

FROM THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

SECOND SERIES—1903-1904

VOLUME IX

SECTION II

ENGLISH HISTORY, LITERATURE, ARCHÆOLOGY, ETC.

THE HON. HENRY CALDWELL

L.C. AT QUEBEC, 1759-1810

By **SIR JAMES M. LEMOINE, D.C.L.**

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J. HOPE & SONS, OTTAWA; THE COPP-CLARK CO., TORONTO
BERNARD QUARITCH, LONDON, ENGLAND

1903

III.—*The Hon. Henry Caldwell, L.C., at Quebec, 1759-1810.*

By SIR JAMES M. LEMOINE, D.C.L.

(Read May 19, 1903.)

Capt. Hy. Caldwell serving under Wolfe, at Quebec	1759
Commander of British Militia, at siege blockade	1775
Called to Legislative Council	1782
President Provincial Agricultural Society	1789
Receiver-General for Canada	1794-1810

In June, 1759, there landed in Canada from Admiral Saunders' fleet, a youthful British officer, destined to fill, at Quebec, a long, active and very distinguished career: Capt. Henry Caldwell of Colville's regiment, whose promotion dated from January, 1759.

At the memorable fight of 13th September, 1759, on Abraham's Heights, the youthful captain, aged 24, acted as Assistant-Quarter-master-General to General Wolfe. His bravery brought him a step in rank; he became Major Caldwell, under which title were won his brightest laurels. A portion of the British forces, after the battle of the Plains, were recalled; the 78th Highlanders were disbanded in Canada; the Major cast his lot for Canada and settled at Quebec. Major Caldwell, by his active business habits, seems to have preserved the esteem of General James Murray, who remained in Quebec, as its first English Governor, until 1766.

A few years will elapse, and we will find the Major the trusted agent, and subsequently the lessee of the General's extensive Canadian estates. Major Caldwell continued to fill military duties in the army of occupation until 1773, when Lord Barrington, Secretary of War allowed him to sell out.

In virtue of a notarial deed of lease, bearing date 7th April, 1774, he was named agent and lessee of the great Seigniory of Lauzon, and of numerous other properties acquired by General Murray. The General, like many other distinguished British officers, had been bitten by the earth hunger, so prevalent in the first years of British rule. Many distinguished Frenchmen the owners of large seigniories in Canada, resolved to return to France in 1760, such as those of Longueuil, the Seigniories of Lauzon, Terrebonne, Foucault, la Prairie, la Chenaye, Belœil, etc.

Governor Murray was not by any means the only British officer craving for land; Sir Thomas Mills, Cramahé, Major Samuel Holland, Major Caldwell, Capts. Fraser, Nairne, Laughlin Smith, the Hales and

others, invested large sums in real estate, near Quebec, in the early days of the colony, after the conquest.

The clever Seigneur of Lauzon had from the first been deeply impressed with the great possibilities which Canada, despite a severe climate, offered for agricultural, manufacturing and industrial pursuits.

Voltaire's sneer, at the "15,000 acres of snow," if it ever came to the ears of the Major, evidently had no terror for him. Let us proceed.

A crisis in Canadian affairs was imminent in 1775; the colony had to fight for its very existence. Major Caldwell was just the man to come to the front and buckle on his sword; his zeal, devotion, undoubted courage as Commander of the British Militia of Quebec during the fierce assault and blockade by Montgomery and Arnold, are matters of history.

Caldwell had, in no small measure helped Guy Carleton in saving Canada to Britain. Recognition and reward were in store for him; he received and merited both.

General Carleton selected Major Caldwell to be the bearer of the despatches, announcing the defeat of the invaders in 1775-6.

Caldwell warmly recommended by Guy Carleton and Col. Allan McLean, landed in England amidst public rejoicings, on the 15th June, 1776.

Imperial Rome had a laurel crown for the trusty messenger bringing the news of a Roman victory. England, more practical, rewarded Major Caldwell, the bearer of the glorious tidings, with a gift in hard cash of £500 sterling,—the War Office made him a Lieutenant-Colonel, whilst the King, later on, named him a Legislative-Councillor, at Quebec.

It is evident Caldwell's visit to London was far from being barren of results, so far as he was concerned. His merit, intelligence, handsome person and happy address, secured to him some powerful friends, amongst others William Pitt, the son of the great Lord Chatham. The influence thus acquired, helped some ambitious plans he had previously entertained.

He applied to the Lords of Commerce, for a grant of the Québec and Lévis ferry. They wrote on the 8th April, 1777, to Governor Carleton, as to the propriety of granting a privilege, seemingly of considerable magnitude. The ferry service in summer was effected by canoes and "bateaux" who landed passengers and freight in the cul-de-sac (the Champlain market now occupies the site). In winter, access from Lévis to the city, was had over the ice-bridge when it formed, and in canoes, when it did not.

Caldwell failed to succeed in this project; it was thought too important a monopoly to be given to one man, over such a large extent of the harbour. Caldwell, a brave, intelligent and ambitious man, elated with past honours conferred, aspired to a high post. He applied for the position of Lt.-Governor, to be vacant by the return of Cramahé to England. General Haldimand, Governor of the colony, on being consulted replied to Lord Germaine, that though he acknowledged the fitness of Caldwell, still he preferred to see Col. Hamilton appointed to the position previously held by Cramahé, which was done.

Col. Henry Caldwell, during his tenure of office as Legislative-Councillor, met with some contradictions and occasionally official reproof; one instance in point: a complaint had been made to the Colonel in 1782, about a captain of militia residing at St. Nicholas. General Haldimand, in a letter on the subject to Caldwell, took the militia-captain's part. Caldwell complained and justly too, of favouritism having been shown to colonists, such as de Rouville and another; his juniors in rank, being made full colonels over his head.

Later on, Col. Caldwell, smarting under the sense of injustice that his military service was forgotten, resigned his commission as Lt.-Colonel—but his permanent appointment as Receiver-General, in 1794—allayed his irritation, one is led to believe.

Caldwell was the friend of progress; had introduced the latest machinery in his large grist-mills and saw-mills—and various improvements on the numerous farms he had acquired in the country,—in the system of tilling and fertilizing the soil, and improving the breed of cattle and farm stock generally.

In the year 1789, he became president of the first Society of Agriculture organized in Canada. On the 6th April of that year, the rank, fashion, nobility and clergy of all denominations, as well as commoners, crowded the halls of the Chateau St. Louis, at the beck of Lord Dorchester to enter their names as subscribers to the Quebec Agricultural Society. The Governor-General, Lord Dorchester was named patron; Hon. Henry Caldwell, president, and the Hon. Hugh Finlay, Deputy Postmaster-General, secretary.

SUBSCRIBERS.

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec.	Major R. Matthews.
Chief Justice Wm. Smth.	Capt. Rotson.
Rev. Phillip Toosey, Military Chaplain.	Capt. Fraser.
T. Monk, Attorney-General.	Kenelm Chandler.
John Blackwood.	Peter Stewart.
Matthew Lymburner.	Malcolm Fraser.
A. de Gaspé.	Hon. Hugh Finlay.
Obediah Aylwin.	“ Thos. Dunn.

Bishop Bailly, coadjutor.
 Jenkins Williams.
 Juchereau Duchesnay.
 Dr. Mervin Nooth.
 Isaac Ogden, judge of Admiralty.
 Sir Thomas Mills.
 J. Arthur Coffin.
 G. Taschereau.
 Perreault, l'Ainé.
 L. de Salaberry.
 Capt. St. Ours.
 Rev. A. Hubert, curé de Québec.
 J. T. Cugnet.
 Messire Pauet, curé de la Rivière
 Ouelle.

Hon. Edward Harrison.
 " John Collins.
 " Adam Mabane.
 " J. C. de Lery.
 " G. W. Pownall.
 " Henry Caldwell.
 " Wm. Grant.
 " François Baby.
 " Samuel Holland.
 " George Davidson.
 " Chs. de Lanaudière.
 " Lecompte Duprès.

Hon. Mr. Caldwell, on being elected president, addressed the meeting in eloquent terms, both in English and in French; twelve members were chosen as directors. The president dwelt forcibly on the modes of improving agriculture—the sowing of hemp to compete with foreign importation—amelioration of farm stock—planting of fruit trees—experiments in seed wheat—offering prizes and entering the lists himself as competitor; such were the doings of the enterprising "Lauzon Farmer," backed by His Excellency, Lord Dorchester.

One of the most important offices which had to be created in the colony after the conquest, was that of Receiver-General of the public dues, and of accounting for the same.

The first incumbent was Thomas Murray. In those days the Receiver-General was not compelled to reside in the province. Absenteeism of high officials was in vogue. Sir Thomas Mills, recently landed from England, succeeded Thomas Murray, on 10th July, 1765.

After a short residence here, he returned to London, leaving as his deputy a Mr. William Grant. The salary was insignificant, \$800—later on, increased to \$1,600; a remuneration totally inadequate for the responsibilities and duties attached to this high office; the titular having to keep up with the expenditure attending the high official circles of society, in which he was expected to move. It was, however, said that the large sums of money passing through the hands of the incumbent—the absence of provincial control over his acts—possibly some additional fees of office, would afford the officer facilities to make the most of his position, by way of compensation for low salary. William Grant soon gave cause for complaint; he refused to account for "receipt and expenditure" to the Governor of the colony, alleging that he was accountable to the imperial authorities only. General Haldimand appointed Col. Henry Caldwell, to take *pro-tempore*

Grant's place in 1784, until the home authorities should be consulted—ordering Thos. Ainslie, collector of customs, at Quebec; Geo. Pownall, clerk of the court, and other public servants, to pay over to Caldwell only, the public moneys received by virtue of their respective office. The Colonel's permanent appointment was gazetted in 1794.

On the 28th February, 1801, Col. Caldwell purchased from General James Murray, by the agency of Lt.-Col. Robert Matthews in London, not only the lordly domain of Lauzon (which included the old parishes of Point Levy, St. Charles, St. Henri, part of St. Gervais, St. Nicholas), but also the seigniories of Rivière du Loup, Madawaska, Foucault, on Lake Champlain, Sans Bruit estate with Belmont manor, near Quebec, together with the fief of St. Foy and a house in St. John Street, Quebec.

Price of sale, £10,180 sterling, payable in instalments.

When taken in connection with other real estate purchased, Col. Caldwell then ranked with the greatest land owners in the province. His speculations in land were not always satisfactory. In 1788, he had applied, but in vain, to Lord Grenville to be compensated by the Crown for the loss of 20,000 acres of land which the verification of the boundary between Canada and the United States had lopped off, the 35,000 acres which hitherto had composed his seigniorie of Foucault (Caldwell manor) on Lake Champlain; he petitioned, in conjunction with others, for Crown Lands from the British Government and was informed that each petitioner ought to make a separate request; thus were rewarded his military services!

* * * * *

The Hon. Henry Caldwell in the enjoyment of the perquisites of his exalted post of Receiver-General was drawn deeper and deeper into land speculations and industrial schemes. The seigniorie of Lauzon soon could boast of a splendid grist mill and saw-mills at St. Nicholas, Levi, Etchemin. Roads were opened—bridges built—colonization promoted.

Belmont Manor,¹ near Quebec—his elegant home—the seat of generous hospitality, burnt in 1798, had been improved and rebuilt. Here continued to reside, courted and esteemed, the hero of the two sieges, 1759 and 1775. Col. Caldwell, according to tradition, seems to have also been favoured with a handsome person. I well remember being told by the late Hon. William Sheppard, of Woodfield, near Quebec, that *le beau militaire* was supposed to have been the hero in Mrs.

¹ *Proprietors: Intendant Talon, 1670; Gen. James Murray, 1765; Hon. Henry Caldwell, 1801; Sir John Caldwell, 1810; John W. Dunscomb, 1854.*

Frances Brook's novel, "*The History of Emily Montague*," and was meant for Col. Rivers, the friend of the divine Emily. This was the first English novel written in Canada, in 1767.

A great sorrow invaded, in 1804, the sweet retreat of Belmont Manor; the death, on the 19th February, at the age of 67 years, of the loved *châtelaine*, Ann Caldwell. This much esteemed lady was sister to the Lord Bishop of Ossory, and of Baron Hamilton; she left an only son, John Caldwell. The learned Rev. Alexander Sparkes, who had landed at Quebec, in 1780, had been selected as the preceptor to the only son of Col. Caldwell; he found a bright and apt scholar in young John, who, after going through a course in the classics and in foreign languages, studied for, and was admitted in 1789, a member of the Quebec Bar; he also received a commission in the Canadian militia.

Young John soon became his father's factotum in the management of the seigniority of Lauzon, and other family estates in Canada. His sympathetic and kind treatment of his father's tenantry, as well as his liberal views won him their confidence. In 1804, and again, in 1809, he was deputed to parliament as member for the extensive county of Dorchester, which then comprised Lauzon, Ste. Marie and other large centres in the Beauce district.

In 1812 John Caldwell, who was to become Sir John Caldwell by the death of an Irish baronet, succeeded to his father's office as Receiver-General, accepting the onerous charge and its responsibilities, Col. the Hon. Henry Caldwell, expired at Belmont Manor, on the 28th May, 1810, aged 75 years. His remains were buried in the vaults of the Anglican Cathedral.

Mr. Jos. Edmond Roy, the historiographer of the Seigniority of Lauzon, published the olograph will of the Receiver-General, its tenth Seignior.

Among other provisions in this lengthy document there are several legacies; to his wife, Mrs. Caldwell; to his brother, Major-General Caldwell, serving in Portugal an annuity of £200; to the children of his younger brother Charles, a naval officer, who died in 1775; there are also legacies to Edward Bowen, attorney-general, later on, chief-justice, who died at Quebec, in 1865; to Miss Margaret Coffin, Mrs. Alice Simpson, Miss Annabella Simpson, Miss Sarah Taylor, Miss Christian Nairn, Dr. James Davidson, William Hamilton, without forgetting the poor, whom he was in the habit of assisting each week in winter; to each the generous old man left 40 shillings.

The warrior who, on so many occasions, had braved shot and shell, seems to have had a holy horror of being buried alive, judging from the text of his will, which I shall give, in Mr. Roy's French ver-

sion: "C'est, de plus, ma volonté, si ma mort arrive en été, que mon corps demeure dans mon lit jusqu'à ce que l'on ne puisse plus longtemps supporter l'odeur. Si la mort a lieu en hiver, je désire que mon corps demeure pareillement dans mon lit cinq à six jours et que l'on fasse du feu dans la chambre, à moins que l'odeur ne puisse plus être supportée. C'est ma volonté que mon corps soit alors confié à la terre dans la voûte que j'ai fait construire dans le cimetière, à Québec."

Belmont lies the St. Foy heights in a most picturesque situation. The view from the east and northwest windows is magnificently grand; probably one might count more than a dozen church spires glittering in the distance—in every happy village, which dots the base of the blue mountains to the north. In 1854, this splendid property was purchased by J. W. Dunscomb, collector of customs, Quebec; he resided there and, about 1864, he sold the mansion and garden to the Roman Catholic church authorities of Quebec, reserving 400 acres. The old house, a few months later, was purchased by Mr. Wakeham.

The first time our eyes scanned the silent and deserted banquetting halls of Belmont, with their lofty ceilings and recalling the traditional accounts of the hospitable gentlemen, whose joviality had once lit up the scene, visions of social Ireland of Barrington's day floated uppermost in our mind. We could fancy we saw the gay roysterers of times bygone; first, a *fête champêtre* of lively French officers from Quebec, making merry over their Bordeaux or Burgundy, and celebrating the news of their recent victories over the English at Fontenoy, Lauffeld or Carillon to the jocund sound of *Vive la France! Vive le Maréchal Saxe! à la Claire Fontaine!* etc., then, Governor Murray surrounded by his veterans, Guy Carleton, Col. Caldwell, Majors Hale and Holland, and some of the new subjects, such as brave Chs. de Lanaudière,¹ complimenting one another all round over the feats of the respective armies at the two memorable battles of the Plains, and all joining loyally in repeating the favourite toast in Wolfe's army *British colours on every French fort, port and garrison in America.*²

Later on, at the dawn of the late century, a gathering of those Canadian barons, so well delineated by J. Lambert in his *Travels in Canada in 1808*, one week surrounding the board of this jolly Receiver-

¹ Chs. Tarieu de Lanaudière, Knight of St. Louis, commanded a portion of the Canadian militia at Carillon, was A.D.C. to Sir Guy Carleton—served in 1775—accompanied the General to England, where George III. rewarded him; he was made Legislative Councillor and Deputy Postmaster General for Canada.

² The sanguinary battle of Fontenoy, was fought on the 11th May, 1745. The battle of Lauffeld took place on the 2nd of July, 1747. The French victory at Carillon, in which the militia of Canada bore a conspicuous part was won near Lake George, 8th July, 1758.

General of Canada at Belmont Manor; the next, at Charlesbourg, making the romantic echoes of Chateau-Bigot ring again with old English cheer and loyal toasts to "George the King"! or else installing a "Baron" at the Union Hotel, *Place d'Armes*,—and flinging down to the landlord, as Lambert says "250 guineas for the entertainment." Ah! where are now the choice spirits of that comparatively modern day, the rank and fashion, who used to go and sip claret or ice cream with Sir James Craig at Powell Place (Spencer Wood). Where gone the Muirs, Paynters, Munros, Mathew Bells, de Lanaudières, Lymburners, Smiths, Finlays, Caldwells, Percevals, Jonathan Sewells, Uniackes. Alas! like the glories of Belmont, departed—living in the chambers of memory only.

This estate, which until lately, consisted of two hundred and fifty acres, was conceded, in 1649, by the Jesuit Fathers to M. Godfroy; it extended from the line of the *Grande Allée* to the Bijou wood. In 1670, it passed over to the famous Intendant Talon. Shortly after the conquest it was occupied by Chief Justice Gregory. In 1765, it was sold for £500 by David Ames of Montreal to General James Murray.

We find that one of the first operations of General Montgomery, in 1775, was to take forcible possession of "General Murray's house on St. Foy road;" later on, the property came into the possession of Col. Caldwell.

In the memory of Quebecers, Belmont manor must remain more particularly connected with the Caldwell family—three generations of which occupied its spacious halls, and where the Colonel expired, in 1810.

Belmont manor is situated on the St. Foy road, on its north side, at the end of a long avenue of majestic trees, distant three miles from Quebec. The original mansion which was burnt down in 1798, was rebuilt by the Colonel, in 1800, on plans furnished by an engineer officer of the name of Brabazon. Col. Caldwell's gracious hospitality drew round his board some of the best known men in Quebec of the time, such as the gallant General Brock, John Coltman, William Coltman, the Hales, Foy, Haldimand, Dr. Beeby, of Powell Place, J. Lester, John Blackwood.

In 1810, Col. Caldwell's son John, accepted the succession, with its liabilities, then unknown—occupied, in summer, a handsome residence in the Seigniory of Lauzon, and was appointed Receiver-General to succeed his father in 1812.

In 1817, Belmont was sold to the Hon. J. Irvine, M.P.P. In 1833, the property reverted to Sir Henry Caldwell, son of (Sir) John Caldwell—Sir John continued to live at the magnificent summer residence

he had built near the Etchemin river at Levi,—too lavish in his expenditure and unlucky in many of his innumerable milling operations, with heavy liabilities unprovided for. Sir John, on his dismissal from office in 1832 owed the Crown \$100,000; this amount was subsequently repaid in full out of the revenues of the seigniorie of Lauzon and other estates taken possession of by Government. He died at Bangor, U.S., in 1845.

WORKS CONSULTED.

The Titles and Plans of Belmont Estate were submitted to me by J. W. Dunscomb, Collector of Customs, Quebec, proprietor in 1865.

"Maple Leaves" for 1865; "Picturesque Quebec," 1882.

Neilson's old Quebec Gazette, 1764-1810.

Histoire de la Seigneurie de Lauzon, par Jos. Edmond Roy, M.S.R.C. As agent for this vast seigniorie, he is in possession of its Titles and Papers.

I seize on this opportunity, to acknowledge my great indebtedness to Mr. Roy's elaborate work for dates and details.