

THE FORT HOWE OF OLD.

IT WAS AN IMPORTANT MILITARY STATION IN EARLY DAYS.

Rev. W. O. Raymond Writes About the Time When the Loyalists Landed—The Troops at Fort Howe—St. John as a Fortified City—Men Who Made History.

The post at old Fort Frederick being considered for many reasons unsuitable, steps were at once taken for the construction of a fort and barracks on the top of the high hill in Portland. This fort was named in honor of Sir William Howe, the commander-in-chief of the British forces in America.

The first garrison at Fort Howe was composed of a detachment of the Royal Fencible Americans under Major Gifford Studholm.

The absolute necessity for the establishment of a strong defensive position was soon apparent. Fort Howe, which was complete when a band of 600 Indian warriors assembled on the river at the June 26. The party consisted of Penobscots, Passamaquoddies and St. John river Indians. They sent a formal declaration of war and returned the British flag to Major Studholm. Their instigator was as usual Colonel John Allan of Machias.

At this juncture the talents of the Indian agent Colonel Michael Franklin were employed to good advantage. He had able assistants in Major Studholm, James White, James Simonds and last but not least in Father Bourge the priest lately appointed to minister to the St. John Indians. Through their united efforts a treaty was made at Fort Howe, the chiefs at the same time turning into the hands of Col. Franklin the presents which they had received from General Washington and then on bended knee taking a solemn oath of allegiance to his majesty King George the third. The inducement held out to them were by no means inconsiderable; the cost of the presents provided at this time being \$2,148, in addition to which \$100 was spent in entertaining the chiefs.

So faithful were the Indians that they assembled again in 1779 and were not appeased until they had received a promise of additional presents.

The following letter is of interest in this connection:

To the Chief Captains and Principal Indians of the River St. John: Brethren—I am much concerned that I cannot see you as I intended on the 25th of this month, but Major Studholm will meet you for me, who will tell you the sentiments of my heart. Brethren—King George wants masters for the river, depending on you to protect the workmen in cutting them and carrying them to Fort Howe, which Major Studholm will deliver you. They are intended to bind fast your promise that you will protect the workmen.

Brethren, King George my gracious master, has sent me a large quantity of presents for you; they are now on the way, and I shall deliver them to you in person. These presents the king gives you for delivering up to me the treaty you had entered into with the council at Boston.

I salute you, and am your affectionate brother, (Signed) MICHAEL FRANKLIN.

Windor, 18th May, 1780.

This letter was accompanied by an invoice of the presents to be distributed amongst the Indians by Major Studholm as an inducement to protect the workmen in procuring masts for the king's navy, viz: 50 pairs blankets, 40 shirts, 4 pieces blue stroud, 63 yards blue and scarlet cloth, 100 rings, 200 flints, 34 yards of ribbon, 51 cwt. shot, 1 bl. gun powder, 3 pieces white kersey, 60 milled caps, 40 worsted caps, 50 castor hats, 100 hoes, 100 yards white serge, 1 cask of wine, sent by Mr. Franklin for the squaws and such men as do not drink rum.

The goods were shipped at Windor for Fort Howe in the schooner *Monnequah*, Peter Doussett, master.

It may be noted in passing that the *Monnequah* was built in 1771 at the upper cove (now Market slip) by Jonathan Leavitt. *Monnequah* was the name given by the Micmacs to the peninsula on which the principal part of the city of St. John now stands.

Masts for the King's Navy.

The first cargo of masts arrived at Halifax from St. John, Nov. 22, 1780. The business evidently proved satisfactory to the promoters for in the month of April following Sir Richard Hughes, governor of Nova Scotia, writes Lord Germaine that "upwards of 200 sticks for masts, yards and bowsprits have been cut, squared and approved by the king's purveyor at the river St. John in the course of last fall and winter and one of our navy transports is actually at Fort Howe embarking the second cargo of those stores."

The shipment of masts from St. John continued to engage the attention of Major Studholm for several years. Special interest attaches to this young industry, marking as it does the beginning of the vast lumber trade which has since then been carried on upon the St. John and its tributaries.

At the close of the revolutionary war General Haldimand sent Capt. John Monro, an officer in one of the Loyalist corps, to explore the route of a proposed road from Kamouraska to Fort Howe by the lakes of the Madawaska and the valleys of the St. John and St. John. Capt. Monro arrived in St. John Sept. 26, 1783, and he found it a busy place. The Loyalists were erecting their future habitations on both sides of the harbor and no less than 700 houses were then enclosed. "On the river St. John," writes Monro, "are the finest masts and spars that I have ever seen. I saw at Fort Howe above six thousand pounds' worth. Two ships were loading when I left that place. I suppose there were masts sufficient there to load ten ships. The proprietors sell the pines standing for \$8.00 each tree. It will be the ruin of the loyal refugees, so many settling at Fort Howe and upon the sea coast as they can have no wood there but what they buy or carry from a great distance they would have done better had they gone into the woods."

Occasional glimpses of life at St. John in early times may be secured from a variety of sources and are always of interest.

Diary of Benjamin Marston.

A short time ago the writer of this article was kindly permitted by a lady in Woodstock to look over an interesting diary kept at the time of the American revolution by Benjamin Marston, a cousin of Judge Edward Winslow and subsequently first sheriff of the county of Northumberland. Mr. Marston was obliged to abandon his home and all his possessions at Marblehead in 1766 and cast in his lot with other unfortunate Loyalist exiles. To one of his active temperamental idleness was something unendurable. Accordingly in the year 1781 we find him in command of a small brig, the *Britannia*, engaged in the coast-

ing trade; a pretty risky business, owing to the seas being infested with French and American privateers. Capt. Marston sailed from Funchobet, Sept. 4, 1781, for St. John, under convoy of the ship *Vulture*. A few extracts from his journal will be of interest as showing the condition of things at Fort Howe at that period.

At Sea in the "Britannia," Thursday, Sept. 6th, 1781.—Last evening about sunset the *Charles* came between a large long island and the main land. I suppose, is the Grand Manan, observed in 44° 30' N. lat. Fine pleasant weather and fair wind for the last 24 hours. 8 p.m.—The island is the Grand Manan; the *Charles* has just now rejoined the fleet; weather fine, moderate wind, fair and gentle; sky serene and full-orbed Cynthia brightens all the scene.

Friday, Sept. 7.—About 10 a.m. arrived safely into St. John's river, went on shore and dined with Mr. Hazen whom I find to be the man I have ever heard him characterized.

Saturday, Sept. 8.—Dined with Mr. Hazen, sold him and Mr. White some tobacco, wine and chocolate. Mending sails today. Wind blowing very hard N.W.

Sunday, Sept. 9.—Am in hopes of having a conveyance to Annapolis; shall know more of it tomorrow.

Monday, Sept. 10.—Still waiting in hopes of a conveyance to Annapolis, in that case shall have a party with me.

Tuesday, Sept. 11.—Dirty—rainy—wind at north.

Wednesday, Sept. 12th.—Waited till 12 o'clock at noon to sail with the men of war the next ship.

Mr. Marston however was destined to remain at St. John a fortnight by reason of contrary winds. In view of the lateness of the season he was eager to get away, yet day after day passed in helpless inactivity. The society of St. John was not at this time to remark, decidedly limited in this time and there was little to attract our unfortunate hero ashore. He was obliged to while away the hours as best he might. From the deck of his vessel he made the sketch of Fort Howe from which the accompanying illustration is taken, and then as the charms of this particular department of art failed to afford consolation, he tried poetry, but successfully the reader shall find.

I'm almost sick and tired to death

With staying in this business place

Where every day presents itself

With just the same old looking face.

Oh! had I but some kind fair friend

With whom to chat the hours away

I would care how long the wind

Nor tedious should I deem my stay.

Ah! that was once my happy lot

When I with house and home was blest,

And then a fair companion met

With many female charms possessed.

Nor scantily did Heaven shower down

The gifts which render life a blessing,

But did our cup with plenty crown

Nor less should I deem my stay.

Till base Rebellion did display

Her banner foul with false pretence,

And kindly Heaven took away

From evils which have happened since.

And careless me, when I had lost

All my blessings far and near,

Did teach, and justify to me

The worth of what I once possessed.

The present good is not prize

But what is worth when 'tis lost near.

But now, we see with other eyes

What was in worth when 'tis too late.

Now more we see, fair Ladies mine,

And there'll be one a piece for you,

Tis he who has no more to give

When I have nothing left to give.

Who at St. John's where I lay a fortnight

Wrote at St. John's where I lay a fortnight

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Fundy, (at Passamaquaddy is a settlement of Quakers), and considerably augmented those of Annapolis Royal and St. John's River; they are so numerous at the last mentioned place as to build two towns, *Carleton* and *Clinton*."

The name of Parr town was never very acceptable to the loyalists, and probably the period of its general adoption did not extend over a twelve-month.

In view of the fact that the name of St. John has been applied to our river and harbor for well nigh three centuries, the name Parr town, as applied to this city, must be regarded as a mere passing episode which has received more attention than it merits.

Col. Morse Describes Fort Howe.

The condition of Fort Howe at the close of the revolutionary war is seen in the report of Col. Robert Morse compiled in the year 1784 by direction of Sir Guy Carleton. Speaking of Fort Howe he says:

"This little work was erected in the course of the late war in preference to repairing the small square fort (Fort Frederick) thrown up during the former war of which the position being low and com-

manded, and not so well situated

for the protection of the town houses

built in the cove of the bay, where two or

three persons lived of a company to whom

a large tract of land had been granted, and

who carried on a considerable trade with

the Indians and persons settled up the

river. The ridge upon which the new fort

stands was offered by them, and a work

in which there are eight pieces of cannon,

house were accordingly erected, together

with a larger blockhouse at the other end

of the ridge. The blockhouse remains

but the work, which is composed of fascines

and sods, is falling down, and the

admit of any useful works being constructed

upon it."

Colonel Morse's report further shows

that there were at Fort Howe eight iron

guns, viz., two eighteen pounders, four

two five and a half inch brass mortars,

and a fair amount of ammunition. In the

baracks there were twelve rooms for the

officers and accommodations for one hundred

men.

The old iron guns of Fort Howe would

not prove of much practical service today,

as far as the defence of St. John is concerned;

they have a history however, and are

identified with all the notable

events in the early days of New Brunswick.

The welcomed with right hearty good

will the arrival of the spring fleet of 1783.

The shores of our harbor were said to have

been white with snow on the 10th day of

May, when Capt. Consett Wilson in the

good ship, *Union*, the flag of Britain

streaming from her masthead, led up to

the anchoring ground beneath the protect-

ing guns of Fort Howe the most notable

fleet that had as yet entered the harbor of

St. John. On board that fleet were upwards

of 3,000 souls, but wearied as they were

not over anxious to land upon our chilly

shores. The popular idea of an immediate

and simultaneous disembarkation is quite

erroneous.

Walter Bates, in his interesting narra-

tion, mentions that the passengers of the

Union were allowed to remain on board

for some days, and he contrasts their good

fortune with that of their fellows in some

of the other ships, who were "precipitated

on shore." By Sunday, the 18th of May,

and that day has ever since been set apart

for a yearly commemoration of the landing

of the Loyalists.

The cannons of Fort Howe thundered

forth a salute of 17 guns on the 21st day

of November, 1784, when our first Lieu-

tenant-Governor, Col. Thomas Carleton,

disembarked from the loop *Ranger* and

landed at the "Upper Cove."

With a royal salute of 21 guns they

voiced the enthusiastic welcome extended

by the loyal citizens of St. John in June

1794 to Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, the

father of Queen Victoria. Once again

they thundered forth a hearty salute when

on the 20th of August, 1824, Lieutenant-

Governor, Sir Howard Douglas, arrived—

a man with whom New Brunswick never

had a truer friend, and who in the course

of his four and a half years' residence in

the Province made his name a household

word.

The romantic career and tragic death of

Lord Edward Fitzgerald are well known to

the students of Irish history. Among the

most delightfully interesting letters for