

# FOOTPRINTS AROUND AND ABOUT BEDFORD BASIN.

## A DISTRICT BRIMFUL OF ROMANTIC ASSOCIATIONS.

### SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT ITS EARLY HISTORY.

[BY GEORGE MULLANE.]

One of the most beautiful sights of a bright June day is obtained by standing amongst the scented foliage and viewing the sparkling waters of Bedford Basin. Looking from Mount St. Vincent a delightful expanse of water greets the observer's eye, extending four miles across to the wooded shores of the eastern side. The harbor, at the Narrows, is less than a mile across—beyond this it expands again into Bedford Basin, with its ten square miles of safe anchorage.

A drive to Bedford gives a most charming view, through a district brimful of romantic associations. It was on the shore of this basin that the Duke of Kent held his colonial court, presided over by a beautiful companion and friend from the Island of Martinique. Along the road close by galloped his coach, with six spanking bays with outriders, and a staff of thirty officers, bound for the Lodge, where, perchance, a grand ball was being given in honor of the King's birthday.

The remains of the prince's music pavilion still stands on a height which overlooks the water. It was indeed a famous place in its day, and the memory of the brilliant functions yet linger as a tradition, albeit the Lodge is sadly shorn of its former glory. In another place will be given Judge Halibarton's famous description of the Lodge, as he saw it in its early decay.

Not far from the Mount lived a distinguished peninsular soldier, and governor of the province—Sir John Cope Sherbrooke. The whole atmosphere here is teeming with romantic interest, and it shall be our endeavor to present its more lively features in a few off-hand sketches.

The earliest reference to Halifax harbor and Bedford Basin is to be found in Champlain's Voyages, first volume. The great French explorer says: From Sesambro (Sambro) we passed a very safe bay, (Baie Sain), containing seven or eight leagues, where there are no islands on the route except at the head of it, where there is a small river.

The Sackville river is no doubt the small river referred to. There appears to have been a settlement of French fishermen at Chebuctou, under the auspices of one of the many private companies which came into being after the dissolution of the Company of New France. It is impossible to locate the exact spot where the village of fishermen stood, but the evidence seems conclusive that it was on the west side of the Basin.

The governor of Acadia, Chevalier de Villebon, visited the settlement in 1698. After his visit he suggested to his government that the fishermen of the Basin be employed in the seal fishery during the winter months. Villebon made a return visit the next