

pox epidemic of 1908 were quarantined in the fort's casemates, or of German prisoners of war interned there during two World Wars.

Gradual improvement of relations with the United States, combined with military developments of the late 19th century, slowly decreased the importance of Kingston's defences. At the time of the North-West Rebellion in 1885, Fort Henry was considered to be of little value and was soon afterwards abandoned. The Fort grew old and fell into decay. The elements worked their will unchecked and by 1936 it was little more than a great mass of crumbling limestone with grass and weeds growing out of the chinks between the carefully hand-cut stones. In the Summer of that year restoration work was begun under a joint scheme sponsored by the Ontario and Federal governments. The objective was the rehabilitation of the ruined structure to its condition of 100 years before, when it was the citadel of Upper Canada. Careful research and painstaking workmanship were combined to produce results which historians concede to be as accurate as any similar achievement in North America.

Restored Fort Henry was officially opened to the public on Aug. 1, 1938, the ceremony coinciding with the 100th anniversary of Kingston's incorporation as a municipality. Distinguished representatives of the federal and provincial cabinets, of the Church and of the Canadian Army took part in the proceedings. The Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King declared it officially open "for the use and enjoyment of the people of Canada and their visitors—an historic museum commemorating for ever the past of our country."

Today, Fort Henry is operated by the Ontario Highways Department. Each Summer throngs of tourists visiting the Fort are conducted on tours by guides carefully trained and uniformed as Imperial Troops of a century ago. They are known as the "Fort Henry Guard"

and their presence helps the visitor capture the atmosphere. One cannot help but be impressed by their courteous manner, neat and clean appearance, knowledge of the history of the Fort and the forthright manner in which they impart it to the visitor. The personnel of the Guard are mostly university students from all over Canada who find this an exciting way to earn funds for their education. The Guard put on exhibitions of foot and arms drill, fire salutes with the Fort's century-old muzzle-loading cannon, employing the drill and equipment laid down in the text books of the period. The Fort Henry Guard Band provides excellent marching music and entertainment for visitors. David, a white goat and the official mascot of the Fort Henry Guard, presented by the St. David's Society of Toronto to commemorate the service of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers in garrison at Fort Henry 1842-43, is paraded and adds color to the ceremonial.

On June 28, 1959, the Fort was honored by the visit of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip. They inspected the Guard and were treated to a display of foot and arms drill, salutes fired from the cannons, the Band performed and David paid his respects to the Royal Party.

Since the official opening, the Fort has become one of the most effective tourist attractions in Eastern Ontario. However, the true significance of the Fort's restoration is that it represents a practical contribution to the teaching of Canadian history. Restored Fort Henry will long stand as a vivid reminder of those long years of tutelage when Britain, not without parental grumbling it is true, freely gave the lives and services of her sons and spent lavishly of her treasure, in order that this youthful nation might grow up unhampered and be free.

(This article was condensed from material prepared by the present administrator of Fort Henry, Mr. Ronald L. Way.) ● ● ●