

Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association Rapport de l'assemblée annuelle de la Société historique du Canada

Report of the Annual Meeting

Preserving Canada's Historic Past

National Parks Bureau, Lands, Parks, and Forests Branch and Department of
Mines and Resources

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PRESERVING CANADA'S HISTORIC PAST

BY THE NATIONAL PARKS BUREAU, LANDS, PARKS, AND FORESTS BRANCH,
DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND RESOURCES

The restoration, preservation, marking, and administration of historic sites of national importance and the commemoration of the public services of outstanding persons connected with the early history of Canada have been entrusted to the National Parks Bureau. The Bureau is advised in this work by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, an honorary body comprised of a number of recognized historians representing the various parts of the Dominion.

The personnel of the Board is as follows: His Honour, F. W. Howay, LL.B., LL.D., F.R.S.C., F.R.Hist., New Westminster, B.C.; J. Clarence Webster, C.M.G., M.D., D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S.C., Shediac, N.B.; Professor Fred Landon, M.A., F.R.S.C., London, Ont.; Professor D. C. Harvey, M.A., F.R.S.C., Halifax, N.S.; The Hon. E. Fabre-Surveyer, B.A., LL.M., B.C.L., F.R.S.C., Montreal, P.Q.; The Rev. Antoine d'Eschambault, D.S.T., D.J.C., St. Boniface, Man.; J. A. Gregory, M.P., North Battleford, Sask.; and F. H. H. Williamson, Controller, National Parks Bureau, Ottawa.

Brigadier-General E. A. Cruikshank, LL.D., F.R.S.C., F.R.Hist., Chairman of the Board since its formation, died during the year. His wide historical knowledge made his services in that position of inestimable value.

Since the formation of the Board 21 years ago, 305 memorials have been erected on its recommendation, and a number of military and other structures acquired for preservation. Considerable development work has also been carried out at a number of the more important sites, in order to make them attractive and of interest to visitors. Six historical museums have been created, which house many relics of value. At the general meeting of the Board, which was held in Ottawa from May 29 to June 1 inclusive, a number of sites were reviewed and a selection made therefrom for attention at a later date. A total of 163 sites, which have been declared of national importance, now remain for marking, but due to war conditions, action respecting these may necessarily have to remain in abeyance for the time being.

During the year the following memorials were erected:

Fathers of Confederation, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Seven bronze plates were placed on the wall of the corridor leading to the Confederation Chamber in the Province Building, to the memory of George Coles, Colonel John Hamilton Gray, Thomas Heath Haviland, Andrew Archibald Macdonald, Edward Palmer, William Henry Pope, and Edward Whelan. These were unveiled by their immediate descendants on July 17, 1939, on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Charlottetown Conference.

Fathers of Confederation, Amherst, N.S.

Four bronze plates were affixed to the Post Office Building, in memory of Edward Barron Chandler, Robert Barry Dickey, Jonathan McCully, and Sir Charles Tupper, all of whom were born in Cumberland

County. These were unveiled by the Chief Justice of Nova Scotia, on September 16, 1939.

Naval Encounter at Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia

A cut-stone monument with bronze tablet was erected on the Community Field, adjacent to highway no. 6, to commemorate the events connected with the naval engagement that took place in Tatamagouche harbour on June 15, 1746, and which prevented the French and Micmac Indians *en route* from Annapolis Royal from reaching the Fortress of Louisbourg, before its fall. The monument was unveiled on August 30, 1939.

Sambro Island Lighthouse, Sambro, N.S.

A field-stone cairn with tablet was erected adjacent to the main highway which passes through the village, to commemorate the events leading up to and the construction of this lighthouse, which is famous in the annals of the sea. The original stone tower 82 feet high stands on a rocky island, and the light being 140 feet above sea level may be seen from a distance of 17 miles. The monument was unveiled on October 13, 1939.

First Minister of Health in British Empire, Fredericton, N.B.

A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected on Parliament Square, to commemorate the establishment in 1912 by the Legislature of New Brunswick of a Ministry of Health, of which the Hon. W. F. Roberts became the first Minister. The resulting benefits were so noticeable that the example was followed in other parts of Canada and the Empire. The monument was unveiled with appropriate ceremonies on September 24, 1939, by Chief Justice J. B. M. Baxter, Administrator of the provincial government.

James de Mille and George McCall Theal, Saint John, N.B.

Bronze plates to commemorate the achievements of these two outstanding personages, born in Saint John, were affixed to the wall of the main hall of the New Brunswick Museum building.

First Transcontinental Train, Montreal, P.Q.

A tablet was affixed to the Notre Dame Street frontage of the old Dalhousie Street station, to commemorate the departure from there on June 28, 1886, of the first regular transcontinental train. The inauguration of this service by the Canadian Pacific Railway linked East and West, and rendered Canada independent in transportation. The tablet was unveiled on November 3, 1939. Sir Edward Beatty delivered the main address of the day.

Ernest Rutherford, Montreal, P.Q.

A tablet was affixed to the exterior wall of the Macdonald Physics Building, McGill University, to commemorate the outstanding fundamental discoveries made by Lord Rutherford which greatly advanced the frontiers of knowledge and opened new paths for the progress of science and human welfare. The tablet was unveiled with appropriate ceremonies on October 6, 1939.

Madame Albani, Chambly, P.Q.

A bronze plate affixed to an iron pedestal was erected on the lot in front of the house at 186 Martel Street, in which Madame Albani, celebrated Canadian singer, was born. The memorial was unveiled on September 14, 1939, in the presence of her son, Mr E. F. Gye, C.M.G.

Louis Philippe Hébert, Ste. Sophie d'Halifax, P.Q.

A bronze plate affixed to an iron pedestal was erected on lot no. 1320, adjacent to the main highway, to mark the birthplace of Louis Philippe Hébert, artist and sculptor.

Sir James Lucas Yeo, Kingston, Ont.

A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected on the Royal Military College grounds, to commemorate the distinguished public services of Sir James Lucas Yeo, as Commander-in-Chief of the naval forces on the Great Lakes in the defence of Upper Canada during the War of 1812-14.

Cornwall Canal, near Cornwall, Ont.

A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected at lock 20, adjacent to highway no. 2, to commemorate the events connected with the construction of the Cornwall Canal from 1834 to 1842, so as to overcome the rapids of the Long Sault. This is one of the canals which, by way of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River, connect western Canada with the ocean.

First Lighthouse on the Great Lakes, near Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

A tablet was affixed to the outer wall of Fort Mississauga, which stands on the site of the first lighthouse on the Great Lakes, built in 1804. The lighthouse was demolished in 1814, to make room for the present fort. The tablet was unveiled under the auspices of the Niagara Historical Society on October 4, 1939.

Surrender of Indian Lands, Orillia, Ont.

A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected in Couchiching Beach Park, to commemorate the treaties made with the Indians in 1798, 1815, and 1818, whereby the ancient country of the Hurons lying north and west of Lake Simcoe was acquired for settlement purposes. The memorial was unveiled on October 13, 1939.

Fort Malden, Amherstburg, Ont.

A tablet was affixed to the stone gateway, at the main entrance to the grounds from Laird Avenue, to mark the site of the fort built in 1797-9 and strengthened in 1812 as the principal military station on the western frontier. It was evacuated on July 1, 1815, in conformity with the Treaty of Ghent. During the border raids of 1837-8 it again became an important military post.

Thomas Simpson, Winnipeg, Man.

A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected in St. John's Park, to commemorate the services of Thomas Simpson, who, with Peter Warren Dease, explored the Arctic coast of America from Sir John Franklin's Return Reef to Point Barrow, the mainland shore from Coronation Gulf

to Rae Strait, and the southern side of Victoria Land. He carried through this enterprise with great ability and determination.

Dawson Road, Ste. Anne, Man.

A cairn with tablet was erected on the southwest corner of lot 25, adjacent to the highway, to mark the land and water route from Fort William to Red River. This was Canada's first attempt to provide an all-Canadian highway linking the East with the prairies. It was surveyed in 1858, begun in 1868, and completed in 1871, and its total length was 530 miles.

Fort Chipewyan, Alta.

A cairn with tablet was erected adjacent to the old buildings of the Hudson's Bay Company, to mark the site of the fort built about 1804 for the North West Company and which was transferred to the Hudson's Bay Company on the union in 1821. It was the starting point of Sir Alexander Mackenzie's expeditions to the Arctic and Pacific Oceans and since its foundation has been an important post and the centre of the northern trade.

The Overland Expedition of 1862, Jasper, Alta.

A boulder with tablet was erected near the Canadian National Railways station, to commemorate the courage and daring of the parties of gold seekers, who, in 1862, left their homes in Upper and Lower Canada and journeyed overland by way of Fort Garry and Edmonton to Kamloops and Cariboo, pioneering an immigrant road to British Columbia. This was the only organized overland immigration from eastern to western Canada prior to the era of railways.

PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT WORK

Preservation and development work was carried out at the following sites:

Fortress of Louisbourg, near Louisburg, N.S.

Situated three miles south of Louisburg, Cape Breton Island, this fortress once proudly called the "Dunkirk of America" was built by the French during the years 1720-40. Being the key to the possessions of France in North America it was the scene of great struggles between the French and English. On its final capture by the latter in 1759, all buildings were levelled to the ground, with the exception of a few casemates, which still remain. In 1928 an area of 328 acres, comprising most of the original area, was acquired by the Dominion government, and systematic excavation and restoration of the ruins has since been carried out from year to year. A new fireproof museum has been built on the site, which houses many relics of rare interest. During the past year all excavation and masonry work proposed on the site of the Citadel building was completed, and a masonry retaining wall constructed against the south casemates; the west wing of the hospital building excavated to first floor level; the cairn at the entrance to the King's Bastion demolished; a tablet erected at the entrance to the Citadel; a new gateway constructed and iron gates hung; a new telephone line erected, wire strung and old poles removed; and all exterior walls of the museum building waterproofed.

Port Royal Habitation, Lower Granville, N.S.

Situated on the north shore of the Annapolis Basin, seven miles south-west of the town of Annapolis Royal. Site of the first fort or *habitation* built by the French under de Monts and Champlain in 1605. It was attacked and partially destroyed by a British force from Virginia, in 1613, restored and occupied by Scottish colonists in 1629, and laid waste on their retirement from the country in 1632. Many important first events in the history of Canada and North America took place there, including the institution of the first Social Club, "The Order of Good Cheer," and the production of the first written play "The Theatre of Neptune." An area of 17 acres, comprising most of the original site, has been acquired, and during the past year a replica of the *habitation* constructed as nearly as practicable to the original. This comprises a group of buildings arranged around a courtyard in the manner of sixteenth century farms in northern France, fortified at the two southerly corners by a cannon platform and a stockade or palisade.

Fort Monckton, near Port Elgin, N.B.

Site of French fort built in 1751, captured by the British in June, 1755, and demolished the following year. An area of two acres, on which the remains, consisting of a square of trenches and the old cemetery, are located, has been acquired. During the past year a new section of sea-wall was constructed, repairs made to the existing sea-wall, a new angle iron fence erected around the cemetery, and improvements made to the new gateway and the well.

Fort Chambly, Chambly, P.Q.

Situated about 20 miles south-east of Montreal, on the Richelieu River. The fort was built of wood in 1665 as a defence post against the Iroquois and rebuilt of stone in 1709-11 to resist the advance of the British forces. It was captured by United States troops in 1775, and the interior buildings were burned in 1776, restored in 1777, and abandoned in 1880. It has an area of two and a half acres and was acquired in 1921. Since then the massive stone walls have been repaired and the grounds within the fort and in the cemetery improved. A new museum building, erected in 1935, contains a number of relics and handicraft articles of rare value. During the past year the concrete retaining wall was extended from Pontchartrain Street to the north-westerly bastion of the fort, and a ramp constructed through a lowered wall section to give access to the beach; an angle iron fence erected in front of the cemetery along Fort Street, and the basement of the museum building waterproofed. Suitable road signs were also constructed and erected.

Fort Lennox, Ile-aux-Noix, P.Q.

Situated 13 miles south of St. Johns, in the Richelieu River, it formed a gateway to Canada and an advance post against the Iroquois and other invaders. The island was fortified by the French before 1759 and its defences were built by the British during the years 1812-27. These consist of a group of buildings on the south end of the island, surrounded by earthworks and a moat. The island, comprising an area of 150 acres, was acquired in 1921 and considerable work has since been carried out on the

buildings and grounds. During the past year the stone walls of the officers' quarters, powder magazine, men's barracks, and the two entrances were repointed, the roofs of five of the buildings painted, and repairs made to the bridges over the moat.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, St. Lin, P.Q.

The property on which the house stood in which Sir Wilfrid Laurier was born, together with the adjacent lot, has been purchased. During the past year the house was moved to the centre of the two lots and placed on a solid foundation of concrete faced with stone. The brickwork of the house was repointed and the woodwork, both inside and out, put in good condition and suitably painted. Shutters were provided for the door and window openings, and a fence erected at the rear and on two sides of the property. Suitable furnishings were purchased and placed in the house, and the grounds surrounding the building were levelled, seeded, and planted.

Fort Wellington, Prescott, Ont.

This fort, situated at the east end of the town, adjacent to highway no. 2, was constructed in 1812-13 as the main post for the defence of the communication between Kingston and Montreal. An area of eight and a half acres has been acquired, on which the blockhouse, officers' quarters, and guard house stand, surrounded by earthworks and a wooden palisade. During the past year a new one-way entrance road was constructed from highway no. 2 to the main entrance, and a parking area provided on the north-east corner of the property. A new entrance gateway, consisting of two rubble stone walls surmounted with granite copings, was also constructed. Alterations and improvements were made to one of the rooms on the second floor of the blockhouse, and the museum collection was transferred to this from the guard house.

Fort Malden, Amherstburg, Ont.

Built in 1797-9 by the Royal Canadian Volunteers. In 1812 it was the principal military station on the western frontier and was evacuated on July 1, 1815. Only slight evidence of the original fortification remains and an area of 4 acres, comprising a portion of these has been acquired. During the past year a fireproof museum building was constructed to house the several relics scattered throughout the district. A new stone gateway was erected at the main entrance from Laird Avenue, and a stone fence constructed across the front of the property. Improvements were also carried out on the grounds.