

Our Wonderful Vacation In Prince Edward Island

By ANICE B. PLUMLEE
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Autumn, 1951.

Perhaps winter winds are blowing in from the several seas now, but it has not been many days since the warm breezes and sun have friendly welcome of Prince Edward Islanders gave us a wonderful vacation. And it is to those people—those who are willing to do more than in most parts of the world to make the traveler happy—that I'd like to send greetings from Chicago and in the States.

As my husband drove our Illinois car onto the ferry to begin our tour of P. E. I., we had no idea we were going to an enchanted spot where everything we did, every step on our journey, would be touched with a magic wand.

The clean-cut young man who helped us get our car into the parking lane of the boat was most gracious about answering our questions, and even gave us, I believe, a part of his lunch time. When he did leave us he asked us to be his guests on the upper deck—a genuine treat to us landlubbers—for the trip.

The whole ferry was a buzz of friendliness. There was a sort of "fiery air" among vacationers in the northlands, like cafe society in large cities, for the tourists are just enough "in the know" to be casually chummy. The meals were served in full course fashion by waiters who seemed to feel with us that this was a festive occasion.

When we were well off shore we took our box of States-made chocolate creams and walked boldly through the "No Admittance" sign. There—lopside—we found our young friend steering the huge craft across Northumberland Strait—which until that time had only been a name in my geography book, and seemed as far away from home as Alaska! I couldn't see how the men of the "order-of-the-gold-braid" could be so cheerful for there was a heavy fog. I warned them they would never make a landing, for I couldn't see a thing. They all shared our anxiety and their friendliness and were untiring in the answering of our questions.

How could they possibly see through the fog? Wouldn't they go astray? Did they HAVE to blow the whistle so often? The reply was an explanation of the radar equipment, and many comments in sea-going Scotch brogue, which, even if I couldn't understand, I enjoyed. They explained the action of the gulls, the porpoises, the status of other boats, and those prolonged noisy signals. They were as gay as old friends.

It was a wonderful way to start our Maritime holiday—a delightful trip across rough waters in a fog—a real welcome from the Islanders before we reached the shore. I wish we might thank the young helmsman with the clear eyes and the shining brown hair, from Borden, for he not only piloted us safely across the Strait but guided us to another benefactor later on.

At the first gasoline station on the Island, the owner took us under HIS wing. He called a hotel owner for us, helped us get quarters for the night, and gave us such complete road directions that the next day, Sunday, promised to be easy going. During the afternoon we visited the huge department store in Summerside where the clerks seem to find it a joy to serve the public. There a salesgirl in the candy department packed our yearly supply of Scotch minis, a delicacy we hoard because they are not found in the States. A saleslady in soft lines advised me about a blanket purchase, and a dignified little lady customer chose a Canadian tea for me which she said would make a "beautiful cup" for my American friends.

Often I have wished for more of that tea—a brand unknown here. Out on the crowded street, a milk-wagon driver posed for a picture; a passerby directed us to a place where we could buy ice. Everyone was courteous—more-gracious!

That evening as we dressed for dinner, we remarked that we had already made a dozen friendly acquaintances on the Island, and our tour only begun. How little did we know the kindly people who swaled us.

Our helmsman pal had directed us to a big restaurant outside of Summerside where we might enjoy the dining room or get drive-in service. We went inside for dinner, and immediately we found another of THOSE PEOPLE—one I wish we might have brought back to the States with us—in the person of Dolores, our waitress, who helped us to choose a real sea-side meal. She would be an addition to many of our fine eating places in this area.

As we started to leave, the owner—you know HIS name—looked at interest in us. He offered to mail our cards for us, and when we made some inquiries about places in the Island, he put his desk force to work to get the answers by telephone. We talked of the tour-book items we wanted to see, when, without warning, that man

go on and have a nice day—he would have a place for us to stay. I do want to tell you that the dear little telephone operator became so interested in our tour that she decided she'd just go out to the car and meet my husband—she'd pick him a flower for his buttonhole—and, if he'd come in, she'd brew a cup of tea for the both of us. We regretted having to explain that we had just had tea and were not far from our lunch destination, for she was such a fine spirited person. Do all telephone operators invite strangers in for tea?

In Souris, dinner was not ready at the hotel, so we asked for our noon meal in a little canteen up the street. The menu, although not printed, was complete and wholesome. In fact, I nearly lost my husband then and there. The canteen proprietor had so good a coccanut pie he had'nt so good he almost stayed. I hope the very young waitress found her gratuity. She was such a tiny lady to be

such a good waitress. Some young fellows had been talking near our booth as we ate, speaking the most delightful Scotch, so that I couldn't resist smiling. Not once did they approach us, or act as if they noticed us, even though we were so obviously strangers. But when we started to drive away, they came out of the door, waved, and called "good-bye" just as if we "belonged". It was heart-warming.

After that the miles simply whirled away, and we found ourselves taking a quick look at the famous spots in Charlottetown, with a moment's visit to the Basilica, and a cove out on the west end beach. Before we realized it we were ready to proceed to the Wood Islands ferry, along that winding, scenic road through the hills and woods. It was our plan to call a cancellation to the pleasant voice in Montague, and take the last ferry over to Nova Scotia. The captain at the pier told us that the five o'clock ferry was

booked full, and that our very best procedure was to stay nearby, put our car in line at the dock for the early morning crossing, and come down at 6:30 a.m. to drive it on.

We were glad to do that—but where could we get accommodations? How bring the car back? How make the schedule in the morning? This genial man had all the answers. There were cabins a mile away. Go there to stay, take out our bags, and the cabin owner would follow us down with our car—or, why, the Captain would drive us back up himself—and the people where we were to stay would waken us and bring us down the next morning. It worked! Everybody did what was asked—and no fee!


I was allowed to call my Montague voice, and HE seemed to be happy we had everything arranged so nicely. "Had we had a pleasant day?" was his query. "Did we enjoy the Island?" "Had we been well treated?" I could not have

told him the half of it.


The breakfast served on the ferry the next morning was satisfying, but more so was the company of two hardy gentlemen whom we persuaded to join us at table. We got them to talk to us for an hour about the lobster fishing, the logs, the crops and industry of the Island in general. They couldn't tell us much about the people—you see, they were THE VERY SAME KIND!

We have never spent thirty-six hours in which every encounter, every contact, was so charmed with the friendliness and kindness of a people.

Thank you, Prince Edward Island—not for this short visit so happily made, but for preserving the thought of service to humanity, for keeping the ideal of good will toward men" uppermost in your hearts. I shall not have to search through a public library and seek out some thriller in a magazine titled, "Island Magic". I learned all about that from YOU.



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LET'S TALK THIS OVER

EDWIN C. JOHNSTONE, B.A., C.L.U., Provincial Manager
111 - 113 Grafton Street, Charlottetown, P. E. I.



*MRS. FERGUSON...

You have seen Canada Savings Bonds, Mrs. Ferguson? A few. All but one issue, I think.

How did you buy them?
Up to the present we've paid cash for all of them. My husband gave me two, and I paid for the others out of housekeeping money.

Why do you pay cash for them?
We have a plan that what we can't pay for, we don't have. What we have we own, like our house here.

What is your purpose in buying Bonds?
To know that I have saved, and to help when my husband retires. It's a wonderful thing to have for an emergency.

How did you start buying Government Bonds?
I bought a couple of bonds in the First World War

when I was out in business in Montreal. These came in handy when I was getting married. I believe it's a good investment because you don't dribble at it the same as if you have some money in the bank. And then the interest is good.

Do you plan to buy the New Canada Savings Bonds? Yes.

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*Mrs. Lillian Ferguson, the former Lillian Saunders, lives at 155 Shirley Street, Halifax, and is one of more than a million Canadians who have invested regularly in Canada Savings Bonds. Her husband, Donald A. Ferguson, is supervisor of the money order branch of the Halifax Post Office. Mrs. Ferguson worked as a clerk in Montreal for eight years prior to her marriage.

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