

P. E. I. - 1998

The Trip

At the beginning of September my wife and I headed east; our destination being P.E.I. We had planned to go through Quebec because of the dollar, but as we approached Cornwall herself suggested, "Should we go across at this bridge?"

I thought about the cheaper gas and some of the scenery in Vermont and New Hampshire and said, "Why not! What we save on gas will partly make up for the higher cost of food."

With that settled, we headed for Carthage. One side benefit of traversing the border there, was the avoidance of the Adirondacks and their twisty roads. The scenery is fair through New York on that route, but it's not the Green or White Mountains found to the east.

The shorter ferry ride across Lake Champlain brought us to Burlington, a college town in Vermont. Outside Burlington lies I- 89, the highway with the prettiest scenery that I've seen this side of the Rockies. There are few trucks on it. As we went south and east one vista followed another through the Green Mountains. There was lots of greenstone schist, a pretty rock formation, along the way.

Crossing through New Hampshire on old #2, a moderately challenging highway, we stopped at Gorham. Gorham had had one of the best family run restaurants we had known. Alas it was gone; bankrupt so we were told. At the Alpine Tourist Lodge we became reacquainted with the elderly French speaking owner after a four year gap.

Next day the adventure took us along #2 to #9 in Maine. The drive on this "highway," was the worst I have ever experienced. The road twists through turf mountains. There are few pull-offs, lots of tractors, road construction and bugs to cloud the wind screen. Added to this the driving over the centre line by oncoming rigs, and sheer drop-offs on both sides made this a road never to take again if you survived it the first time.

Re-entering our blessed Canada, we were on the roads of New Brunswick which were excellent, and with a higher speed limit than Ontario! Just for a little diversion we headed for Saint Andrews-by-the-Sea for supper. The town several kilometres off the main highway, is a larger version of Niagara-On-the-Lake. Dinner was on a deck

out over the water. We had fresh fish of course, as the sun was setting over the American shore in the west.

In the morning, we cruised a four lane highway, arriving at the new bridge to the island. You don't pay until you return so if you go save the 35+ dollars for the crossing or have a credit card. It took about twenty minutes to drive over to the island province; very smooth, even a bit dull, that's progress!

Our host owned several cabins at Brackley Beach, to the east of Cavendish. The cabin served as our base of exploration for the island.

There seems to be a lot of residential development in Queen's County since we were there four years ago. The east and west ends of the island still seem as before. Gallian Boats, one of the prime lobster boat builders, seems to have gone out of business according to a chap I met when I tried to visit there. I hate to see neat places fold up! We did find a couple of good restaurants that were new. Shipwright's Cafe in Tyne Valley, and Cafe St. Jean in Rustico were excellent. While at the latter we met a young couple from Quebec. They were, "Separatists," so we had some interesting dialogue during dinner. Seems they had recently bought some property on the island, mmm!

The north-east area of King's County has some bleak spots, as does some north-west areas of Prince' County. The roads in Prince Edward Island are not as good as those in our County. However the drinking water from various wells, was excellent.

picturesque New Glasgow has a stream and Church building very much like Milford.

The "Anne of Green Gables," play was the same essentially as the one we had seen in Milford. We enjoyed both.

Leaving the island was sad. We had grown very fond of the place and the people on our two trips. Nature walks there were a little different than in the County because of the sea and the sea birds. We do have Beaver Meadow and Pt. Traverse though.

On our return I avoided the dreaded #9 highway through Maine. The long ferry ride from Burlington was chosen by me, since it is really a treat visually, if not as efficient as the shorter route.

As we approached the bridge at Cornwall, I realized that I didn't have enough change for the toll. Fortunately there was a bank machine that came to our rescue.

The return on the 401 was so uneventful, it seemed to be part of another trip.

- Bill Brearley