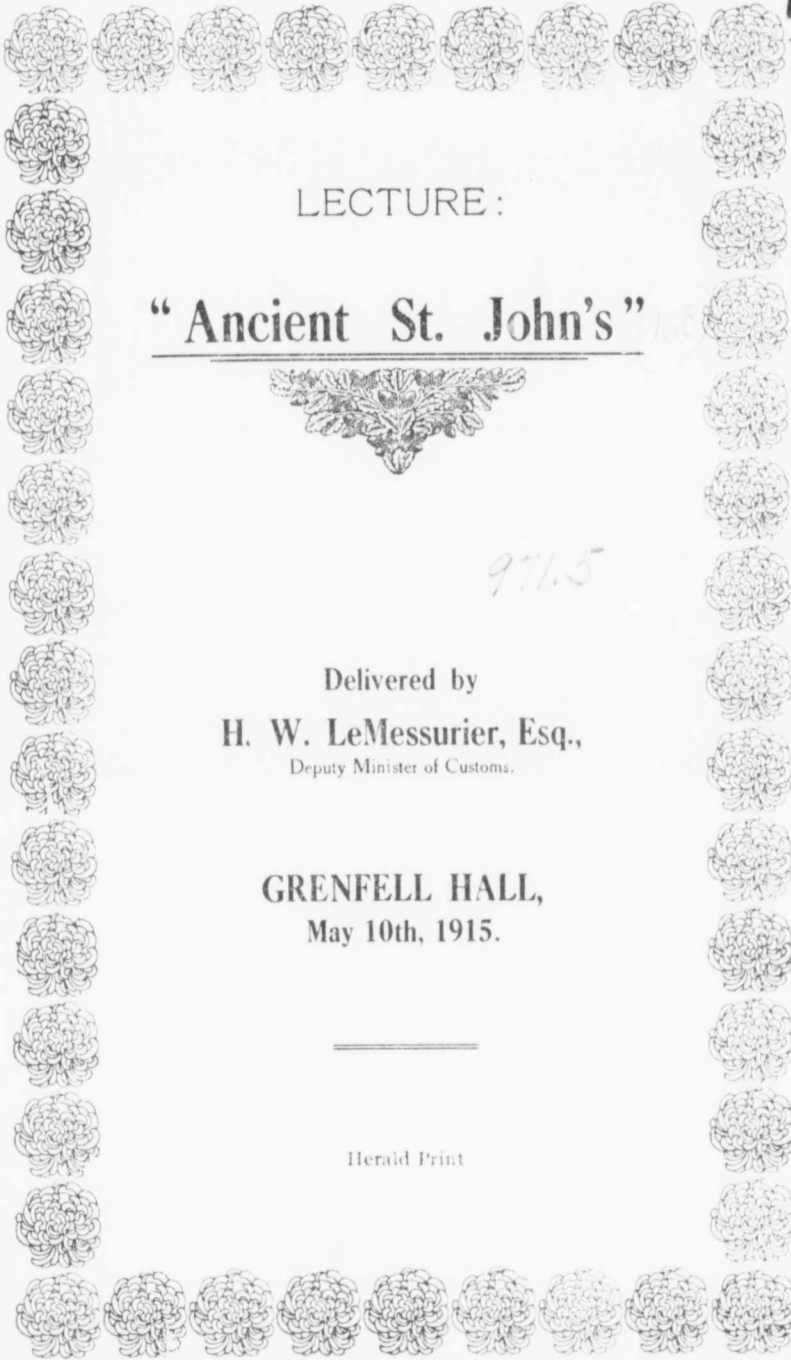


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H. W. LeMessurier

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LECTURE :

"Ancient St. John's"



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Ancient St. John's.

To lecture about Ancient St. John's and to give you any new and interesting matter is not an easy task, neither is it easy to picture to you what St. John's was like in the past. To give an account of the city, with details of its growth and boundaries, is not my intention, as I have neither the time nor ability to do the subject proper justice, therefore the present lecture is merely a recital of some facts which may be of interest to you, and such as I have gathered from historical records and from the lips of those who remembered St. John's a century ago.

Who first discovered St. John's, and who named it, is not recorded in history. The name does not appear on any of the earliest charts of North America, its first appearance on a chart is in that of Desclir of 1546, but we have a record of a letter, written from St. John's in 1527 in which Rut says "On the third day of August, entered into a good harbour called St. John's and there we found eleven sail of Normands and one Breton and two Portugal barks all a-fishing.

It has been asserted by two writers on Newfoundland that John Cabot, discovered and named St. John's on St. John's day, 1497, the date on which he first saw the land of America. On an examination of the account of John Cabot's voyage I can find no authority for this assertion, it has also been asserted that Cape Bonavista was the landfall of Cabot and it was stoutly

maintained by the late Judge Prowse that such was the case.

Messrs. HARRISSE, Dawson, Biggar and others however, maintain that the land fall was Cape Breton. In the Encyclopedia Britannica, under the head of "John Cabot," giving the Cabot Biography, by H. P. Biggar, as well as in the "Cabot voyages to North America and Greenland" and in "Revue Hispanique" the land fall of Cabot is spoken of as some place on the American Continent and not Newfoundland. But suppose we allow that Cape Bonavista was the land fall of Cabot, we have it on record that he made the land with a large island lying off it, on the 24th. of June (St. John's day) 1497. He had been 57 day at sea in a Caravel of fifty tons and it is likely that when he made the land he at once sought an anchorage in order to obtain wood and water and to clean his ship; for in those days, when anti-fouling paints were unknown, vessels' bottoms had to be frequently cleaned during a long voyage, moreover we are told that such was the case, for it is recorded, after he landed "the Royal banner was unfurled and in solemn form Cabot took possession of the country in the name of King Henry VII. etc. etc. Having taken on board wood and water, preparations were made to return home as quickly as possible and he sailed north 300 miles." Judge Prowse maintained that tradition showed that Cabot anchored in King's Cove, which was, as he asserted, the King's

port, and that Cabot put his vessel on shore at Keels and cleaned her. If we grant all this then Cabot did not enter St. John's on St. John's Day, even if he sailed south. Further supposing that he did make the landfall of Bonavista early in the morning of St. John's day and that he coasted south, which is not proved, he would sail some distance into Trinity Bay before he discovered that it was a Bay, and likewise into Conception Bay, thus delaying his progress south. But a great deal would depend upon the weather and the wind as to how long it would take him to reach St. John's from Cape Bonavista. Then in sailing along the coast with a fair or leading wind he would actually pass St. John's before he would discover it, as he would keep off to clear Cape Spear or else get embayed. Historians differ about the course that Cabot took after he made the land, when he coasted for 300 miles, but there is a consensus of opinion among the majority of them, that if Cape Bonavista was his landfall, he coasted north from there and not south, as the prevailing winds on the south coast at the end of June and beginning of July would be S. W. and the coast with that wind is invariably enveloped in fog, he could not have coasted south 300 miles or that distance west as time did not permit. I am strongly of opinion that John Cabot never saw St. John's. On his second voyage he made Greenland and coasted from there to Nova Scotia and as far south as 38 when provisions getting short he returned to England late in the autumn of 1498 and not long afterwards he died.

The name of St. John's, like many names around our coast, I have

very little doubt, was given by some of the Povers of the Channel Islands. If the nomenclature of Newfoundland is enquired into very carefully it will be found that many names are a repetition of names of places in Jersey or Guernsey. It would take me too long to go into this subject, but I will instance three places on the northeast peninsula, Croque, Conche and Brehat Bay. Croque is a point and place on the N. W. coast of Guernsey, and La Conchee is just off it. Brehat, on the Norman coast, southwest of the Channel Islands, was the harbour inside of Brehat Island where the Guernsey and Jersey vessels were moored during the winter time, as in those days there were no made harbours in those islands. Many names of places on our coast are of Norman French origin and no one, unless acquainted with the old Norman language as spoken by the Channel Islanders, can trace the origin of the many so called French names; take for example, Gaultois, an attempt to spell in French a name that is not in that language. Frenchmen wonder at it and call it an English name, but there is an old Norman-French word that fits the place exactly, viz: Galtas, meaning pinnacly or like an attic or dormer.

As before noted Rut was in St. John's in 1527 and found there eleven sails of Normans. At that period the Channel Islands were known as the Norman Islands and all who hailed from there were called Normans. One hundred years ago a tradition existed in Jersey that the fishermen of that Island when going to Iceland, where they were in the habit of fishing from 1260, were driven away to the westward by a north-east gale, and made land to the

westward where codfish were numerous, and that their discovery was kept to themselves for over two years. It was also asserted that a ship belonging to DuMoulin was in the harbour of St. John's in 1500. Now it is a remarkable coincidence that on the northeast of the island of Jersey, St. John's Bay, Petit Port and Bouley Bay are contiguous and that here in Newfoundland we have St. John's Bay, Petty Harbour and Bay Bulls, or Boulee Bay as it is written on all the early charts. I leave you to draw your own conclusions as to where the name was derived.

That St. John's was an important harbour in the early days of its discovery is evident from the number of distinguished visitors who have been recorded as visiting it, and the frequent appeal to arms, for its retention by England or France.

It was here in 1542 that Jacques Cartier, who had waited for nearly two years at Hochelga (Montreal) for his Seigneur, unexpectedly found Roberval with three ships full of men, women and children, and it was here that Roberval tried every persuasion to retain him in his company.

In 1578 Whitbourne visited here and later in 1583.

Here Sir Humphrey Gilbert, in 1583 took possession of the harbor and surrounding country in the name of Queen Elizabeth, making a great display and levying toll upon all the vessels then in the port. This was indeed a notable day for St. John's. Sir Humphrey Gilbert had under his command a fleet of four vessels; the "Delight" of one hundred and twenty tons, of which he had command, the "Golden Hind" of forty tons, Edward Hayes, own-

er and captain; the "Swallow" of forty tons, Maurice Brown, captain and the "Squirrel" of ten tons, Mr. Wm. Andrew, Captain. On board this fleet were about two hundred and sixty men. On the 14th. of August, of the year before mentioned, the fleet, which had separated in a fog, met the little "Squirrel" in St. John's Bay, the latter had been denied admittance to the harbor and lay outside. According to Hakluyt, the harbour was occupied by thirty six vessels of different nations, but according to Dr. Foster, there was a much larger number of which a large proportion were Portuguese. Sir Humphrey prepared to force a passage and informed the people within the harbour that he was empowered to take possession of the place, and would do so. Their answer being for peace, the ships then entered, and on the following day, the 5th. August, he erected a tent within sight of all the ships, summoned the English and foreign merchants to attend, and in their presence caused the Commission under the Great Seal of England to be publicly read, and took possession of the adjacent lands in the name of Queen Elizabeth of England.

It is not definitely recorded whether there existed at that time any dwelling houses in St. John's, but it is well known that stages, storehouses and flakes existed, for on several occasions disputes had arisen with respect to ownership, and in 1582 Sir Thomas Hampshire was sent to Newfoundland with five ships, authorized "to secure every master of a fishing crew the property of that fishing room which he made the object of his choice, as long as he kept it employed for the use of the fishery." When peace

was being negotiated with France in 1761 the proceedings were suddenly stopped by the intrusion of Spain with a renewed claim of right to fish in Newfoundland waters. The English ambassador of Madrid in writing to the Prime Minister of England, Mr. Pitt said: "I had in the clearest terms I could make use of showed that the first discovery of the island was made at the expense and command of Henry VII and I had likewise demonstrated the uninterrupted possession of it from that time to the present date to have belonged to the English, from their being constantly settled there."

A writer in 1812, writing of Quebec which was founded in 1603 speaks also of dwellings in St. John's in Newfoundland, existing before that period, and it is also believed that after Sir Humphrey Gilbert's visit, "expeditions multiplied so rapidly that in the year 1615 upwards of two hundred and fifty English vessels, carrying altogether more than 15,000 tons, were employed along these coasts. Fixed habitations were formed which gradually extended on the eastern side from St. John's and Thorne Bay or Torbay to Cape Race." From the foregoing evidence it is certain that there was a settlement in St. John's prior to the arrival and settlement of Guy in Conception Bay.

Henry Hudson, the celebrated navigator, whose name is best known in connection with the River Hudson in the State of New York, visited St. John's in 1609, and in 1614 Whitbourne was sent to Newfoundland with a commission from the Admiralty, authorizing him to "empannel jurors, and to inquire upon oath of divers abuses and disorders, committed among those who carried on the fishery on that coast."

In 1623 Sir George Calvert sent Captain Edward Wynne to colonize his new province of Avalon. Captain Wynne settled at Ferryland or Forrillon, where "he built the largest house ever yet seen on the Island." From this we may judge that the houses in St. John's were mere huts. In 1654 Sir David Kirk obtained a grant of certain lands in Newfoundland, and it is recorded that "at that time settlements had been effected in fifteen different parts of the Island, the principal of which were St. John's, Ferryland and Quidi Vidi; the whole amounting to upwards of three hundred families." In 1670 Sir Josiah Child induced the Government to prevent settlement by destroying the entire Colony. A number of the settlements were destroyed by Sir John Berry, who strongly remonstrated against this edict, St. John's however, was not interfered with. In 1696 a French force under D'Ibberville and Brouillon destroyed all the English settlements on the coast including St. John's. Here they found the fortress but weakly defended and easily captured. After setting fire to the fortress and to the town the place was abandoned, the English garrison being allowed to return to England in two ships. The settlements of Carbonear and Bonavista, being too ably defended, D'Ibberville returned to Placentia. The peace of Ryswick in 1698 restored to each power all their possessions while as at the commencement of the war, the French then proceeded to extend their settlements and strengthen their positions, whilst the English discouraged permanent settlement in Newfoundland and neglected their fortifications. St. John's appears to have had a garrison and fortress as early

as 1618. the fort was built on the site of the old Railway Depot. and for many years was known as Fort William. All the buildings out one have been destroyed, but there existed one stone building. prior to the advent of the Railway, which tradition said had been erected by the French, but this I very much doubt as the French never held St. John's long enough to erect any such building. In 1705 another attempt to capture St. John's was made by the French, a strong party of five hundred men under the command of Subercase, set out from Placentia and marched to Petty Hr. and having reached the latter place they made a resolute attack on the two principal forts of St. John's but were repulsed. Failing in their attempt on St. John's, they ravaged the adjoining settlements spreading their devastations as far north as Bonavista. In 1708 a French fleet under Saint Ovide, visited and destroyed the town on the first day of January; in less than half an hour Saint Ovide had taken both forts, the English having been taken so by surprise that no attempt could be made to resist the attack. The forts were dismantled and the town destroyed before the French vessels sailed for France. St. John's had but a small chance to grow in these troublesome times; with the fear of invasion by the French, the British laws prohibiting settlement, and the regulations enforced to enable the West-Country merchant to keep Newfoundland as a fishing preserve it is remarkable that so many people did make this Colony their home. In 1713 the Treaty of Utrecht was signed and the French abandoned to Great Britain all territorial rights to Newfoundland. For the next fifty years St. John's progressed a little. It was still nothing more than a

fishing station, a rendezvous for vessels going to and coming from Europe, and a depot for a small garrison, the latter subject to the officer commanding at Halifax. The building of a house of more than one story was prohibited, flakes covered the sides of the hills which slope towards the waters of the harbor, and stages lined the water front now occupied by the merchants wharves. No roads were to be seen anywhere, but many paths connected the various fishing rooms and one regular path led from Fort William to Signal Hill. In 1728 Captain Henry Osborne was appointed to Newfoundland as the first Governor and took up his residence at St. John's; shortly after Justices of the Peace were appointed in the Island. In 1741 Captain the Hon. John Byng was appointed Governor and in his ship, the *Sunderland*, of sixty guns, made reprisals on Spanish ships, for at that time England was at war with Spain and the latter's ships of war and privateers carried their depredations on British commerce, in every part of Europe and America, with great activity and boldness. Governor Byng had a squadron under his command by which means he not only most effectually protected the Newfoundland trade and fisheries but also succeeded in making very many captures from the enemy. All the prizes captured by Captain Byng's squadron were brought into St. John's, which became of such importance that a vice-Admiralty Court was established here and William Keen Esq., was appointed the first judge. Keen's fishing room was situated nearly on the southeast corner of Water Street, and what is now known as Job's Cove, that is where Parson's and Hearn's buildings stand. In July 1755 war again

broke out between France and England and all the ships and vessels employed by the French in Newfoundland were captured, many being brought into St. John's and disposed of. In this war France lost all her Canadian possessions. In 1760 the Governor, Capt. James Webb captured and brought into St. John's the French ship Tavingnon of St. Malo with upwards of three thousand five hundred quintals of dry fish; the whole of which capture produced, by public sale in St. John's, the sum of two thousand five hundred and seventy pounds. In 1761 Captain, afterwards Lord Graves, was appointed Governor. The naval force on the station was very inconsiderable at that time. England was engaged with Spain and France in negotiations for a permanent peace, but Spain had a desire to secure in these negotiations the privilege of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland. On the 17th December negotiations were broken off, war was declared in January 1762 and the importation of fish from Newfoundland into the Kingdom of Spain was prohibited. In May a French squadron under the command of M. de Ternay sailed from Brest, and on the 24th of June entered Bay Bulls and landed some troops which marched towards St. John's. This place was not then in a proper state of defence. The garrison consisted of only sixty three men, and there was at that time in the harbor the Gramont, sloop of war. After an ineffectual defence the town was surrendered, and the garrison and officers and men of the Gramont were made prisoners. Several merchant vessels, which were in port at the time, were seized, as well as every kind of property of any value. The French then proceeded to repair the fortifications

of the town and harbor, being determined to keep possession of the place. The French squadron which was then assembled at St. John's, after devastating the coast from Bay Bulls to Trinity, consisted of the Robuste, of seventy-four guns, L'Eveille, of sixty four, La Garonne, of forty four, La Licorne, of thirty, and a bomb ketch; they had fifteen hundred soldiers and a proportionable quantity of artillery and stores. The news of the capture of St. John's was some time reaching the other Country, but in the meantime Captain Douglas in the Syren, happening to be on a cruise to the southward of Newfoundland, received information of the appearance on that coast of a French squadron with land forces, he entered St. Mary's harbor and despatched from thence two merchant vessels, the brig William and sloop Bonetta, with a petty officer of the Syren, on board each, to cruise for a stated time on the Banks to intercept the convoy daily expected from England, and then to proceed with letters for General Amherst to Halifax, where they were to take in supplies and bring them to Placentia. The Bonetta was more fortunate than the William and intercepted Governor Graves, in the Antelope, with a large fleet of merchantmen. The Bonetta was ordered to land a party of marines at Isle au Bois (Ferryland) and then to proceed to Halifax with the Governor's and Captain Douglas' despatches. Governor Graves put into Placentia and ordered the repairs of Fort Frederick and Castle Hill and waited anxiously for re-inforcements from Halifax, Captain Douglas meantime superintended the fortifications at Ferryland. On receipt of the despatches, brought by the Bonetta, Lord Colville, who was the Admiral

in command of the North American station, sailed from Halifax in his flagship the Northumberland and having looked into Bay Bulls, arrived off St. John's harbor, which he blockaded, whilst M. de Ternay lay inside with a superior squadron.

On the 11th September Colonel Amherst, with about eight hundred men, consisting of Highlanders and Provincial Light Infantry, joined Lord Colville's squadron off St. John's. The French had made every preparation to resist attack, they had sunk shallops in the narrow entrance of Quidi Vidi, and had very much strengthened its fortifications, and those at the entrance of St. John's, and at Signal Hill. Finding it no easy task to force the entrance of either St. John's or Quidi Vidi, the troops were landed, under a galling fire, at Torbay. Capt. McDonald, with his company, dispersed the enemy, who retired on St. John's through the woods. Capt. McDonald followed by the sea coast path, and advanced on the strong post of Quidi Vidi. Capt. McKenzie, with another company, advanced to the foot of the ridge or at the junction of the Portugal Cove and King's Bridge Roads, and attacked the French position from near where now stands the King's Bridge, it was there that he was wounded. From a letter written by one of the eyewitnesses of the battle, it appears that the southern bank of Rennie's River and Quidi Vidi Lake were then thickly wooded and the French had skirmishers posted amongst the trees to resist the English advance. The river we are told was in flood just at that time, showing that the September rains had commenced. Captain McDonald succeeded in carrying the French position at Quidi Vidi, and opened up a communication with the ships, for landing the artillery and stores. He then

proceeded to dislodge the French from a position of great strength just over Quidi Vidi, and presumably that hill at the junction of the Cuckhold's Cove and Quidi Vidi Roads which overlooks and commands the entrance to that place. The French retreated with some precipitation, leaving some prisoners behind, but they still held Signal Hill and the town, and in order to gain the latter it was necessary to storm the former. This was done by Captain McDonald at the head of his Highlanders and the Provincial Light Infantry. If you walk towards Quidi Vidi on the north side you will notice the ridge which runs up to the crest of Signal Hill, and you will see by a close investigation that it was an easy matter for McDonald's force to climb within a short distance of the fortifications without being seen. Thus it is that we are told he passed the French sentries and advance guard unobserved, nor was he discovered till the main body of French saw him climbing up the rocks and almost at the top, (that is the north-east crest of the hill) which he actually gained in the midst of the enemy's fire, which he soon returned with such fierceness that the French gave way; the crest being taken the French force on the Crows Nest or Gibbet Hill was next destroyed. In this engagement the gallant captain received a mortal wound, four of his men were killed and eighteen were wounded. It was on the 13th September, that the English landed at Torbay, and on the 16th that Colonel Amherst proceeded vigorously in his preparations to attack Fort William and the town of St. John's. A breastwork and an unfinished fort which commanded the harbor being taken, the guns of Signal Hill were trained on the town. The shallops which had been sunk there by the French had to be removed in order

that artillery and stores might be landed, and this was fortunately done before a violent gale of wind sprung up and drove Lord Colville's squadron off the coast. The French Admiral finding the blockading squadron away, slipped his cables and under the cover of a thick fog, made his escape without being seen by the English fleet, until he had got too far out to sea. On the night of the 17th Colonel Amherst opened fire on the town with a battery of one eight-inch mortar, seven cohorns and six royals, which was replied to by a brisk fire from the fort, which threw several shells. The attack continued until the 19th, but on the morning of the 20th the French, finding themselves abandoned by their fleet, at once capitulated and surrendered themselves prisoners of war, on condition of being conveyed to Brest by the first opportunity. This condition was complied with by Lord Colville who had by that time returned to the harbor. Thus with a small force of eight hundred land forces and three ships of war the French were driven from the shores of Newfoundland.

After the re-capture of St. John's by the English, much destitution prevailed in the town and surrounding settlements. The merchants complained that a number of Irish youngsters had been left in the Colony and that they were in indigent circumstances. The Governor was petitioned to have them sent home, and some were deported. It has been said by some historians that during the attack on St. John's and other settlements in the Colony that the men of the West Country were the principal fighters, there are no records to prove this statement but it has been said by the old inhabitants that whilst the West Country men were great fighters at sea, they

were surpassed on shore by the Irish youngsters.

The attack on St. John's and its capture by the French was keenly felt in Britain, and the Government, on its recapture, took more interest in its defences and in the general government of the Colony. The defences were strengthened at St. John's, and the first Custom House was established in the Colony, being stationed in St. John's. Hitherto a tax had been collected by the naval officers in command of the station; but this mode was changed by the appointment of Mr. Hamilton as the first civilian collector of customs, who was under the control of the department in Boston, Mass., then capital of the North American colonies. The population of the whole island at this period (1762) was reckoned at 13,000, only about one-half of whom were constant residents. The population of St. John's must have been very small, as the most of the people appear to have been settled in Conception Bay and Ferryland. Before Governor Graves left the Colony, in the autumn of 1762, several of the inhabitants who aided in its defences had their services suitably acknowledged. Mr. George Hutchings for his constant watch on the fleet of Admiral de Ternay, was awarded the land now known as the Hutchings' estate.

In 1764 Captain, afterwards Sir Hugh Palliser, was appointed to the Government of the Colony, and he brought with him the celebrated Captain Cook, who upon his arrival in St. John's, was detailed to survey and make a chart of the Island. Previous to this, however, in 1762, Captain Cook had surveyed the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon before they were surrendered to the French.

Under Governor Palliser's administration the navigation laws were ex-

tended to St. John's, and laws made with respect to the payment of wages to the fisherman. These gave great offence to the West Country merchants, and attempts were made to set them aside which proved futile. Under his government, trade and population increased, although settlement was discouraged by him. He appears to have had a poor opinion of the island, and did his utmost to prevent cultivation and settlement. Palliser had some trouble with the garrisons of both St. John's and Placentia, and he ordered a number of houses which had been built about Fort William, to be hauled down. These houses had been looked upon by officers and soldiers as their private property, and their destruction gave great offence. Palliser, no doubt, corrected many abuses, and one of his chief acts was the limiting of places where liquor could be sold. Prowse's History quotes an old record showing that Mr. William Newman was ordered to pull down his house because it had been sold to him by "a soldier in payment of debts contracted for liquor and other unjustifiable dealings. Michael Gill's house was to remain only during his life-time; no liquor to be sold there. And Wood's house was also to remain for his life-time under the same conditions."

At this period the persons in greatest favour in St. John's appear to have been the Gills and the Keens, upon whom every kind of office was conferred. Michael Gill was Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court, Keeper of the Rolls, Public Auctioneer, Sole Sworn Broker, and Sole Notary Public. His brother Nicholas also held offices.

In 1769 the Honourable John Byron, then a Captain in the navy—the grand father of the celebrated poet, was sworn in as Governor of Newfound-

land, Labrador, Magdalen Islands and Anticosti. During his administration many changes occurred in and about St. John's. Several grants were given for property, notably to Lieut. Pringle, of the Royal Engineers, "that piece of land which lies north of a river running into Quidi Vidi from the Cascade to a foot bridge which crosses the said river and to the south of Dover's Hill." This is the piece of land which extends from the falls of Rennie's River to the King's Bridge. Robinson's Hill was then called Dover's Hill. This grant was executed on board H. M. S. Panther in 1771, and was in 1773 confirmed and recorded by Governor Shuldham.

In 1773 Governor Lord Shuldham was appointed and a more rigorous collection of taxes was enforced. As resistance to taxation by the Mother Country first commenced at Boston, so St. John's loudly protested against the introduction of further duties on the fishery which had always been almost free hence the reason why Governor Shuldham rigorously enforced the payment of duties.

The revolution in the American Colonies, which culminated in the outbreak of war in 1776, caused great uneasiness and distress in St. John's. An alarming apprehension of want prevailed and vessels were dispatched to Ireland for provisions. During this period many grants of land were obtained. Friendly Hall was granted to Alexander Dunn, Collector of Customs, and the Ellis's, Stripling's, Gill's, Keen's and Williams's estates were all obtained about this time. In 1773 Fort Townshend was first commenced, and a road from Fort William to it begun, also the King's Road, and the road to Signal Hill was laid out. Upon the breaking

out of the American War redoubts on the roads from the adjacent outposts were erected. On the Torbay Road, at Cox's Marsh, two redoubts were formed mounting two 18-pounder carronades—each about a mile from Torbay. At Piperstock Hill—three guns were mounted. At the village of Torbay a battery of four long 6-pounder, with a guard-house and a Sergeant's weekly command, was stationed. Two or three guns were mounted on the rising ground near Twenty-Mile Pond, and there was also a guard-house and battery at Hayse's Farm on the Petty Harbor Road.

In 1775 much destruction of property was caused by one of the heaviest storms known in Newfoundland. Many fishing boats and vessels were destroyed and about three hundred persons lost their lives. The destruction of property on land especially in St. John's, was severe. Whilst great suffering and privation was experienced by reason of this gale, it was greatly accentuated by the conduct of the American Colonists, who having decreed in 1774 that no intercourse of trade should be had with Newfoundland, the following year, put it into effect, and deprived us of the means of obtaining food supplies for which we had been largely dependent on the American Colonies. In this year of want our late Colonial brethren did their utmost to starve and destroy our trade.

In 1776 Rear Admiral Montague was appointed Governor, and he at once proceeded to take means to defend the Colony from the attacks of the New England privateers, which had done much damage on the coast during the previous year. The fastest sailing vessels in the trade, chiefly from St. John's, were man-

ned and armed, and being officered by men from H. M. Navy did good service in protecting the coast. Many American privateers were captured and brought into St. John's.

During the American rebellion several changes of Governors took place. In 1778 a fleet was fitted out from St. John's by Governor Montague, and St. Pierre and Miquelon were captured, and over 1900 Frenchmen who were residing there were deported to France. In 1779 Rear Admiral Edwards was appointed Governor and the first Government House was erected in St. John's. This stood, previous to the fire of 1902, in a narrow lane named Duke of York Street, running from Duckworth Street to Gover Street, parallel with and east of Cochrane Street. The Gills used to describe it as surrounded by a garden which was known as "The Garden." Governor Edwards was accompanied by his daughters, and one of them left a sketch of St. John's made from the Beach which appears in Prowse's History as taken in 1770. The date, however, must have been 1780, as Miss Edwards did not arrive here until 1779 and no Highland soldiers were stationed in St. John's until 1778, yet several appear in the sketch.

One of the most notable events which occurred during Governor Edwards' administration was the appointment by Pope Pius VI. of the Rev. James Louis O'Donel, O.S.F., as Prefect Apostolic of the Island. In noting this event the late Archbishop Howley says: "We may date the birth of the Catholic Church in Newfoundland from this appointment." Subsequently, in 1796, the Rev. J. L. O'Donel was consecrated Bishop in Quebec. He built the Old Chapel and the Old Palace, both of

which stood on or near the land now occupied by the Star of the Sea Hall.

Fort Townshend, which was begun in 1773 was finished in 1779. As there was no regular line of streets laid down, there was much irregularity in building. Governor Edwards ordered that the lower road (now Water Street) and the upper road (now Duckworth Street) be kept twelve feet wide. The width of Water Street does not appear to have been kept to that gauge for as late as 1823 a cart could barely pass along the street near where now stands Garland's bookstore.

A notable event took place in 1786, viz.: The arrival in St. John's, for service on the naval station, of Prince William Henry (afterwards William IV.) as Captain of H.M.S. Pegasus.

The inhabitants of St. John's were kept in a state of vigilant watchfulness during the year 1780 as a large French fleet and transports had sailed from France, the destination of which was supposed to be Newfoundland, but which afterwards arrived in the United States. After the American War the Home Government commenced the repairing and improving of the defences of St. John's. Signal Hill was fortified, barracks were erected, and the first block house or Signal House was built there. The guns for the fortifications were parbuckled up the face of the cliff at Crow's Nest and Queen's Battery. Three furnaces for heating shot were formed, viz.: at Fort Fredrick on the Southside near Pancake rock, Fort William, and at Chain Rock Battery. A corps of volunteers was raised by Col. Skinner called the Newfoundland Fusileers, and so

many were the troops that sufficient accomodation was not found for them in existing barracks. In 1796 the garrison was ordered under cover, and the barracks at Fort Townshend and William were repaired and enlarged and the new barracks at Signal Hill finished. The Block House was so far completed that six guns were mounted on the lower floor, and a system of signals was arranged whereby the presence of an enemy's fleet might be made known. The first Block House was stationed on the northern eminence of Signal Hill; the south point being occupied by a large platform of wood called the Duke of York's Battery on which was mounted eight 24-pounder guns four 18-inch pounder carronades and two 10-inch mortars. A large chain had been fastened at Chain Rock and laid across the Narrows to a great capstan which stood at Pancake, preparatory to being stretched across the Narrows when an enemy might appear. These preparations for defence had been scarcely completed when on the 1st September 1796, the signal was made from the Block House for an enemy's fleet to the southward. The signal consisted of a blue pennant hoist at the mast-head over the French flag.

The enemy proved to be the French Admiral—Rilery—who had under his command seven sail of the line, two frigates and some smaller vessels. The signal of alarm and defiance was at once made from Signal Hill and at all the forts. Quite a number of vessels were in port, but only two ships of war—the Governor's ship and a frigate. The Governor, Admiral Sir James Wallace, immediately proclaimed martial law and ordered all men in the town fit

for service—merchants and their servants, captains of vessels with their crews, planters with their fishermen and shoremen—to muster in front of the camp where they were enrolled and told off to the forts and batteries. There was only one old man or a boy allowed to remain on each merchant's wharf, vessel or fishing room. A great many seamen were employed in raising the chain across the narrows; the great capstan at the South Side being assisted by three schooners placed at equal distances from Chain Rock, and by grappling the chain with their anchors, and heaving altogether they raised it to the surface sufficiently to prevent the entrance of any vessel. The schooners were charged with combustibles and were intended to be used as fire-ships on the enemy coming in contact with the chain. The flag-ship and the frigate were also placed at enfilading distance in the harbor to give the foe a warm reception on entering the narrows.

The enemy stood off and on, near Cape Spear, all that day; and during the night the Governor ordered the road to be opened from Maggotty Cove Bridge through the enclosures leading to Signal Hill in order to expedite the transport of camp equipage, ammunition, stores, and provisions to that point. By daylight, on the second, the tents were all pitched on the summit of the hill, from Duke of York's Battery to Cuckhold's Head, and also on the South Side Hill over Fort Amherst. This war-like display of three or four thousand men on the hill's appeared to have an intimidating effect on the enemy. A great deal of telegraphing and boat communication took place with the flag-ship, and towards evening the fleet stood a little further off to sea.

Reconnoitering parties were sent out along shore, north and south, day and night in anticipation of a landing being effected. On the third day the enemy formed line and stood in for the narrows, when it was expected their intention was to attempt a landing. They stood on until the foremost ship was near the extreme range of the guns at Fort Amherst when she and all of them put about and stood off to sea. They remained in sight several days, and at last arrived at Bay Bulls, where they landed and after driving the inhabitants to the woods burnt their stores and houses.

After the visit of Admiral Richery's fleet, the sincere and heartfelt thanks of the merchants of St. John's were voted to Governor Wallace for his exertions in putting the town into such an admirable state of defence. In 1797 the Hon. W. Waldegrave was appointed Governor, and upon his arriving here the mutiny of the *Nore* spread to this Colony, and a rebellion broke out on board *H. M. S. Latona* whilst lying in St. John's harbor. It was only quelled by the officers drawing their swords and the marines using their bayonets. On the following Sunday, Admiral Waldegrave addressed the ship's crew informing them that their great delegate—Parker—and many other of his atrocious companions were hanged at the *Nore*, and that he was prepared to pour hot shot into the *Latona* if there was any further sign of mutiny. In 1799 the first government school was opened in St. John's, the Rev. L. Anspach being appointed head master. Although the population of St. John's was at this time not above 5,000 over thirty public houses were licensed. In the winter of 1799 and the spring of 1800 a conspiracy was set on foot by cer-

tain soldiers of the troops stationed here, to destroy the fortifications and plunder the town. The plot was discovered and twelve of the ring-leaders arrested, five of whom were sentenced to be hanged and seven to be shot. The former were executed on a gallows at Gibbet Hill, and the others were sent to Halifax.

Having put before you a short historical account of St. John's, to the opening of the 19th century, I propose to give some idea of what it was like at this time. My account has been gathered from those who fifty years ago recounted their knowledge of the place as they knew it or as their fathers had known it. I also propose to quote from a work called "Family Recollections," written by Miss Durnford, the daughter of Lieut-Col. Durnford of the Royal Engineers who was stationed here at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Miss Durnford's sister married Mr. J. Dunscomb, the brother of Mrs. Bridge, who was the wife of the much esteemed Archdeacon Bridge, the mother of Admiral Bridge.

The town of St. John's, in about the year 1800, presented an appearance similar to an outpost fishing village. The water-front was lined with fishing stages and the wharves of merchants. Water Street extended unbrokenly from the cove, now known as Job's Cove, but then called the "Watering Cove" and afterwards Hudson's Cove, to a little beyond Newman's premises. It was a narrow street lined on the south side by the stores and shops of merchants, and on the north side by small shops, only here and there, and not continuously. So narrow was this street in places, and particularly between where the Tele-

gram Office now stands and McBride's Hill, that two persons could easily grasp hands across it, and a cart could with difficulty be brought along. The hill or cliff prevented the widening of the street within this area at that time. It has since been blasted away to permit the erections on the present line of street. At Prescott Street the hill continued from Duckworth Street out to the water's edge, at the level of Duckworth Street, and after leaving the street at Job's corner the pedestrian had to take to the land-wash to get further east. The same kind of projection occurred at Custom House Hill and what was then known as the King's Beach extended nearly to the middle of the present Water Street, on a level with Duckworth Street. When the King's wharf was built in 1811 a large portion of the "Beach" was cut down, and it was again further levelled in 1816. But few houses were built in the central portion of the town between King's Road and McBride's Hill. Around and about Fort William, and along that portion of Duckworth Street situated between Ordnance Street and Cochrane Street, a number of small dwellings were erected. The upper portion of the town from Queen's Street to Beck's Cove, and back from Water Street, was covered with flakes and in the winter time the road under the flakes was protected from the heavy snow, but it was usually covered with a sheet of ice. In the summer it was like a bog. The only houses that stood off of Water Street, between what is known now as McBride's Cove and Hutchings' house, at Barking Kettle, was Mr. Carter's house on Burstheart Hill (now Carter's Hill), Mr. Branscombe's house, which stood back of where Mr. Smith built at

the foot of Theatre Hill and a cooerage near Lion's Square, back of where Mr. E. F. Carter lives. As I said previously, all the space between McBride's Cove and Springdale Street, on the north side of Water Street, was covered with flakes, which were reached from Water Street by overhead bridges: one for many years stood near Codner and Jennings's Cove (now Monroe's Cove), and one near where Lash's is. At McBride's Cove, where the Bank of Montreal now stands, the road was so narrow that Mr. Renouf could, at his door, hold an ordinary tone conversation with his neighbor opposite.

The Military Road and King's Road were opened up in the year 1773, and Signal Hill Road in 1794, and were merely good paths for some time after 1800. The roads which then extended into the country, were only pathways connecting with the various outlying settlements, and with several farm buildings. One path led to Pringle's Dale, and thence over Dover's (Robinson's) Hill to Friendly Hall, one to Boucher's farm at Riverhead, and two to Quidi Vidi Lake. One is now the King's Bridge Road, which was widened by the Military in 1798, when the building of the Royal Engineer's House was commenced. This building stood where is now the residence of Mr. John Browning. The 'King's Bake-House,' as it was called, which stood on the corner of Military Road and King's Bridge Road, and the Ordnance buildings, were erected much earlier; they were begun in 1794. The Commissariat House was built in 1800, it is now known as St. Thomas's Rectory. The law, prohibiting the erection of any house near the waterside excepting for

fishery purposes, and then of only one story in height, was so strictly enforced that we find Governor Millbanke in 1790 ordering Mr. Hutchings to remove a house which was erected in opposition to Acts 10th and 11th of William III., and 15th of George III. This Governor also informed Mr. Hutchings: "I am also directed not to allow any possession as private property to be taken of, or any right of property whatever to be acknowledged in any land whatever which is not actually employed in the fishery."

The father of Sir Hugh Hoyles was subsequently ordered to pull down a house which he had built in the eastern part of the town. Neither Mr. Hutchings nor Mr. Hoyles obeyed the mandate; in the former case Governor Millbanke left the Colony without enforcing his order, and Mr. Hoyles stubbornly refused to comply with the order. It was not until 1813 that the Home Government ordered Governor Keates to grant titles to land. Where the Roman Catholic Cathedral stands and from thence down to and including the ground upon which Government House stands, was known as the "Barrens," and there the people resorted in those days to pick the whortleberry or "hurts." Thick woods covered the banks of Quidi Vidi and what is known as the Forest Road was a pathway through the woods. Trees covered Signal Hill and the Southside Hills, although the former is now bare of bushes, and the latter has only low scrub growing on it. Miss Durnford writing of 1809 says: "Approaching Newfoundland we were at once greeted by a fragrant land smell, and soon the abrupt features of its wild fir-clad shores came in view." Again she says, "England, sensible of the value of this evergreen land, has

guarded it by a strong naval force." Again, "The heights over-looking the entrance to St John's are covered almost from water-line to summit with fir and spruce, and planted with batteries romantically situated. The raging surf of the Atlantic's billows dashes against the embrasures of Amherst and Chainrock batteries; lobsters of the finest flavour, and other shell-fish are found in abundance amid the crevices of their shelving and slippery rocks, with hosts of mollusca; and the line of battleships, as well as the red-sailed fishing skiff come almost within arm's reach of the cannon. Midway and crowning the eminence, guns commandingly point from the Queen's Battery, Fredrick Battery, and the lines on Signall Hill; and other defensive positions are placed among wooded projections of capes and bays, fragrant with spruce, juniper, &c. Generally wherever the ground was laid open by clearance, the kalmia sprang up, an indigenous shrub or weed, brightening the wilderness with its pink clusters. Fantastic and delicate creepers present a trellised carpet to the feet that tread within the sombre shade of the woods; and varieties of graceful shrubs produce spontaneously the cranberry or oxycoccus, whose Indian name is maskigo meino; the whortleberry or vaccinium; the partridge or mitchella, whose tiny wreath almost vies in beauty with that of the famed capillaire or linnae, yet without the fragrance of the last; and the hardy little dogwood or cornus. There is much to admire in the decoration of its hills and valleys, its ferns and intricacies of wreathing foliage, clinging to and twining round tapering firs and valuable spruce trees. The beautiful white moss crushes beneath the feet, and another species hangs in tufts among the branches"

A few years ago the late Mr. John Score, whilst taking bog from Signal Hill, near Deadman's Pond, uncovered numerous remains of spruce and birch trees, some of them of no mean grith.

In the days of 1800, and for many years after, only wood was burnt in St. John's, and the hills were soon denuded to supply the wants of the people in the town and of the garrison stationed at Signal Hill.

The churches in existence in St. John's in 1800 were the Anglican Church, which stood nearly at the southwest corner of the square on which the Cathedral is now built. Its eastern end was where the monument stands near the flag-staff, and its western end was on ground which has since been taken to make Church Hill. The first building placed there was erected in 1720, the second in 1759 and was largely repaired in 1800. The "old chapel," as it is fondly called by the Catholics who remember it, was built by Bishop O'Donel in 1785 and stood near where the Star of the Sea Hall now is. A Congregational Church stood on the site near the corner of Gower and Victoria Street; it was afterwards removed and was known by the past generation as the Temperance Hall. It does not appear that a church of any other denomination existed here in 1800, the first Methodist Church in St. John's not having been erected until 1816, although Methodism had been early established in Newfoundland.

No newspaper flourished in the Island until the establishment of the Royal Gazette in 1807. A grammar school was established in 1799 under the care of the Rev. L. Anspach, and in 1802 two charity schools were opened—one a Protestant and the other a Catholic school. There was no post

office in existence, the first being established in 1805. No protection was afforded from the numerous fires which occurred, and it was not until 1804 that the town owned a fire engine, which was presented by the Phoenix Insurance Co. of London, and thirty-five fire buckets were given by the British and Imperial Insurance Companies.

At that time everyone who stirred abroad after dark carried a lantern and a good stick. The military officers and the merchants and shopkeepers, had frequent dinner and tea parties in the winter evenings, and it was not an uncommon occurrence to see the gentleman, who attended the former, winding their way home preceded by a servant carrying a lantern. A story is told of a well-to-do merchant walking, or trying to walk home, being met by a gentleman shortly after sunrise, in the rear of where Mr. Stott's premises now stands. The merchant was preceded by a negro, who carried a lighted lantern, and who was thus loudly abused: "Pompey, you d—d nigger, why don't you hold the lantern straight? I am sure you are drunk." "No massa," replied the negro. "I'se not drunk; specs de lantun am."

Fresh meat of any kind was very scarce, and not at all procurable in the summer time. From the old people we learn that "Buble's Squeak" (a compound of corn beef and vegetables), "Colcannon" (potatoes and cabbage), "Twice Laid" (salt fish mashed with potatoes, butter, salt, etc.), "Vang" (fat pork cut up into small squares and fried in batter), and "brose" or "brewis" were amongst the dishes in vogue. Fresh fish in the summer time was one of the chief edibles indulged in by mas-

ter and servant alike. Hamburg bread, flour and pork, Irish pork, and English corn beef and flour were the principal food imports in 1800.

No encouragement had been given to agriculture, in fact the military officers were, for a long time, the only people who attempted cultivation of the soil. Governor Edwards (1780) had a very good garden near Government House, in Duke York Street, "which yielded abundantly fruits and vegetables, equal in flavor and size to the most carefully cultivated produce of English gardening." In 1800 Mr. Thomas had a cleared place at Quidi Vidi, nearly opposite the grounds of the camp of the Newfoundland Regiment; it was subsequently known as "Prowse's Farm." Colonel Pringle had a small farm (the late Sir James Winter's place of residence), another existed at "Friendly Hall," and Bulley's farm on Waterford Bridge Road, and a farm owned by Mr. Dunscomb (now Lester's farm), were a few of the places known as farms about St. Johns at that period.

The Governor's, up to 1800 and for years after, were all naval men. Up to 1780 they served a term of three summers, retiring to England for the winter. Upon the appointment of Governor Edwards the term was changed to three years residence, and the ship-of-war, commanded at the time of appointment by the Governor, with topmasts struck, was moored in the harbor about opposite Knowling's premises. Those who remember the premises occupied by Messrs Knowling and R. Prowse & Sons, prior to the fire of 1892, will bring to mind the fact that an access to the waterside, from Water Street, was by an arch to the westward of R. Prowse & Sons, and by a crooked lane which was, on the south, built over. This was the old

lane, opposite to which the Admiral's ship was moored and was known as Man-o'-War's Lane. A landing place was here fitted up for the accommodation of the officers and men of H. M. ships. At what is now known as Job's Cove a boom was placed, and there the boats of the warships obtained water from a brook which, running down on the west side of Prescott Street, discharged into that cove.

About 1825 the use of this watering place was discontinued by the ships of war, and water for their use was obtained from the brook on the Southside, which still flows east of the Admiralty property now occupied by Bowring Brothers, and known as Mudge's premises.

On the 5th February, 1806, the Benevolent Irish Society was formed. Lt. Col. J. Murray, Jas. McBriare, John McKillop, Joseph Church and Capt. Winckworth Tonge were named as a committee to draw up the rules and regulations for its government.

On the 19th November, 1807, the Merchants Hall (the first Board of Trade) was opened. The rooms were advertised in the Royal Gazette, to open every day from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. James McBriare (First) President and George Garland, Secretary.

On the 11th August, 1808, a Notice in the Royal Gazette announces that Doctor Carson will inoculate with the cow pock gratis to the children of the poor.

On the 17th October of the same year, D. Rennie, foreman of the Grand Jury, Supreme Court, recommended the erection of a powder magazine near Chain Rock. Shortly after, Mr. George Garland called a meeting at the Merchants Hall to initiate this

enterprise. A company was formed and 50 shares of 10 pounds each, were issued, not more than one share to be allocated to any one person.

On the 22nd June, 1809, a notice of the Dissolution of Partnership is advertised in the Royal Gazette. "The concern lately carried on under the title of Patten, Baine & Co., was dissolved on the 20th February, all claims are to be paid by Walter Baine & Co."

On the 4th April, 1811, we are informed that a new light house has been erected.

"Notice is hereby given that a light house is established at Fort Amherst on the southside entrance of this harbor, which will be lighted from the 15th March to the 31st December in each year.

"J. Dunscombe, N. Parker, Thos. Stabb, N. W. Hoyles, G. Robinson, Committee for Light Establishment."

In 1811 two rare visitants were seen in Newfoundland, the comet of that year and an English Duke. His Grace the Duke of Manchester, being en route to his Government at Jamaica, spent a few days at St. Johns. In 1812 the first local Insurance Society was formed. James O'Brien was President and N. W. Hoyles was Agent.

The year 1812 was the commencement of a stirring period in the history of St. John's.

In June of that year war was declared between the United States and Great Britain.

At the outbreak of the war there was three sail of the line, twenty-one frigates and thirty-seven sloops, brigs and schooners of war in St. John's alone. Lieut.-General, then Col. Durnford, in command of the Royal Engineers, threw up fresh batteries and repaired and improved, in some

cases entirely rebuilding, such as were falling to decay. The Queen's Battery and a large Block House on the south projection of Signal Hill were among the newly constructed; Fredrick, Amherst, and Chain Rock among those repaired and newly built. To carry on these works, continual excavations in the rock by means of gunpowder were necessary, and Col. Durnford had frequent cause to lament the fool-hardiness of the workmen, who would linger after the warning horn had told that the slow match was lit. A sapper was blown up by its exploding force, entirely in consequence of the man's own dearly paid for neglect. An eye-witness said "the explosion was so great that the man's body was hurled in the air." The officer commanding the troops at this period was General Francis Moore, to whom Col. Durnford acted as aide-de-camp whilst he was on this station.

Although intimately connected by trade with the United States a loyal enthusiasm prevailed amongst the people of Newfoundland, and on the outbreak of hostilities the Loyal Newfoundland Rangers, which was organized in 1806, but had fallen into a disorganized state, was reconstructed. The following were the officers; Major McBraire, Commandant; Capt. Bouchier, T. William, Lily, McAllister, G. R. Robinson, Crawford, Haynes, Ryan, Trimmingham, Thomas; Lieu tenants Millidge, Broom, Stewart McLea, Simpson, Livingston, Grieve, Arnott, Clift, Shannon; Ensigns Morris, McCalman, Rendell, Scott, Willis, Magill, Niven Lang; Adjutant Hughes; Quartermaster Barnes; Surgeon, Dr. Duggan. The regular troops numbered about 750 men. Vessels of marque were fitted out by the merchants in St. John's, and kept at bay the numbers of Yankee privateers which visited our coast.

In August of 1812, whilst the British fleet was engaged off the coast and in convoying merchantmen, an American armed vessel appeared off St. John's, and very near to the entrance. This greatly alarmed the merchants, who immediately applied to General Moore for the aid of fifty volunteers from the troops in garrison, who decided that each corps should furnish a proportionate quota. Two corporals and six privates of sappers cheerfully joined the other detachments, and embarked in a brig fitted out by the merchants. As soon as the Americans saw the movement of the British vessel, it took its departure, and was not again seen.

The winter of 1812 was a very severe one. Miss Durnford says: "Deep snow and high drifts debarred, during the long winter months, all field exercise to the troops, and fearful at this season were the risks to which soldiers on duty, visiting officers, and relieving parties were exposed. During that winter the sentinel was not unfrequently found frozen to death, and while the tempest of a powder was battling, life was often hazarded in visiting by night the various detached posts. While the intense frost hung with icicles the breath from the nostrils and lips, and nipt with the pang of extreme cold the extremities of the human body, the strict discipline of war was maintained at St. John's and no relaxation of its severity permitted. To assist in keeping alive the spirit of the troops, during the tedium of the dreary winter months, a mock fight was sometimes carried on upon the Lake of Quidi Vidi, and the Irish game of hurley was encouraged whenever the sea in the harbor was frozen, or became ice-bound.

Again Miss Durnford gives us some information about the rejoicings and

otherwise, on the receipt of war news. She says: "While war flapped its lurid wings over Europe and America—and never was purpose more righteous than that which opposed its progress—every honest man's heart responded to the virtuous obligation and awakening call. Indignation swelled, but the more at each rumour of its reverses, and the joy with which the news of a victory was received, gained acknowledgement at St. John's, and was rendered in the individual pride and ecstasy accompanying the salute and volley, pealing from its rock-planted batteries, and strongest mustered parades; cheerfully commenced by the ships of war lying in the harbor, filled up by enthusiastic cheers from the seamen and troops, each crag and rock echoing loudly every discharge. Col. Dunford took pleasure in studying himself and exercising the sappers under his command in tactics, whenever leisure permitted; sparing himself no fatigue in bearing a share in the garrison duty, often in this severe climate amounting to dangerous, though such duty was not strictly required from his corps. He often spoke with satisfaction of a parade on the commemoration of a signal overthrow Napoleon had sustained, where his newly practised sappers displayed great steadiness when formed in line with the Newfoundland regiment. Three volleys were to be fired; and when the commandant's first word of command was misunderstood by the rest of the line, and a scattered irregular fire in consequence given, the company of sappers reserved their fire to a man until ordered to arm, to post and shoulder, when the volley was properly executed, eliciting on the field the verbal approbation of the General. Colonel Durnford took his regular turn in the garrison duty, first as Captain, latterly

as Field Officer. He took pleasure in the morning parades; and whilst performing the services of an aide-de-camp, prided himself in mounting on these occasions an old charger of the Duke of Kent's—a faithful bay, that in memory of gone by distinction, always persisted in stepping foremost of the General's staff."

Miss Durnford says that her father was fond of horticulture. "Several wild patches, to which he devoted attention, yielded abundantly fruit and vegetables, equal in flavor and size to the most carefully cultivated produce of English gardening. No market or fair was to be depended on from soil calling vainly for cultivation; each man was of necessity his own farmer, did he desire to eat fresh mutton, pork, fowls or eggs; and the luxury of milk must be supplied by his own cows. My mother was fortunate in having her pianoforte, an instrument which was a novelty in the island, twice tuned by naval officers. One was Sir William Parker, a young married lieutenant attached to the Admirals flag-ship; the other, brother to the English composer Bishop, and purser of one of the frigates."

A fire, which occurred in the woods near St. John's during the summer of 1812, caused no little anxiety for a time to the inhabitants; but the military turned out and fought the flames, their efforts, with a change of wind, prevented them spreading to the town. In fact at that period fires were rather of frequent occurrence in St. John's and the military were always foremost in combating the destroying element. In 1812, and for some years after, the public were notified by beat of alarm drum that a fire was in progress. The grants of some land for the purpose of agriculture, and a threatened plague of smallpox which

began in Harbor Grace, but was happily prevented from spreading, were among the notable events which closed the year 1812 in St. John's.

To tell of the games of "hurley" played on the harbor during the winter by the men-of-war sailors and the Irish youngsters, and on Quidi Vidi by the troops; of the faction fights; of the Yule-tide sports and the many old

customs brought to this country by the English and Irish youngsters, would take much more time than is at my disposal.

In closing this lecture I thank you for the patient hearing you have given me and I trust that I have not wearied you and that you have been interested in my attempt to give you an account of Ancient St. John's.