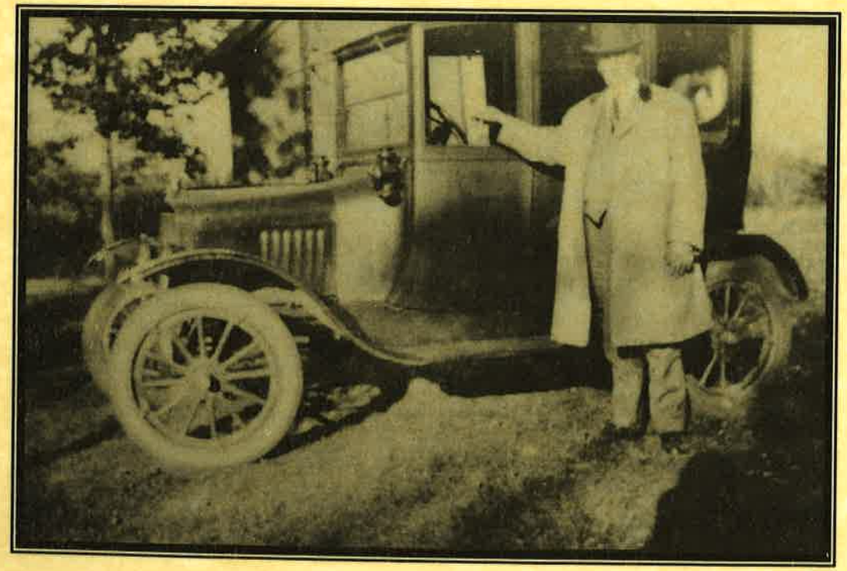
CAMI'S MEMORIES OF YESTERYEAR



INTRODUCTION

This book of stories from the past is dedicated to our families and friends in hope that they will find pleasure in reading it.

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WELCOME

We invite you to take a walk down memory lane with us. Remember the old song "Those Were The Days." Those were the days that some of us speak of as "the good old days." They days when people respected and helped each other, when doors were not locked, Grammies delivered babies and everyone was your neighbor. In a small community like ours people offered security to one another in their struggle to survive.

These earlier settlers fished in sail boats and lived from the land and sea. They grew vegetables and raised animals for food. They cleared the land to grow hay for their animals and used the trees for firewood. Horses and boats were their means of transportation. They were not afraid to walk. They followed the beaches in the summer and the ice in winter. Branches from trees were used to mark roads across the ice to make it safe to travel on in snow storms. They washed their clothes in ponds of water and dried them in the wind and sun. They used beach sand to scrub and whiten their wood floors. Socks and mitts were knitted from yarn and carded and spun from sheep's wool. Their animals were driven to the marshes in winter for water and run free in summer. However, as time went on, they found ways to dig a water well.

There were three wells dug in the beginning to Grosse Ile. People would haul water in barrels on a horse and cart, or by sleigh, to make their homes from these wells. As the years went by, they found ways to make life a little easier. Those were very difficult times, but many things were invented which perhaps indirectly still serve to benefit people today.

We have gathered photos, childhood memories, stories form memories of yesteryear, as well as from friends and neighbors. We invite you to read on and take a walk down memory lane with us.

Our cover picture brings us to a memorable story about one of Grosse Ile's first cars that was brought to the community by Herbert Huntington Tager Sr., or Hub, as most folks called him.

Alma (Turnbull) Clarke

GRANDPA'S CAR

It was the summer of 1929, my grandfather Herbert H. Tager was sixty-eight years old. He had been working for fourteen years as a carpenter in the Boston shipyards. He was still in good health but decided to return home.

He paid $600 for a new 1927 Chevrolet, packed his belongings in it and drove to Pictou, Nova Scotia. There he had it loaded on the S.S. Lovat, our freight and passenger steamer at that time. When they arrived in Grande Entrée, Magdalen Islands, the car was hoisted down off the boat onto the wharf. Luckily for Grandpa, there was a sort of road for horses from Grande Entrée to Old Harry. Not being home for many years, he could not have known the road ended there.

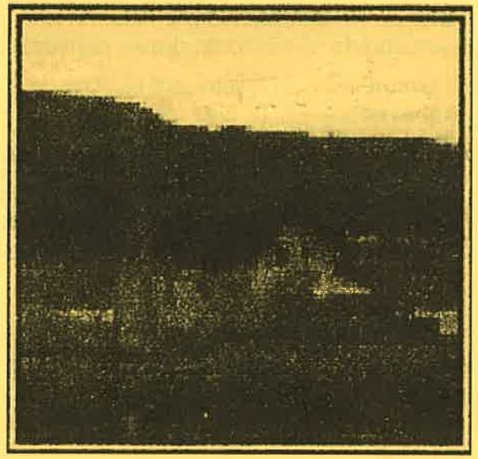
He left Old Harry and took the beach near about where the canteen is now in Old Harry. He drove down the beach around East Point and up the North Beach. He got the car stuck at the Head of the Bay and the back of East Cape. Since they knew he had left Old Harry, his son Fred went down on his horse to meet him and found him stuck. Somehow they pulled the car out of the muck, and he continued up the North Beach to Grosse Ile North. From there he crossed to the other side on a road made for horses across the end of the cove in Grosse Ile, drove up by the school to his home which was up Takers Drive.

Grosse Ile roads were made for horses; his was the first car. The horses had never seen such a contraption before and were scared to death of it. Within the next five years the road from East Cape to Old Harry was built where it is now. It was a make work project in the depression years. The men who worked on it made ten cents an hour.

By that time Grandpa had built himself a boat and a wharf down below the cape near his home. He also got a horse that he thought could trot. The car stayed in the shed most of the time and he seldom took it out. He finally sold it to a young fellow who probably enjoyed it much more than Grandpa did.

Grace Taker Rankin

LESLIE POST OFFICE



The first post office in Grosse Ile was opened on October 1, 1894, and was run by Norman Clarke. Norman requested retirement on April 22, 1924, but he carried on until July 18, 1924, when it was taken over by my father, Arthur (Oss) Goodwin, who moved the operation to our home in Grosse Ile North.

His responsibilities were heavy, the payment small, the salary being $5 a month. As Postmaster he had to supply the space that housed the office and furnish it with the racks, tables and counter that such a place required as well as a division to keep customers away from the official area.

Apart from the sale of stamps, money orders were issued and Registered mail accepted and handed out, all of which required accurate book-keeping, the moneys collected being the responsibility of the office holder.

A separate building, at the rear of the house, became the official post office. In those days before electricity arriving, Grosse Ile was lighted by oil and heated with wood and coal. The supplies of lamps, stove and fuel for the office were being paid for by the Postmaster from his salary.

Parcels were an initial problem. They had to be weighed. When asked to supply a scale the Post Office Authorities suggested that he take the parcels to the local grocer to be weighed. In any case none would be forthcoming from them. Eventually my father bought his own.

Luckily we had a large kitchen and on mail days it would be packed to capacity by local folk either collecting or sending mail, but who also took the opportunity to socialize and hear the latest news. Whilst Dad was in the office, Mum looked after the "guests".

The level of excitement was always high and increased as the arrival of mail drew closer. I remember, Phillip Clarke was the mailman then, how the updates of the whereabouts of his horse drawn conveyance would be rushed to our house.

"He's passed Old Harry," someone would report, "and on his way to East Cape. If he can reach there by, such and such a time, he could be here within the hour." The excitement was even higher at Christmas when parcels arrived from relatives or from stores on the mainland. The mailman's journey generated intense interest, somewhat like the way we hear of Santa's whereabouts on Christmas Eve now-a-days.

At the start of my father's tenure there were no official times listed for people to collect their mail, they arrived whenever they felt like it and it was often ten p.m. or later, when the last ones called out "Good Night." At one minute our house would be virtually shaking on the foundations, the silence that followed the departure of the last visitor was profound.

Off Island mail came once a week after the SS Lovat had docked at Grande Entrée, usually on a Friday. Local mail from Grindstone came on Tuesdays. As the system of roads improved and transport quickened mail deliveries became more frequent but the habit of stopping off for a chat in our kitchen carried on. It was an impromptu center for gathering of the latest news. The art of visiting was still important though, in present times, the arrival of television has changed all that.

My father operated the Post Office from July 18th, 1924, until his death on November 7th, 1957. My mother, Dorothy (Best) Goodwin, carried on as Postmistress. Between them they ran it, without holidays or respite for forty years. My mother sent in her resignation to be effective on July 15th, 1963, but carried on, as temporary Postmistress until April 22nd, 1964, when Walter Turnbull took over the position. It was at this time that the office was relocated inside Walter's store at Grosse Ile South.

In my mind's eye I can still see the horses, rigs and cutters, folk with their children and even their dogs coming and going up and down the lane to the post office. It would be grand to hear again some of those stories told in our kitchen, with the oil lamp casting its soft luminance and the stove sending out its waves of wood burning heat. Alas, like other memories, it can never be.

Margaret George

THE PARTY LINE

Remember the "old party line" with all the telephones in Grosse Ile on the one line. Our ring was one long, one short and one long crank of the handle. I admit, sometimes we would pick up the receiver and listen in on our neighbors calls. Of course everyone's excuse was, we wanted to hear the news. They tell me telephones have been here since 1910.

In my time there was a central office at Grosse Ile North equipped with a switchboard in a room in Jim Quinn's house. The operator took all the calls. My father Tom Turnbull and James Quinn worked there for many years.

Shortly after World War II started, I was hired on. We got all our information from the main office in Grindstone. I did my best to answer all the local calls and relay the information. People would call to ask – what time the mail would arrive, if the S.S. Lovat, our freight and passenger boat, had arrived to the islands, if it had left Grindstone to come to Grande Entrée. They would want to know if the local passenger boat from Grande Entrée to Grindstone was on its way back to Grande Entrée. They would even call to ask the time of day.

I also connected calls between Grande Entrée, Old Harry and Grosse Ile to Grindstone. There were two phones on Entry Island back then. It cost 15 cents to phone Grindstone and 25 cents to call Entry.

My responsibility in war time was also to report airlines flying over, in which direction they were flying, and if they were flying low. I also reported any ships I saw sailing by. The short wave radio was used to talk to the light house keeper on Brion Island, Mr. Edward Keating, at a certain hour each day. At Christmas I would get some young people together, we would gather around the microphone and sing Christmas Carols to Mr. Keating and his family and wish them a Merry Christmas.

I was there two and a half years, then I married and moved to Entry Island. My brother Walter worked there after the war ended.

Ada Turnbull Welsh

FIRST TELEGRAPH STATION

Augusta LeBourdais operated the first telephone station in the Magdalen Islands. It opened in Grosse Ile in 1881. Norm Clarke also run it for many years. Messages were all sent out by Morris Code. Various telegraph offices for messages were set up over the Islands. The old telephone resembled a box with a shelf on it. A bottle of white liquid had to be kept filled in order for it to operate. It had a receiver and a mouth piece, a crank was used to call out. If people wanted a message delivered they went to the central office. Edward Chenell operated the Central on Entry Island from 1911 until 1923. At this time a cable was hooked up from Sandy Hook to the point of service at Entry Island. It was often out of service as the cable would break.

(Augusta LeBourdais arrived in the Islands in 1871 when the ship on which he had served as First Mate shipwrecked off the coast of Pointe-aux-Loups.)

Bahan Chenell

CHERISHED PIECES FROM THE PAST

When you look at the table in the picture you can see that it is not new. My grandmother had two like it. One sit at each end of her chesterfield. My sister ended up with one and I with the other one.

It sits in the corner of my kitchen that was once my grandmother's kitchen. On it sits the old kerosene lamp that Gram always kept shining as well as the old flat iron that she would heat on the wood stove and use to iron wrinkles out of clothes. My grandfather's razor, shaving mug and his pipe stand with a pipe in it also sit there. A patchwork quilt is draped over a chair.

Some people throw these things away as trash. As for me, there is a fine line between trash and treasure and the special memories that go with these articles.

Kathy Clarke

SNOWMOBILE MEMORIES

I am very happy to relate to you a couple of events that occurred to me during those winters on the East Side. I started the mail service in the winter of 1953 until 1981. In 1946, during the fall, I had a boat and I had the contract for two months because the previous boat burned and they asked me to replace for a short period.

Winters were very bad during those years. Mail service was very important. I had the contract and I was very glad and very dedicated regardless of the weather. It was six days a week. Sometimes it was rough to go out in the day time so I would go out during the night. I had a snowmobile because the road was not open. For many years I was the only means of transportation, not only for the mail but all the goods including food, cigarettes, etc. I transported passengers to and from Grindstone and the East, sick people in particular. Sometimes we were eight to ten people including pregnant women.

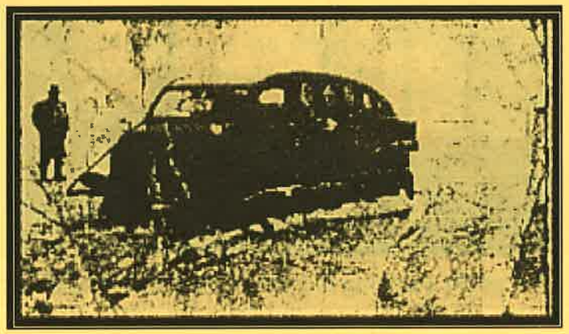
I remember January 1961. After my mail trip, I was at home. I had a call from the nurse of Grosse Ile, Mrs. Goodwin, asking me to come to Grande Entrée to pick up Mrs. Alderic Cyr who was bleeding after a labour. So I went in my snowmobile. This was the shortest trip that I ever made. Sometimes it took me three to four hours for a return trip.

One winter the House Harbour bridge was closed for two months for repairs. I had a 4x4 Jeep on one side of the bridge and my snow mobile was on the House Harbour side. I transported the mail in a wheel-barrow to the snowmobile. I was very lucky that nothing happened to my passengers or me. I thank God for that. My vehicles were always in good shape and I knew the road and the bay.

I remember that on one cold day I had a motor problem and my snowmobile would not start so I walked to Pointe-aux-Loups bridge to Mr. Sarto Theriault's. It took me two hours to walk. Mr. Jerome Delaney came with his snowmobile to pick me up. My snowmobile was broke down for two days and I eventually had to change the motor.

These are a few of the things that happened to me. Before I finish I want to thank all the people from Pointe-aux-Loups, Grosse Ile and Grande Entrée for helping me during those beautiful years. People were always welcome and friendly. I have good memories about those years.

Claude Boudreau



snowmobile

THE ENTRY ISLAND FACTORY

At one time Entry Island had a lobster factory. It was located at the point that is where the boats came in. It was built in the 1930's by Mr. Frank Leslie. About 30 or 40 people were employed. In those days the workers were paid the whopping sum of $1 per day.

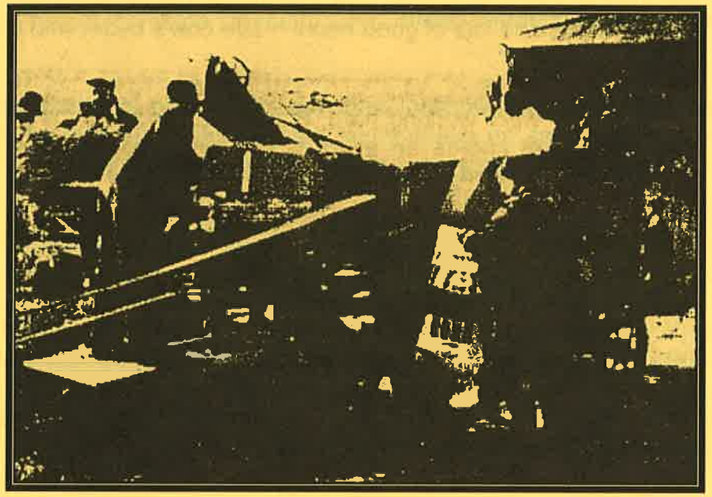
Seven or eight men would boil the lobsters outside the factory. Inside, the women cleaned and washed the meat packed it in cans. French people from Amherst and Grindstone also worked there. They stayed in camps and someone cooked for them.

Mr. Joe Nadeau managed the factory. Henry Welsh hauled shells away by horse and cart and spread them over the fields for fertilizer. Frank Leslie also operated a store located beside the factory. Mr. Richard McLean ran the store. Clara McLean Patton also was the clerk at the store.

Brenda Chenell

People standing in front of the Entry Island Factory

threshing machine



HARVEST TIME

There was much hard work and good food at harvest time. Families worked together helping each other get it all done. Threshing the oats was a big day, which was prepared for like a wedding.

The oats were sowed in the spring and left to grow all summer. If the grain was wanted for green fodder for the animals, it was cut down early and piled up in stacks. If it was used for oats it was left to grow until the stalks ripened.

A threshing machine was used to separate the oats from the stalks that were then known as straw. The machine was run by five or six horse power stationary engine, with pulley belts attached. As the belts turned on the wheels, the box went back and forth to feed the grain into it, then it would shake from side to side to separate the oats from the straw. The oats came out one side, the

straw on the other. It kept men working fast to feed the machine and catch the oats in boxes.

Women prepared food for days for all the families. Tables were set up the length of the big kitchen. Dinner was at noon with roasts of beef and pork, boiled dinners with fresh garden vegetables. For supper there were huge crocks of baked beans, home baked bread and buns, with all the other goodies – pies, cakes, biscuits and curds and lots of good homemade cow's butter and cream.

It did not seem like they were working hard, the chatter and togetherness very often made the hardest of chores an event which many would remember all through their lives.

Edna Dickson Welsh

MILDRED REMEMBERS

In the late 1800's and early 1900's the fields in Old Harry wee mostly woodland. The land was cleared to grow vegetables and hay for the animals. In winter small trees were used to mark safe roads across the ice on the bays. Young trees and tree limbs were used to make bows and rings to put in lobster traps.

There were no doctors. People often faced sickness and death with nothing but homemade remedies, faith and love. It seemed that molasses was a life saver. It was mixed with different things and used for sickness.

People made huge gardens and potato patches. They would dig as many as 50 or 60 barrels out of the ground in the fall. They made their soap from potash and animal fat. They made a fire outside and used an iron boiler over the fire to make it.

I crossed the first covered bridge at East Cape when it was only half made. My sister and I walked from old Harry and across the bridge as far as we could go. My brother took off his shoes, rolled up his pant legs and carried us across the water in his bare feet.

They made their entertainment. They had house parties, and the women made lunches and molasses candy. They took sewing or knitting with them. Horse trots were a great recreation. A party was held after the race, dancing, lunch, the

usual molasses candy. They were always sold and the money given to the church. There were many who played the fiddle and the accordion. In winter people came from Grindstone by horse and sleigh and stayed for a week. When there was an ice bridge, people also came from Entry Island. People from here also visited up there. It helped to pass the long winter. We danced in the parsonage barn just below the parsonage in Grosse Ile. The minister would have a lunch for us. We ate lunch and chatted with him, then went and danced again. People were more tolerant toward one another. We had neighbors then. We visited, worshipped and died together. Religion was taken more serious then. The church helped in many ways. It was more or less the back bone of the community.

Mildred Clarke

WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY

Ed Clarke was asked, "What was life like here in Grosse Ile when you were growing up?" He replied, "It was a rugged country, we grew up fast and learned to work very young, so everyone could survive. We lived off the land and the sea. As I understand, there were three families in East Cape. They said my great great grandfather and his brother came from the old country on ship. It landed in New Brunswick. They went picking blueberries and a thick fog came up. When they found their way back to where the ship was tied up, it had sailed.

The brothers parted, one went to Newfoundland – my great great grandfather – and the other brother went to Nova Scotia. The next year my great great grandfather came here on a fishing schooner. They landed in back of East Cape. They always said that he look around and said, "This would be a good place to live." The next year he came back with a fishing schooner loaded with lumber to build a house. They said there was another family living at Ford aux Pointe named Moore then.

A boat full of immigrants shipwrecked at East Point. They took them in at East Cape. The barns and houses were full. There were Clarkes among them. The Captain's log is still hanging on the wall in my brother Forbes house at East Cape.

When I was a kid there would be a Halloween party and a New Year's Party. It would take a month to save up twenty five cents to go. Christmas was more of a day to worship. There were no doctors here at that time, but the old people were as good as doctors anyway.

East Cape did not come under Grosse Ile School so the families hired a teacher. We had three teachers: Add Clarke's spouse (Emily), Alan Clarke's spouse (Eveline) and Will McPhail. I learned a lot about figured from him. We did it all on a slate board, what you saw had to stay in your head. The first school that I can remember was down on the ridge down below the old red road at Grosse Ile Head. The first post office here was run by old Uncle Norm Clarke. The name "Leslie" was here ever since I can remember.

There was a family who lived on Seal Island, old Francois, his spouse and kids. East Cape just about fed them. One time Forbes and I went to Seal Island with father to get Francois to file his saw. His wife asked about Father's sister who lived in the United States. Father said that we got a letter from her. The old lady did not understand how a letter could leave the United States and come here. Old Francois said, "Mrs. You put a two cent stamp on an envelope, it will go to hell and back."

To get to Grosse Ile from East Cape before they got a bridge built, we crossed the channel in a flat, a small form of a boat. You rowed it by paddling oars back and forth in the water. My father would cross over the channel in his flat and bring people over. To get to Grosse Ile not crossing in a flat, you walked out back of East Cape, across the marsh at Cumseys Road, down through the barrens and crossed over at the head of the bay and walked up the North Beach to Grosse Ile. They made a short road with rocks to cross over the marsh out back of East Cape. Everyone who came to East Cape for a horse load of rock, which they used to balance their traps (so they would sink to the bottom in the spring when they put them in the water), would haul a cart load out first and dump it in the hole across the marsh. Then they would take their load home. It was a rugged country.

They got a sort of a bridge made around 1915. It was made from logs off the beach and lumber sawed with a rip saw, form trees that were cut down on Moore's Mountain. The floor of the bridge was made from small logs and poles. I remember once my horse got his foot caught between the logs and broke his leg.

They got a municipal council started. I do not know if it was the first one or not. They got land in Ford-aux-Pointe. They had a building there. They had a council meeting every month. Forbes and I would carry wood over and make the fire. That property was sold to my brother Hugh. It is still owned by his family today.

The difference from then 'til now is like day and night. We used to sail boats. We counted our lobsters 'til about 1905, then it changed to pounds. We got $2 for a

hundred pounds at one time. In 1920, I got 37, 816 lbs. The first engine that was put in a fishing boat was around 1915.

Lobster factories were started. There were about five or six at old Harry one time. They packed and canned lobsters, sealed the cans with a soldering iron that they got hot to melt the tick of solder. This was done by hand, one can at a time. Later on they got hand turned sealers to seal the cans. They put the legs through a wringer when they got one and squeezed the meat out. They mixed this with the green tomalley and corn starch to make the lobster paste. The bodies were emptied in what they always called the "Lobster box." What the kids did not eat were hauled with all the other shells by horse and cart out over the land for fertilizer.

I started my work in the factory when I was nine years old. I got $11 for two months. We did men's work. We carried boxes, boiled lobsters and cracked claws. I went to fish with my father when I was eleven. I fished with him for two years then set out on my own. I fished for about seventy-five years. The first year that I fished with my father I bought my first suit of knickerbockers. I was pretty proud of that, as the only clothes we had were made by Mother. I paid $5 for it. Times were hard. There was no old age pension for old people until 1926.

I joined the navy in World War I. I got $1.10 a day and I sent $20 monthly home to Mother. I learned a lot in the navy. I got to be a Quarter Master on board ship. I read every book that I could find about navigation. We did convoys overseas on the navy ship "Canada." We got back in Halifax on the morning of the Halifax Explosion in November 1917. Pete Clarke, Ned Sweet and I worked together that day. It was a terrible disaster. We dismantled a gun magazine so it would not explode. If that was today we would have been given a medal. We were trained for emergencies. We helped rescue the wounded.

I got my discharge from the navy in 1919. I married in Westville, Nova Scotia, and spent one winter in Halifax. The next spring we moved home and I bought the old house and land from Abb Clarke in 1920. I started fishing again. I fished from Old Harry Head. We stayed in a cook house and walked home on Saturday night. We walked back Sunday night. It took about an hour to walk it. I got animals and began to work the land. I drove my animals down to the marsh every day in winter for water. In summer they ran free on the beaches. There was lots of beach hay. We drove the cows home at night to milk them.

There were three water wells in Gross Ile. Henry Best, Jim Quinn and Tom Clarke had them. People hauled water from them by the barrel. As the years

went by I got a well dug down where Fred's house is now. He is using the same well today for his water supply. I would cut 25 or 30 loads of wood in East Point every winter. I repaired and made new traps. I cut rings and bows and carried them out of the woods, and I made them ready to put in new lobster traps. We worked hard but it was our way to survive. If a man could not make it, everyone helped him. I always got twelve barrels of flour in the fall before navigation closed so I would have some extra if someone needed it.

My mother was a Turnbull. Her father came from Nova Scotia. John Turnbull, Walt Turnbull's father came from Nova Scotia too. Walt was a comical man, about the kindest person ever put on earth. He helped everyone.

I built my new house in 1950. I had no real hardships. I was lucky, I guess. I had good health. I lived to see all the changes for progress from boats to roads on beach sand, to gravel roads, bridges and the pavement. I saw transportation from boats and horses to cars, snowmobiles and airplanes, and I am lucky enough to live to see the ski-doos and the four wheelers.

(Ed died July 2, 1989, at the age of 98 years, just three months to the day from his 99th birthday.)

Alma Turnbull Clarke

ENTRY ISLAND KNITTING PARTIES

There were parties for knitting socks, mitts, gloves, fishing mitts and cuffs to pull over the wrist to protect the arms while fishing. Many a long night was filled with enjoyment by storytelling and the feeling of belonging when everyone got together. At the same time, the knitting was done and it never seemed to be a chore.

About ten ladies would gather at one house and bring their knitting needles. As the yarn was made up in skeins, they would put a skein over one person's arm and ball it off into a ball, and it was ready for the evening.

They would knit new feet on five pairs of socks in one evening, or start five pairs of new socks. The next night ten more ladies would come and finish up the new socks. Each lady would knit up one mitt in an evening. You could hear the needles clicking as they worked. They would arrive at five in the evening and work until about nine o'clock.

If we kids were good, sometimes we could stay up and have some of the delicious food that the table was filled with.

Doris Aitkens Burke

WE MADE OUR OWN

Television brings much entertainment into our homes today. Back in the 30's we made our own. It was sincere. Toy was not a common word. The few things we had to play with were called play things.

Girls learned to cut out patches and place quilts. We learned to crochet, sew, knit and embroider. These skills were more play than work. Boys followed the men. Some learned to do carpenter work, others farming and fishing. Some learned to hunt before they were old enough to carry a gun.

Then there were the everyday chores to keep us busy – working in the garden, feeding the chickens, gathering the eggs, turning the handle on the butter churn and bringing in water and wood. I thought it was fun to rinse the clothes and watch them come through the wringer when the handle was turned. The fun stopped when it was time to fold and iron them with the old sad iron heated on the stove. However, children are full of energy and we still had time to play.

In summer we played tag, hide and seek, and went swimming. We picked berries and jumped on hay stacks in the fall. In winter we had snow ball fights, made snowmen, skated and went sliding down the hills. We played with cats and dogs, baby lambs and calves and tried to catch butterflies.

We were part of the family, and we lived in the family ways. They included us in their everyday life and we followed, watching and learning. We were never chased away. We were where we belonged and the feeling was great.

Tillie Turnbull Clarke

RUNNING THE MAIL WAS NO EASY TASK

My father, Phil Clarke ran the mail from spring until fall on his horse and wagon. He would go from Grosse Ile to Grande Entrée. He did this twice a week and had some rough days with very little pay and no roads to travel on. He went down

through the barrens and along the sand beaches until they got a road made between East Cape and Old Harry.

He would pick the mail up at Arthur Goodwin's Post Office, at Grosse Ile North, on a Monday night, get up at 5:00 a.m. Tuesday morning and drop the mail off at East Cape and Old Harry and at the post office at Grande Entrée point. He picked the mail up there and brought it back to Grosse Ile. There was a different mail carrier in the winter. They would make a road across the ice in the bay and mark it with bushes from trees, a few yards apart. They could follow the bushes to keep on the right track in snow storms. They travelled by horse and sleigh.

Times were hard when I was little. There was barely enough oil for lamps and water was hauled or carried. There were ten of us kids. Mom had three sets of twins. They all died except Bun, he was the only one who survived. I think there were seventeen in all in our family. O cam just remember Father going to Brion Island in the fall to get butter from the Dingwells for winter. They packed it in 25 lb. wooden buckets and sold it for 25 cents a pound.

There were no doctors or nurses here then. My Mom and Aunt Eva Keaton delivered all the babies. They were called out all hours of the day and night. They never seemed to lose many babies. I guess they were lucky with God's help. The women worked very hard. I do not know when they took time to sleep. They worked late into the night spinning and weaving sheep's wool. They knit and sewed, made clothes, bleached out flour bags, and colour dyed some quilt tops.

My Uncle Norman Clarke ran the telegraph and post office on Grosse Ile North. There were no telephones then. All messages went out by Morse Code. In those days they must have had a lot more courage than we have today.

Effie Clarke Richards

MEMORIES OF MY ENTRY ISLAND HOME

I can remember my Grandmother making biscuits with buttermilk. You cannot find biscuits like them today. She was such a jolly woman and loved to laugh. She, like most women in her day, took life as it came. There were many hard days, but the love and belonging gave people so much courage in those days.

We would decorate a tree for Christmas by tying apples on it. We would cut the foil from tea packages and tie it on the tree. We did not get much under the tree, an apple or an orange, molasses candy, maybe a pair of knitted socks. But we had the security that many kids today do not get with all their big gifts.

It did not seem like we were living on an island. Mail was dropped by the plane and when it was possible they travelled on the ice bridge in winter. They went by boat in summer and the supplies that were needed for winter were brought in the fall. Everyone grew their vegetables and had root cellars made to put them in to keep them fresh.

The old days were better. There was good clean fun. We got many drives on the horses in hay making time. There was a little one room school. Lillie Clarke from East Cape came to teach us one year. We would cut up old socks and pick them apart and mix them with sheep's wool and spin up yarn for hooking mats. We made quilts from flour bags cut up in squares. A letter needed a three cent postage stamp then.

A flu struck there one winter and many people died. The minister would come and talk to people through the window. Fred Aitkens often buried people when the minister could not get there. There was more religion then, more peace and good neighbours. The men fished and farmed. Women stayed home, cared for the family and delivered the babies. They always said that Entry Island was the travelers' paradise, as it was the first place early settlers could stop.

Irene Welsh Clarke

HOUSEKEEPING ERA 1930

In 1930 my mother had five children, my two seventy year old Grandparents and my Uncle to work for as well as my Dad when he was home. He was seldom at home in summer.

The first thing to do in the morning was to light a fire in the wood burning stove in the kitchen. The first stove that I remember was black iron and had to be black leaded and shined every week, which was a very messy job. There was a coal and wood heater in the living room in winter.

About 7:30 a.m. after my mother had breakfast, she went out and milked three cows, carried the milk in and separated it, then fed the calves, pigs and hens.

She churned the butter two or three times a week. By 9:00 a.m. she was washing the dishes, then washed and scalded the cream separator. She then carried in wood and water. The kids would help when they were out of school. The water pump was outside, and it took two kids to pump it. A couple of barrels would catch rain water from the house roof.

On wash day, the water was heated on the stove in the wash broiler. Washing clothes was done by hand rubbing them on a glass or galvanized wash board in a tub sitting on two chairs. The water was rung out of them with the hands. The white clothes were boiled. The clothes were put outside on a clothes line to dry all through the year. In winter they froze before they dried. Then there was the cold job of bringing half frozen clothes inside when they were put on a line hanging over the stove to finish drying. The ironing was done with irons heated on the stove. Two or three were used since the handle could be moved from one to another.

Bread was baked every second day. The sponge to rise the bread was made in the afternoon. The bread was mixed at night and left to rise over night and baked the next day.

The kitchen floor was unpainted hardwood. It was scrubbed twice a week, on the knees with a scrub brush and homemade soap. The living room had a congoleum square and the other rooms were painted wood.

We had no electricity and no bathroom. We took our bath in the old galvanized washing tub. After the beds were made every morning, the chamber pail had to be carried to the outside toilet and emptied. The kids mostly had straw mattresses made by Mother. Adults usually slept on store bought mattresses.

She also planted a big vegetable garden and potato patch. We had our meats, fish, eggs, butter, milk and vegetables. We seldom ate canned foods. Meals were made from scratch. Sweets and pastry were all home made.

We always had four or five sheep. They were tied on a rope all summer and had to be taken to the barn each night and put out in the morning, as some dogs would kill sheep. Mom sheared the sheep in June. The wool had to be washed and dried well, then in the fall it was spun into yarn.

In winter she found time to sew, spin yarn, knit, quilt and hook mats. I do not know when she found time to rest and sleep. She got out for an hour once a week to take the kids to church. Such was the life of a homemaker in the early 1900's.

Grace Taker Rankin

BIRD ROCK

Bird Rock lies out beyond Brion Island to the North East. It has stories of birds and human tragedies of which little has been recorded. In the 1600's it was covered with birds from top to bottom.

It was not until 1870 that light keepers were put on the Island. Until that time since it was square into the path of navigation, these rocks were a fearful menace to ships. Light keepers dug a rough stairway on the cliff and supplies were taken up on them with a hoist serving for heavier loads. The rock was made a bird reserve under the care of a light keeper. This was due to the fishing fleets who used the birds and their eggs when their provisions ran low. The solitude known by the light keeper was more than enough to justify his turning a blind eye when visitors came looking for the birds for food.

With only the casual visitor, the roar of the sea, the screaming birds and the fog horn, and being frozen in the ice for nearly half the year, housebound for days by gales and storms is it any wonder that more than once the keeper, mad with his awful solitude was taken from the island in a straightjacket.

Code flags were the only means the keeper had to make his distress known, either to passing ships or a chance that the keeper on Brion Island would see them.

Years ago the keeper and his assistant, looking for seal, were floated off on separate ice cakes. The keeper died. The assistant washed ashore at Cape Breton and died a year later. In 1912 the tragedy repeated itself and again the keeper was lost leaving the anguished spouse to tend the light. She tried to signal but due to heavy fog banks day by day, the signals were not seen. The widow, a baby in her lap, steering her shallot through ice fields to Brion Island.

John Mason Clarke "Bishop's Visit-Bird Rocks." The heart of Gaspe, July 1913.

SPRING HERRING ARRIVE

In the early 1920's it was always a busy time when the herring would strike. The men at Entry Island would set herring nets during Apil. When the herring arrived they would sail to Amherst and bring them home in boat loads.

The men in Amherst had herring seines. They charged $20 a barrel. The boats would be level to the water. They held fifteen or twenty barrels of herring, depending on the size of the boat which was much smaller than they are today. They were only 25 feet long and some men had only small dories. They landed their herring wherever the water was calmest and hauled the fish to the boat house by horse and cart. In those days they salted herring to bait their lobster traps. They always salted a barrel to eat in winter. The children enjoyed getting their boots full of herring scales.

They also used herring for fertilizer when planting potatoes. They usually planted their potatoes before the fishing season started and sometimes the snow was still on the ground. It took longer for them to come up but there was always a good crop of potatoes.

Brenda Chenell,
as told by Bahan Chenell

WHEN HATS WERE ESSENTIAL

Remember when people wore hats, and no one felt completely dressed without one. Today I am still interested in hats because of my personal memories of wearing them. Hats were popular among men and women. A new Easter hat was a must for the ladies. Hats are essential today in England especially when attending a formal event.

Alma Turnbull Clarke

THE TWO LEGGED STOVE

Sometimes I sit and reminisce about my old school days and there always seems to be one day in particular that comes to mind. As most of you know, back then, there was no central heating and our classroom was heated by an old Quebec heater coal stove sitting in the middle of the room.

Now this old stove had two good legs on the front, but the back leg was missing and was replaced by two red bricks. Well, this day at recess time, Marie McKay had brought teachers' arm chair down in front of the stove. We were all crowded around where it was warm. She put her two feet on the front bar of the old stove, to brace back in the chair, and over went the stove full of hot coals. The pipes came off, everyone scrambled to get their belongings and fled outside.

Someone had sense enough to run across the road to the old co-op store for help. Glenson, Keeks and some other men came up, put the stove back on its feet and put the pipes back on it. I still do not know how they handled that hot stove. But when the smoke cleared, classes resumed as usual. Thanks God for volunteer firemen.

Irma Taker Clarke

WE WALKED TO SCHOOL IN 1926

In my schooldays we walked half a mile to school in the morning, back home at noon hour, back to school and back home again at night when school was out. Sometimes we got chills in our fingers and toes. It seemed we got many ice storms then. After an ice storm we would sit down at the top of Glenson Craig's hill and slide down to the bottom. But sometimes it was very hard when it was slippery to get to the top of the hill.

Girls did not wear jeans or long legged pants then. Our coats and dresses were well down past our knees, and we wore long stockings knitted from yarn up past our knees.

The old school house had a big coal stove in the middle of the room. A bucket of water sat on a shelf in the porch with a long handle dipper in it, for anyone that wanted a drink. The water was carried from Ed Clarke's well across the road from the school where Fred's house is now. At Christmas time the school would have a small gift for us under a tree that the teachers would put up. The toys

were sent up to the secretary. I think that the church must have sent them here.

After we finished school there, I remember that Grace, Effie, Etta and I (there may have been others) went to night school at the parsonage. The minister taught us grade IX, X and some of XI.

I taught school here in war time, as they could not get teachers. I taught on Entry Island one year and three years here in Grosse Ile.

Eunia Turnbull Dickson

MY ONE AND ONLY STRAPPING

When I was little we lived in Grosse Iles Head. My father died when I was four years old. Times were hard. We lived with my Uncle Albert McLean. We did not miss many school days. We had to walk a mile. I got my one and only strapping in school the very first day that I went.

There were not many seats in school. We had to sit with an older sister or brother. Since I had no sister, I was put in a seat with my neighbours, Till and Pearl. Pearl sent me over to put paper in the stove. When I came back, she tickled me and I laughed out loud. That's how I got the strap. Times have changed.

Margaret (McLean) Rankin

WHEN THERE WERE NO SCHOOLS

There were no schools when my father was school age. Great Grandfather taught his kids and grandkids. Father was twelve years old when they got a school. The first school I remember was on the corner in Old Harry near about where Nina's Canteen is now. We were taken to school on a horse and sleigh on stormy days. We used a slate board, and when one lesson was finished it was erased for another. Our main studies were the three R's. Reading, writing, and 'rithmetic. What you saw on that slate had to remain in your memory.

I grew up and went to the convent in House Harbour for two years, then spent one year at Truro Academy in Truro, N.S. From there I went to the United States and lived there for thirty years. On my return home, I was happy to have the opportunity to teach in the little red school house at Old Harry, which is now the mini-museum.

Mildred Clarke

SCHOOL IN 1918

When I went to school we had a one room school house, with rough boards on the wall and floor, but they were painted. A pot-bellied stove sat in the middle of the room. It burned mostly wood, coal if they had it. A bucket of water sat on a shelf in the corner. We had a long walk to school and most of the time in winter we took a lunch with us. There was a shed built on the back end of the school, with a seat made across one end of it, and twoi round holes cut out of the boards of the seat. A big box was put under the shed below the holes. This had to be emptied when it filled up. This was our toilet.

Alan Dickson

CHERISHED MEMORIES

Remember the family button box. Grandma collected buttons, no worn out garment was thrown away until the buttons were removed and stored in a cookie can. There were big round buttons made from wood, and buttons that looked like pearls. There was a game played with big round buttons. A string was put through the hole, and the button would spin until it sang.

Another box was an old cigar box to store beads in. All sorts of coloured beads were collected from broken necklaces and strung with thread to make a new necklace. Buttons and beads could brighten someone's day.

The first bridge at East Cape was made around 1915 or near that time. It was made from beach logs, and lumber sawed with a rip saw from trees that were cut down on Moore's Mountain. The floor of the bridge was covered with poles. A covered bridge was built after that. Some say that covered wood bridges were made because some horses were afraid when crossing water. With the covered bridge it was as they were entering a barn. The bridge also provided shelter in a storm.

It was very quiet and peaceful on an early summer morning, milking a cow out on the pasture. In winter while one milked in the barn it was rather cold, and the steam would fly from the bucket of hot milk.

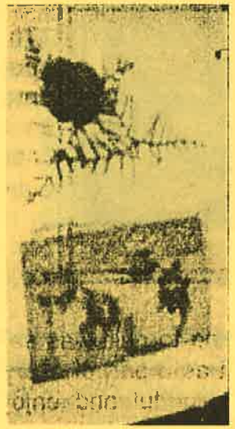
This old pump served many. People from miles away would haul water to their homes from it.

This sewing machine is over a hundred years old. Many long hours were spent late into the night, sewing clothes and quilts. Canvass covers were made to cover knitted mitts. They also made sails for the sail boats and canvass bags to carry their lunch in when they went to the ice hunting seal.

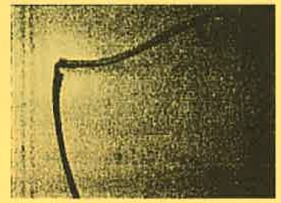
This was a round wooden tub with a paddle inside. On the top of the cover on the outside there were two cogs and a handle. When the handle was turned back and forth, it turned the inside paddle, which moved against the clothes in the tub and washed them. The wringer to squeeze the water out of the clothes was bolted to the back of the tub. There were two rollers on it. The clothes were put to the edge of the rollers. When the handle was turned the clothes went through the wringer.

They also did their washing by rubbing the clothes on a glass wash board. Many got blisters on their fingers from rubbing their fingers on the board. They also boiled the white clothes in a wash boiler with lye in the water to whiten the clothes. They would hang them outside on the clothes line to dry in the wind and sun. It was a back breaking chore.

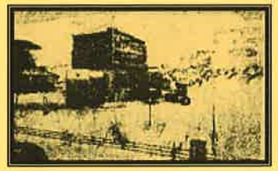
In the early 1900's there was a card known as a friendship card. It was very pretty with flowers and greetings on it. The card in the photo was sent to Nellie McLean from Vera Best about 85 years ago from Truro, N.S. This card is something to keep and cherish, just like the friend who sent it.



The horse and cart box were a very important part of life. They were used to transport fish, and most anything too heavy to carry from one place to another.



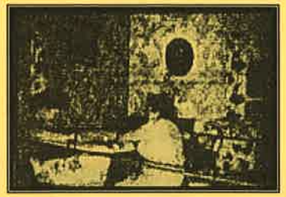
Men would cut down tons of hay with scythe. Some were actually very skillful and could cut many tons of hay in one day.



The hay barracks was invented by Magdalen Islanders. It was used as a shelter for hay. When the barns were full, hay was piled in. The roof could be raised to hold the hay. Today some of these are being relegated to folk history.

Whole milk was put into the bowl. A container was placed at each spout, one to catch the creamer the other to catch the milk. When the handle was turned the cream was separated from the milk.

This was William Matthew's organ. A teacher brought it here from Charlottetown when he was sixteen. He practiced one hour every night learning the notes. Later he began playing without the notes. He played in the church for sixty years. The organ is more than 100 years old. It sits in the corner of his daughter's living room.



Learning to quilt was something every young girl was taught as a part of everyday living in days gone by. It was colorful and enjoyable. It seems it was very important to make tiny even stitches.

It was not until the mid 1900's that horses gradually lost their importance. They were used for ploughing, hay making, transportation and just for plain joy riding. During the Christmas season some people decorated their sleighs with bells and ribbons. People would drive from house to house giving out greetings. Horses were also used to haul boats up out of the water and to haul them home. Horse races also provided a great recreation.

Alma Turnbull Clarke

TAD REMEMBERS

Alan (Tad) Dickson celebrated his 85th birthday on July 11th, 1996. I baked him a cake and visited with him. He reminisced about the old days. Tad, a retired fisherman, is quite active and enjoys gardening and picking berries.

He started lobster fishing with his father, George Dickson, when he was just eleven years old. He fished one season with him. The next spring he set out on his own in a 25 foot sharp stern boat, with a single cylinder six horse power engine. They got six cents a pound for their lobsters. He remembers when his father fished in a sailboat. His mother would make the sails for it on her treadle sewing machine. He also remembers when his brother Walter got a fish bone caught in his throat. His mother took a pair of sharp pointed scissors,. wrapped

something around the blades, put them down his throat and pulled the bone out. Another time a girl came to their home, fell and punched a vein in the top of her head. His mother took the soda box and poured it on her head, wrapped it tight with cloth and the bleeding stopped.

Tad paused for a moment, then he said, "We had more fun when we were kids." At Christmas, we cut and made our decorations for the tree from coloured paper and foil from tea packages. We did not get many presents but we were happy. I remember one Christmas Albert McLean gave me a little tin track with a bike sitting on it. You pulled a cord and the bike went around the track. We would go sliding. We put our dog in the hand sleigh. In the summer we dug clams for the fishermen to use mackerel bait.

There were sand hills west of Grosse Ile North all the way up the beach. One in particular we called Big Sand Hill. It was as big as a mountain. Kids would climb it and slide down on the sand. They have all disappeared with the wind and the sea.

They took passengers and mail from Keatings point to Grande Entrée in a fishing boat. They connected with a boat there to go to Grindstone. They called this the local boat. Tad also remembers the cross-cut saw and how they would saw logs of the beach and trees. They would have a sort of a stand made about eight or ten feet high. One person stood on the floor, the other up on the stand. The saw was long with a handle on each end. They pulled the saw up and down to cut the log lengthwise and used the lumber to build houses. A ship names The Congo went ashore on Brion Island loaded with lumber. The Old Harry Church and other houses were built with the lumber. He also remembers the rum runner ship named The Grand Slam that run ashore on the North Beach at Grosse Ile. There was rum and alcohol hid in the sand hills everywhere.

He recalled a terrible tragedy in the community. Jack Clarke, Will Clarke and Jack Dickson went seal hunting. A snow storm came up with strong winds. They went adrift on the ice. Somehow, they managed to reach land during the night. They must have been following the telephone poles down the beach. It was very cold. They were found frozen to death, sitting beside the pole.

Tad's father owned a lobster factory. He started it in 1930 and operated it until the war started. It was down on the shore, across the road from his home. A wharf was made from poles and boards out toward the North Beach. A boat could sail in the cove then. About 15 women worked in the factory shelling, cleaning and packing the lobster. About eight or ten men worked there also.

The lobsters were hauled from Grosse Ile North shore to the factory by horse and cart, and put in the cove in crates. The next morning they were boiled and canned. They were boiled in a big iron tank set up on cement blocks. A wood fire was made under it.

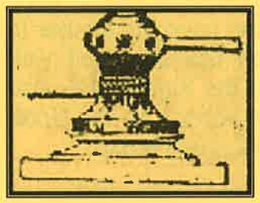
The can sealer was run by a little motor. You pressed your foot on a lever. This moved the can up under the cover and sealed it tight. The cans were put in a steam retort for an hour. The boss in the factory earned about $150 a season, the workers about $50. The lobster shells and bodies were hauled out over the land for fertilizer.

I asked Tad what it was like here during the depression years. He said that it was not that hard here, not much different from it ever was. People always lived off the land and sea. Some were not as lucky as others, but they helped each other out. We had three horses in our barn and five milk cows, lots of hens and a couple of pigs. My brothers cut tons of hay with a hand scythe. They were good at it.

My grandfather came here on a ship that was wrecked at East Point.

Alan Dickson
As told to Alma Clarke

THE OLD CAPSTAN



Lawrence Lohnes (Buster) remembers the contraption used to haul boats up on the slip at Grosse Ile shore. They called it the capsule. It probably was a capstan. It was a grooved like cylinder kind of thing, fitted with ropes for moving weight. There were holes all around the top part of it. They would put big holes through these holes and five or six men would pull on the poles to turn the cylinder around. The rope from the boat was tied around the middle of it. As they turned it around, the rope would wrap around it. This pulled the boat back up the slip. Later they started hauling boats up with a horse and they used a black and tackle.

Lawrence Lohnes
As told to Alma Clarke

HERBERT REMEMBERS

Herbert Taker remembers when his Grandfather Herbert would go sailing cargo vessels. His vessel would have two or three sails on it. It would take about two or three weeks, depending on the weather, to make a trip to Pictou, N.S., from our islands. His vessel would carry about forty or fifty tons. They would carry salt fish from Brion Island to Halifax.

He remembers when his Grandfather Herbert and his two sons, Symonds and Fred, once took a load of potatoes from Newfoundland to Boston. Sym and Herbert stayed there. Sym married Saidie in Boston. It was about twenty years before they came back home. When he came back, they built a wharf down back of the cape and they would bring their vessel in there. Everyone called it Hub's Wharf, as everyone called his grandfather Hub.

Herbert went to work on the vessel when he was just fifteen years old. He would shovel coal in a tub that they would hoist out of the vessel with a wench. They needed six tubs to weigh one ton. He remembers the vessel's lantern. It hung on a pivot, so the glass would not break and the oil could not run out.

Herbert's father, Harvey Taker, sailed vessels for many years after his grandfather retired. Herbert and his two brothers Harvey and Huntley all worked on the vessels.

Herbert Taker
As told to Alma Clarke

A JOURNEY UNBELIEVABLE

I Lillian (Cox) Turnbull came to the Magdalen Islands in 1946. It was a journey that would change my life.

It started after I had returned from my first teaching assignment in Fogo Island, Newfoundland. There was a letter waiting for me from Mr. Thomas Turnbull of the School Board in Grosse Ile, Magdalen Islands, Quebec, informing me that I had been accepted for the teaching position there and instructions on how to get there.

This was a surprise and an exciting occurrence that left me scared and unsure of what to do. I had actually answered two ads for teachers in the Family Herald

and had answers from both of them. The last one being from some place in Saskatchewan (the name escapes my memory). This was quite a decision to make and one that could not wait. I talked it over with my family and friends, but they were just as confused as I was, even arguing that it might be dangerous for me especially since I was travelling alone. But there must have been a little bit of an adventurous in me, for my decision was made.

Packing enough clothes for a year was rather easy because some of them were still packed from the year before. So I boarded a train from my home in St. John's, Newfoundland, arriving in Port-aux-Basque eight hours later.

Being too late to catch the boat to North Sydney, I stayed in a hotel and continued on the next morning. Although I had been on boats before, this was my longest trip and on such a boat with so many people. However, roaming around and conversing with other passengers, time soon passed, until around midnight we pulled up to the Immigrant Terminal in North Sydney.

Up to now, my travelling had gone very nicely and I was enjoying it all. But this was soon changed, as you will see.

We had all disembarked from the ship and were now going through customs (this was something I knew nothing about). When it came my turn he asked me a few questions and then said I would have to wait. Others passed through and soon I was left alone, I did not know what to do or what they were going to do with me. Now, it was past midnight and I was tired and sleepy. I was becoming scared and frightened.

Then someone came to me and said they were detaining me because I had no passport to travel into Canada. Now I was really frightened. I did not have any place to go or anyone to help me. I explained to them why I was going to the Magdalen Islands, but that did not please them. They said they would get in contact with Mr. Turnbull and get more information.

So, since I had no place to go they took me to a hotel for the night – it turned out to be two nights. But weird things still continued to happen. Although people at the hotel were very good to me, I was not permitted to go outside unless I had an escort. This to me was unbelievable. It was almost like being a prisoner, and it was getting to be rather frustrating. I was starting to wonder what it would have been like if I had gone the other way. (It would have been the same idea,

because I found out later all this was happening because Newfoundland was a foreign country. She had not joined confederation in Canada until 1949.)

Anyway, it might have been a couple of days later (the exact time escapes my memory) the officer came and informed me that they had been in contact with Mr. Turnbull and he had confirmed my employment there and they told me I was free to go. Someone from the hotel took me to the train for Pictou Landing where they said I would get the boat for the Magdalen Islands.

On the boat (Lovat), I was beginning to feel safe from anymore crazy things happening to me. Not so, a couple of incidents took place that got me worried again. First, the purser came up to me and informed me that I should have a fur coat because I was going to need it. Then a little later two sisters (nuns) came alongside me and began speaking in French. I was dumbfounded. I could not speak to them, I must have looked the way I felt, because they walked away muttering to themselves. This was the last straw. "My God, I thought, where am I going?" I felt so let down, I went to my cabin and cried.

But something did change that made me feel better. The purser came to my cabin and asked me if I would share my cabin with a mother and two children, as all other cabins were filled. Glad to have someone to talk to, I agreed. The little family turned out to be Pheobe Sweet and her two children, Bobby and Irene. They were going home, she told me. Thank God, I thought, there will be someone I know, when I get there, plus Mr. Turnbull. So this made me anxious again to get there.

The boat docked at Grande Entrée and Mr. Edward Clarke met me in his army jeep. This was funny. In wartime I had seen many jeeps, but never driven in one, but I could see later why he had it. It was very appropriate for the road conditions then. We stopped at someone's home where I met some nice people. Then on we drove until we came to Mr. Fred Taker's where I stayed for the night. After checking out the boarding houses, I decided to settle down at Mrs. Glenson Craig's.

When I finally got a chance to look around, it surprised me that the Magdalen Islands were very familiar to Fogo Islands, and having the same environment, no roads, no electricity and no plumbing or sewage. However, after living with these conditions for a year already made it easier for me to accept the surroundings and get along with my work.

The schoolhouse was a little disappointing compared to the one before. This one was rather and old run-down structure, dark and gloomy inside and out. It had only two classrooms, which contained about 80 children. I found out there were fewer materials to work with too. But the students were very well behaved and did their best with what they had. They were very easy to work with and I enjoyed working with them.

My teaching experience did not last long, however. In the meantime I had married my spouse, Walter, and very shortly after I had my first baby, and Walter had acquired his father's business. All this required me to stay home. Also added to this was the post office that operated within our store for a year or so, when a new one was built.

As the years went by we had acquired three stores that prospered very well for many years with the help of family members. But times and people change and as each child grew older, he or she wanted to go further afield to find new and better horizons. When this happened, of course, it made it harder for us, causing us to sell out each time.

The largest of the two stores hung on a little longer, however, under the management of our daughter and due to circumstances beyond our control, she went into bankruptcy within a year. With nothing else to do she went to Ottawa and found work there.

After 37 years in business Walter and I decided to retire and move to the Mainland where we would be closer to our family.

Lillian Turnbull

GENERATIONS OF SEAFARERS

It started with my great-grandfather, Peter Alexander Tager. He was supposed to have been born in Finland in 1831. He was sent to St. Petersburg, by his father, at the age of fourteen as an apprentice sail maker. After some years he ran away to sea.

He was on a British ship when he ended up on the Magdalen Islands. The ship's name was, "The Good Intent." The ship lost her rudder off Brion Island, Magdalen Islands, in December. The crew abandoned ship, but it was not wrecked. It was found the next spring, but not around here.

The crew rowed in a dory from Brion Island to somewhere near East Cape. Old Peter went on a French vessel for a time and eventually got his vessel. He carried salt fish from Brion Island to Halifax and brought supplies back.

Peter married Margaret Keating in 1857. They had two children. The first child died an infant, the second was Herbert, my grandfather. His mother Margaret died when he was about a year old. Peter's second spouse was Kate McLean.

Grandfather Herbert Tager was born in 1861. He was married to Maude Clarke in 1882. He was a captain of sailing vessels in his young days. He built his vessel and went to Newfoundland and took a load of potatoes to the U.S.A. around 1910. There he worked as a ship builder in the Boston shipyards. His spouse and four of their boys joined him for a short time, but they returned home. Herbert came home in 1929. He run a vessel for about 50 years. He was blind when he died at 94 years of age.

Harvey (Tager) Taker was Herbert's eldest son born in 1886. He fished lobsters for nearly thirty years, then he decided to get a vessel. He was captain of sailing vessels between the Magdalen Islands and Nova Scotia for nearly forty years. He brought supplies, but mostly coal to the Islands. He had many vessels. The first was named Joseph, followed by, The Middleton, Electro, Bradford, H.K.P., Conductor, Bessie Louise, and Ellison. He died at 86 years of age.

His sons, Herbert, Harvey and Huntley all sailed on vessels with him and studied navigation. Huntley is now a mate on the Magdalen Islands car ferry, The Lucy Maud Montgomery.

Grace (Taker) Rankin

POLIO, BACK THEN

It was October 1929, and I was laid up with Polio. I got up one morning, sit down and had breakfast, and when I tried to get up from the chair, I could not walk. Dr. Solomon came down from Grindstone, but he had no treatment to give me. The minister and his spouse, Rev. and Mrs. Jones, would come and massage my leg with hot oil. When spring came they took me to New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, on the S.S. Lovat. There I was taken to a doctor. He thought that I had Polio. He told my mother to feed me all the raw vegetables that I could eat. The toes on my right foot were all drawn up under my foot, my shoe was all out of shape.

I did not go to school until I was nine years old. My brother Tad taught me at home. When I did go I would be very upset at recess, as I was not able to run

and play games and play ball with the kids. When they would call me cripple Dick I would go home and crawl up on my father's knee. My only comfort was to feel his strong arms around me, and I would think that all I had left was his great love. Sometimes, at night, I would dream that I could run or that I was skating on Big Pond. At Christmas, Tad and Walter would take me on their sleigh to the Christmas party.

I learned to play the organ from a teacher we had. I played in church. My Mom would take me on the horse to Old Harry Church first to play for their services. How well I remember when we would stop at Ed Clarke's on our way home, and the warm welcome we got. I played the organ on the day that I was confirmed.

When I was thirteen, I managed to work in the factory. I would sit on a bench and pack lobsters in cans.

In 1934, I went to Truro, N.S. I worked in the hat factory. In 1941, I married a soldier and we moved to Ontario when the war was over. We had two children. In 1962, I had my foot operated on and my toes straightened out.

I am 84 now and still drive my car, and I take seniors out, and do any kind deed that I am able to do for them.

My motto is:
Don't count the years you've spent
Just count the good you've done
The times you lent a helping hand
The friends you have won
Count your deeds of kindness
The smiles not the tears
But never count the years

My love to all who remember me

Nora Dickson Charette

GLADYS REMEMBERS

I worked in the factory when I was just eleven years old. I picked arms and put the legs of lobster through a wringer to squeeze the meat out to use in making lobster paste. I would mix the green tomalley and meat together, and mix corn starch in with it.

When I had been working a short time, Pheobe Lohnes (Freeman Lohnes' spouse) was also working there. She had beautiful thick, long black hair. She would comb her hair back with a steel comb. There was a pimple near the hair line. She combed over it and took the top of the pimple. Blood poison set in, and in a couple of days Pheobe was very sick. There was nothing to treat her with.

My father sent me up to look after Pheobe and her children. Her family was all boys except for one girl. I would make bread every day. I was too small to knead the bread, so I would mix up the bread dough and Norman would knead it. They just had a small stove and only two loaves of bread could be baked at one time.

I would bathe Pheobe's head with warm water and hold hot cloths on it. The minister would come to see her every couple of days. She only lived a short time. I went home on Saturday night and Pheobe died Sunday morning. It was very sad.

Gladys Rankin Dickson

THE OLD COOK HOUSE

Back in the early 1900's we worked hard. I cooked in Ed Clarke's cook house at Old Harry. I cooked for ten men. At night, I set the table for breakfast, made everything ready and left it sitting on the stove. They cooked their breakfast and left in the morning. The last thing I did at night was to go out to the cape, dig out some chimney clay, carry it back, mix it with water to make a paste, and patch up the holes in the old cook stove. It would harden over night. The next morning the first thing that I did was to get the baking done. The first thing I baked was a full carnation milk box of white biscuits. You baked these as well as bread and pies every morning. The water was hauled to the cook house in barrels.

I usually walked to Old Harry with Ed and the other every Sunday night and walked home on Saturday nights. I remember one big storm. The seas came up so high that I could not go outside the camp.

After Wurtle and I married, I always helped make the hay. We had to rake it all up with a hand rake for a few years. I always had three or four milk cows. We kept them in a pasture about fifteen minutes walk from home. I milked them twice a day and carried the milk home. I always made enough butter to last all winter. We would dig fifteen or twenty barrels of potatoes every fall.

I guess work will not hurt you. We got enough exercise anyway.

Clara (Keating) Matthews

HOOKING MATS

I am 77 years old now, and living with my daughter in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. I hooked eight mats last year to pass the time. It brought back memories of those happy days when I was a mother and homemaker back home on Entry Island.

We would gather at someone's home for what we called, "A Mat Hooking." Today those mats are called rugs. They were the highlight of long winter evenings with a couple of the old kerosene lamps lit up and placed as near to where we were working as could be, so we could see what we were doing.

The mat lining was usually made from a jute feed bag, cut in a rectangle, as long or as short as you wanted it. We would draw a picture on it, then cut up rags in long strips to hook into the mat. Most of the hooks were made from a large nail, filed into a sort of a hook on the end of it, and with a wooden handle on it. The rag was held in the left hand below the mat. The hook was punched through the lining from the top. The rag strip was caught up with the hook and pulled to the top about half an inch. We also hooked a scrap mat, by hooking one line of every colour we had.

As usual, we had a big lunch cooked up on the wood stove, and the glow from the fire made us all feel cozy with many a good laugh enjoyed by everyone. We each brought our scissors and hook. In two evenings we had a new mat.

Luella Welsh Aitkens
1995

YOUNG DAYS IN THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS

I was born on the Magdalen Islands in the year 1899. In 1911 the mail arrived at Christmas time and again in May the following year. The only communication to other places in Canada was by way of wireless.

Fishing was done in sailboats, and the fish caught were lobster, mackerel, cod and herring. If the fog came up while the men were out sail fishing, the church bells would ring to help the fishermen out in the fog find their way home.

After lobster fishing, they used to do boodling down in the rushes. The fishery officers were not as strict then as they are today. I remember they used to do quite a bit of boodling. Sometimes they used to have a bag in the boat, and if they caught a lobster, they would put it in the bag and drop it overboard, and come back after dark to retrieve it.

The bay was frozen over. I can remember driving over that bay with a horse and sleigh. It was not me driving, but somebody else who was handling the horses, and it was lovely. You had a nice warm carriage robe and irons at your feet, with straw in the sleigh to keep you warm.

And the little one room schoolhouse! I have to tell you this little story. You know how the back house was. You could slide off the top of it. When there was a lot of snow, the kids used to get up on the top of the back house roof and slide down in the snow, and Percy Taker slid down and broke his leg. I went home crying to Ma, poor Percy, he broke his little leg.

It was winter time, and you know all they had in there was a pot bellied stove, and I don't know whether I was nervous or afraid to ask to go to the bathroom, or what. But one day I was up in front of the class, and being nervous I left a puddle on the floor. The next morning my puddle was frozen over, and the boys were skating on it. That's the truth!

I remember the first year I was in school (1905). I went to school in the morning and during the day a snowstorm came up, and I remember my Father coming to school and carrying me home. But you see we lived close to the school.

I remember one day the teacher (future spouse) made Clinton, my brother, hold out his hand, and the teacher used a razor strap to hit his hand. I was so mad that day I could have killed him.

One day we were drawing, and I was not good at it. I said, "Oh, I cannot draw that!" He just picked up the pencil box and gave me a whack on the head with it, and said "Yes you can!" And I tried and did it, and was quite good at it. The funniest thing was, he left the Island after school closed, and went to war.

He (Clarence Murphy) was in the army a long time before he came back home wounded. He was pretty badly wounded. It was his hip. Anyhow, all the older kids wrote to him, so he came down to Pictou,

N.S. He had an aunt in Pictou. He and his mother came down to visit the Aunt. I was working at the time with Curry's, a Mr. P.A. Curry, Bank Manager, Pictou, N.S. After a few years working for the Curry's, I went to Boston and met up again with Clarence Murphy, and we were married a few years later.

I was the oldest in my family and I remember from age 12 that I did housework and looked after the younger kids. On my 12th birthday my Mother had her fifth child, my brother Kenneth McKay, and you know when my Mother was pregnant, she was one of those who would not even lift a kettle. She was scared to death she would lose the baby, and you see all the heavy work came on to me. I really had no time for games, and of course then too, I do not think they were doing much game playing.

This is one thing they used to have down there in the winter time. They would have concerts for the church and the school. I remember Grandpa Charlie (Pa) would dance and sing. Tom Turnbull would recite a poem. I remember the Pealey family coming from Grande Entrée and putting their horse in our barn while they went to the concert. Pa must have had a couple of extra places for horses to rest. And after the concert I remember my Mother used to make supper for everybody, and another thing they used to have was a pie social. They would have the pie socials, and whoever bought your pie would eat it with you. I remember Hugh Clarke bought my pie one time. He was such a big homely man, but he was awfully nice. We sat down together and at the pie. These concerts used to be quite nice. I remember Phillip McPhail. He would recite poems at these concerts.

I worked in a lobster factory with Old Beck, Yankee Bill's spouse. In those days we canned the lobsters after boiling them, and when the cans were cool, we polished the tins. The lobster cans were steamed and cooled, then someone polished the cans. I do not know if they put a band on the cans, or whether Frank Leslie's company in Grindstone put a band on. The company bought all the lobsters.

Today I am 97 ½ years young, living in New Jersey, USA. My thoughts often wander back to the Magdalen Islands.

Elsie Pearl McKay Murphy, 1996

THE FIRST PROTESTANT PRELATE TO VISIT THE ISLANDS

This is a brief summary of the Reverand Dr. George Jehoshapet Mountain, Third Lord Bishop of Quebec.

He was 61 years old when he felt it was in the line of his duty, to go to the Magdalen Islands and look after the Protestant Communities on Grosse Ile and Entry Island, whose existence had been reported to him. So, in 1850 he was determined to see those few sheep with his eyes.

He took passage on a small brigantine, bound for Halifax, whose captain undertook to put him off on the islands. Approaching at night and knowing nothing of the coast, Bishop transferred himself and his luggage onto a fishing schooner that lay nearby. They ran ashore at the couth west point of Amherst, 12 miles from Amherst village and sixteen miles from Grindstone, where he wished to reach. There was nothing in sight but a black pig, two fish houses on a beach strewn with cod heads.

Stowing his luggage under an overturned flat, the sailors went looking for some means of transportation for him. In an hour and a half, they returned with two or three people and a low cart of the rudest possible construction, drawn by a rat of a horse that hauled only his luggage.

He described the Magdalen Island pony as "a rat of a horse" that was the only kind on the Islands. They were thought to have been brought here from Sable Island, where they had been shipwrecked from French and Spanish Islands in the 1600 and 1700's. The harness was made from seal skin with the fur left on it. The saddle was worked into a sort of parchment, supported by a parcel of rags. The head stall was a piece of old rope and the reins were of the same. A piece of board was nailed across the cart for a seat.

After being up in a schooner all night, he walked nine miles over the sand of Amherst in pouring rain, not a house in sight. At last, he came to a house where he was able to dry his clothes and get breakfast. He continued on and finally reached House Harbour. There, he got a boat that took him through the channel to Grosse Ile where he found about 50 of his sheep, as he referred to them. They had never seen or heard a religious service. The settlement was 22 years old. It began in 1828. He was deeply impressed by the poverty of the people.

From Grosse Ile he made the return journey and on to Entry Island, where there were about thirty families. There was a little question about light for the service,

which was held in the largest house there. After searching over the Island, three candles were found. One candle set in a candle stick. The other two were put into the neck of the bottle. The people heard him gladly, children and adults were baptized. On his departure, evidence of their better conditions was shown by them loading the vessel with farm produce from their island.

The bishop returned to the Islands many times in the next few years.

THIS WAS TAKEN FROM THE BOOK "THE HEART OF GASPE" JULY 1913,
Written by John Mason Clarke

HERRING SMOKERS

According to Mr. Alozeous Lapierre, herring smokers were started in Grande Entrée around 1942. The herring trap was shaped like a heart, made from iron and the trap was wood. There were five anchors running from it. The trap was set from May 7 until the end of June.

The herring were dipped out of the trap into the boat, and sailed in to the cape where the smokers were. They used a kind of a winch to take them out of the boat. They were put out in the hot sun to dry out and become a little hard. Then they were strung on a stick through the gills. They were 22 on a stick and hung from the floor to the ceiling and left to hang there for twenty-two hours. A huge fire was made under them on the floor by burning hardwood and the smoke went up through them.

They were packed into 18 pound wood boxes and sold. They were shipped to Halifax on the S.S. Lovat. They sold for $1.25 a box, then they went up $1.75. The last year Mr. lapierre worked there, they were selling for $2.25 a box.

The smokers were situated on the north cape at Grande Entrée, just north of where the Grande Entrée Municipal Hall is today. The smokers ran for about 20 years. Both Isaac Goodwin and Rob McPhail ran smokers then.

Alozeous Lapierre
As told to Jeanne Poirier and Johanne Cyr Goodwin

ENTRY ISLAND MID – WIFE

One of the stories my father has told me is about the mid-wife on our island in days gone by Jane A. Dickson Collins was born on August 14th, 1831. She was the spouse of John Collins and lived her life on Entry Island. In her day, there were no nurses on Entry. However people were very fortunate to have this person.

She not only delivered babies, she would give advice to others who were sick. When, "Aunt Jane," was struck for advice she referred to her old Doctor book. She lost only one mother and baby, because the mother was afraid to let her remove the after-birth.

In 1800's and early 1900's it was not proper for women to smoke, but she did not care who saw her puffing on her old clay pipe. She refused pay for all her services, but she accepted a drink of whiskey after the job was done.

She was a very superstitious person. She washed her feet only when the tide was going out because she believed the tide would wash away the pain. If a new moon was coming up, she did not wash then because to her the new moon brought pain. She always wrapped a white sock around her neck before going to bed to keep draft away.

During hay making time she would pick Tansy in the fields to store away for winter. This was used to take swelling down. Steeped sheep manure was used to bring the rash out when someone had the measles. "Mary Grovels" (small round flowers) was used for measles in babies. Kerosene and molasses were good for a cough, also goose grease and molasses and onions and molasses. "Gravels" or urinary tract infections were treated with sweetened niter.

Aunt Jane died on May 25, 1920, at the age of 89 years.

As told by Bahan Chenell
to Brenda Chenell

THE OLD POWDER HORN

This powder horn was given to my Daddy around 1900. It was used to carry gun powder in. A man named Chenell gave it to him. He was on Brion Island then. There were many shipwrecks over there and he got it off a ship. It might have come from England or France.

It is as smooth and shiny as glass. These are carvings all over it, a horse standing on a chest, a heart, a seal, roman numerals and other things. There is a plug in one end with a cord on it, so it could be carried over the shoulder.

The powder carried in it was used for a muzzle loading gun – that was loaded with powder and oaken. Powder was put down into the gun barrel. A rod was used to push the oaken on top of the powder, and a lead ball was put down in the muzzle on top of the oaken. There was an outside lock on the gun, called a hammer. A cap was over the hammer. When the hammer was hauled back, it pulled the gun trigger that hit the cap and set the gun powder off.

This is a family treasure in our home. I remember my Daddy using it to go hunting ducks, and when he went to the ice, seal hunting.

Beverley Rankin

DADDY'S RACE HORSE MADE SUNDAY'S SPECIAL

My most cherished memory of when I was a little girl of six or seven was my Sunday visit to Grandpa's and Gram's at East Cape. In those days my father, Ed Clarke owned a race horse and sulky. I can still feel the excitement of Sundays I went to East Cape with Daddy and his horse.

Every Sunday after dinner I would climb on to the bottom part of the sulky and sit between Daddy's feet, with only the top of my red stocking cap showing. We would go out along the sand beach to get to East Cape. There I would jump down from the sulky to go and play with my cousins.

Daddy would go back over the bridge to the hard beach where Uncle Hugh and Uncle Forbes would time Daddy's horse with a stopwatch as he raced him. For supper we would gather around Gram's big kitchen table, where Aunt May would place a large bowl of curds and cream. I can still remember the wonderful taste of curds and cream with fresh homemade bread and butter.

After supper Daddy and I would go back home to Grosse Ile, along the beach, with me sitting proudly between his feet. I will never forget those Sunday trips with Daddy to East Cape.

Eleanor Clarke Boudreau

THE SPARE BEDROOM

This water pitcher and wash bowl were given to my mother when my brother David was born. It was from Uncle David Dickson. Mum bathed David and all of us five children in the bowl until we grew too big for it.

Uncle Dave, "Pa," as I called him, told me this pitcher and bowl was always placed in a spare bedroom in his house, on the wash stand it sits on, in this photo. When company came, water was put into the pitcher the night before, and towels were put on the washstand for them to wash the next morning. If they wanted hot water, they went downstairs and got it.

Pa had a bedroom he always called the minister's bedroom. He kept the minister and the bishop when they came to Entry Island. The pitcher and bowl were always kept in that room.

Mary Ann Welsh Dickson

MAKING KNITTING YARN FROM SHEEP'S WOOL

When I was a little girl my father, Herman Josey, raised sheep, as did many on our island. The little lambs were so cute. One could almost keep them as pets.

In the spring they sheared sheep, by cutting the wool off them and putting it in bags. During the summer when the weather was nice, they washed the wool in the old galvanized wash tubs. They squeezed it through hot soapy water several times. They rinsed it well and wrung it dry with their hands, then spread it out on a blanket to dry in the hot sun and wind. At night it was taken in, and put out each day until it was well dried.

I will never forget the next step in yarn making. Eight or ten ladies would come to the house. They would take small pieces of wool and pick and pull it apart with their fingers until all the hay seed was taken out of it. This was because the sheep had been in the barn all winter. Of course this always ended with a tasty lunch of homemade goodies, and we kiddies would work very well with them, so we could enjoy the lunch.

Then in September the third step was taken. The wool was carded and made into rolls of soft wool, about a foot long and a couple of inches around.

The fourth step was to work the wool into long lengths of yarn on the spinning wheel. The fifth step was to put the yarn on a skeiner and make it into skeins of yarn.

Five or six ladies would come out with a spinning wheel on their shoulder. Three or four more would bring the cards to card the wool. These cards, spinning wheel and skeiner in the photos belong to me from my parents. The spinning wheel was made in 1854.

This rocker is a real antique also. It was given to my parents from Laura and Joe Miller from Westville, Nova Scotia. It is precious to me, as my mother rocked me to sleep in it. Today it sits in our little post office, on Entry Island, for all to see and enjoy. My daughter-in-law is post mistress and guards it well for me.

Joyce Josey Dickson

WEEKLY TRIPS TO BRION ISLAND

I remember when my father, Thomas Turnbull, would make a trip to Bird Rock once a week in his boat with the old six cylinder engine in it. He took supplies there for the lighthouse keeper, and the men who were making the steps to go up on the rock. They would tie a rope around the supplies and hoist them up on the rock.

He boated the mail and supplies to Brion Island twice a week, for the factory and cook house. Leslie Co. owned a factory. They also ran a store over there.

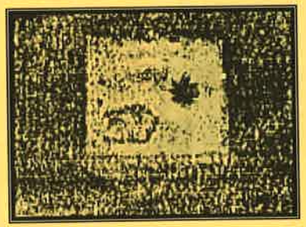
Father would visit the Dingwell family. They were good farmers. They would give Father large bundles of Rhubarb to take home. Mother would make rhubarb jam and pies. In spring they would give him the little lambs that had broken legs. He would put a splint on the leg so it would heal. My sister, Tillie, was good at feeding them with a baby's bottle and nipple.

I went to Brion with Father sometimes. One time that comes to mind is the day I went with him and bought 25 cents worth of Globe chocolates. I ate all of them while walking around Brion. On our sail back home, the wind came up and the waves got rough. I got sea sick and lost all my chocolates.

Walter Turnbull

AUTOGRAPH ALBUMS

Remember when autograph albums were popular? Everyone wanted to write in your album. Some of the popular verses were:



When in a lonely spot you sit and think
And wish a friend to see
Just turn your thoughts to Grosse Ile
And fondly think of me.

In your golden chain of friendship
Regard me as a link.

Some write for the future
Some write for fame
I write to be remembered
So I'll sign my name.

Perhaps the most popular one of all was written down at the bottom of the very right hand corner of the back cover, which said-

By hook or by crook
I'll be the last in your book.

Alma Turnbull Clarke

FAVORITE OLD TIME POEMS

FLOUR SACK UNDERWEAR

When I was a maiden fair,
Mama made our underwear
With five tots and Pa's poor pay
How could she buy us lingerie?

Monograms and fancy stitches
Were not, our flour sack britches
Just pantie waists that stood the test
Gold medal's seal upon the chest

Little pants were best of all
With a scene I still recall
Harvests were gleaming wheat

Right across the little seat!

Tougher than a grizzly bear
Was our flour sack underwear
Plain or fancy, three feet wide
Stronger than a hippo's hide!

Through the years each Jill and Jack
Wore this sturdy garb of sack
Waste not, want not, we soon learned
Penny saved, a penny earned.

Bedspreads, curtains, tea towels, too
Tablecloths were all reused.
But the best beyond compare
Was our flour sack underwear!

MY MOTHER'S APRON

My mother wore an apron
A clean one every day
A part of daily living,
It served in many ways
When she hung the wash to dry,
Her pockets held the pins
The apron was a washcloth
That cleaned our dirty chins
When days were hot and humid,
'Twas used to mop our brow
When hands were wet from laundry
The apron was a towel
Her pocket hid a needle
To sew the rips we'd get
In Mother and her apron
Our many needs were met.
Sometimes it was a basket
For eggs and baby chicks
A bag for garden bounty
And apples that she picked.
At supper time the apron
Protected Mother's hands,
When taking bread from oven
Or lifting lids from pans
It was a fan in evening
To shoo away the flies.

But the apron's greatest use
To wipe tears from childish eyes.

MA'S OLD GALVANIZED WASH TUB

Did you ever take your Saturday bath, and try to wash and scrub, while squatting down on your haunches, in a galvanized washing tub? If not, then you ain't missed a thing, but I'm telling you what's right. I done it 'til I was almost grown, on every dog gone Saturday night.

In summertime it was hard enuff, but in winter it was really tough. Spreadin paper, filling buckets and kettles, and all that sorta stuff. But getting ready for that ordeal, wuz only half o'the rub, o'takin a bath on Saturday night in a galvanized washed tub.

Did you ever stand there stripped to the skin, a wood stove bakin your hide, a dreadin to put your darn foot in for fear you'd burn alive? Finally you got the temperature right and into the tub you trod, that cold still a 'touchin your back, and you'd squeal like a fresh stuck hog.

You'd get out of the tub, next to the stove, and stand there a drippin and shakin. The front of your body's a freezing to death while the back o'your body's a bakin. A shivern' n' shakin, a burnin' n' bakin. That's the price I had to pay. That awful ordeal will haunt me 'til I'm old and gray. I ain't thru yet, there's something else that I've been wanting to say. I was the youngest of all the kids what bathed each Saturday. Ma, we all bathed accordin to age and I fell last in order which meant I had to wash myself an'in their same dad-blasted water.

Now I'm a man o'clean habits and believe in a bath a week. It helps to keep clean' n' healthy an' it freshens up my physique. But if I had my druthers, I'd druther eat a bug then to take my Saturday bath again in a galvanized wash tub.

SOMEBODY'S MOTHER

(Dates back to 1891 – maybe earlier)

The woman was old and ragged and gray
And bent with the chill of the winter's day.
The street was wet with recent snow
And the woman's feet were aged and slow.

She stood at the crossing and waited long,
Alone, uncared for among the throng

Of human beings who passed her by,
Nor heeded the glance of her anxious eye.

Down the street with laughter and shout,
Glad at the freedom of school let out,
Came the boys – like a flock of sheep,
Hailing the snow piled white and deep.

Past the woman so old and gray,
Hastened the children on their way.
Nor offered a helping hand to her
So weak, so timid, afraid to stir
Lest the carriage wheels or the horses' feet
Would trample her down in the slippery street.

At last came one of the merry troop,
The gayest laddie of all the group.
He paused beside her and whispered low,
"I'll help you along if you wish to go."

Her aged hand on his strong young arm
She placed, and without hurt or harm,
He guided her trembling feet along,
Glad that his own were firm and strong.

Then back again to his friends he went,
His young heart happy and well content.
"She's Somebody's Mother, boys, you know –
Even though she's poor and aged and slow."

"And I hope some fella will lend a hand
To help my Mother, you understand,
If ever she's poor and old and gray
And her own dear boy is far away."

Somebody's Mother bowed her head
In her home that night, and the prayer she said
Was, "God be kind to a noble boy
Who's Somebody's Son with pride and joy."

PAT'S REASON

One day on a crowded Woodward Avenue Car
A lady was standing, she had ridden quite far
And seemed much disposed to indulge in a frown

As nobody offered to let her sit down.

And many there sat, who to judge by their dress,
Might a gentleman's natural instincts possess.
But to judge by their acts, make us firmly believe
That appearance will often sadly deceive.

There were some most intently devouring the news,
And some through the windows enjoying the view.
While others indulged in a make-believe nap
While the lady still stood hanging on to the strap.

At last a young Irishman, fresh from the sod,
Arose with a smile and a most comical nod,
Which said quite as plain as in words could be stated
That the lady should sit in the place he'd vacated.

"Excuse me," said Pat, "that I caused ye to vate
So long before offering to give ye a sate.
But in truth I was only just waiting to see
If there weren't any more gentlemen here besides me."

FUN 'BACK WHEN'

Back in the good ol' days,
Whenever chores were done
The children went to play,
Having homemade fun.

Packed dirt was great for marbles
And mumblety-peg with knives
Tree limbs made for climbing
Threatened brave boys' lives.

Hide and seek was played,
Hopscotch squares were chalked.
Games of tag were frantic,
You'd run and never walked.

Girls dolls were often corncobs
With umber silk for hair.
Others sewn from rags,
Were plain but held so dear.

There were no fancy playgrounds,

Ball parks, malls or zoos.
But we never even thought to miss
Such things we never knew.

FAMILY TIES

Family ties are special things
Woven through the years,
Of memories of togetherness,
Of laughter, love and tears.

Family ties are treasured things
And far though we may roam
The tender bonds with those we love,
Still pull our hearts towards home.

William Craig, wife Laura Quinn and two of their children

Edward Clarke on his 98th birthday with son Fred, daughter-in-law Alma and great grandson Matthew

A PERFECT DAY

Grandmother, on a winter's day,
Milked the cows and fed them hay.
Slopped the hogs, saddled the mule,
And got the children off to school.

Did a washing, scrubbed the floors
Washed the windows, did some chores.
Cooked a dish of home dried fruit
Pressed her husband's Sunday suit.

Swept the parlour, made the beds,
Baked a dozen loaves of bread.
Split some fire wood and lugged it in
Enough to fill the kitchen bin.

Cleaned the lamps and put in oil,
Stewed some apples she thought might spoil.
Churned the butter, baked a cake
Then exclaimed, "For mercy sake!"

"The calves have got out of the pen"
Went out and chased them back again.
Gathered the eggs and locked the stable,
Went back to the house and set the table.

Cooked a supper that was delicious,
And afterwards washed all the dishes
Fed the cat and sprinkled the clothes
Mended a basket full of clothes.

Then opened the organ and began to play
"When you come to the end of a perfect day!"

THINGS JUST AIN'T THE SAME

TODAY----------AS I REMEMBER

Fax----------Just the information, Ma'am
Garbage Disposal----------A stray, hungry mongrel
Violence----------Two kids in a fist fight
New Age----------Another Birthday
Obscenity----------Thumbing the nose
Forgery----------Blacksmithing
Rapper----------A door knocker
Toilette----------The outdoor two-holer
Heavy Metal----------The old Tin Lizzie
Sitcom----------The two commands of Fido
Porn----------Rainin' really hard
Hard core----------Whats left on the apple
Apple----------A school kid's treat for teacher
Profanity----------Gosh!
Stock exchange----------Two pigs for one cow
Scrub it----------Wash your face real good
Recession----------A balding head
Gallup Poll----------Hitching post for runaway horse
Census----------We had five: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling
Decaf----------What de cow has
Grammy awards----------Hugs and Kisses for baby-tending
Freeway----------Stepping on a penny scale for nothing
Ph.D----------Just a posthole digger
Headlines----------Wrinkles on the brow
Heat wave----------What sis has at the hairdresser's
Anchor man----------The guy in charge of ship docking
Free-for-all----------Saturday night silent-picture shows on Main Street
Double shot----------Bang! Bang!
Prime Time----------When Ma's kitchen sink pump needed a glass of water to get going
Computers----------Anybody's brain, simple as that
Sexual Harassment----------A school boy pulling a girl's pigtail
Air Conditioner----------Papa, when he had to open all of the windows to cool off
L'eggs----------What we prayed for a hen on a nest to do
Yellow Pages----------Grandpa's old family Bible
Country Music----------Moos, oinks, baas, clucks
Seat belt----------What papa took there to tan their hides
Lead poisoning----------What mama worried about when we chewed our pencil end
Swat----------Mash that skeeter
Drugs----------Castoria and Castor oil
Pot----------A lidded vessel under the bed
Commentator----------Just an ordinary spud

The Dingwell family