

FORT CUMBERLAND.

BY JAMES HANNAY.

Fort Cumberland is the name which was given by the English to the French Fort of Beauséjour when they captured it in 1755, and I select the former name as the title of this article because, while Beauséjour only existed for about five years, Fort Cumberland has been known by that designation for about a century and a half. Beauséjour had its origin in the claim of France that when Acadia was ceded to Great Britain in 1713, under the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, the words, "Nova Scotia or Acadia comprehended within its ancient boundaries," only referred to the peninsula of Nova Scotia, and that the part of ancient Acadia now known as New Brunswick still belonged to France. The same claim had been made on behalf of the English in 1667 when Acadia was restored to France by the Treaty of Breda, but it was not allowed. The French had always maintained that the River Kennebec was the western boundary of Acadia, and this claim was put forward by Governor Villebon of Acadia as late as the year 1698 in a letter written to Lieutenant Governor Stoughton of Massachusetts. Thus, according to the French view of the matter, the size of Acadia depended on its ownership. When they held the title to it Acadia extended to the Kennebec, but when it passed into the possession of the English it shrunk so much that it only consisted of the territory comprised in the modern province of Nova Scotia, and its boundary was the Misseguash.

Any one who looks at a map of the Maritime provinces will see in a moment that the isthmus which connects the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia is a position of great strategic importance, even at the present day, and that before the invention of railways and steamboats it was still more commanding than it is now. For nearly eighty years it had been the site of a prosperous settlement, which had become populous and wealthy and sent out many of its young men to establish other settlements in its vicinity. But in 1749 a change came. The French government at Quebec resolved to erect a barrier on the isthmus to resist the advances of the English; and in the autumn of that year M. la Corne, a French officer, arrived at Chignecto with seventy regular soldiers and a number of Canadian irregulars and