

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, 1957-58

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

Volume 37, Number 1, 1958

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/300573ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/300573ar>

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Publisher(s)

The Canadian Historical Association/La Société historique du Canada

ISSN

0317-0594 (print)

1712-9095 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this document

National Historic Sites Division, National Parks Branch & Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (1958). National Historic Parks and Sites, 1957-58. *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association / Rapport de l'assemblée annuelle de la Société historique du Canada*, 37(1), 99–105. <https://doi.org/10.7202/300573ar>

NATIONAL HISTORIC PARKS AND SITES, 1957-58

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, Reverend A. d'Eschambault, Genthon, Manitoba; Professor Fred Landon, London, Ontario; 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, June 3 to 7, 1957, 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 an obsolete bandstand was removed from the grounds.

Visitors who registered at the Park, numbered 24,052, an increase of 2,690 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, 441 a decrease of 375 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 the final conquest in 1758.

The total number of visitors who signed the register in the museum were 20,705 an increase of 2,637 over 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.

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 134,866 during the 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.

Visitor registration at the museum was 13,778, that is, 9,731 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.

Work included repointing the walls, and construction of a fence along Chambly Basin.

Visitors who signed the register in the museum numbered 72,965, an increase of 2,385 over 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.

Walls were repaired; interior of officers' quarters was painted; Protestant and Roman Catholic cemeteries were marked at the corners; outdoor fireplaces were constructed; fences were repaired.

Attendance at the Park increased from 11,637 in the preceding year to 13,335.

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.

New electrical wiring was installed in the fort during the year.

17,426 visitors signed the register at the Park, an increase of 4,183 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.

Construction of a fence was carried out during the year.

Attendance was 1,284, an increase of 210 over the previous year.

FORT MALDEN NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK is in Amherstburg, Ontario. The original fort was built in 1797-99 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.

Repairs to museum building and erection of a fence was carried out during the year.

21,197 visitors signed the museum register, which is an increase of 534 over last 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.

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.

21,300 people visited the fort during the year, an increase of 6,300 over last year.

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 replacement of palisades, and underground electrical lines were completed.

Visitor attendance at the park rose from 12,384 in the preceding year to 15,214.

SIGNAL HILL NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK 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 blockhouse 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, and an entrance road constructed.

Attendance was approximately 500 during the year.

GRAND PRÉ NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK, at Grand Pré, Nova Scotia, includes the property on which stands the Grand Pré 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.

During the year, repairs were carried out to the Museum building basement, the heating, electrical, and water systems.

Visitors numbered 31,362 during the year.

FORT LANGLEY NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK, which is the site of the old Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Langley, B.C., has been taken over by the Federal Government.

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 is under way and one other building in the fort has been completed, as well as a residence for the custodian, a parking lot, and landscaping. Construction of the palisades and bastion is continuing.

Visitors numbered 3,500 during the year.

FORT PRINCE OF WALES NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK, opposite the port of Churchill, Manitoba, is the most northerly fortress on the North American continent, and was built in the years between 1733 and 1771 by the Hudson's Bay Company to secure control of Hudson's Bay. In 1782, a French expedition, under La Pérouse captured the fort which was then stripped of all valuable items and demolished to a large extent. The fort, partially restored, stands today in much the same condition as La Pérouse left it.

Work on restoration of the outer walls was continued during the year.

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL MUSEUM, at Baddeck, Nova Scotia, was constructed in 1954-55 by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, to present the scientific research of Dr. Bell through the displays contained therein.

During the year a house was constructed for the custodian.

QUEBEC WALLS AND FORTIFICATIONS, Quebec.

Continuation of repointing and rebuilding the wall was undertaken.

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

Minor repairs were made to the house.

CARILLON BARRACKS, Carillon, Quebec.

Minor repairs were made to the building.

BATOCHE RECTORY, Batoche, Saskatchewan, which is a permanent monument to the battle in 1885 between the Métis, under Louis Riel, and the forces of General Middleton. On May 12th the Métis were routed after two days of heavy fighting and Riel's movement was broken. Riel was captured three days later. The first floor will be used as a museum commemorating the events of 1885, as well as the life and customs of the Métis, the Indians, the fur traders, and the settlers of the district. The second floor will be restored as a school room and a post office, having been used for this purpose during the 1880's.

The assembly of exhibits was continued during the year.