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Report of the Annual Meeting

National Historic Parks and Sites, 1955-56

National Historic Sites Division, National Parks Branch and Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources

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NATIONAL HISTORIC PARKS AND SITES, 1955-56
BY THE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES DIVISION,
NATIONAL PARKS BRANCH,
DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS AND
NATIONAL RESOURCES

THE RESTORATION, preservation and administration of National Historic Parks and Sites and the commemoration of the public services of outstanding persons in Canadian history is carried on by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources through the National Historic Sites Division. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, an honorary body of recognized historians, representing the ten provinces of the nation, acts in an advisory capacity to the Minister in this work. The Board was placed on a statutory basis by the Historic Sites and Monuments Act in 1953, and amending Act of 1955.

The present members of the Board are as follows: Chairman, Professor Fred Landon, London, Ontario; the Reverend A. d'Eschambault, Genthon, Manitoba; Dr. Walter N. Sage, Vancouver, B.C.; W. Kaye Lamb, Dominion Archivist, Ottawa, Ontario; the Honourable Thane A. Campbell, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Dr. A. G. Bailey, Fredericton, New Brunswick; Dr. F. J. Alcock, Chief Curator, National Museum of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario; Dr. C. Bruce Fergusson, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Richmond Mayson, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan; H. J. Walker, Ottawa, Ontario; Edouard Fiset, Quebec City, Quebec; Jules Bazin, Montreal, Quebec; M. E. LaZerte, Edmonton, Alberta; O. L. Vardy, St. John's, Newfoundland. A. J. H. Richardson, Chief, National Historic Sites Division, Ottawa, Ontario, is secretary to the Board.

Meetings of the Board were held in Ottawa in May and December, 1955, when many matters relating to Canada's historical background were reviewed. Of the many sites considered by the Board to date, over five hundred have been marked or acquired and a number of others recommended for action.

NATIONAL HISTORIC PARKS

Fort Anne National Historic Park is situated in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia. The museum building, restored in 1935, was originally the Officers' Quarters and was built in 1797-8 under the supervision of Edward, Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, when he was commander-in-chief of the British forces in the Atlantic Provinces, with headquarters at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

During the year a new residence was constructed for the Park custodian, extensive painting carried out in the museum building, a new

landing wharf built, and improvements made to the roads and paths. Additional articles of historic interest were acquired for the museum.

Visitors who registered at the Park numbered 20,276, an increase of nearly 600 over the previous year.

Port Royal National Historic Park is situated at Port Royal (formerly Lower Granville), Nova Scotia. A replica of the original Port Royal Habitation marks the exact site where the first European settlement in Canada that was more than a trading post was established in 1605 by the Sieur de Monts and Samuel de Champlain. Champlain himself chose the location and drew up the plan of settlement from which the present replica was built.

During the year a new stone entrance gateway was constructed, roads and paths improved and a new well drilled, which was lined with concrete.

Registration at the Park numbered 20,457, a decrease of 435 from the year before.

Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Park is situated about three miles from the town of Louisbourg, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. Louisbourg was a focal point in the long struggle between English and French in North America which culminated in the possession of Canada for the British Crown. Built by the French after the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 and named in honour of their sovereign, Louis XIV, the fortress was twice captured by the British and destroyed after its final conquest in 1758.

Improvements were made to the road system within the Park and to the parking area at Black Rock. Excavation and maintenance work was continued on the ruins of the fortress where 235 feet of wall was rebuilt.

The total number of visitors who signed the register in the museum was 23,022, an increase of 6,518 over the previous year.

Halifax Citadel, Halifax, Nova Scotia, is situated on Citadel Hill and has a commanding view of the harbour and city. Four forts were built at different times on its summit. The first was a wooden palisade around the young settlement, designed to protect the settlers from Indians. The second was built during the American Revolution as a stronghold against the rebels. The third was constructed when Napoleon Bonaparte was endeavouring to conquer the world and the existing one was begun in 1828. Control of the existing fortifications has been obtained and action taken to repair or restore them. During the past year work on the reconstruction of the stone walls was continued, including the repointing and restoration of the casemates and dungeon. Repairs were also made to the administration building and a water system was installed.

Visitors who signed the register numbered 121,213, approximately 21,000 more than during 1954-55.

Fort Beausejour National Historic Park is situated near Sackville, New Brunswick. Built by the French, the fort was intended to be an Acadian stronghold against the undefined claims of the English to Acadia. Around the fort the Acadians had their homes and farms. It was captured by the British under Monckton in 1755, after which time the fort was strengthened and its defenses extended by a system of entrenchments, traces of which still remain.

General maintenance work was carried out on the buildings and grounds with a view to having them present a pleasing appearance to visitors. Improvements were made to the heating system which had not been functioning properly. A new roof was constructed on the museum building, following a hurricane.

Visitor registration at the museum was 23,572, a slight increase over the previous year.

Fort Chambly National Historic Park is situated about twenty miles southeast of Montreal on a conspicuous headland on the Richelieu River. The first fort, built by the French in 1665 as a protection against the Iroquois, was of wooden construction. It was later rebuilt of stone, this work being completed in 1711. In 1760 the fort was surrendered to the British, who, with a small garrison, held it until 1775. In that year the Americans captured the fort, but evacuated it in the following year. The fort was soon afterwards repaired and garrisoned by Sir Guy Carleton and later played an important part in the War of 1812.

Improvements were made to the picnic grounds and the masonry in a section of the main walls of the fort was grouted and repointed. A new aluminum flagpole was erected on the northwest corner of the fort and the walls and ceiling of the museum were painted.

Visitors who signed the register in the museum numbered 72,090, which was an increase of 1,585 from the year before.

Fort Lennox National Historic Park is located on Ile-aux-Noix in the Richelieu River, about thirteen miles south of St. Johns, Quebec. The present fort which stands near the site of one previously erected by the French, was built by the Imperial authorities in the period from 1819 to 1827. The island, comprising an area of 150 acres, was acquired for historic site purposes in 1921, and extensive works have since been carried out on the buildings and grounds.

Maintenance work was carried out during the past year on the several fort buildings within the enclosure. This included repairs to floors, pointing of masonry walls and painting of roofs. The museum was painted and several trees trimmed and the dead branches removed.

Attendance at the Park rose from 11,899 in the preceding year to 14,610 in 1955-56.

Fort Wellington National Historic Park is situated at the east end of the town of Prescott, Ontario, adjacent to Highway No. 2. The fort, named after the Duke of Wellington, was erected when the British authorities decided to fortify Prescott as one of the most vulnerable points of attack in the War of 1812, and as the main base for the defence of communications between Kingston and Montreal. It remains as it was when finally completed in 1838, an impressive landmark.

The palisade was renewed from the entrance gateway to the caponiere on the south side of the fort. New oak entrance gates were installed and the decayed logs in the old guard-house replaced with squared timber. The usual maintenance work was carried out on the buildings and grounds.

10,918 visitors signed the register at the Park, an increase of 1,872 from the previous year.

Fort Malden National Historic Park is in Amherstburg, Ontario. The original fort was built in 1797-9 by the Second Battalion, Royal Canadian Volunteers. It was strengthened in 1812 as the principal military station on the western frontier, and was dismantled and abandoned in 1813. Only slight evidence of the original fortifications remain, but the existing earthworks and the only old building still standing are as early as 1823 at least.

A commencement was made on the extension of the iron boundary fence along the front of the Park. A new heating unit was installed in the museum building and repair work undertaken in the Custodian's quarters.

16,356 visitors signed the museum register which was a slight decrease from the previous year.

Lower Fort Garry National Historic Park is situated on the west bank of the Red River about twenty miles north of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and comprises an area of approximately 12.75 acres. It was built between 1831 and 1839 by the Hudson's Bay Company and, although never besieged, played an important part in meeting the threat of war and rebellion. Indian Treaty No. 1 was signed there on August 3, 1871. It remained a place of considerable importance until about 1882 when the head of navigation for the Red River was removed from there to old Colville Landing on the opposite side of the river near Selkirk. It was transferred to the Canadian Government in 1951 subject to the continuance of a lease of the buildings and grounds to the Motor Country Club for a further period.

Maintenance of the fort structure and grounds was continued and landscaping work was carried out from the north wall of the fort to the parking area.

Fort Battleford National Historic Park is situated in the Townsite of Battleford, four miles south of the City of North Battleford and comprises an area of 36.7 acres. The buildings include the Superintendent's House, Inspector's Cottage, Guard Room, Hospital, Stable, and Barracks. Only the first-mentioned buildings was part of the original Mounted Police Post established there in 1876 by Colonel James Walker and linked up with such posts as Macleod, Fort Walsh, Calgary, Edmonton, Carlton, and Swan River. Located in the territory of the Cree Indian, this old post had a stabilizing and encouraging effect in the settlement of the Prairie Provinces, and, during the Rebellion of 1885, many settlers sought shelter and protection there. It was also the place of execution of those who were sentenced to death for participation in the Frog Lake Massacre.

A workshop and garage building was constructed and some landscaping work carried out around the new Administration Building.

Visitors to the Park numbered 10,818, a decrease of 1,360 from the previous year.

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES

Winning of Responsible Government, St. John's, Newfoundland—A tablet was affixed to the wall in the vestibule of the House of Assembly to commemorate the events connected with the new system of Responsible Government which was conferred upon the Colony by the British Government on May 22, 1855. The tablet was unveiled by Premier Smallwood on April 4, 1956.

Sir Andrew MacPhail, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island—A secondary tablet was placed on the wall of the entrance hall to Prince of Wales College to the memory of Sir Andrew MacPhail, editor and literary figure. The tablet was unveiled on July 11, 1955.

Honourable David Laird, New Glasgow, Prince Edward Island—An iron standard with secondary tablet was erected adjacent to the main highway in honour of Honourable David Laird, Prince Edward Island legislator, Lieutenant Governor of the North West Territories and Indian Commissioner, who was born in New Glasgow in 1833. The tablet was unveiled by the Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island on August 21, 1955.

Alexander Graham Bell Museum, Baddeck, Nova Scotia—This building was constructed on a site overlooking Bras d'Or Lakes which was donated by the Province, to house the memorabilia of Alexander Graham

Bell. These were presented to the Canadian Government by the inventor's daughters. Commencement was made on a new access road, a parking area, and the installation of sewer and water services.

Fort Edward, Windsor, Nova Scotia—Window and door frames were renewed in the blockhouse, the shingles were removed from the exterior walls, and a start was made on the placing of boards thereon to simulate the original squared timbers, many of which had decayed.

First Astronomical Observatory, Fredericton, New Brunswick—A bronze tablet was affixed to the west wall of the old Observatory Building at the University of New Brunswick to mark the site of the Observatory built in 1851 at the instigation of William Brydone Jack, professor of mathematics, natural philosophy and astronomy. The tablet was unveiled with suitable ceremonies on May 10, 1955.

Sir Pierre Armand Landry, St. Joseph's, New Brunswick—A secondary tablet was affixed to St. Joseph's University to the memory of Sir Pierre Armand Landry, who represented Westmoreland in the Legislative Assembly from 1878 to 1883 and held two Cabinet portfolios. In 1916 he was knighted, the first Acadian to be so honoured. The tablet was unveiled on September 22, 1955.

Honourable Ernest Lapointe, St. Eloi, P.Q.—A special bronze tablet, affixed to an iron standard, was erected near the birthplace of the Honourable Ernest Lapointe to commemorate his distinguished services as an orator and statesman. The memorial was unveiled by the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent, on August 21, 1955.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Quebec, P.Q.—A tablet was placed on the Chateau Frontenac Hotel to commemorate the events connected with the establishment, on October 16, 1945, of the Food and Agriculture Organization, first of the new United Nations agencies. The tablet was unveiled on the occasion of the F.A.O. decennial celebrations at Quebec, October 15, 1955.

Robert Giffard, Giffard, P.Q.—A monument with tablet was erected in a small park near the City Hall, to the memory of Robert Giffard, first seigneur of Beauport and first large scale agriculturist in Canada. The memorial was unveiled on October 14, 1955.

First Banding of a Bird in Canada, Toronto, Ontario—A memorial in the form of an iron standard with a secondary tablet was erected in High Park, Toronto, to commemorate the events connected with the banding of the first wild bird in Canada, which took place on September 24, 1905, in the garden of James Henry Fleming, 267 Rusholme Avenue, Toronto. From this beginning has come a greatly increased knowledge of bird migration. The unveiling ceremony took place on September 24, 1955.

Horatio Walker, Listowel, Ontario—A secondary tablet was affixed to an inner wall of the Public Library to commemorate the services of Horatio Walker as a painter of the French-Canadian rural life and scene, particularly on the Isle of Orleans. It was unveiled on October 26, 1955.

Engagement at The Forty, Grimsby, Ontario—A cairn with tablet was erected in Waterworks Park to commemorate the events connected with the engagement at Forty Mile Creek on June 8, 1813, when invading forces were forced to abandon their position and retreat to Fort George. The memorial was unveiled by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario on June 18, 1955.

Homer Watson, Doon, Ontario—A secondary tablet was placed on the former home of Homer Watson, Canadian landscape painter, at Doon, which is now occupied by the Doon School of Fine Arts. This was unveiled under the auspices of the Waterloo Historical Society on September 10, 1955.

Lord Selkirk, Winnipeg, Manitoba—A cut-stone monument of special design, and tablet, was erected in a small park at the intersection of Colony Street and Memorial Boulevard, to commemorate the services of Lord Selkirk as a philanthropist, social reformer and colonizer. This was unveiled under the auspices of the Manitoba Historical Society on November 12, 1955.

Territorial Grain Growers' Association, Indian Head, Saskatchewan—A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected to commemorate the events connected with the founding of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association in November, 1901. This was the first attempt at co-operative enterprise among the farmers of Western Canada, and resulted in a constant advance in the development of food resources, trade and commerce. The memorial was unveiled on August 19, 1955.

Peter Fidler, Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan—A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected in the "Elks' Park" to commemorate the public services of Peter Fidler as a meteorologist and surveyor. The memorial was unveiled on October 27, 1955.

Creation of the Province of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta—A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected in front of the Legislative Building, commemorating the events leading up to and the inauguration of the Province of Alberta on September 1, 1905. Honourable G. H. V. Bulyea was the first Lieutenant Governor and Honourable A. C. Rutherford the first Premier. The monument was unveiled by the Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent, on September 7, 1955.

John Murray Gibbon, Banff, Alberta—A boulder with tablet was placed near the main Administration Building in Banff National Park in recognition of the services of John Murray Gibbon, whose life work

left a lasting impression on Canadian literature and sport. The memorial was unveiled on August 7, 1955.

Sheridan Lawrence, Peace River, Alberta—A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected on the Cathedral grounds, commemorating the pioneer services of Sheridan Lawrence as a farmer, miller, meat packer, merchant, friend of the Indian, road builder, magistrate and patron of education. The unveiling of the memorial was carried out on September 25, 1955.

Magrath Head-Gates, Magrath, Alberta—A monument with tablet was erected in the town, to record the events associated with the first large scale irrigation system in Canada, which was opened by the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company on November 14, 1899. The scheme was promoted by Elliot T. Galt, Charles Alexander Magrath and Charles Ora Card, and the system extended from Kimball to Lethbridge and beyond. The memorial was unveiled on July 25, 1955.

Industry at Trail, Trail, British Columbia—A cut-stone monument with tablet was erected at the large smelter of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada, to commemorate the tireless and successful research of engineers, metallurgists and chemists which resulted in the commercial development of important mineral resources of Canada. The smelter was built in 1895 and this centre later became one of the world's greatest sources of lead, zinc and silver, and later of chemical fertilizers. The unveiling of the memorial was carried out on November 19, 1955.