

Military Lent Color To Functions In Early Days

Barracks Were Located Near Connaught Square

Continued from page 10

QUEEN SQUARE

The late W. R. Watson, Esq., chemist and druggist, used to say that when he came to Charlottetown in 1843, Queen Street was overgrown with grass, and had only a cart track through the centre of it. That probably was the case, but as we remember it a year or two later, it was not quite so bad as that. The streets leading in from St. Peter's and Malpeque roads to the market, and the lower part of Queen Street to the wharves, being travelled on, were more like thoroughfares; all the others looked like country lanes and made good pasturage for the pigs and cows that were allowed to roam about at their own sweet will.

Hogreves were often appointed from among the young gentlemen, and their duties were to have the pigs and cows taken to the pound on the outskirts of the town. One thing we remember was the appointment of a young law-student, who was afterwards a prominent lawyer in Charlottetown, to the position of hogreves. Probably the event would have escaped our memory, if we had not heard of a young lady say of him: "I am glad so-and-so has something to do,—it will keep him from gossiping at the Apothecaries Hall or Stammer's Corner."

As there were no City Fathers at that time the improvement of the streets was left very much to nature—the sides of the street and squares were not levelled for many years after; and it was an amusement for the children to jump from hillcock to hillcock in King's Square, and play hide and seek through the small spruce bushes then allowed to grow in and about Hillsborough Square.

STREET CONDITIONS

The condition of the streets in 1844 recalls to mind the improving or cutting down of that part of Euston Street called Gallows Hill. All along the east side of Great George Street, where Euston Street crosses it, the ground rose abruptly, extending through the greater part of Holland Grove, as it was then called, across Euston Street and along the entrance to the Malpeque Road. Any one remembering some of the old cottages on the east side of Malpeque Road could see they were built on a slight elevation, for steps were cut in the hill side up to the front doors.

The house built by the late Mr. John Heartz, and the one adjoining it were decidedly on the hill side; the lower front parts of brick were high enough for shops, but the brick ends were lost in the hill and that part built of wood, or house proper, opened from the back on the high ground.

We well remember hearing that Gallows Hill was being cut down and that a coffin and human bones had been disturbed.

The remains were allegedly those of a man who, on the evidence of his own son, had years ago been convicted of theft and arson, hanged here, and buried under the gallows.

On the west side of Great George Street, the land was low and boggy with occasional dry ground extending from Grafton Street past Kent and Fitzroy to Euston, or the middle of the block, out through what is now called Chestnut Street.

The high ground of Holland Grove was a lovely spot, thickly wooded with forest and ornamental trees. A large and fine observatory, with an observatory on the top showing above the trees, was situated on the centre or highest part of the ground. It had been built and occupied by the first Colonel Holland; was Government House for a short time, and in 1844 was occupied by John Grubb, Esq., who had come to Charlottetown from England a few years previously.

This belt of trees from Holland Grove continued on both sides of Euston Street or Gallows Hill northwardly away across the Malpeque Road, past where the Woolan Mills have stood and extending on the lower Malpeque Road. This Spring Park property, belonged at that time to the family of the old Colonel Grey. It was a very favorite resort in the summer for both young and old; for through those grounds were many pretty walks, and in it a lovely limpid spring rose, which meandered and rippled its way through the trees on and on, till it lost itself in Governor's Pond.

SHIPBUILDING DAYS

In the early days there was a great deal of shipbuilding carried on, and business was brisk and productive of much activity. Each of these firms—Peake's, Duncan's, Welsh's and several others—had large stores containing everything from a needle to an anchor. It was a stirring time when the ships belonging to those firms arrived here, direct from the Old Country. The wharves would be fully occupied with shipping, and Queen Street and the adjacent thoroughfares would fairly pulsate with the life and bustle of business.

The Douse shipyard being on the Douse property near the west end of Richmond Street was the first to meet the eye, as it showed up from the harbour, and there Mr. Douse built several vessels.

The next to be seen was close by where the Steam Navigation wharf now is, and where the second Gulnare was built in 1845 by Peake and Duncan. The first Gulnare was built in Quebec and came to Charlottetown in 1841, the same year that Captain Bayfield, Commander Bedford, Lieutenant Orlebar, and the other officers of the surveying staff came to take

up their residence here. The second Gulnare not being quite up to their expectation, they had the third one built in Quebec. She proved a failure, and Mr. Robert Longworth undertook to build the fourth. All were topsail schooners, and we understand the fourth Gulnare was more satisfactory. After that they had their first steamer, the Margaret Stephenson, built by and belonging to a firm in Quebec by the name of Stephenson.

Further along and almost directly below where the Duncan House later stood, was the Duncan shipyard, where the ring of the workman's hammer was constantly heard, and where the largest ship ever built on this Island, registering 1,791 tons, was launched in the year 1858, by the firm of Duncan, Mason and Co., and named "Ethel" after Mr. Duncan's only child.

OTHER SHIPYARDS

Mr. Heard's shipyard was about where the railway yard is, only nearer where the railway wharf is built.

On the shore not far from the Kensington shooting range of later date was McGill's shipyard, where there appeared to be always a vessel on the stocks.

Some of the old shipbuilders used to say, that shipbuilding was like making patchwork quilts, and that when one was finished there was almost enough material left to make another, and in that way they were induced to go on building. But the wooden ships of P. E. Island are now amongst the things of the past.

On part of Kensington range the land was very low and wet, caused by a stream running in from beyond the St. Peter's Road. The way to the McGill shipyard was along the shore and as the outlet from the stream to the Hillsborough River was wide, a bridge was built over it. On the north side of the bridge was a floodgate, or sluice, and as the water rose quite high, it caused a whirlpool. It was a great amusement to children to throw chips or sticks into the water and watch them drawn into the vortex. The strong railing of the bridge afforded safe protection.

About fifty yards beyond the bridge and standing upon rising ground was an object of great interest to all. A large vat had been built for the purpose of rendering oil from seals, brought in by the Island sealing vessels. Whose venture it was or whether it was a rotary power being derived from a machine similar to a threshing mill of later days.

Subsequent to this we had a steam-boat of the high-pressure order—a fearful and wonderful thing to see. You could hear her puffing and groaning during the whole course of her passage across the river, shattering the calm of the summer's day and sending her notes of distress far on every hand. The ferry was in those days managed by T. B. Tremaine, Esq. This boat proved a failure, and she was later to be seen stranded high and dry upon the shore where she made a first rate plaything for the boys of the town.

FEVER OUTBREAK

One ship we remember very well was the "Lady Constable." She arrived here on the 21st of May, 1847, and had four hundred and forty passengers. When they were out some days, ship fever of a very malignant type broke out among them. Twenty-five of their number died before they reached this harbour, eight others died soon after coming into port, or within a few days.

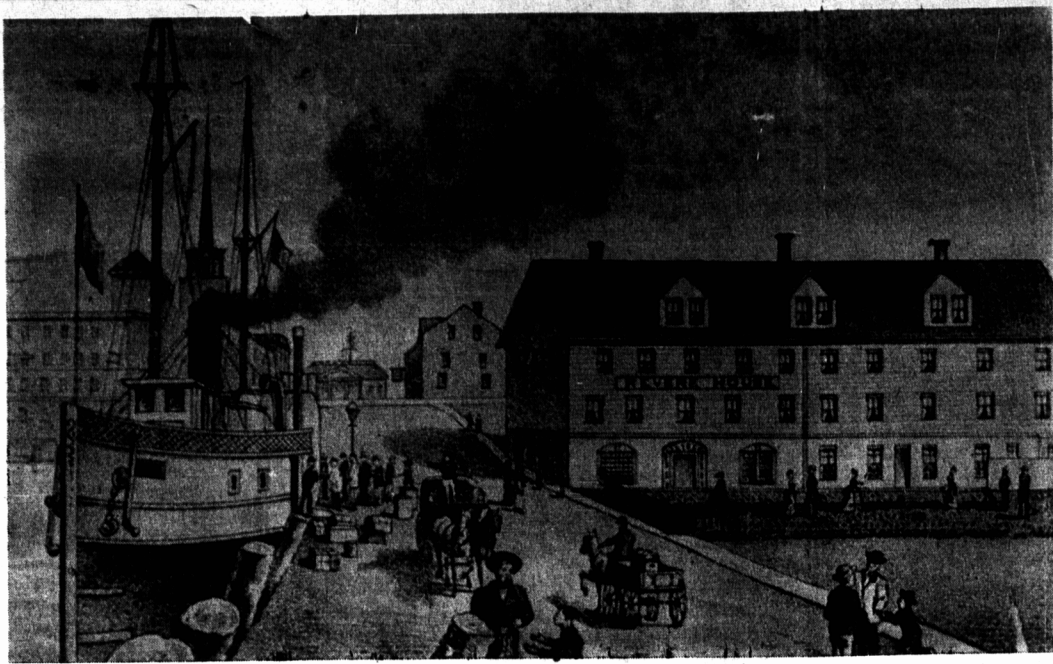
Of course the arrival of this ship caused great consternation to the people of Charlottetown. What was to be done with the ill and dying in a town so unexpectantly thrown upon our hands; a shelter must be provided for them. Some suggested the Marine Hospital at the end of the Brighton Road, and on the furthest part of Government House farm (now Victoria Park) but that was not allowed.

After a day or two an isolated house was found situated on one of two vacant blocks between Hillsborough and Weymouth Streets, near Water and some distance back of where Notre Dame Convent is. The yellow flag flying over this unfinished house made it look very dismal, but a more dismal sight was the many rough-boarded coffins of all sizes, carried past on a truck to the cemetery on St. Peter's Road, (then a new burying ground) and to know that each one contained a victim of the dread disease. We remember counting eight coffins at one time; probably those held the people who died whilst the ship was in quarantine. We have also counted three and four each day, and sometimes one and two twice a day as long as the fever lasted, but eventually the "plague was stayed" and those who survived were allowed to go at liberty. When it was found there were too many patients for this temporary hospital some were sent to the Lunatic Asylum at Brighton, where they were kept all summer and where a number of them died.

The only Charlottetown resident we remember contracting typhus (or emigrant fever as it was called) was Mr. A. H. Yates, auctioneer; he was very ill, and it was impossible to get anyone to nurse him, all were so terrified. At last they succeeded in getting one of the immigrants, a widow whose husband had died of fever. Many of the women who came in the "Lady Constable" hired in town and made good servants.

HILLSBOROUGH FERRY

One of our earliest recollections is of crossing the Hillsborough River (in the 1840's), and the manner in which passage was accomplished was certainly crude and primitive, compared with the ferry system in present operation. Passengers from the Charlottetown side embarked at the foot of Queen St., the principal wharf being situated there. Southport was not then known by its present name; it was variously termed



Revere House In Mid 1800

Corner Great George and Water Streets

Craswell Studio (Copy)

ad "over the river", or "Murphy's Point". The landing-place on that side was a long, rough structure, extending from the shore at Murphy's Point. This wharf was so low that at high tide it was almost covered with water. It was hardly safe on such occasions. The ferry boats were either sail or rowboats; sometimes, but not often, they carried a horse and wagon.

These simple craft were superseded by a larger boat called a "team" boat, (referred to in previous paragraphs) from the fact that the propelling power was furnished by a team of horses. The horses walked round and round in the centre of the boat, being harnessed to a machine that resembled a "merry-go-round," which was geared to the paddle wheels on each side of the boat. Later on the horses were transposed to positions either alongside or directly over the paddle wheels, the rotary power being derived from a machine similar to a threshing mill of later days.

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MAIL PACKETS

In those days the mails were conveyed to and from the Island by what were called sailing-packets. The first steamer we remember was called the Rose; she was not very large, but a very fair boat for that day. After the Rose came the Rosebud—somewhat of a reversion of the natural order owned by Mr. William Heard. She was built in Charlottetown somewhere near where the present Railroad Station is situated. She too proved a failure. Then came the ill-fated Fairy Queen, whose tragic history has often been related. Her successor was a screw steamer called the Lady LeMarchant—quite a good boat. After her came the Westmoreland, a side-wheeler, distrusted at first on account of her resemblance to the Fairy Queen, but she turned out to be a satisfactory boat.

Then came the large paddle boats Princess of Wales and St. Lawrence, and they in turn gave way to the splendid and efficient boats the Northumberland and Princess.

CHURCH FIRE BELLS

Old St. Paul's and St. James' (or The Kirk as it was called) were the two largest and most fashionable places of worship. They were the first to procure bells. Then there was old St. Dunstan's Cathedral, which had both a bell and a clock, the latter usually being called "the town clock". Those bells were the only fire alarms on which the citizens had to depend, and to hear them sounding in the middle of the night used to strike terror to many hearts, for the means of fighting fire were primitive, albeit there was always a willing and competent volunteer fire brigade ready to answer the call of duty.

The most common means of conveying water for the extinguishing of flames was by passing buckets of water along a line of men from the pump to the burning buildings.

SPRING PARK

We have every reason to be proud of our Victoria Park which for situation and natural beauty can hardly be surpassed in any country. Yet it was not the first

park that Charlottetown people possessed; for in years gone by we had what was called Spring Park, which although the private property at that time of Colonel J. H. Gray, he allowed the citizens to enjoy. Extending from about where Douglas Street now is as far out as the cross road leading from the upper to the lower Malpeque Road (Elm Avenue), it was thickly covered at that time with a growth of spruce and other trees, and had a beautiful spring of cold, pure water. It was very shady and cool in summer time, and was the favorite resort for public teas and picnics. One we especially remember was the Sons of Temperance Tea, which was the finest of the season and was largely attended. This society was quite an influential one at that time and made a fine show when they paraded out to the grounds on the day of their tea.

In winter the pleasure consisted mostly in lectures, concerts, bazaars and "tea-fights," which were usually held in the Temperance Hall, later known as the Kindergarten (now The Guardian office). One tea given in 1883 by the volunteers might be mentioned. It was a very brilliant affair, under the management of the elite of the town, who brought their own silver and china which with the gaily decorated cakes, flowers, etc., which decked each table, made a very attractive display. The hall

by the Charlottetown Hospital from Water Street to Sydney Street. The officers' quarters were along the west side and the soldiers' quarters on the east, leaving a large square in the centre. At the south side of this square, and overlooking the river, were ranged the forts and cannon.

There also was placed the signal station, a tall, double-masted pole with cross-yards in the centre. This was to notify the townspeople what kind of a ship was coming into the harbour. Different coloured flags were used for signals, thus: for a barque a blue flag; a brig a red one; a schooner a white; and a steamship half red and white. On the yard arms there were large black balls to indicate what point the vessels came from, that is from the east or west. It was very convenient for business people as they nearly all owned a ship of some sort and they were warned in this way of their approach.

About one hundred years had passed from the time the Surveyor General, Captain Holland, designed the site of Charlottetown and Garrison, to the year the Barrack ground was disposed of by auction. A considerable quantity of ordnance remained at the Blockhouse until the year 1856, when began its removal to the Barrack square. During its removal an 18 pounder gun slipped from its sling and rolled over the bank to the water's edge where it remained for some years. It was subsequently conveyed from thence by Theophilus DesBrisay, and placed by him, at the corner of the Apothecaries Hall (now Hughes' drug store) where it is yet to be seen.

TROOPS WITHDRAWN

After the regular troops had been withdrawn the Barrack square remained a parade ground for the volunteer militia, as well as a favorite resort for citizens, and the subsequent sale of the property by auction caused quite a lot of chagrin. In the M Nitro newspaper of June, 1864, the following paragraph appears:

"The Battery, or Barrack Square—much to the annoyance of a large number of our citizens—was sold by auction by Messrs. J. and T. Morris on Tuesday last. This beautiful property was put up and sold in twenty-one lots of various size. Along the sea-face, commanding a magnificent view of our noble harbour... a carriage-way or Esplanade has been reserved, sixty feet wide, connecting at Water Street at one extremity, and with Sydney Street at the other. Two streets, running at right angles with Sydney and Water Streets, and extending from the former to the latter, have also been reserved. The purchaser of each lot is bound to erect a two-story building thereon, and there is every probability that ere the lapse of many years,

THE OLD BARRACKS

This leads one to say something about military affairs of early days, as they had pretty much the ruling of social function. The barracks were situated near the old jail square (Connaught Square) and embraced all that land known as the Esplanade and extended as far back as the street, which runs

this will be by far the handsomest, if not the most aristocratic portion of our City. The whole plot comprises about three acres and a half, for which the handsome sum of \$25,464 (about \$18,000 Island currency) has been realized. The interest on this will, we presume, be applied towards the maintenance of our volunteer force."

Another item from the Examiner of June 6, 1864, states that "in consequence of the projected sale of the Battery and adjacent property, a flagstaff has been erected on the Colonial Building, by means of which our citizens will be informed of the approach of all vessels from the sea during the day."

By the 22nd of September, 1854, the troops had all been withdrawn to Halifax. The following year Saint George's Battery, Fort Edward and the Blockhouse Fort were with one exception, dismantled, and the ordnance and other equipment shipped to Halifax. The

permanent garrison force of Charlottetown ceased to exist, an event which caused much dissatisfaction at the time.

The New Team Boat

"The new Team Boat, intended to ply as a ferry boat between Charlottetown and the opposite side of the Hillsborough, came down the York River, and up to the wharf yesterday forenoon, impelled by the power of three horses. She soon after commenced plying, and her performance, we understand, has been so far satisfactory."—Colonial Herald, May 12, 1838.

ANCIENT FARMERS

Scientists have found traces in northern Iraq of a farm economy that existed 6,000 years ago.

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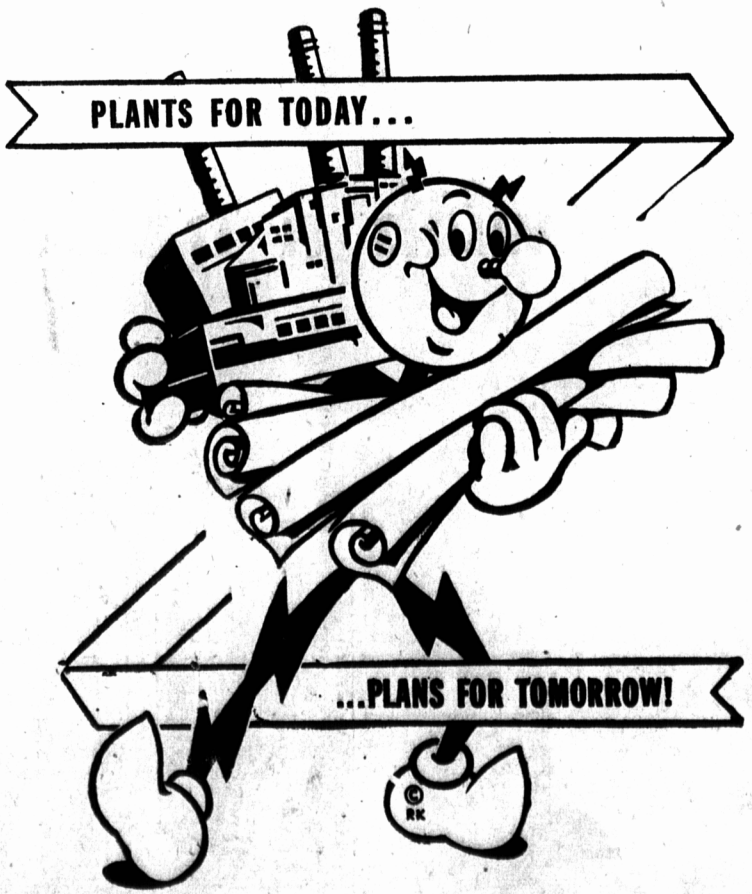
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