

tants as any which has since occurred. A gentleman who had obtained a lot in the neighborhood of the spot where the Centenary Church now stands, had cut the trees and piled the brush into heaps for burning. The summer had been one of great drought. Everything of a vegetable nature was as dry and as ignitable as tinder. The brush heaps only awaited the spark to burst into flame. The morning was calm with the slightest breath of air from the south. The owner, thoughtless of any dangerous consequences to himself or neighbours, started the fire. The result was one of those disasters, such as have too frequently brought ruin and desolation to many of the fairest and more thriving parts of Canada. About noon the wind suddenly arose to a gale. The flames spread with fearful rapidity. Men quickly gathered from all directions, with axe, pick, shovel or whatever implement was at hand, to make an attempt to stay the progress of the flames. But the attempt was hopeless. By two o'clock in the afternoon the fire had spread eastward to Courtenay Bay and north to what is now known as Jeffrey's Hill. Soon it leaped across the intervening valley and thence onward until the flames had lapped the water of the Kennebecasis River destroying in their path, several miles in width, almost everything that would burn with the exception of one house. This was not saved by water, but by digging trenches around it.

Shortly after this disaster which retarded the progress of the now prosperous city of St. John, a large number of the Loyalists who had drawn lots in the city and on which they had built the log houses which were destroyed, moved to the country and occupied lands which were soon converted into flourishing farms.