



The perfect little province

by Norma McLellan

Prince Edward Island is Canada's perfect little province. Surrounded by warm salt-water, it's blessed with magnificent beaches on both the gulf shore and on the Northumberland Strait.

The lovely rolling countryside draws the visitor away from the sea. It's ideal for sightseeing, hiking, picnicking, golfing, whatever you would like to do. It's particularly interesting to visit the various museums which capture the flavour of pioneer times and commemorate the eventful history of the original main-stays of the island economy: fishing, farming and shipbuilding.

A fisheries museum

The Basin Head Fisheries Museum at Kingsboro, 10 km from Souris, in King's County, tells the story of fishing on the island. It sits atop a small hill overlooking a beautiful sandy beach and small harbor. On display are small boats, nets, hooks and other equipment used by island fishermen from the early days of development on the island until recently.

Farming 100 years ago

Just a short drive from Charlottetown is Orwell Corner, a well-preserved village typical of the 19th century. It is strictly an agricultural vil-

lage with its general store, post office, farmhouse, school, church and farm dependencies.

The combined store, post office and farmhouse is a fascinating museum, apparently untouched for 100 years. The house was inhabited until a few years ago and has been kept in good condition but no modernization of any kind has altered its appearance. In the 1800s, the same family handled the post office, in a corner of the store, served customers and farmed the land.

The little red schoolhouse is complete with its battered desks marked with the initials of former students, a "recent" picture of Queen Victoria, a once "up-to-date" map of Prince Edward Island and a pot-bellied stove. Goats keep the grass short in front of the small white church that stands across the road from the school. The program at Orwell Corner includes musical evenings and hayrides.

Situated in Queen's County, Orwell Corner is 29 km from Charlottetown on the way to Wood Island and Murray River. Admission is 50 cents for adults and children are free. It is open from mid-May to the end of October.

They launched a 1,000 ships

During the 19th century, ships built by Islanders were known in every major port around the world.

Far left: Cavendish Beach. Centre: A fisherman's wharf.
Top right: Fairy Castle, Woodleigh Replicas, Kensington.
Bottom Right: Anne of Green Gables Museum, North Rustico, P.E.I.

The story of this exciting period is vividly told at Green Park Provincial Historic Park at Port Hill, 40 km north of Summerside.

The site is the old estate of a wealthy shipbuilder and shipowner. He named it Green Park when he built his spacious residence in 1865. It is now a museum and is filled with period pieces dating from that time and earlier. It's fascinating to see how the well-to-do lived in those days.

The interpretive centre shows how ships were built of timber cut within a few yards of the site. Photographs of famous P.E.I. ships line the walls and anchors, pulleys, bollards and other sailing ship equipment fill several rooms. Films and slide presentations are shown in the theatre. Down by the shore stands a partly constructed hull. One expects to hear the sawing, hammering and chipping of a team of skilful shipwrights. They farmed in the summer and built ships in the mild winter weather.

There's an excellent beach on Malpeque Bay and camping and trailer facilities too. The museums are open from mid-May to mid-October. Admission is free. If you'd like more information about P.E.I. vacations write: Tourism Services, Box 940, Charlottetown, P.E.I., C1A 7M5. □

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