

over a drawbridge, which crossed a small dry moat, and when drawn up fitted into and closed the doorway. The doors were of oak, studded thickly with iron bolts, and when these were opened the visitor found himself inside a bomb-proof vaulted passage leading into a square court-yard, all round which were barrack-rooms, gun sheds, stables, and prison cells. Into the three former our pass admitted us, under the guidance of a soldier who took us in charge at the gate, but no one was suffered to explore the vaults used for places of confinement. However, there was plenty to be seen without them. Even in the rooms where the troops were quartered the guns were mounted ready for use, and the thick walls of primitive masonry were pierced at regular intervals with perpendicular narrow openings through which the defenders might discharge their muskets in case of need, and, walking through the bare and scantily furnished rooms, it needed no great exertion of the imagination to fancy that an immediate attack was imminent, although the most complete peace and quietness prevailed throughout the land.

Passing through a dark vaulted passage rather than room, intended, as the soldier told us to put women and children into when the place was besieged, we ascended a narrow stairway to the north-east angle of the building, where the flag-staff was. Here we looked over into the turbid water at the foot of the rapids of the Richelieu, which flow close to the foundation, and were glad to get safely away from the rather giddy height.

A year or two afterwards neither a soldier nor a gun remained. Windows and openings of all kinds were closed, some with shutters and others with strong planking nailed over them. Admittance was as sternly refused as ever, for the magazines still contained a good deal of ammunition, and there was then no intention of allowing the old place to go to decay. But as time went on, and the vigilance of the one non-commissioned officer left in charge became less zealous, more than one active boy scaled the old walls and startled the bats, who were now the only occupants of the fast mouldering building. Finally, when the Ordnance property passed into the hands of the Provincial Government, even the semblance of caretaking passed away, and gradually but surely ruin marked the place for its own.

A few days since I stood once more in the old court-yard. Of the wooden part of the building hardly a vestige remained. Landward the walls still held their own, for the old French masonry was well put together. Out towards the river the ruin was complete. Bastion, curtain, magazine and vault, all lay in one confused heap of stone, and, exposed by the fall of the flag-staff bastion, were the vaulted prison cells so jealously guarded in bygone days. But there was one thing in the neighbourhood still unchanged. An old oaken headstone in the old military burying-ground still stood guarding the soldier's grave as I had seen it thirty years before.