

Fort Tipperary

Old and New

IN 1812 THE threat of war with the United States caused three blockhouses and a garrison in which to quarter soldiers to be erected in the Town. The garrison, called Fort Tipperary, was at the top of the hill at the corner of what is now Adolphus and Prince of Wales Streets. Like the blockhouses, the fort never saw any real action, except perhaps during the Fenian scare of 1866, when the fear of an armed invasion from the other side of Passamaquoddy Bay caused St. Andrews to become briefly an armed camp, with its own militia supplemented by forces from Fredericton and Saint John. For most of its existence the old fort was a sorry affair, with never enough money to keep it much beyond life support. What was left of it was torn down in 1902 when Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, third president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, decided to build his summer home there. Shaughnessy purchased this property in 1891, the same year Sir William Van Horne and Sir Donald Smith bought St. Andrews property.

Shaughnessy's Tipperary was an asymmetrical version of the shingle style so popular at the turn of the century. It was designed by Hutchison and Wood, of Montreal. Sir Thomas incorporated several features of the old fort in his new home, including some of the shingles from the old fort buildings. After 80 years in the weather, they were still in excellent shape. He also set out cannons and miniature ramparts, in memory of the old Tipperary.

The Fort Tipperary of today is a reconstruction. The original house burned several years ago when the building was used as part of the culinary course offered at the New Brunswick Community College.

Of particular interest in this section is the reminiscence of "J. M.," a former resident who wrote memorably on the routine and personalities of some of the officers who were stationed at Tipperary in the mid-19th century. ∞



Fort Tipperary.
Undated photo.
Charlotte
County
Archives
p11.18

Standard
June 19, 1840

Fort Tipperary has been furnished with a new set of signals, which will be hoisted, in future, on the arrival of all brigs, ships, and steamers, at this Port. The following are the distinguishing Flags: blue - ship or barque; red - brig or brigantine; Yellow - steamer. Ball to denote more than one vessel of the class which is telegraphed. The signals to be hoisted on the western yard arm when the vessel is coming up by the western passage, and on the eastern arm when by La Tete.

Standard
July 17, 1840
Fort Tipperary

This unsightly and antiquated erection is miserably adapted either for the comfort or convenience of its gallant occupants. We hope

to see the day when its place will be supplied with barracks more creditable to a frontier town, and from its conspicuous situation, of a far more prepossessing exterior.

Standard

Nov. 13, 1867

32 Pounders mounted at Tipperary. "When a salute is fired from them, it will be heard by the adjoining towns, east and west. Now for a flag!" [The town is too poor to afford a proper flag without petitioning the taxpayers to chip in for one. This comes out later.]

Standard

May 6, 1868

Wanted - A Union Jack!

The people of St. Andrews are proverbial for their loyalty in its true sense - not mere display and show. Well then, as the birthday of our beloved Queen is approaching, it is to be hoped that Major [Benjamin R.] Stevenson or someone else will open a subscription for the purchase of a Union Jack for the fort; there is no time to be lost; scarce as money is, and hard as the times are, a sufficient sum can be raised among our loyal townsmen for the purpose. Let the Flag be owned by the Town, and no government official, or marching Regiment can then take it away when they get the "rout." Two years ago, the good old Flag might be seen every day flying from the Staff at the fort, but on the removal of the Royal Artillery they carried their flag with them. There is as much genuine loyalty here now as then, and there is no good argument against our having a Union Jack - a double emblem of our unity - raised on the Fort flag post, in honour of the birthday of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, and observing the day as all true Britons should.

B. R. Stevenson fonds, Charlotte County Archives

April 26, 1889 - Eugene Fay to B. R. Stevenson MS3-Z-237

"I have your favor, re-enclosing to me assignment of lease of Fort Tipperary, from Sir Leonard [Tilley] to the St. Andrews Land Co. Herewith please find enclosed, deed of Mr. R. S. Gardiner, to the St.

Andrews Land Co., of Block L, Bulkley's Division, with corrections made as you suggested, and, if now satisfactory to you, will you kindly have it put on record."

Beacon

Sept. 18, 1902

Old Tipperary and New Tipperary

Old Fort Tipperary, around which so many fond and stirring memories cluster, is gone and a new and more imposing Tipperary has sprung up in its stead. The new Tipperary is to be the summer home of Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, president of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. Four months ago, the ground within the old ramparts was broken for the new building. Now it is completed in every detail. By degrees, as the new work expanded, it became necessary to remove the old buildings which stood upon the site. First, the barracks building proper, with its immense pine timbers, port-holed for resisting invaders, was razed. Then the officers' quarters were swept out of existence; afterwards the guardhouse and sergeant-cottage. The last of the old buildings - which has been used as an icehouse by the Algonquin Hotel - was torn down on Saturday.

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At the upper end of the verandah the shingles used are the old ones taken from the fort buildings. They are supposed to be 80 or more years old, yet they are in a splendid state of preservation. They are 22 inches long. One peculiarity about them is that where the chalk line struck them a ridge had been produced, showing that whatever was used for marking (some suggest that burnt alder was employed) it had served as a complete preservative against the weather.

Beacon

Aug. 28, 1902

Reminiscences of Bye-Gone Days

For the *Beacon*

In one of your late issues you requested information from the old inhabitants of St. Andrews, relative to the English soldiers who occupied the old Barracks, lately purchased by Sir Thomas Shaughnessy. As a native of St. Andrews, where I lived till the

summer of 1854, I will simply say I have no recollection of the time when there were not soldiers in St. Andrews. In my schoolboy days I went to school with the sons of soldiers at the old schoolhouse at the entrance to the old Episcopal Church near the residence of the late Thomas Algar. I was born in 1826. In 1839 I left school and went to learn my trade with James Kennedy, who at that time lived in the old Gilchrist house, next to the house occupied by the late Russell Bradford. On the wharf below was John Treadwell's block and spar yard. At that time, the officer in command was Lord Hill. He was a very handsome little man, a great horseman and had two English thoroughbred horses - the most beautiful creatures I ever saw. If I mistake not, his father was second in command at Waterloo. He used to gallop up the street to Mr. Kennedy's, get off his horse and hitch him to the latch of the door, sit up on Mr. Kennedy's cutting board, and chat by the hour about their old home in Ireland. They were both from the same town, in the County of Antrim, Ireland.

There were never in my recollection more than 25 or 30 soldiers at the barracks commanded by a Lieutenant, the Regiment being at Saint John or Fredericton. Lord Hill was removed to St. John. As I remember, he volunteered to ride a tailor's horse in a race and won the race. He was afterward killed while riding a vicious horse in a steeple chase in the old country. The horse threw him and broke his neck. He was the second man that horse killed. They shot the horse. I distinctly remember many of the officers - a Mr. Cole, who kept a horse. When he left, his equipment was sold at auction. Dr. McStay bought his sleigh. It was after the fashion of a Russian sleigh - very low. I remember the Doctor's daughters when in it seemed in a reclining position. A Lieut. Wedderburn, another officer with money, was a great ladies' man; also Mr. Lacy or DeLacy. He always dressed in his scarlet regimental clothes when going to church on a Sunday - the only officer I ever saw do so. He was a tall, beautiful figure of a man. In fact, all the officers were the same.

The soldiers all had to go to their respective places of worship on a Sunday. The officers seldom went with them. They would all leave the barracks in Company form, come down the hill together as far as the George D. Street house. Those who were Roman Catholics would drop out there and go to their place of worship, the same

at the Kirk. The Episcopalians would continue on to the Episcopal church. I don't remember ever seeing one at the Methodist church. The majority were Roman Catholics.

I don't remember the names of the many officers till that of Lieut. Wells, of Her Majesty's, (it was then) 1st Royals. He came very prominently before the inhabitants of St. Andrews by his assaulting Mr. A. T. Paul (your late Sheriff) in A. MacFarlane's pasture. I did considerable work for him. He was a very nice gentleman and distinguished himself in the Crimean War. [Wells did the undated lithograph of St. Andrews hanging in the Charlotte County Archives. As Mr. J. M., the contributor, lived in St. Andrews until 1854, the lithograph predates this year.]

The officer who relieved him was Lieut. Herrong, or some such a name. He was a great boating man. I used to loan him my boat and borrow his. We got along very nicely together. He was also a very nice gentleman. He is the last I remember, as I left in 1854.

There were always two artillerymen at the Western Blockhouse. It was there the guns and accoutrements used by the Militia on training days were kept, and I presume they were there to care for them. They were mostly Scotchmen and went to the Kirk.

So far as my life in St. Andrews was concerned, there were always soldiers at the old Barracks on the hill. I could prove it, were it necessary, from many reminiscences. I was told that when the Confederation of the provinces took place the English Government said, if you want soldiers you will have to pay for them, but as we declined to pay for them, and as they were of no use to us, they were taken away.

I realize that when a man emigrates from the place of his birth he always is in a retrospective view, sees it and everybody and everything about as he had been accustomed to see it. It is always the same dear old home to him, regardless of its humbleness. Nature seems to place in the heart of man a love for the humble, old home that no amount of prosperity or riches in another sphere can obliterate; hence so many remember in their last will and testament a fond recollection of their old home. As I read the columns of the home paper it makes me sad to see how few names in it I recognize. I too forget how time passes, forget it is 48 years since I left and



that great changes in the population have taken place - to see there is not the name of Wilson, Hatch, or Street in the town - and so many that moved in the same circle - Col. David and Mrs. Mowat, David W. and Mrs. Jack., Col. and Mrs. Wyer, Thomas Wyer, Mrs. Wiggin, the Hon. B. R. Stevenson, and his brother, Fletcher. All have passed to their reward. They were a goodly lot of ladies and gentlemen, who would add grace and dignity to any condition of life, and a community should be much the better for their having been of it.

- J. M., Boston, 1902

**Thomas
Shaughnessy's
Fort Tipperary
and a late pre-
fire iteration of
the Algonquin
Hotel, circa
1913.
Charlotte
County
Archives
p135.1**