

A RAMBLE ON THE GROUNDS OF OLD PORT ROYAL

The long summer day was far advanced, the sun clothed in robes of amber and scarlet and gold, lay low in the western heavens. Long shafts of light fell across the purple hills, gleamed through the branches of the trees and kissed the shining leaves—as I went down the principal street of the old town. (Once Port Royal). My intention to spend a quiet hour in rambling about the grounds of old Fort Anne and among the ancient tombs that crowd the silent city closely adjoining.

The view as one enters the town is one of great beauty—a picture of sea and land and sky, fair and beautiful, as when that old time voyager, DeMonts sailed delightfully into the quiet harbor.

The "Soldiers of the Queen" no longer tread the streets—the guns of the fort are silent—but no force of time or change can mar or destroy the picture painted by Nature's Master hand.

At the foot of the town lie the blue waters of the Basin that flow outward between tall cliffs that rise on either side, like great battlements grim—frowning—immovable—till they mingle with the swift rushing waters of the turbulent Fundy—restless—chainless—unbound yet held by the Eternal decree—"Thus far shalt thou go". Like a guard of honor majestic trees painted by hands long since crumbled to dust line the streets, or stand in groups, with here and there one in solitary grandeur lifting its towering head to face the sky—mute reminders of a long forgotten past—perhaps here and there one under which long ago the Knights of the Templars smoked their lobster claw pipes, as they listened to the tales of the old Indian warrior Memberton whose head was white with the snows of his hundred years. Gay careless knights they were, spending time in game and jest and song—whispering careless words or doing gallant service in my "Lady's bower"—yet doughty knights withal, ready to fight valiantly for king and country and bravely lay down their lives with never a back to the foe.

From the old town have gone brave men whose names are written on the pages of the nation's story—men who have stood in the foremost ranks in the time of the country's need.

Long ago its streets echo to the tread of the royal duke—father of the great queen whose name will be ever fragrant in the hearts of the people in all our Great Empire.

The sun brightened and dipped his trailing robes in the depth of the shining waters, as I passed through the gate that leads to the grounds of the Fort—I tread softly with the feeling with which one enters the presence of the dead. The shadows of a dead past rose up and gathered around me. Far voices seemed to whisper among the trees.

The grounds of the fort originally extended over an area of twenty acres and breastwork for attack and defence still stand time unimpaired as in the days when the gallant French soldiers guarded the Fleur de lys that floated bravely above the Fort.

It is to be remembered that this interesting relic so closely associated with the country's history should have so long suffered from neglect, causing the destruction of some of its ancient landmarks.—At last Government and people have awakened to its value as an interesting memorial of a bye-gone age, and already much has been accomplished to adorn and beautify the grounds, and as far as the ranges of time will permit, to restore it to ancient distinction. Again the old-time guns, mounted and ready, wide mouthed, iron throated—frown menacingly across the harbour guarding the bay.

Outlined against the western sky and overlooking the town facing seaward, stands the rugged figure of the old explorer DeMonts an outstretched arm pointing significantly to the shining water of the Basin, into

which he sailed more than three hundred years ago, after his long tempestuous voyage in search of unknown lands and strange adventures.

I pushed aside the half closed ponderous iron doors of the old Magazine to peer within—half fearful lest from its shadowy corners some grim foe should suddenly emerge to dispute my right to disturb its ancient silence.

High on the massive stones of the wall are carved unknown names—names of long forgotten actors in life's ceaseless drama.

Built of stones brought from France in the days when the banner of Louis floated over the Fort, it still stands massive, solid, impregnable, defying the ravages of time as it did the shot and shell of the foe when for the last time the French soldiers led by the gallant DeMonts marched through the gate and the flag of England was raised in final victory, above the Fort.

I went down the heavy stone steps leading to the dungeon, where are hidden away secret tales of cruelty and crime, of the days when the iron hand of power fell pitilessly upon the head of the helpless offender.

Over the narrow entrance, clear and distinct as in the days when the builder carved it in the solid stone, stands the date of its three centuries of old time, menace and crime.

I touched with reluctant hand the solid slimy walls and peered with a shudder into its dark recesses. What if some unseen hand should suddenly close that narrow heavy door and leave me alone in that midnight darkness, with the ghosts of the unavenged dead crowding about me? No cry for deliverance or help could pierce those thick solid walls—no gleam of rising or setting sun could send one faint ray of light through the horrors of that awful darkness. I fled upward, rejoicing in the sun's broad light and the glad consciousness of freedom.

Not far removed, but sheltered by the heavy breastworks thrown up for protection and defence stands the long, low building—the quarters of the forces sent to command and defend the Fort.

I wandered through the quaint low rooms—looked into the deep cavernous hearthstones with narrow shelf above them—convenient for pipe and bowl—up those wide chimneys once great fires roared and sparkled—mounted the steep narrow stairway that once echoed to the clang and clatter of armed men hastening to the fray—and looked through the narrow slit like windows from which brave women watched and waited for the shout of victory or the bitter cry of defeat—now only a great silence—no voice or sound, save the evening breeze coming up from the sea, moaning dirge like through the trees.

In one of the rooms may be seen an interesting collection of relics and curios of the people and history of "Ye olden Tyme" in charge of a trusty keeper.

Closely adjoining the grounds of the Fort is the ancient "God's Acre" the crowded silent city where sleep forgotten generations.

There beneath a marble slab brought from far across the sea, rests, after his life's toilsome journey the servant of a greater than an earthly king who first brought the message of peace to the scattered people.

Through pathless forests—across ice bound rivers—over trackless mountains, in summers' heat and winters' cold he went everywhere preaching the Word. Now priest and people sleep together—Dust to dust, ashes to ashes.

There too, lies one whose dark love lit eyes won the heart of a gallant soldier, who led his regiment against the foe in a far distant land. A soldier's wife, her high heart failed her not in danger's hour. She saw him laid away in his far off lonely grave, then turned back widowed and alone, to die in her childhoods home within the shadow of the ancient Fort.

Old stones—moss grown—time obliterated lying here and there tell their silent story of long forgotten actors in the drama of life.

The play is ended—the curtain drawn down—the lights forever extinguished.

And now "the day is done" the sun spreading wide his train of rose and gold across the purple hills has gone down behind the western heavens. I stand again upon the ramparts and gaze across the harbor towards the Bay. A ship rests at anchor on its bosom, its tall masts reflected in the clear waters. Along the shore two people wander side by side—the man bends his head, his eyes seeking those of the maiden by his side—the old story—told in Eden when the world was young and Adam walked with Eve alone in the garden.

The stars find their appointed place—the young moon sets herself a "bow

of silver" in the sky. In the town beyond the gate the evening lights flash out to illuminate the darkness. Again the phantoms of a dead past lurk among the shadows—long rows of armed men stand behind the heavy breastworks but the guns of the fort are silent, no sound of command starts into life the silent waiting hosts—only the whispering of the winds from off the sea, among the trees—only the shout of the sailors from the ship that rides at anchor in the harbor—only these memories of a quiet ramble among the ruins of the ancient Fort at old Port Royal.

In June, 1904, a Tercentenary celebration was held in Annapolis (old Port Royal) in which the Governments of Great Britain, France and the United States took part, each Government sending a battleship in honor of the occasion.

The success of this laudable and happy event was largely due to the energy and public spirit of Hon. Judge Longley.

At that celebration it was resolved to erect the statue of the discoverer DeMonts which now adorns the grounds of the Fort.

SARAH J. H. HEALY

RUNWAY ELECTRIC DASHED INTO CROWDED PASSENGER CAR.

Vancouver, Nov. 10.—A terrible accident, by which fifteen persons lost their lives and several were injured, occurred on the Interurban Tram line to New Westminster this morning. The first passenger car from Vancouver had just been twenty minutes on its way when a freight car which had broken away from an electric tram head of it, came rushing down the hill with the motor man aboard. He jumped, but the majority of the passengers had not time to save themselves before the crash came.

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