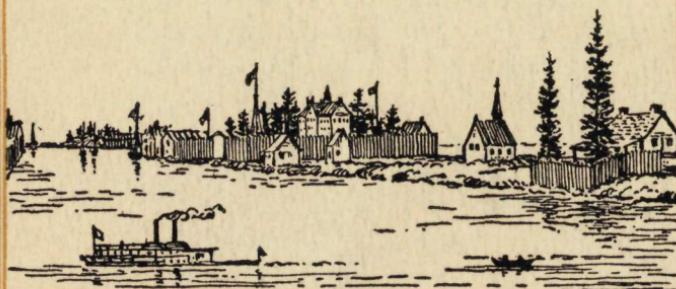


GUIDE TO
FORT LENNOX
ILE AUX NOIX . QUEBEC

FORT LENNOX, ILE AUX NOIX. 1850



A WISE NATION PRESERVES ITS RECORDS - GATHERS UP ITS MONUMENTS - DECORATES THE TOMBS OF ITS ILLUSTRIOS DEAD - REPAIRS ITS GREAT STRUCTURES & FOSTERS NATIONAL PRIDE AND LOVE OF COUNTRY - BY PERPETUAL REFERENCE TO THE SACRIFICES & GLORIES OF THE PAST . . . JOSEPH HOWE . . .
CANADIAN NATIONAL PARKS - HISTORIC SITES

FORT LENNOX

Ile aux Noix - - - Quebec

*A Brief History of the Island Fortress
on the Richelieu River. Battle ground of
contending Nations for the possession of
Canada in the Eighteenth Century and
built by the British at immense cost
during the early years of the Nineteenth
Century - - - - -*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HON. CHARLES STEWART - Minister
W. W. CORY, C.M.G. - Deputy Minister
J. B. HARKIN - Commissioner Canadian
National Parks, Ottawa

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

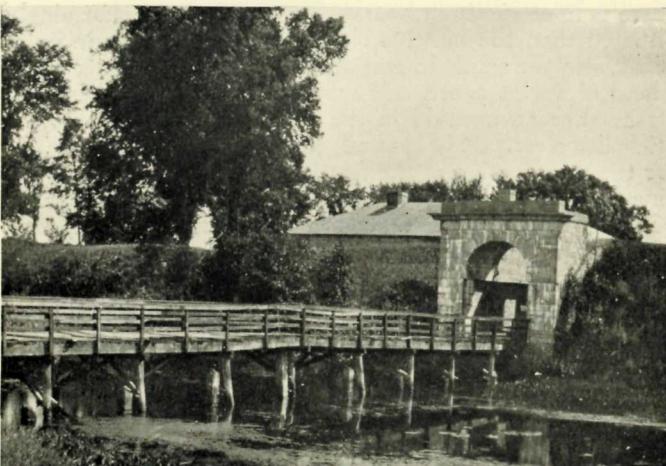
The Old Fort

Among the historic memorials of Canada that have been from time to time placed under the care of the Canadian National Parks Branch of the Department of the Interior there is none richer in historic interest or more charmingly situated than the massive old fortress that stands in quiet dignity on the southern end of Ile aux Noix. Ile aux Noix, island of velvet sward and majestic elms anchored in mid stream like an emerald in the silver belt of the noble old Richelieu river. Now that adequate means have been taken for the preservation of the fort it will doubtless pose for all time as one of the chief monuments of the military romance of Canada and its island home as one of the most interesting of Canadian historic parks.

Fort Lennox has stood just within the Canadian border in the province of Quebec for more than one hundred years and, happily, during that period the call upon its services for national defence has not been sounded. In any case the changed methods of warfare in later days would have rendered its services pathetically futile. The old fort has been declared obsolete by the military authorities and after more than half a century of neglect and progressive decay it has been incorporated in the scheme of Canadian National Parks for preservation and restoration. Henceforth national piety may come to the assistance of creative beauty and on the spot where the first white settlers fought with Indian savages for the unclaimed lands of Canada the children of a nation at peace with its neighbours will plant flowers and trees and crimson vines to greet the transformation of the sweet springtime. Out of the welter and the madness of

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

war and the melancholy destruction of beautiful things is born the hope that national piety may now manifest itself for many years to come in new creations of constructive beauty where the most effective patriotism has its roots and its efflorescence.



MAIN ENTRANCE, NORTH SIDE

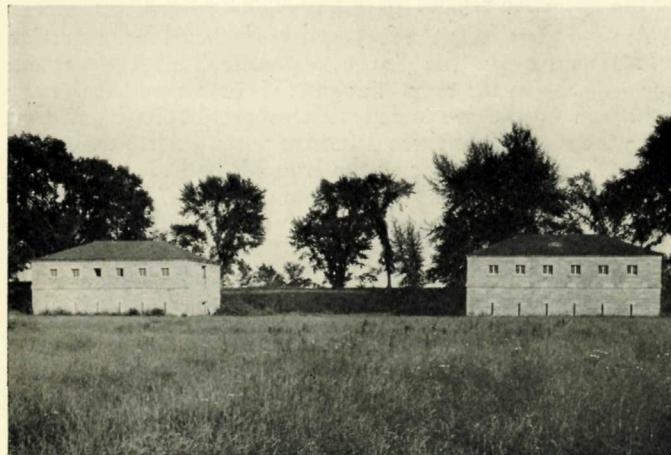
Ile aux Noix

Ile aux Noix, situated about twelve miles below the outfall of lake Champlain and ten miles from the American border, attracted the attention of Champlain in 1609, who, noticing an unusual number of nut trees upon it called it the Ile des Noix. With his force of but two of his countrymen—the

PAGE FOUR

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

first white men to visit the region—and a band of friendly Indians in war canoes, Champlain had ascended the river of the Iroquois far from his base of supplies, en route to the lake which formed the source of it and to which he gave his name.



THE ARTILLERY AND COMMISSARIAT BUILDINGS

A Line of Forts

With the French occupation of the Richelieu territory a line of defence for the Richelieu river became a necessity, since the Richelieu was the chief gateway from the south to the cities of Montreal and Quebec.

PAGE FIVE

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

In the course of time a chain of forts was built stretching from Sorel to lake Champlain which covered with their guns the advance of the enemy from the New England States. In these operations the famous Carignan regiment took a prominent part and the names of many of their officers are still preserved in the place names of the Richelieu region.

Around these forts the first settlers clustered for protection and thus formed the "French Country" of the eastern townships. In the term "habitant" is preserved the literary memorial of the stockaded villages or "habitations" that were the outcome of these defensive posts. After the smoke of battle and the terror of the Iroquois had died away and most of the resplendent "gentlemen of France" had returned to their country these habitants were found with cleared lands and growing crops, the real hope of the great new colony, asking only from their superiors peace, justice and the opportunity to cultivate the land whose riches they alone could appreciate.

The Island is Fortified

The struggle between English and French involved the fortification of Ile aux Noix. The island was three-quarters of a mile in length with on either side a swift narrow channel and shores rendered unapproachable for troops on account of wide tracts of treacherous marsh land. These factors made Ile aux Noix an ideal site for the defence of the Richelieu. To the south, where attack might be expected, the river takes a sharp bend and an approaching flotilla coming suddenly around Sturgeon Point could be surprised by a deadly fire from the guns of the fort.

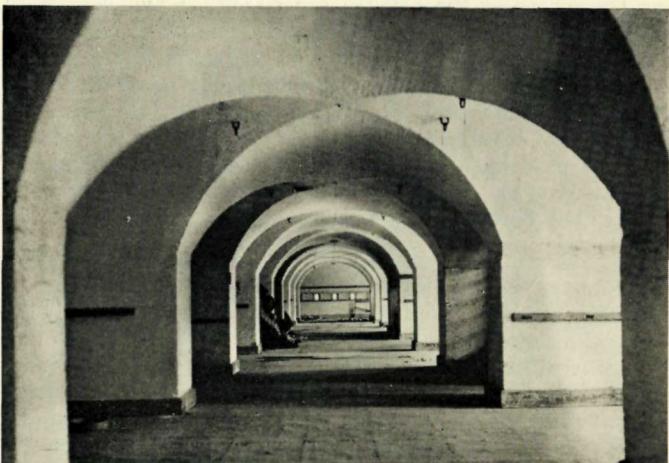
FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

With the abandonment of Carillon and St. Frédéric, which guarded that part of New France situated around lake Champlain, General Bourlamaque decided to entrench himself strongly at Ile aux Noix with the intention of arresting the march of the English commander, Haviland. With 2,000 men of the detachments of the Queen, of Guyenne and of Berry, Bourlamaque worked so well that his adversary was afraid to attack him immediately. It was only in the month of August 1760, after having received some reinforcements, that Haviland appeared before the fort of Ile aux Noix, then commanded by de Bougainville, who distinguished himself later by his voyages and discoveries and whose body rests in the Pantheon of Paris.

The French had thrown some stockades across the river to close the passage but the English had succeeded in surrounding the island, advancing unperceived through the bush and marsh land on the east side and pointing their cannon on three sides of the fort. The French commander judged it to be better to retreat than to be obliged to surrender with all his forces and during the night of the 24th and 25th August, profiting by darkness, he embarked the greater part of his troops in canoes, leaving in the fort 50 men in order to hide his strategem. He thus succeeded in evading the enemy and gaining St. John and Montreal where he joined himself to Lévis. The morning of the 25th the English commenced to bombard the fort in response to the fire of the few French remaining there. Later, the French offered to surrender, provided they were allowed to leave with the honours of war. Their proposal was immediately accepted but the English realized that a trick had been played upon them and were naturally much chagrined.

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

The fall of the island was the prelude to the fall of Montreal and the loss of New France to the French Government. Ile aux Noix was the last defence of the old régime.



MEN'S BARRACKS—ARCHWAYS ON FIRST FLOOR

The American War of Independence

From the time of the English occupation Ile aux Noix was recognized as a strong position and was constantly occupied by troops. With the outbreak of the American War of Independence in 1775 the need for a strong fortress on the island became apparent. In this year the American rebels, commanded by Generals Schuyler and Montgomery,

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

took Ile aux Noix from their ancient compatriots in the course of their advance on Montreal and Quebec. After Montgomery's failure and death before the old capital the American army retreated on the Richelieu in 1776 and entrenched at Ile aux Noix under the orders of General Arnold. Fever broke out among the soldiers and the Americans left very hurriedly in order to escape the ravages of the epidemic. The English took possession of the fort.

The Imperial government, in view of the recent occurrences and understanding the importance of this location for the protection of the colony decided to build on the island a real fortress. Plans were made and immediately the work of reconstruction began under the direction of an engineer called Twiss. A large number of Canadian prisoners who had joined the Americans during the invasion were employed on this work but the major part was carried out by the German mercenaries who were in the English service. The preparation was to dig a large moat surrounded by high ramparts in the form of a rectangle with bastions on four corners and then build in the interior quarters for the officers and soldiers. This was a gigantic enterprise when one considers the rudimentary means at that time to build large terraces. The construction of the fort, which was called Lennox, from the family name of Charles, Duke of Richmond, who was governor general for the year 1818-1819, cost millions of dollars to the mother country.

It was at this time that General Riedesel, the commander of the New Brunswick mercenaries, hired by Britain to subjugate the revolting New English colonies, came to figure in the destinies of the island. The landgrave of Hessa and the Duke of Brunswick had supplied the English with 20,000

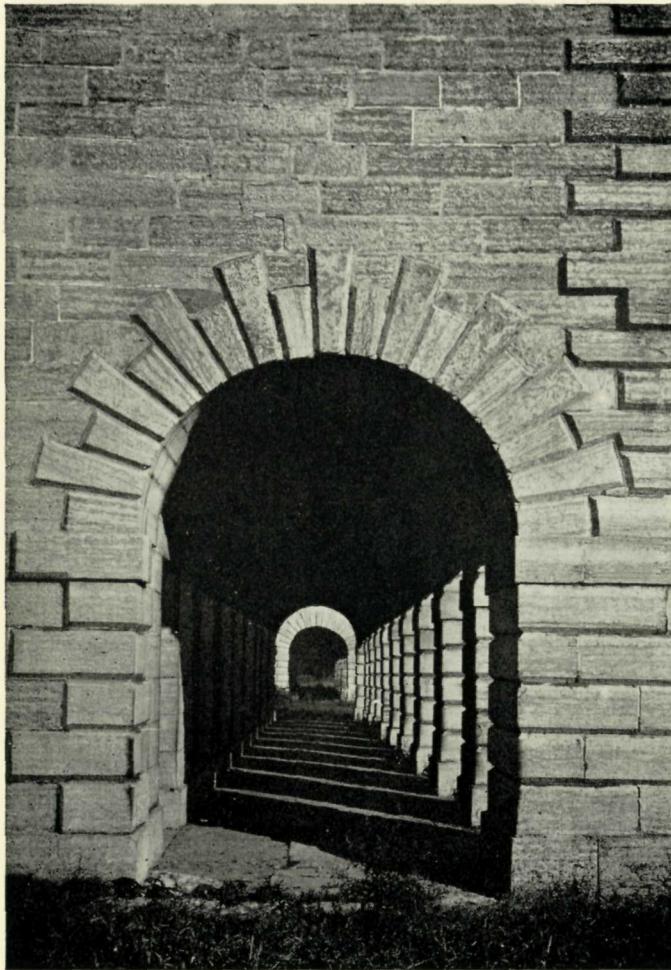
FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

troops. In command of 4,000 Brunswickers, Major General Frederick Adolphus von Riedesel came to Canada and operated between Sorel and lake Champlain and under his supervision the first considerable English fortifications were built on Ile aux Noix. At this time the defences of the island were very primitive although the remains of the old French fort were good. The fortifications erected by Riedesel were intended to serve as magazines for the British army which intended to cross lake Champlain. The builders of the fort worked under miserable conditions during the fall when rain poured in torrents softening the clay soil and filling the ditches with water. Often they were standing in water up to their knees and wet to the skin. The fortress was advanced before the winter came on but was not completed till the next summer. The expected attack of the Americans did not materialize and when the unhappy war ended Riedesel and his Germans, decimated by hardships, disease and casualties in the field returned to their fatherland. But Ile aux Noix was established as a garrison fortress.

The War of 1812

When trouble once more broke out between the neighbouring countries in 1812 it was found that the fortress built by Riedesel at the cost of so much labour and suffering was not sufficient to meet the purposes of defence. It was decided to reconstruct the interior and the present buildings were from time to time erected. The island also became a naval station where the lesser class of warships was built. The work was begun in 1812 and was not completed for many years.

On June 3, 1813, two American ships appeared in sight and were successfully captured after two hours fighting.



ARCHWAY—OFFICERS' QUARTERS AND GUARD ROOM BUILDINGS

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

It was from this island that the expedition set out when the British, under captain Everard, destroyed the Plattsburgh arsenal, block houses, barracks, military stores and vessels. The island was intimately connected with the battle of Lacolle's Mill five miles distant. It was also the centre of the ill-fated expedition under Sir George Prevost against Plattsburgh and there in the winter of 1813-14 the "Confiance" was built, a ship of considerable tonnage.

The Abandoned Fort

After the war of 1812-14 the fort continued to be garrisoned until the withdrawal of the imperial troops in 1869 when it was abandoned and became the free resort of tourists and picnic parties and naturally drifted towards decay. On May 18, 1921, on the recommendation of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, the fortress and adjoining lands were transferred by order in council to the Canadian National Parks Branch of the Department of the Interior for preservation and restoration and later a curator was appointed to keep the property in order and prevent further depredation by thoughtless visitors.

Fort Lennox To-day

The Fort Lennox of to-day, although showing many signs of the desuetude of half a century and the depredations of the vandal, presents to the visitor an aspect of proud and magnificent solidity as if it had the power in itself to defy the disintegrating influences of time and weather and even the more desolating effect of the irresponsible vandal.

At the entrance is a massive archway of great blocks of hewn stone on which is cut in large letters the legend "Lennox". The gateway opens upon a spacious square on three

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

sides of which are arranged the various buildings of the fort: officers' quarters, guard-house, canteen, barracks and commissariat buildings all of which are constructed of stone and on the massive lines adopted by the British authorities at the beginning of the 19th century. The square, with its



OFFICERS' QUARTERS AND GUARD ROOM

buildings, is surrounded by a steep rampart of earth which rises abruptly from the waters of a moat 60 feet wide and ten feet deep, running like a girdle around the whole structure. On the summit of this rampart the mounted cannons, like sleepless lions, commanded the approaches of the river on all sides.

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

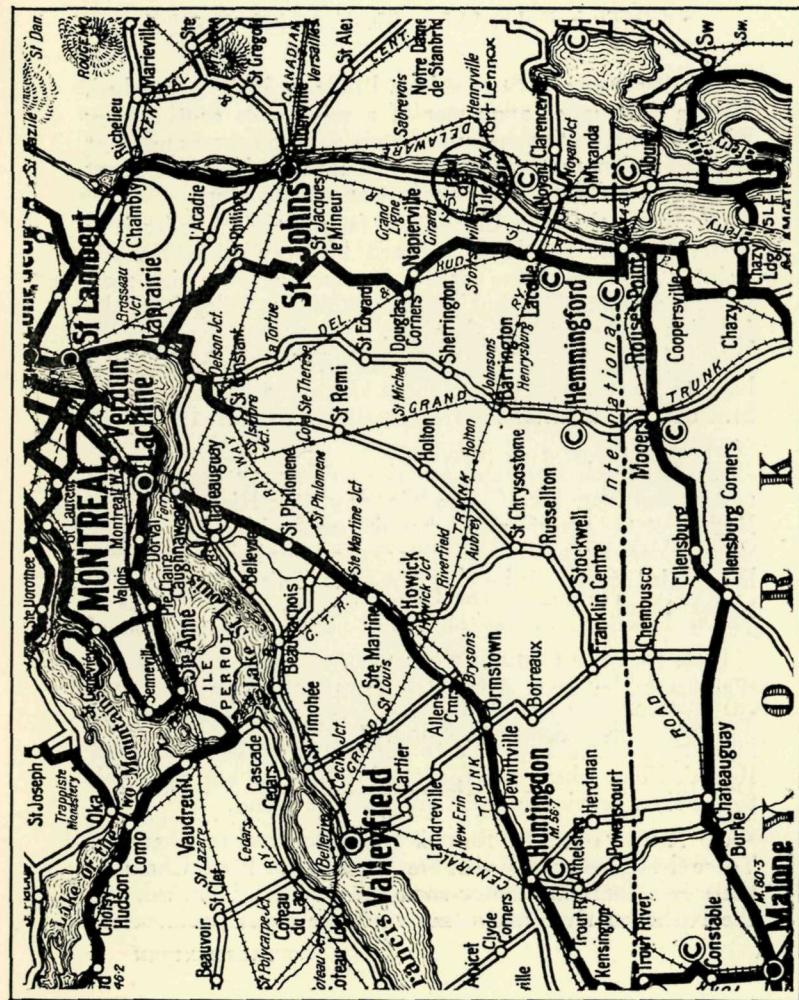
The fortress stands at the south end of the island and occupies about one-quarter of the total area, which covers 210 acres. Outside the fort may be seen the remains of church and graveyard, and other ruins. Of the nut trees that attracted the attention of Champlain and gave their name to the island, there is no trace, but within the fort are many magnificent elm trees which add a dignified beauty to the scene and seem to stand as conscious guardians over the noble ruin. In the patriotic solicitude that would maintain the fort "as a monument to the brave men who fell in its defence and as an inspiration to generations of Canada yet to come" these giant elms appear to take a conscious part.

Methods of Approach

(1) From the American Side

The Richelieu valley has already established itself as a tourist route of exceptional interest comparable in national and historic charm to the famous Niagara frontier. There is a chain of old forts on both sides of the international boundary, reaching on the Canadian side to the waters of the St. Lawrence and on the American side as far as Albany.

(a) Leaving Rouse's Point on the American side the motor traveller may proceed to Fort Lennox by the river road, which is a very good road for motor traffic in dry weather. After proceeding about four miles Lacolle bridge is reached which spans the Lacolle creek. There may be seen the foundations of the famous Lacolle's mill where a great struggle took place between the English and the Americans during the War of Independence. The site of the mill is about 100 yards from the bridge. Immediately opposite is the Lacolle blockhouse, a wooden building at present privately owned and in rather poor condition.



©

Border Custom House Towns
Postes douaniers

Main Travelled Highways
Grande Routes Améliorées

Improved Main Highways
Grande Routes Aménagées

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

Five miles beyond, St. Paul de l'Ile aux Noix is reached. Here a turning of a quarter of a mile leads to the river Richelieu where two summer hotels will be found and boat transportation to the island. The landing is on the west side about 300 yards from the entrance to the fort.

(b) When the elements do not favour the traveller it is better to take the King Edward highway from Rouse's Point. After travelling eight miles turn off on a side road leading down to St. Paul, a distance of five miles from the junction of the roads to the river.

(c) Coming by train from Rouse's Point the visitor will book to Stottsville, Quebec, about two and a half miles from St. Paul. This distance can be walked or covered by hired conveyance.

(d) Approach from the American side may be made by motor boat from lake Champlain, down the Richelieu river, landing at the wharf on the east side of the island where the water is deep enough to accommodate a large boat. The west landing is too shallow for this purpose. This journey is very pleasant and picturesque.

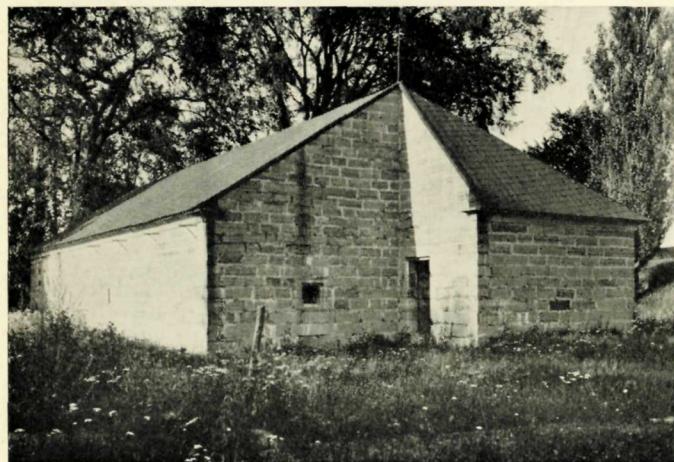
(2) From the Canadian Side

(a) Proceeding from Montreal the traveller crosses Victoria bridge to St. Lambert and thence takes the Gouin highway through Laprairie to within ten or twelve miles of Rouse's Point where the cross-road to St. Paul and approach to the river previously mentioned will be found.

(b) A very beautiful route is from Montreal to Chambly. There the traveller may visit Fort Chambly. From Chambly there is a charming motor road down to St. John, skirting the Richelieu river and canal with the accompaniment of

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

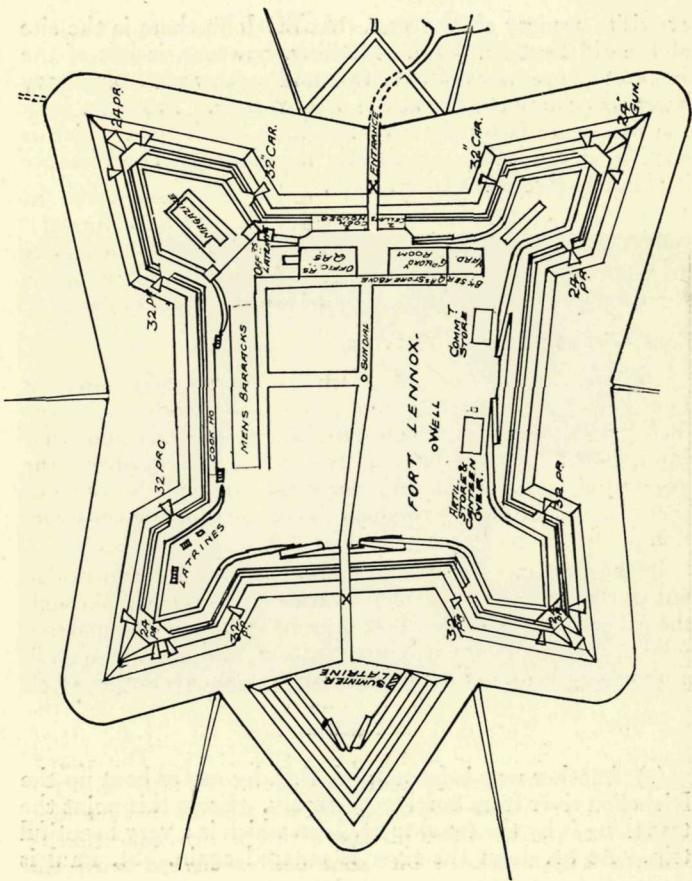
exquisite scenery all the way. At St. John there is the site of the old Fort St. John. Nothing, however, is left of the fort but the remains of the moat and earthworks. Military barracks occupy the site at the present time. From St. John the procedure is by the river road, an earth road which is good in dry weather, as already mentioned. The distance is about twelve miles to St. Paul.



MAGAZINE

(c) Another way is from Sorel, P.Q. by motor boat up the Richelieu river from Sorel to Chambly. From this point the travelling is by the canal to St. John which is a very beautiful trip. At St. John the river is entered again. St. Paul is

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX



PAGE EIGHTEEN

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

reached and the objective of the traveller is the east side of the island by the main channel of the river.

(d) The rail journey from Montreal is to Stottsville. The way thence to the river has already been described.

At present there is no refreshment accommodation on the island. It is customary for travellers to bring light lunches when staying for any length of time or to depend upon St. Paul or St. John, twelve miles distant, for hotel accommodation. When the island was occupied the chief means of transportation was on the east side and it is probable that in the course of time this accommodation may be restored.

The Fort Without and Within

Landing on the west side of the island the first object of interest is the encircling moat sixty feet wide, with the mounting rampart on which were poised the great guns that commanded the reaches of the river. Everywhere the vegetation is luxuriant and beautiful. It will be obvious that the excavations of the moat were used for the construction of the rampart.

In the old times the means of approach was by drawbridge but of this there is at present no trace. Proceeding through the gateway the visitor will at once be struck by the massive solidity of the buildings. In front of him on the parade ground is a centenarian sundial which was erected in 1820. On the right are the officers' quarters and on the left the guardhouse. Both buildings will immediately attract attention by the beautiful archways and cloisters. The guardhouse was built in 1824 with a new roof in 1907, and the officers' quarters were built in 1826. Within this building will be found the museum, containing a rich collection of historic relics with recent additions connected with the

PAGE NINETEEN

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

great war. Behind the officers' quarters will be seen various buildings, dug into the ramparts, used for kitchen purposes. Further to the right in the northwest bastion will be seen the magazine where the ammunition was stored. Here the thickness of the side walls will be appreciated. The arch inside is four feet thick while the side walls are eight feet



THE GATE AND MOAT, SOUTH SIDE

thick. Shell rooms were built on each end of the stone wall, separating the site of the magazine from the other buildings. Next on the west side a fine stretch of men's barracks will be observed, looking like a magnificent hospital, and within this building the visitor will still further appreciate the

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

massive character of the buildings. It may be said that the chief feature of all these buildings is the excellence of the construction of the various archways. Behind the barracks and under the embankments will be observed other buildings used as ovens, where the soldiers baked their bread. These



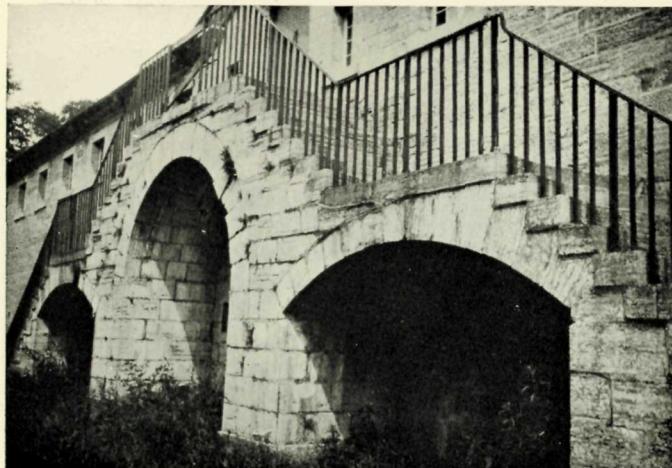
MEN'S BARRACKS

were repaired from time to time between the years 1907 and 1914. They were used as a convict prison between 1866-1869, and window rods were put in the lower section of the men's barracks.

On the south side there is another outlet to the water connecting with a curious triangular structure, also

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

surrounded by a moat, which was intended as an additional protection from attack on the south side. Here there is a most beautiful view of the Richelieu river. Proceeding to the east side there are the artillery store, canteen and commissariat buildings. To complete the itinerary of the fort



STAIRWAY REAR OF MEN'S BARRACKS

there is the guard-room building which is on the left main entrance where will be seen the cells intended to discipline refractory soldiers.

Leaving the fort by the main entrance the visitor can find trace of a sally-port. This was rebuilt in 1913 with stones

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

taken from the wall in front of the magazine. It was originally much longer and included a protective stockade to the wharf on the east side of the island. Before him is now seen the expanse of the island which, in the summer time, presents a charming vista. About two hundred yards north of the entrance in the field can be seen two cemeteries enclosed by fences. The names of the soldiers who are buried there are preserved in the records. In some cases the original headstones had perished and the memorials were renewed. Among them were the following:

In memory of
Sydney Neville Ussher
aged 17 days
Son of W. H. Ussher Esq.
and grandson of the
late Rear Admiral
Sir Thomas Ussher,
C.B., K.C.H.
who died 9th Dec. 1848
at Ile Aux Noix, C.E.

Sacred to the memory
of John Duggan
Sergeant in the Royal
Sappers and Miners of
Wales
who departed this life
on the 8th day
of Jan. 1835
aged 59 years

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

To the memory
of Lieutenant
William Grimshaw
of the 76th
Hindoostan
Regiment who
died the 10th
November 1815
Aged 25 years

In memory of
Thos. Lebrun
County of Monagan, Ireland
died
April 10th 1868
Aged 35 years
Erected by his widow and
orphan children in
token of their love.

In the middle of the island there is a large excavation which once served as a dry dock. It is approximately two hundred and fifty feet long by fifty feet wide with signs of an entrance from the river about two hundred and fifty feet long by twenty-five feet wide. In the days of naval activity on the island the boats were brought into this enclosure, the gates closed and the water pumped out by hand. Great preparations were made for ship building, but with the conclusion of the war in 1814 the works were closed and the ships under construction were sold.

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

The Museum

Visitors with historic sense will find the museum of great interest. In the Indian relics which have been dug up on the island or in the vicinity there is ample proof that Ile aux Noix was used by the Indians long before the 17th century. Among these relics there are thirteen stone axes, sixty flint arrow points, totem stone, spear heads and other curiosities.



SALLY-PORT

The relics, military and domestic, of early French and later British occupation are very numerous. Students of regimental history will find a unique collection of military buttons, badges, crests and plates, bearing such names as Hindustan, Peninsula, Malay, Corunna, Royal Miners and Sappers, Canadian Militia, New Brunswick Regiment, Royal Canadian Sappers, Royal Regiment of Artillery and many others. The collection includes an English triangular

PAGE TWENTY-FIVE

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

bayonet dated 1618, Scotch claymore sword, marine cutlass, old guns of early construction, cannon balls, ship axes, earrings and trinkets, leg irons, wooden shoes, steel and tinder for striking fires. There is also an extensive collection of old coins including a Portuguese coin dating back to 1530. There are numerous Spanish, French, British and Canadian silver and copper coins bearing the quaint devices of their periods. There are also many rare old books, documents and newspapers. Quite recently a large consignment of relics of the late European war has been received at the island comprising the following items: 20 rifles, 1 anti-tank rifle, 6 unmounted machine guns, 1 M.G. (round stand), 1 M.G. (high stand), 1 M.G. (small stand), 1 Austrian M.G., 2 barrels T.M. (loose), 1 aeroplane, 1 granatenwerfer, 1 sniping plate, 1 breastplate, 20 shells, 1 periscope, 1 rifle stand, 5 bayonets, 2 signal pistols, 10 trench helmets, 1 dress helmet, 12 posters, 2 limbers, 3 trench signs, 1 zeppelin piece.

A Public Reserve

The day of the vandal at Ile aux Noix, it is hoped, has passed and the supervision of the Canadian National Parks Branch is intended to give a better and fuller freedom to the public for the use and enjoyment of the island as a holiday resort and historic shrine. Special areas have been reserved for campers and facilities provided for their needs. Good bathing opportunities are afforded. Two wharves have been built on the east and west sides of the island, that on the east giving accommodation to steamers of heavy draught such as excursion boats. A caretaker has been appointed who will supply information and literature and attend to reasonable requirements of visitors.

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

Looking Back

The imaginative visitor standing on one of the bastions which commands a fine view of the river and looking through the trees across the spacious parade grounds of the fort will reconstruct for himself the fevered activity of naval operations which once characterized this placid river. He will

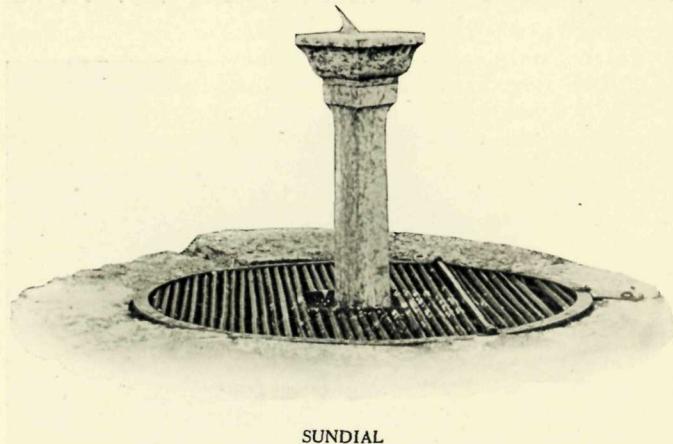


LOOKING NORTHEAST FROM THE SOUTHEAST BASTION

hear once more the call of the bugle and see the officers and men issuing from their quarters in the resplendent uniforms of the olden times. Once more he will hear the sharp word of command and picture the vigilant sentry scanning the river for signs of hostile approach. The day of this method of warfare has passed away but it is well that there should

FORT LENNOX—ILE AUX NOIX

be monuments still standing, such as the old fortress on Ile aux Noix, to focus the thrilling story of the nation's first defences, and to create and keep alive reverence for those who counted not life as dear unto themselves in the service of their country.



SUNDIAL

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