

*Historical Heritage  
of English Communities  
On The Magdalen Islands*

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Although the information presented here is based on systematic research, discrepancies have been found. To the best of my knowledge, the information is as accurate as is possible, at this time.

**Note:** The photo on the front cover is a compilation of two separate photographs taken by Robina Coe Goodwin. They were taken at the re-enactment of the arrival of Jacques Cartier at Old Harry, four hundred fifty years ago. The lady in the background is Dorothy Best Goodwin, a postmistress who served the public of Grosse Isle for several years. This book is the second in the Historical Heritage Series, presented by the Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders.

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## Introduction

The Magdalen Islands are situated near the center of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. The archipelago is comprised of a series of nine main Islands and various smaller ones. It is roughly in the shape of a fishhook, lying in the northeast-southwest directions. Five of the main Islands are connected with long sandbars, causeways, bridges and Route 199. Entry Island is the only inhabited Island not physically linked to the main group.

Micmac natives came to the Islands for perhaps many centuries before Jacques Cartier arrived in 1534. The French (Basques, Bretons and Normans) fishermen were attracted to the Islands by large schools of fish. Though codfish was the primary concern for the fishermen, seal and walrus were wanted for their precious oils and meat. The British began to show serious interest in the resources of the Islands late in the sixteenth century. Because of the battles for North America, the Islands switched hands many times. By the late eighteenth century, the walrus were hunted to extinction in the Gulf. Fish became the mainstay for the islands. Seal were always abundant. Admiral Isaac Coffin was granted patent letters to the Islands on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1798, making him the sole owner. English were attracted to the Islands around this time.



The Municipality of Grosse Isle dedicated this memorial to the visit Jacques Cartier made to our Islands in 1534. The sculpture was erected in 1984, marking the 450th anniversary of his visit to the Islands.

## English Arrivals

Shipwrecks, though heartbreaking for the victims, aided in populating the Islands. Many sailors dragged themselves ashore, to find hardship and despair and sometimes something desirable enough to keep them in the isolated region. There are several shipwrecks that were significant to the English-speaking communities.

John Dickson was the survivor of a shipwreck in the East Point area, but it is uncertain if he was related to the Dixon/Dickson family on the Islands. He is listed as having property and a house in Étang-du-Nord, in the 1831 census.

In 1839, the *Andromache*, a British war ship was wrecked upon the rocks behind Entry Island. These rocks are still called “Andromache Rocks”. John Patton was on that ship when she hit Entry. He was formally from Dunoon, Scotland and was a ship’s carpenter and farmer. He married Eve McLean and they had ten children on Entry.



The *Andromache* Rocks (X) Site where the British War Ship, *Andromache* struck and sank in 1839.

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1847, the immigrant bark called the *Miracle*, went ashore at East Point. This wreck is perhaps one of the more tragic of the Magdalen Islands and the most familiar. Mary Goodwin Clark, one of the original settlers, lost her life to typhoid fever, contracted while nursing the victims of the shipwreck. Survivor John James Brophy married Eva McLean from Entry.



Part of a large ship came ashore at Ad's Cove, Old Harry 2005

December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1856 was a violent day indeed for the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. The *Good Intent* had made the voyage safely from Liverpool, England but broke her rudder in a violent storm near Brion Island. Peter Tager, the man who brought the Taker name to the islands had been on board. The ship had been disabled but not lost and after the storm the ship had been repaired and continued on its way, without Peter Tager.

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1863, the brig *British Lady* broke up, near Grosse Isle North. She was carrying a load of lumber from Port Hill, PEI to Bristol, England. Of the few survivors from the ship, William Heddon remained on the islands. He married Susan, the daughter of Alexander McPhail and Alice Goodwin, one of the original settlers of Grosse Isle.



Shipwreck victim William Heddon

On November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1871, the brig *Wasp* went ashore five miles east of Pointe-aux-Loups on the north beach. The sole survivor of this tragedy was Jean-Baptiste Augustin Lebourdais. The story of his tenacity to his hold on life is well documented so there is no need to retell this. This man eventually became the 'founding father of modern communication', on the Magdalen Islands.



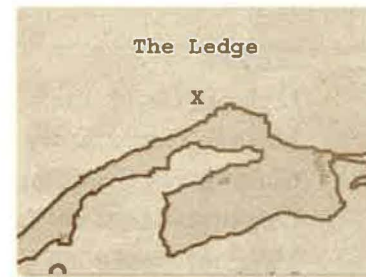
Augustin Lebourdais



Shipwreck at Grosse Isle North

Also on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1871, the *Peri* hit the Ledge near Grosse Isle North. She had left Gaspé, Quebec and set sail with a load of dried, salt codfish. Robert Best, a fourteen-year-old who had survived the shipwreck had came ashore by clinging to a ladder. Later he married Bethania Rankin from Grosse Isle North.

The *S.S. Lunenburg* was a steamship being used by the Leslie family to import general merchandise to their store in Grindstone and export fish products. The ship also carried mail to and from the islands. While on a voyage to the islands, she encountered hurricane force winds and foundered on Sandy Hook beach on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1905. Robert J. Leslie, Deputy for the Magdalen Islands was among those victims who died that day, when the ship broke up, throwing some of the crew and passengers into the frothing sea.



The Ledge (X) is an rock formation off Cape Dauphin in Grosse Isle approximately three feet under water at low tide. This formation has been disastrous for many ships in the past.

Though not considered ships, the next two boats that sank had seriously affected the English communities. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1936, a fishing boat with men from Old Harry sailed to Grand Entry to meet the *Lovat*, the passenger and cargo vessel that sailed from Pictou-Souris-Amherst-Grindstone and finally to Grand Entry. The small boat foundered in the Grand Entry Channel. Six people, mostly from the Dunn family, drowned that day. They were Aubrey, John and Raymond Dunn. Orrin Clarence Dingwell from Bay Fortune, Prince Edward Island, Foster Clark and Baxter Turnbull also died in the incident. They are all buried in Saint Peter's By-the-Sea Cemetery in Old Harry. The only survivor was Charles Henry, son of Charles Clark, who managed to hold on to the boat.

In November 1987, a boat capsized between Entry Island and Grindstone. Five young people died in the incident, while returning home from Grindstone. Four of the young people were from Entry and the fifth one from Quebec. They were Kimberly Patton (18), Lorne McLean (28), Tracy Clarke (18), Delbert McLean (24) and Darla Hickey (30).

The Craig and Matthews families name also originated from a shipwreck. Other family names did not survive time, such as Heddon, Brophy and Lebourdais.

The following is a list of some of the English-speaking family names and the approximate year they settled on the islands:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Arrival Date:</b>
Dickson, David (Entry Island)	1822
McLean family (Entry Island)	1822
Clark, James (East Cape)	1828
Goodwyn or Goodwin, George	1828
McLean, Alexander	1828
Rankin, John	1828
Dickson, John (Grindstone)	1831
Keating, Nicholas (Grosse Isle Point)	1831-32
Turnbull, Benjamin (Grindstone)	1831
Patton, John (Entry Island)	1839
Burke, John	1845
Collin, Thomas	approximately 1849
Welsh, James (Entry Island)	approximately 1849
Aitken, James	1850
Quinn, John (Grindstone)	1852



## *Churches and Cemeteries*

### **Anglican Churches**

The Rt. Reverend Jehoshaphat Mountain, third Bishop of Quebec, founded the Anglican Mission of the Magdalen Islands on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1850. Ordained a deacon on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1851, the Magdalen Islands Mission became Reverend Felix Boyle's first ministry. A few scattered Protestant English settlers would congregate in a warehouse near the beach each Sunday to worship. In 1882, Reverend Boyle built the first parsonage in a central location because quite a number of Anglicans were scattered from Amherst to Grand Entry.

The first little church on the Magdalen Islands was built at Grosse Isle North, around the year 1852. The timbers from a shipwreck were used to frame this church.

Around 1884, a larger Holy Trinity church was consecrated by Rt. Reverend Williams at Grosse Isle North within the area of the large cemetery, to accommodate the growing community. The church blew off its foundation during a heavy gale, in the early 1920's.

Meanwhile, the congregation of Grindstone had grown enough to warrant their own church. John Townsend Coffin, the proprietor of the Islands and nephew of the late Admiral Isaac Coffin, financed the first Saint Luke's Church. The church was built and well used but it wasn't consecrated until 1869, by Rt. Rev. J.W. Williams, the forth Bishop of Quebec.



Saint Peter's By-the-Sea at Old Harry near the end of the rainbow

During the autumn of 1859, the lumber and materials arrived on the Islands to build Saint Augustine's Church on Cape Gridley, in Amherst. This lumber was another generous gift from John Townsend Coffin. It is believed that the church was built in 1860 to accommodate the fishermen from the Nova Scotian and American fleets, who congregated in Amherst every spring and remained there until fall. It was built on the site that is now occupied by the Musée de la Mer. A large cross was placed to remember those people buried in the cemetery. The Rt. Rev. Williams consecrated this church during the incumbency of Reverend John Walters, in 1869. The last service that was held in the Saint Augustine's Church was in 1903. Although uncertain, it is believed that the church was torn down in 1911. The lumber, pews, vestries and bell were incorporated in the first All Saints Church on Entry.



Saint Augustine's Church  
in Amherst

The third Holy Trinity Church was built in 1925 by Douglas Clarke and Arthur Goodwin and was consecrated by the Rt. Reverend Lennox W. Williams in 1928.

Saint Peter's By-the-Sea, the little church of Old Harry was built in 1916 and consecrated in 1918. It was framed with lumber from the *Kwango*, a ship wrecked off of Brion Island. This church is now the oldest existing Anglican Church on the Magdalen Islands.



Saint Peter's By-the-Sea

The third Saint Luke's Church in Grindstone was built in 1950. By 1974, the parish of Grindstone had only five Anglicans, making it impossible to maintain the church. Bishop Allen Goodings deconsecrated the church on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1980.

The Archbishop Carrington consecrated the present All Saint's Church, in 1958.



First All Saint's Church on Entry Island

The second Saint Luke's Church was built in 1905 and was consecrated by the Rt. Reverend Lennox W. Williams, the sixth Bishop of Quebec in 1918. It was lost to fire March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1946.



First Saint Luke's Church



Present day All Saint's Church

## Anglican Cemeteries

### Amherst

#### Saint Augustine's

Some of the names of people buried there are: Arthur Pinkham; Joseph Rowden; William Clarke; George Brown; the crew of the vessel *Juliet M. Tilden*, who drowned on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1867 and were buried three days later, on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1867; Benjamin Sylvester; Hezekiah Clarke; Edward A. Clarke; Freeman Sanders; Wells Wardwell; S. Wardwell; Samuel Perkins; John Sawyer; William Wilson (able seaman on the *General Grant* from Gloucester, Maine (03-05-1868)); and William Snow (Captain of the sailboat, *Snow Drop*, (1884)).

### Grindstone

#### Saint Luke's

The Saint Luke's cemetery was consecrated in 1869. The cemetery has 118 separate grave markers in it.

The grave marker with the oldest date in the cemetery is that of William Adams Johnston, son of William Johnston, who died on the Magdalen Islands, on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1853. He was eighteen months old.

The oldest person with a gravestone buried there is William Dixon. He was born in 1825 and died in 1910, at age 85 years.



Saint Luke's Church

## Grosse Isle

Grosse Isle Island has two consecrated boundaries, Grosse Isle North, and Grosse Isle South. Trinity church. Private family cemeteries such as Dingwell Cemetery existed before and after lot

### Grosse Isle North

A large marker has been placed at the crossroads of Grosse Isle North, to honour the original settlers from Nova Scotia. The stones, still visible, mark a number of graves in this cemetery. In the consecrated grounds, these stones were placed on their sides, instead of facing east. The cemetery was established because it is a private cemetery. The stone's enclosure



"AROUND 1828, A LITTLE BAND OF ENGLISHMEN, WHO HAD FLED FROM NOVA SCOTIA SETTLED IN THIS AREA. THEY FACED POVERTY UNTOLD, HARDSHIPS AND DEATH. WITHOUT DOCTOR OR CLERGYMAN TO HELP THEM, THEY DIED OF THEIR OWN SICK. BURIED THEIR BODIES IN THE GROUND. ALTHOUGH THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO DIED ARE UNKNOWN, THIS MONUMENT IS ERECTED TO THEIR MEMORY, TO THEIR COURAGE AND TO THEIR PROFOUND FAITH IN ALMIGHTY GOD. THIS MONUMENT IS A PART OF OUR HERITAGE.  
(ERECTED JULY 1990)"

There are over 300 marked graves in the consecrated cemetery on Grosse Isle North. However, there were many more people buried there in graves that were only marked with shore stones, which have since been accidentally removed or have become overgrown.

The oldest person buried at this graveyard with a memorial stone was Mary McDonald, wife of Jeremiah Driscoll. She was born in 1795 and died in 1881. The oldest grave marker appears to be that of Susan McPhail, wife of shipwrecked victim William Heddon, who died March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1868. There is a stone for eleven-year old Daniel Albert McLean who drowned when the boat that both he and his eighteen-year old brother, James Freeman, were in capsized. They died on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1880.

In 1975, a plaque was erected at the Grosse Isle North cemetery in memory of the Reverend Felix Boyle. This plaque is also dedicated to the memory of his wife, Julia Louisa Arnold who died and was buried on the Magdalen Islands in 1865 and for his little daughter, Julia Magdalen (1863-1864).

### Grosse Isle Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity Church was built in 1925 and the church was consecrated in 1928. Eighty-nine graves have been marked with gravestones.

The oldest person remembered with a marker at Grosse Isle South is Margaret (Clark) Shelbourne (1845-1935). She is remembered on a stone dedicated to some of the children of Frances Levi Prest's family. The first child to have a memorial stone placed in this cemetery was Lilian Prest, 1922, daughter of Frances Levi Prest and Eva Maria McPhail, who died at birth.



Holy Trinity Church

### **East Cape**

A grave marker has been placed at East Cape to remember the original Clark who came to the Islands and settled there. James Clark died at age 77, in 1870 and his wife, Mary Goodwin died in 1847.



There is a large stone, a boulder really with a bronze plaque, placed at East Point, to honour the victims of the Miracle, many of whom died on the beach or were washed ashore and buried in the sand by James Clark, his sons and others who were at the scene on that fateful day, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1847.

### **Entry Island**

There are two cemeteries on Entry, one called the 'Old Cemetery', which is on the side of Patton's hill and 'All Saints Cemetery' at the church.

#### 'Old Cemetery'

The 'Old Cemetery' has 29 people buried in it even though only seven are still marked. Most of the grave markers that were placed here were wooden crosses. The eldest person with a marker buried was John Cassidy (1757-1842). The youngest person buried in the cemetery is Esther Ellen Dickson. She was only one year and two months old. It is believed that Alexander McLean Sr. was buried here in 1826.

#### 'All Saints Cemetery'

The 'All Saints Cemetery' has 188 monuments to people who have died. The first stone placed in the cemetery was for John Henry Collins who died at age 15 years, 3 months, on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1904. The person with the earliest birth date buried in the 'All Saint's Cemetery' is Eleanor Hynes, wife of James Welsh Sr., who was born 1829 and died December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1919.



## Old Harry

### Saint Peter's By-the-Sea

The Saint Peter's By-the-Sea Cemetery has 95 tombstones. The grave marker with the oldest date in the cemetery belongs to an infant boy of James Burton Clark and Annie Exina (Ina) Rankin, named John Lawrence Clark, who was born on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1915 and died December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1915. It is written on the stone:



"A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM"

This small white marker is witness to the changing times of Old Harry.

The oldest person to be buried in the Old Harry cemetery is Flora Driscoll, wife of Henry B. Clark. She was born in 1825 and died on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1921. She was ninety-six years old.



## *Education System*

The education system for the English-speaking people of the Magdalen Islands was slow to come into full effect. In the 1800's, educated parents or grandparents taught their children at home. Even into the early twentieth century, the system wasn't consistent enough to adequately educate the youth. Those who wanted an education beyond grade eight, often left the Islands to pursue their goals; sometimes returning to teach after the system became more stable.

Occasionally students would go to the Roman Catholic Convent School in House Harbour, or the Academy for boys at Lavernière. If this was not an option, ambitious students could ask the teacher of the English school to tutor them after hours, usually in a back room of the house where the teacher boarded. Another option was to ask the Minister in charge of the community, to tutor higher education. Usually it was only the girls that followed this option. They often managed to receive their grade eleven and became eligible to teach at the local school. The only other option was to leave the Islands, to stay with family on the mainland, in order to continue their education.

Eventually, a school board was created for the Islands' Protestant schools. Four or five local residents helped make the decisions that were required. The head of each school was the teacher who taught the secondary classes.

### **Grindstone**

In 1880-1881, Mr. Harvey Clarke (1848-1923) was the schoolmaster in the English school in Grindstone. The first school, near the National Bank was still giving classes in the late 1920's, but the decision had been made to build a school closer to where the English-speaking people of the village lived. Land was purchased from Montaque Goodwin to comply with this decision.



Second Grindstone School

The second school was built at the corner of the Big Cape Road, to replace the first. It was a larger one-room school with an enrollment of roughly thirty students. It accommodated classes up until the eighth grade and the teachers were hired from the mainland.

In time the student population outgrew this one-room, so the decision was made to build another classroom on to it. During the summer of 1941, Arthur Goodwin started the extension to accommodate a secondary school and completed it in 1942. This school was used to hold church services after the second St Luke's church burned down in 1946.

### Grosse Isle

The first school at Grosse Isle was built in early 1860's or earlier with Norman Clarke (1852-1929) as the teacher. It was a single room school, built on the ridge at Grosse Isle Head, on land that Captain John Townsend Coffin had leased for that purpose, for a period of ninety-nine years. The date the building became unused and what happened to it is unknown, but a second one-room schoolhouse was built in a more central locality around 1896. Its position is approximately where the elementary section of the present day school is now.



First Grosse Isle School

Second Grosse Isle School

Eventually the community out grew the school and a third schoolhouse with two rooms was built. The old school was sold, moved and turned into a home.

The third school was built facing south toward the Wide Road, on the school hill, approximately where the secondary section of the present school is now. Local carpenters, Arthur Goodwin and Douglas Clarke were contracted to build it. It was approximately 30 by 50 feet in size and had two classrooms, one on the west side and the other on the east. Each classroom was approximately 30 by 20 feet in size and had a coal stove. The school had a "hip" roof, which was the style used from the early twenty's to the mid-forties. Though it was built in the summer of 1934, it was not used before January 1935.

A large hall ran down the center of the school and a door led out of the back of the school to the toilets. These toilets had boxes that needed to be emptied. Later, toilets were installed and water could be poured into them. The septic system was in the cellar.



Third Grosse Isle School

The present day school was built in the 1954-55 school year but no classes were held until the 1955-56 school year. It was built in front of the two-room school, closer to the Wide Road. Its length went in the east/west direction and it had three classrooms. This school was originally heated with a coal-burning furnace. The north-south section was built in 1963, and became the secondary school. This section had two classrooms, an office and the residence for the head teacher or principal. Another two classrooms would be built on in the early eighty's.



Present Day Grosse Isle School

## Entry Island

The first school of Entry Island was built near Sam's woods, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, possibly as early as 1865. It was called the "Moody School" because of one of the teachers that taught there. Even with a school, classes were not held regularly, as teachers were difficult to find. Classes were held when a teacher was available or when the Islands minister came to Entry. Often reading was taught with the Bible, as this served the dual purpose of learning to read and spiritual teaching at the same time.



Entry's Old School house

When the first school became unserviceable, school was taught in the dining room of John McLean's home until another school was built. It is unknown when this second school was built but when it was completed, it was a one-room school with a high pitch in the roof and a high ceiling. As the



Second Entry Island School

student body of Entry continued to grow, the school became too small and the secondary students once again were sent to a room rented in one of the local homes.

It was decided to build a school in a central location, in 1950-51. This school had one room in 1951, but there had been renovations and additions built on to it. One afternoon in March 1962, while classes were held, the school caught fire. Students noticed the smoke, so the teacher had them leave. The school burned to the ground. It is unknown what caused the fire, but no foul play was considered.



Third Entry Island School

The present school was built with three classrooms and a teacher's residence, in July 1962. Until the school was finished, elementary classes were held in the Church Community Hall and secondary classes were taught in a room of one of the homes.

## Old Harry (1921 - 1975)

Around 1850, Henry Clark Sr., son of James and Mary (Goodwin) Clark, of East Cape met Flora Driscoll, married her and moved his family to Old Harry Head. After the passing of some time, Henry Sr. used his first home as a schoolhouse. At first he used the building where it was, but prior to the new century, he gave three quarters of an acre of land at the corner of Old Harry, to the community and moved the old house to that place.

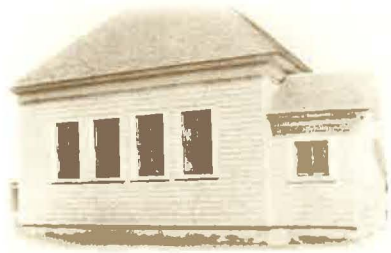
The small one-room school was replaced because of its small size, age and location. In 1922, the School Board had the quaint "Little Red Schoolhouse" built in the middle of the community of Old Harry, so that it would be equally accessible to all the youth. Douglas Clarke and Arthur Goodwin of Grosse Isle built the school. It was a one-room school serving up to grade nine in the early years and up to grade seven in the later years. High school students were bussed to Grosse Isle. The school served approximately twenty students each year.

In 1975, the Gaspé School Board amalgamated the Old Harry with Grosse Isle schools and bussed the students to Grosse Isle. The building came under the care of the Old Harry Community Center who used the building as a place to raise funds for the maintenance of the Saint Peter's By-the-Sea Church. In 1985, the Community Center Committee released responsibility for the building to the Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders (C.A.M.I.) who created a mini-museum and then the Historical Complex, after much restoration, renovation and rebuilding. "The Little Red Schoolhouse" is now owned by C.A.M.I.



Old Harry School

## East Cape



East Cape School

The school at East Cape was built in the early 1930's. Local resident, Arthur Goodwin from Grosse Isle was the head carpenter for the project. It was a one-room schoolhouse with the popular "hip" roof style. It had a separate porch entry and outhouses for the toilets. As with the other small schools of the era, it had a coal-fed stove near the center of the classroom. Because this school came under the Grosse Isle School Board, the students studied the same subjects. The students who attended this school were from the Clarke families of East Cape.

It is unknown when the school was closed, but the families of the students took them to Grosse Isle School either by horse and cart or they stayed with relatives who lived close to the school. In 1963, it was purchased from the school board and made into a home.

## Grand Entry

The first English school in Grand Entry was built in 1895 or 1896. It was at the extreme western end of the village and had nineteen students with Mrs. Paulina Dixon Burke as the first teacher. This school accepted both Protestant and Roman Catholic students, which caused some difficulties with the Catholic Church and RC Bishop J.C. MacDonald of Charlottetown. The Francophone families probably sent their children to this little school because of its proximity to their homes, however the church condemned the practice. Eventually a Roman Catholic school was built in Grand Entry.



Grand Entry School



Grand Entry School outhouses

Allen Clark and Mr. Sullivan were contracted to build a school for the English in Grand Entry, in 1936 on the English Road (Ch d'Anglais) to accommodate the Clark, Aitken, McPhail and Goodwin families living in the area. It was a one-room schoolhouse with eleven-foot ceilings and the popular "hip" roof. There were hardwood floors, interior walls and ceiling, all varnished and polished. The school was heated with the coal-burning stove. There was a interior pump room inside the main building, a coal shed off a hallway in the back that lead to two toilets.



Allen Clark

Four six-foot tall, large double windows adorned the south wall to let light in, as there was no electricity.

As a school it was closed around the late 1940's. The building served as an Anglican church for a short period, though not consecrated, a meeting hall, and finally a community hall. Eventually, it was sold and made into a private home.



The Clark, Goodwin and McPhail homesteads on the Old English Road in Grand Entry

## Economy

### Agriculture

Most of the families maintained kitchen gardens. Using lobster and fish by-products as fertilizer, families had an abundance of potatoes, turnips and carrots for winter. The first Magdalen Islanders to make a living off the agriculture industry were the residents of Scottish and Irish descent. Most of them lived on Entry and Brion Islands. The English population had 721 farm animals and as much as 3,202 kilograms of butter were made, according to the 1871 census.



The Dingwell farm on Brion Island

### Merchants

There were many general stores in the English communities over the years. The Leslies, Clarks, Turnbells, Dingwells, Rankins and others made a good living from serving the public.

Early in the twentieth century, Charlie Clark and Jim Clark both owned general stores in Old Harry. Fresh meat would come in every Friday, on the S.S. Lovat. During the autumn, bulk foods such as flour, tea, sugar and molasses were ordered in.

In 1947, Grant Clark started the islands first soft drink bottling plant not far from the Old Harry corner. It is still possible to find the old bottles from the plant, buried in the sand near the beach parking lot.

Grosse Isle had a co-operative that sold general merchandise in the middle of the twentieth century. It went bankrupt and had to be bailed out by private citizens.



Grants pop factory

### Fishing Industry

The lobster fishery officially opened in 1875, on the Magdalen Islands. Large lobster stocks in the Grand Entry and House Harbour lagoons had been well known before 1875, but the obstacles in harvesting lobster proved too great to do much for the economy. There was the question of Island ownership. Also, the lack of lumber on the islands for building the cannery factories and traps caused a relatively slow start to the lobster fishery. There was little firewood left for boiling the lobster and steaming the cans, etc. Prior to 1875, there were only twenty-five families living on the east end of the Islands, so there was a lack of labourers where the lobster stocks were most promising. In 1876, Grand Entry had its first cannery.



Even though it was a daunting task, William Gasper Leslie started William Leslie & Company in time to take advantage of the lobster boom. He came to the islands in the early 1870's, married Victoria Boudreau, then Alice Jane Burke after his first wife died. He worked as Grindstone's postmaster and telegraph operator when the cable came to the village. He had also been in business, having a general store in Grindstone. Leslie bought and sold from the fishermen. He invested into ships and brought supplies to the Islands, such as lumber to build factories and hardwood to cook the lobster. Eventually, he invested into factories in nearly every village on the Islands, creating a substantial business for himself and his family and a considerable boost for the economy.



Seventy-six thousand traps were fished in the lagoons and shallow waters, mostly around Grosse Isle, Brion Island, Grand Entry and Entry Island. Hundreds of fishermen and labourers came to the north-east end of the Islands in April, to start each season. Small shanties were built, to house the influx of labourers. The herring season began early in the season, to have fresh bait for the traps and salt fish for consumption. Traps were baited both with salt herring and fresh spring herring, until the 1960's. The men who didn't fish worked in the factories. They carried and cooked the lobster, maintained the factories and built cases for forty-eight cans of lobster. Women and girls would polish metal cans, fill them with lobster meat and seal them. The women would also cook, clean and sew for the men, in their homes and at the cookhouses. The lobsters were taken without discrimination for size or gender, spawning or not. When the lobster season ended in mid July, many of the workers stayed for the cod and mackerel seasons. With time, people decided to stay permanently on the east end of the Islands.

Between 1905 and 1910, fishermen were paid by the quantity of lobster they caught and not by the weight. Early in the mornings, around daylight or just before, the fishermen would push the boats off the slip, each helping the other. The boats were hauled up on the slip by horses in the evening. It was rare that a boat would be left in the water, because a storm or heavy wind could come up overnight.



The Slip at Grosse Isle

Later in the autumn, after mackerel and cod fishing finished, fishermen would go after halibut, a large groundfish that is still considered a delicacy. Until freeze-up, nets were put out around the wharves, capes and beaches, to catch a 'mess' of smelt for supper. After freeze-up, the young fishers would cut holes in the ice and 'jiggered' with a line to catch frostfish.

Early in the twentieth century, the Department of Marine and Fisheries decided that the lobster stocks were too low and put a ban on fishing in the lagoons. After that, only poachers fished there.

By 1916, the coastal fishing vessels were, little by little, changing their sails for piston-driven motors. As a result, the sea bottoms further from shore were fished. The Islands began to export live lobster around the 1920's. This began to diminish the economic impact fishing made on the Islands, thus putting many islanders in the position of having to leave the Islands to find work.

In 1922, the federal government gave the administration of all fishing industries in Quebec, to the provincial government, except that of the Magdalen Islands.

Girls at a young age would leave school early in the year and go to work for fishermen or in the factories. The cookhouses, where some fishermen would stay, had several wooden beds to a bedroom. If the girls were lucky, they could stay with nearby relatives, otherwise they would stay in a small bedroom within the confines of the cookhouse. The factory work had long, hard hours and the pay was low. The wage for these girls was approximately \$.10/hour in 1924 and \$.17/ hour in 1942. The price of a can of lobster climbed from \$.15/can to \$.40/can before the Great Depression struck.



James Clark's Factory

By 1925, the Leslie Company was the largest general merchant on the Islands. Then the Great Depression hit and the number of lobster each fisherman caught declined. There were no conservation actions taken prior to the decline and the lobster didn't have time to recoup their populations. The world was in the Depression, the sale for the luxury food declined. As the demand for fish decreased, so did the price. The factories suffered because they did not have the lobster and they also did not have the price. After the Depression struck, the price of seafood products dropped. The industry was getting only \$.03 per pound of lobster and \$.01 for four mackerel. The Leslie Company, Eastern Canada Fisheries, was heavily invested in the fishing and shipping industries and it began to suffer seriously. Finally in 1926, the Company closed its doors. A few years later, the Eastern Canada Fisheries Company declared bankruptcy, giving another serious hit to the English economy.



Edward (Ad) Clark's Factory and Ad's Cove,  
Old Harry

In the first half of the twentieth century, Old Harry had a strong economic community for its size. Because of its close proximity to what is still referred to as the island's best lobster grounds, the small community had no less than four lobster factories. James Clark had a factory and slip at Old Harry Head. Edward Clark had a factory and slip in 'Ad's Cove'. The Leslies had their factory in the same area and the Maritime Parkers Ltd. bought lobster from James Clark after he closed his factory. In the center of Old Harry, at Sea Cow Path, a slip had been built to serve a factory called the Seven Seas. Seven owners of local boats built their own business. They put a factory and cookhouse on Sea Cow Path Road. The business did not last a long time because during World War II, five of the seven captains enlisted.



Seven Sea's slip at Sea Cow Path

After the fall of the Leslie Enterprises, small French co-operatives sprang up to fill in the gap left behind in the fishing industry. Big Cape co-operative opened its factory with 189 members, in 1933, and bought lobster from the English.



Cape Dauphin Fishermen's Co-operative

In 1993, after becoming dissatisfied with the price they were given for lobster, a group of 27 Grosse Isle fishermen decided to set up their own co-operative and call it Cape Dauphin Fishermen's CO-OP. It was put together and managed a couple years by Byron Clark. Since the startup of this co-operative, it has continued to expand the number of boats that fish for it. It retained 70 fishing boats in the year 2006. This co-operative along with the Islands salt mine became the backbone for the Grosse Isle economy.

### Forestry Industry

Prior to 1880, the Islands forests were sufficient to build the small homes and boats that were used at the time. Island wood was also used to heat homes. After 1880, lobster merchants began importing coal from Nova Scotia, because the limited amount of forests on the Islands became scarce. The only area where there was forest in abundance was in Grosse Isle and on Brion Island. These forests were privately owned and not for sale. Mildred Clark (1904-1997) of Old Harry remembered that the heavily wooded land was cut down, so as to grow hay to feed the animals.



Cuting winter wood

## Hunting Industry

Walrus hunting had ended by the time the English began to settle on the Islands, but the seal hunt was an important commodity at a time of the year when both food and money were exhausted. Seal hunters would take soft molasses biscuits out on the ice for their lunch because the biscuits would not freeze. They would leave from land, in teams of four to six men, dragging a flat-bottomed rowboat, to get across glades in the ice. Many seal hunters have been lost because of a change in the wind direction, which would move the ice out to sea. The men would freeze before help could arrive. In one example, in March 1921, three men did manage to reach land but became disoriented in the rising snowstorm. They froze just west of Grosse Isle.



## Mining Industries

Mrs. John Buck leased her land in Grindstone to the Quebec Manganese Mine Company. They had the official inauguration on June 8, 1940. The company retrieved 600 tons of the metal. However, the quantity of the ore did not justify the cost of mining it, on the islands. Albin Petitpas died in a mining accident in 1941. The mine ceased all activities on November 20th, 1948.

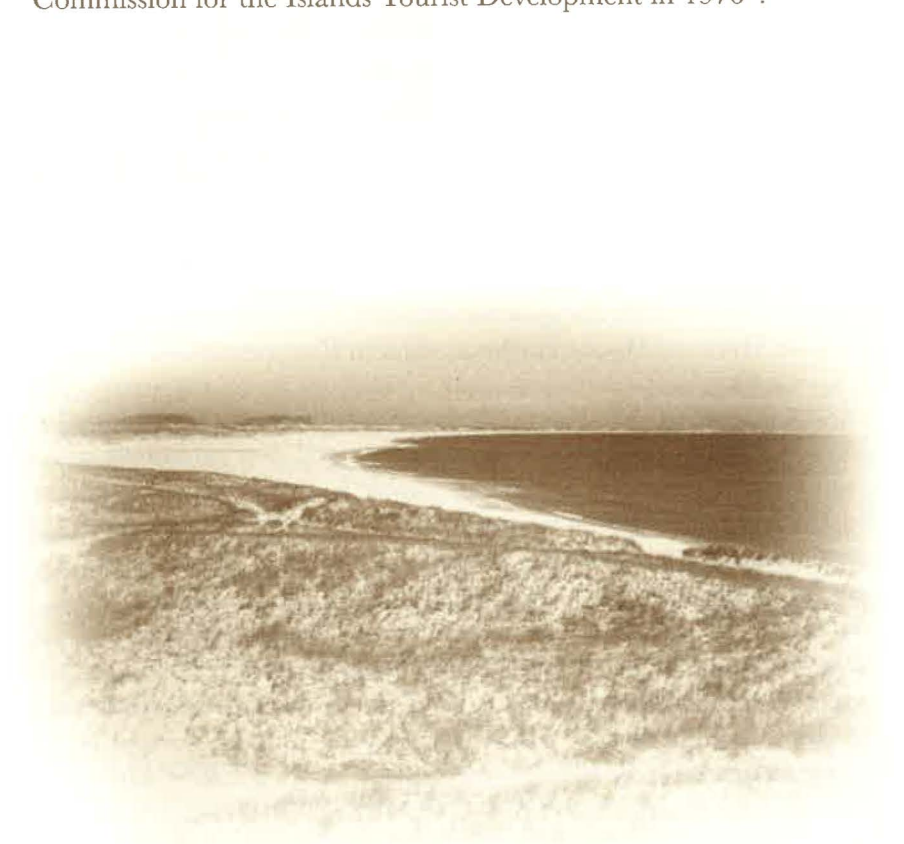
In 1972, SOQUEM drilled the first of its wells on the Islands and found a large quantity of exploitable salt. Quebec approved of the \$51.5 million financial plan of SOQUEM's, to accomplish their project relative to mining salt, in 1979. The Mine Seleine officially opened at Grosse Isle in 1982.



Mine Seleine

## The Tourist Industry

In 1954, the Deputy of the Islands, H.D. Langlais put together a "Magdalen Islands Memoir" to the Royal Commission on the Concern over the Constitutional Problems of the Islands, in which he recommends that the Islands are a propaganda opportunity for the Provincial Office of Tourism. It said that the tourist industry was an "unexploited resource" for the Magdalen Islands economy. It was not until 1972, that the Islands had their first official tourist season and a visible number of tourists arrived. The County Council created the "Commission for the Islands Tourist Development in 1976".





## *Communication & Transportation Systems*

### **Communication**

Prior to 1880, ships carried all communication to and from the Magdalen Islands. In August 1880, the federal government had an underwater telegraph cable installed between Old Harry and Cape Breton Island to link the Islands with the mainland, which would allow external communication. This cable was 84 miles long and had cost \$91,485, which was expensive but considered absolutely necessary for the well being of navigators and Island residents.

Shipwreck victim, Augustus Lebourdais returned to the Islands, after having corrective surgery to remove his legs, which had been frozen during his ordeal. He set up the first telegraph station at Grosse Isle North, in the home of William Clarke. He worked ardently at this task to create an important communication tool to help save lives, when the sea threw ships up on the shores.

Around 1881, the Bird Rocks were linked by eight miles of cable to Grosse Isle. Soon after, the government laid a land cable, making a link from Old Harry to House Harbour, then to Étang-du-Nord.

Over the next thirty years, telegraph communication expanded to cover the Islands. The system worked very well, but eventually broke down. Early in 1910, the underwater cable between Cape Breton and Old Harry broke. Although repairs had frequently been made to the system, this was a break that could not be fixed. Residents of the Islands had become accustomed to sending and receiving mail to and from family and friends on the mainland, so a bit of panic ensued. An employee of the RJ Leslie Company Limited, exporters of lobster and smoked and salted fish was first to have an idea to launch a puncheon into the sea. On February 10<sup>th</sup>, the village of Amherst turned out to participate in the launching of the sealed, wooden barrel with a sail and a rudder. It had the words "WINTER MAGDALEN MAIL" clearly wrote on the sail and about one hundred letters, safely packed inside it. One of the letters was addressed to the Minister of the Department of Marine and Fisheries in Ottawa. The letters were put into cans used for packing lobster and soldered shut. The cans were put into the barrel, which was tightly closed to make it ready for the sea.

They sent the puncheon out into the Gulf from the Sandy Hook beach and watched as the northwest winds pushed at the sail and took His Majesty's Mail on it's unknown southerly course. Although the letters were and still are considered official mail, they were never canceled by any Magdalen Islands post office.

It was an ingenious idea, a unique method of communication. Because of favourable winds, the WINTER MAGDALEN MAIL arrived on a beach near Port Hastings, Nova Scotia, on February 12<sup>th</sup>, of the same year. Someone combing the beach, looking for whatever the sea would have throw up on shore, found it. The federal government immediately dispatched the steamship *S.S. Harlaw* with supplies and return mail to the Islands.

Meanwhile, the cable between the individual Islands was still connected. Edward Chenell worked at the telegraph central in his home on Entry Island in 1911, while James Quinn ran the central in Grosse Isle. Most messages cost \$0.25, depending on the number of words used. The phone resembled an old box with a shelf on it. A bottle full of a white liquid had to be kept full for the system to operate. It had a receiver, a mouthpiece and a crank that was used for outgoing calls.

In 1912, a new method of communication was established on the Magdalen Islands. A wireless remote was set up on Marconi hill in Grindstone, which provided telegraphic and telephone service to all the islands. The telephone system was installed in 1915. This network was created and paid for by the Minister of Transport until 1960. It then became a private system. Bell Canada acquired the network and administered the system under the name, Télécommunications des Iles-de-la-Madeleine Ltées.

### **Post Offices**

The Magdalen Islands Post Office was in Amherst. It was the first post office on the Islands and started postal services on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1854. It was simply called Magdalen Islands, a name attributed to Samuel de Champlain, from his 1632 map. This office stayed open until 1899, when the name was changed to Amherst Island Post Office.

Grand Entry Post Office opened on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1873, and continued in service under this name until 1955. Today, the English speaking

population is largely on Grosse Isle, but in earlier days, English also lived in Grand Entry, as well as Old Harry. This post office served the fishermen and as it was the only post office at this end of the Islands until 1894, it was well used. On July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1955 the name was changed to its French version, Bureau de Poste de Grande-Entrée.

In Grosse Isle, the post office name has changed many times. When it opened on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1894, it began as the Brion Post Office. It was located in Grosse Isle and the postmaster was Norman Clarke. No cancel postmarks have been found from this office. That name lasted until 1898, when the name was changed to Fauriel Post Office. The origin of the name is unknown. The reason given for the change is that Brion Island had opened up its own post office and there were concerns that there could be confusion and the mail would be sent to the wrong office. Norman Clarke continued as postmaster. The post office operated under Fauriel until 1903, then the name once again was altered. It was changed to Lemieux Post Office on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Although there was no official reason given for the change, it is noted that the Honorable Rodolphe Lemieux was the Minister of Labour and Communications and Deputy of the Islands, at the time of the change. In 1906, the name was changed again because another post office in Lotinière, which had formally been called Forestdale, took the Lemieux name. Only one cancellation mark for the Lemieux Post Office in Grosse Isle has been found. The name of the Grosse Isle post office became Leslie, in 1906, after Robert Leslie, Deputy for the Islands who died the previous year as a result of the sinking of the *S.S. Lunenburg*, a ship that had carried passengers and mail to the Islands. Norman Clarke continued as postmaster through this final name change. The post office continues under this name today.

Brion Island had a post office for the summer months only. It opened in 1898 and operated every summer, until 1932. After the navigation opened in the spring and the fishing season began, the population of Brion grew to around 100 people; fishermen went to the rich waters off the Island, many spending months there, away from their families, while eking out a living from the sea. Hence, this post office opened every year in late April or early May, and closed again in late November or early December when the ice closed in and it was no longer possible to fish. It is believed that these men were far too busy to communicate much, since it has so far been impossible to find a

post-mark cancellation for this post office, though they do exist. The first postmaster for Brion Island Post Office was John Ballantyne, who worked from 1898 to 1902. William Dingwell took over as postmaster in 1903.

The first post office to open in Old Harry was on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1904. Elizabeth Clark was the first postmistress in this small fishing village. The small post office closed on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1970. Since then, the residents of Old Harry have had to use rural service from Grande-Entrée Post Office.

In the late thirties, Clarence Rankin (1914-1995) hauled the mail from the Fatima beach to the Post Office in Grosse Isle. He did this for two winters. He used a box sleigh and his brother's horse named 'Old Bill'. There was no airport at that time and the small plane had to land on the Hospital beach, near Fatima. He would leave early in the morning and rarely made the round trip in one day. If the channels were frozen solid, he would come down the beach on the south side of Pointe-aux-Loups and cross to Grand Entry on the ice, before continuing around to Grosse Isle. However, if the channel was not frozen it was then necessary that he drive on the north beach to Grosse Isle.



Dorothy Goodwin

The Post Office was in a building connected to Arthur and Dorothy Goodwin's house on Grosse Isle North, since Dorothy was the postmistress at that time. From Grosse Isle North, Norman McKay would take the mail through to Old Harry and Grand Entry post offices.

## Transportation

Over the years, the Islanders have seen various methods of transportation coming to and leaving from the Islands, however they have been served by ships in all of the changing eras. With each change, the ships became more technologically advanced. They brought cargo that was necessary for the survival of the growing Magdalen population and took fish back to the mainland. The Leslie Enterprises used quite a few of the first recorded ships. The *S.S. Albert* sailed from 1875 to 1880. The *S.S. Scud* (1880-1883), the *S.S. Beaver* (1883-1891), the *S.S. St. Olaf* (1891-1895) also ran business to the mainland for the Leslie Company. The Leslie family enterprises also used the infamous *S.S. Lunenburg* (1900-1905). The steamship left Souris, P.E.I., on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1905, with mail and general cargo, when hurricane force winds pushed it up on Sandy Hook beach during the morning of the fourth, killing crew and passengers including the Deputy of the Islands, Robert Jamison Leslie.

The first automobiles appeared on the Islands around 1917. In the fall of 1929, Herbert Huntington Tager returned to the Magdalen Islands after working in Boston a number of years, bringing with him a new Chevrolet automobile. This was the first to arrive in Grosse Isle. Trevor Dickson owned the first truck in the community. The first automobile arrived on Entry in 1949. It was a two-ton International truck owned by D.K. McLean. Ivan Quinn also took an automobile to Entry, in the early years.



Herbert Huntington Tager and his new 1929 Chevrolet

Harvey Tager Sr., Herbert H. Tager's eldest son, bought his first sailing vessel, the *General Middleton*, in 1920. Over the next fifty-two years, he would carry freight such as coal, lumber, cordwood, salt and foodstuffs from the Maritimes to the Magdalen Islands. Mr. Tager used the *General Middleton* from 1920-1930. The ship was an eighty-foot general cargo ship, with a gross tonnage of 70 tons, with a twenty horsepower engine and sails. This ship was traded for the *Electro*, a 90-foot general cargo ship with a gross tonnage of eighty tons. She had a thirty horsepower engine and sails. The *Electro* sank in 1934 with a load of coal aboard, about five miles off Grand Entry. The *General Middleton* was lost when she hit Indian Rocks, not far from Wood Islands, Prince Edward Island, in 1932.



General Middleton

Harvey Tager purchased the *G.R. Bradford*, a two-mast sailing vessel, from Maine, U.S.A. She was a ninety-six foot general cargo sailing ship with a thirty-six horsepower engine that had carried rock along the east coast. With a crew of four, Tager left Maine under sail, as she had no engine at the time. They stopped at Halifax, en route to the Magdalen Islands, to take on water and supplies. After acquiring this ship, Harvey Tager had her fitted with motors. He cut some off the two tall masts and added a third mast in the center of the ship. In doing this, the ship used smaller sails, which were easier for the small crew to handle. This boat was sold to F.W. Leslie in 1943 and it was re-fitted with a 250 horse-powered engine. She was eventually sold to the Groupe C.T.M.A. The *G.R. Bradford* while carrying a load of coal went ashore on the backside of Sandy Hook beach, in 1953 and became a complete wreck.



Electro



G.R. Bradford



H.K.P.

In April 1944, Harvey Taker bought the *H.K.P.* from Murray Harbour, in Prince Edward Island. This 75-foot vessel had a gross tonnage of fifty-six tons. That same year, she broke her moorings while anchored for the winter, near Grand Entry channel and sank. *The Conductor* was purchased in April

1945 from Richabucto, New Brunswick, to replace the *H.K.P.* She had a 120-tonnage capacity. She was sold in 1946 to a buyer in Canso, Nova Scotia.

The *Bessie Louise* was the next ship that Harvey Taker purchased in Port-aux-Basques, Newfoundland. She was a seventy-five foot general cargo ship, with a gross tonnage of fifty-seven tons, two gas engines and sails. She was sold to Islander Léger Arseneault, who bought her in 1953. The *Bessie Louise* was lost at Pointe-Basse harbour in October 1954.



Conductor



Bessie Louise

The *W.J. Ellison* was the last ship bought by Harvey Taker Sr. He acquired her from Trinity Bay, Newfoundland in April 1954. She was an eighty-three foot general cargo ship with a gross tonnage of sixty-eight tons and she had two diesel engines. This ship served him eighteen years until Harvey retired. He sold the ship in 1972, to Mike Raven from New York, U.S.A.



W.J. Ellison

The ship, the *S.S. Lovat*, first owned by the Fraser Lovat, came into service between the Islands, Souris, P.E.I. and Pictou, Nova Scotia, in 1924. This ship became a lifeline for the Islands, because of its longevity. It made a regular weekly round trip until 1960. This ship carried passengers, vehicles and cargo in large steel shipping containers. In 1945, she came under the ownership of the Magdalen Island Transportation Co. Ltd. The new owners changed her name to the *S.S. Madeleine*, but to this day she is still referred to and is fondly remembered as the "Lovat" by the population of the Magdalen Islands. Her last Captain was Roméo Bourgeois.

The *M.V. Maid of Clare* was the first ship put into continuous service by the new Islands cooperative, Groupe C.T.M.A. She traveled the route between Halifax and the Islands from 1945 to 1969. The *Maid of Clare* was a coastal-vessel of 145 tons.

In July 1923, a plane made from aluminum landed in Leslie's cove near the Leslie store in Grindstone. This was the first time the inhabitants of the Islands saw a plane. Fishing boats with sightseers made a semi-circle around the flying machine, because it was so novel. However, transportation by plane did not officially begin before 1927.

Trans-Continental Airways had the first airplane that came to the Magdalen Islands carrying mail and cargo, on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1927. It was an amphibious plane and landed on water. This was a spectacle that attracted many Islanders. A company called Canadian Airways created the first link between Charlo, New Brunswick and the Magdalen Islands, in 1929. This transport carried mail and passengers until 1941. Often this plane had to land on the Sandy Hook Beach in Amherst. In 1942, Maritime Central Airways, a company of F. Burke of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island established a bi-weekly flight to the Magdalen Islands. The plane would land on the North Dune, better known as the Hospital Beach. The plane they used was a DC3, which gave valuable service for many years.

A new airport was constructed at House Harbour, in 1956. It had two

runways, which were paved in 1959. They ran in the east-west and north-south directions to allow for landing and take-offs, no matter what the wind direction was. The airport was officially opened in 1960. In April 1966, the airport had its first night time landing. Meanwhile, the *Lovat* (*S.S. Magdalen*) continued its faithful duty until she was retired in 1960.



## Lighthouses

Lovat

It is said, "Necessity is the Mother of Intervention". The need for visibility in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence was indeed great during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There were more than four hundred recorded shipwrecks around the Magdalen Islands.

The first lighthouse on the Magdalen Islands was placed on the Bird Rocks. It was built there in 1870, by the Dominion government. The light is located 140 feet above sea level at high tide. The architect of the light was John Page and the builder was a Mr. Fraser. It was first lit on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1870. The original lighthouse was white, hexagonal building, thirty feet tall and not far from the residence and outer buildings. It was equipped with a fixed white light. During fine weather, the light was visible for twenty miles in all directions. When there was foggy weather and the light could not be seen, a cannon was fired every thirty minutes to warn passing ships.



Bird Rocks lighthouse

Access to the top of the Island was a difficult task indeed. Lumber and materials had to be hauled up with a rope and pulley system, hung out over the steep cliffs. A chair was often hung to this system to lift people to the top, however a set of stairs was built to allow people to climb the height.



Stairs to the top of the Bird Rock's

This Island has a tragic history not only to ships but also to the lighthouse keepers who stayed there to warn ships to stay away from the dangerous shoals. Many keepers suffered death and injury because the cannon was known to explode on occasion while being loaded and lit. Even after a foghorn replaced the cannon, the tragedies continued. The keepers would supplement their income and their diet by hunting seal. Too many of them were lost because the wind pushed the ice out and away from the islands. In 1987, the light on the Bird Rocks became fully automated. As a result, the Bird Rocks are once again uninhabited. There are only birds there now. This lighthouse was the last to be automated on the Islands.

The first lighthouse on Entry Island was built in 1874, on a high hill that mariners considered too high. It looked like a star at night. The second lighthouse was built too close to the cape. It has been documented that the light keeper was seen going to the lighthouse with his lantern. Cliff erosion forced its replacement. The third and final lighthouse is located on the southwest corner of Entry.

The lighthouse on Brion Island was built in 1904. It was placed high on the west end hill, over looking Cape Noddy. During the war years, and in times of emergencies, the lighthouse was used to send short messages via Morse code, because it was believed that the enemy could hear the telegraph messages.



Entry Island lighthouse



Brion Island lighthouse and keepers house

## The War Years

English Magdalen Islanders dedicated much of their manpower to defending the country. During World War I (1914-1918), fifty-one members of the Magdalen Islands English-speaking community joined the Canadian forces. Sixteen men from Entry Island registered, six men from Grindstone and twenty-eight from the East End of the Islands.

During World War II (1939-1945), more than one hundred and fifty English Magdalen Islanders enlisted. These men and women went into the air force, army and navy. Thirty-seven men from Entry Island joined up, eleven from Grindstone and almost ninety men from the northeast end of the Islands.

Of the young men from Entry who enlisted in the forces, many joined the Royal Rifles of Canada and were sent to defend Hong Kong from the invading Japanese. The suffering and ultimate death at the hands of their Japanese captors is well documented elsewhere. Out-manned and out-gunned their regiments were forced to surrender, on Christmas day, 1941. The men of these regiments were kept in Prisoner of War camps and many of them did not return home. Meanwhile, the women, children and the elderly men were left to fish, farm and keep the home fires burning.



Back row L to R: Thomas Bazil Chenell, Melvin Burton Welsh, Georges Borden Chenell, James Maxwell Chenell, Edward Bahan Chenell, Albert Benjamin Chenell, Wilfred Collins, Bernard Leslie Chenell, William Bradley Chenell, Delbert Louis Welsh.  
Front row L to R: James Stanford Welsh, James Patton McLean, Georges Walter Welsh, Ancil Lloyd Josey, George Palmer  
Note: All the above except Walter Welsh and Wilfred Collins went to Hong Kong.

## Health Care

The original inhabitants of the Islands had to prepare for all kinds of emergencies. For cases of colds and the flu, they would use the natural herbs they found on the islands made into remedies and cough syrups.

On Entry Island, they had their own family midwife in the mid-eighteen hundreds to the early nineteen hundreds. Jane A Dickson (1831-1920), wife of John Collins was known not only to aid in the birthing of children but to heal the sick also. She would dispense medical advice and homegrown remedies, as needed. She would consult a medical text when it was required. In Grosse Isle, Annie McLean (1882-1960) delivered children and used home remedies of the past.

From the 1920's to the 1940's tuberculosis, diphtheria and poverty-related diseases spread through the villages. In 1935, the number of deaths surpassed that of the "year of the flu", in 1891.



Red Cross Dispensary in Grosse Isle

The Canadian Red Cross put the first dispensary in Grosse Isle in 1929 with nurse, Amelia Jennings, in 1930. Ms. Gallant was the first registered nurse to stay on Entry Island. She started work in the year of 1932, even though Entry Island didn't receive its dispensary until 1948. She boarded with one of the Island families. The original dispensary on Entry Island is still in use today. Mrs. Ann Shawburg was the first Red Cross nurse to work on Entry, in 1945. It was the nurses of these clinics that prescribed and dispensed drugs, delivered babies, gave immunizations, made night calls and took care of all emergencies. They were on call, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Often they sat with terminally ill patients, pronounced them dead and laid them out, because the English traditionally kept their dead at home. During the winter, the nurses traveled by horse and sleigh over great distances to aid the sick. As hard as it was, it was often more preferable to the way things are done today because the nurses had a sense of family that is now missing.

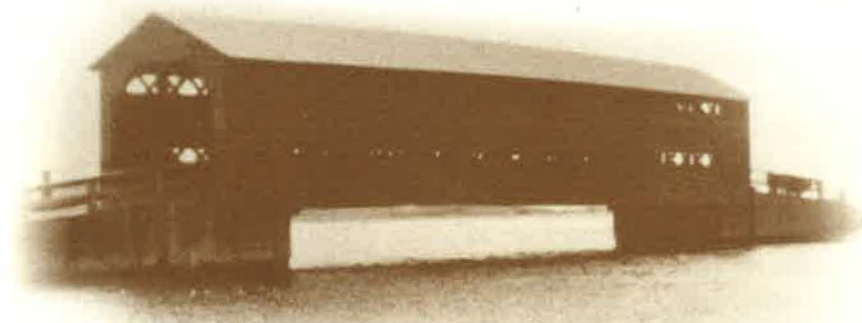


C.L.S.C. of Grosse Isle

## *Civic Services*

This first English community to have their own municipality was Grosse Isle. It became autonomous on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1892, when a resolution was made to separate from the Municipality of House Harbour. Grosse Isle's first mayor was James William McLean. Grande-Entrée separated from Grosse Isle in 1929. Grosse Isle remained a municipality until 2001, when the provincial government forced a merger of all small communities and it became part of the larger Municipalité des Îles-de-la-Madeleine. In 2004, they were given the choice to remain merged or return to a similar autonomous municipality. The people of Grosse Isle voted to retain their own municipality and once again became their own municipality in 2006.

Entry became a Municipality in the 1960's, when they decided to separate from Amherst. The first mayor was Howard C. Dickson. This small municipality became smaller as people moved to other areas of the Islands and Prince Edward Island, returning home, only for in the fishing and summer seasons. When it became evident that the province would force the merging of all the islands small municipalities, Entry Islanders chose to be re-merged with Amherst in 2000. Today, the small English speaking community remains a part of the larger Islands Municipality.



East Cape Covered Bridge

Originally, the residents didn't pay taxes to the municipalities. Instead, the islanders were required to work two days of the year on the public roads. It wasn't until the late nineteenth century that Island Municipal taxes were paid.

In 1895, the Islands became a provincial county for the first time. The first election was held two years later. Election campaigns, particularly federal and provincial elections became an interest for Islanders. Island voters quickly learned of the importance of having members of parliament in Quebec City and Ottawa, who belonged to the party in power. They provided the greatest employment opportunities.

Prior to the 1930's, Quebec subsidized the building of roads and small schools. The federal government invested into modern transportation, communication and fishery systems, sometimes hiring hundreds of islanders to work on large construction projects. Work would begin after the lobster season ended in July. Fishermen became carpenters and labourers in the construction of wharves and breakwaters, warehouses and freezers.

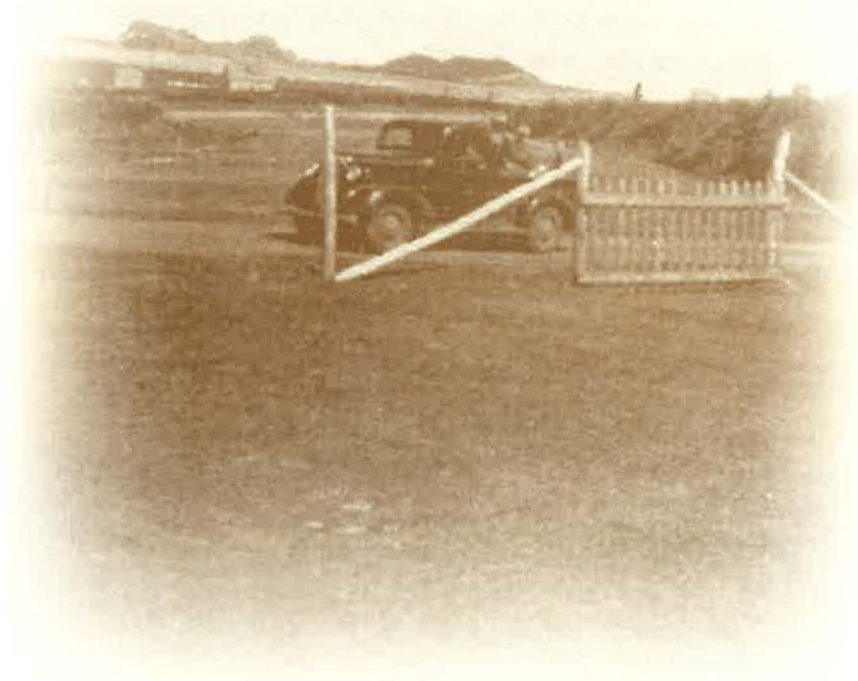
The road and bridge built at Keating's Point was built in 1948. This original bridge had been renovated and repaired until the early in 1971, when it was declared an, "enter at your own risk" bridge. The bridge was replaced the next year.



Road between Old Harry and East Cape

## Conclusion

The English of the Magdalen Islands have been conditioned by the past. Their seclusion from the rest of the changing world has isolated them from both the evils and from the benefits of the world. The technological race has evolved at a slower rate on the islands, making it seem as though the people were not as smart by comparison to mainlanders in general. Islanders have had to learn their way of life from the experimentation of their forefathers, who created their own tools. From these tools, islanders grew to have a different, more pleasant view of the world, than most mainlanders. They learned not to fear the harm that others could do. When the tourist industry began, islanders were still not used to locking their doors, even at night because of the respect each of them had for others.



Trevor Dickson's first truck

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