

Observations of Coastal Change and Historical Events by Jimmy Kickham, Souris West

Background: Jimmy grew up in Souris West and has lived there all his life except for a few times he went to Alberta. In June of 2011 he was 86 years old and has a good memory of events from the past. At the time of the interview he was still operating his own construction company which mainly involved digging with a backhoe.

The main part of the house where he lives was approximately 40 years old. His ancestors purchased it from a Halloran family many years ago.

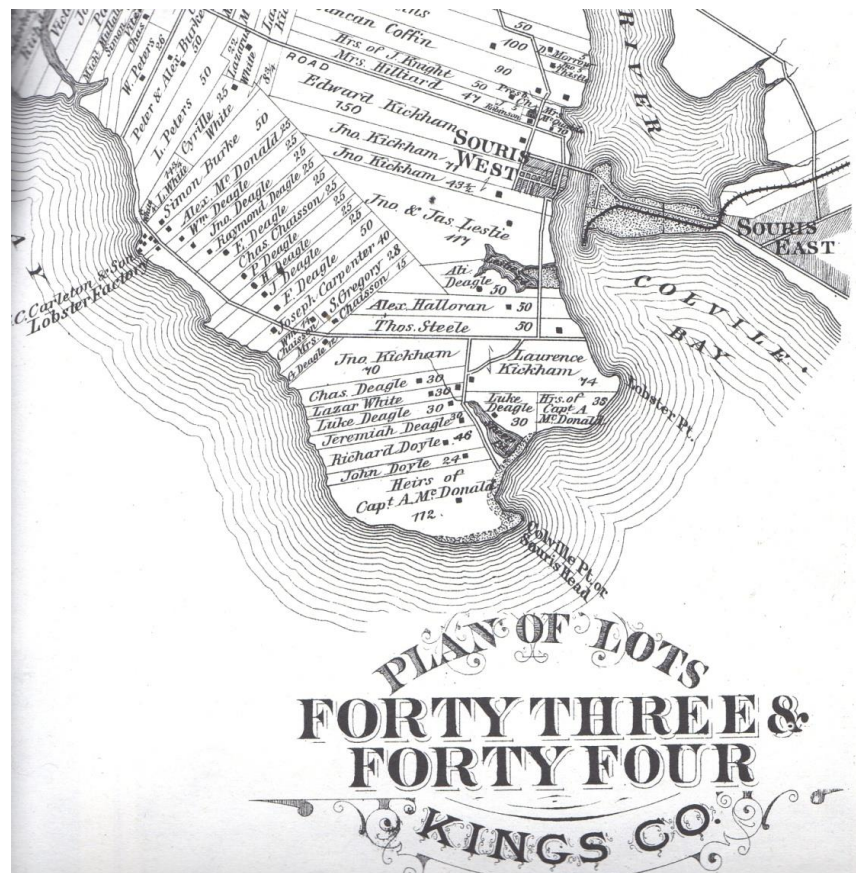


Figure 1 - From Meacham's Atlas – 1880 Showing Kickham Property

Sea Ice: Jimmy recalls that 2 houses were hauled across the ice from Souris West to Souris. This occurred on March 23, 1921. A team of six horses was used to haul the houses and they went on the ice just below the old Platter House and crossed the channel to the Souris Harbour and went ashore at the Souris marine terminal. He said one house was placed near the old Souris Hospital and was occupied by Russell Poole, who died a few years ago. This house is still at 2 Cliff Crescent, Souris in 2011.

On November 18, 1933 there were 3 potato boats loaded in Souris. Two of them were able to get out of the harbour but the third one got stuck in the ice and had to remain in the harbour all winter. Coal was hauled from shore to keep the ship and crew warm until they were able to get out of the harbour the next spring.

There was a plane crash on March 10, 1944 when a military plane flying from Newfoundland to Summerside ran low on fuel and had to make an emergency landing. It landed near Jimmy's house and it broke in two upon landing at the edge of the cliff along Colville Bay. The two occupants of the plane, Jim White and Dave Kirkhoff both survived. The accident occurred at 10:10 in the evening when the family was listening to a hockey game on the radio. Some locals were skating on a pond nearby when the crash occurred. Some people walked across the ice from Souris to Souris West to look at the plane. A crew came to take the plane apart and the parts were loaded onto horse and sleighs and taken to the railroad terminal in Souris. The parts were then loaded into box cars and taken by train to Quebec.

Salt Water Wells: He was aware that Gerry Gallant had trouble getting fresh water at Lobster Pt and had to drill several wells before they got reasonably fresh water. He knew that Kathy Rose may have also had some problems with salt water and thinks she hooked onto Gerry Gallant's line.

Shoreline Erosion: Mr. Kickham is familiar with several areas in Souris / Souris West which were experiencing shoreline erosion.

In the Sheep Pond area there used to be 5 fish houses at the shore side of Sheep Pond. These fish houses disappeared about 40 to 45 years ago due to severe shoreline erosion in the area. He said that Billy Archie MacDonald also had a house in the area. Jimmy believes that hundreds of feet of shoreline have been lost in the area.

The shoreline in front of Jimmy's own house has also been eroding fast over the years. He said the whole area around Lobster Point was eroding at a fast pace.

The land along the Souris side of the causeway has also experienced a lot of erosion. He indicated that 7 fish houses used to be located near the existing travel bureau. He also said a railroad spur used to run across the causeway and did a loop at the Souris side of the causeway (see figure 2) which has all been lost due to erosion. He also recalled two houses on the north side of the causeway on the Souris end. One was occupied by Georgia Perry, who used to sell moonshine. This house was moved after the parents died. Another house was located where the existing sewage lift station is located and this was occupied by Frank Grimes who used to haul the mail across to the travel bureau area.

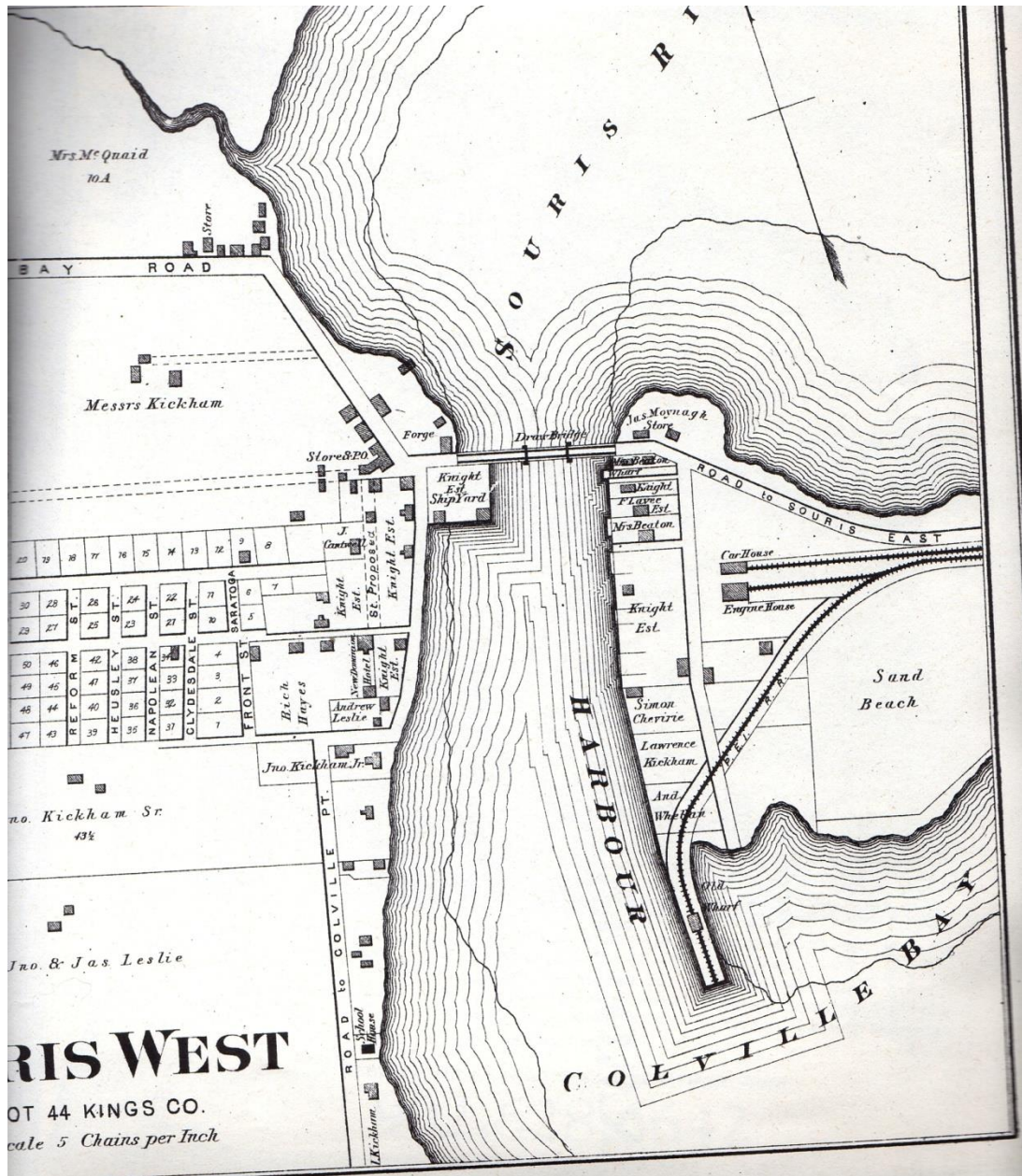


Figure 2 – Souris West Bridge / Causeway Area - Meacham's Atlas 1880 Showing Location of Rail Spur Line on Causeway Area

Storms / Storm Surges: Jimmy believes that the storm which did the most erosion damage was the one on Dec. 21, 2010. He couldn't recall a storm surge causing more damage. This storm had a lot of wind associated with it. The storm surge of January 21, 2000 was probably the one with the highest water level. He recalled it came within a foot of the deck of the Souris West bridge on highway 2. He also recalled another bad storm 28 to 30 years ago but didn't mention what type of damage it caused.

Other Information: Jimmy observed that the current, cool, foggy weather PEI has experienced over the last 2 months (May and June 2011) is the slowest spring for growing plants that he has seen in many years.

Source: Jimmy Kickham interview June 30, 2011 by DE Jardine