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So they were forced to recognize that the Indians had been here first! It is interesting to note that this section of river-bank was near the Forks where the South West Margaree flows into the North East Margaree. Gaspereaux will only ascend a river which flows from a lake, such as the South West which flows from Lake Ainslie. Even now there is much netting of gaspereaux along this section of river each spring, the fish being salted and shipped by the barrel to the West Indies. Salmon and trout come up the Margaree from the sea each spring and summer. For many miles along the coast near the river mouth commercial netting of salmon is carried on today. Such fishing is bound by strict laws made by our government. It is interesting to note that as early as 1813 laws were made by the settlers themselves respecting this fishing. J. L. MacDougall in his History of Inverness County gives a copy of the Minutes of a meeting held by the freeholders of Margaree: Voted 1. That Ranald MacKinnon, Esq., be the chairman of meeting. 2. That Miles MacDaniel be clerk of this meeting. 3. That salmon berths shall be laid off by the overseers and a fair lot drawn for the berths. 4. That 10th day of next May, providing the weather permits, the salmon berths shall be laid out and drawn for. 5. That there is no nets more than thirty fathoms long shall be set in the river this present year. 6. That the distance between each net shall be fifty fathoms. 7. That no net shall be set or hauled in the river of Margaree this year. 8. That the boundary of last year shall serve for the present year and that no net shall be set below that same boundary inside the mouth of the River this year. 9. That every man as soon as he has filled his fishing craft, he shall leave his berth vacant for another, at the Forks of this river at the Alewives Fishery. 10. That the quibs of all fish dressed at the Forks of this River shall be carried off and buried at a distance from the Fork. The inhabitants of Margaree who had attended this meeting and had drawn up their own rules were honor-bound to observe them and any man who broke them could not hold up his head among his fellow-men. Honourable they were, but strangers poached in their waters. Hence, in the Cape Breton Council Records we read that on the 3rd of June 1818 a petition was received from Hezekiah Ingraham "on behalf of himself and other residents of Margaree stating that their fishing had been much injured by strangers placing their nets at the entrance of the river and praying that it may be remedied." Mr. Ingraham stated that a line drawn down from Moore's Cape to the first cape north of Jedore Chaisson's grist mill would secure the fishing. The Council conceived that the inhabitants of Margaree were already authorized to make a regulation to that effect by an ordinance passed for that purpose. Though most of the settlers were farmers, even by 1818 specialized trades were seen in the Margaree Valley. Besides Hezekiah Ingraham and James Ingraham who were cooperers, we see that William Hindle was a blacksmith; Thomas Power, a carpenter; Patrick Cowdy (Cody), a tailor; and George Bucher, a shoemaker. Some time before 1824 there was a violent storm and subsequent fire in the district. This deprived most of the settlement of Rossville, as the district where the four Ross brothers settled is now called, of wood. The fire ran from the



Big Brook to almost the Egypt Road. Even today the effects of that fire may be seen in what are called the "Barrens" through which the Lake o'Law road passes before dropping down into the valley. The fire was so severe that it burned down into the soil. In places today traces of primeval pine stumps may be seen. Only after more than a hundred years have trees begun to grow there and those are only in the damper spots. This road into the valley passes through what was Edmund's grant of 398 acres. In 1824 he petitioned for more land because he now had no wood because of the fire and had even to purchase wood for the frame of his house from his neighbours. We note that he was given 100 additional acres for fuel and fencing. Edmund Ross had a grist mill before this time, the first such mill at Rossville. It was very likely a hurricane which caused such destruction. In 1814, John Phillips petitioned for more land at North East Margaree because "in the violent gale of wind which happened in September 1811" his wood was destroyed and the land was afterwards swept by fire. The Margaree Valley because of its trough between the hills where cold air settles on the low-lying lands may have frost any month of the year--even in July or August at times. We read that one John Meloney stated in 1817 that "he once grew a lot on the Margaree but did not settle on it as the frost was so destructive to crops." School was being taught in the district

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