

Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association Rapport de l'assemblée annuelle de la Société historique du Canada

Report of the Annual Meeting

National Historic Parks and Sites, 1956-57

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

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NATIONAL HISTORIC PARKS AND SITES, 1956 - 57

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. W. N. Sage, Vancouver, B. C.; Dr. W. Kaye Lamb, Dominion Archivist, Ottawa, Ontario; the Honourable Thane A. Campbell, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Dr. A. G. Bailey, Fredericton, New Brunswick; 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; O. L. Vardy, St. John's, Newfoundland; Joel K. Smith, Edmonton, Alberta. A. J. H. Richardson, Chief, National Historic Sites Division, Ottawa, Ontario, is Secretary to the Board.

The annual meeting of the Board was held in Ottawa, May 29th to June 6th, 1956, when many proposals relating to the commemoration of the national history were reviewed. Of the many sites which have been considered by the Board to date, five hundred and thirty-six 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 1797-98 under the supervision of Edward, Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, when he was Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Nova Scotia.

During the year work was done on landscaping of the area adjacent to the custodian's new residence. A curb and gutter were constructed around the museum and one of its large chimneys was repaired.

Visitors who registered at the Park numbered 21,362, an increase of 416 over the previous year.

PORT ROYAL NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK is situated at Port Royal (formerly Lower Granville), Nova Scotia, near Annapolis Royal. 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 the picture of the building which was the chief source of information for the present replica.

Registration at the Park numbered 23,816, an increase of 3,359 over 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 the final conquest in 1758.

Improvements to the King's Garden were carried out by removal of rocks and application of topsoil and seed. Essential building repairs to the museum and custodian's residence were undertaken. Repairs were carried out on the sewage system. Picnic tables were constructed and placed near Black Rock.

The total number of visitors who signed the register in the museum were 18,068, a decrease of 4,954 from the previous year.

HALIFAX CITADEL NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK (Halifax, Nova Scotia) is situated on Citadel Hill and has a commanding view of the harbour and city. Four successive forts were built on its summit. The first was the strong point in a system of wooden blockhouses and palisades 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 started in 1828. The Citadel has recently been declared a National Historic Park and for some years the fortress, which had fallen into disrepair, has been under restoration.

During the past year reconstruction of the walls continued, including repointing and restoration of casemates and dungeon. Power lines were installed for flood-lighting the Duke of Kent's Clock Tower in the Citadel grounds and the interior court of the Citadel.

Preparations were also made for lighting the grounds in 1957-58. Improvements were made to the glacis, work was done on the main entrance road, fencing of the property was continued, and entrance gates were constructed.

Visitors who signed the register numbered 213,860, an increase of nearly 92,647 over the previous year.

FORT BEAUSEJOUR NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK is situated near Sackville, New Brunswick. Built by the French, the fort was intended to be a 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 and renamed Fort Cumberland, after which time it was strengthened and its defenses extended by a system of advanced entrenchments, traces of which still remain.

The lawn areas were extended to a point between the outer earthworks and the advanced trenches. Excavation and investigation of the extensive system of underground passages within the fort was started. The glacis or main slopes of the fort were improved and levelling of the floor of the moat was carried out. The advanced trenches were cleared of undergrowth.

The hot water heating system at the museum was overhauled and a new overhead door was installed in the Custodian's garage.

Visitor registration at the museum was 23,509, that is, 63 less than the previous year.

FORT CHAMBLY NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK is situated about twenty miles southeast of Montreal, on a conspicuous headland on the Richelieu River at Chambly, Quebec. 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, occupied 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.

The picnic area just outside the fort was fenced and emergency repairs were made to disintegrating walls.

Visitors who signed the register in the museum numbered 70,580, a decrease of 1,510 from the previous year.

FORT LENNOX NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK is located on Ile-aux-Noix in the Richelieu River, about thirteen miles south of St. John's, Quebec. The present fort, which stands near the site of one previously erected by the French, and a second constructed during the Revolutionary War, was built by the Imperial authorities in the period from 1819 to 1827. The island, comprising an area of 210 acres, was acquired for historic site purposes in 1921, and extensive work has since been carried out on the buildings and grounds.

Repairs were made to the wall and gateway and the roofs on some of the buildings were painted.

Attendance at the Park decreased from 14,610 in the preceding year to 11,637 in 1956-57.

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 first 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.

Replacement of the palisades, of the banquette on top of the ramparts, and of the entrance gate, was continued. Repairs were made to the caponniere (advanced work in the moat) and the floor in the custodian's quarters was replaced.

13,243 visitors signed the register at the Park, an increase of 2,235 from the previous year.

WOODSIDE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK, Kitchener, Ontario, is a characteristic house of the 1850's where the Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King spent his boyhood years in the 1880's.

Materials were purchased for fencing, a ventilation unit was installed in the basement gallery, and a combined garage and workshop was constructed. Floodlighting was installed for the house, and the grounds in the park were levelled.

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 evidences of the original fortifications remain, but the existing earthworks and the only old building still standing date from as early as 1823 at least.

Steel sheet piling was obtained for repairs to be carried out on the breakwater during 1957-58 by the Department of Public Works. The Hough House (Museum Building) was reroofed, the existing fencing at the Park was extended and modified and ornamental lighting standards were installed in the park.

20,663 visitors signed the museum register, which is an increase of 4,307 over 1955-56.

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.

The park is open to the public May 1st. to October 31st. Hours are Monday to Friday 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. and Saturdays, Sundays and Statutory Holidays 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

A toilet building was constructed in the south east bastion, and restoration and repair work was done on the Doctor's Residence, the Fur Storage Building, and the north east and south west bastions.

Approximately 15,000 people visited the fort during 1956-57.

FORT BATTLEFORD NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK is situated in the Townsite of Battleford, four miles south of the City of North Battleford, Saskatchewan, 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 building was part of the original Mounted Police Post which was established there in 1876 by Colonel James Walker, and linked up with such posts as MacLeod, Fort Walsh, Calgary, Edmonton, Carleton, and Swan River. Located in the territory of the Cree Indian, Fort Battleford had a stabilizing and encouraging effect in the settlement of the Prairie Provinces, and, during the Uprising 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.

Materials were purchased for an underground power line. Minor improvements were made to grounds and fencing.

Visitor attendance at the park rose from 10,818 in the preceding year to 12,384 in 1956-57.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

SIGNAL HILL has recently been taken over by the Federal Government and will be declared a National Historic Park. The park area, rich in history, overlooks the entrance to the harbour at St. John's, Newfoundland. On the hill is a memorial tower commemorating Cabot's explorations in North America. There is also a tablet erected on the site, commemorating the First Wireless Signal between the North American continent and Europe, which was transmitted by Marconi from a location near the tower. Also within the area in the vicinity of Signal Hill is located the position of the Chain Rock Battery, commanding the narrowest part of the harbour entrance and constructed after the French defeat in 1762; the Waldegrave Battery commanding the narrows, built in 1810 and constructed on a knoll on the north of Chain Rock. There is also the position of a block-house situated on the northern entrance of Signal Hill, mounting six guns on the ground floor, dated 1776; the Duke of York Battery, situated on the southern shoulder of the crest of Signal Hill, which in 1796 mounted eight 24-pounder guns, four 18-pounder carronades, and two 11-inch mortars. A chain of a very large size was fastened to Chain Rock and lay across the narrows with its other end fastened to a large capstan on Pancake Rock on the south side of the entrance, by which means it was raised sufficiently to prevent the entrance of any vessels larger than fishing boats.

The Signal Hill area was also the scene of a battle between the British under Colonel William Amherst and the French under Count d'Haussonville in the year when St. John's was finally captured, 1762, since when it has been held under the British Crown.

The Powder Magazine has been restored and repairs were made to the exterior of the Cabot Tower. A general clean-up of the Park area has also been carried out.

Early in 1957 the Federal Cabinet approved of the maintenance and operation of the *EVANGELINE PARK* at Grand Pre, Nova Scotia, as a National Historic Park. This park includes the property on which stands the Grand Pre Chapel, built by the descendants of the Acadians over a period of eight years and opened as an historic museum in 1930. In its formal lines, planned to reflect mid-eighteenth century French architecture, the Church preserves the memory of the original Church of St. Charles. The museum collection includes maps, portraits, and documentary evidence relating to the Acadians, as well as relics of the first New England settlers in the Minas country.

Ornamental landscaping in the park complements the graceful beauty of Evangeline's Monument, the Memorial Chapel, and the interest of "Evangeline's Well" with its wooden well sweep.

The Old Rectory, built in 1883, at *BATOCHÉ*, Saskatchewan, has been taken over by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources on the recommendation of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The building is a permanent monument to the historic battle between the forces of Louis Riel and General Middleton. On May 9th, 1885, General Middleton's force engaged the Metis who fought from skilfully constructed rifle pits that covered the approaches to Batoche. Two days of heavy fighting followed but on May 12th General Middleton, attacking in force, succeeded in routing the Metis from their rifle pits; Batoche fell and Riel's movement was broken. Riel was taken prisoner three days later.

The first floor of the Rectory, where several priests and nuns were confined by Riel during the campaign, will be used as a museum, to commemorate the historic events of 1885 connected with the Riel Uprising and also to recall the life and customs of the Metis, Indians and early fur traders and settlers of that section of the northwest. The second floor will contain a restored school room and a post office of the early period, the building having been used as a school and post office during the 1880's.

The historic site of the old Hudson's Bay Company post at *FORT LANGLEY*, B. C., has been taken over by the Federal Government and will be declared a National Historic Park.

The original fort built in 1827, was completely destroyed by fire in April, 1840. The trading post was rebuilt on a new site, the present village of Fort Langley, some two and one-half miles farther up the Fraser River.

By 1864 the fort was being gradually dismantled. The front and part of the stockade were taken down by degrees between 1861 and 1864, and the remainder was allowed to fall into disrepair. The growth of general farming in the colony caused the Hudson's Bay Company to abandon its fur trading in the Fraser Valley in June of 1896.

An old storehouse, which dates from 1840, is the only original building of the post now standing. Partial restoration of the fort

is underway and a former living quarters has been reconstructed. The north-east bastion and the palisades have been rebuilt, the car parking area has been completed and landscaping is underway.

MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS TO NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL MUSEUM, Baddeck, Nova Scotia.

The access road, parking area, and landscaping of the grounds were completed, stone retaining walls and entrance pillars and gates were erected, and water and sewer services were installed.

FORT EDWARD BLOCKHOUSE, Windsor, Nova Scotia.

The lower logs were replaced and the plank siding (simulating squared timber) was completed.

FORT GASPEREAUX, New Brunswick.

Restoration of the retaining wall was partially finished.

QUEBEC WALLS AND FORTIFICATIONS, Quebec.

Continuation of repointing and rebuilding the wall was undertaken, and floodlighting was installed on the St. Louis Gate.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER'S BIRTHPLACE, St. Lin-des-Laurentides, Quebec.

Major repairs were made to the house, which was redecorated. A new heating unit was installed.

CARILLON BARRACKS, Carillon, Quebec.

Minor repairs were made to the building and a new heating unit was installed.

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES

RETURN OF THE ACADIANS, Ste. Anne du Bocage, Caraquet, N. B. A cut-stone monument bearing a bronze tablet was unveiled August 19, 1956, by Dr. A. G. Bailey, New Brunswick's representative on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. This memorial commemorates the return of the Acadians from their wanderings after the Expulsion in 1755, and bears the name of Alexis Landry of Ste. Anne du Bocage, whose experiences were symbolic of the tribulations of the thousands who were forced from their homes in the eighteenth century expulsion.

MEN OF LETTERS, Shediac, N. B. A granite monument bearing a bronze plaque, located in Memorial Park, in the centre of the town of Shediac, was unveiled by the Honourable Milton F. Gregg on August 13, 1955. The monument honours four outstanding men of letters: Dr. John Clarence Webster, Shediac; Ferdinand Robidoux, editor of the first Acadian newspaper in the Atlantic Provinces; Placide Gaudet, historian and genealogist, and the Honourable Pascal Poirier, first Acadian to be appointed a senator in Canada.

EDWARD WINSLOW, Fredericton, N. B. A tablet placed in the Bonar Law-Bennett Library of the University of New Brunswick at Fredericton was unveiled on May 16, 1957, by Mr. J. J. Fraser Winslow, descendant of Edward Winslow and senior member of the family. The tablet was erected in memory of the Honourable Edward Winslow, one of the Loyalist founders of New Brunswick.

MEETINGS OF PARLIAMENT IN NATIONAL MUSEUM, Ottawa, Ontario. A plaque affixed to the wall of the Victoria Museum was unveiled June 2nd, 1955, by the Honourable T. A. Crerar and the Honourable C. G. Power, both of whom actually sat as members in the museum building when it was the seat of Parliament in 1919, after the burning of the Parliament Buildings.

WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL, Woodstock, Ontario. A tablet was affixed to the Woodstock Town Hall in recognition of its historical and architectural importance. The unveiling by Mr. Wallace Nesbitt, Q.C., M.P., took place on October 6, 1956.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COURT HOUSE, London, Ontario. A tablet, later mounted on a large boulder located on the court house lawn, was unveiled in the court house by Mr. Gordon MacDonald of Strathroy, Ontario, on January 18, 1957.

MRS. NELLIE MOONEY McCLUNG, near Chatsworth, Ontario. A tablet was affixed on a monument erected by the Women's Institute branches of Ontario's Grey County to the memory of Mrs. Nellie Mooney McClung, famous Western Canadian author and leading advocate of women's rights. The monument is located on the former Mooney farm one and one half miles south of Chatsworth, and about eleven miles south of Owen Sound. The memorial was unveiled Saturday, June 8, 1957, by Miss Nellie McClung, of Edmonton, daughter of Mrs. McClung.

SIR SANDFORD FLEMING, Ottawa, Ontario. A tablet was placed on the Dominion Observatory Building, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, to commemorate the achievements of Sir Sandford Fleming. The unveiling of the tablet was performed on May 16, 1957, by the Viscountess Hardinge, granddaughter of Sir Sandford.

FIRST HOMESTEAD IN WESTERN CANADA, near Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. A tablet mounted on a cut-stone monument honours John Sutherland Sanderson, who in 1872 became the first settler to obtain land under the Dominion homestead policy. The monument, situated six miles north of Portage on the Delta Road, was unveiled by Richard Sanderson, son of the West's first homesteader, on July 11, 1956.