

Queen Square Was Early Hub Of Charlottetown

Activities Were Many In Growing Business District

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had his store on the corner of Queen and Richmond Streets opening on Richmond.

All along from the Davies property to the corner of Grafton Street, was the land of Charles Stewart, Esq. The Stewart house which was in some distance from Queen Street, was about where the rear part of L. W. Watson's drug store (now part of the Woolworth building) later stood. It was a one-storey house raised quite high from the ground and there were seven or eight steps to the front door over which was a look-out supported by pillars. They must have had a fine orchard judging by the number of fruit trees, of different kinds, that could be seen over the high board fence, which extended from the Davies property to the Stewart house.

Round about the house were willow and other trees, and a low railing separated the front garden from the street. Three old ladies lived there, Miss Nelly, Miss Mary and Miss Margaret Stewart, very dignified and aristocratic in appearance. The Stewart stable was on the corner of Queen and Grafton Streets, where the Medical Hall later stood (now Rogers Hardware Co. Ltd.). Stables were very much in evidence round about Queen Square in the old days, and prominent corners and sites seemed to the favorite places to build them.

Some time in 1845 the Misses Stewart sold part of their land to Dr. Hobbkirk, who built a handsome dwelling on it, and lived there for some years. In the early fifties Doctor Hobbkirk sold his house and land to Mr. Heard, who built a large brick store and did business there. He eventually moved his house back and built another store, the one in which Moore and MacLeod now are. (Much smaller, of course, than the present day store, which underwent several changes.)

APOTHECARIES HALL

The Apothecaries Hall was always on the corner of Queen and Grafton Streets. In the 1840's the proprietor was Thomas DesBrisay, Esq., son of the Rev. Theophilus DesBrisay. He and his son, Theophilus, usually dispensed medicines, and often gave both medicine and advice gratis to the poor. The store was a great rendezvous for the young men of that time, as drug stores generally are. The main building has had many changes since then. There were no other stores in it, and it did not extend quite as far along Grafton Street as the present building. In 1844 it was the residence of Mr. Solomon DesBrisay, another son of the old Parson, as the Rev.

Theophilus DesBrisay was usually called.

Mr. Solomon DesBrisay had three sons, Theophilus, Alexander (Eck) and Aretas. There were four daughters, Mrs. Alexander Ramsay, later of Summerside, was one of them. The family moved to Bathurst, N. B., where some of their descendants reside. Theophilus, the eldest son, was drowned in one of the docks in Liverpool, England.

The adjoining house, situated end towards the Square on Grafton Street, belonged to a man named Hertz; he was a tanner, and had one of the numerous tanneries in town, which although unseen, were always known to be near.

Next came the residence of a Mr. Macdonnell, a carpenter, whose father came to Charlottetown from the United States to build the barracks for the military. He must have liked this Island, for he took up his residence here. He had a fine orchard at the back of his house, which was often surreptitiously visited by the boys in the fruit season.

A Mr. Roome lived in the fourth house, who kept a crockery store. The next house was occupied by J. Williams, who bought and sold country produce, and seemed always busy. He must have been in the employ of James Peake, Esq., senior, for he was generally known as "Peake's Red Williams." His wife was a daughter of Mr. Chappell, postmaster, and had, presumably, the responsible position of postmistress.

And now we come to the Tremaman watchmaking and jewelry store. Mr. Tremaman was a thorough Englishman, and much respected. His jewelry and silverware were always reliable, although the articles were not numerous. He had a large family of sons and daughters.

Adjoining his store, was Robert Weeks' shoe shop, and under the same roof lived a Mr. Pickard, who was a saddler.

PRESENT BANK CORNER

At the corner of Great George and Grafton Streets (Nova Scotia Bank corner) there was at this time a low, two storied house, which was owned and had been occupied by Mr. Solomon DesBrisay. As the land was very low and boggy at that corner, one would imagine the house was sinking into the ground, for the front door was rather below the level of the street. The house in 1844 was occupied by Hon. J. S. Macdonald; afterwards by a Mr. Koughan. About 1850 Hon. Patrick Walker bought the house and land, and did business on that corner for many years.

Between the corner house and Mr. Pickard's was Mrs. DesBrisay's stable, another one of which Queen Square was ornamented. About 1845 or '46 Mr. J. B. Cox,



View of Richmond Street business area in the old days, from Queen Square

who came to this Island from Newfoundland, bought the piece of land on which was the DesBrisay stable, and built a good house and store on it. Mr. Cox afterwards lived at Morell, and died there. He was the father of Mr. Bannerman Cox, proprietor of the Seaview Hotel, Souris.

Right across Great George Street from Walker's corner, as it was called for many years, was Smardon's corner (now Capitol Theatre). His building was a two-story one. Mr. Smardon was a saddler. He sold his property sometime toward the end of the sixties to Mr. Beales, and then left the Island with his wife and son. Mr. Beales held the corner for many years, and it took his name.

Along a little farther east from Smardon's corner was the Faught property, a long one-storied range with dwelling and shops attached. Mr. Faught was a shoemaker, an Englishman and a man much respected. One of his daughters married Mr. William Boyle, tanner and currier.

MECHANICS INSTITUTE

A want very much felt in Charlottetown in the early 1840's was a public hall, or lecture room. The meetings of the Mechanics Institute which had been organized in 1836 by Judge Young during the governorship of Sir Charles Fitzroy, and patronized by the Governor and Lady Mary, were held at the National School House every Wednesday evening during the autumn and winter months. Of course, if the Governor patronized it, the Institute was fashionable, and all the elite of the town must patronize it too; but in '45, or about that time, it seems that the Institute had not been as well attended as formerly. That caused dissatisfaction among the promoters, and in 1846 a great

effort was made to bring it to its original standing. Season tickets were sold, lectures were advertised a month ahead, and their subjects given. The lecturers included Mr. Charles Young, Mr. Porteu, Mr. Hubbard, Dr. E. R. Humphreys, M. T. Heath Haviland, Jr., and Mrs. J. P. Tanton.

Dr. Humphreys gave a course of twelve lectures on English History every Friday evening during the winter of '46. The first lectures were given in the National Schoolhouse, on Kent Street East, but as it was far from the centre of the town Mr. Humphreys continued them in the old Court House or Provincial Building, near the Apothecaries Hall.

(Dr. Humphreys was headmaster at the Central Academy afterwards Prince of Wales College—and later became headmaster of Merchiston College School, Edinburgh, and headmaster of Cheltenham Grammar School, England. He was educated at Magdalen College, Cambridge, and was a finished scholar. While in Charlottetown he put forth an excellent edition of Horace, with English notes, which he dedicated to the Colonial Minister, Lord Stanley, afterwards the Earl of Derby.)

LADIES' ACTIVITIES

Lady Mary Fitzroy was the first to establish the "Ladies Benevolent Society," and had a sewing society in connection with it, meeting at Government House. Each lady belonging to the society paid an annual subscription of five shillings. Many of the gentlemen of the town, headed by the Government, also gave good donations.

After Lady Mary Fitzroy left this Island, Lady Huntley was patroness, as was each succeeding Gov-

ernor; but towards spring during another heavy gale, the ice was driven off shore and took the ship with it. After being adrift in the ice for some time she was eventually brought into Charlottetown harbour, the remainder of the cargo discharged, and the vessels put upon the shore. A trench was dug near Mr. Peake's breastwork, and the "Castalia" placed in it. A roof was put on her and she was used for a warehouse and rigging loft.

FIRST BAZAAR

In the spring of 1840 the Ladies' Benevolent Society held their bazaar on the deck of the "Castalia." Stalls were formed of canvas, and the whole ship decorated inside with flags. We are informed that the sale was most successful.

Lady Mary started the first bazaar in Charlottetown in 1838. She was an energetic woman, and took great interest in the young people. It was said she followed in the footsteps of her mother, the Duchess of Richmond, who was to be the greatest match-maker of her time, and at whose house, on the eve of the battle of Waterloo, "There was a sound of revelry by night And Belgium's capital had gathered then Her beauty and her chivalry."

During the time Sir Charles and Lady Mary Fitzroy were in Charlottetown, Miss Fitzroy, their daughter, was married to the Honorable Keith Stewart, R.N., son of the Earl of Galloway and Captain of H. M. S. Ringdove. Rather an interesting story is told of the marriage which took place in old St. Paul's Church. Many people were there, of course, not only inside to witness the ceremony, but outside to see the happy pair and guests drive off. It was noticed a sur-

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GREETINGS FROM "Apothecaries Hall"

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TOM DAVIES

SERVICE STATION
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Welcome To Our Visitors

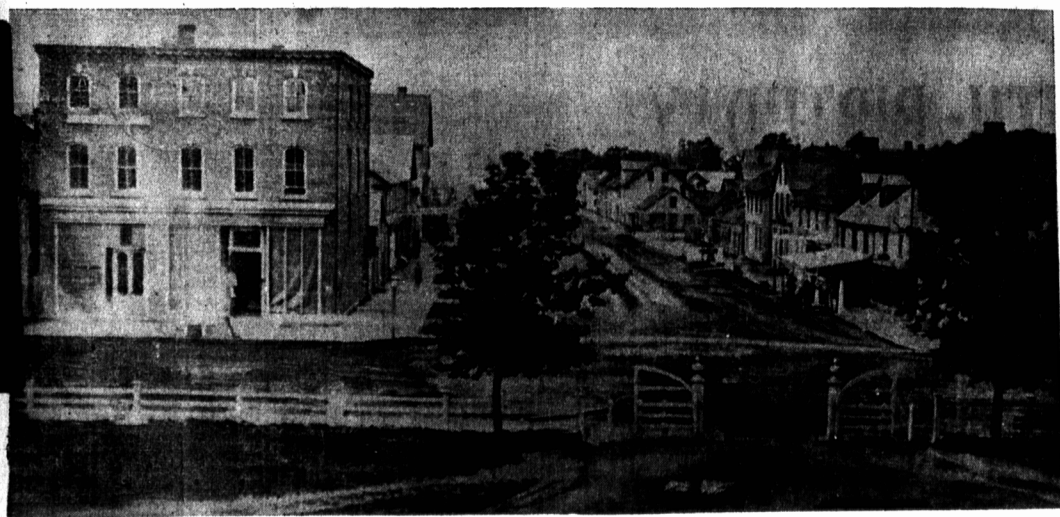
After The

- * Show
- * Races
- or an
- * Outing

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A Comparison In Street Scenes

As Grafton-Great George Streets corner looked a century ago. The picture, taken from the Colonial Building, shows the fence and gateway at the entrance to Queen Square, which a few oldtimers can still remember.



As Grafton - Great George Streets look today.

Craswell Studio

GREETINGS TO OUR MAYOR, CITY COUNCILLORS and FELLOW CITIZENS

The Centennial celebrations of our city serve to recall events of the past and the unselfish acts of those who helped build and develop Charlottetown.

We trust, as we enter a second century, our contribution will be equally as great and merit the praise of the generations to follow.

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