

MARINE SOUNDINGS

The newsletter of the Provincial Marine of Amherstburg, Ontario

SNB 1406-6506/NOVEMBER 2011

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The Commissariat Report

By Jennie Lajoie

We accomplished a great deal this year at the commissariat beginning with the replacement of the fluorescent lights with replicas of more period correct chandeliers. Thanks to Wayne Mickle for all his work in finding them and assisting the electricians with their installation.

Two excellent students manned the commissariat during the months of July and August and almost 600 people signed the guest book, many from other countries—*e.g.*, Brazil, England, Finland. Everyone who visits our beautiful little building remarks upon the artifacts, the awesome location and the general ambiance of the building.

Several events were hosted—at the request of Ft.

Malden, "Activities Day" for local students was hosted by the Provincial Marine in March. Dr. Alan Taylor, author of *The Civil War of 1812* was given a private tour of the facilities in July. During the month of July we greeted and escorted a bus tour group from Michigan through the commissariat. In September, we participated in Doors Open and welcomed approximately 60 guests.

In October, we hosted a luncheon for the *1812 Alive* group which was meeting at Ft. Malden and we served as the back-drop for Jeff Watson's announcement of a federal grant toward the Roots to Boots bi-centennial celebrations.

The commissariat will work in concert with the River Lights Festival again this year – a model train display will be set up and we will act as a second warming house during the celebrations in November and December.

11th Year of Publication

By George T. Marshall

Since we withdrew from HMS Detroit Project, our members' faith in our purpose sustained us. Bob Garcia reminded us of the Provincial Marine's long history, and we could take its name, independent of, but not hostile to, the idea of the ship building project.

Bob Ferguson's experience in boats gave us confidence as well. He pushed for shares to fund

the buying of the same whaler that we bought for the Project when we had been part of it. When we got our grants, that money was returned to us. If we had had to buy costumes, tents, boats and artillery at the same time it would have been overwhelming.

Carol Ferguson wanted us to have a publication similar to the *Ship's Log*. *She felt it would give us some credibility; I agreed though initially my computer was not up to the task.*

We were ambitious for our group. We started a fife and drum band, but without experienced players, the group gradually faded. We had a Northern Alliance, but it was hard to get any sense of unity with a group that far away. Their small dues did not cover any more than a small percentage of the costs of setting them up. Eventually they left us paying a small part of our costs of setting them up. We, however, have the satisfaction that another group of PMs exists in part because of our efforts. In that sense the Northern Alliance was a success. Most projects have come off rather well. Many of our long term goals seem close to fruition. A significant sculpture will represent the men who died to keep our nation free. We seem close to our goal of commemorating the Indian encampment on Bois Blanc Island. Grants are coming to ensure that the block house on the island will be preserved. These are all ambitious objectives that we have long espoused. **(See articles inside for these items.)**

Marine Soundings

is published by the Provincial Marine, Amherstburg, a Re-enactment Group.

Membership at \$15 a year includes the right to go on encampments, training with equipment, sailing on our vessels plus an insurance component and our quarterly newsletter. In addition we have many social events each year. Active re-enactors pay an additional \$10.00 towards insurance.

Members of similar organizations may apply for just a newsletter subscription. At \$6.00 Canadian funds and \$6.00 US, we simply recover our costs.

The Executive for 2011

David May Sr.—President

Peter Rindlisbacher—Vice-President

Ellen Rindlisbacher—Treasurer

Secretary—Jennie Lajoie

Board Directors:

David May, Bob Ferguson, Peter and Ellen Rindlisbacher, Vern Coon, Jim Ouellette, Jane Teeple, Vicky Beaulieu, Wayne Mickle

Committees (chairs highlighted)

Newsletter: **George Marshall**, (Various departments report)

Membership: **Jane Teeple**

Boats: Bob Ferguson, Vern Coon, P. Rindlisbacher, Jim Ouellette,

Dale Kidd, David May

Events: **Marty Burnett**

Black Powder: **M. Burnett**, David May

Drill: **James Whyte**, Dale Kidd

Social: **Jennie Lajoie**

Promotions: **Jennie Lajoie**

Brick Campaign: **Carol Ferguson**, Bob Ferguson

Commissariat: **Jennie Lajoie**

Period Clothing: **Jane Teeple**, Jennie Lajoie

Bingos: **Brenda Mayer**, E. Kersey

Web master: **Kenneth Cyr**

Our Sponsors and Supporters:

Essex Community Futures Development Corporation,

Trillium Corporation, Windsor Charity Bingos,

Royal Canadian Naval Association, Royal Canadian Navy, Legion Branch 157

Amherstburg, CAW Branch 200, hbc

(Hudson Bay Co.), the Questors, The Windsor

Essex Community Foundation, and Fort

Malden Historic Site

To submit articles, questions, ideas e-mail

NEW: gtmar3@bell.net

To Read articles in our newsletter on the

web, visit www.provincialmarine.org

To contact Marty Burnet, our events coordinator

Martyb17@hotmail.com

Our history influences us still!

The Queen of England can trace her lineage back to the Stuarts, and then back to the Tudors, and then back to the Plantagenets, and then back to William the Conqueror. **This continuity is both an advantage and a disadvantage for the UK.**

The bad blood between the Irish and the British goes back to 1169 when a dethroned Irish king, Diarmuid MacMurrough, called upon the **Anglo-Normans** to help him seize back his throne. These **Vikings** were in control of most of Britain, and had little problem capturing much of Ireland for themselves. The **Anglo-Norman** leader, Strongbow, took the Irish king's daughter as his prize for his troubles. Subsequently, the Irish by force of arms succeeded in pushing the British (**Anglo-Normans**) back into a small area around Dublin known as the Pale.

But in the 16th century the Tudor King Henry VIII launched a reconquest, and forced Irish chieftains to acknowledge his sovereignty. Later he turned the English Catholic Church into a moderate half-Catholic, half-Protestant church called Anglican. Under Henry's children, Mary and Elizabeth new settlers from Britain came, and under Elizabeth the persecution of the Catholics began.

Various rebellions happened in 1601, 1641, and then in 1649 Oliver Cromwell came and by brutal efficiency had the whole of Ireland under English control in 1652, dispossessing every Catholic of his land east of the Shannon River. Certain areas west of the Shannon were used as a reservation for the Catholics who had not fled the country. There was a brief ray of hope for the Irish when one Stuart, James II, changed back to Catholicism. But this ray was extinguished in the Glorious Revolution when the Protestant William of Orange defeated him at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. This victory gave the English complete control of Ireland.

There were all sorts of things forbidden for being Catholic, such as owning land, holding public office, bearing arms, and even practicing one's faith. And this went on for a hundred years. Naturally the Irish supported the American Revolution, and frequently fought on the American side during the War of 1812. In 1798, Wolfe Tone led an unsuccessful rebellion which cost 30,000 Irish lives.

In 1828, with the overwhelming election of Daniel O'Connell to the House of Commons in spite of the law forbidding him to take office, the British were forced to act. The British Prime Minister, wishing to avoid civil war, passed the Catholic Emancipation Act. However, Parliament, showing ill will, increased the value of land required for voting from a rent of 2 pounds to a rent of 10 pounds. Beginning in 1845 and lasting 5 years, a fungus started killing off potato crops. It was the Great Potato Famine. *Laissez-faire*, a pernicious theory, saw the government sitting back as up to one million starved and one million migrated to the USA. Meanwhile in Belfast the Protestants were experiencing an Industrial Revolution. Somewhere, a break in the unfair treatment of Catholics needed to happen, but sudden breaks in tradition are foreign to the British system. The prejudice against the Irish went deep; the expression "**black Irish**" persisted into my generation!

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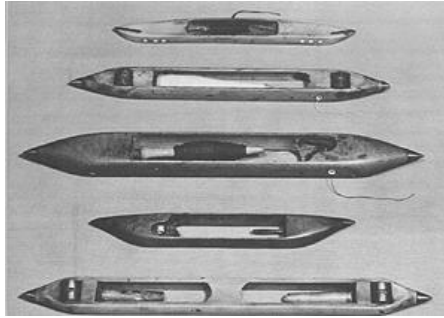
The Winning of the Napoleonic Wars had brought Great Britain close to Revolution

For the twenty-three years that Great Britain had been at war, home affairs had been neglected with the mass of her people enduring hardship and misery. On the return of peace, one could reckon up the gains and losses. Great Britain had obtained a considerable extension of colonial territory. Malta, the Ionian Islands, Heligoland, Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius, Ceylon, Trinidad, and Tobago had been added to her possessions. She had won an influential position in the councils of Europe, and was easily the first naval power in the world.

But all these gains had been made at the expense of prosperity, reform, and progress at home. During the war, scarcely one important attempt had been made by the government, to improve the condition of the British people; all its energies had been consumed in the great task of raising money to subsidize allies, to equip armies, and to build ships. Now that war was over, Great Britain had to face an enormous debt, heavy taxes, high prices, increasing pauperism, badly managed factories, crowded and ill-governed towns, and a thousand other conditions that made the middle classes dissatisfied and the laborers sullen and rebellious. There was a serious rebellion in Ireland in 1798, which was put down without dealing with the causes.

The Industrial Revolution

In the eighteenth century, great industrial changes had taken place in England, which had created vast wealth for the few and the terrible distress for the masses. Manufacturing experienced a period of the convergence at the turn of the



century much like what we are experiencing now. Many skilled trades lost their importance and were replaced by factory workers.

Weaving of wool and cotton goods had been carried on by workmen in their cottages, and spinning had been largely done by women and girls in their free time. In 1733 Kay invented the flying shuttle (seen above), which doubled the weaver's power of work and at once increased the demand for yarn. In 1764 Hargreave invented a machine that speeded up spinning, known as



the spinning-jenny, worked by hand with a wheel. A little later, the factory pioneer, Arkwright (seen above)

improved on Hargreave's machine, and by a new method made a stronger thread. Crompton combined the inventions of Hargreave and Arkwright, and produced the "mule" in 1779. Cartwright did the same for weaving with his mechanical loom, invented in 1785.

In the late 1700s Watt added steam to the mix of hand, animal and water power. Steam moved to major importance with the substitution of coal and coke for wood and charcoal. The iron industry made iron items cheaper and more available for general use. As cheap production demands rapid distribution, it was important to improve transportation—canals were first built in 1761, and then the awful roads were replaced with modern roads—layers of broken stone, a method invented by two Scottish engineers, Thomas Telford and John Macadam.

Agriculture was also improved. Wet lands were drained; poor lands were transformed by manuring and fertilizing; new seeds and roots were introduced; and the breeds of animals improved in appearance, weight, and strength. Beginning with 1780, a new enclosure movement began, for the sole purpose of better farming. At first machinery reduced the cottage laborer to penury, enclosures ruined the small farmers and drove them to the cities, the factory system took the place of domestic industry, and great landowners controlled the farms of England. People crowded into the towns, which lacked police and adequate government. Wages were low, hours long, and life was intolerable.

After the fall of the old mercantile system, a new theory of government had arisen known as **laissez faire**—leaving business to run itself—without government interfering. Under this system, factories and mines became death traps for the women and children who worked in them. The evil

was aggravated by an abominable poor law system, which had grown up since 1795 and had set aside some of the best features of mediaeval law. It pauperized the poor, trebled the expenses of the parishes, and raised enormously the number of those dependent on parish doles. Crime increased, and with hanging a universal remedy, society became brutalized. The tone of the law courts was low—judges browbeat the prisoners, lawyers bullied the witnesses, and the whole administration of law and justice savored of barbarism. It is difficult for us of to-day to realize the cruelty and injustice shown by men of the privileged classes toward those of the class who were without political influence, money, title, certain employment, or assurance of personal liberty or safety.

In 1816, we recall there was “the year without a summer”. No wonder that the years immediately following the return of peace were full of agitation and unrest. From 1815 to 1820, the masses all over Europe were dissatisfied with the repressive policy of their rulers and formed secret societies and engaged in revolts. Kings and ministers generally were doing all in their power to preserve the peace by acts of repression.

In 1815 with the Whigs discredited because of their opposition to the war, the Tories were in power in England. The prime minister was Liverpool, assisted by Castlereagh, a very able but narrow-minded Irishman, as secretary of foreign affairs. The U.K. became a bastion for reactionaries. In parliament, the House of Commons was representative only of the landowning and moneyed classes with little sympathy for the people, and the House of Lords was a bastion of the huge landowners. For five years the government did nothing to alleviate distress, and could find no better remedy than the use of force. The government despised the people they were governing.

Predictably under such

circumstances, leaders arose who desired radical changes. These men were called Radicals, and knew no other way to gain their ends than by intimidation. In 1816 a body of them near London, and made an attempt to organize a committee of public safety and to seize the Tower. Soldiers broke up the meeting; the frightened parliament suspended the Habeas Corpus Act and passed laws to prevent discussion in meetings or in the press. More strikes culminated in the famous gathering at St. Peter's field, Manchester in 1819, where fifty-thousand persons met in protest. The cavalry broke the crowd and killed half a dozen individuals, whence the name “Massacre of Peter-loo”. Then the Six Acts called the Gag Laws were passed, which prohibited public meetings to discuss grievances. It is not surprising that in 1820 a conspiracy was formed to murder the members of the cabinet.

Predictably Britain failed to deal with problems in Ireland, which led to the secession of that country in the midst of WWI. I found it odd that they could emancipate the Catholics in Canada, then in Great Britain, and delay so long doing the same for Ireland. And **laissez-faire** was a disastrous policy in the potato famine. The UK had not jelled under the Tudors, or Cromwell, or the Stuarts. (The Irish sided with the Catholic Stuarts.) With generosity, the Union could have jelled, but it was not extended. LAISSEZ-FAIRE was a dangerous idea to build a country around, and prejudice against the poor left the Irish with no good choices. The average Briton had good will towards the Irish, but it was never the average Briton oppressing them. It was that class of British gentry that we see in the novels of Jane Austen.

My grandfather started as a common workman in Manchester and saw the exploitation of workers and the enormous profits gained by the capitalists. He, like the vast majority of people, had no enmity towards the Irish, but saw them as exploited as himself. Determined to join the middle class, he became a factory manager.

His deep distrust of the upper classes reminds me of our problems today. The story of the U.K. shows that unresolved problems go on and on, causing unending problems.

This brings to an end the discussion of the British Empire at the time of the War of 1812. I think understanding its immense problems help us to understand why the war was brought to an end so quickly. It may be said that having won the war, the British lost the peace. They never got the buffer territory they wanted between B. N. A. and the US. This would not have mattered if the US had behaved with anything like generosity towards their native Americans. But Andrew Jackson, hero of the Battle of New Orleans and later president, would be guilty of ethnic cleansing if he were alive today. He was the author of the long march that killed thousands of Cherokees. His face figures prominently on a frequently used denomination of dollar bill. And gradually British North America adopted the same irrational attitudes towards the blacks and the Indians that the US had adopted.

The Americans are justly proud of their constitution—the oldest in the world, but some of its provisions are like the eighteenth century steam engine—great in its day but hopelessly inefficient and dangerous in the modern world. A few examples—the American fascination with the gun including weapons that are only used for mass killing of people, a congress that gets hopelessly deadlocked at some of the very worst times. How can America lead when its own country seems hopelessly messed up? How can it lead when it allows situations to get so messed up that solutions demand to be made? The Americans will do the right thing when all other solutions have been tried. I don't believe the US needs a revolution, but it needs the Canadian option to dump a political party when it gets too proud to do its business. It needs a third party.

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promotes the history of the Provincial Marine, most particularly in the War of 1812, and is available as part of the membership of the Provincial Marine. For members not on the web we mail their copies and send it to organizations at cost for \$ 6.00 CAD or US including postage and handling. MARINE SOUNDINGS/NOVEMBER 2011 p5

Membership Matters

by George T. Marshall

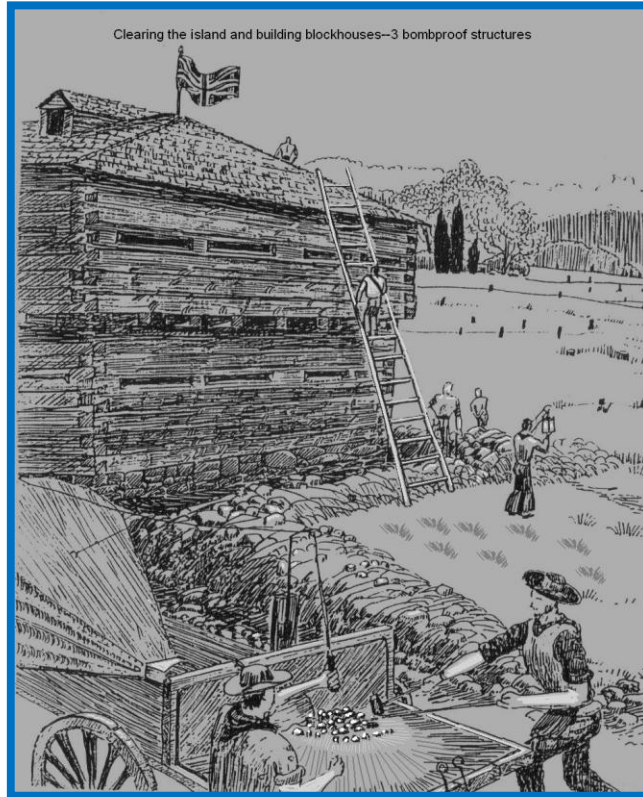
Thanks to Doug Robinson (Shamus Gunn), a member of the Provincial Marine and a professional story teller, for raising \$680 towards our 2012 events at a beef dinner theatre event called "Fire on the Water". He surprised us, talking as if at a dinner in 1815 and looking back at earlier events in the War of 1812. We had great heroes, but he gave us **the rest of their stories**. Frederic Rolette's distinguished service started with the capture of the Cuyahoga Packet and ended in the Battle of Lake Erie. He was welcomed as a hero when he returned to his home town in Quebec. Robert Barclay, defeated in the Battle of Lake Erie, went home expecting the worst. Severely wounded, he released his fiancé from her vows, but she stood by him. At his court martial he was completely exonerated and put on full pay till he could resume his duties. Sandy MacKintosh, captain of the Nancy, a North West Company supply ship on hire to the British, became one of the most heroic commanders of the Great Lakes, carrying on the battle with distinction after the loss of the Lake Erie fleet.

We are indebted to Shamus for making us understand the ingenuity and bravery of our forefathers and patriots. All that money doesn't hurt either. (More page 6)

Good News about the Blockhouse

Our sole remaining Boblo blockhouse is about to be repaired. We tried to educate the public with our Boblo

prints (detail above). Its tight joints are made to drain easily and it has an immense deep foundation. It was built of



hard wood and not prone to rotting. In 1955 the Federal Government recognized its historic national importance, but no money was forthcoming. On November 9, 2011, in the **River Town Times**, Becker Engineering announced that it will be providing all the engineering required on a pro bono basis for the building's restoration. The town will provide 7,900 dollars and the Federal Government will provide the rest totaling 158,000 dollars. Hopefully this restoration will halt the decay which had gone pretty far when I did the Boblo sketches about thirteen years ago.

Congratulation to the people at Becker Engineering and others for stepping up to the plate.

We plan to make more use of the island, and this move should help in a big way.

Fall Events

17th September, at Doors Open, we received 60 people.

October 8th saw us re-enacting a typical journey of the North West Company traveling from the Lake St Clair area to Amherstburg. Incidentally, according to David May the paddlers were tired but not muscle sore.

Oct. 22, Shamus, (Doug Robinson) presented "Fire on the Water" at the Legion.

November 19th River Lights Festival starts. Our building will have a Charles Dickens look with a Christmas tree and displays.

26th Nov. Christmas Parade with Charles Dickens theme. We'll be using an antique sleigh

26th, 27th Nov. Native Finger Weaving at Maidstone Museum
December 4th, Christmas Concert, lantern lighted.

Dec 6th, Christmas Potluck Dinner at 7 (Meeting and dinner).

Taken at the November 11 Parade
From the left: Jane Teeple, David May, Marty Burnett, and Dale Kidd. Manning the 3 pounder at the November 11th Parade.
Nov. 11th pictures courtesy of Brynn Goegebur.



Reports are due from various departments according to when they are most active.

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Progress Report on the Sculpture

By Peter Rindlisbacher

Work on the Battle of Lake Erie Gun Crew sculpture for Navy Yard Park continues on schedule. About eighty per cent of the pouring at a nearby U.S. foundry has been completed for the initial two Trillium-funded figures, which were done in clay earlier this year. Once they are completed, it will take about a week to braise the components together, before the two figures are brought to Amherstburg. We expect their arrival before the end of December.

An extensive federal grant application was submitted earlier this month for funding the two remaining figures, in order to complete the four gun crew design in bronze. Word on the grant decision is due in the first few months of 2012. We were given positive (unofficial) reaction from the grant review staff, and remain hopeful that the entire sculpture group, with cannon, landscaping and dramatic park lighting can all be in place in time for the 200th anniversary of the Battle in September, 2013. A major bi-national commemoration ceremony is planned for that dedication day.

President's Year End Message

David May Sr.

This year has witnessed a buildup of excitement towards the fast-approaching bi-centennial year.

Our group started eleven years ago with very little. We obtained the whaler through membership shares. These were paid back over time as we got appearance fees and the like. We applied for and got grants. We have a bingo account that enables us to rent the Commissariat and expand our educational equipment. We are flourishing.



The Provincial Marine has received requests for local appearances for next year from Amherstburg, La Salle and Windsor. I promise them that we have to do our events first and only then can we consider theirs.

This summer we formed a canoe brigade, of sorts. (A canoe brigade has 3 canoes. We hope to have more than one canoe.) We have been practicing every Wednesday evening. This culminated, on the Saturday of the Thanksgiving weekend, in a six hour journey from the East end of Windsor to Amherstburg. We hope to get it to other events this coming year.

Our new Native contingent is getting started. James Ouellette is opening doors for them to learn and experience their culture. He has nine people from Windsor, Walpole Island and is reaching as far as London. They are involved in fundraising and workshops to help sew up traditional clothing and learn traditional weaving and basket making. They are a sub-group of the Provincial Marine, and they have chosen a name, approved by their elders, SKANA: WATI (pronounced "Skana what eh"). We hope that these young people get others of their community involved during our planned encampment on Boblo Island. Hopefully they will continue with

their learning after the bi-centennial is over.

Upcoming events include the commemoration of the Battle of Lake Erie sculpture with appropriate fanfare and involvement of the three levels of government and the re-enactment of the capture of the Cuyahoga Packet.

We have a wonderful two and a half years where we hope to relive, and hopefully to teach, our history. There are many events coming up, and I hope we are all up for it

Membership Matters continued Various departments

Our membership stands at 99. Our boats are in good shape and are tarped and ready for winter. The old Project Detroit jolly boat will require a thorough examination before it is reintroduced to the water. Even though we have taken good care of it, it is in a Great Lakes environment and subject to dry rot. Recall that all the ships on the Great Lakes soon rotted after the War of 1812, whether they were tarped or kept in sheds(as in the US). We have tarped the canoe as well.

The Bingo funds stand at \$12,004. The annual Memorial Brick Campaign received a blow this year when the sidewalk was damaged during the winter. The town and the brick engraving company are replacing the damaged bricks. Next year will see the campaign carry on actively.

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promotes the history of the Provincial Marine, most particularly in the War of 1812. It is grateful for the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Questors, Windsor Charity Bingos, Windsor Community Futures Corporation, and the Windsor Essex Community Foundation.
HISTORIC PICTURE PAGE 7

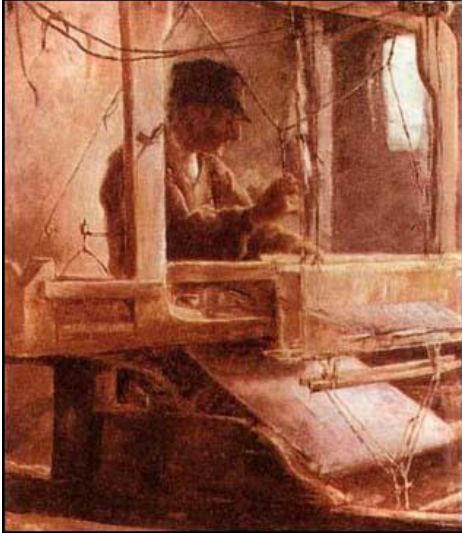


Fig. 5 Mr. Arkwright himself, the famous inventor of the factory system. Fig. 6 shows a mechanical loom like in fig. 3 showing automatic devices for lifting alternate threads, advancing the cloth, and keeping the cloth taut and passing the shuttle back and forth. The profits of machines like this were enormous, but the worker's wages did not keep up. Rent and food took most of their wages. Drink often took the rest.

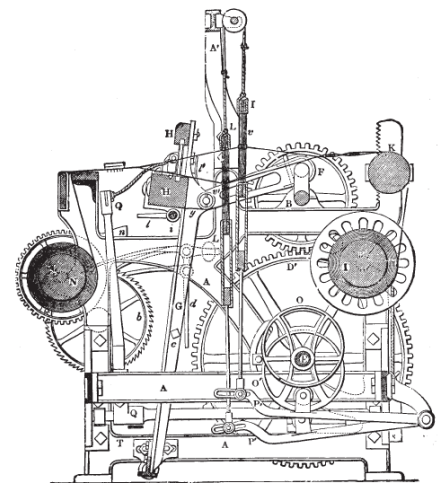


Fig.1 shows a weaver working in a typical cottage with a wooden loom. He passes the shuttle, carrying the thread back and forth raising alternate threads up and down. Note the dust.

Fig.2 shows one of Mr. Arkwright's model factory villages with large windows for natural light.

Fig.3 shows a weaving machine automating the weaving process. Weavers walked back and forth tending these machines thus increasing their output many, many times. Unfortunately they all created the same fine dust that handlooms create—a horrible health hazard for the workers.

Fig. 4 shows a viaduct carrying a narrow canal over a valley.



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promotes the history of the Provincial Marine, most particularly in the War of 1812 and is grateful to the many volunteers whose work makes us eligible for grants. Sales in yards and in the Commissariat, bingos, and other volunteer work make us eligible for these awards.
OUR PICTURE PAGE—Fall Activities page 8

Shamus Gunn is shown below getting his props ready before his presentation “Fire on the Water” in the Legion, Branch 157. Shamus is a professional story teller but also a proud re-enactor in our group.



We have purchased a “Northern canoe”, which was still part of the local scene in 1812. We are training to use it as part of our re-enactments.



The canoe was an integral part of the opening up of Canada. The North West Company used them in their operations. Long canoe trips were no longer necessary along the shores of the Great lakes as schooners could carry a lot more. But they were still useful going up narrow creeks. After the War of 1812, both sides sought to

build ambitious canals so that trade could move even more efficiently. Our canoe currently boasts a native motif on the stern and a typical

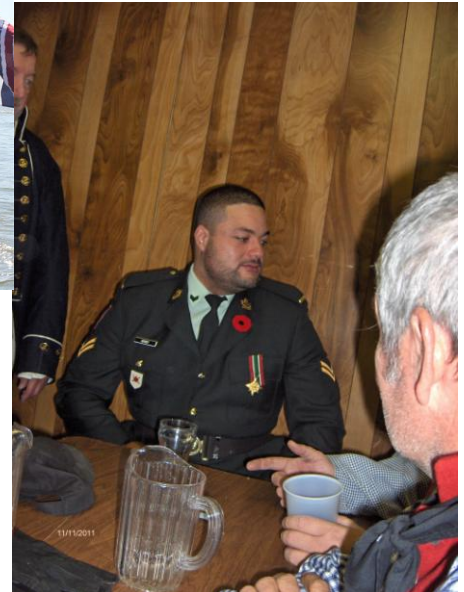


French Canadian motif on the bow.

Every year at November 11th we look forward to the Legion Parade. It’s a chance to see members that have moved elsewhere and to find out how people are doing. We always look forward to seeing James Whyte and Katie, whom we saw in the crowd. She is awaiting her third child. Brenda Mayer was in the parade dressed as a typical navy wife of the period. (see below.)



We saw Hunter Kersey, a longtime member of our group, who was in the parade as a member of Canada’s armed forces. We were out in record numbers and we had a room set aside for us after the parade.



Here’s a picture of Jane Teeple in Victorian dress sitting with “Reggie” in our Victorian sleigh float. (Reggie is Dale Kidd’s stepson.)



Thanks to everyone who contributed pictures and ideas to make this newsletter a success!

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