



Look, Ma!

History's Fun

By MICHAEL BARRIE

AS THE ship rounded a sunny, Nova Scotia headland, the man put a hand on the lad's shoulder and pointed to a majestic cape just rising from the sea ahead.

"There it is, son," he said.

The boy peered at the blue-grey mass of Cape North—which John Cabot called "Cape Discovery" in 1497 when he made his North American landfall.

"This is how it must have looked to Cabot and his men when they saw it first 462 years ago," the man mused. "Cabot thought he'd reached Asia. He didn't realize he'd discovered the mainland of North America."

The boy's eyes swept along the green slopes of the Cape Breton Island coast. "Is this history, Dad?" he asked.

"It sure is," his father answered.

"It's fun, isn't it, Dad?" the boy said. "History's fun, when you see it."

This summer's vacationist will have an unprecedented opportunity to see how much fun history can be. More and more resort areas are discovering how to rescue their storied past from the yellowing pages on the library shelves and make it a living thing.

In Williamsburg, Va., for example, more than \$60 million has been spent in restoring a 17th Century village. Replicas of the *Mayflower* at Plymouth, Columbus's *Santa Maria* at Barcelona and the ships of Capt. John Smith at Jamestown have become highly successful tourist attractions. Restored fortresses—like New York State's Ticonderoga—attract throngs of fascinated visitors of all ages. History is riding the tourist boom.

An outstanding example of how dignified showmanship is whipping up new interest in what people were doing when the world was younger is taking place in Nova Scotia, which inherited more history than most parts of the New World.

For the half a million people who visit Nova Scotia every Summer, history is every bit as much fun as the beaches, highlands, fishing, folklore and friendliness which have given this province its name of "Canada's Ocean Playground".

The boy who—for about the cost of a history book—took the one-day cruise with his family out of Sydney and, like Cabot, saw Cape North rising out of the sea, came home from his visit to Nova Scotia with a new perspective on the history which had shaped his world.

His mother talks of the famous, old houses preserved in several different areas within the province, where visitors may wander freely among gardens and furnishings exactly as they were a century or more ago. His mother collects antiques.

His sister's favorite vacation memory is of Grand Pre, where Gabriel and Evangeline, the lovers in Longfellow's immortal poem, plighted their troth before their tragic separation. Today Grand Pre—where visitors snap pictures beside Evangeline's Well and stand in the reconstructed chapel where the luckless French learned that they were to be expelled—is an Acadian shrine. Many homesick Acadians returned to Nova Scotia. Their villages today are treasure houses of Acadian lore.

Dad's vote is for the Habitation, a true-to-life, full-size trading post on the site