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fact the situation remained so until new roads were opened and, later still, when his ride terminated at Catherine McPherson's inn. A major obstacle on his ride was Lennox Passage in wintertime, when its waters were covered with ice. At other times, even the government-supported ferry service at the crossing fell short of expectations. The rates were so high as to allow a private competitor to enter the picture and undercut the ferryman. A government subsidy supporting the official service was looked upon with considerable suspicion by the travelling public. In 1842, for example, "a wayfarer" wrote that there "were two men striving against one another for this Ferry. One of them offers to carry a man across for 4d and a horse for 9d and so of other things, low. The other, however, is given the exclusive right of Ferryman, at a charge of 6d for a man. Is for a horse, and so of other things high." The leading citizens of Isle Madame evidently shared this disgust, for about the same time they asked the provincial government to erect a bridge across the Passage at Burnt Island. That did not become a reality for many years. In the meantime, poor Maddock was forced to resort to the ferry whenever he could do so, and to winter crossings on the ice. These crossings were particularly risky and worrisome. On a wet and windy day in January 1836 Maddock was making his way toward Plaister Cove when he encountered George Wood Sr, the ferryman, at the south side of the Passage. Wood warned him of danger from thin ice but Maddock paid no heed, and headed straight across. He had not gone far when his horse suddenly plunged into the frigid waters. A group of men rushed from Wood's home to the aid of the poor beast, three times managing to haul it onto the ice only to see it break through again. Finally, on the fourth attempt, the ice held but by now the horse was so cold and exhausted that it died on the spot. Maddock put his loss at \$18. It was a severe blow to the humble courier, and one he could ill afford. He turned to the provincial government for assistance but the request was met with a chorus of protests from those who knew Maddock well, for they thought him the victim of his own folly. One by one they came forward, each with his own horror story. George Wood Jr, was among them. There were times, he said, when Maddock had arrived at the ferry so drunk "he could hardly ride or even walk," and had left mail lying about on the beach. A week

before Christmas 1835, Maddock had been so intoxicated that Wood had to haul him two and one-half miles by sled to the home of Farquhar McPherson near the junction. Tom Wood was no more sympathetic. He claimed that Maddock would arrive at the ferry "in a state of intoxication and frequently so drunk as to be staggering from one side of the road to the other," and had fallen "with his head into a barrel" at George Wood's place. This was not all. It was then said that Maddock sometimes substituted his brother James on the post ride, and that he too had a marked weakness for the bottle. Tom Wood once saw him at the ferry so drunk "he could neither stand nor speak," leaving letters scattered along the Arichat road. Donald McDonald of Ship Harbour once found James lying drunk on a pile of wood by the side of the Ship Harbour road, while further along that road he had been literally saved from serious injury when Roderick Cameron and Alexander McLean discovered him riding upside down in the saddle, feet caught in the stirrups, head dragging on the ground and the mail bag lying a hundred yards behind. The last laugh went to Maddock for, despite all these protestations, the province awarded him \$10 towards the cost of replacing his lost horse.

**Why He Galloped About** The dangers at the Lennox Passage crossing were not the only ones that beset Maddock on his post ride. Weather was always a factor, with heavy snows in winter sometimes blocking the way and heavy spring rains washing out flimsy bridges. In the spring of 1842, Maddock was overtaken by an event that was unprecedented in almost 20 years of post riding: a money letter was stolen from his mail bag. On Saturday, 23 April, Maddock left Arichat to meet the Halifax mail at Catherine McPherson's inn. The late arrival of the Sydney courier forced him to wait at the inn overnight and until the following evening, but to no avail. As neither a bed for himself nor a stable for his horse were available on the Sunday, he returned to spend the night at the Grandigue ferry landing after arranging to have the mail brought forward to him. None of Catherine's sons was at home at the time, so Maddock took his chances with a young man in her employ, agreeing to pay one shilling and sixpence for this service.

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 CARDS \* LIQUOR \* \* DEPARTMENT STORES \* MUSIC \* OPEN MONDAY THROUGH  
 SATURDAY 10:00 AM TO 9:30 PM Late that night the mail bag arrived at the inn. It contained a letter from John McLeod, way office keeper at the bridge over River Inhabitants, to Hector McDonald, the postmaster at Arichat, with a \$5 note. The young man rode swiftly through the night, delivering the mail bag to Maddock and collecting his pay. Then, just as swiftly, he galloped back toward the west, the beat of horse's hooves raising suspicion as he sped past lonely pioneer homesteads in the early morning darkness. Whenever the moon and stars are set. Whenever the wind is high. All night long in the dark and wet, A man goes riding by. Late in the night when the fires are out. Why does he gallop and gallop about? (Robert Louis Stevenson, Windy Nights)