

MILFORD HOUSE - A RUSTIC RESORT IN SOUTHWESTERN NOVA SCOTIA

This postcard exhibit will take you to Milford House – the lodge and cabins, the lakes, trout fishing and other activities on the property. The postcards are pre-1950 although many of the photos are earlier since they were used for many years. In some cases, the only way to date the postcard is by the postmark.

Initially a stagecoach stop, by the early 1900s, Milford House had developed into a bustling sportsman's retreat consisting of a main lodge and almost 30 cabins. Located in South Milford in the heart of southwestern Nova Scotia, Canada, it has long been known for game and trout and excellent hunting and fishing guides. The popularity of Milford House with American tourists and "sports" coincided with the rise in popularity of the picture postcard. Guests have enjoyed Milford House over many years, their messages tell more about the Milford House experience.

Arrival at the Main Lodge

Having taken the Dominion Atlantic ferry from New York or Boston to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, guests of Milford House would take the train to Annapolis Royal. From there, after about 15 miles down a twisty dirt road, they would catch a first glimpse of the main lodge and the lake. Guests received their meals in the main lodge and some stayed upstairs rather than in cabins.

Exhibit Plan
 Arrival at the Main Lodge
 A Tour of the Cabins
 Get a Canoe and Explore the Lakes
 Fish, Moose and Camping
 Back to the Lodge
 Departure

Items of Note – outlined in red
 Pages 2 & 5 & 6 - Salesmen's Sample Cards
 Page 6 - Earliest Known Postcard of Milford House (1902)
 Pages 5 & 6 - Patriotic Postcards
 Page 7 - Real Photos of Fishers with Guides
 Page 8 - Real Photo of Louis and Madeline Harlow



The People's Game and Fish Protective Association of Nova Scotia, founded in 1946, was one of the game associations which promoted Nova Scotia to sportsmen (sports) from the United States and beyond.



Postmark: August 7, 1933
 Published for: Albee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal
 Printer: Novelty Manufacturing & Art Printing Co., Montreal

Are you sure you would like it this place very much
 There is fishing, boating, tennis, croquet
 -H.D.H., August 1929



Postmark: August 6, 1925
 Photo: Paul Yates

Paul Yates ran "The Little Art Gallery" in Digby and Annapolis Royal from 1909 until his death in 1946. Born in Philadelphia in 1863, Yates' photos chronicle the people, businesses and landscapes of southwestern Nova Scotia.

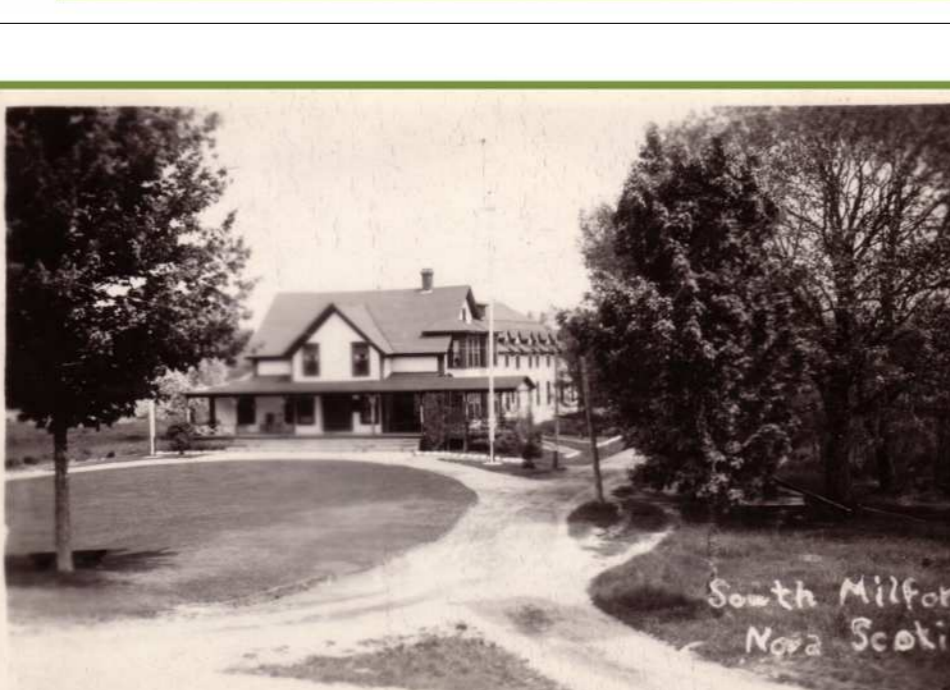
Here is the Milford House & lakes. The upper one empties into our lake. It's like that for miles & miles - glorious. There are cabins all around the lake. Charming spot, fine hotel.
 -Writer Undescribed, August 1925

Postmark: September 29, 1920

Postmark: August 12, 1929
 Published for: Albee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal
 Printer: Novelty Manufacturing & Art Printing Co., Montreal

Novelty Manufacturing, active from 1912 until 1926, printed their cards in Germany.

The Lakes, South Milford, N.S.



Postmark: August 29, 1934
 From l to r: Otter, Maples and Tyler cabins and Home Beach.

Photo: Canadian Kodak Company
 Logo used between 1910 and 1962.

Above Right: Postmark: August 10, 1951

This is the lake I swim in every morning before breakfast
 -Grace Berick, August, 1934

This is the place where we have been fishing for the past two weeks near the hotel going out in a canoe and catching trout every day rain or shine
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This map shows the location of cabins on the peninsula between Boot and Geier Lakes.

Postmark: September 21, 1911
 Published for: Albee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal

Come out of the woods yesterday. Had a grand trip. Just fishing & saw some deer & several moose...
 -Thomas?

Postmark: September 8, 1939
 Paper: Canadian Kodak Co. (1910 to 1962)
 Geier Lake - Home Beach, left; Thomas cabin, centre

Photo: Ralph N. Harris
 Paper: Defender
 Defender used this logo between 1920 and 1945.

A Tour of the Cabins
 When you have checked in, make your way to your cabin. Originally, the cabins were privately built and maintained on land owned by the Thomas family. Eventually most of the original cabins were bought back and are now part of Milford House. Many are named after the original owners or longtime guests.

Photo: Ralph N. Harris
 Paper: Defender (1920-1945)
 Morton cabin named after the Atlantic Monthly writer Charles Morton (1899-1967) who promoted Milford House in his columns.

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 Junco cabin, around a point of land from Tyler.

Photo: Ralph N. Harris
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 Undentifiable cabin typical of the Milford House cabins. The sender reported that it was 80°F (27°C).

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 Geier Cabin is named for Frederick Geier (1893-1981) of Cincinnati, Ohio who headed the purchase of the Milford House property from the Thomas family by a group of shareholders in the late 1960s.

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After settling in the cabin, you may want to take a canoe to explore the lakes and streams surrounding Milford House.

I am having a lovely time up here. This picture was taken just back of the hotel. They have tennis, dog, cat, cow, pigs and horses.
 -Dorothy Ewald, July, 1912



Postmark: September 2, 1925
 A fishing guide on Geier Lake.

Postmark: September 21, 1911
 Published for: Albee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal

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 Geier Lake - Home Beach, left; Thomas cabin, centre

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The main lodge changed as Milford House became more popular. The verandah on the left was replaced when the dining room was expanded.

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 Photo: Ralph N. Harris

Ralph N. Harris (1883-1958) was listed as a photographer in the 1911 Canadian census. Although to a lesser extent than Yates, Harris also documented southwestern Nova Scotia.

Place marked 'X' is about where our cabin is located five minutes walk from hotel at night - winding road through woods. You would be interested in the hooded traps - old and new.
 -M.A. Galtier

Sample card c. 1906 used by salesmen to sell postcards to stores and businesses. #2423 was the card order number.



Card #2423 - Two different titles for the same picture c. 1906
 Published for: Albee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal
 Printer: Warwick Bros. & Rutter, Toronto

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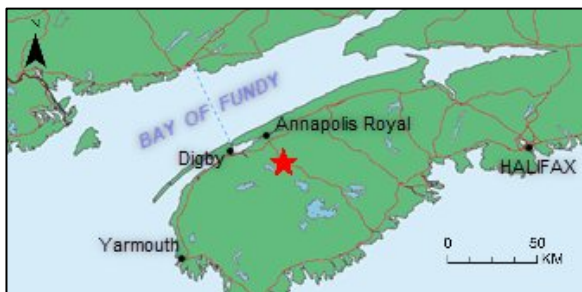
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- H. D. H., August 1929

Typstyles Used
Times New Roman = Story
Arial = Postcard Information
Italics in a Gray Box = excerpts from postcard message



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- M. A. Gardner

Sample card c. 1906 used by salesmen to sell postcards to stores and businesses. #2423 was the card order number.



ANNAPOLIS, N.S.

2423

Colorized Version
Postmark: August 11, 1933
Publisher: Valentine-Black Co. Ltd., Toronto
Printed in Saxony

Valentine-Black was a branch of Valentine & Sons Ltd, Dundee, Scotland, which produced postcards in Great Britain from the 1800s until the 1960s. The company arrived in Canada in 1903 and in 1909 became an independent entity. In 1926, it was divided into two companies with the Valentine Black arm operating out of Toronto until 1957 when it closed.

Postmark: August 25, 1915 (Photo used until at least 1949)
Photo: Ralph N. Harris
Paper: NOKO

NOKO photographic paper was produced by Ansco, Binghamton, NY, from 1907 until the 1920s when it merged with the German company Agfa.



MILFORD HOUSE, MILFORD

The headquarters of the Liverpool chain of Lakes extending 60 miles inland.

ANNAPOLIS, N.S.

Atlee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal, N.S. 2423



MILFORD HOUSE

MILFORD, ANNAPOLIS, N.S.

The headwaters of the Liverpool Chain of Lakes extending 60 miles inland
Atlee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal, N.S. 2423

Card #2423 – Two different titles for the same picture c. 1906
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From 1848 until 1933, Warwick Bros. & Rutter was a printing, publishing, and bookbinding firm which printed over 7,000 postcards. It was the first Canadian company to produce postcards.



Over time the lodge changed – first, a longer veranda and cement steps across the length of the veranda. Later, in the 1940s a formal croquet lawn provided another post-dinner activity for guests.



Photo: Ralph N. Harris
Paper: Defender

Defender used this logo between 1920 and 1945.



A Tour of the Cabins

When you have checked in, make your way to your cabin. Originally, the cabins were privately built and maintained on land owned by the Thomas family. Eventually most of the original cabins were bought back and are now part of Milford House. Many are named after the original owners or longtime guests.



Postmark: September 8, 1939
Paper: Canadian Kodak Co. (1910 to 1962)

Geier Lake - Home Beach, left; Thomas cabin, centre.

Came out of the woods yesterday. Had a grand trip, fair fishing & saw some deer & several moose...
- Howard ?.



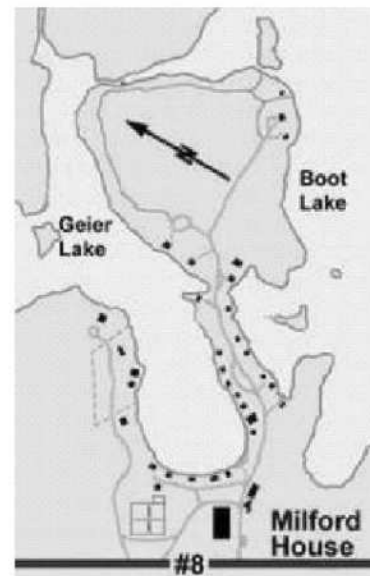
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Logo used between 1910 and 1962.



This is the lake I swim in every morning before breakfast.

- Grace Berrick, August, 1934

This map shows the location of cabins on the peninsula between Boot and Geier Lakes.



This is the place where we have been living for the past two weeks near the hotel going out in a canoe and catching trout everyday rain or shine.

- Writer Unidentified

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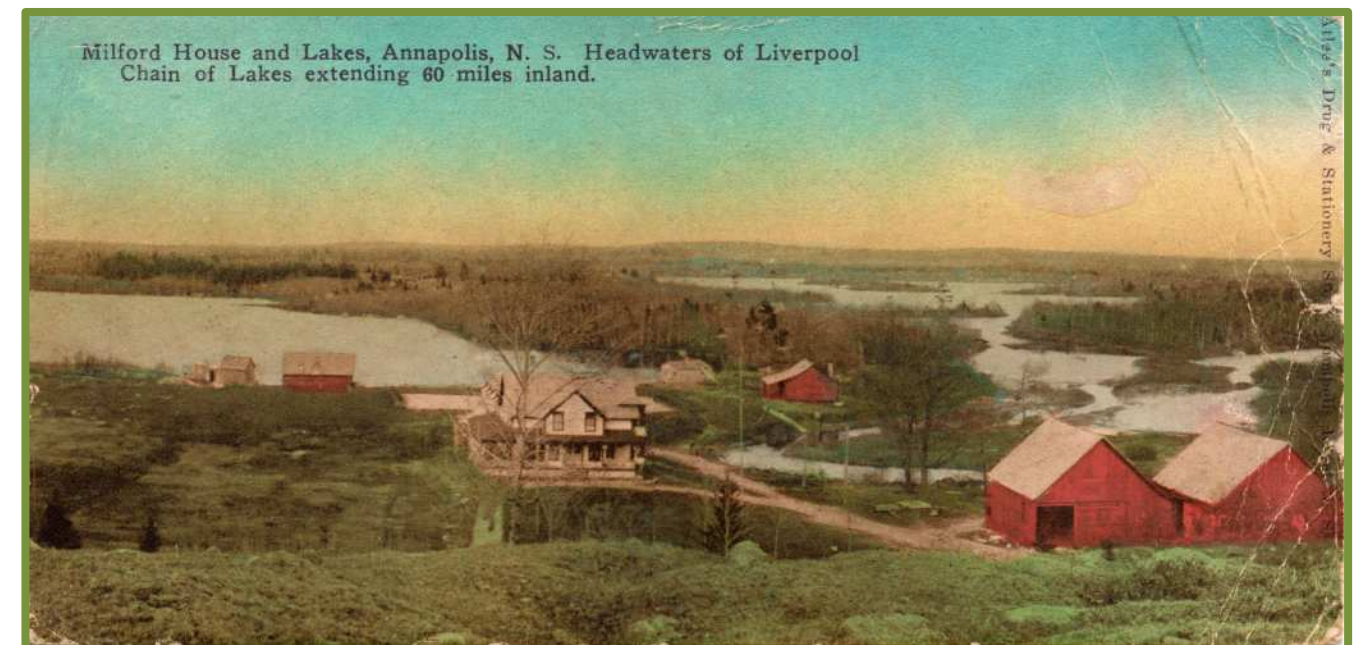


Above Right:
Postmark: August 10, 1951



Postmark: August 29, 1934

From l to r: Otter, Maples and Tyler cabins and Home Beach.





Postmark: October 1935

Tyler cabin - named for the Tyler family.

...This is were [sic] we live. But we are not there now we are in a tent in the wood hurry & come to us so you can be out here too...

- ? Disston, July, 1915



Postmark: May 18, 1914

Photo: Ralph N. Harris

Card was available until at least 1925. Later cards had South Milford, Nova Scotia printed in the lower right hand corner.

Thomas cabin named after the Thomas family who originally owned the Milford House property.



Photo: Ralph N. Harris

Paper: Defender (1920-1945)

Morton cabin named after the *Atlantic Monthly* writer Charles Morton (1899–1967) who promoted Milford House in his columns.

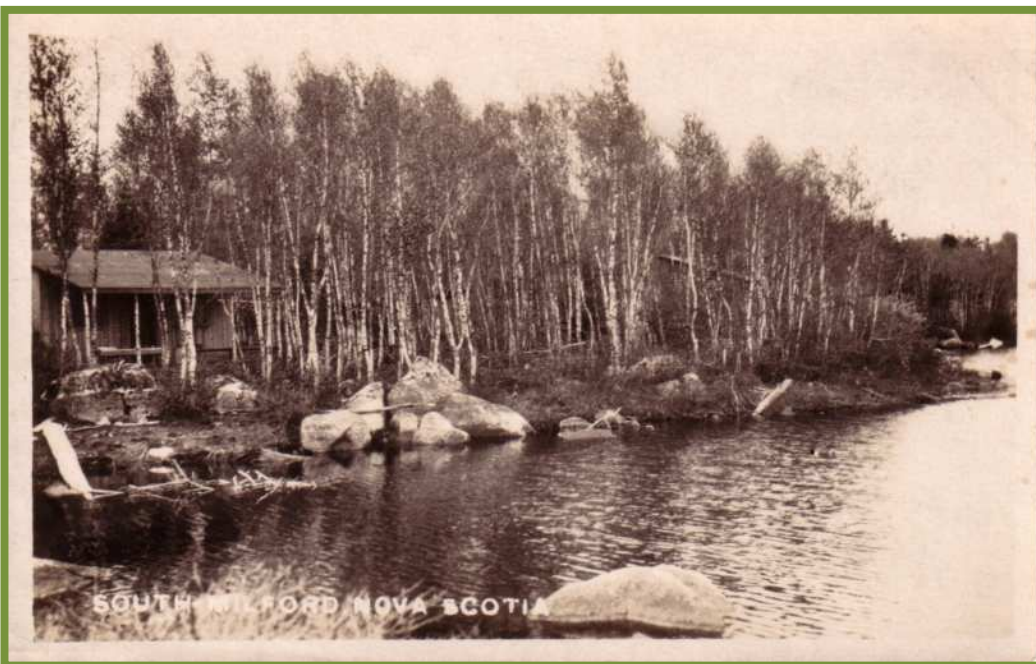


Photo: Ralph N. Harris

Paper: Defender (1920-1945)

Junco cabin, around a point of land from Tyler.



Postmark: September 4, 1934

Unidentifiable cabin typical of the Milford House cabins. The sender reported that it was 80°F (27°C).



c. 1920

Photo: Ralph N. Harris

Paper: Imprinted by the photographer

We develop and print films your way.
Photograph by R. N. HARRIS,
Bear River, N. S.

Geier Cabin is named for Frederick Geier (1893-1981) of Cincinnati, Ohio who headed the purchase of the Milford House property from the Thomas family by a group of shareholders in the late 1960s.

Get a Canoe and Explore the Lakes



Postmark: July 15, 1912
Photo: Ralph N. Harris



Postmark: August 25, 1904
Undivided back postcard

After settling in the cabin, you may want to take a canoe to explore the lakes and streams surrounding Milford House.

I am having a lovely time up here. This picture was taken just back of the hotel. They have hens, dog, cat, cow, pigs and horses.
- Dorothy Ernauld, July, 1912



Postmark: September 2, 1925
A fishing guide on Geier Lake.

Although the caption reads 'On Annapolis River', the private postcard photo at the bottom centre is at Milford House.

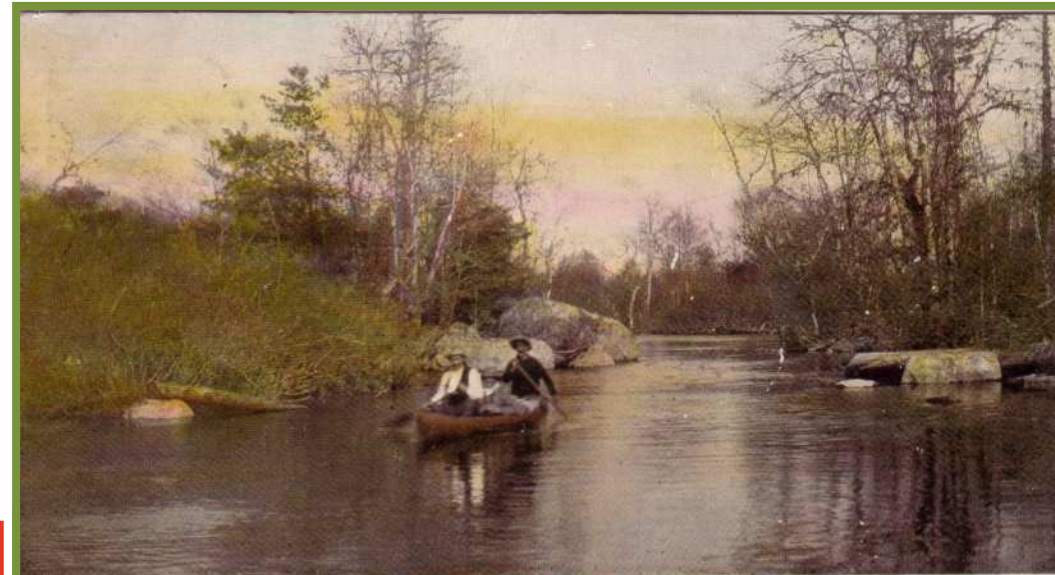
Colorized version - Series #1354

"Milford Lakes, Annapolis Royal, N.S."
Postmark: September 22, 1908

"On Annapolis River, Annapolis Royal, N.S."
Postmark: September 21, 1905

Published for: Atlee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal
Printer: Warwick Bros. & Rutter, Toronto

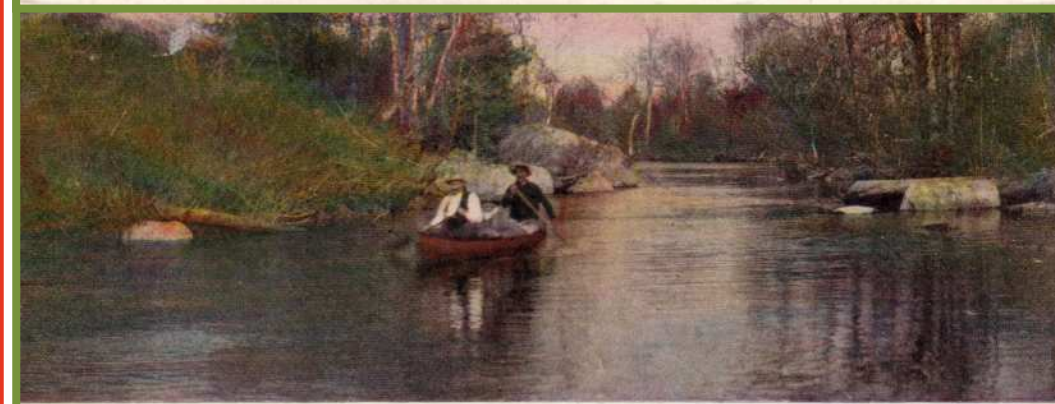
Salesmen's sample card #1353



MILFORD LAKES

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL, N.S.

Published for Atlee's Drug & Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal, N.S. 1354



ON ANNAPOLIS RIVER

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL, N.S.

Atlee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal 1354

Sept. 20th 1905 M.P.R.

c.1905
Printer: Young Bros., Toronto
Series: Original Owners of Our Country



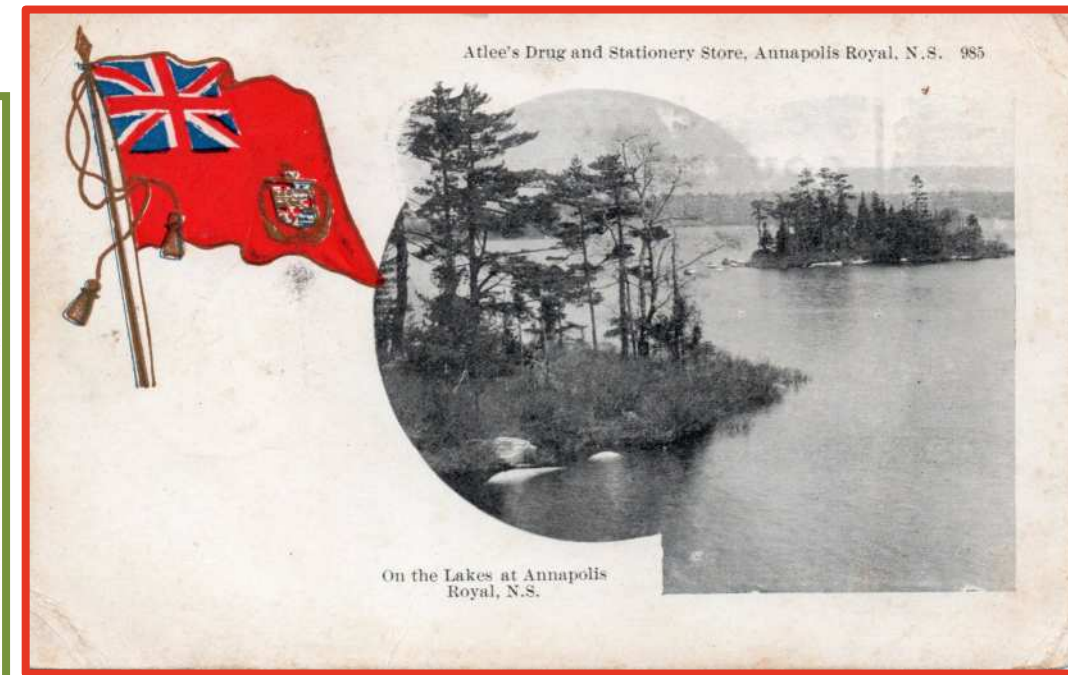
"On the Lakes, Annapolis Royal, N.S." is one of the most common images of the Milford Lakes looking down Boot Lake from the cabins past an island towards Pike's Run. The image on the salesmen's sample card was used as early as 1902 with a similar image used at the same period.



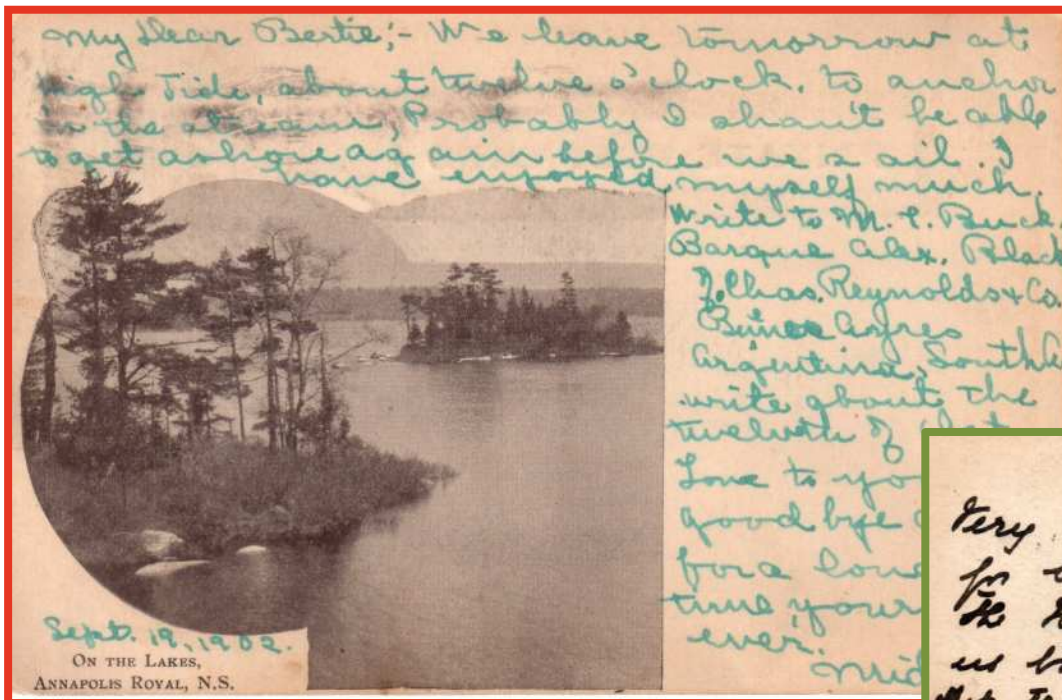
Salesmen's sample card #2436
 Postmark: June 22, 1907
 Published for: Atlee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal
 Printer: Warwick Bros. & Rutter, Toronto.



I caught 432 fish here one afternoon.
 - Writer Unidentified, June 1907

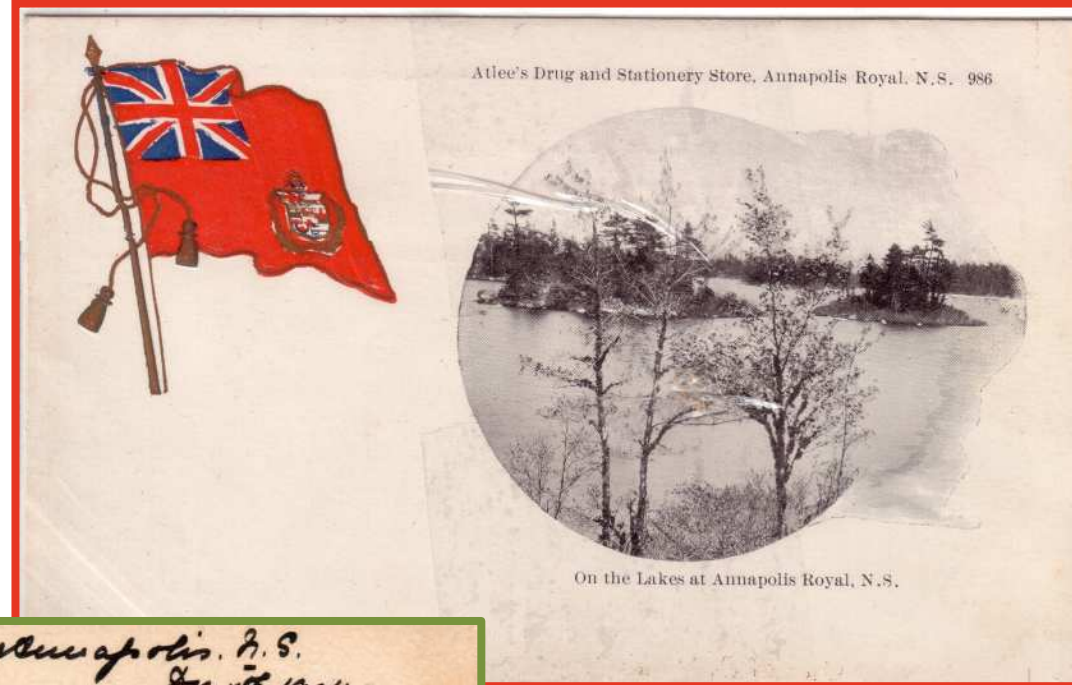


Type I - Series #985
 Postmark: August 7, 1905
 Published for: Atlee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal
 Printer: Warwick Bros. & Rutter, Toronto



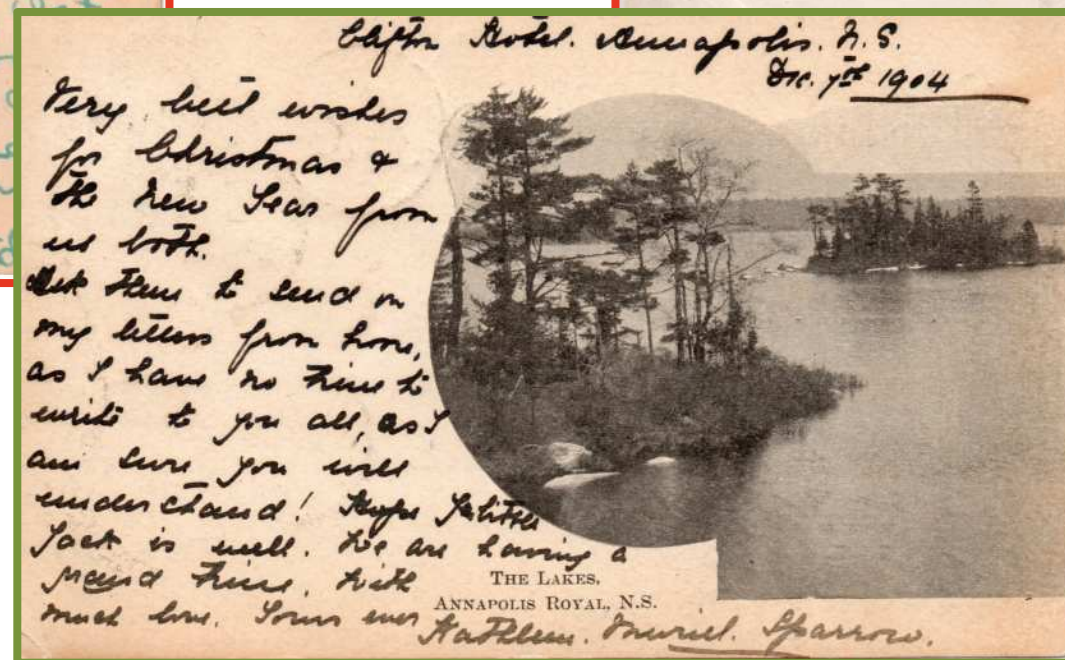
Earliest Known Postcard
 Undivided back private postcard
 Postmark: September 20, 1902

Divided back postcards were permitted by Canadian Postal regulations in December 1903.

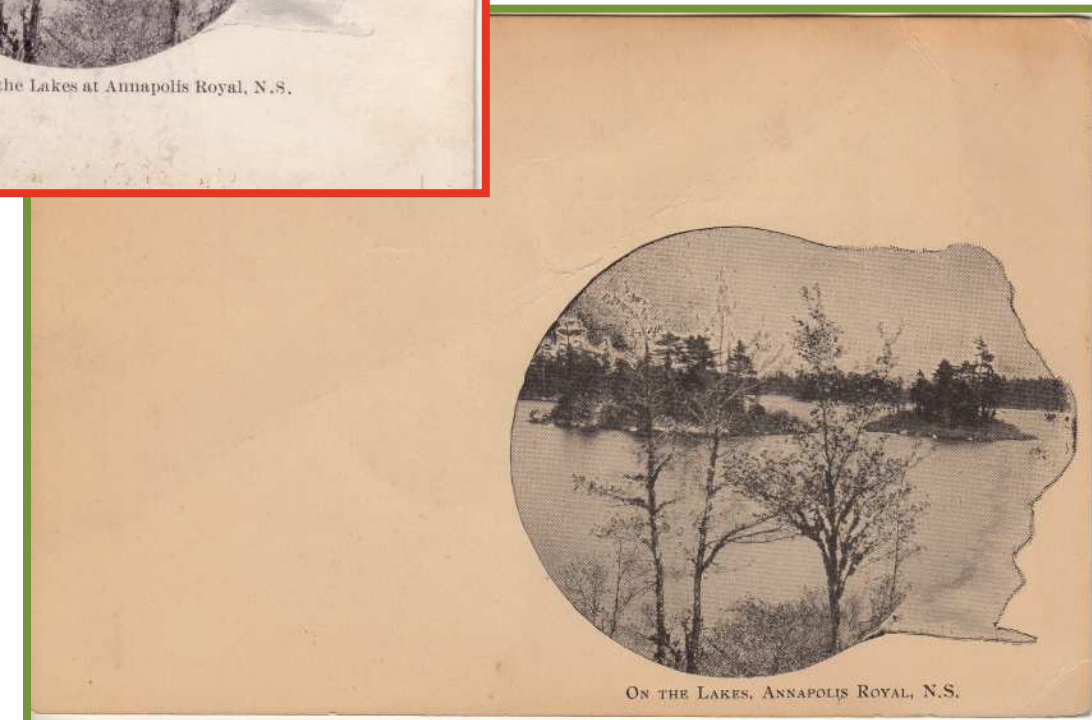


Type II - Series #986
 EKD: 1905
 Published for: Atlee's Drug and Stationery Store, Annapolis Royal
 Printer: Warwick Bros. & Rutter, Toronto

Undivided back private postcard c. 1905
 Unused



Undivided back private postcard
 Postmark: December 8, 1904



Fish, Moose and Camping

Since 1907, non-resident hunters and fishers (Sports) in Nova Scotia have been required to be accompanied by a licensed guide. During its heyday, Milford House employed as many as 15 guides for over 100 days a year. A 2-day camping trip in 1926 would cost about \$22.00.

Either John Glode or John Labrador, both Mi'kmaq from the nearby Bear River area, could be the guide in these pictures. Sports also traveled to Bear River and Kejimkujik to hunt and fish.



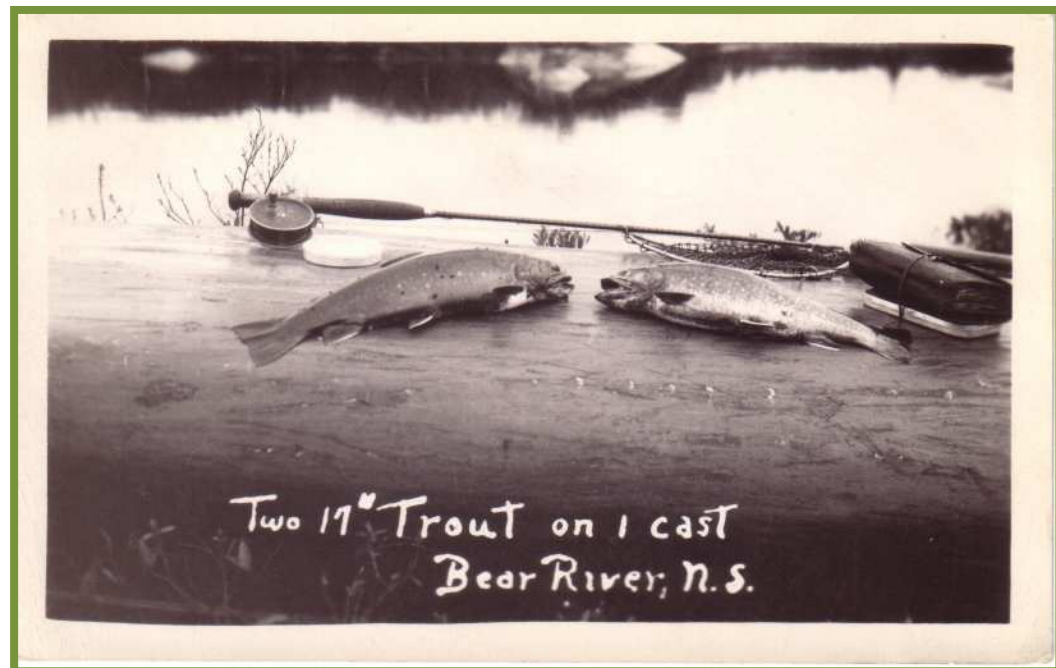
Postmark: July 15, 1914
Photo: Ralph N. Harris

Paper: Velox 1946-1948

Many messages on postcards from Milford House mention the abundant trout population.

Photograph by R. N. HARRIS, Bear River, N. S.
15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*...plenty of trout if you know where
and how to find them...
- J. W. Feldman, July 1914*



Postmark: September 5, 1934

Pike's Run, typical of the Milford landscape with glacial erratics and overhanging trees, connects Boot and Fisher Lakes.

How would you like to go down this lake in a canoe. Daddy & I saw Mr. Whip Snake swimming across the lake also Billy Mink. We have heard Sammy Jay & Chickadee & a few others not as many as I thought.

- Mrs. Hamilton Disston, to daughter, Jessie; September 1924



Photo: Ralph N. Harris
Paper: NOKO (1907-1929)

One of two cabins on Eleven Mile Lake used for overnight hunting and fishing trips.

This morning up at 7:00 & in our canoe with our guide, John by 8:30. We paddled carried & fished all day - caught 9 speckled trout (2 big ones) (Hank caught them all) & had a hot campfire lunch of coffee, eggs, bacon, cheese, homemade bread & butter. Home at 6:30. Bathed in lake!! Quite warm.

- Ruth Melville Berlin, July 1948

Postmark: July 9, 1948 (late use of earlier photo)
Photo: likely Ralph N. Harris



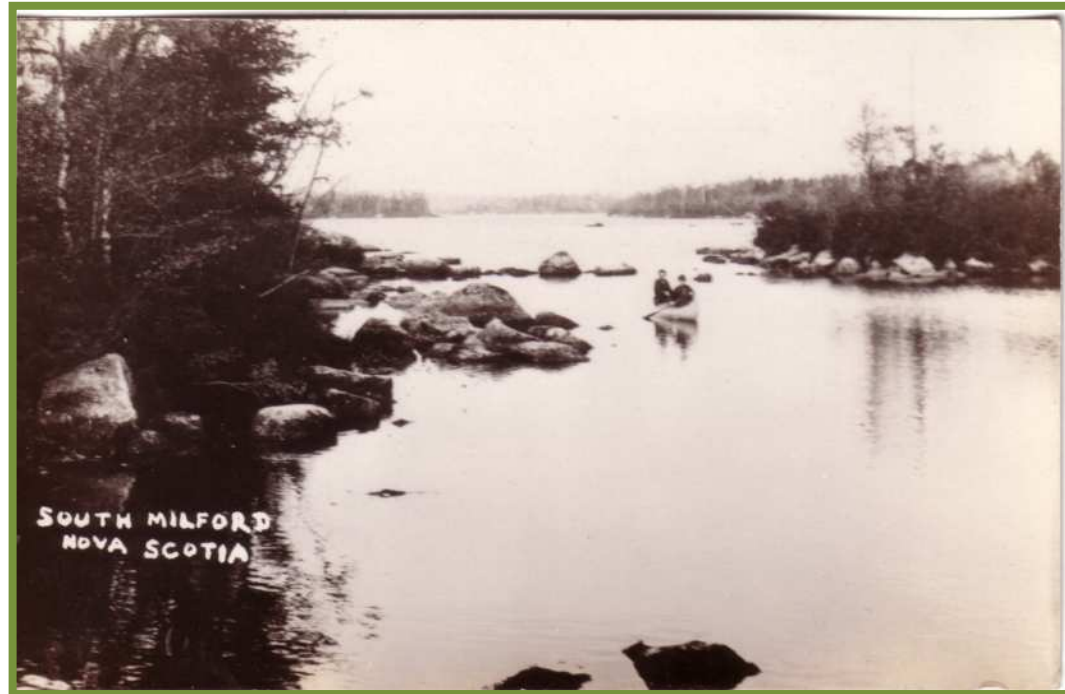
Postmark: August 25, 1938

This cow moose was an increasing rare site, by 1936, hunting Mainland Moose was banned in western Nova Scotia due to low population from over-hunting and disease.



Back to the Lodge

After a successful fishing trip, guests return to their cabins for dinner at the main lodge and perhaps a game of tennis. As a souvenir of their vacation, they could buy a basket made by Madeline Harlow, wife of Mi'kmaq guide, Louis Harlow.



Paper: AZO (1926-1940s)

AZO photo stock was produced by Eastman Kodak Company from the late 1800s until 2005



Postmark: July 20, 1909

Photo: Ralph N. Harris

Mi'kmaq guide, Louis Harlow (1876-1967) with his wife, Madeline (1870-197?). Harlow was known for his moose calling. They lived near Milford House in the summer and spent winters in nearby Bear River.



Postmark: September 15, 1936

The tennis court behind the main lodge with (l-r) Topside, Morton, Thomas and Sikes cabins in the background.

Departure

When leaving Milford House, it is tradition to wave to guests from the verandah with white handkerchiefs to ensure their return the next year. The Dominion Atlantic Railway's Boston and New York ferries on the "Land of Evangeline Route" brought guests to Milford House to escape the rigours of city life and took them home again—relaxed and refreshed, anxiously waiting to return the next year.



c.1908

Publisher: Edgar Jenkins Vickery, Yarmouth, NS
Printed in Belgium

Edgar Jenkins Vickery (1862-1939) was a publisher, bookseller and stationer. He produced and sold many postcards of Yarmouth County.

Postmark: September 2, 1929

Photo: Ralph N. Harris

Milford House was featured in Albert Bigelow Paine's *The Tent Dwellers* (1908), a classic tale of a fishing expedition in southwestern Nova Scotia:

*Then away to the heart of the deep unknown,
Where the trout and the wild moose are—
Where the fire burns bright, and the tent gleams white
Under the northern star.*

