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from Hallowed Timbers The Wooden Churches of Cape Breton We don't need excuses to travel around Cape Breton, but it's wonderful to have a focus • the search for old museums, birds, beaches, and so forth. In this case, Susan Hyde and Michael Bird have provided us with an architectural tour in Hallowed Timbers • the Wooden Churches of Cape Breton (a Boston Mills Press book, published by Stoddart Books). This is a new book that shows 67 of our churches. These churches are beautiful, and each speaks for the community from which it sprang. Even the settings are a part of the meditation. The authors have written, "The natural settings of churches throughout the countryside and small villages of Cape Breton gives these sacred places a unique spirit. With their lofty towers and spires, these houses of worship point to the heavens, but with their unblocked window views (stained glass is seldom used), the connection with water and forest surroundings is just as evident. Perhaps it is the mingling of the sense of the transcendent with a reverence for nature that defines the unique appeal of Cape Breton's wooden churches. Few have elaborate decorative detail, bargeboard is uncommon, and tracery is rudimentary in form. The most genuine form of tracery may well be the unfolding of maples and other native trees that surround these churches. Perhaps the deepest spiritual dimension of these hallowed timbers is found in the integration of natural beauty with the aesthetic of modest but ingenuous architectural forms." There is always the desire for more, more. Every Cape Breton wooden church is not represented • but 67 is quite a lot. There is a basic glossary of architectural terms, but readers will still have to look up a few words, such as "gablet" and "drip-finial"! But all in all, this is an attractive, well-informed guide. St. Margaret's, Broad Cove built in 1853 From Hallowed Timbers: One of the truly splendid wooden churches on the Island, St. Margaret's at Broad Cove is situated on a small rise, behind which are majestic hills and, to the west, vistas of the Northumberland Strait. This fine place of worship is one of four churches on Cape Breton Island named for St. Margaret of Scotland, and a large painting of the saint is given prominence in the sanctuary. The three great windows in the west facade call to mind the medieval Trinitarian symbolism. The doorway and tripartite pointed-arch window above merge into one soaring entryway. Above, in the upper storeys of the tower, are set a complex rose-window and paint-simulated clock. St. Margaret's abounds in ornamental detail. Running over the doorway is an entablature with cutout and Gothic drip-finial decoration, creating an impression of stalactites. The bottom ends of the hood mouldings here and on the side windows are flared outward, and the Gothic bar-tracery is unusually fine. An interesting feature of the tracery is the manner in which it continues through the heavier frames of the window sections, unifying the various parallel components into one beautifully pointed whole. The interior is as impressive as the exterior. A wide nave is flanked by two aisles, divided from the centre by rows of columns and a gallery with arcading rendered in the form of flattened, or Tudor, arches. The altar, built in the period 1896-1904, is of refined workmanship. Its columns and arcading,



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