

[Page 57 - Cruising Cape Breton, 1878 & 1884](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 51](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1989/2/1

and found ourselves at last in the land of railroads. On that side, also, a little further up the strait, broods Cape Porcupine.... From its shape and position Cape Porcupine commands the entire strait, and gives character and force to every prospect from all points. But, if we had to choose between the two shores, in a region where a comparison would seem especially invidious and superfluous, give us the inexhaustible beauty of the Cape Breton side. For three days we explored its attractions on foot, proceeding well up toward Port Hood on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and it seemed as if it exceeded all the beautiful scenery through which we had passed, for giving the largest variety of pleasure to the summer tourist.... Port Hastings was formerly called Plaister Cove. Some noble cliffs are there, at the mouth of a beautiful stream which empties into the strait. The town is built upon an abrupt height, and from a distance seems to be about to slide into the sea. Port Hastings might easily pass itself off for a village on the Rhine, with its rambling lanes embowered with willows, its houses straggling down a steep, and its church perched on the highest coign of vantage. The road toward Port Hood follows a plateau, below which the farmers were raking in their hay, close to the sea; beyond, on the left, towered Cape Porcupine; while on the right towered CAPE PORCUPINE. CAPE ST. GEORGE, FROM PORT HASTINGS crested the craggy coast ranges of Cape Breton. Many a buxom Maud Muller, raking hay in a straw hat, was to be seen in the meadows, and the whole scene was pervaded by an air of pastoral peace, and rounded into completeness by the blue waters of the sea, fading into the cloudless azure above us. There is little enterprise at Cape Breton. "What our people want," said a gentleman to me, "is money." But something more is needed, and that is that willingness to dare which is called enterprise. It must be conceded that the long winters tend to check immigration and to foster emigration, while the yield of the mines and the fields and the large exportation of beef cattle are sufficient to keep the people comfortable, at least, if not wealthy. It is rare to see any signs of poverty at Cape Breton. The result is to make them generally contented. They all own their farms and homesteads, and every commodity is cheap. Most of the worthy islanders are of Scotch descent, and a hale, hearty, buxom race they are. Those who come thence to the United States should be welcomed, for they are of a nature to add real strength to the race now building up in this country out of the various peoples flocking to our shores. Our thanks to Laura Peverill, Librarian, University College of Cape Breton, for extraordinary efforts to obtain illustrations for this article. Readers interested in other travel writing should look at Impressions of Cape Breton, edited by Brian Tennyson, a recent publication from the University College of Cape Breton Press. A portion of Benjamin's visit to Cape Breton appears in that book. Home Of Solid Birch Furniture Keltic Furniture Sofas Sofa Beds Coffee & End Tables World Rockers Recliners Tables & Chairs All Your Home Furnishing Needs 1115KingsRoad,SydneyRiver, N. S. B1S1C6 • 539-1715 Enormous Showroom at SYDNEY RIVER Overlooking the Margaree Valley at the Junction of Route 19 and the Cabot Trail A



full-accommodation Lodge featuring: DININGROOM LOUNGE SWIMMING POOL
SPACIOUS ROOMS Take advantage of nearby recreation: BEACHES GOLF
FAIRWAYS CAMPING FRESH AND SALT WATER FISHING HIKING 'J-KEEP ?? ** *
YOUR DREAMS ALIVE 'The best of Nova Scotian musicians entertain in our' lounge
every weekend. Check with us to see who is playing, and drop in for an enjoyable
evening. P.O. Box 550 MARGAREE FORKS Nova Scotia BOE 2A0 | Phone (902)
238-2193, William F. Maclsaac, Manager RELAX IN THE BEAUTIFUL MARGAHEE
VALLEY I