

the town of
Conception
Bay South

CONCEPTION BAY SOUTH T'RAILWAY.

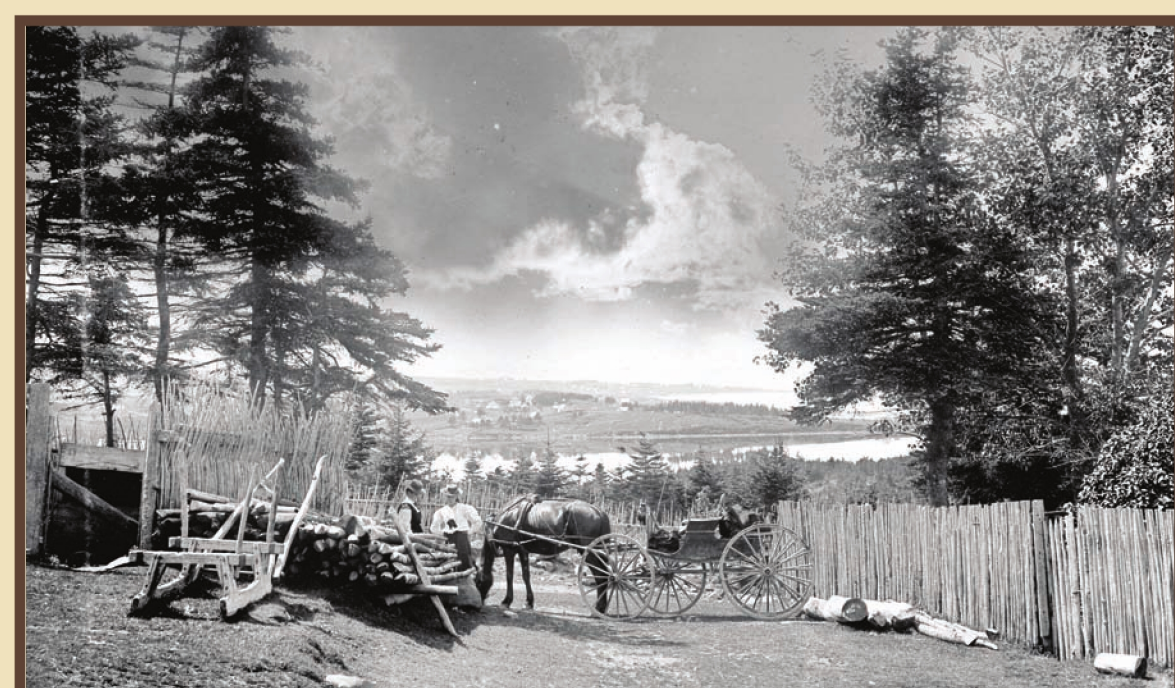
Manuels.

Early History.

There were at least three “planters” (fishermen who owned their boats and hired others) living here by the early 1800s. These were John Smith, William Smith, and William Williams. Other early family names were Atkins, Neal, and Squires. By 1845, Manuels had 74 people. The opening of a road along the South Shore of Conception Bay in the 1850s, stimulated the growth of agriculture with farmers/fishers able to take their produce to St. John's. A new railway connection followed in 1882. The first “excursion” from St. John's followed in July, when the “Sons of St. Andrew” held a recreational trip to Manuels. They had their meal

at the “Bellevue Hotel”, owned by the Squires family. The Bellevue Hotel also served briefly as the first railway station in Manuels. Nearby Manuels River was becoming a popular summer destination for residents of St. John's. In 1891 Manuels had 194 residents, and by 1971, 1,006 lived here.

The Rooms Provincial Archives Division PA 1234



A trip to Manuels, a popular summer destination, in the early 1900s.

World-famous Manuels River.



The Rooms Provincial Archives Division A 3048

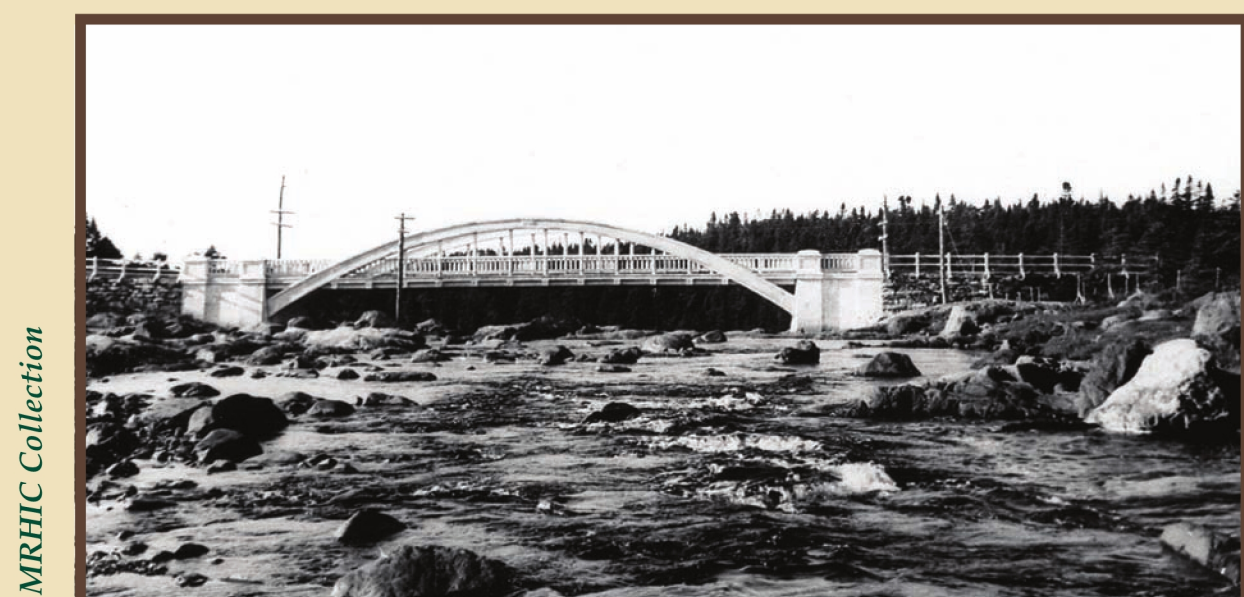
An early coloured post card of below the bridge, Manuels River.

Manuels River is world-renowned for its geology and fossils, discovered in shale beds by T. C. Weston of the Geological Survey of Canada in 1874. Resembling sow bugs or crabs, trilobites are now an extinct class of marine arthropods that inhabited the earth's oceans for more than 300 million years. Downstream the Manuels River fossil site is a protected site. Provincial Law does not permit any fossils to be removed. Fossils found in loose shale should be brought to the Manuels River Hibernia Interpretation Centre, which opened in 2013. The Manuels River Linear Park was designated a municipal heritage site in 2007 by the Town of Conception Bay South, because of its social and scientific values.

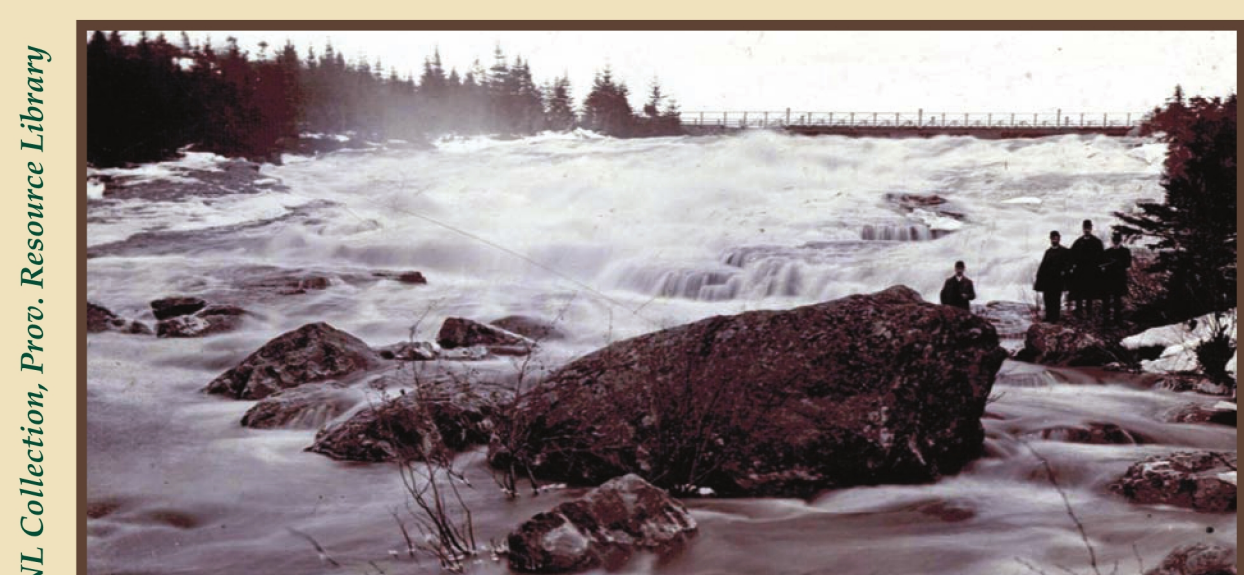


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Manuels River Hibernia Interpretation Centre.



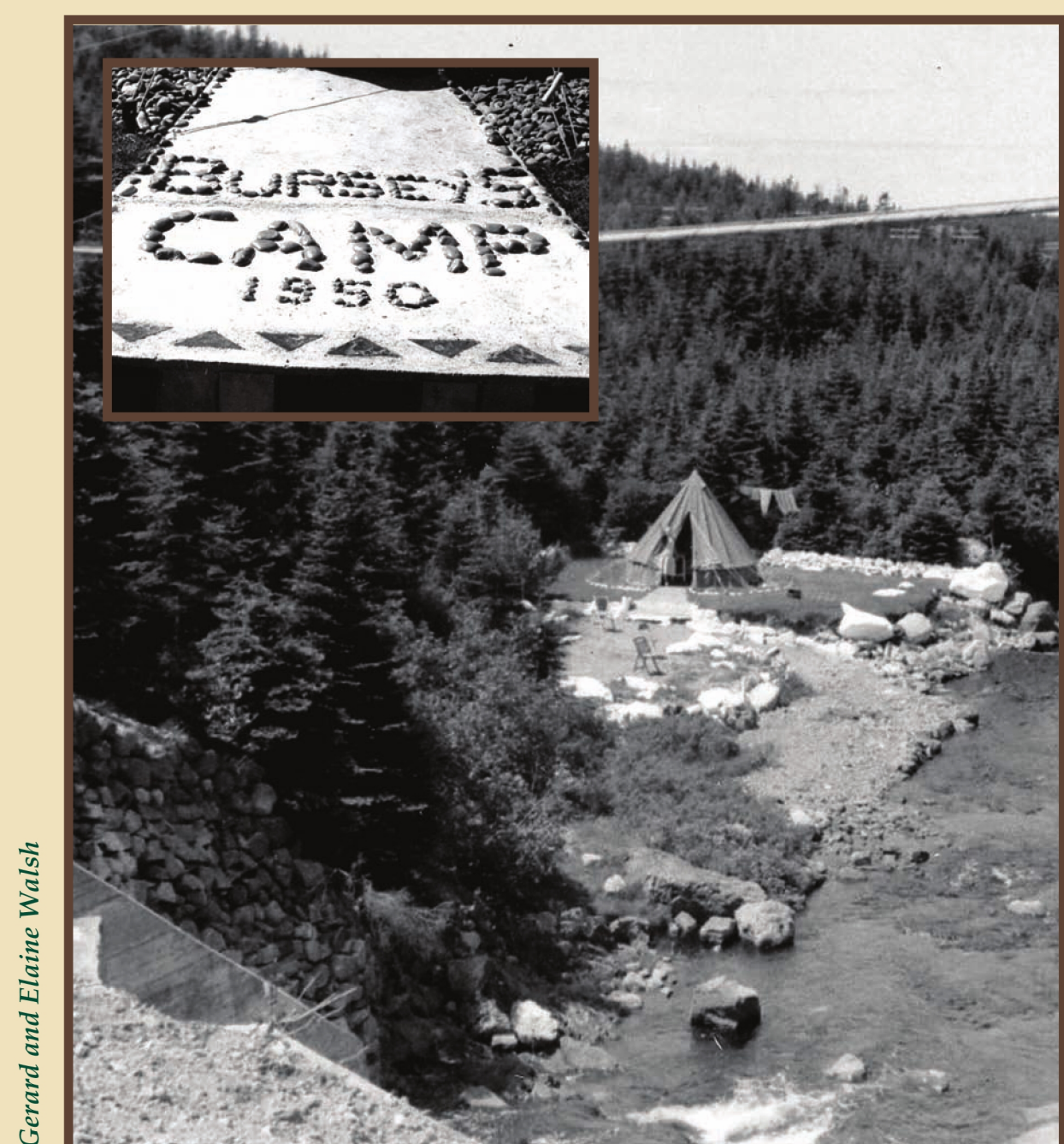
A view of the river from below the bridge.



Manuels River is world-known for its geology and trilobite fossils.



Manuels River is home to Paradoxides trilobite fossils, some as long as half a metre / 1.5 ft. They are 500 million years old, and can be viewed inside the Interpretation Centre.



“Bursey's Camp” existed here for over 60 years. The Boy Scouts camped upstream.



Railway Coastal Museum

The 1944 “Overland Express” passes over the Manuels River Trestle, en route to Port aux Basques.

1924 Railway Accident, Manuels Bridge.



Robin Barrett

View of the 1924 Train Wreck, from the Manuels River edge.

The Railway cost a life. One of those tragedies was the train derailment near Manuels Bridge. In the early morning hours of 24th November 1924, Engine #11 and five box cars were dispatched from St. John's to join a steam shovel and its crew doing maintenance on the track at “Woodfords”. Engineer Frederick Tipple, his fireman Johnson, and the acting conductor Rowsell were the only people on board. Just as the train was approaching Manuels Bridge at a steady speed, the engine

left the rails. The engine, tender, and three cars plunged down a 6m / 20 ft embankment, landing at the river's edge. They were followed by the two remaining cars, which landed just in front of the engine. Tipple died at the scene and the two other men were seriously injured. The 26-year old, was to have been married the very next day. He was one of six members of the Tipple family who earned their living on the Railway.



Robin Barrett

Another view of the accident scene, at the Manuels River edge.

Train Derailed Near Manuel's Bridge

**Engineer Tipple Killed Instantly
--Fireman and Conductor Escape With Their Lives.**

The Evening Telegram of November 24, 1924 relates the tragedy.

Villa Nova Orphanage.

After the death of owner Mary Tobin Squires, the Bellevue Hotel and adjacent land was purchased by the Roman Catholic Church. In 1886, the Church opened an orphanage and industrial school for about 80 homeless boys from all over Newfoundland. By 1887, there were 127 orphans and a Chapel and Vocational School were added. The orphanage also operated a printing press, bakery, green house, carpenter shop, and tailor shop, to help make the institution self-sufficient. In 1889 a typhoid epidemic

struck the Villa Nova Orphanage and claimed the lives of five orphans and Reverend Michael Morris (brother of Edward P. Morris who was Prime Minister of Newfoundland in 1909-1918). Forced to close after his death, the Irish Christian Brothers filled the void by opening Mount Cashel Orphanage in 1898 in St. John's.

Supplying St. John's Markets.



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The Metclafe slaughter house and outbuildings have held Municipal Heritage Site status since 2008.



Borer and David Metclafe

Men gather for a horse auction, but most often the auctions were for cattle.

Manuels was one of the main centres where butchering operations existed on the South Shore. The Metcalfe family owned one of the largest. Previous to the railway operating, Metcalfe's imported livestock by ship. In the mid-20th century Thomas Metcalfe imported over 50 rail carloads of cattle a year from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. They also ran a meat market in St. John's as well as supplying the supermarkets and independent “meat men” who

went door-to-door selling fresh meat and other produce. The Metcalfe family also looked after cattle imported by George Neal Ltd. of St. John's. Neal's cattle, brought in by rail, were offloaded at the siding at Talcville and herded down the main highway to Neal's stockyards at Manuels (now the site of the Villa Nova Plaza). Before the 1960s, other butchers from the South Shore who sold their meat in St. John's, left their homes at 5 am to be in the city by 8 am for their daily sales.



Borer Neal

Cattle and farmers at George Neal's Villa Nova stockyards.



Borer Neal

A large herd of cattle is lined up, ready for auction at George Neal's.



Maritime History Archive, MUN

Villa Nova Orphanage closed after the death of Reverend Michael Morris.

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GRAND CONCOURSE