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## Book Reviews

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**Going Home** by Margaret Dixon, privately printed, Summerside, 1979. 181 pp. \$7.50 paperback.

To begin, it should be noted that the editor of this magazine did not seek far and wide for an unbiased reviewer: I am both a relative and an admirer of Margaret MacQuarrie Dixon. Furthermore, I was born in the same house and experienced much the same upbringing that she did. Forty years separated our lives on the MacQuarrie farm in Hampton, but I think I can claim first-hand knowledge of both the author and her material.

In this book, Mrs. Dixon describes her early years, her parents and relatives, her schooling and first years of employment as a teacher. She writes

of the community and the people, of birth and death, and the celebration of the seasons on the farm. Her way with words will be familiar to all who used to read "Ellen's Diary" in the *Guardian*. The eye is kindly, the prose sensitive, the imagery rich but unpretentious. It all adds up to an excellent account of farm life on the Island.

I found *Going Home* very moving. To read of my father as a child is to become involved in the special kind of time-travel that only a good author can create. I knew my grandparents in their old age; to meet them 40 years younger, and so instantly recognizable, is close to magic.

The farm remains, as Mrs. Dixon writes, "length about a mile, 100 acres in all." The land is still in good heart,

but Hampton, I think, is not. Like so many small villages, it has lost its school, its post office, and perhaps its reason for being. The dominant feature now is not a mill, or a store, or a hall — it is Highway 1, with its almost ceaseless roar of traffic. More reason to be thankful for an author who can remember and write of quieter times.

The book has a few trifling misprints; I suspect they would not have escaped Aunt Margaret's school-teacher eyes in earlier years. I think that *Going Home* is the best expression of "The Island way of life" yet written. It should become a classic.

Ian MacQuarrie

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## Contributors

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**Harry Baglole** edits *The Island Magazine*. He has produced several books and articles about the history of Prince Edward Island.

**Jim Hornby**, a resident of Kensington, is a member of the Prince Edward Island Fiddlers Society. He is presently engaged in research on Island fiddling and folklore.

**Susan Hornby** of Cavendish is a graduate student in Prince Edward Island history at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

**Ian MacQuarrie** teaches Biology at the University of Prince Edward Island. He has been prominent in efforts to preserve the Island's social and cultural heritage.

**Deborah** and **David Stewart** are married and live in Summerside. Deborah enjoys doing photography and collecting oral history. David likes to talk; he finds his medical work as a general practitioner a constant source of story-tellers and history.

**Robert C. Tuck**, Anglican Archdeacon of Prince Edward Island, is a frequent contributor to *The Island Magazine*. He is author of *Gothic Dreams*, a biography of Island architect William C. Harris.

**Elinor Vass** of Bunbury is on staff at the Confederation Centre Library, Charlottetown.