

[Page 17 - Searching for the Highlands National Park, 1934](#)

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Searching for the Highlands National Park, 1934 June 23, 1986, marked the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the Cape Breton Highlands National Park. A park for Cape Breton had been proposed as early as a 1914 suggestion to set aside a portion of the Bras d'Or Lakes region. In 1928 S. P. Challoner made the first specific recommendation concerning northern Cape Breton. The idea was supported by the Cape Breton Tourist Association, Glace Bay Board of Trade, Baddeck Board of Trade, North Sydney Board of Trade, and the South Cape Breton Fish and Game Protective Association. The cause was taken up by F. W. Baldwin, M.L.A. for Victoria. In 1934 R. W. Cautley set out to inspect and report on potential sites for a National Park. He visited sites near Yarmouth, Blomidon, the Louisbourg-Gabarus area, and northern Cape Breton. What follows is a portion of the report he prepared. He takes up central problems that would continue to face the park: such as what to do with people living within proposed park boundaries, and of course, travel conditions of the Cabot Trail. It was only in 1932 that the portion of roadway was built over North Mountain, allowing automobile travel from Pleasant Bay to Cape North, completing the Cabot Trail. The Nova Scotia Relief Map and Directory for 1934 described the Trail as one of the "most thrilling and scenic in Eastern Canada"- -but warned: "inexperienced or timid drivers should not take this drive; and under no circumstances should the drive be taken unless your brakes are working perfectly and your car working well in low gear." From Judith Campbell's history of the region: Johnny Roach remembers being summoned to the aid of drivers who froze at the wheel while trying to negotiate the road over the mountain, in which cases the nervous driver would slide into a passenger seat while the amused Johnny guided the car safely down the hill. Connected with this, he remembers that the most peculiar thing I have ever seen was two men and two women going up Cap Rouge Mountain. One woman was running ahead of the car to see the curves, and there were two men running behind the car with big rocks in their hands in case the car stalled (and began to roll backwards). On his search, Cautley was joined by Jack Barrington (representing Mr. Baldwin, Farms at Cap Rouge before the Park (1: La Grande Falaise; r: Le Buttereau) Below: F. Laurence, J. Barrington, and R. W. Cautley (1934) (17)