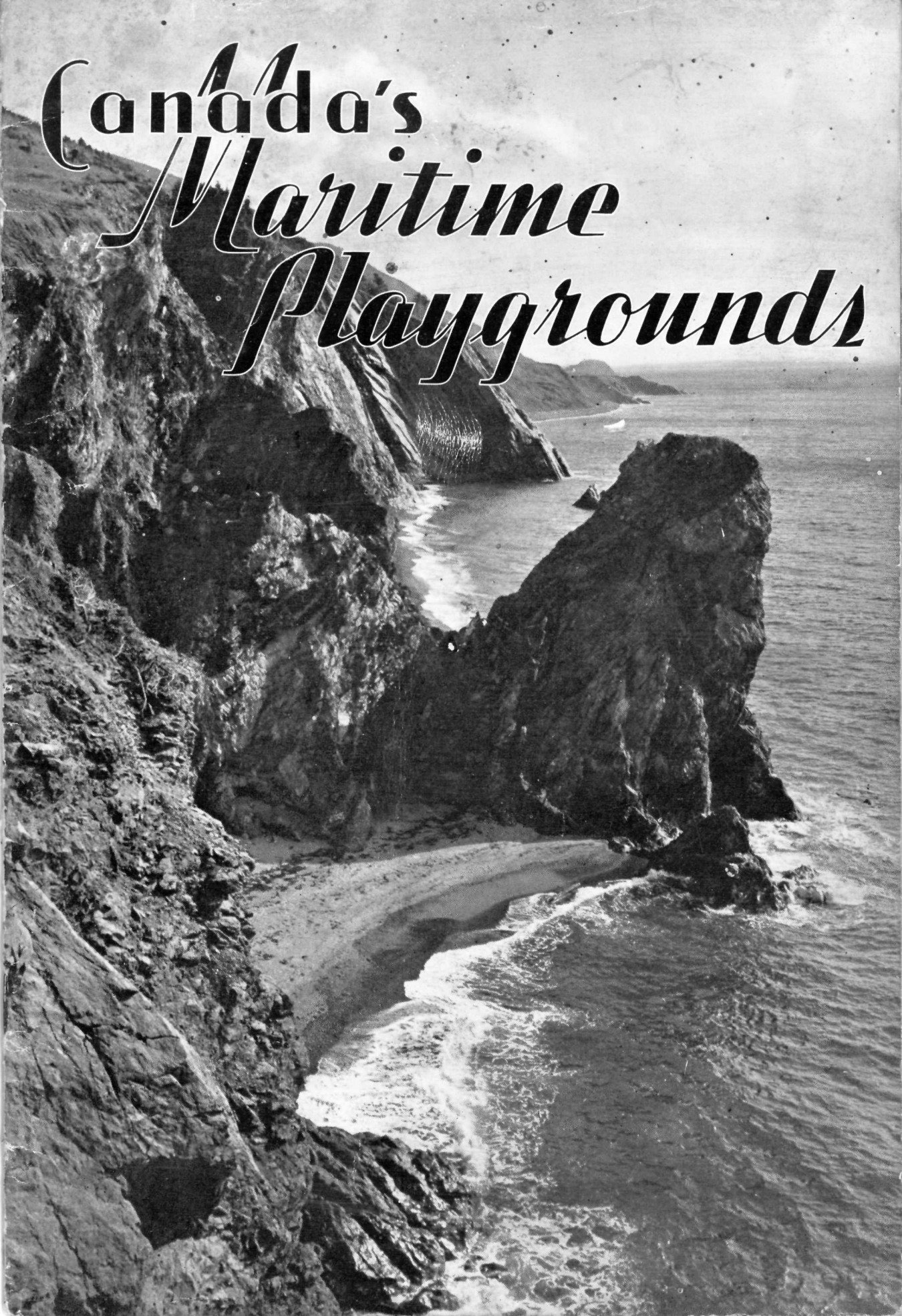


Canada's  
*Maritime*  
*Playgrounds*





# CANADA'S MARITIME PLAYGROUNDS

by ROBERT J. C. STEAD

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ESTABLISHMENT of national parks in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island extends to the Atlantic Coast the system of public reservations "dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment" which had its origin at Banff more than fifty years ago. From a small beginning of ten square miles on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, Canada's national playgrounds have grown until they now reach from British Columbia to Nova Scotia and occupy an area of more than 12,400 square miles.

I have just used the term "national playgrounds" as a synonym for national parks. For national parks are playgrounds on a gigantic scale; they are areas in which forest, lake and landscape are preserved in their natural beauty; where wild bird and animal life is protected from the "arch-predator", Man; and where the peace and quiet of hill and valley are conserved against the noise and confusion of this clamorous age. It is these qualities which have made them national playgrounds in the fullest sense of the word; areas to which each year more than a million Canadians and visitors from other lands turn for rest and recreation.

Cape Breton Highlands National Park and Prince Edward Island National Park are the new maritime members of Canada's family of national parks. Thrust far into the Atlantic, the Island of Cape Breton occupies a place in Canadian history as unique as its physical setting. The date of its original discovery is cloaked in doubt, although there are strong grounds for the belief that John and Sebastian Cabot landed here in the summer of 1497. The memory of these explorers is perpetuated in the Cabot Trail, the spectacular highway which girdles the northern part of the Island. Later its coasts were sailed by Verrazano in 1524 and by Jacques Cartier in 1536. The fisheries of nearby waters attracted English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, with resulting settlements at such points as English Harbour (later Louisbourg), St. Ann's, St. Peter's, Baie des Espagnols

(Sydney), and Niganis or Niganich, now Ingonish. It is generally supposed that Basque or Breton fishermen first gave the name "Cape Breton" to the eastern promontory of the Island.

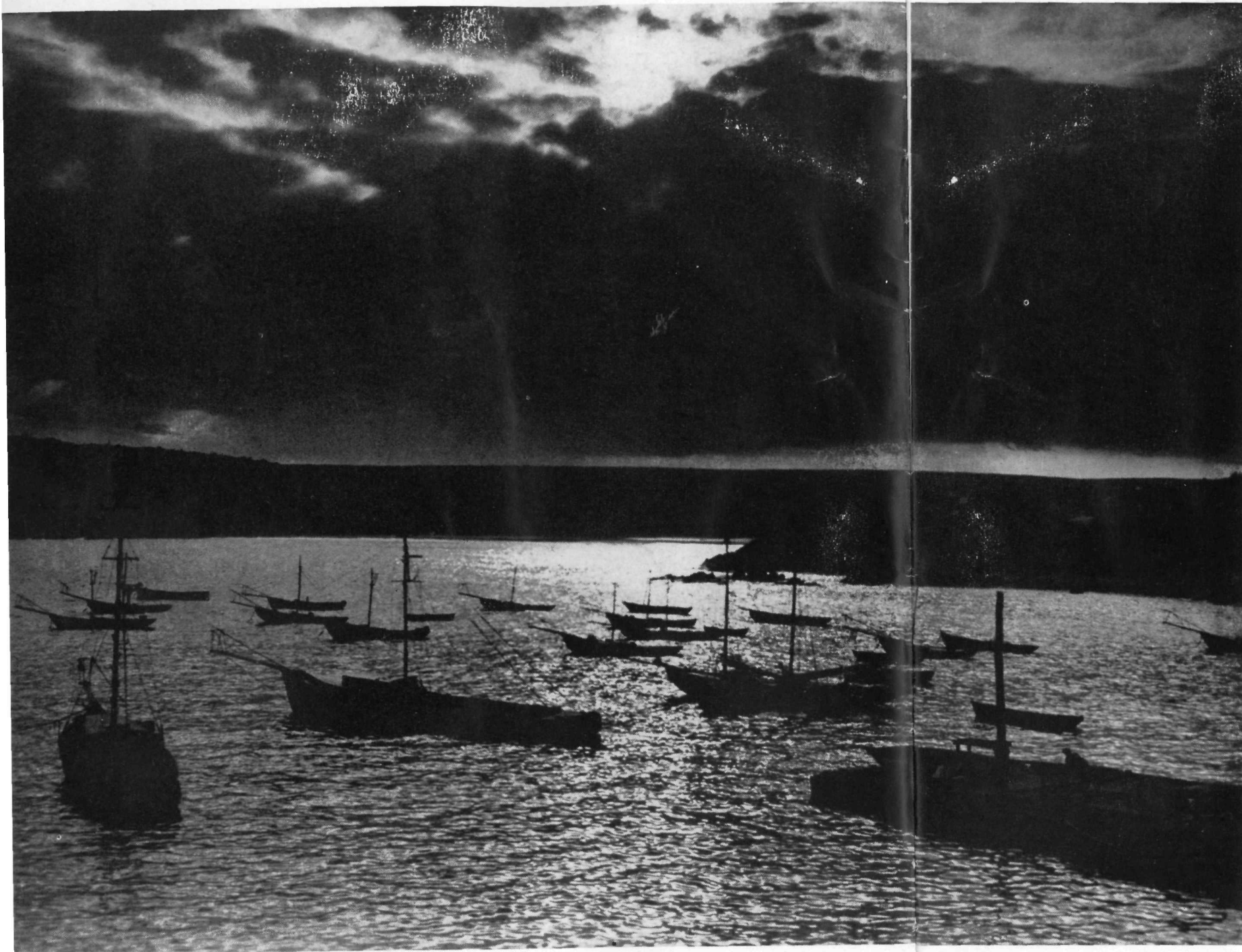
Ceded to France by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the Island was re-named Ile Royale, and fortifications, then regarded as the greatest in America, were erected at Louisbourg, so named after Louis XIV of France. During a quarter of a century great sums of money were spent in building the fortress. Around this stronghold centred the great struggle between French and English for supremacy in North America. Its capture by the English in 1758 preceded the fall of Quebec and the end of French rule in Canada. Acadian settlement of parts of the Island continued after 1758, and was followed by extensive Scottish immigration between 1791 and 1828. Descendants of these early settlers still constitute a large part of the population.

On the physical side, Cape Breton presents attractions unique in North America. Separated from the mainland of Nova Scotia by the deep and narrow Strait of Canso — so narrow that it barely appears on the map, and the crossing is made by ferry in less time than on many a river — it nevertheless seems set apart from all the rest of the continent in the environment it offers to the visitor. A high, forested tableland forms the interior backbone of the northern part of the Island, and drains by numberless brooks of soft amber-coloured water into the surrounding sea. The coast-line is rugged and even grim, but broken by many bays and inlets, with small pastoral valleys. Good natural harbours afford facilities for small ocean craft. From the sea is presented an everchanging panorama of hill-side, cliff, and valley; from the land, equally beautiful vistas of sea, cape, jagged fingers of tide-worn rock, and the constant blue background of the Atlantic Ocean or the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The new Cape Breton Highlands National Park stretches across the northern

Left:—Reflections — Swordfishing boats at South Ingonish, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia.

Cover:—The rugged shores of Cape Breton Highlands National Park. Old Scot Rock, near Cap Rouge, on the Gulf of St. Lawrence.



Evening at Neil's Harbour on the Atlantic Coast, Cape Breton Island.

part of the Island and contains an area of approximately 390 square miles. The western shore, along the Gulf of St. Lawrence, rises abruptly, even precipitously from the water; the higher lands are forest-clad, and to their rugged sides clings the Cabot Trail, already mentioned, commanding views which are among the experiences of a lifetime. The eastern shores also are rocky, but with more numerous coves at the mouths of valleys that clamber back to the interior highlands. The scenery, although reminiscent of the Highlands of Scotland, has qualities peculiar to itself. The solitary grandeur mounted against the eternal cadence of the sea defies every art of description.

Clustered close to the park, but outside its boundaries, are a number of picturesque fishing villages, inhabited mainly by families of Highland Scottish or Acadian ancestry. For generations these hardy fisher-folk have won their substance from the sea, which abounds in cod, haddock, herring, lobster, mackerel, swordfish, tuna and halibut. Largely self-contained, the inhabitants have retained their native languages and a rare skill in handicrafts, including the arts of rug-hooking and weaving from native wool spun on ancient wheels. These fisher settlements afford an ideal setting for lazy tourist days, and lend an interest to the park and its environs hardly to be found elsewhere.

The park itself is clothed with forests in which spruce, balsam fir, birch, maple, and beech predominate, although pine, hemlock, oak, and poplar are also found. Small fruits — cherries, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, and apples once tame but now growing wild — abound. Animal and bird life is being restored under the watchful eye of the park authorities. White-tailed deer, snowshoe rabbit, black bear, wildcat, red fox, otter, muskrat, weasel and mink are native to the area. Beaver, recently reintroduced, are settling down in their new environment with the intelligence and industry for which Canada's emblem animal is justly famous. Grouse and a variety of smaller birds enliven the forests, and ducks and other species of waterfowl are common. Salmon and trout are caught as sport fish in the inland waters.

Cape Breton Island may be approached by paved highway from the mainland of Nova Scotia, the crossing of the Strait of Canso from Mulgrave to Port Hawkes-



Massive Cape Smoky guards the entrance to South Ingonish Harbour, Cape Breton Island.

Haying along the Cabot Trail. Fertile green valleys lie between the rolling hills of Cape Breton Island.



Rolling forested hills sweep back from the sea at South Ingonish, Cape Breton Island.

Part of the swordfishing fleet in South Ingonish Harbour, Cape Breton Island.



bury being made on a Government ferry at a nominal charge. This route is also tapped by a regular ferry service from Prince Edward Island to Pictou, Nova Scotia. From Port Hawkesbury the visitor has a choice of routes to the park. The western route, after winding through a generous variety of scenery, traverses the beautiful and fertile Margaree Valley, and joins the Cabot Trail at Margaree Forks. About four miles north of the important seaport village of Cheticamp it enters the park. Skirting the seashore for many miles before turning inland to cross the northern part of the Island, the Cabot Trail provides many magnificent vistas, and at one point reaches an altitude of nearly 1,300 feet. The Trail, quite passable in its present state for careful drivers, is being rapidly improved, and promises to become one of the great scenic drives of the continent.

Entry may also be made by an eastern route from the city of Sydney, which is reached by highway, a line of the Canadian National Railways, or water; thence by highway *via* Baddeck or Englishtown Ferry to Ingonish, or by regular steamship service from Sydney to Ingonish. An interior route by way of Whycocomagh and the Bras d'Or Lakes connects with the Cabot Trail at Baddeck. The nearest railway station is at Little Bras d'Or, about 65 miles from Ingonish. There are telegraph connection and regular mail service to principal points along the Cabot Trail.

The entrance to the park, by the eastern route, is at South Ingonish, where the administrative headquarters are located. Lying in the shadow of Cape Smoky, South Ingonish Harbour is one of the finest anchorages on the eastern coast and is frequented by many types of deep-sea craft. Just north of the harbour and within the park is a remarkable promontory known as Middle Head. It extends nearly two miles into the Atlantic beyond the normal coast-line, forming twin bays. Between Middle Head and South Ingonish Harbour is a magnificent beach and between the beach and the mainland lies a fresh-water lake. In the vicinity are being erected an administration building, Superintendent's residence, and registration office, designed in an architectural style to blend with the surrounding landscape.

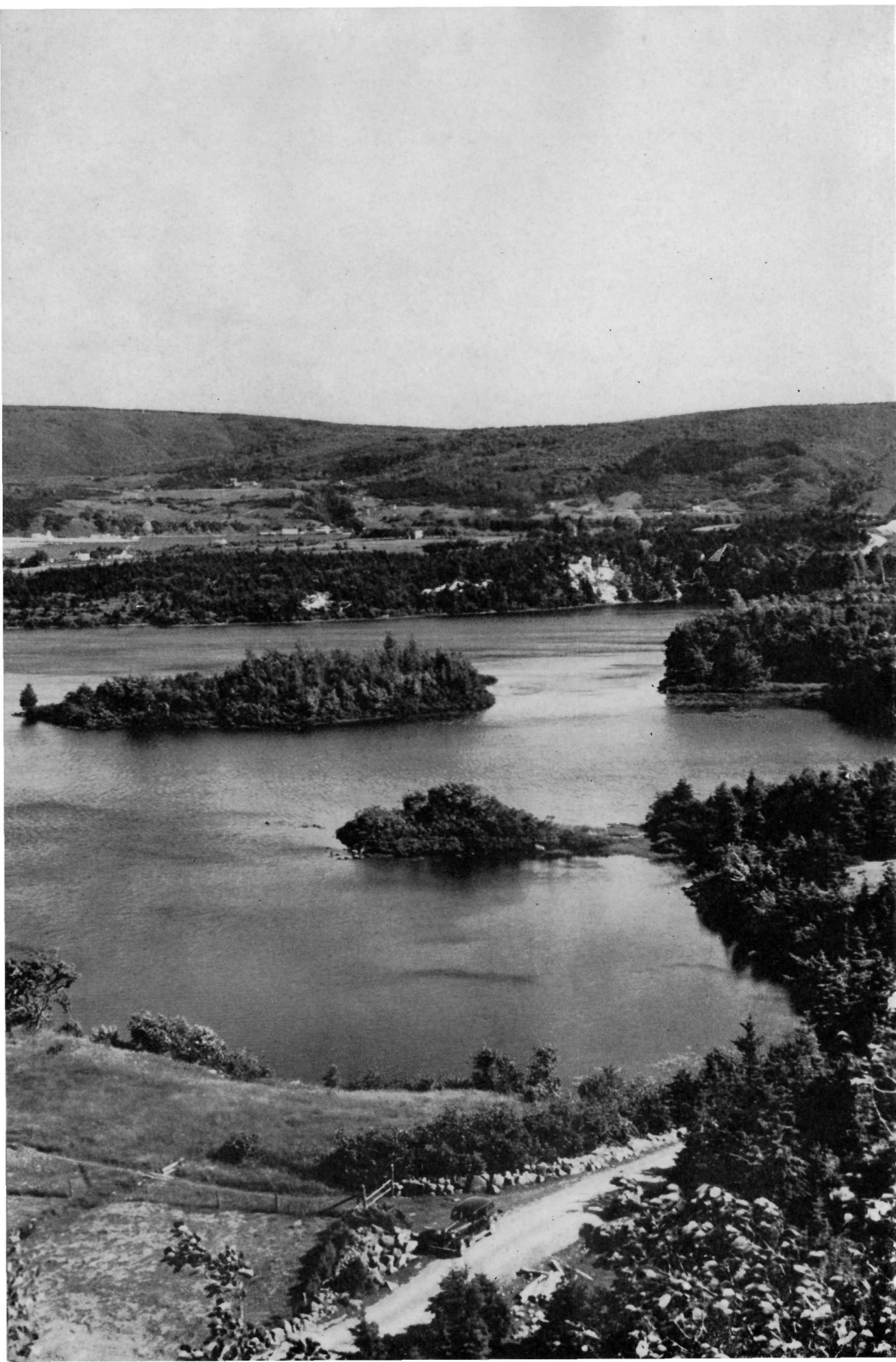
Opportunities for recreation in the park are varied, and include fishing, boating, bathing, hiking and motoring along the park roads. A golf course, designed by the noted golf course architect, Stanley Thompson, to utilize the picturesque terrain of the region, is being constructed in the vicinity of Middle Head, extending up the valley of Clyburn Brook. Provision of tennis courts, athletic grounds, parking and picnicking places is also being made. Inland fishing has already been mentioned. Deep-sea fishing enthusiasts may enjoy angling for swordfish, as one of the finest areas in the North Atlantic for this sport is located off the eastern coast of Cape Breton. Ingonish and Neil's Harbour are noted swordfishing centres.

Tourist accommodation, as yet of a limited nature, is available in many of the towns and villages adjacent to the park, including Cheticamp, Pleasant Bay, Cape North, Dingwall, Neil's Harbour, and North and South Ingonish. As development of the park proceeds it may be assumed that private enterprise will supply the necessary hotel and bungalow camp accommodation for the increasing thousands who are sure to seek this unique summer playground.

**D**ISTINCT in character from the rugged grandeur of Cape Breton is Prince Edward Island. Jacques Cartier, who discovered the Island in 1534, noted in his journal that it was a land "low and flat and the fairest that may be possible to see, and full of beautiful trees and meadows." Its gently undulating surface, intensively cultivated and extraordinarily productive, presents a charming pastoral setting. The coast-line is very irregular, presenting a succession of bays and projecting headlands, with long stretches of sandy beach along the northern shore. Red sandy loam soil, overlying strata of red sandstone and red clay shale, is found almost everywhere throughout the Island and gives to the landscape a warm and colourful appearance.

Prince Edward Island, too, has a history of interest. Known for years as Ile St. Jean, or St. John Island, it was settled mainly by Acadians until the fall of Louisbourg Fortress in 1758. The present population is descended principally from English, Scotch, Irish and French Acadian.

Left:—Looking across the fresh-water lake between North and South Ingonish, Cape Breton Highlands National Park.





A lesson in boat-building. Many Cape Breton fishermen build their own fishing craft.

Sturdy oxen have a place in every-day life on Cape Breton Island.



Natives of Cape Breton Island excel in handicrafts. This Acadian woman near Cheticamp is rug-hooking with native wool yarns.

A study in transportation. Drawing water with ox and cart at South Ingonish, Cape Breton Island.



## CANADA'S MARITIME PLAYGROUNDS

settlers. Charlottetown, the capital, has been called the "Cradle of Confederation", for here was held, on September 1, 1864, the first conference which led to the federation of British North American colonies in 1867. It was not until 1873, however, that Prince Edward Island itself entered the union and became a province of the Dominion.

Prince Edward Island National Park is a seashore area extending as a narrow strip for nearly twenty-five miles along the northern coast. It includes some of the finest sand beaches in Eastern Canada. Landward from the beaches, sand dunes rise in many places to considerable heights, and across the mouth of several bays small sandy islands or shoals, formed by the action of the sea, give protection to the inner waters. The water is warmer than at many points along the Atlantic coast hundreds of miles further south, and the opportunities for surf-bathing are almost ideal.

The park has, however, many other attractions. Within its area is located Green Gables, made famous by the novels of L. M. Montgomery. The old farmhouse, although repaired and re-decorated, has been retained in as much as possible its original style, and is open to visitors. In the immediate vicinity an eighteen-hole golf course has been constructed, into which have been woven the "Lake of Shining Waters" and other points of literary interest. Skirting the sand dunes and stretching back into the beautiful countryside, the new course combines many delightful features in a romantic and attractive setting.

The park headquarters are located at Dalvay House, a large building originally erected as a summer home, which has been re-designed for use as an administration centre. The surroundings are being landscaped and an area in the vicinity will be developed as a community and recreational centre, with playgrounds, tennis courts and a bowling green.

The delights of surf-bathing and relaxation on the beautiful broad beaches are enhanced by the perfect climate of the summer and early autumn. The temperature is ideal, and the air is always invigorating. Bath-houses have been provided for visitors at the Cavendish, Brackley and Dalvay beaches, and there are opportunities for boating, hiking, and deep-sea fishing. Motor roads skirt the seashore

and provide attractive views of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. As yet there is little tourist accommodation actually within the park but a number of good summer hotels and tourist homes are operated adjacent to the main beaches, and, of course, in nearby Charlottetown.

Prince Edward Island Park is easily accessible by motor highway and lies within an hour's ride from Charlottetown, the provincial capital. A paved road runs within a short distance of the Cavendish region and the Brackley and Dalvay sections of the park are served by good provincial roads. A new park road which has been built from the eastern entrance near Dalvay House to the western extremity of Stanhope Beach provides access to a choice section of the park. The Island itself is reached from the New Brunswick mainland by ferry between Tormentine and Port Borden and also from Pictou, Nova Scotia, to Charlottetown.

When most of the national parks were established the land was already owned by the Dominion Government, and settlement had not encroached upon it to any appreciable extent. A different situation existed with respect to the new parks in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, which was met by the Provincial Governments acquiring the land and turning it over to the administration of the federal authorities. The public-spirited attitude of owners, in making their lands available for this purpose, and the co-operation between Dominion and Provincial Governments, have made possible these valuable additions to Canada's system of national parks. Although still in the early stages of development, these new Maritime Playgrounds are already attracting visitors in increasing numbers each summer. Washed by the Gulf and the broad Atlantic, they stretch beckoning fingers to the tourist from Europe and the countries to the south, and as they are regions of never-ceasing interest to Canadians from other provinces there is little doubt that they are destined to be among the most popular holiday resorts on the continent. They round out Canada's national playgrounds family — playgrounds of the mountains, playgrounds of the prairies, and playgrounds by the sea.

Right:—Mary Ann Falls is one of many beauty spots in Cape Breton Highlands National Park. The bridge in the background marks the Cabot Trail.





Rolling, well-cultivated countryside at Bonshaw, Prince Edward Island.



The Kildare Capes are typical of the red sandstone bluffs found along the north shore of Prince Edward Island

Picnickers at Brackley Beach on the beautiful seashore of Prince Edward Island National Park.



One of Prince Edward Island's modern paved highways. A fine stretch near Brookfield.





Above:—A beautiful vista from the Cabot Trail — Looking down the North Aspy Valley towards Cape North and the Atlantic Ocean from Sunrise Lookout.  
Below:—Fly-casting on the Eliot River near Bonshaw, Prince Edward Island.



Surf from the Atlantic breaking on the rocks at Neil's Harbour, Cape Breton Island.

## THE NATIONAL PARKS OF CANADA

(Nineteen in number, with a total area of 12,403 square miles)

- Banff, Alberta.**—Mountain playground, typical example of Central Rockies. Massive ranges, ice-fields and glaciers. Contains famous resorts, Banff and Lake Louise. Winter sports centre. Big game sanctuary. Established 1885; area, 2,585 square miles.
- Buffalo, Alberta.**—Fenced enclosure near Wainwright. Home of national buffalo herd numbering 3,000 head; also moose, deer, wapiti, yak and hybrids. Established 1908; area, 197.5 square miles.
- Cape Breton Highlands, Nova Scotia.**—Typical example of rugged coastline of Cape Breton Island with mountain background. Remarkable seascapes visible from motor road. Established 1936; area, approximately 390 square miles.
- Elk Island, Alberta.**—Fenced enclosure containing 1,000 buffalo, also moose, deer and wapiti. Recreational area. Established 1911; area, 51.2 square miles.
- Fort Anne, Nova Scotia.**—National Historic Park at Annapolis Royal. Site of early Acadian settlement of Port Royal. Historical Museum. Established 1917; area, 31 acres.
- Fort Beauséjour, New Brunswick.**—National Historic Park near Sackville. Site of French fort erected prior to 1755. Historical Museum. Established 1926; area, 59 acres.
- Georgian Bay Islands, Ontario.**—Thirty islands in Georgian Bay, including Beausoleil. Recreational area. Unique limestone formations and caves on Flowerpot Island. Established 1929; area, 5.37 square miles.
- Glacier, British Columbia.**—Superb example of Selkirk Mountain region. Snowcapped peaks, glaciers, luxuriant forests, alpine flora, and subterranean caves. Established 1886; area, 521 square miles.
- Jasper, Alberta.**—Immense mountain wilderness of majestic peaks, broad valleys and beautiful coloured lakes on eastern slope of Rockies. Big game sanctuary and alpine playground. Established 1907; area, 4,200 square miles.
- Kootenay, British Columbia.**—Mountain park enclosing Vermilion-Sinclair section of Banff-Windermere Highway. Deep canyons, remarkable valleys, hot mineral springs. Established 1920; area, 587 square miles.
- Mount Revelstoke, British Columbia.**—Alpine plateau formed by summit of Mt. Revelstoke on western slope of Selkirk Mountains. Reached by spectacular motor highway. Established 1914; area, 100 square miles.
- Nemiskam, Alberta.**—Fenced enclosure containing more than 300 pronghorned antelope. Established 1922; area, 8.5 square miles.
- Point Pelee, Ontario.**—Most southerly mainland point in Canada. Recreational area with remarkable beaches and unique flora. Resting place for migratory birds. Established 1918; area, 6.04 square miles.
- Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.**—Forested lakeland of northwestern Canada. Remarkable water highway system. Interesting fauna. Summer resort and recreational area. Established 1927; area, 1,869 square miles.
- Prince Edward Island.**—Coastline strip twenty-five miles in length on north shore of Prince Edward Island. Recreational area with fine beaches. Established 1937; area, approximately 7 square miles.
- Riding Mountain, Manitoba.**—Rolling woodland, with crystal lakes, on summit of Manitoba escarpment. Big game sanctuary. Summer resort and recreational area. Established 1929; area, 1,148 square miles.
- St. Lawrence Islands, Ontario.**—Mainland reservation and thirteen islands among the "Thousand Islands" of St. Lawrence River. Recreational areas. Established 1914; area, 185.6 acres.
- Waterton Lakes, Alberta.**—Canadian section, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. Mountain playground of unusual charm on east slope of Rockies. Fine motor drives and trails. Varied flora and fauna. Established 1895; area 220 square miles.
- Yoho, British Columbia.**—Rugged scenery on west slope of Rockies. Famed Yoho Valley with numerous waterfalls. Kicking Horse Valley. Emerald and O'Hara Lakes. Established 1886; area, 507 square miles.

*Additional information concerning the National Parks of Canada may be obtained from the National Parks Bureau, Lands, Parks and Forests Branch, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, Canada.*

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