourite retreat, where a hearty welcome and a refined tone of conversation were ever to be found, and assured a pleasant evening. Sydney was further fortunate in the residence of one of the most eminent lawyers in the Province, the then Solicitor-General, but who is now promoted to the Bench, where his learning and legal knowledge must prove most valuable: I refer to Judge Dodd. There was also an open house at the Barrack-master's pretty retreat, "Coleby." In this little circle our time was pleasantly diversified; while, through the kindness of a Canadian resident, Mr. Bunsinot [Bourinot], I was always provided with the most recent American reprints of the works of favourite English authors.

The hospitality of the farmers and the gentlemen settled in the Province is proverbial, and deserves grateful mention. They never sent in a waggon to market, but some present was forwarded to our cottage. Quarters of lamb, poultry, exquisitely-flavoured butter, vegetables and fruit of every kind, and sundry other produce of the farm-yard, or results of the gun, were daily placed in the larder,—the whole the presents of this really kind-hearted people, notwithstanding their faults, peculiarities, and tittle-tattle, to which indeed most small Colonial communities are liable. To refuse to accept these well-meant offerings, would be considered an offence; indeed "No refusal" was their motto. I can safely say, that during our entire sojourn in Cape Breton, I had not occasion to spend a single sovereign in marketing, such was the unbounded kindness of the habitants to myself and my wife.

Our dressing-table was always decorated with fresh bouquets, gathered in the well-arranged gardens of some of the residents; and their kindness went so far, that they never thought of brewing, making preserves, or home-manufactured wine, without sending to the "Lieutenant and his lady" a tithe thereof. We were then both very young, and perchance on that account became especial favourites; however that may be, I never heard a military man who had been quartered in Cape Breton, but speak kindly and gratefully of the hospitality of the people.



**APPENDIX H****INVERNESS COUNTY, 1861**

Halifax, December 11th, 1861.

Dear Sir—As I am desirous of procuring the fullest information from the most reliable persons in your County as to its capabilities, and its adaptation to receive emigration, I shall feel much indebted if you will fill up replies to enclosed questions, or to as many as you can, heading them with the No. of the question. Please let the answers be as full as possible; and if you could fill two sheets or more of foolscap, instead of one, they would be most acceptable.

The answers must be sent to me before January 6th, at the latest; after that, they will be of no service.

I am, respectfully yours,

R. G. HALIBURTON.

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**QUESTIONS.**

- 1.—What is the general character of the settlers in your County or District, as regards their occupation, industry, and progress?
- 2.—What number of farm laborers could be employed in addition to present labor? Do. Servant Girls. . . Do. Servant Boys, (Minors). . . Do. Servant Girls, (Minors.)
3. What can a farm of two hundred acres, with a log house and barn, and forty acres cleared, be purchased for per acre?
- 4.—Are there many farms of that character for sale?
- 5.—What extent of ungranted lands, of a character suitable for profitable cultivation, can be obtained for settlement, and where?

- 6.—What quantity of land covered by old grants, unsettled, but of a character suitable for settlement, remains unoccupied in your County?
- 7.—Name the prevailing timber growing on the unoccupied lands of your County.
- 8.—Name the number of mechanics—such as carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, and cartwrights—that could find profitable employment within your County or District.
- 9.—What are the ship-building capabilities of your County, and what class of vessels are built, and at what price?
- 10.—Name the average price of the following articles:
- |                 |   |                   |
|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| Beef, per cwt.  | : | Eggs, per doz.    |
| Pork, “         | : | Oats, per bushel. |
| Mutton, per lb. | : | Barley, “         |
| Butter, “       | : | Wheat, “          |
| Cheese, “       | : |                   |
- 11.—State the markets for your produce, and the principal roads, &c., over which the produce of the County is conveyed.
- 12.—Are there any manufactories established in your County, and what? Describe them.
- 13.—Are there any river fisheries of any value in your County, and what?
- 14.—Are many of the people of your County engaged in sea fisheries? What species of fish do they catch? and where are the fisheries situate? and where do you find a market for your fish?

### ANSWERS.

No. 1.—The county of Inverness is decidedly agricultural, for although there is a number of merchants, Traders, Mechanics, and Fishermen, yet they nearly all possess farms, and cultivate them more or less.

There are a few french and Irish settlements, and a sprinkling of Novascotians, throughout the county, but the inhabitants are chiefly from the Highlands, and Islands of Scotland. Those from the Islands did very well while cutting down the trees, and clearing up new land, but as soon as they gave up that, and turned to the plough they began to fall behind.

There total want of system and knowledge of farming unfitts them to take charge of a farm, and the unlimited credit that has prevaded in this county, add to that the loss of the potatoe crop for a number of years, has thrown many of the people in debt to Merchants so deep that there lands have, or must go to liquidate them.

I make this statement to show why there are so many farms now for sale in this County, and that it is not owing to any defect in the land, or localities, and as a proof of it, all the farmers who attend to there business and obtained some little skill in farming have become quite independent.

No. 2. Servants of all kinds are plenty and wages low.

No. 3. A farm of that discription could be purchased for from 20/— to 40/— per Acre.

No. [4] There are a number of farms in Mabou and vicinity for sale, and I think in every part of the county. I think 100 imigrants with fifty pounds and upwards to five hundred could be accomadated at once and as many more in a short time.

No. 5. Could not answer that question correctly but I think there is considerable quantity.

No. 6. I would answer that as I have done No. 5.

No. 7. The Timber is pretty well mixed, but the prevading timber is hard wood. Birch, Beech, Maple, and Elm.

No. 8. We have plenty mechanics such as they are, but very few first rate workmen, but in new countries we must be contented to have our work roughly and cheaply done, but as the



country improves, better mechanics will come in and as a matter of course will push out the inferior ones.

No. 9. No county of the province is better adapted for ship-building than this. Timber of superior quality plenty and easy to be obtained. Provisions and labor plenty and cheap, and saw mills in all directions.

The Strait of Canso, River Inhabitants, Whycocomah, Mabou, Margarie, and Cheticamp are all first rate places for carrying on Ship building. Very few large vessels have yet been built, but such as were adapted for the fisheries and for coasting, from 30 to 80 tons at about £5 per Ton.

No. 10.	Beef per Cwt	15/—	..	Eggs per Doz	3d
	Pork “ “	25/—	to 30/—	Oats per Bushel	1/9
	Mutton per lb	2½d	....	Barley “ “	3/6
	Butter	9		Wheat “ “	8/
	Cheese “ “	6d			

No. 11. Our live stock cattle and sheep are sent to St Johns N. F. in summer, all else to Halifax.

No. 12. There are no manufactories, but such as are common to every country such as Grist Mills, Saw Mills, and Carding, and fulling Mills &c.

No. 13. The only valuable River fishery is Margaree where a large quantity of alewives are taken and Salmon and Trout are abundant. In there season the same may be said of Lake Ainslie, a sheet of fresh water 2 Miles long an[d] six broad Out of which Margaree river flows. There are a few Salmon and trout taken at Mabou, but the number is limited about 20 Barrels of the former are exported annually.

No. 14. The Cod fishery is carried partialy on the whole western coast from the Strait of Canso to Cape North but only in boats and that mostly by farmers who live on the shore who after they first put there crops or seed in the ground go fishing till it is time to take them in again. This will apply to the whole coast except Margarie and Chiticamp where they have a number of Vessels.

fitted out for the fishery and follow it constant. Principly the codfish but some take Mackeral in there season.

The Cheticamp people give there fish to the House of Robeen [Robin] & Co who ship them to Europe, all others send there fish to Halifax for a market.

Those who follow the fishing in vessels in Cheticamp and Margarie, are descendants of the french Acadians who found there way here from Prince Edward in 1785 and were the first settlers of this county in 1786. The House of Robeen [Robin] & Co erected a fishing establishment at Cheticamp which has been in full operation ever since, and have exported immense quantities of fish to Europe.

### [SECOND SET OF ANSWERS]

No. 1.—The most of the Settlers in this County are from the Islands & Highlands of Scotland. The most of them are farmers. The majority of them are not industrious consequently they are progressing but slowly. Those who are industrious are progressing rapidly.

No. 2.—I do not think that any number of farm Labourers could be profitably employed in this County excepting in the Township of Canso. A gentleman from that section of the county informs me that a large number of labourers might be profitably employed there particularly if they understood draining, manuring &c.

No. 3.—From 10/ to 20/.

No. 4.—About 150 of 200 Acre lots might be purchased at above prices and many more by an advance in price.

No. 5.—There is a large tract of ungranted and unoccupied land Situate between Lake Ainslie and Middle River. Whether suitable for profitable cultivation I cannot say. The settlers in this District Say that owing to the snow lying on the ground so late in the spring they are prevented putting their crops in the ground until late in the season and before they are ripe in the fall

the frost destroys them. Were they to prepare the ground the previous fall I believe this could be avoided.

No. 7.—Principally hard wood with some fir.

No. 8.—About 50 or 60 Mechanics of the various kinds might find profitable employment in this county.

No. 9.—This County is well adapted to shipbuilding. There is plenty good timber for that purpose all over the county. The vessels built are generally small say 40 to 200 tons. Cost about six pounds Cy. per ton.

No. 11.—Halifax and St. Johns Newfoundland.

No. 13.—The only River fisheries of any value are the two branches of the Margaree River. The South West branch for its Gaspereaux and Eels of which—especially the former—large quantities were caught until the last two or three years. They are not so plenty since as before that time. The North East for its Salmon and trout which are caught in considerable quantities there.

No. 14.—A large number of the people along the Gulf Shore are engaged in the Sea fisheries. The fish caught are Cod, Herring Mackeral and Salmon. The most of the Cod Mackeral and Salmon are Shipped to Halifax. The Herring are used in the County. There are some Codfish and Herring taken in St. Georges Channel, but not sufficient to supply the wants of the Inhabitants along the shore.

### McKEEN'S REPORT

The County of Inverness extends from Ship Harbour on the Strait of Canso to Cape North a distance of about 120 Miles and its breadth from 20 to 03 Miles, it is bounded the South by the Strait of Canso on the west by the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the East by the county of Richmond to the Southward, the county of Victoria to the Northward, and in the middle for about 20 or 30 miles it is washed by the Bras dore, there is a ridge of high Lands running through the center of the County from South to North, in parts about 1000 feet above the level of the Sea and



here I may remark that the tops of these mountains are mostly free from Rocks, or stones, the soil deep and aluvial and resembling that of the best of Entervale and is covered with heavy hard wood, Birch, Maple beach, and Elems—the whole county is undulating and is well fitted by nature for an Agriculturall Country, the Entervals are not extensive but in a few localities, but the Up Lands are the best I have seen in this province and as a proof of it the hard wood timber growing on it is far superior to any I have seen, which makes it a desirerable country for ship building, and further every ship carpenter is aware that timber growing on the sides of hills are generally crooked so in a hilly country they will have no trouble in finding crooked timber to suit their purpose, this may appear trifling but it is of great importance to the Ship builder.

The Island of Cape Breton is surrounded with a valuable fishery which is well known, one of the best is on the west side of this county from Port Hood to Chiticamp. so much for general principals, I will now take the deferent localities in rotation from South to North.

Ship Harbour the southern extremity of the county situated on the Strait of Canso is a place of business is well calculated for carrying on the fishery and ship building, no mines or minerals that I am aware of, Plaister Cove three Miles N. W. is [singularly] situated for trade, the fisheries, and ship building, and has abundance of Lime Stone and Gypsome.

The River Inhabitants on the East side of the County is a pretty Large River with extensive Entervales and where large stocks of cattle are kept it is decidedly a farming county, there are no fish in the River that I am aware of but in the Bay below there are some springs large quantities of lean Mackerell taken, River Denny to the Northward is also a farming country and has large and extensive intervalles where large stocks of cattle are kept—Whycocomah to the North of that is a growing place built on the borders of the Bras Dore Lake and is well situated for trade and will yet be a flourishing place. the Steamer from Sydney at present runs to there once a week and should we have a Rail Road to Pictou and a steamer as now running to Port Hood it would be possible to send the mail by that route in one day from Halifax to Sydney.

Mabou is an extensive and well settled place as You will perceive by the Census having 2737 inhabitants and to make this a good Harbour would not only be a great boon to all those, but to all the region round about, I further remark that the S. W. branch of Mabou and all the south side of the Harbour is not included in the census, but is included in that of Port Hood district.

Cape Mabou which commences on the north side of Mabou Harbour rises to a great height near 1000 feet and is thought to contain mines and minerals of all descriptions coal and Iron Ore, is all I can speak of with certainty but it is confidently affirmed that gold will be found in quantities sufficient to warrant the working of them. A Mr. Douglass who has been gold digging in Australia five or six years was taken to examine some of the places and he pronounces the Rocks Auriferous and says that in Australia they would not hesitate to commence operations at once.

Mabou has some marble quarries and abundance of ore, and matalic paints and the finest ship timber in North America and in great abundance—it is a first rate farming country and good farms could be purchased from one pound to three pounds pr Acre, and on Cape Mabou partially cultivated for from 10/ to 20/ pr Acre and very fine Lands they are.

Broad Cove 20 miles from Port Hood stretches along the shore for 10 or 12 miles towards Margaree and has some fine lands and good farms which could be purchased at about the same rate as I have before stated, it is a farming country and as they are situated on the shore and a very good fishery convenient they give too much of their time to that branch, to have good farms or farms properly worked.

Coal, Lime Stone, Gypsone and free stone, which abounds on the whole shore, is the only minerall wealth it can boast of.

Margaree Harbour 40 miles from Port Hood is also a born Harbour—with about 7- or 8 feet at high water, here the cod-fishery is carried on to some extent as also salmon and alewives in consequence the farms are not well attended to I alude to the Harbour of Margaree.

Chiticamp from 15 to 20 miles from Margaree was the first place located in this county in 1786 the Messers Robeens & Co. from the Island of Jersey established a fishery at what is called the point where it still continues and a great quantity of fish is cured every season for the European market.

Chiticamp is settled with french Canadians who found their way there from P. E. Island after Novascotia was taken from them and they still remain in that old primitive state our people found them in, and I think it will be long before they adopt the crinoline, hoops, and other Anglo Saxon improvements.

About 20 miles north of Chiticamp there is a settlement of 15 or 20 families but having never been there I can say nothing about it, but the whole shore from Chiticamp to Cape North is Iron bound and the Rocks very high with the exception of a few places where they got to the shore by breaks made by ravines and otherwise.

There are large tracks of Land not taken up yet in that quarter, but what the quality of it is I could not undertake to say but I have been told that a large track lies between Chiticamp and the head of the N. E. branch of Margaree that has niver been explored properly yet, and is reported to be of an excellent quality.

A number of small vessels are built every year at Chiticamp and at the Harbour of Margaree which are used for fishing and coasting but the most eligible situations for Ship building is Ship Harbour, Plaister Cove, Mabou, & Whycocomah, though many could be found where it might be carried on to advantage but the above are the best localities for that business to be carried on extensively.

As regards imigration 500 imigrants having from £50 to £500 could be accomodated very comfortably at once and as many more in a very limited time—for the ungranted Lands the Surveyor Generalls office is the only place where correct information can be procured and plan now on foot of surveying the whole of the ungranted will in short time make that information attainable.



I have given a short and crude discription of the principle places in this county and it should be understood that the Roads leading from one place to the other are nearly all good carriage Roads and settled all the way by farmers &c. and although a new country our Roads will compare favorably with any county in the province.

I have not time to continue but the statements I have given are truthfull and out of which I know you are able to give a very good discription of our county, and I sincerely hope and trust you will find time to do so.

I am very respectfully

Yours truly

Wm McKeen

Robert Haliburton Esqr.  
Secry Inl. Exe.<sup>n</sup>  
Halifax

Iron Ore is plenty at Whycocomah and of a good quality.  
Mabou has Salmon & Trout but not extensive about 20 Blls.  
of the former are exported yearly.

## APPENDIX I

## VICTORIA COUNTY, 1861-62.

[The same Question form from R. G. Haliburton as in Inverness County.]

## ANSWERS.

No. 1.—

No. 2. Not even one, with any benefit to the employer or even to the employed. Farming produce has never been found here, to pay for the cost of thus raising it, especially with labour obtained by the year.

No. 3. The prices of farms are regulated by their situation, their quality, title, &c., and to a great extent, by the reports from other countries as to the advantages of removing to them. Prices will thus fluctuate, from £40 to £300, or even more, for a lot of 200 Acres with a good title—a dwelling house, log or framed, and barn.

No. 4. Only at such times as there is a prospect of emigrating to more favored climes are there many such farms for sale. A few however may always be found in the market.

No. 5. There are but little if any ungranted lands in the county, unoccupied, that are fit for cultivation. Squatters *claiming* from 100 to 250 acres each are to be found on every piece of land that promises the means of support, and it is the received opinion that since the failure of the potatoe, no emigrant, especially if unacquainted with the work and requirements of a farm in the back woods, could now succeed on such new farm, even should suitable lands unpreoccupied by *squatters* be found.

No. 6. There are none to any extent, worthy of notice that I am aware of. I understand this question to refer to granted lands on which no person is residing.

No. 7. There is not on the lands in the county unoccupied or *unclaimed*, timber of any value. So far as the extensive tract

yet unoccupied is known, situate between the Eastern coast, north of St. Anne's and the county line, the lands are mountainous, said to be poor, and covered with dwarf spruce or white moss.

No. 8. None. Almost all of this class are desirous of getting away to other countries, where their industry will meet with that remuneration that cannot be obtained here.

No. 9. There is hard wood fit for shipbuilding but very little pine; Persons have repeatedly tried the building of vessels from 600 tons down to 30, but none appear to have made any thing beyond getting in debt; so that but few if any vessels excepting small fishing craft, are now built in the county.

No. 10.	Beef—from 15/ to 18/	Eggs a dozen 5d to 6d
	Pork " 20/ to 29/.	Oats a bushel 1/9 to 2/.
	Mutton " 3d to 3½d.	Barley " 4/ to 5/.
	Butter " 7d to 8d.	Wheat " 8/ to 10/.
	Cheese " 7d to 8d.	

These are about the prices given by the merchants in exchange for their goods. Generally speaking they never pay in money. From the annual proceeds of his farm, it is difficult for the farmer to obtain 20/ in cash, unless he ship his produce, at his own expense and risk to some distant market, the results of which, from obvious causes are often ruinous; farmers being in general altogether unfitted for such speculations.

No. 11. There are no roads in particular over which farming produce is taken to the merchants as of these merchants there is an ample supply in every settlement. On the roads to these merchants stores, the produce is carried or it may be by water in boats in summer, or on ice in winter. Of the mud paths ycleped *roads* in the county, that from Cape North to Baddeck; from Marguerite to Baddeck and from Whycocomah to Baddeck may be deemed the most important. None of these paths are at present, or under existing circumstances ever will be, roads such as they should be for the prosperity of the people connected by them. The first and most indispensable requisite towards *Road* making is wanting in this Province, and the result is, grades of one in 12 or even it may be, of one in 8, where one in 28 or 30 is attainable.



No. 12. One Fulling mill at Wagmatcook. A few saw and shingle mills in different places. Durable home made cloth of good appearance is made in almost every farmer's house, either of wool or partly of wool and of cotton warp.

No. 13. None of any commercial value. Even hardly any, left by that class of idlers, that regardless of the advice of the poet

"Never to blend our pleasures nor our pride  
"With suffering to the meanest thing that feels."

or even of the common dictates of humanity take pleasure in the barbarous pastime of torturing to death, some unlucky fish, so unfortunate as to be caught by their wiles.

No. 14. At Bay St. Lawrence, Aspy Bay, and on the eastern coast in general Cod, mackarel, herring and dogfish are caught by the settlers. These sell to the merchants who dispose of them in Halifax to the inland farmers.

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The county of Victoria is settled principally by Scotch highlanders from the western Islands of Scotland and the mainland adjoining; with a few settlers from England and Ireland, and the Low countries. The proximity of the county to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, renders the springs late, and it is in general necessary for the farmers to feed their cattle with hay, from five to six months in the year. The system of tarning is, with but few exceptions, very defective; a regular rotation of green and white crops being but little practised. From one, to three, and even four crops of oats in succession, are said to be taken at times from the same field, which is then laid down to hay & this is cut annually while the land will produce it; when it is again broken up, and subjected to the same culture, with now and then an attempt to raise a crop of potatoes, or a change with barley; turnips being generally raised on new lands taken from the forest. Very little wheat can now be raised; formerly an abundant crop.

A very great want is felt by the farmers, of regular marts or fairs, where seeds, cattle, &c. could be exchanged with mutual advantage, and possibly new articles of culture introduced, that for want of the facilities requisite for obtaining these, are never attempted to be raised in the county.

Of these useful articles, (rendered much more so, since the decay of the potatoe) the farmers in general in Cape Breton, may be said to know but little. From the loss of the potatoe, their lands are by too close a succession of white crops, without the necessary change of green ones, being rapidly reduced to a state of sterility, and a war with the United States, (on the *bread-stuffs* from which, even our farmers are now to so great an extent dependant for their support) would, with the failure of the oat crop for a year or two, be attended with the most distressing results.

No appropriation of the Provincial funds could be attended with more important and lasting benefits than in the outlay of a sum to purchase for seed, field carrots, beans and pease, mangel wurtzel, parsnips, hempseed and other like seeds, that would furnish the farmer with the requisite change of crops for keeping his land in order. To these might be added a few short practical directions in the form of tracts, for raising and preserving these, and for giving them to their cattle.

Were every farmer who earns a few dollars of the annual road grants, required to take of these seeds in part payment as much as in the whole, would sow but one acre; with a few leaves of practical directions, the benefit to the farmers, as well as to the country at large, would be great; and in a few years would change the face of the Island; for it would not be hazarding much to say, that unless some such improvement be speedily introduced, the lands, by the present mode of culture, will surely be ere long, exhausted, and our dependance on the States of America for food become absolute.

These seeds would require to be sold at the lowest possible price to cover costs & charges, or even below these. On these terms, the merchants could not be expected to import them, and the prices at which they could afford to sell them would preclude the possibility of purchasing for field culture. Indeed, the disposing of these gratuitously, by the Province, would be infinitely preferable to their distributing corn meal, that has been, & without something of this kind, too probably may yet be required to avert starvation.

The principal exports from the county of Victoria are Black cattle, sheep, butter, codfish, mackarel & herring and fish oil, also a few horses, deemed good and in demand. The fisheries have fallen off very much of late, the export of timber is but nominal, Black birch, beech maple fir and spruce, all of a good quality abound in many localities but far from places of shipment. There is good coal near the entrance of the Great Bras d'Or, and between Baddeck & the Wagmatcook rivers, but not yet worked, Copper ore has been found in the valley of the Wagmatcook. Iron ore has been found in different places, and sulphate & carbonate of lime are abundant in many parts of the county, and there is reason to believe that gold may be found in that section of the county north of St. Anne's.

In a county possessing so large an amount of mineral wealth, with a reasonably good soil so far as it has been cultivated; it may be asked why a single additional mechanic, or even a farm servant cannot in it, find profitable employment. It can only be said that the answers to the foregoing questions are the result of many years observation, and in harmony with the opinions of some of the most respectable and intelligent persons in the county & who have been consulted with a view of obtaining correct replies. That the inhabitants do not in general, lack industry, may be evident from the demand for their services in the neighbouring Republic, to which the youth & strength of the country is to so lamentable an extent going; there, to meet with that reward for their industry, that no amount of it can obtain for them here.

D. B. MC NAB

Baddeck Bay  
22 Feby 1862.



**APPENDIX J****CAPE BRETON COUNTY, 1861-62.**

[The same Question form from R. G. Haliburton as in Inverness County.]

**ANSWERS**

No. 1. About one third of the Inhabitants in this County call themselves Fishermen, one third Farmers. The fishermen farm some, and the farmers fish a little, which spoils both, one third follow farming altogether and if industrious make a good living and more, industry is the only thing wanting, if we had it, I could report progress. We have a class of people, that is Miners, and half mechanics who work well and are never in want, and always well clad.

No. 2. It is impossible for me to say whether any would be employed as I find that if I have occasion to employ two or three men, a dosin will offer, and further, on or about the first of May, a number of young men leave this County in search of labour or higher wages, servant Girls, are an article of exportation, they ship by the dosin from here to Boston, where they are proud of the name, *help*, instead of Servant.

No. 3. About the average price of such farms (if Granted Land) is \$3 per acre, this is a fair property which would support a large family with a little industry, but the range of prices is so wide, owing to situation, quality of soil, and title, that I may price farms of that description from £300.0.0 to £50.0.0. I will venture to say that all the farms excepting 4 or 5 on the North and South sides of Mira River could be purchased, at the average price £110.0.0.

No. 4. I Believe that one third of the farms in the County of Victoria and half the farms in the County Cape Breton could be purchased for £150.0.0 each. the Rageing of the New Zeland fever in the County Victoria, and the Coal and Gold fever in the County Cape Breton has affected the sickley spirit of industry, so that it is likely to die.

No. 5. There is a large tract of Land situate between the head of Mira River or Grand Mira, the Eastern end of Grand Lake and the south side of Salmon River, containing about 25000 Acres, deducting barrons, about double that quantity remains unsettled, between the South Eastern side of grand Mira, and Catalogne extending in bredth nearly from Mira River to the Southern Shore of the Island Cape Breton, there is but a small portion of this tract Granted the soil is good tho rocky in some places, the hills are not high and but few barrons, there are a number of small lakes and ponds, the Timber on the driest parts is chiefly Beach with an under wood of fir, the more moist, is mixed with Black Birch, at the foot of the hills the sugar Maple forms the greater part of the timber, the low land and swamps, are covered with a thick groath of Fir mingled with Juniper, the swamps can all be drained with little expence and the mud in them would manure the hire lands for many years ther are other tracts of less note, say on the North and South sides of the East Bay Between Mira River and Sydney River, between Sydney and Cow Bay and between Big Glace Bay, and Sydney, but they are more settled by squatters and more Barron, than the first mentioned tracts.

No. 6. I kno of no old Grants in the County that is not settled, but one up the Forks of Sydney River about 500 Acres, Granted to Richard Gibbons.

No. 7. The timber on the two first mentioned tracts is chiefly Beach, Birch and Maple with an under groath of fir, the Last mentioned has a larger portion of Fir and spruce also Burned wood which is about being replaced with all Birch.

No. 8. I believe that about Thirty Mechanics would be employed within the County.

No. 9. The County produces the best of Beach, Black Birch, and Maple, for building Vessels of not a very large size

The County being intersected by lakes, Bays and Rivers, that a Vessel can be built, near to the timber which can be gathered together at a small expence. The Vessels built here are generally from 40 to 120 tons. A few of a larger class are builded at North Sydney in Mr. Archibalds Yard there is no other reg-

ular ship yard in the County, Persons wishing to build usually lay the first blocks as near the timber trees as possible, observing only, that a cheap Launch way may be erected, there is also enoug of good Larch wood for top timbers, knees, and trenails, the prices for building generally, for the hull, without the spars is £4:5:0 per ton, ship carpenters measure.

No. 11. The produce is generally sold by the Farmers at South Sydney, North Sydney, Manadiou Louisburg, and Gabarous: the principal Roads to South Sydney are from East Bay, Mira River, Cow Bay, Lingan and Low Point. To North Sydney, Leaches Creek Road, and the Road from Boysdale. To Manadiou the Catalogne Road, To Louisburg, from Mira and New Boston. To Gabarous the French Road from Grand Mira.

No. 12. There are no manufactories in the County, unless one dying and fulling Mill for Homespun, Two Shingle Mills, Six tanneries, and Nine Grist Mills come under this head.

No. 13. The River fishing is at Sydney and Mira Rivers. The fish Caught in Sydney River are Herrings, which some season are very plentiful. Those taken in Mira River are Gasperaus, Shad and Salmon there are no fish exported from Mira. I cannot consider the fishing in either Sydney River or Mira of any value, for the following reason.

The time of catching is in June, and in the busy time of planting, the inhabitants neglect puting there crops in in proper season, and therefore get a small return. the expence of Boats and Nets is more than the fish is worth.

No. 14. The fishing business of this County is carried on with Boats, and Nets, owned by the inhabitants of the different Harbours. The Fish caught are Codfish, Haddock, Herring, and Makerel. They are generally collected together by the dealers in the several Harbours and sent to the Halifax market.

I know of but one vessel fited out in this County for deep sea fishing, it is Owned by Josiah Hooper in Foresue Harbour, it is said that He is doing very well.



Allow me here to remark that the American fishing Vessel leave the United States with half a crew, Land on our southern coast and make up a full crew of our best fishermen, and seamen either for wages or on half their catch, if on half hand (as it is called) they go with the vessel to the States, to dispose of their shairs where every inducement is used to intice them to stay, and fish the next season, with them by this means they have drawn away some hundreds of our best fishermen. I saw an American fishing vessel at Ingonish Hir Crue was Nine young men, I personally knew them all, they were born in Manadiou and Louisburg.

G. H. GESNER

Mira Jany. 1st. 1862.

[No. 10 was filled in on the Question Form:]

Beef, per cwt.— 20/: Eggs, per doz. ./4 and ./5

Pork, " 25/ not ever very fat: Oats, per bushel 1/9—36 lb.

Mutton, per lb. /3 good: Barley, " 3/9

Butter " 9/ shop pay not Cash: Wheat, per bushel 8/  
when sold.

Cheese, " none going to market.

**APPENDIX K****RICHMOND COUNTY, 1861**

[The same Question form from R. G. Haliburton as in Inverness County etc.]

**ANSWERS**

No 1.—Some are occupied in farming, others in fishing, costing, Mercantile, and mechanical pursuits The industry of the majority of the farming class is less than that of those who follow other pursuits

No 2.—None.

No. 3.—Cannot tell.

No. 4.—None to my knowledge.

No. 5.—About 10,000 acres, Some at Frambroise, Some at Sporting Mountains, some at Red Islands & other places.

No. 6.—About 19,000 acres.

No. 7.—Pine, Maple, Birch, Beech, Ash, Juniper, Spruce, Alders, Hemlock and a few oak.

No. 8.—A considerable number would.

No. 9.—Plenty of Timbers, particularly at the Bras d'or Lake Vessels built are generally for use of owners for fishing and employment in the coal trade of the United States. Value of Vessels built in this County rigged and found with all materials about \$40 per tun.

No. 10.—[copied from actual form, where filled in]

Beef, per cwt.....	25/	Eggs, per doz.....	6d to 7d
Pork " .....	35/	Oats, per bushel.....	1/6 to 2/
Mutton, per lb.....	2½d	Barley, " .....	3/
Butter.....	9d	Wheat.....	none.....
Cheese.....	8d		

No. 11.—Arichat, Strait of Canso, Newfoundland & other places. The principal Roads to the Markets within the County are the Kempt Road, the West Bay Road, the St. Peters Road, the Grand River and L'Ardoise Road.

No. 12.—None.

No. 13.—Several, although of no great importance, yet valuable the Settlers bordering on them.

No. 14.—A great number of persons engaged in the fisheries, supposed about one half of all the population of the County, the Species of fish caught, are Cod, Haddock, Mackarel, Herring, Salmon. The fisheries, are Situate, in the North Bay & round the Coast of Cape Breton. The markets for the fish are—the British North American Provinces, Brazil, Mediteranean, Portugal, West Indies and United States of America and some few other places.

JAMES McKENZIE  
Prin. Depy. Surveyor  
Co. of Richmond.

Arichat 28th Decr. 1861.



## APPENDIX L

## CAPE BRETON ISLAND, 1861

Dear Sir,

In acknowledging your letter of 4 inst. I regret to record my conviction that you should have sought a more copious and trustworthy source for obtaining the desired information as to the capabilities and present industrial establishments of this Island of Cape Breton. No one is better able to furnish you with an authentic description of the condition of things now existing in this quarter than Judge Dodd himself. He is called on, by his position, to traverse the country several times in each year, and is familiar with all that is doing in every part of it: and he is aware that since my retirement from office, in 1848, I have lived secluded, for thirteen years, without the means of knowing what improvements or changes may have taken place, other than may have been afforded by the newspapers.

I am at a loss to imagine why he should have directed your application to me, unless he wishes that the value of this Island should be *puffed thro'* the medium of your forthcoming publication, and that he thinks I can do the *fine writing* essential for that effect. If such were the judge's intention or desire, I presume that it is not yours. You want only the homely truth; and it is but fair to intending emigrants, that the estimate of advantages should be under, rather than over stated.

To come to the point in question; the prospects of future settlers in this part of the Province; I should say, that the country is already overrun with the poorest of the poor description of Scotch emigrants, from the Hebrides principally; and that little or no good land remains unoccupied, for the benefit of later comers—that is to say, little, worth having, to be obtained at the Government price. But there are hundreds of *partially cleared farms*, or lots of land; perhaps it is hardly correct to term them *improved* lands; which emigrants, possessed of moderate means, may acquire at what would be considered in Europe very low rates. For instance, I should think that many such portions of land might be had, in all the four Counties, at an average price of fifty, or seventy five pounds, the hundred acres. In very favourable

localities, the price might be reckoned at twenty shillings the acre, for lots of one hundred acres or over that quantity.

Whether the purchasers would be satisfied with their acquisitions, is another question—I incline to the opinion that for the most part, they would not be content. They would miss the aids and appliances and comforts, and also the markets, of the more civilized countries they had left.

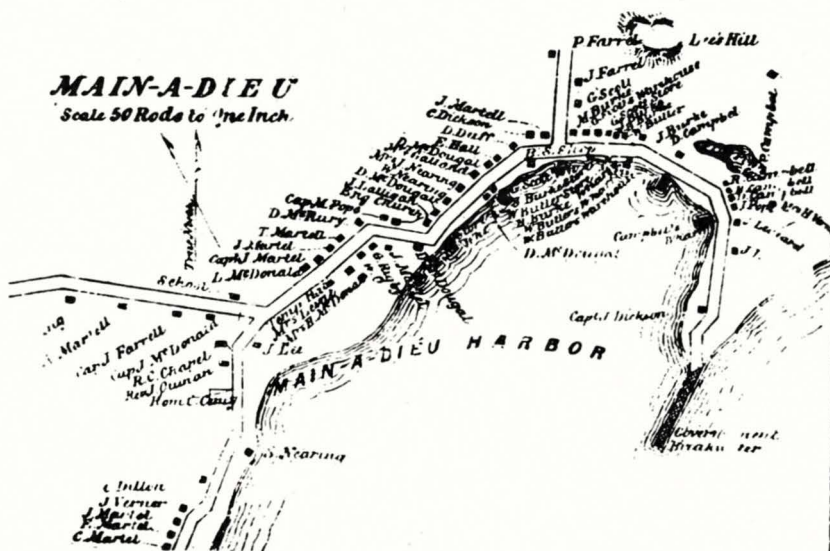
You are, doubtless, informed of what our agricultural products consist. Grain, with potatoes and other common root crops, butter and cattle, constitute the sole exports of that description. Timber and lumber, and spars, are not now articles of export, except in a very limited degree; only sufficient remaining for home uses. Victoria and Inverness are the two principal grazing counties; the former possessing the rivers Baddeck (or Bedeque) and Wagamatkook (or Middle River) with their adjoining intervale lands. Cape Breton county has no intervale, but raises cattle also for export. Inverness has the rivers of Marguerity or Margaree (or Magré) the small streams of Mabou and Judique, with their intervale lands; and St. Denys, in the Bras d'Or. In Richmond also, the River Inhabitants affords rich land for hay and grazing, and the Grand River issuing from the lakes in the interior, named by the Scotch Settlers, Loch Lomond.

All the four Counties export agricultural products of the kinds above named. Inverness probably takes the lead; then Cape Breton, Victoria, and Richmond, respectively furnish their quota. Such is my *conjecture*; but your statistical tables, from the census, may prove it to be erroneous.

The opening of additional roads to the interior settlements, with steam boat facilities for conveying their produce to the shipping ports, from the Bras d'Or and smaller harbors, would, no doubt, favour the augmentation of produce; but the difficulty is, where to find a market. Newfoundland English and French, would soon be over supplied especially as Prince Edward Island and the Country of N. Scotia proper would contribute largely, as they now do; altho' this Island has the advantage of propinquity. In what other quarter a market might be looked for, is a query not easy to be satisfactorily answered.

Scale 50 Rods to One Inch.

Scale 50 Rods to One Inch.





The riches of the Sea encompassing this Island probably are, or might be, greater than those of the land. The Fisheries I should conceive to be capable of almost indefinite extension; and why they are not now more largely engaged in, is to me a mystery. From all parts of the North American continent, on its eastern aspect; and from all the western portion of Europe, where such pursuits are known; the fishing vessels resort in great numbers to these shores, and to the deep sea banks in this vicinity, conducting the business at great disadvantage, compared with what might be done by establishments on this Island. The harbor of Sydney, especially, could not be more favorably placed for the purpose; and yet scarcely a vessel belonging to the port is so employed. The merchants here deal with fishermen in the out harbors—merely coast fishermen—and do not equip vessels from this harbor. A few sealing schooners only are here furnished, and sent to the ice, in February and March.

There has taken place a general abandonment of the bank fisheries, by British seamen. The banks of Newfoundland which lie off this coast, were vaunted, in days past, as the prime nursery for the British Navy. Now, I believe I am correct in saying, there is not a solitary vessel, of British tonnage, fishing on the banks. Hundreds of Americans and French are there but not one Englishman.

But to return to our Island. In Cape Breton County, the fishing ports are (or should be) Little Bras d'Or, Sydney, Menadou, Balein,\* the two Lorans,\* Louisbourg,\* and Gabarus.\*

In Victoria; Aspy Bay,\* Neale's Harbor,\* Inganiche\* (Nig-aniche) St. Anne's, and Great Bras d'Or.

Inverness; Bay St. Laurence, Cheticamp,\* Margarie\* (a great place for salmon also) Mabou, Port Hood,\* Judique\*, and Ship Harbor in the Strait of Canso. Cheticamp & the lower portion of Margarie are almost exclusively French.

In Richmond; Arichat\*, Petit Degrat\*, Grande Digue\*, Little Arichat,\* and various small harbors in the Isle Madame. Also the sundry inlets in Lenox Passage, and St. Peter's Bay, and L'Ardoise\*. Almost the whole of the fishing population in Richmond is composed of the descendants of the original Acadian French settlers.

Such of the places above enumerated, as are actually engaged in the fisheries, are distinguished by the mark\*.

The Bras d'Or Lake should not be forgotten in this enumeration. Excellent herrings and cod are taken there, in the winter, thro' the ice, in addition to the summer fish. It has been proposed as a most favorable location for breeding fish, being a body of *salt* water, into which the sea has access by two long and narrow inlets, the Great and Little Bras d'Or. As yet, however, the trial has not been made.

The MINES and Minerals of the Island have not attracted any general or scientific investigation. You know, of course, that coal is one of the principal exports. It has been worked from the earliest days of the colony. The large establishment of the London General Mining Association, near the entrance of Sydney Harbor and at Lingan, was, until lately the only one in operation; but others are now commenced with favorable prospects, at Glace Bay, and at Cowbay; beyond the Lingan workings; and are said to be doing a good and increasing business, and to be partly sustained by foreign capital. Except as forming a market for native produce, the mines will have but little interest for emigrants generally. They do, to a certain extent, now afford a market, which must increase with their extension & prosperity. The ships of the French Navy, frequenting Sydney Harbor for coal, also derive their supplies of fresh provisions and vegetables from the country.

Gypsum also has been an article of export principally from the Great Bras d'Or, in Victoria County; and from the vicinity of Ship Harbor, in the Strait of Canso, in Inverness; and the mineral is abundant in various other places. Iron ore and plumbago are known to exist, but have not been worked. Salt springs of good quality are found at the foot of the highlands along the northern shores of the Bras d'Or waters, from Bedeque to Whykokomagh. I have heard no tidings of Gold; but have myself observed remarkable seams, or veins, of quartz, and of serpentine (I believe it is called) in the granite rocks on the coast near Menadou, opposite Scatari.

I am no geologist, but I think it probable that minerals of sundry kinds will be found in the large tract of high land occupy-

ing the northern part of the Island, from Great Bras d'Or to Cape North on the eastern coast and from Mabou to Cape St. Laurence on the western; and extending across the Island from shore to shore: but no geological survey, or investigation of any sort, has been attempted hitherto. The interior of this tract, which comprises the greater part of the county of Victoria, and all the northern portion of Inverness, is reported to consist of elevated table land, the home of the moose and caribou, and not adapted for settlement, from the prevalence of barrens and morasses.

In short, I cannot say that the Island offers an encouraging field for incoming settlers with agricultural views. Neither does there appear to be a desirable opening for commercial enterprise, except as respects the fisheries. The Island is locked up to navigation, during three or four months, by the severity of the climate in winter; nearly as much so as Canada. In spring even more so. It is peculiarly beset by the ice fields which, as the spring months approach, are brought to these shores by the set of the current from the Gulf of St. Laurence and are kept here by the eddy of the polar current coming round the south of Newfoundland, from the Labrador. From this harbor vessels may be seen, in April and May, in the offing standing up for the Gulf, bound to Quebec, while the collected ice drifts on the coast forbid an entrance.

It is foreign to the present purpose to point out the commanding position occupied by this Island in a military or naval point of view considered as a key to the Gulf and River St. Laurence and by consequence, to all Canada.

I conclude therefore, this meagre, and unflattering, but I believe truthful, report. Altho' I have been resident sixty years—probably for that reason—I cannot offer a more encouraging description. I must refer you to younger and more sanguine correspondents, for a summary of the advantages which may have escaped my perception.

Wishing you every success,

I remain,

Your humble Servant,

H. WM. CRAWLEY.

Point Amelia,  
Sydney, C. B.  
10 Decr. 1861.



## INDEX

- Acadia, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 116  
Acadia Colliery, 123n  
Acadians, 28, 30, 31  
*Acteon*, 146  
*Albion*, 3  
Albion Mining Company, 152  
Alexander, Sir William, 13, 14, 28  
Alexander, Sir William, Jr., 14  
Alley, Rev. Dr. Jerome, 4  
Americans, 30  
Annapolis County, 4  
Annapolis Royal, 24  
Anticosti, 13  
Antrobus, Captain, 29  
Archbold, Edward P., 45, 45n, 77, 126, 126n, 136  
Archibald & Co., Messrs., 120n, 121n  
Arichat, 9, 31, 39, 48, 49, 131, 132, 150, 178, 181  
Armstrong, James, 27  
Arnold, Rev. Robert, 138  
Ashfield, Thomas, 73, 74  
Aspotogon, 116  
Aspy Bay, 9, 41, 170, 181  
Atlantic, 41, 42, 44, 46, 58  
*Atlantic Neptune*, 73n  
Aurora Borealis, 9, 52, 60  
Australia, 8, 39, 52, 66  
Baddeck, 12, 31, 34, 63, 117, 130, 131, 133, 134, 138, 169, 172, 180,  
182  
Bagnal, John, 30  
Bake-apple, 11, 97, 99  
Baleine Cove, 14, 17, 20, 29, 30, 31, 181  
Ball's Creek, 149, 150  
Bard, Peter, 27  
Barrington, Charles, 118  
Bathurst, Earl (Colonial Secretary), 135  
Bay de Morienne (see Port Morien)  
Bay St. Lawrence, 170, 181  
Bear, black, 11, 86, 91  
Beaver Harbour, 78n

- Belcher, Jonathan, 25  
Belloni, Robert, 122  
Benoit, Boniface, 30  
Big Pond, 31  
Binney, Rev. Hibbert, 5, 78, 78n, 134, 134n, 139n  
Binney, Hibbert Newton, 134n  
Binney, Jonathan, 25, 134n  
Binney, Lucy (Creighton), 134n  
Black Cove, 95  
Bliss, Mary, 78n  
Bliss, Hon. William B., 78n  
Block House, 121, 121n  
Blomidon, 116  
Blowers, Sampson Salter, 2  
Blueberry, 11, 97, 100  
Boisdale, 175  
Bollong, Cornelius, 30  
Booth, Lieut. W., 32, Description of Sydney, Appendix A, iii, 143  
Boscawen, Admiral, 29  
Boston, 3, 147, 154, 173  
Boulais, de la, 19  
Boularderie, Capt., 23  
Boularderie Island, 28, 42  
Bourinot, Arthur, 79n  
Bourinot, John, 79, 79n  
Bourinot, John G., 12, 79n, 157  
Bourinot, Marshall, 77, 121n  
Bown, Messrs., T. S. & W. R., 43n  
Bown, Thomas, 43n, 81n  
Bras d'Or, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 29, 30, 31, 42, 48, 49, 70, 76, 105, 131,  
134, 149, 150, 153, 164, 172, 177, 180, 181, 182, 183  
Brazil, 178  
Brest, 118  
Bridgeport, 44, 45n, 129, 153, 154  
Brimigion, William, 29  
Briscoe, Lt. Col., 80n  
Bristol, 13  
*British America*, 33  
British Columbia, 8, 39, 52  
Broad Cove, 165  
Brown, Rev. Alfred, 123n  
Brown, Richard, 12, 24, 75, 75n

- Budro, Joseph, 30  
Budro, Lewis, 30  
Bulkeley, Richard, 25  
Cabot, John, 13  
Cadegan, Mr., 45n  
California, 39  
Cameron, John, 31  
Campbell, Colin, 135  
Campbell, General, 32  
Campbell, William, 31  
Campbell, Gov. William, 27  
Canada, 22, 66, 86  
Cann, Benjamin, 30  
Canso, 16, 18, 24, 39, 162  
Canso, Strait of, (see Strait of Canso)  
*Cape Breton Advocate*, iii, 33, 115n, 153  
Cape Breton County, v, 27, 34, 105n, 173, 180, 181  
*Cape Breton News*, 6  
Cape Canso, 15, 16  
Cape North, 18, 41, 49, 50, 69, 161, 163, 166, 169, 183  
Cape Percy, 9  
Cape St. Lawrence, 183  
Cardiff, 118  
Cariboo, 11, 86, 89, 90  
Castletown Roche, County of Cork, Ireland, 1  
Catalone, 116, 137n, 174, 175  
Central America, 70, 75, 118  
Champlain, 13, 14  
Chapeau Rouge, (see Gabarus)  
Charlottetown, 49  
Chebogue, 116  
Chebucto, 103, 103n, 116  
Chedabucto, 49  
Chegogin, 116  
Cheticamp, 9, 18, 31, 50, 69, 117, 161, 162, 164, 166, 181  
Chikaben, 116  
*Church Journal*, 71  
Cibo, (see Sydney)  
Claremont, N. H., 5  
Clewly, John, 30  
Coffin Island, 131  
Coleby, 81, 81n, 157



- Collier, John, 25  
Collins, Richard, 30  
Colonial and Continental Church Society, 139  
Columbia, (see British Columbia)  
Company of New France, 14, 15  
Converse, J. H., 45n  
Cossit, Rev. Ranna, 5, 31, 132, 132n, 133  
Cottnam, George, 25, 29  
Cow Bay, (see Port Morien)  
Coxheath, 6, 131, 137n  
Crawley, Edmund, 25  
Crawley, Henry William, 34, 81, 81n, 183  
Crimean War, 76  
Croucher, Rev. Charles, 123n  
Curdo, Mr., 30  
Cuyler, Abraham, 73n, 145  
Daniel, Capt., 14  
D'Anville, 24  
d'Aulnay, 15  
d'Aulnay, Madame, 14  
Dartmouth Harbour, 148  
Dartmouth River, 151, 152  
Davenport, Henry, 81n  
Delesdernier, Martha Maria, 1  
Delesdernier, Moses, 1  
Dennis, Clara, 12  
Denys, Nicolas, 14, 15, 16, 19  
Denys, Simon, 14  
DesBarres, Joseph Frederick Wallet, 5, 31, 72, 73n, 74, 144, 145,  
150, 151  
Descousse, 116  
Dieppe, 14  
Dodd, Hon. Edmund Murray, 82, 82n, 156, 157, 179  
Dominion Coal Company, 28, 121n  
Dominion Iron and Steel Company, 28  
Donkin, 125n  
Dorchester Street, Sydney, 6  
Douglass, Mr., 165  
Dublin, 2, 7  
Dublin Exhibition, 86  
Duga, Charles, 30  
Duke of York, 43n, 44

- Dyott, William, 32, 33, Description of Sydney, Appendix B, iii, 144  
*The Earl of Moira*, 3  
East Bay, 174, 175  
Eddy, Jonathan, 2  
Edinburgh, 14  
Emery, James W., 45n  
England, 9, 12, 13, 15, 24, 33, 52, 60, 61, 68, 75, 100, 170  
English, 28, 30, 32  
English Harbour, (see Louisbourg)  
English Port, (see Louisbourg)  
Eskasoni, 100, 105, 116  
Esplanade, Sydney, 6, 76, 78, 81, 82  
Europe, 12, 66, 69  
Fagundes, Joao Alvarez, 13  
Falmouth, England, 13  
False Bay Beach, 45n  
Farquharson, Rev. Alexander, 123n  
Fawson, Dorothy, 4  
Fawson, Capt. Jones, 1, 3  
Ferryman, Rev. Robert, 5, 134n  
Fitzgerald, 1  
Flat Point, 9  
Flint Island, 9, 45, 119  
Florida, 145  
Forchu Harbour, 175  
Fort Cumberland, 1, 2  
Forty-second Regiment, 147  
Fougier, Charles, 30  
Fougier, Peter, 30  
Fourillon, 17, 18  
Framboise, 177  
France, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 22, 23, 24, 31, 105  
Francklin, Michael, 25, 27, 29  
French Village, 150, 153  
French West Indies, 22  
Fresh Water Creek, Sydney, 80n, 81n  
Gabarus, 9, 12, 29-31, 48, 58, 130, 131, 133, 139, 139n, 151, 175,  
181  
Gargas, 19, 20  
Gaspé, 15  
Gaudein, Joseph, 30  
Gelling, Rev. William Edward, 78, 78n, 121, 122, 123n

- General Mining Association, 11, 28, 43, 43n, 79, 118, 138, 182  
Geneva, Switzerland, 1  
Germany, 98  
Gerrish, Benjamin, 27  
Gerrish, Joseph, 25  
Gerrot, Elias, 29  
Gerrot, William, 30  
Gesner, G. H., 34, 176  
Gethings, James, 25, 29  
Gibbons, Richard, 72, 72n, 174  
Gilbert, Sir Humphrey, 71, 131, 131n  
Gilpin, Rev. Edwin, 4  
Glace Bay, 11, 12, 44, 45n, 59, 59n, 62, 77, 121, 123, 123n, 124,  
125n, 126, 126n, 128, 129, 131, 152, 174, 182  
Glace Bay Brook, 127  
Glace Bay Mining Company, 45n  
Glasgow, 33  
Glenelg, Lord, 135  
Gomez, Stephen, 13  
Gordon, Sir Robert, 14  
Gould, John, 30  
Gowrie Mine, 121, 121n  
Graham, Lieut-Colonel, 145  
Grand Anse, 69  
Grand Battery, 29  
Grand Chibou, 17  
Grand Digue, 171  
Grand Lake, 174  
Grand Mira, 175  
Grand River, 178, 180  
Grant, John, 26  
Grave's End, 13  
Great Britain, 22-24, 28, 30, 52, 80  
Green, Benjamin, 25  
Grouville, 78n  
Haliburton, R. G., 33, 34, 158, 167, 168, 173, 177, Questionnaire,  
158, 168  
Haliburton, Thomas Chandler, 8, 33, Description of Sydney,  
Appendix D, iii, 148  
Halifax, 2, 3, 4, 7, 24-26, 28, 46, 47, 49, 50, 58, 85, 92, 109, 117,  
127, 145, 147, 154, 156, 163, 164  
Hammonds Plains, 98



- Hillier, Mr., 126, 126n  
*Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia*, 8, 33  
Holland, Samuel, 21, 25, 26, 28, 30, 32  
Hooper, Josiah, 175  
*Hopewell*, 13  
Hopkinton, Mass., 3  
Hore, Master, 13  
Howe, Estes, 45n  
Hubbard, Gardner, G., 45n  
Hudson Bay, 23  
Huntington, Richard, 115n  
Huxford, Thomas, 30  
Indians, 11, 30, 93, 94, 105-116, 156  
Indian Cove, 31  
Indian Cup, 11, 97, 99  
Indian Summer, 9, 52, 54, 56  
*Indus*, 79  
Inglis, Rev. Charles, 4, 5, 131, 133  
Inglis, Bishop John, 4  
Ingonish, 13, 17, 18, 20, 116, 176, 181  
Ingouville, Philip, 133, 133n  
International Coal and Railway Company of New York, 45n, 129  
Inverness, Scotland, 14  
Inverness County, v, 27, 33, 34, 105n, 158-168, 176, 180-182  
Ireland, 1, 2, 68, 170  
Irish, 28, 30, 32  
Isle Madame, 9, 16, 40, 48, 49, 181  
Isle Verte, 16, 17  
Jamison, Rev. William Henry, 137n  
Jermaine, Peter, 30  
Jersey, 9, 50, 79n, 133n, 166  
Jervois, Peter, 30  
Joice, Francis, 30  
Jones, Rice, 13  
Judique, 180, 181  
Juste-au-Corps, 27  
Kavanagh, Laurence, Jr., 26, 29  
Kempt Road, 178  
Kilkenny Lake, 151  
King George III, 43n  
King Louis XV, 105  
King's College, University of, 6

- King's Orange Rangers, 31  
Kneeland, Rev., 28  
Labrador, 183  
Lake Ainslie, 161, 162  
Lambeth, 78n  
L'Ardoise Road, 178  
Lawrence, Governor, 30  
Le Borgne, Emmanuel, 15  
Le Chadye, (see Cheticamp)  
Leigh, Capt., 13  
Leitche's Creek, 123n, 149, 175  
Le Jamtel, Rev. Francis, 46n  
Lennox Passage, 29, 150  
Ley, Alexander, 30  
Lincoln's Inn, London, 4  
L'Indian, (see Lingan)  
Lingan, 9, 31, 43, 118, 150, 151, 152-4, 175, 182  
Lithgow, J. R., 45n  
Liverpool, England, 70, 117, 118  
Liverpool, N. S., 32  
Lloyd, William, 27  
Lochinvar, 14  
Loch Lomond, 180  
London, 13, 33, 43, 43n, 67, 86  
London Exhibition, 86  
London Mining Association, 45, 75, 117  
Loon, 11, 86, 94, 95  
Lorraine, 29, 137n, 181  
Louisbourg, 9, 12, 13, 17, 19, 20, 23-5, 27-31, 39, 42, 47, 48, 51, 58,  
66, 72, 77, 100, 120, 121n, 131-3, 137, 137n, 139, 145, 150, 152,  
175, 176, 181  
Louisbourg and Sydney Railway Company, 138, 138n  
Lovell, Rev. Benjamin, 5, 73, 73n, 132, 132n  
Lovell, John, 73n  
Low Point, 74, 150, 151, 175  
Loyal Regiment of N. S. Volunteers, 3  
Loyalists, 26, 31  
Luis Leroy, 31  
Lynch, Peter, 45n  
Mabou, 116, 161, 166-7, 180, 181, 183  
Mabou Harbour, 33

- Mainadieu, 9, 29-31, 39, 46n, 47, 47n, 58, 59n, 78, 131, 133, 137n,  
151, 175, 176, 181, 182  
Margaree, 63, 66, 161-3, 165, 166, 169, 180, 181  
Marguerite, (see Margaree)  
Marshall, Jane, 79n  
Marshall, Hon, John G., 79n  
Mascall, Richard, 30  
Mathews, David, 73n  
Mayflower, 11, 97, 97n, 98  
Meadoz, Thomas, 30  
Mediterranean, 9, 48, 49, 178  
Meek, Rev. Mr., 138  
Meloney, John, 31  
Meray, (see Mira)  
Merton College, Oxford, 4  
Meulles, Jacques de, 19  
Michaux Islands, 17  
Micmac, 105  
Middle River, 63, 63n, 117, 162, 180  
Middle River Mountain, 70  
Milward, Robert, 29  
Mink, 11, 86, 96  
Miquelon, 24, 31, 118  
Mira, 6, 31, 100, 131, 150, 176  
Mira Bay, 45n, 46  
Mira Ferry, 123n  
Mira River, 29, 30, 173-5  
Montegu, Sieur de, 19  
Montho, Thomas, 29  
Moore, Adam, 31  
Moose, 11, 18, 86-90  
Moren, J. A., 45n  
Morris, Hon. Charles, 1, 3  
Morris, Capt. Charles, 3, 25  
Morris, Charles, Jr., 3  
Morris, Dorothy, 1, 3  
Morris, Elizabeth, 1, 3  
Mount Uniacke, 2-4, 92  
Muggah's Creek, 82  
Musquodoboit, 33, 116  
MacAlpine, C., 48  
Macarmick, Governor, 5, 133, 148



- Macdonald, C. Ochiltree, 12, 121n  
Macdonald, Edward, 30  
Macdonald, Thomas, 30  
McGregor, John, 38, Description of Sydney, Appendix E, iii, 151  
Mackay Francis, 98  
McKeen, William, 33, 163, 167  
McKenzie, James, 34, 178  
McLennan, J. S., 12, 24  
McLeod, Mr., 45n  
McLeod, Rev. Hugh, 123n  
McLeod, Rev. Norman, 34  
McNab, D. B., 34, 172  
MacQueen, Donald M., 82, 82n  
Nairing Francis, 30  
Neale, John, 30  
Neil's Harbour, 181  
Nepisiguit, 15  
Nesbitt, William, 25  
New Boston, 175  
New Brunswick, 7, 15, 32, 62, 86, 105  
Newcastle, 118  
New England, 24, 28, 45n  
Newfoundland, 13, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 40, 50, 75, 79, 105, 117, 118, 178, 180, 181, 183  
New Galloway, 14  
*New Penny Magazine*, 8, 36  
New Port, (see Port Nova)  
Newport, 4, 7  
Newton, Henry, 25,  
New York, 62, 154  
New Zealand, 8, 39, 52  
Niganiche, (see Ingonish)  
*Nile*, 79, 80  
Norsemen, 13  
North America, 12, 13, 71, 145  
North Bar, 75, 153  
North Sydney, 31, 60, 117, 121n, 174, 175  
North West Arm, Sydney, 6, 7, 11, 31, 75, 131, 150, 152  
Nova Francia, 13  
Nova Scotia, 1, 3, 4, 11, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32, 40, 45, 49, 58, 63, 67, 71, 89, 90, 93, 94, 103, 104, 105, 115, 150, 166  
*Novascotian*, 97n

- Ohio Valley, 22  
*Osprey* 47  
Ouseley, Capt. William G., 81, 81n  
Oxford, 4, 36  
Owen, Rev. H. L., 4  
Palais, Chevalier du, 19  
Parrott, W. B., 45n  
Paul, Lewis, 113  
Paulin, H. B., 45n  
Perry, John, 30  
Peters, John, 30  
Petit de Grat, 30, 31, 181  
Philadelphia, 1  
Phipps, William, 25  
Pichon, Thomas, 12  
Pictou, 31, 33, 49, 99, 164  
Pitt Street, Sydney, 6  
Pitts, Thomas, 74  
Piziquid, 116  
Placentia, 23  
Plaister Cove, (see Port Hastings)  
Point Edward, 75, 149  
Porcupine, 11, 86, 93  
Portage Lake, 149  
Porter, William Young, Rev., 7, 47n, 59, 59n, 78n, 123n, 131  
Point Amelia, 183  
Port Dauphin, 42  
Port Dolphin, 42  
Port Hastings, 164, 166  
Port Hawkesbury, 163, 164, 166, 181, 182  
Port Hood, 9, 39, 49, 164, 165, 181  
Port Morien, 9, 11, 27, 28, 31, 45, 45n, 59n, 77, 78n, 82n, 117, 119,  
119n, 120, 122, 125n, 131, 137, 152, 174, 175, 182  
Port Nova, 13, 47  
Port Royal, 14, 22  
Port St. Louis, 23  
Portugal, 178  
Prince Edward Island, 15, 22, 31, 32, 33, 49, 62, 63, 73n, 105, 138,  
146, 150, 166, 180  
Prince of Wales, 50, 110  
Puerto Nuovo, (see Port Nova)  
Quebec, 14, 15, 20, 22, 23, 24, 70, 73n, 75, 118, 183

- Queens College, Oxford, 59n  
Queen Anne, 23  
Queen Elizabeth, 71, 130  
Raleigh, Sir Walter, 71, 130  
Raudot, Intendant, 22  
Read, Mary, 3  
Red Islands, 177  
Reilley, John, 29  
*Revenge*, 3  
Richmond county, v, 27, 34, 105n, 163, 176, 180, 181  
Rigby, Samuel, 81n  
River Denys, 164, 180  
River Inhabitants, 161, 164, 180  
Robin & Co (Robeen) 162, 166  
Roe, Mathew, 29  
Rosemar, 14  
Ross, Mr., 45n  
Royal Horticultural Society, 67, 103  
Rundell, Bridge & Rundell, 43n, 44, 44n  
Russell, William, 25, 29  
Sackville, N. B., 7  
St. Alban's Hall, 4, 7, 36  
St. Andrew's, N. B., 4  
St. Ann, 9, 14, 17, 31, 34, 41, 150, 169, 172, 181  
*St. George*, 79  
St. George's Bay, 49  
St. George's Channel, 163  
St. George's Church, Halifax, 4, 5, 7  
St. George's Church, Sydney, 4, 6, 7, 77, 80, 130, 131n, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138  
St. James's Anglican Church, Mainadieu, 47n  
St. James's Church, Newport, 4  
St. John, Henry, 23  
St. John, N. B., 154  
St. John River, 20,  
St. John's Church, Sydney, 6  
St. John's, Newfoundland, 154, 163  
St. Kitts, 1  
St. Lawrence, Gulf of, 15, 20, 22, 23, 24, 40, 41, 49, 50, 54, 59, 163, 170, 183  
St. Lawrence River, 13, 22, 28, 183  
St. Mark's Chapel, Coxheath, 6, 137n



- St. Mary's Church Aylesford, 4  
St. Mary's, Oxford, 36  
St. Paul's Church, Halifax, 7  
St. Paul's Church, Sackville, 7  
St. Paul Island, 9, 39, 40, 41, 50  
St. Peter's, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 29, 31, 49, 150  
St. Peter's Canal, 9  
St. Peter's Road, 178  
St. Pierre, 3, 24, 31, 79, 118  
Sainte Marie, Island of, 16  
Salmon River, 78n, 174  
Scatarie Island, 9, 39, 40, 46, 47, 49, 116, 182  
Schooner Pond, 45n, 123, 123n  
Scotland, 10, 14, 15, 32, 68, 162, 170  
Scots, 28, 30, 31  
Scots Fort, 14  
*Semslack*, 23  
Seven Years' War, 24, 27  
Shelburne, 144  
Ship Harbour, (see Port Hawkesbury)  
Simsbury, Conn., 132n  
Sissiboo, 116  
Sleigh, Burrows Willcocks Arthur, v, 33, 154  
Smith, Rev., D., 7  
Smith, Hon. William, 133, 133n  
Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 78, 136  
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 5, 6, 28, 47, 59n, 132, 137  
South America, 49  
South Head, Cow Bay, 45n  
Southsea, England, 4  
South West Arm, 15  
Spain, 9, 49  
Spanish Bay, (see Sydney)  
Spanish River, now Sydney Harbour  
Spencer, Mrs. Arnold, 119, 119n, 121n, 123  
*Spirit of the Times* 115n  
Sporting Mountain, 177  
Sterns, Jonathan, 2  
Stewart, Charles, 57  
Stewart, Sir James, Lord Ochiltree, 14, 32  
Stout, Henrietta Lavinia, 134n

- Stout, Martha (Weeks), 134n  
Stout, Hon, Richard, 134n  
Strait of Canso, 40, 49, 78n, 86, 93, 94, 102, 161, 163, 164, 178, 181, 182  
Strasburg, Francis Albertus, 25  
Strawberry, 11, 97, 100  
Strong, Richard, 13  
Sugar, manufacture of, 97  
Sugar Maple Tree, 11, 97, 101  
Sutherland, Mayor, 156  
Sydney, iii, v, 4-11, 17, 19-23, 27-8, 31-3, 37, 43, 46-8, 51, 54, 58, 59n, 62, 63, 69, 71, 72, 74-7, 78n, 80-4, 104, 115n, 118, 120, 127, 129, 132, 133, 137, 138, 143-156, 164, 174, 175, 181, 183  
Sydney Forks, 133n, 149, 174  
Sydney Harbour, 9, 28, 32, 42, 45, 45n, 74, 110, 143, 144, 182  
Sydney Mechanics' Institute, 6, 85, 85n  
Sydney Mines, 9, 12, 27, 43n, 59n, 84, 130, 131, 132, 134, 138, 138n, 144, 149, 153  
Sydney Mines Volunteers, 75n  
Sydney, Presbyterian Church, 78n  
Sydney River, 81, 118, 137, 174, 175  
Taitt, David, 72n  
Tewitnochk ("Tweedporge"), 149  
Thirty-third Regiment, 73  
Townshend, Gregory, 25, 26, 29  
Townshend, James, 30  
Tracey, Mr. 45n  
Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 24  
Treaty of Utrecht, 22, 23  
Trinity College, Dublin, 138  
Truro, 33  
Tulleskein, Lt. Col., 30  
Tusket, 116  
Twining, Rev. William, 5  
Uniacke, Crofton, 3, 4  
Uniacke, James Boyle, 4  
Uniacke, Richard John, 1-3  
Uniacke, Richard John, Jr., 27  
Uniacke, Rev. Richard John, iii, 1, 3-10, 12, 32, 37  
Uniacke, Rev. Robert Fitzgerald, 4, 7  
United States, 8, 45, 66, 69, 86, 154, 176-178  
Vernon, C. W., 12

Verrazano, 13  
Victoria county, v, 27, 34, 105n, 163, 168, 170, 172, 173, 180-183  
Viking, 13  
Villebon, 19  
Virginia, 15  
Wagamatkook, 63, 63n, 170, 172, 180  
War of the Spanish Succession, 23  
Walker, Admiral, 22, 23  
Warner, Charles Dudley, 12  
Wentworth, Sir John, 72, 72n, 73, 74  
West Bay Road, 178  
West Indies, 9, 22, 49, 178  
Whately, Richard, Archbishop, 7, 8, 36, 78, 136  
Wheeler, Richard, 29, 30  
Wheeler, Thomas, 29  
White Point, 9, 41  
Whitney Syndicate, 28  
Whycocomagh, 101, 161, 164, 166, 167, 169, 182  
Williamson, Sir Joseph, 15  
Willis, Ann Jane, 7  
Willis, Rev. Robert, D.D., 7  
Windsor Road, 3  
Winslow, Edward, 2  
Wolfall, Master, 71, 130  
Wood, William, 24  
Woolwich, 73n  
Worcester College, Oxford, 78n  
Yarmouth, N. S., 115n  
Yorke, Colonel John, 73, 73n, 74  
Young, Sir William, 98n  
Zouberbuhler, Sebastian, 25