

Historical Records Of Harbour Grace

HARBOUR GRACE—Following last week's article on Harbour Grace, we write as follows from our records.

MARCH 24, 1827

"The night important and gratifying information is received by the Brig 'Caroline' from Bristol, dated the 17th inst. by Mr. Robert N. P. of England to Mr. Robert Pack, chairman of the Harbour Grace, Carboniferous, that the British Government has granted the petition of the inhabitants of Harbour Grace, and has issued a new commission to Sir Thomas Cochrane by which he will be empowered to visit the Harbour, and to hold a representative assembly.

"This was the first news to reach Newfoundland and was confirmed a few days later by despatches from England arriving at St. John's.

Mr. William Stirling, chairman of the public meeting held at Harbour Grace, October 4th, 1831, now deceased, the sheriff, Nicholas Stubb, to call a public meeting, which was held at the Harbour Grace, on the 21st March, at 12 o'clock.

The Deputy Sheriff having presided at the meeting, the chairman, Dr. William Stirling, came forward and read the communication on the important subject of the Harbour Grace.

Mr. Brooking writes Mr. Thomas Cochrane that the terms of the commission are being strictly observed, and that only one Judge will be admitted to the Harbour Grace, Carboniferous, and that the Deputy Sheriff having presided at the meeting, the chairman, Dr. William Stirling, came forward and read the communication on the important subject of the Harbour Grace.

OCTOBER 3, 1957

Historical Records Of Harbour Grace

OLD FAMILIES RECALLED

The Trappell Family

HARBOUR GRACE—The Trappell family is another of the very old families which is said to come to England with William the Conqueror and whose name appears in the Domesday Book, as one of the largest landowners in England at that time. The family can still show their coat of arms, the Griffes Rampant—granted to them at that time.

The Trappells were among the first settlers of 1832, but had been residing there long before that time. Among records of 1832, there was an advertisement of a Mrs. Trappell, who says that they will find her in the house lately occupied by Mr. Joseph Peters. This Mrs. Trappell had five children, Mr. John Trappell was the late one, Mr. John Trappell who for many years was the respected Deputy Sheriff at Harbour Grace and the Recording Secretary of the Methodist Church. He was recognized for his long years of service by receiving the Imperial Service Order some years before his death. Two sisters, Mrs. Worrall of St. John's and Mrs. Spence of British Columbia have descendants living at St. John's. Two brothers were captains in the foreign trade, and both lost their lives in that service. Capt. Robert Trappell, who was lost in the barque Lord Regan of 2000 tons when trading in Australia has also descendants in this country. Capt. William Trappell was lost in the brigantine the Redburn, which he built on the site where the marine docks stand at Harbour Grace.

The Burke Family

Records of H. F. Sherwin tell of many of the well known family of Burkes at Carboniferous very frequently in Harbour Grace news of the early 1830's. The Burke family name of many figures as chairman of many important meetings. Perhaps then, our Carboniferous readers may be interested in what the late Mr. Sherwin has written of that well known family, which today is one of the best known in this province and better known in the old town of Carboniferous, where it still conducts a flourishing business.

The Hon. John Burke got his title from Queen Victoria for his long and honorable career as Member of the House of Assembly for the district of Carboniferous. He was better and more familiarly known as "Honest John Burke." He was born in Athlone, County Kavan, Ireland in 1807 and came to Newfoundland in 1825 as clerk to Bennett and Burke, where at that time they carried on business at Adam's Cove. John Burke and John Burke were cousins, and nephews of Thomas Bennett. Thomas Burke had started business on his own account at Harbour Grace. John Burke managed a branch business for him at Adam's Cove, but in a record of Dec. 11th, 1832, there is an advertisement that the partnership carried on between Thomas Burke and Co., and John Burke of Adam's Cove under the name of John Burke and Co. is dissolved and the firm will be carried on in future by John Burke.

In the year 1833, John Burke started business at Carboniferous on the site of St. Elson and Co., which previous to that was George and James Kemp, dealing back to 1769. But even prior to that date these firms were closely connected with Poole, England and both firms in that day were the wealthiest in the island.

The business stand of Messrs. John Burke and Sons is one of the oldest and most important in the island and is being carried on to this day by descendants of that notable man "Honest John Burke."

Feb 26, 1957

Slushbacks From February 1890

ELLI SHULTSHERY

Slushback promises to be the coming of the snow. The snow has been predicted for this town, while many people here are carrying on their business as usual. The snow has been predicted for this town, while many people here are carrying on their business as usual. The snow has been predicted for this town, while many people here are carrying on their business as usual.

History Of Harbour Grace

THE PLAGUE CHOLERA (1832)

"The disquieting news of the spread of the cholera morbus or Asiatic Plague has been given a lot of anxiety.

The cities of Quebec, Montreal, New York and Boston, also Liverpool and other ports in England have been declared infected and clean bills of health cannot be issued. There is such close and intimate intercourse with all these places that it is feared by the whole population that it may spread to this country.

A meeting was held in the Court-house, Monday, July 9th, to discuss the best means of averting the cholera from this town. Mr. St. John was called to the chair and read a communication from James Cochrane, the Colonial Secretary to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Fleming, the Catholic Bishop, who was taking a very prominent part in looking after the affairs of the community. Resolutions passed in St. John's were also read at this meeting.

Mr. Thomas Ridley, Rev. Mr. Ellis, James Hipsley, George Hipsley, Mr. Mayne, Dr. Molloy, and several others addressed the meeting. A resolution appointing a committee of 35 was adopted to instruct all the inhabitants of the danger. Another resolution was passed that a subscription be started for the purpose of providing a hospital.

The whole country was aroused and meetings after meetings were held in Harbour Grace, Carboniferous, Brigus and Western Bay, and all taking precautions to prevent this terrible epidemic which is causing such havoc elsewhere. The town of Harbour Grace was divided into seven wards."

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THE 1832 FIRE (Continued)

"At the very first alarm, such of the inhabitants whose property was not immediately endangered, collected in great force, with the two fire engines belonging to the town, and after a fruitless attempt to subdue the flames upon the spot where they broke out, directed their attention to the preservation of the extensive mercantile premises belonging to the estate of Mr. H. Bonson, which was in the immediate vicinity to the Westward, for which purpose the engines were brought into play upon various points, but the fire had got too much a head before they arrived and the materials were so inflammable as to render all their efforts to check the progress of the fire unavailing.

"A quantity of gunpowder was deposited here also and in several other stores that destructive articles had been imprudently lodged which exploded from time to time, terrifying the people and paralyzing their efforts and fatally increasing the conflagration by hurling the fragments accelerated by the wind to an amazing distance. The afore mentioned premises were more or less abandoned and the crowd retreated to the back between them and Peter Brown's residence. Here, the houses had been covered with blankets which were constantly saturated with water by the engines, the neighbouring fences and pailings were cut down, and by these concentrated efforts and the wind veering at this time to the westward the flames were happily prevented from expanding to the westward of the town. All the buildings, however, in the contrary direction as far as before stated, except a few in the rear, among which were Mr. Parkins (now the residence of Mr. H. Archibald), the Parsonage of the Newfoundland school were all destroyed. Entirely built of wood, and containing great quantities of pitch, tar and resin and other combustible articles, besides being thickly interspersed with large manufactures of oil, they were in the short period of two hours from the time of the alarm reduced to ashes. No lives were lost, but the losses of property were great and as accurately as amounted to one hundred thousand pounds.

"The Episcopal Church, which has ever been the pride and ornament of the town and certainly the most handsome of its kind in this island, was consumed at an early period. It cost about four thousand pounds to build fifteen years before (1817). The establishments in this town with but three exceptions shared the same fate and all the goods and merchandise which they contained, besides seven retail stores, the Waterford Arms, Keeffe's Hotel, and the Commercial Rooms, twelve public houses, and upwards of sixty premises occupied by tradesmen and others were entirely destroyed. In all, at least, one hundred families, forming about six hundred of the inhabitants were deprived of their dwellings and were forced to take refuge in the homes of such fellow-townsmen who were beyond the reach of the destructive element."

OCTOBER 31, 1957

THE FIRST AUTOMOBILE, ST. JOHN'S—1903

"The vehicle is a four wheeler, and cost Mr. Reid, landed here, \$1600. It is run by a gasoline motor, is called the 'Locomobile', and was built at Bridgeport, Conn. Its wheels are 28 inches in diameter, fitted with heavy pneumatic tyres. Its extreme length, nine feet, one inch and width five feet three inches. It weighs with tanks empty 1250 lbs., with tanks full 1600 lbs.

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dwelling house of the former and a store belonging to the latter, which were only separated from each other by a very small space. The wind blew a fresh breeze from the west and so rapid was the progress of the fire that in about fifteen minutes from its discovery, the whole body of these buildings was enveloped in flames, and soon after, a quantity of gunpowder which had been deposited in the upper loft of the store exploded, shaking the tottering timbers like an earthquake, and the next moment the atmosphere for a considerable distance was filled with burning embers.

The flames now communicated to the houses on the right and left of both sides of the street and with such rapidity that the scene was most formidable and terrifying. They were seen passing from house to house with almost as much celerity as fire kindled among stubble, embracing each in rapid succession until the immense range of buildings on both sides of the street from where Victoria Street now is, in a direct line to Leonard as far as Mr. Candler's, below Kerry Lane, became a burning mass.

The scene that ensued baffles description, females and children were seen running about in all directions, shrieking in the most piteous manner and endeavouring to save themselves from destruction by jumping into the street—merchandise of every description—beds, bedding and pieces of furniture lay promiscuously heaped together and were trodden under foot. The little time given for preparation prevented the removal of these to a place of safety and of individuals could be saved, whilst the willfulness of the lookers on of the sufferers and the incoherence of their expression to solicit assistance excited the compassion of the spectators and the alarm and distress pictured in all their countenances rendered the scene forth simultaneously from the

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Following up last week's article concerning the Asiatic Plague, which brought much alarm to many cities and seemed to present a real danger to Newfoundland, especially to Conception Bay, we read that a subscription amounting to nearly one hundred pounds were had from the people of Harbour Grace. The list of subscribers leaves us to wonder what has become of the names of many on the list—so few are found today in this town.

Although the precautions taken were many and preceded to combat the disease should it have come, there is no record of any case appearing. The cities of Quebec and Montreal suffered terribly and so did Boston and New York. Several cases were reported from Halifax and Cape Breton and many deaths resulted among the crews and the passengers of several ships.

The Brig, RINGWOOD arrived at Port de Grace from Oporto and late English papers brought by her as well as private letters told that the cholera which was of a very bad kind had reached far afield.

However, in the midst of all the preparations of the people of this bay against the dread disease, there came the clash of fire-bells. Fighting the plague was forgotten in the dreadful catastrophe of fire which swept the town. Harbour Grace was in flames, and there was trouble and lots of it right at hand.

August 18th, 1832

The record of this fire reads as follows: "On Saturday afternoon, between two and three o'clock, the most alarming fire which ever occurred in this district broke out between the premises of Thomas Marks and those of Messrs Ridley and Co. in the centre of the town. The cause from whence it proceeded of the precise spot whence it appeared, are, from all that we have been able to ascertain, matters of conjecture, for, when discovered, the flames had assumed an appalling power and were burst forth simultaneously from the

Historical Records Of Hr. Grace

HARBOUR GRACE—Following the great fire of 1832 which laid waste the larger area of Harbour Grace and of which an account has been written in recent articles, improvements were planned for a new town, and the result of this planning is evident in the well laid out streets which are to be found here in this day. The men of that day are to be remembered for their energy and far sightedness—their works live after them. And so we come to September 7th, 1832 and quote:

"The gentlemen appointed at the public meeting held at the Court House on Monday 27th August, 1832, to act as commissioners for the purpose of laying out the streets for a new town, following the disastrous fire of August 18th, met at once and appointed Thos. Rifley as chairman with Robert Pack, George Lilly, Patrick Keough and Richard Anderson as committee, the last named being secretary.

"According to resolutions already passed, the main street now called Water Street was to be 50 feet wide and four cross streets or fire-breaks to be 60 feet wide.

"The first fire break was to be between the premises of H. W. Danson and Daniel Candler's, Victoria Street was the name given. The second firebreak was on the premises formerly occupied by William Innott, which commemorates the Waterford Arms Hotel and which must have created a heart pang at the good times that many had in celebrating their titular saints. LeMarchant Street or as it was more familiarly called, Gas House Hill records this locality.

"The third fire break was leading down from St. Paul's Church to the point of Beach and was called Cochrane Street or Church Hill.

"The fourth firebreak was to be the widening of Kerry Lane to at least forty feet. This must have been looked upon by the owners as an extremely valuable piece of land, as for some reason or other the Commissioners failed to carry out the plans laid down, and Kerry Lane remains about 6 or 7 feet wide. It should have been widened when Garland Street was widened to the Railway Station as it is a direct continuation to the waterfront, but this lane awaits widening (and is seldom used at his day).

"We need only look at the town of Harbour Grace to see how well these commissioners carried out their work and valuable buildings were erected on both sides of the streets.

"After another fire in 1858, Water Street was widened still more to the present width. Bannerman Street must have been widened at this later date as the old plans show it to be a narrow crooked lane leading from the water front to beyond Josiah Parkins' residence which must have been one of the original buildings in the town at that time and must have been built about 1825.

"Previous to the 1832 fire, one of the main arteries was a lane which led up just each of Victoria Street and joined with Death Hill as the path to Lady Lake and the woods."

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to tell of the time when there were four horses in Hr. Grace, two at the race course and two at Mosquito (Bristol's Hope). It is to be wondered that anyone would take this steed unduly."

Hr. Grace, Dec. 1831—Josiah Parkins sends notice that his red and white cow, branded J. P., has strayed and he offers a reward for information that will lead to the conviction of the culprit.

Hr. Grace, August 31, 1832—Peter Rogerson offers handsome reward for the recovery of a HAIR BRUSH which was stolen from his trunk on the day of the great fire.

Carboniferous—Dr. Taylor has lost a case of surgical instruments on Carboniferous Beach and offers a reward of four dollars to the person returning them to the home of Mr. H. C. Watts.

Holyrood, Dec. 18, 1832—The valuable fee-simple property belonging to the estate of William Danson is now offered for sale at Holyrood comprising a good dwelling house, 2 stores, country house, stone cook room, wharf, 2 barns, 3 large flares, frost proof cellar with net loft over. An extensive range of garden and meadow ground with cow house and four tenements for fishermen.