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None of the Jesuits, however, thought of organizing these memory marks, or picture writing (which seem to have been common among the Amerindians as a whole) into a writing system. It was the Recollect (i.e., Franciscan) named Christian Leclercq, missionary among the Micmac of the Gaspé peninsula from 1675 to 1687, who began, about 1677, to make a rational systematization of these marks and thus develop a hieroglyphic writing system. Leclercq's system was apparently not extensively adopted, but was taken over and adapted in the following century by Father Maillard, one of the most remarkable and influential of all the missionaries among the Micmac, who began his mission in Cape Breton in 1735. It is Maillard's system that is found in the extant manuscripts and printed books that we possess today. Maillard's mission

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07-12-87 nova scotia power Making Customer Service a Priority had three lasting results. The first of these was the Chapel Island mission, centred around the feast day of St. Ann, on the 26th of July. Contemporary accounts from the 1760s report that the Micmacs congregated annually at Chapel Island. The Chapel Island mission, in fact, would appear to be the oldest continuous Christian festival in North America. (See "St. Ann's Day Mission. Chapel Island" in Issue 40 Of CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE.) The second result was the establishment of lay readers who baptized, led prayers, heard marriage promises, and buried the dead. (Note; These lay readers are akin to the "Worthies"-- Presbyterians and Catholics who served the Scottish communities during years that ministers were not available.) The third result was the famous Micmac Prayer Book, written in hieroglyphics which Maillard taught the Micmac to copy, and which, under the guidance of the lay readers, they continued to copy in manuscript form for another hundred years. The early copies were on birch bark, but by the early 19th century paper was in use. A beautiful example of a hieroglyphic manuscript book, copied on paper, is in the library of Princeton University. The watermark on the paper gives a date of 1830, indicating that the



work is 150 years old. CONTINUED NEXT PAGE (56)