

A Hundred Years of Steam Navigation on the St. Lawrence.

BY J. MILLER McCONNELL.

Of the several centenary celebrations of the present year, that of most interest to Canadians is the one hundredth anniversary of the introduction of travel by steamboat. The birth of such famous men as Lincoln, Darwin, Gladstone, Tennyson, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Fitzgerald, Poe and Holmes made the year 1809 of intense interest to the present generation. The centenaries of several of these have already been fittingly observed, while those of others are yet to take place.

It is consequently fitting that a centenary of such importance to the Dominion of Canada should receive that attention which its importance merits and preparations are already under way at the instance of public bodies which will guarantee giving the event that historical place which is its due.

In that celebration the name of Hon. John Molson, one of Canada's cap-

tain. Most of the great events connected with the development of Canada, were in some way associated with the St. Lawrence and much of the early development took place along its banks.

The steamboat Accommodation, which ushered in such an epoch-marking period in the history of Canada, was 75 feet long on the keel and 55 feet on deck. She had berths for twenty passengers which it was promised would be considerably augmented the following year. She received her impulse from an open, double-spoked, perpendicular wheel on each side without any circular band or rim. To the end of each double-spoke was fixed a square board which entered the water, and by the rotary motion of the wheels, acted like a paddle. The wheels were kept in motion by means of steam op-

erating within the vessel. A mast was afterwards fixed in her for the purpose of using a sail when the wind was favorable for the purpose of accelerating her headway. Such is a novel but brief description of the first St. Lawrence steamboat.

Contrast that with the measurements and accommodation of the present palatial boats which, slightly carry hundreds of passengers for Montreal and Quebec and vice versa. For this purpose it will be most interesting to take the latest addition to the fleet of the Richelieu & Ontario Navigation Company plying on that small section of its famous route. This is the steamer Montreal, which has the distinction of being the largest steamer in existence of Canadian register. She is 340 feet long, her hull is 44 feet wide, while the width over her guards is 75 feet 6 inches. Her engines are triple expansion, 3,000 horse-power, and she has side wheels fitted with feathering cur-

ved so greatly improved that the steamboats came into more general favor. Montreal and Quebec, the piers and the docks were covered with canvas awnings, and they secured practically all the through passenger traffic.

A few years afterwards attention was devoted to the building of powerful tug boats so that sailing vessels could be towed up the river against the current. About 1823 such boats as the Waterloo and the John Molson of the Molson Line, the St. George, the British America and the Canada, owned by John Torrance & Co., and other boats of improved capacity came into service.

It is interesting to note in this connection that Mr. H. Markland Molson, a great-grand-son of the builder of the first steamboat, is today a director of the Richelieu and Ontario company, as well as of the Molson Bank, which his grand uncle organized in 1853. He kindly furnished the following interesting historical notes culled from the archives of the Molson family, so long prominently identified with the history of Montreal:

"One of the first steamers that plied between Quebec City and Montreal, was known as the Car of Commerce, and ran in opposition to the Molson fleet which consisted of two steamers, one which was the Swiftsure. By adding a third steamer to his enterprise, Mr. Molson secured the control of the Car of Commerce, and he gave up his opposition and dismantled the steamer.

"This steamer, as well as those of Mr. Molson, would generally occupy three days and nights, having favorable weather, between Quebec and Montreal, but not one of them could ascend the current (St. Mary's Current, opposite Montreal), by their own motive power, father up than where the present sugar works are carried on at Hochelaga. Mr. Molson was equal to the occasion and imported from England a double engine, made by the celebrated firm of Boulton and Watt, and built the Swiftsure at his shipyard, then situated on the bank of the river, near the present Molson's brewery, but she did not come up to the expected requirements in mastering the current on all occasions, and much depended on the wind.

"Some years ago an old stable might be noticed where the present Molson terrace stands. This stable contained stalls for keeping two or three pairs of oxen. If the wind was blowing down the river, and the steamer could be recognized below Longue Pointe, the oxen were yoked up and driven to the river side, waiting to assist. In addition to the oxen there was one horse as leader.

"The steamer would puff and snort until she had passed by the present Molson terrace, and when the anchor would be dropped and a boat would make for the shore taking with it two tow lines. One was attached to the oxen whiplettes and the other carried up the embankment and fastened to a stationary windlass. Steam was then turned on and the anchor lifted. Should the steamer be very deeply loaded, the progress up the current was difficult and the boat would be driven to a short proximity, the hands would be to man called into requisition at times, to haul on the ropes in the rear of the oxen, and the combined power dragged the steamer upward a few yards when the men at the capstan would twist the slack around it. At times it occupied hours of such work before the landing place was reached.

"This system prevailed up to the year 1832, at that time wharves did not exist; the boats drew up to the shore as close as possible and made fast to piles temporarily driven in the bank of the river.

"The records of accidents to steamboats in the St. Lawrence are those of the Waterloo and John Bull. The former foundered in Lake St. Peter and was replaced by the John Bull, a fine boat 190 feet long, which was burned in 1838. It was related of the latter boat that she earned more money while at anchor than while in operation. This arose out of the fact that she burned so much coal that she was unprofitable but while at anchor was often used as the official residence of His Excellency the Governor-General, Lord Durham.

Traffic on the river continued to grow and faster and larger boats were being constructed. In 1843, the Commodore, a trade which was also growing rapidly. Some of the new boats were successful while others proved rash experiments. The Canada which came out in 1837, was the largest and fastest steamer then afloat in the world. About 1846 several famous boats were built, one of the most notable being the John Munn. She was 400 feet in length and her boiler was 30 feet long and 40 inches in diameter, with a large walking beam in the centre. Unfortunately she proved too large for the trade and was eventually broken up and her engines shipped to New York.

The third steamboat accident of which there is a record, was that of the Montreal, which was lost in a snow storm near Batavian in November, 1853.

"First Iron Steamers.

"The first iron steamers came into use on the St. Lawrence about 1843, the pioneers of that class being the Prince Albert and Iron Duke, which were used as ferry boats between Montreal on the one side, and St. Lambert and La Prairie on the south shore. This was long before the Victoria Bridge was built and passengers from the south by the Champlain and St. Lawrence railway were landed on the south side and were conveyed across the river by small ferries. These boats were built in Scotland and brought out in sections, being put together in Montreal.

The year 1845 saw the advent of the Richelieu Steamboat company, which was destined to give the Montreal and St. Lawrence navigation in after years, much larger than the originators of the service ever dreamed. From the modest beginning of running some market boats to Soré to enable farmers to market their produce in Montreal, the company has by steady growth and amalgamation with other companies, developed into one with assets exceeding \$3,000,000 to its credit and operating steamers of all sizes, throughout the lower St. Lawrence, the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The company did not accomplish all that in a short time or without participating in a great deal of struggle, and she learned from his plannings that in the river traffic, were among the most memorable, and exciting of the history of St. Lawrence steamboat navigation.

It was in 1856 that the Richelieu company put steamers on the line between Montreal and Quebec, the piers being two small boats called the Napoleon and Victoria. With the Molson and Torrance boats this made three lines on the same route, and a little later on the Torrance put on two boats forming the fourth line.

Naturally there was keen competition which in due course developed into a great rate war when passengers were carried for nothing or next door to it. It is related that the steamer passage was down to 12½ cents, while the first cabin fare was reduced to \$1.00 which included berths and meals.

There was a good deal of racing done by the boats of the different lines to get the credit of landing passengers ahead of the others, and there was much excitement among all those concerned in the business. How long the furious competition could have lasted it would be difficult to tell had it not been for the steamer Montreal disaster in June, 1857.

End Of Ruinous Competition.

This event brought the competing lines to their sober senses. The bulk of the passenger business fell to the Richelieu company which continued to do a lucrative business, and in those days the shareholders got as high as 15 to 20 per cent dividends.

The company's development of importance was the amalgamation of the Richelieu company with the Canadian Steam Navigation company (the old Upper Canada line) under the present name of the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation company, which is now admitted to be one of the largest enterprises of the kind in America, if not in the world. The paid up capital has increased in the past ten years from \$1,350,000 to \$3,125,000 at the present time. The steamers, real estate, buildings, docks, wharves, etc., are valued alone at \$4,114,601.

In order to encourage a wealthy class of tourist traffic, the company have built splendid Summer hotels at Murray Bay and Tadoussac, where the most exquisite tastes may be satisfied.

The gross earnings of the company now run between \$1,300,000 and \$1,500,000 service for many years past, that the company has been left in practically undisturbed possession of the field, which it is safe to assume would be the case if there was any dissatisfaction with the manner in which the company catered to the requirements of the general public.

The fine steamers operated have made world-famous the trip through the Thousand Islands, the running of the St. Lawrence Rapids, and the scenic trip of the Lower St. Lawrence, commencing with the run up the Saguenay river.

The immense improvement in the lighting and buoying of the St. Lawrence in recent years has made the trips of the river steamers virtually devoid of danger and accidents of more than a trifling nature are practically unknown now. Gas buoys keep up their flashes all night long, and would be alone sufficient to guide an almost unpracticed steersman, but shore lights also give helping hand so that ocean going steamers are now constantly running throughout the night, whereas a few years ago they anchored at dusk and remained so until daylight. No doubt the fame of the wonderful river St. Lawrence will continue to spread, and tourists from all parts of the world will enjoy its beauties.

WILL NOT BUY RIVAL STEAMERS

CAPTAIN TROUP DENIES INTENTION OF DOING SO

Negotiations Pending for Settlement of Rate War on Seattle Route.

Captain Troup, superintendent of the C. P. R. coast steamships, returned on Friday on the Princess Victoria after paying a visit to St. Paul on business connected with the company. He denied absolutely that there was any intention on the part of the C.P.R. to purchase the International Company's steamers Chippewa and Iroquois. He said that there had been no negotiations looking to that end.

There were negotiations going on, however, with the purpose of restoring the rates which were formerly in force on the Seattle-Victoria run. These had already been partially restored and the matter was still being discussed with a view of ending the rate war.

The Captain has been in St. Paul partly for the purpose of taking up this matter with officials of the company and partly on other business. It is understood that the International Company's representative was present, although Captain Troup would not say so.

The Captain wished it distinctly understood that nothing was yet settled. The fight between the two companies was over the matter of schedule and this was still under discussion.

BOY DISAPPEARS.

Efforts to Find San Francisco Lad Prove Unsuccessful.

San Francisco, Cal., May 8.—The disappearance of 9-year-old Johnny Keefe from his home at 201 Maple street last Wednesday afternoon is enshrouded in mystery. No trace of the little fellow has been found by searchers who have been scouring the city since late Wednesday night, and it is feared some evil has befallen him.

Stories of kidnaping have been so frequent recently that the child's parents are frantic and the police were called upon to-day to assist in the search. The boy last home about 10 o'clock on Wednesday. His mother supposed that he was playing with the boys in the neighborhood, but grew alarmed when he did not return at six o'clock. When in search of the boy, she learned from his playmates that he had started for home some time before. The boy's mother is on the verge of nervous prostration.



A Spring Beauty

HERE'S ONE OF OUR favorite new models in Spring Suits. There's genuine style in its every stitch.

Just note the full chested effect of the coat—the snug, close-fitting collar, with slightly rolled, liberal lapels—the natty clean cut hang of the trousers.

It's a very popular Spring style and the correct thing.

The new shades for Spring are Greys, Olive mixtures and Browns, in a variety of patterns. These suits were drafted, cut and tailored by the best talent money could secure, but still they are moderately priced.

\$16.50, \$25 TO \$35

Remember that it's always safe to buy here for our permanent guarantee, that goes without the saying, is "Money back if you want it."

ALLEN & CO.

Fit-Reform

1201 GOVERNMENT ST. VICTORIA, B. C.

BRIEF LOCALS.

—Building permits were issued on Thursday to S. G. Featherstone for a three-roomed house on Seaview street to cost \$350; to J. Wells for a three-roomed house on Hillside avenue to cost \$250 and to A. F. Preston for a four-roomed house on Maple street to cost \$1,600.

—A local syndicate have purchased that piece of land on Yates street between the Merchants Bank and the Sylvester Feed company and on which they will erect a brick building at once. The price paid is in the neighborhood of \$20,000. P. R. Brown Ltd., negotiated the sale.

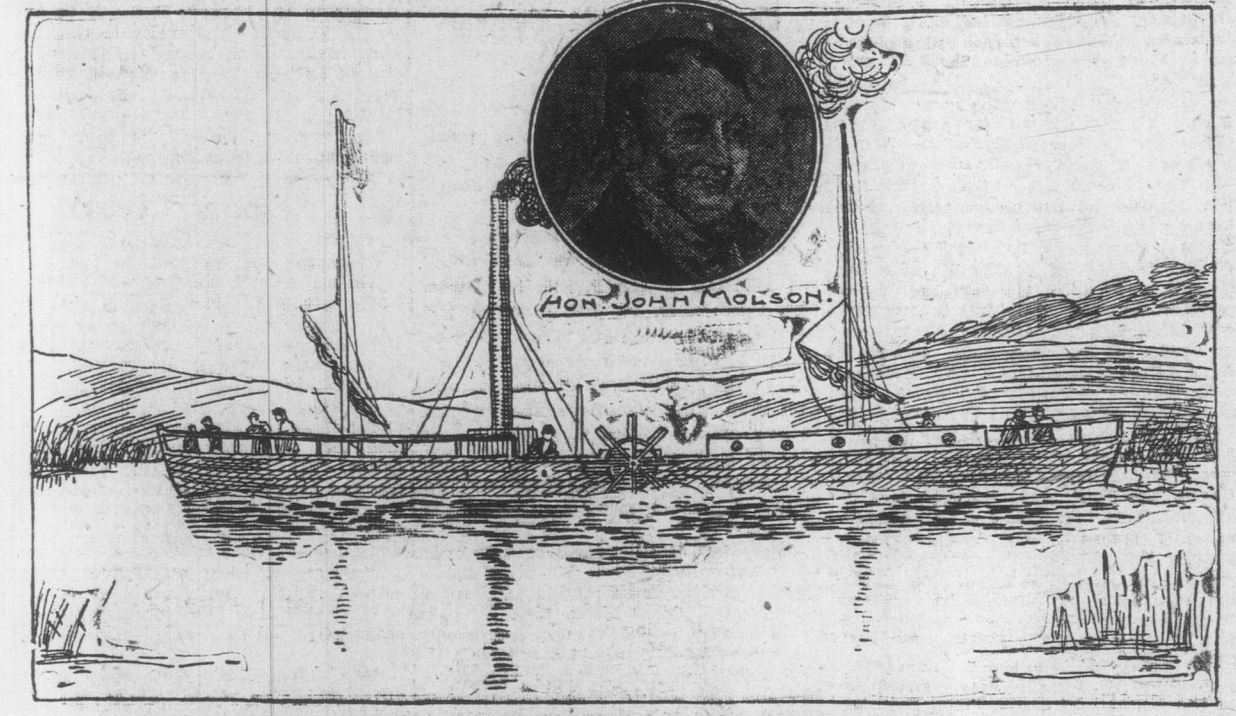
—The death occurred on Friday at the St. Joseph's hospital of Isabella Fraser Knight, beloved wife of Oliver James Knight. Deceased was a native of Cromarty, Scotland, and was 25 years of age. She has been a resident of this city for the past ten years and was beloved by all who knew her. She leaves to mourn her loss a husband and a young son, a mother, who lives in Cromarty, two sisters and one brother in San Francisco and one sister and one brother in Vancouver.

THE ILLS OF CHILDHOOD HOW TO CURE THEM

In thousands of homes throughout Canada Baby's Own Tablets are the only medicine used which the children break up colds, destroy worms and make teething easy. Guaranteed free from opiates and poisonous drugs. Mrs. Geo. Wilson, Wilson's, N. B., says: "I began using Baby's Own Tablets about five years ago, and since then have used no other medicine for my children. They never fall to bring relief, and I would advise all mothers to try them." Sold by medicine dealers or by mail at 25 cents a box from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

It is said that the Queen of Italy possesses the most beautiful and valuable handkerchief in the world. It is an example of the earliest Venetian point lace, dating toward the close of the fifteenth century. The handkerchief is in almost a perfect state of preservation, and is valued at \$4,000.

Finch & Finch's
High-Class
Clothing
Sale
Continues
This Week
Finch & Finch
1107 GOVERNMENT ST.
Our Name Behind Our Clothing Is an Important Asset. It's Your Protection. Our Name Behind Our Furnishings Is Worth a Good Deal to You.



TYPE OF THE FIRST BOAT, AND HER BUILDER.

tains of industry of the past century, will be indelibly linked as it was he who conceived the idea of applying steam to boats which then carried on the limited transportation on the River St. Lawrence between Montreal and Quebec.

While Robert Fulton's steamboat, which plied on the Hudson was a couple of years ahead of Mr. Molson's craft, the Canadian centenary is distinguished by the fact that the hull, engine and boiler of Mr. Molson's steamer were built entirely in Canada, of Canadian products, while the engines of his American predecessor were imported from England.

The "Accommodation" was the name of the Molson steamboat, and she was built on the banks of the St. Lawrence at Montreal in the summer of 1809, and started on her first trip to Quebec on November 1st, not an advantageous time of the year for an experiment of that kind on the St. Lawrence. Nevertheless the "Accommodation" success-

fully made the trip to Quebec and was hailed with great joy by the citizens of that ancient city.

The event was fraught with great importance to the trade of the country, greater by far, probably, than the prime mover in its accomplishment.

To go into details of how the application of steam to river navigation revolutionized the internal trade of the country would require a volume in itself. Previous to that event traffic between Quebec and Montreal was not only costly but slow. Steam linked up the two most important places of that time in Canada and made such a change as was not dreamed of. The name of Hon. John Molson is clearly entitled to a prominent place in Canadian history in consideration of that great event.

Finding of New Route.

When Jacques Cartier sailed up the St. Lawrence over three hundred years ago the historians tell us that he thought he had found a new route to China. The lapse of time has shown that the famous French sailor was not so very far wrong in his conjecture, as the river St. Lawrence does now form at least an important link in a route to China and the Orient.

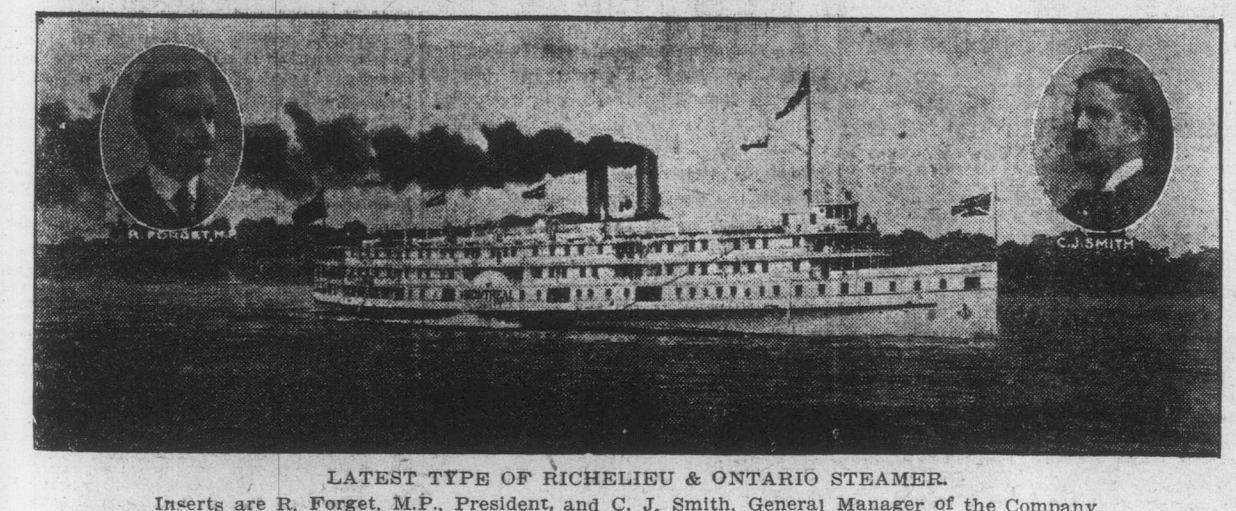
Since that time the great river has played a most important part in the history of the North American continent.

room, and by the time he has breakfasted the probabilities are that the steamer will have arrived at her destination.

This by way of contrast, by way of showing what an immense change has been accomplished in a hundred years. One cannot help wondering if the pioneer Canadian steamboat owner ever dreamed of such a startling consummation.

In the old days hardships innumerable presented themselves in the land journey, whilst dangers by day and by night started the hardy voyagers in the face when they made their journey between Quebec and Montreal. The heavy and swift flowing currents of the river made the upward journey very difficult, and many labouring detours had to be made to accomplish the journey.

To go on with the historical side of



LATEST TYPE OF RICHELIEU & ONTARIO STEAMER.

ed-steel buckets.

It will thus be seen that four or five of the early types could be comfortably stowed away in the big boats which are now provided for the growing travel of the St. Lawrence.

But the difference in the size of the boats of the two periods is nothing compared with the contrast in accommodation for the comfort of the traveller then and now.

To illustrate this I cannot do better than quote a Quebec paper which recorded the arrival of the old Accommodation on her first trip to Quebec from Montreal. It says: "On Saturday morning at 8 o'clock, arrived here from Montreal, being her first trip, the steamboat Accommodation, with ten passengers. This is the first vessel of the kind that ever appeared in this harbor. She is continually crowded with visitors. She left Montreal on Wednesday at 2 o'clock, so that her passage was 66 hours, 30 of which she was at anchor. She arrived at Three Rivers in 24 hours. No wind or tide can stop her. The price for a passage up is \$9 and \$8 down. The vessel supplying provisions.

The great advantage attending a vessel so constructed is, that a passage may be calculated on to a degree of certainty in point of time, which cannot be the case with any vessel propelled by sail only."

Our narrative, it may be stated that with all its conveniences, the mode of travel introduced by Hon. John Molson, was a success for the following year we find him applying to the Legislature of the Province of Quebec "for the exclusive right and privilege of constructing and navigating a steamboat or steamboats within the limits of the Province for a space of fifteen years."

In 1812 he built another and larger steamer of 120 feet keel and 24 feet beam, which made her first trip the following year, and did splendid service conveying troops and munitions of war from Quebec to Montreal and other points of vantage for Great Britain and Canada during the war between those countries and the United States.

The Swift and Sure.

The name of this vessel was Swiftsure. The service she gave conduced to the failure of the American invasion of 1812 and 1813. The launching of this vessel is described as a great event, being graced by the presence of the Governor-General and Lady and suite, as well as the wealth and beauty of the city, representative of some 300 prominent families.

Following the Swiftsure, Mr. Molson proceeded to carry out his idea of operating a fleet of river steamers, and the construction of each one led to improvements in matter of size and accommodation. The Lady Sherbrooke, was 170 feet long, 34 feet beam and 10 feet in depth, with a 63 horse-power side lever engine.

Up to about 1818 a great many people preferred to drive in calches over rough roads between Montreal and Quebec, but by that time the service

Personal

HOWES, Fyathic Medium one daily. Sessions Mondays 9 to 11 p.m. King Edward Ave. 11.

Everybody to read The Educationalist in this paper of Saturday.

WIRELESS SHARPHOLDERS are valuable and important in by addressing J. P. Barkley, 1018 Chicago.

RELATIVES—Should this meet Mr. William Helyear Farmer, ven about 20 years ago, Beaulieu Island, will be com with W. Berry, 40 Drummond Montreal, Canada?

Rooms and Board

EMENTS under this head 1 word per insertion; 3 insertions, 4 cents per word per line per month. No rent for less than 10 cents.

Single room, with board, also bath, with or without table for two gentlemen or couple, 95 Gorge road, close to street car.

Room and board in private 200 Cook street.

One large bedroom, also stable 229 Menzies street.

pleasant room, suitable for two, central, near park; meals if 641 Superior street.

ED ROOMS to rent, cheap, 1 Embroke street.

comfortable, furnished bedroom, close to car and 9 Rithet street. Phone A1690.

OMS—Single and double, 25c, 716 Yates street.

ED BOARD, 729 Esquard street.

COUNTRY HOME for pay, 40 weekly, 5 March, Times

Newly furnished rooms, with bath, Mrs. Thomson, 1012 11th street.

O. LEIP—With board, \$5 per week, 400 Gorge road.

Furnished bedroom, with bath, about 15 minutes to Grand Theatre, pleasant 4 812 Cook Bay Ave.

Suite of 2 or 3 sunny room, central, 40 Quebec street, 1111 Government Buildings.

56 Courtney street (late Rae), in vacant; also table boarders Terms on application to Miss A. A. 1212.

Six roomers and boarders, accommodation; terms, 214 A. Apply Mrs. Taylor, 1154

Nicely furnished rooms, 540 11th street.

unfurnished rooms, 427 Govt. street.