

## BUILDERS OF NOVA SCOTIA.\*

## I.

*SOME ELEMENTS OF THE POPULATION.*

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THE foundation of Halifax in 1749 practically put an end to the Acadian period of Nova Scotian settlement. Until that year the English occupation of the country was merely nominal. Owing largely to the representations of Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts, the British Government decided at last on a vigorous policy in the province, which seemed more than once on the point of passing out of their hands.

Halifax was founded by the Honourable Edward Cornwallis, on the slope of the hill, whose woods then dipped their branches into the very waters of the noble harbour long known as Chebuctou, and renamed in honour of the Earl of Halifax, a member of the Montague family, who was at the head of the Council of Trade and Plantations, which had in those days full control of the administration of colonial affairs. Colonel Cornwallis, a son of the baron of that name—a man of firmness and

discretion—entered the harbour on the 21st of June, old style, or 2nd July, present style, and soon afterwards assumed his duties as governor of the province.

The town was surrounded by a cordon of palisades or upright pickets with five quadrangular block-houses at important points. In the middle of the town was the parade, ever since a familiar feature to residents of the town. On the upper part of this ground the barracks of the Royal Artillery stood for some years. An historian of the city tells us that before 1760 "the houses were generally built of square and round timber, some with small pickets placed upright between the stubs of the frame, and the whole covered over with clap-boards; they were usually of one story with a hipped roof, the shops and half-doors with no glass, swinging signs, and wooden shutters opening downwards, on which goods were exposed for sale." The first Government House stood on the site of the present province building, and had only one story, defended by small pieces of ordnance mounted on hogsheads of gravel and sand. Block-houses and eventually batteries were raised at all important points around the harbour, whose chief defence for years was the fort on George's Island. In early years there was only a small redoubt on Citadel Hill, which was included within the original palisades. That important position was defended by a

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