

A Journey of Discovery
By
Henry Gordon Academy
Cartwright

Cast:

Mrs. Gatehouse..... Heidi Pardy

Jacklyn..... Claire Sainsbury

Victoria Hailey Hamel-Dyson

Susy..... Kendra Driscoll

Mr. Williams..... Matthew Pardy

Relative 1 Evan Burdett

Relative 2 Ryan Green

Andrew Corneaux Ryan Green

Opening Scene

Elementary classroom. As curtain raises, the song, "The Harbour is Empty" is being played.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Good Morning everyone. *(Class responds)* Does anyone know who we just heard singing?

Jacklyn: Yes, Miss, that's Harry Martin!

Mrs. Gatehouse: Do any of you know who he is? Yes, Victoria.

Victoria: *(raises hand)* Miss, he is from here. He used to be in a band with my uncle.

Susy: Yes, my family likes to listen to that music all the time.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Well, I am very glad that you guys know who he is. Did you notice anything about the title of the song we just heard?

Susy: *(raises hand)* Yes, Miss. That song was called The Harbour is Empty.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Good observation. Why do you think Mr. Martin wrote that song?

Victoria: Sounds like he wrote it in the fall, about this time of the year when all the freight and passenger boats were gone.

Jacklyn: Yes, when all the freight boats had gone and people probably felt all alone. It's different now though.

Mrs. Gatehouse: How so?

Victoria: Yeah, we don't have boats anymore. We just got the road now.

Mrs. Gatehouse: You're right, but today I want to bring us back in time. Do you remember we just finished exploring some of the local stories?

Susy: Yes, Miss. I loved learning all about our past.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Well, today, I am very excited to tell you that we have a guest coming in. He is coming in to share his knowledge of one of the stories we have been talking about.

Victoria: Who's coming in, Miss? Is it anyone we know?

Mrs. Gatehouse: I am sure some of you might know him, or some of his family. Today, we

have Mr. Williams coming in to visit with us. Remember; be on your best behaviour.

Jacklyn: Miss, I promise not to make jokes today, unless he wants me to tell him one!

Mrs. Gatehouse: Good idea, Jacklyn we know what happens when we don't pay attention and start telling jokes, don't we?

Victoria: Yeah, we don't want to hear any of her jokes!

Jacklyn: Come on, just one! Why did the chicken cross the road?

Victoria: Lame! We all know it was to get to the other side.

Jacklyn: No, not this time...he crossed the road because the river was flooded!

Susy: Sick! Miss, make her stop!

Mrs. Gatehouse: That's enough, Jacklyn. There'll be no more jokes today. I want you guys to be on your best behaviour for Mr. Williams.

Students: Yes, Miss.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Now, before Mr. Williams arrives, there are some things that I want to remind you of. Remember we are talking about local stories that still remain a mystery. Pay attention to what he has to say. He might be able to fill in some of the blanks for us.

Susy: Yes, Miss. You never know what interesting things he might tell us.

Mrs. Gatehouse: That's right. Remember, we're talking about George's Island, and some of the things that might have happened there.

Victoria: Oh, Miss, I forgot to tell you that I passed along by George's Island last summer when I went to Rigolet on the Northern Ranger.

Susy: Did you hear any howling or did any rocks get thrown at the boat?

Mrs. Gatehouse: Now Susy, never mind, let her finish.

Victoria: I was very nervous when we passed by, but I didn't hear or see a thing!

Mrs. Gatehouse: Well, there are some local people who say something different. There are some who say that they have not only heard things, but have seen things as well.

Jacklyn: Spooky, Miss, I don't know if I want to hear this today.

Mrs. Gatehouse: It's okay; we'll be just fine. You're all fine here with me. Now, let me go see if our visitor has arrived. (*attempts to leave, but before she can leave, there's a knock on the door.*) Oh, it sounds like he has arrived. (*opens the door and Mr. Williams enter*) Good Morning, Mr. Williams, welcome to our class.

Mr. Williams: Thank you Ma'am. I am glad to be here.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Guys say hello to Mr. Williams.

Class: Good Morning Mr. Williams.

Mr. Williams: Good Morning to all of you. Thank you for asking me to come to your class.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Mr. Williams, we are ever so glad to see you today I have a seat ready for you right here. And here's a bottle of water if you want it.

Mr. Williams: Thank you Ma'am. I might need that today. Got a bit of frog in my throat, my old voice is not like it used to be.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Well, I am glad that you could come today. Are we ready to begin?

Mr. Williams: Yes, Miss. I am ready, but before I begin, I better tell you that I am sharing with you my own knowledge of what happened on those shorelines, based on the information that was passed down to me by my family. Remember this is my ancestor's version of those fateful events. I wasn't there, but have been told what happened.

Students: We understand Mr. Williams.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Yes, I've explained that to them as well. I am sure they understand. We're ready when you are.

Mr. Williams: Well, where to begin? It was in 1876. A ship named the Walrus, which was owned by the Hudson's Bay Company, was traveling from Rigolet to Quebec, with a load on board. It is said that a storm came up and the Walrus had to anchor in a small harbour along the shorelines of George's Island. This is where the story becomes a bit of a mystery, as there are a couple of versions of what happened. I do know that my relatives from Fish Cove went to George's Island and this is what they discovered....

Lights fade on classroom...lights flash/wind howling. Lights up on stage...dead bodies on the beach.

Relative 1: That was some hard stem across the bay today.

Relative 2: Yes, boy, I got a bit of start watching that shoal break. Thought we were goners for sure!

Relative 1: It must have been some rough here these past few days. I wouldn't want to be on this island when the weather is like that. I dare say the wind was howling down through the valley.

Relative 2: Yes boy, I dare say it was. Must have been some ole racket on the go.

Relative 1: By gar boy, something must have been on the go. Look up there past the high water mark.

Relative 2: Oh my god boy, what is that?

Relative 1: Blessed God, my son, something went on here. There are two bodies here with their heads chopped off!

Relative 2: What in the name of God went on here?

Relative 1: I don't know, but lets have a look around and see what else is here.

Relative 2: *(men look around)* I found this picture and some other things in a crevice along shore. I also saw two tents set up over there.

Relative 1: Honest to God boy, I can't for the life of me figure out what happened here.

Relative 2: Yes boy, who would have thought we'd find bodies here on George's Island? What happened here?

Relative1: I haven't got a clue, but one thing for sure, they never washed ashore, and they're well above the high water mark. Something bad had to happen here.

Relative 2: And it was no accident either. Sure as I'm alive, these people was killed, they never just died.

Relative 1: We better get back to Fish Cove and get some help. But we better cover these fellers over first.

Relative 2: Yes, that's right.....

Lights fade..... on beach and come back up on the classroom

Mr. Williams: My family went back to Fish Cove and got some more help. Then they went back to the island to give the poor souls a proper burial.

Victoria: Wow! That happened so close to us?

Mr. Williams: Yes, my dear, and not all that long ago either.

Jacklyn: That must have been some creepy! I can't imagine seeing that!

Mr. Williams: Yes it must have been. I did hear that the poor fellers were a long time getting over it.

Susy: I wouldn't be over it yet!

Mrs. Gatehouse: Thank you Mr. Williams for sharing your story with us. It is really amazing to hear about it from someone whose family was part of the mystery.

Mr. Williams: My pleasure, Miss.

Mrs. Gatehouse: But I have to ask you, have you heard about the sole survivor's recount of the events, as told to his lawyer Mr. Prowse?

Mr. Williams: No, I can't say that I have. Do you know any of the details?

Mrs. Gatehouse: As a matter of fact, I do. There's a sworn affidavit from the ship's sole survivor.

Mr. Williams: I'd like to hear that as well.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Sure, let me get it for you. *(She begins to read)* We left Rigolet...

Lights fade and one spotlight on centre stage. Andrew Corneaux on the opposite side of the stage begins to read.

Andrew Corneaux: ...on the Walrus on October 15, 1876 and were heading for Quebec. We had a full cargo of salmon and other supplies on board. There were six crew members and one boy passenger on board.

The wind was blowing a moderate breeze from the North West when we left, but it quickly turned to blow strong from the southeast and it began to snow.

The captain decided to turn around and head back to Rigolet. However, about 4pm we saw land that we thought to be George's Island. We anchored with three anchors ahead and our chains were pulled tight. The wind was blowing on land and it was blowing a strong gale and if the boat drifted she would be a total loss and everyone would perish. We decided to use our lifeboat and abandon our ship and make our way to shore. We launched the boat and put in some supplies, clothing and all hands and the passenger got in her and rowed towards the beach. There was a great surf on at the time. As soon as the bow of the boat touched the beach, a heavy rolling sea capsized the boat and everyone was thrown into the water. After struggling for about five minutes I was able to crawl on shore. I looked around for others but only saw one more holding on to the boat. The boat capsized and that person disappeared. The boat washed up on the beach and I was able to get a hold of the painter and tied it on to a rock. Two oars also washed ashore as well as a small keg of brandy.

The next day I realized I was all alone on the island, and the only food I had was the six biscuits that I had put in my pocket the day before. For two days it blew very hard and there was also some snow and frost. I had to walk night and day to stay warm. I decided to launch my small boat on the 20th as the wind had died down and the waters had become smooth. I managed to get aboard the Walrus and set the sails by using a watch tackle. I was hoping to get back to Rigolet, but was not able to fight the wind. The sails were in really bad shape. I decided to make my way to Grady. While going through Grady Run I saw a vessel anchored at Black Island. I passed along side and called out for help. But before I could get help, the Walrus went ashore on the rocks, as the harbour was so small.

I went on board the boat and had some food. Captain Tuggie and his crew were able to get the Walrus off the rocks and sail her back to Rigolet. I swear that these things are true and I felt I needed to get this information out. I traveled to St. John's and on November 6th, I gave this information to Robert Prowse, my attorney.

Back to classroom

Mr. Williams: Very interesting information Miss. I had never heard that until now.

Mrs. Gatehouse: Yes, Mr. Williams we discovered this when we began our research on the mystery of George's Island.

Student 3: It was all pretty exciting!

Student 1: Huh, exciting? You were more scared than excited you said you never slept for two days.

Mrs. Gatehouse: That's enough, Jacklyn. I think we were all a little bit scared that day.

Mr. Williams: Yes, my dear, there are many events that remain mysteries and lots of things have happened on these shores! But it is these shores that we are proud to call home.

"This is my Home," by Harry Martin