

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 National Historic Parks and Sites, and the commemoration of the public services of outstanding persons connected with the early history of Canada are undertaken by the National Parks Bureau. The Bureau is advised in this phase of its work by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, an honorary body composed 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. F. 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.

Due to war conditions, the annual meeting of the Board was not held this year. A number of monuments and tablets, however, were erected and of the sites considered by the Board to date, 321 have now been suitably marked. In addition, 149 other sites have been recommended by the Board for marking in the future.

During the year the following were created National Historic Parks by Order in Council:

Fort Anne, Annapolis Royal, N.S.
Port Royal Habitation, Lower Granville, N.S.
Fortress of Louisbourg, Louisbourg, N.S.
Fort Beauséjour, near Aulac, N.B.
Fort Chambly, Chambly, P.Q.
Fort Lennox, Ile-aux-Noix, P.Q.
Fort Wellington, Prescott, Ontario.
Fort Malden, Amherstburg, Ontario.
Fort Prince of Wales, Churchill, Manitoba.

WORK OF PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Preservation and development work was carried out as follows:

Fort Anne National Historic Park

This national historic park is situated in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia. Fort Anne today is the outgrowth of two French fortifications built on the same site with later additions made by the English. The museum building, restored in 1935, was originally the Officers' Quarters and was built in 1797-8 under the supervision of Edward, Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, when he was Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in North America with headquarters at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

During the past year 5,926 persons visited the museum and, in addition, it is estimated that 5,395 visited the grounds without entering the museum, making a combined total of 11,321 persons to visit the park. Travel groups from the United States, as well as teachers and pupils from Canadian schools, were among the visitors.

A number of interesting articles were added to the collection in the park museum, including a chair which formerly belonged to Thomas Chandler Haliburton, the author of "Sam Slick."

General maintenance work was carried out during the year, including the painting of the fence posts, chain fence, and fourteen cannon which are located on the park grounds.

Port Royal National Historic Park

At Lower Granville, N.S., on the exact site where the Port Royal Habitation stood nearly three and a half centuries ago, a replica of the group of buildings which sheltered the first European settlers in Canada has recently been erected. The original Habitation was the headquarters for about two years of Samuel de Champlain, famous explorer and chief geographer to Henry IV of France, who chose the location and drew up the plan of settlement.

The interest that is being taken in the reconstructed Habitation is shown by the fact that during the year, 6,662 visitors registered at the park. Careful consideration was given to the question of furnishings for the various rooms and as a beginning, the Artisans' Dormitory has been furnished. The grounds within the courtyard and outside the buildings were levelled and seeded; the flagstone walk from the gate to the office entrance was completed; the floor of the trading-room was retamped and re-earthed; and other general maintenance work carried out.

Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Park

This national historic park is situated about three miles south from the town of Louisbourg, Cape Breton Island, N.S., and here were enacted the early stages of the long struggle which culminated in the possession of Canada by the British Crown. Louisbourg was one of the most keenly disputed fortresses in North America. It was erected more than two centuries ago by the French, who had named the settlement in honour of Louis XIV, King of France. It was captured by the British forces in 1745, but subsequently handed back to the French. It was again besieged by the English and finally captured by them in 1758. It is interesting to recall that one of the brigades of infantry engaged in the recapture of Louisbourg was commanded by General Wolfe, who was later to die heroically at Quebec. Most of the original area of the fortress has now been acquired by the Dominion government. During the past few years careful excavation work has been carried out and a museum established at the site. From a visit to this museum and a tour of the grounds, the visitor can reconstruct in imagination a little of the historic past of Louisbourg.

During the past year all outside woodwork on the museum and caretaker's quarters was painted, together with the entrance gate and flagpole; repairs were carried out to the roads and fences; a new bridge was constructed over the moat at the Maurepas Gate; the pump-house

at the pond was shingled and painted; a new electric water pump was installed in the museum basement; and other miscellaneous work carried out. Visitors registered at the museum during the year numbered 7,905.

Fort Beauséjour National Historic Park

This national historic park is situated near Aulac, N.B. Built by the French, the fort was intended to be an Acadian stronghold against the undefined claims of the English to Acadia. Around the fort, Acadians had their homes and farms. It was captured by the British in 1755 and renamed Fort Cumberland. In recent years restoration work in connection with the ruins of the fort has been carried out and a new museum built at the site.

During the year all telephone poles were removed from the fort grounds and the wires placed underground; all sewer ditches were dug up and tile replaced; a survey was made of a small parcel of land containing the remains of the old entrenchments which it is proposed to add to the fort area; new lawns were seeded; the walks leading to the pavilion gravelled; the museum exhibits re-arranged; and other miscellaneous work carried out. A total of 7,488 persons signed the museum register during the year.

Fort Chambly National Historic Park

This national historic park lies about twenty miles south-east of Montreal, P.Q., on a conspicuous headland on the Richelieu River. The first fort, built by the French in 1665 as a protection from the terror of the Iroquois, was of wooden construction. After many vicissitudes, it was rebuilt of stone, this work being completed in 1711. In 1760 the fort was surrendered to the British who, with a small armed force, held it until 1775. In that year the Americans captured the fort; they evacuated it the following year, but burned everything that was combustible, leaving only the four walls standing. The fort was later repaired and garrisoned by Governor Carleton and played an important part in the War of 1812. Under the administration of the National Parks Bureau, steps have been taken to arrest the disintegration of the massive structure, and a new museum building has been erected within the walls of the fort. During the past year the reclaimed area adjacent to the new retaining wall was levelled and seeded; the walls of the museum room were painted and the exhibits re-arranged; steps were taken to prevent water from entering the basement of the museum; the roof of the caretaker's quarters was repaired; and other improvements undertaken. During the year, 9,345 visitors signed the museum register.

Fort Lennox National Historic Park

This national historic park is located on Ile-aux-Noix in the Richelieu River, about thirteen miles south of St. Johns, P.Q. The present fort, which stands on the site of one previously erected by the French, was rebuilt by the Imperial authorities in the period from 1812 to 1827 and stands majestically in memory of the defence of the Richelieu Gateway. The island, comprising an area of 150 acres, was acquired in 1921 and considerable work has been carried out on the buildings and grounds.

Fort Wellington National Historic Park

This national historic park is situated at the east end of the town of Prescott, Ontario, and adjacent to Highway No. 2. The fort remains as it was when finally completed in 1838, an impressive landmark. Named after the great Duke of Wellington, it was erected when the British authorities decided to fortify Prescott as one of the most vulnerable points of attack in the War of 1812, and as the main base for the defence of communications between Kingston and Montreal. The fort property, comprising eight and a half acres, was acquired in 1923. During the year the blockhouse and officers' quarters were painted; repairs made to the *caponnière*; the parking area and roadway improved; the septic tank system repaired; and other maintenance work carried out. A total of 8,842 visitors registered during the year.

Fort Malden National Historic Park

This national historic park is situated in Amherstburg, Ontario. The fort was built in 1797-9 by the Second Battalion Royal Canadian Volunteers. It was strengthened in 1812 as the principal military station on the western frontier and dismantled and abandoned in September, 1813. Only slight evidence of the original fortifications remains and an area of about four acres comprising a portion of these has been acquired. Of particular interest is the fireproof museum, constructed in 1939, which has been suitably furnished and already contains many interesting exhibits. During the past year a new steel flagpole was erected; arrangements were made with the Department of Public Works to place the requisite fill at the rear of the shore protection wall, facing the Detroit River, and other miscellaneous improvement work was carried out.

Fort Prince of Wales National Historic Park

This national historic park is situated at the mouth of the Churchill River, Churchill, Manitoba, and comprises an area of approximately fifty acres. The fort was built from plans drawn by English military engineers, to secure control of Hudson Bay for the Hudson's Bay Company and England. Construction was commenced in 1733 and completed in 1771. It was surrendered to, and partially destroyed by, a French naval force under La Pérouse in 1782. Its ruins, which are among the most interesting military remains on this continent, have been partly restored and over forty old cannon have been unearthed and suitably mounted on the walls of the fort.

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES

During the year the following historic sites were marked:

Pioneer Fox Farming, Alberton, P.E.I.

A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected adjacent to the Alberton-Elmsdale Highway, to commemorate the work of Robert T. Oulton and Charles Dalton, pioneers in breeding and raising silver black foxes in captivity, and of James Gordon and Robert Tuplin, who later assisted in developing the industry.

Samuel George William Archibald, Truro, N.S.

A bronze plate was affixed to the Court House Building, in memory of Samuel George William Archibald, Member of the Nova Scotia Assembly, 1806-41; Speaker, 1825-40; Solicitor-General, 1825-31; Attorney-General, 1831-41; Chief Justice of Prince Edward Island, 1824-8; Master of the Rolls and Judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty, 1841-6. He was born at Truro on February 5, 1777, and died in Halifax on January 28, 1846.

Sir Adams George Archibald, Truro, N.S.

A bronze plate was affixed to the Court House Building, in memory of Sir Adams George Archibald, K.C.M.G., a Father of Confederation; Secretary of State for the province, 1867-8; Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, 1870-2, and of Nova Scotia, 1873-83. He was born at Truro on May 18, 1814, and died at Truro on December 14, 1892.

William Alexander Henry, Halifax, N.S.

A bronze plate was affixed to the Law Courts Building, in memory of William Alexander Henry, a Father of Confederation, lawyer, legislator, and statesman, and Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, 1875-88. He was born in Halifax on December 30, 1816, and died in Ottawa on May 3, 1888.

William Henry Chase, Halifax, N.S.

A bronze plate was affixed to the Public Archives Building, to the memory of William Henry Chase, who gave this building to his native province. He was born at Cornwallis on July 16, 1852, and died at Wolfville on November 22, 1933.

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

A monument in the form of a boulder with a bronze tablet was erected adjacent to the house in which Sir Wilfrid Laurier was born on November 20, 1841. He was Prime Minister of Canada, 1896-1911, and died in Ottawa on February 17, 1919.

Sir John Joseph Caldwell Abbott, St. Andrews East, P.Q.

A bronze plate was affixed to the Post Office Building, to the memory of Sir John Joseph Caldwell Abbott, K.C.M.G., the first Canadian-born Prime Minister of Canada, 1891-2. He was born at St. Andrews on March 12, 1821, and died in Montreal on October 30, 1893. The plate was unveiled under the auspices of the Historical Society of Argenteuil County on September 7, 1940.

Battle of Stoney Creek, near Hamilton, Ontario

A tablet was affixed to the Battle of Stoney Creek monument, in honour of those who fell in the engagement which took place on June 6, 1813. The tablet was unveiled on October 11, 1940, under the auspices of the Women's Wentworth Historical Society.

Blockhouse, Merrickville, Ontario

A bronze plate was attached to the old stone blockhouse, marking it as a fine example of the best type of the blockhouses erected for the

defence of the Rideau Canal. It was built about 1832. The tablet was unveiled with suitable ceremonies on June 12, 1940.

Murney Tower, Kingston, Ontario

A bronze plate was affixed to the Murney Tower in Macdonald Park, which was built in 1846, by the Imperial government for the defence of Kingston harbour and the lake terminal of the Rideau Canal.

Douglas Brymner, Ottawa, Ontario

A tablet was erected in the main entrance of the Public Archives Building, to commemorate the public services of Douglas Brymner, LL.D., F.R.S.C., first Dominion Archivist, whose historical acumen and unflagging industry over a period of thirty years contributed in such large measure to the establishment of the Public Archives of Canada.

Battle of Queenston Heights, Queenston, Ontario

A tablet was affixed to the General Brock monument in honour of those who fell with General Brock in the engagement which took place on October 13, 1812. The tablet was unveiled on October 12, 1940, under the auspices of the Niagara Historical Society.

Rocky Mountain House, Alberta

An area comprising the site of this North West Company Post was acquired and a bronze plate affixed to the remains of one of the original chimneys, which are being preserved as rare examples of the primitive chimneys built by the fur-traders in their posts long before that region had a settled population.

Sir Richard McBride, New Westminster, B.C.

A bronze plate was erected in the Sir Richard McBride Public School, in memory of Sir Richard McBride, K.C.M.G., Premier of British Columbia, 1903-15, and Agent-General of British Columbia, 1915-17. He was born in New Westminster, December 15, 1870, and died in London, England, August 8, 1917.