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Early History of the Town of Amherstburg

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Early History

— Of The —

Town of Amherstburg.

A Short, Concise and Interesting Sketch,
with Explanatory Notes, by C. C.
JAMES, M. A., Deputy Minister of
Agriculture for Ontario.



AMHERSTBURG, ONT.
PRINTED BY THE ECHO PRINTING Co., LIMITED.

1902.

NOTES ON EARLY AMHERSTBURG.

While looking for some information upon a subject in connection with the early history of Upper Canada, I had occasion to look up some of the records in the Haldimand Papers. I found that a large quantity of these records dealing with Southern Ontario had been printed by The Pioneer and Historical Society of Michigan in their annual volumes. I came upon some references to early Amherstburg, and becoming interested I carefully followed up the record as far as therein contained. To my surprise I found that Fort Malden did not exist in the early days, but that Fort Amherstburg did. Then I turned up a number of historical books and papers and found that many others had made the same mistake, and that some who should have been acquainted with the military history of that section had been misnaming the fort and had been perpetuating the mistake. I found that three different forts had been constructed, or partly constructed, at Amherstburg at different times, and that the first was officially known as Fort Amherstburg, the second was known both as Fort Amherstburg and as Fort Malden, and that the third, constructed subsequent to 1837, bore the name Fort Malden.

Thinking that perhaps these records might be interesting to many of the citizens of Amherstburg and that the Michigan Reports may not be readily available, I concluded it would perhaps be worth while to reproduce these records in somewhat connected form. At the same time I do not claim for this article anything more than a gathering together of some scattered items to which many additions may be made by further search of the originals at Ottawa or elsewhere.

In closing this introductory note it may be worth calling attention to the fact that while the Dominion Government has performed a most commendable service in gathering together these documents at Ottawa, yet it seems somewhat strange that we are indebted to The Pioneer and Historical Society of Michigan, assisted by State friends, for placing so much of these records in printed form for our use.

C. C. JAMES.

Toronto, January, 1902.

CORRECTION

*The Plans on pages 14 and 21
should be interchanged.*

EARLY AMHERSTBURG.

The War of American Independence was brought to a close in 1783, but Oswego, Niagara, Detroit, and Michillmackinac remained as British posts until their evacuation in 1796. Oswego and Detroit were transferred in July of that year. The war in the west had been carried on to a considerable extent by Indians who were led and directed by white officers. With them were associated many rough and ready frontiersmen, hardy and crafty, skilled in woodlore and the methods of the redman. At the close of the war many of these British officers gradually drew back to Niagara and Detroit and now we first find mention of the country that is the subject of our study.

On June 7th, 1784, the Huron and Ottawa Indians who claimed ownership or proprietary rights in the country surrounding Detroit, gave by treaty a tract of land seven miles square at the mouth of the Detroit River to the following British officers or fighters, who had been associated with them in the recent war: Alexander McKee, William Caldwell, Charles McCormack, Robin Eurphleet, Anthony St. Martin, Matthew Elliott, Henry Bird, Thomas McKee, and Simon Girty. By arrangement among themselves, Henry Bird was given the northern section. This would be in the northern part of the Township of Malden, and would contain what is now the northern part of the Town of Amherstburg.

It should be noted here that the Governor and Council at Quebec, by formal proclamation shortly after, declared that no private grants made by the Indians would be recognized; that all grants must come through the Crown, and this part of Southwestern Quebec (it was then a part of Quebec) had not yet been ceded by the Indians to the Crown.

The settlement of these lands on the east side of the river appears to have been approved of by Governor Haldimand.

July 22nd, 1784, Jehu Hay, Lieutenant-Governor of Detroit, wrote to Governor Haldimand: "Several have built upon and improved lands who have no other pretensions than the Indians consent possession. Captains Bird and Caldwell are of the number, at a place they have called Fredericksburg." It

would appear that in reply to this letter, Governor Frederick Haldimand wrote to Lieutenant-Governor Hay to encourage Captains Caldwell and Elliott to settle on the land. We see, therefore, that in 1784 settlement of the Malden township first began, in a somewhat irregular manner. The settlers were not exactly squatters, they had the consent of the Indians, the recognition of the Lieutenant-Governor of Detroit, and, apparently, the approval of the Governor of Quebec. Their settlement was to be known as Fredericksburg, whether after Sir Frederick Haldimand or after Frederick, the son of George III., cannot be stated.

On August 14th, 1784, Governor Haldimand wrote to Lieutenant-Governor Hay that Colonel Caldwell, of Colonel Butler's late corps, had applied to him for sanction to settle on the land; that he could not confirm the grant, but that they should "carry on their improvements until the land could be laid out and granted according to the King's instructions." Mr. McKee was to be directed to get the Indians to make over the land to the King, but that "two thousand yards from the center would be reserved on all sides for the purpose of establishing a fort."

Here we have the first suggestion of the future Fort Amherstburg, and the promise of the town.

On July 16th of this year (1784), Mr. Hay reported finding "only one" loyalist at Detroit, *i. e.*, a loyalist who had come to settle on the British soil; on August 5th, he reported finding twelve, and on September 2nd he sends a list of forty-eight, also one woman and two children.

Haldimand, however, retired from the Governorship on the 15th of November, 1784, and after two years was succeeded by Lord Dorchester (October 23rd, 1786). The possession of the lots soon became a subject of inquiry. It was claimed that Lord Dorchester, in 1787, gave instructions for Major Matthews to investigate the situation, and he laid out 97 lots in the best manner possible, and confirmed the original squatters or owners in the possession of their lands as far as possible, in accordance with the Indian grant of 1784. The 97 lots were apparently on Lake Erie, east of the grant afterwards called the Township of Malden.

A Committee of the Council at Quebec in 1791 appears to have admitted that Lord Dorchester gave orders to this effect. As orders in those days had

to be given in somewhat indefinite form and to be transmitted by an irregular post over so long a distance, it can easily be seen how uncertain some points might become and how irregular certain transactions might be.

The crossing of mails, the disappearance of carriers the loss of correspondence, the necessity of acting without formal and detailed orders, all tended to throw matters into a somewhat irregular and at times irreconcilable condition.

August 28th, 1788, Lord Dorchester wrote to Major Mathews to encourage settlement on the east side of the River, but that no lots must be settled upon before purchase by the Crown from the Indians; "also to report the progress made by some Loyalists in their settlement on a spot proposed for this class of men on the east side of Detroit River, and to state his ideas fully of what may be done for its further encouragement, as well as for establishing a Military Post at that quarter."

In 1790 Major Matthews wrote from Plymouth Barracks, giving a summary of his investigation, in 1788. He stated that he went from Quebec to Detroit in 1787 with instructions from Lord Dorchester. After describing the fortifications at Detroit, he says:

"Should this Post be given up, and another taken, the most convenient place will be at the entrance of the River, upon a point at present occupied by some officers and men who served the war as Rangers with the Indians. The channel for ships runs between this Point and Isle Aux Bois Blanc, which should also be fortified, the distance from each to mid-channel about 200 yards. There is a fine settlement running 20 miles from this Point on the north side of the Lake."

Here in 1788 is the reference to the future post at Amherstburg. The settlement on the north side of Lake Erie refers to what was known as "the two connected townships" (Colchester and Gosfield).

May 15th, 1787, Lord Dorchester wrote Major Close, giving him orders for the settlement of any claims of Indians, and to lay out a township opposite Bois Blanc, to be called *Georgetown*.

The District of Hesse in the west had been set apart by proclamation, dated July 24th, 1788, and early in 1789 the Governor was authorized by Council to appoint a Land Board, and the following were appointed as the first members in 1789:

Farnham Close, Esq., Major of the 65th Regiment of Foot, or the Officer Commanding at Detroit.

William Dummer Powell, Esq.

Duperon Baby, Esq.

Alexander McKee, Esq.

William Robertson, Esq.

Alexander Grant, Esq.

Adhemar de St. Martin, Esq.

Any three of them to be a quorum.

One of the first duties then put upon this Land Board was to lay out a township, to be called Georgetown, but still there was delay.

On August 22nd, 1789, the Land Board reported to Lord Dorchester that Mr. McNiff, the surveyor, had not yet arrived, and that none of the lands had yet been purchased from the Indians for the Crown, and that the Indians had some years before granted these lands to private individuals.

September 2, 1789, Lord Dorchester instructed the Land Board to receive applications from the occupants for grants, stating extent and value of Tracts and Improvements and the grounds of their claims, and the Board are to give certificates including the improvements. The Board was also to have Mr. McKee obtain from the Indians all the lands west of Niagara for settlement, the cession to include all lands held by private individuals from the Indians by private sale.

October 17th, 1789, the Land Board reported that all the land was claimed, and asked for power to settle the claims, according to their best judgment.

May 19th, 1790, the Indians (Ottawas, Chippewas, Pottawatomies and Hurons) cede to the Crown all the land from Chaudiere or Catfish Creek on the East, to the Detroit on the West, and from the Thames to Chenail Ecarte on the North to Lake Erie, including the grant of 1784 before referred to, but reserving a tract seven miles square north of the 1784 grant and also a small tract at the Huron Church (Sandwich).

The settlement of the land dispute appears to have gone on slowly. Surveyor McNiff and the Land Board did not agree. McNiff claimed to be acting under direct orders from Quebec. Many of the settlers got tired waiting for recognition of their claims and left the country, some doubtless going over to

the States, and some coming East to the Niagara peninsula. The district suffered because of its remoteness from Quebec.

May 3rd, 1791, Surveyor McNiff reported that two or three families live continuously on their land east of the River (Caldwell, Elliott, Lamotte, etc.), but many more resort there in the summer to raise corn and beans. He recommends that the Indians be removed to some other reserve; suggests at Chenail Ecarte. All the land is settled from the Reserve north to Peach Island in Lake St. Clair.

The reference to the growing of corn and beans as the pioneer crops of Essex will be interesting, and the spelling of Peach Island shows how early the corruption of *Pêche* took place.

The division of Quebec into Upper Canada and Lower Canada now takes place (December 26th, 1791), Col. Simcoe arrives as Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, and the first Legislature is called to meet at Newark (Niagara), on September 17th, 1792.

The County of Kent took in all the land not included in the other counties, it included Detroit, and a strip along the south shore of Lake St. Clair running east to the Thames from Maisonville's Mill. The two members from Kent were William Macomb, of Detroit, and David William Smith, the son of the Commanding Officer at Detroit. D. W. Smith was at the time the Secretary of the Land Board of Hesse, and his father, Major John Smith, of the 5th Regt., was Chairman. The member for Essex was Francis Baby, son of Duperon Baby. He will appear later as the owner of a lot on the river front.

January 8th, 1793, the Executive Council resolved that a township to be called Malden be laid out at the mouth of the Detroit River.

Thus we see that Fredericksburg gave place to Georgetown, and this in turn to Malden. This last name was chosen in accordance with Lieutenant Governor's plan of reproducing English names in Upper Canada. Essex was fixed as the name of the county by Simcoe's proclamation of July 16th, 1792, issued from Kingston. The counties from Essex to Northumberland were named from English counties and the townships in these counties were named after important towns in the same English counties.

It might be interesting to reproduce the exact wording of the entry, as it appears on the Docket Book of Orders of Council in the Surveyor-General's office.

TOWNSHIP OF MALDEN.

Description of Malden Township. To commence at the Straights at the south boundary of the Indian Land. Thence along and following the course of the River and Lake till it strikes the west boundary of Lot No. 97—in the two connected townships. Thence up the said west boundary of Lot No. 97, in the 1st or 2nd Concession as heretofore surveyed and said to be 76 acres, from the Lake, and the rear of the 2nd Concession. From thence east until it intersects a line produced south from the Indian Land, etc.

Resolved, the 8th of January, 1793, that Colonel Alex. McKee, Captains Elliott and Caldwell, be the patentees of the above mentioned township, and the persons who have settled under the authority of the late Governor Hay, and who have actually made improvements. It appears that the *marsh* has been granted to the sons of Captain Caldwell by the Honorable Council of Lower Canada

The Indian officers have it at their option to complete their quota of land in the said township.

The land lying between Captain Bird's lot and the Indian Land is reserved for Government.

In all other respects the Township of Malden to be subject to such general regulations, as are, or may be, hereafter framed for the government of townships.

Especial care to be taken that the Reserve by made of the two seventh.

C. B. WYATT,
Surv. Genl.

D. W. SMITH,
A. S. G.

Lot 97 was undoubtedly the westernmost lot located by Matthews in 1787 (see above), and was the property of John Cornwall. This accounts for the jog in the eastern boundary of Malden. The two townships east of Malden (Colchester and Gosfield) were for some time known as "The Two Connected Townships."

The two-sevenths were Crown and Clergy Reserves. These blocks in 6th, 7th and 8th Concessions were surveyed into lots in 1832 by Peter Carroll, of Oxford.

We now come to the year 1796. In the Crown Lands Department at Toronto is to be found the original plan of the Township of Malden. It gives the subdivision into lots, and each lot carries the name of the original grantee. It bears the name of A. Iredell, Deputy Surveyor of the Western District, and

is dated Detroit, 17th April, 1796. The lots on the river number from the north to the south, nineteen in all, nineteen ending at the marsh that fronted on Lake Erie. The first five lots were about twice as wide and half as deep as the remaining fourteen, and in their rear were five other similar lots. These were numbered from south to north, 20 to 24. Thus 24 was in the rear or east of No. 1, and 20 was to the rear of No. 5. The following statement of the first grantees of these lots may be given here, with the dates of issuing of patents:

| | | | | | |
|------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|------------|------|
| 1-2. | David Cowan.....East. part | 100 | Acres | July 2, | 1807 |
| 3. | William Caldwell..... all | 187 | " | April 13, | 1810 |
| Water lot. | William Caldwell..... | 1 | " | August 20, | 1810 |
| | Francis Caldwell..... | 2 | " | Dec. 28, | 1839 |
| 4. | Alexander McKee..... all | | " | Feb. 28, | 1797 |
| Water lot. | William Duff..... all | 5 | " | Feb. 9, | 1856 |
| 5. | Matthew Elliott..... all | 200 | " | Feb. 28, | 1797 |
| Water lot. | Alex. Callum..... all | 2 1/4 | " | April 28, | 1863 |
| 6. | Chatham Elliott..... all | 169 | " | March 1, | 1805 |
| 7-8. | David Cowan..... all | 357 | " | Nov. 25, | 1803 |
| 9. | Archange McIntosh.... 1/2 | 187 | " | Nov. 25, | 1803 |
| 10. | Charles Reaume..... all | 185 | " | June 30, | 1801 |
| 11. | Simon Girty..... all | 164 | " | March 6, | 1798 |
| 12-13. | Francis Baby..... all | 360 | " | July 30, | 1799 |
| 14. | Hon. James Baby..... all | 180 | " | July 30, | 1799 |
| 15-16. | Thomas McKee..... all | 325 | " | June 30, | 1801 |
| 17-18. | Prideaux Selby..... all | 325 | " | June 12, | 1798 |
| 19. | Thos. Alexander Clarke all | 178 | " | March 6, | 1798 |
| 20. | Matthew Elliott..... .. | | | Feb. 28, | 1797 |
| 21. | Alexander McKee..... .. | | | Feb. 28, | 1797 |
| 22. | William Caldwell..... .. | | | Feb. 28, | 1797 |
| 23. | William Caldwell..... .. | | | Dec. 31, | 1798 |
| 24. | Hon. Alex. Grant..... .. | | | Aug. 10, | 1798 |

All the above names of owners of full lots are on the Iredell Map of 1796, except that on the latter Lot 1 is left vacant and Capt. Bird's name appears on Lot 2. Iredell's map also has the following buildings entered as then built; Two on Lot 2 (Capt. Bird's), and one house on Lots 3, 4, 5 and 8. Therefore, in 1796 there were six buildings on the front of Malden. In the Crown Lands Record the lot to the north of No. 1, taken from the Indian Reserve, is known as Lot A.

By agreement between the Governments of the United States and Great Britain, Detroit was to be evacuated in this year—hence the necessity arose of at once making provision for the troops on the east side of the river and of having an arsenal or depot for stores—a town and a fort were necessary. Lot 1 was vacant, reserved by the Crown, and to it was added Capt. Bird's Lot No. 2, which was appropriated by the Crown. The taking over of this Bird lot was the beginning of a long correspondence. Capt. Bird was sent abroad and died in service, and his widow and children put in plea after plea for compensation.

Much of the correspondence may be found printed in the Michigan volumes.

The following letter now becomes important—it was written a few weeks after the troops left Detroit:

Detroit River, Sept. 8th, 1796.

Capt. Wm. Wayne, Queen's Rangers, commanding on the Detroit River, opposite the Island of Bois Blanc.
To the Military Secretary, Quebec:

Suggest the gunpowder be placed on the Dunmore, soon expected to lay up there, pending the erection of temporary magazine. "I have reason to fear that the merchants who have already erected buildings on the ground within the line of defense of the Post under my command, will not be easily reconciled to the sentiments of the Commander in Chief on that subject. They have not merely built temporary sheds, some of their buildings are valuable, and have cost to the amount of many hundred pounds, authorized in these their proceedings by Colonel England, who hitherto commanded this district, at the same time they were to hold these lots on limited terms."

He then states that there is no vacant land in the vicinity of the garrison—

Capt. Caldwell, Col. McKee and Capt. Elliott claim the lots to the south, on the north is the vacant land of the Indian Reserve, to the rear the land beyond the 1,000 yards reserved is a perfect swamp.

"I now enclose for the Commander in Chief's inspection, a plan of a town laid out by Colonel Caldwell, on his own land, who could sell his lots to much better advantage to British subjects wishing to leave the territory of the United States, did he conceive the same would meet with the approbation of His Excellency."

A reproduction of the plan accompanies the letter showing a town laid out in lots, with streets at right angles, with a vacant square in the centre. This projected town would be in what is now the southern part of Amherstburg.

This letter appears in Mich., Vol xxiii, pp. 402-3. It was evidently written in reply to inquiries made as to possible locations for settlers. The Bird lot had just been taken over by the Government, and a garrison established there, with the intention of erecting the Fort.

Thus we see that in the summer of 1796 the plans are set in motion, through the Military Department, for the starting of a town and post opposite Bois Blanc. All letters are addressed from "Malden" (that is the township), or "mouth of Detroit River."

On January 10th, 1797, an advertisement was put up at His Majesty's Post, calling for men with teams, oxen, carts, trucks, etc. This was to complete the work begun in 1796. It would appear that all buildings and accommodations made in that year were of a more or less temporary nature. Early in 1797 the creation of the post begins in earnest. Up to February 2nd no

special name had been given. On February 9th, 1797, appears a requisition for stores for Indian presents "for *Fort Amherstburg*." Here for the first time the name occurs in an official document, and it no doubt came from the Military Department at Quebec.

Those who wish to find the documents showing the coming in of the name Amherstburg, may turn to Vol. XII of the Michigan Reports, pages 249-255 and pages 256-9.

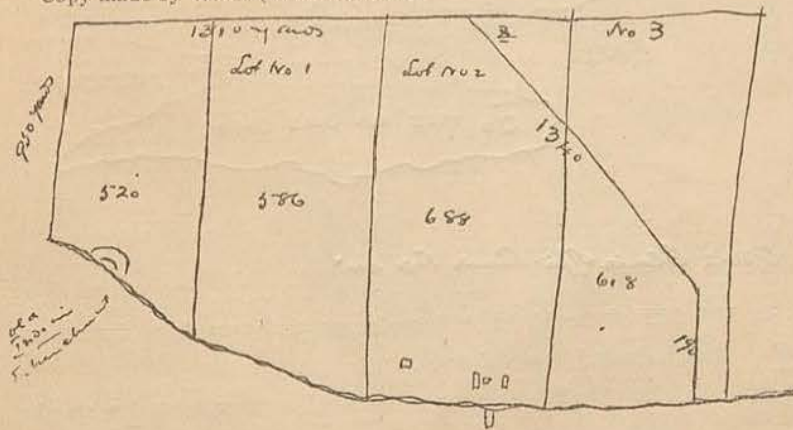
In the Crown Lands Department at Toronto is an interesting old plan showing what was proposed to be included that year in the Government reservation. It is a copy made by William Chewett from the earlier original plan of IredeU.

Plan showing the site of the Military Post of Amherstburg and the land reserved for Government by Col. Mann, as it falls on the Huron Reserve, and the lots in the Township of Malden:

No. 1 reserved by the Patentees of said Township.
No. 2 claimed by Capt. Bird.
No. 3 claimed by Capt. Caldwell.
July 24th, 1797.

A. IREDELL,
D. S. W. D.

Copy made by W. C. (Wm. Chewett).



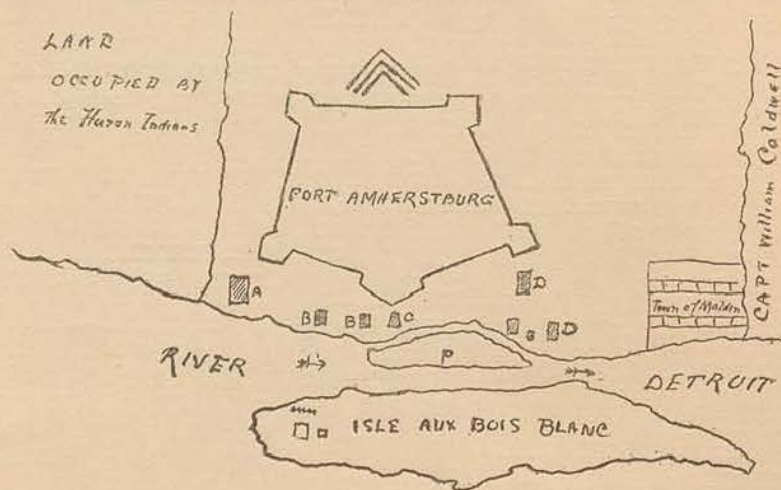
Bay's Blanc

It would appear, however, that Lot No. 3 (Caldwell's) was not required

for the first town plot of Amherstburg belongs to Lot No. 2, or the original Bird lot. Lot No. 1 was left vacant in the original division of the land among the first settlers. The lot to the north of that, unnumbered, was acquired in 1800 from the Indians, as it on several plans is marked, a well-defined "old Indian Entrenchment."

The following is a copy of an old plan of 1828 showing the location of Amherstburg in reference to the Military Reserve. It should be compared with plan just given as proposed in 1797.

In this plan of 1828, the Town of Amherstburg appears, occupying part of Lot 2, with a line separating it from the Military Reserve, as follows:



Q. 311-2 Colonial Office Records, Page 410

In Vol. XII of the Michigan Records, appear letters dated from Fort Amherstburg in June, July and August, 1797.

On page 267, "The Magazine now building," another quotation may be interesting:

"Capt. Forbes, of the R. Artillery, who was on duty at Fort Amherstburg, resided in one of the houses built by Capt. Bird, from July, 1797, to August, 1799."

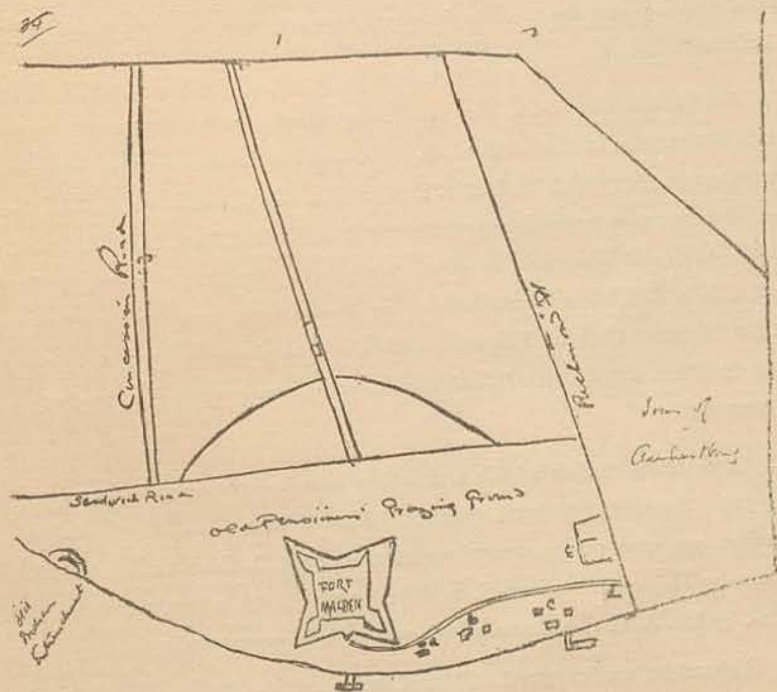
In Vol. XXV, p. 235, is a sketch map of Fort Amherstburg, Town of Malden, etc., showing situation of Capt. Bird's two houses, Indian Council House, Commissioner's House, Dock Yards, etc., taken from the Colonial Office Records and the following memorandum:

"Capt. Bird's Lot of Land was repossessed by Government in the year 1796, since which time Fort Amherstburg has been constructed, the Town of

Malden built, a Dock Yard, Commissary Store House, and other buildings, previous to the year 1796."

It would appear therefore from these documents that the Fort was from the first known as Fort Amherstburg, and that by some at least the group of houses outside the Fort, to the south, was for a time called by some Malden, the same name as the township. But there was no Fort Malden in those days.

Where was this first Fort located? In Vol. XXV referred to, there is a sketch given on page 235, taken from the Colonial Office Records, showing the Fort as a five-sided enclosure, the northernmost angle in a direct line east of the north end of Bois Blanc, the southernmost corner about opposite the middle of the Island, and the little Town of Malden extending south to the Caldwell lot, just opposite the southern limit of Bois Blanc Island:



- a. Commanding Officer's Quarters
- b. Fort Surgeon's Quarters
- c. Commissary's Quarters
- d. Lot owned by Ordnance Dept.

NO.

Bois Blanc

See also Morley's Survey

- A. Indian Council House.
- B. Captain Bird's House.
- C. Engineer's House.
- D. Commissarie's House and Store.
- E. Town of Malden.
- F. Dock Yards.

A comparison of this plan with the earlier Iredell plan of July 24, 1797, shows that on the former are given the Indian Council House and the two Bird houses, also the first dock. It was doubtless at this dock that the *Dunmore* was located when the ammunition was temporarily stored therein, and that primitive dock and the three or four buildings adjacent, were the beginning of Amherstburg.

We pass on now to the War of 1812-14. Barclay sailed from Amherstburg with six vessels, on September 9th, 1813, and on the following day his fleet met Captain Perry with his fleet of nine vessels. On September 23d, 1813, General Procter, then in command of the troops at Amherstburg, decided, contrary to the advice of Tecumseh, to abandon the Fort. Under his orders, the Fort and public storehouses were burned by the soldiers, and shortly after the retreat began. General Harrison, with the United States troops, followed and the disastrous Battle of the Thames took place, resulting in the death of Tecumseh.

Some of the readers of this article may have had the opportunity of reading that rare Canadian book, entitled, "War of 1812, Containing a full and detailed narrative of the operations of the Right Division of the Canadian Army, by Major Richardson, K. S. F." A new edition is in preparation, with notes, by Mr. A. C. Casselman, which will be well worth reading.

Richardson was captured at Moraviantown at the Battle of the Thames, and his account deals altogether with the western section. He speaks of Amherstburg, never of Malden. It should be noticed, however, that some American writers, some participants in the western fights, refer to the capture of Malden, and Lossing, in his well-known "Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812," refers to Fort Malden, and on page 295 gives a view of Malden, where the British ships were built and on page 266 he has a map of the Detroit River, showing Amherstburg town and Fort Malden. Lossing says, on page 547:

"The army entered Amherstburg with the band playing 'Yankee Doodle.' The loyal inhabitants had fled with the army. The ruins of Fort Malden, the dock yard, and the public stores were sending up huge volumes of smoke." He also says that there were two blockhouses on the mainland in 1813, one near the Fort and one near Salmon's Hotel.

Several Kentucky volunteers were taken prisoners by the Indians at River Raisin. One of them, Elias Darnell, who served under General Winchester, published in 1854 a journal of his campaign, and we make the following extract. It will be observed that he calls the Fort, Malden. From these accounts and from the fact that this was the name of the third Fort which was in existence when Amherstburg was visited by Lossing, we may understand why Lossing so called the Fort:

"As he took me near Fort Malden, I took as good a view of it as I could while I passed it. It stands about thirty yards from the river bank. I judged it to be seventy or eighty yards square; the wall appeared to be built of timber and clay. The side from the river was not walled, but had double pickets and was entrenched round about four feet deep; and in the entrenchment was the second row of pickets. As we went through the edge of town (Amherstburg) I asked an Englishman where the other prisoners were? He said they were in town in a wood yard."

To return to Richardson. After describing the historic meeting of Procter and Tecumseh, he says, on page 121:

"It having been resolved to move without loss of time, the troops were immediately employed in razing the fortifications and committing such stores as it was found impossible to remove to the flames, kindled in the various public buildings; and the ports of Detroit and Amherstburg for some days previous to our departure, presented a scene of cruel desolation."

We now call another witness, an expert witness, a contemporary record that should settle the question if any doubt remains.

In 1799, David William Smith, Surveyor General of Upper Canada, prepared and published at the request of Lieutenant Governor Simcoe, a gazetteer of the Province:

On page 49, we find the following:

"Amherstburg, the military post and garrison now building at the mouth of Detroit River, in the township of Malden."

The only description accompanying Malden is to describe it simply as the name of the township. In 1813, a second edition was published, revised by Francis Gore, Esq., Lieutenant Governor. In this, Amherstburg is described as a post and garrison, and there is no mention of Malden as either Fort or Town.

The Surveyor-General and the Lieutenant Governor should be considered as authoritative. Thus we see that officially, the settlement was known as Amherstburg from 1797 down to 1813.

Just here it may be interesting to interject this question: On what day did the U. S. troops occupy Amherstburg, and on what day did they march out?

* * * * *

Kingsford, on page 316, Vol. VIII, says that: "The retreat from Amherstburg commenced on the 24th of September;" and on page 317 he says, "He (Harrison) had landed on the 27th, nine miles below Amherstburg, with 5,000 men and the fleet of boats to sustain him."

Auchinleck, the historian of the War of 1812, who uses Richardson very freely as his source of information for this western section, says, on page 215:

"On the 27th the American fleet, composed of 16 vessels of war and upwards of 100 boats, received on board General Harrison's division and landed it in the afternoon of the same day at a point *three miles* below Amherstburg, which post was reached but three days after it had been evacuated by the British."

Now we turn to *Niles Register* for 1813, and on page 117 we find short dispatches sent forward by General Harrison and Captain Perry. Harrison heads his dispatch from *Amherstburg*, and Perry reports from *Malden Harbor* that Harrison had just marched into Malden. These two letters agree that the U. S. army marched into the town between four and five o'clock in the afternoon of the 23d of September.

It may be stated that these letters are reprinted in Brannan's "Military and Naval Letters." On page 220 will be found Perry's letter, dated September 27th, while on page 214, Harrison's letter is dated September 23rd. In Vol. XV, page 427, of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society's publications, is

given a letter by Procter from Ancaster in which he stated that the enemy appeared in the offing on September 26th, and on the 27th landed nine miles below Amherstburg. This letter, doubtless, is Kingsford's authority.

How long did the Americans hold Amherstburg? On page 104 of the Life of Lewis Cass, it is stated that on 1st of July, 1815, Malden was surrendered to the British.

On page 630 of Vol. XXV, of the Michigan publications, will be found part of a letter from Sir Gordon Drummond to Earl Bathurst, dated Quebec, August 15th, 1815. He says:

"I consider it necessary to apprise Your Lordship that it will be necessary to place the Post of Amherstburg, which was delivered up to us on the 1st ultimo, in a suitable state of defense; Fort Malden, at all times insignificant, having been rendered totally useless as such during its occupation by the United States Troops."

This settles the date of the evacuation—July 1st, 1815. Drummond, it will be noticed, here applies to the Fort the name that is generally found in all U. S. records.

Kingsford says, page 579: "They held nothing of Upper Canada to cede except Amherstburg, of which they had been in possession since the defeat of the gallant Captain Barclay on Lake Erie."

Lieutenant J. E. Portlock, Lieutenant of Royal Engineers, in 1826 prepared for Major General Sir James Carmichael-Smyth, a report of the Posts of Amherstburg and Drummond Island. We make an extract from the report on Fort Amherstburg:

"Amherstburg.—The Fort is a square, consisting of three bastions and one semi-bastion, and in its present form was constructed by the Americans. The original works, which had progressed very slowly and stood unfinished on the approach of the enemy, during the last war were (as far as it was practicable to do so), destroyed by the British Troops prior to their retreat from the western frontier. The Americans had advanced but a little way towards the completion of the present Fort, when the renewal of peace placed it in the hands of the British."

"Since the re-occupation of Amherstburg by the British troops, the Fort

(such as it was) has been allowed to decay, and in consequence scarcely merits the name of a work of fortification, etc., etc." Then follows a description of the various buildings, including "the magazine *within* the Fort." The barrack room for 80 men and kitchen had been erected during the last year.

Further on follows a description of the stone magazine standing "*without* the present Fort, it stood within the original Fort and was (especially the arched roof) very much shattered prior to the evacuation of the place."

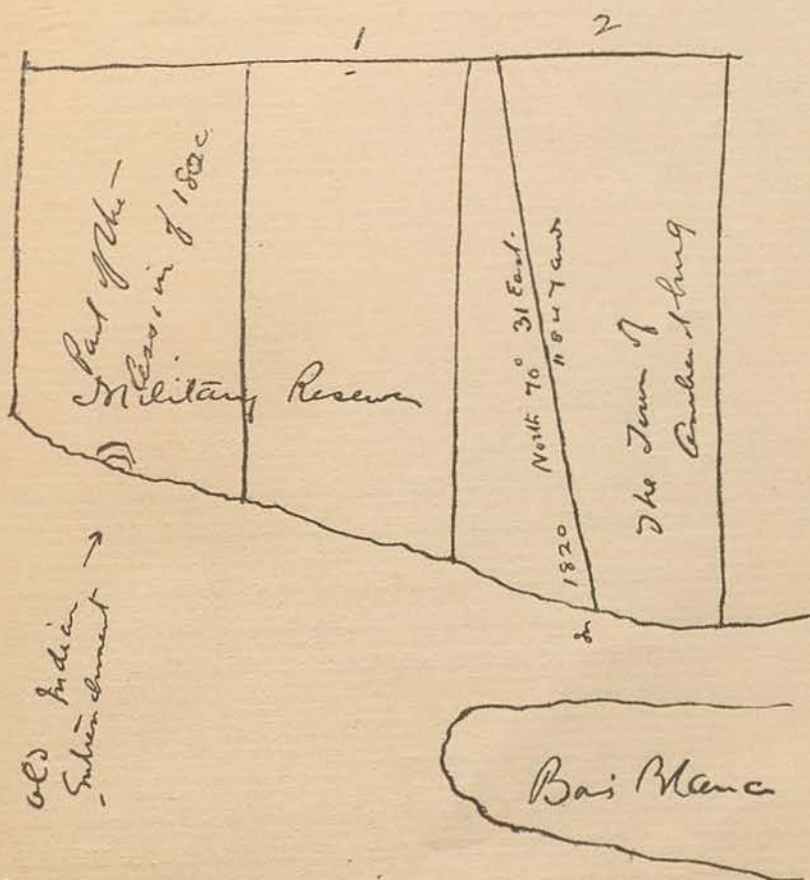
Major General Smyth says, p. 414: "I am not of opinion that it will be necessary to do more at Amherstburg than to build in the place of the present ruinous Fort a fortified barrack or pentagonal tower, similar to that of Fort Wellington, at Ostend."

From the preceding statements, it will be seen that the Fort Amherstburg reconstructed by the Americans in 1813 was not exactly on the same lines as that begun in 1797 and destroyed by the British in 1813, and that by 1826 the second Fort had fallen into decay.

It must have been at some date subsequent to this report of inspection that the Fort was reconstructed and renamed, for this third Fort appears to have received an official naming as Fort Malden. One authority says that the rebuilding took place in 1839. The story of the schooner "Ann" of 1837, is well known to Amherstburgers. It was on her that E. A. Theller, "Brigadier General of the Canadian Republican Service," was captured. He has left an account of his experiences in two volumes, published in 1841, entitled, "Canada in 1837-38." In Chaps. X and XI he gives his account of the experiences on the Detroit River. In every case he refers to the "Town of Malden" and "Fort Malden," never to Amherstburg.

In the Crown Lands Department is a neatly made sketch, entitled, "The Survey of Reserves taken by Lieutenant De Moleyns Royal Engineer, and copied November, 1852, by Captain Moore." On this plan, Fort Malden appears as a four-sided enclosure, the southern wall or face of which is in a line with the northern end of Bois Blanc. The commanding officers' quarters, Fort Supanto's quarters and commissariat premises all lie outside of the Fort between it and the town of Amherstburg. The land to the east of the Sandwich Road is laid out in lots for the pensioners, and a sample pensioner's house is sketched. The old Indian entrenchment is marked on the river bank to the north. Rich-

mond street is marked as the northern limits of the town and the open space around the Fort north of the town and between the Sandwich Road and the river, is marked as "Enrolled Pensioners' Grazing Ground." This plan comes down to the recollection of many of the older residents of Amherstburg, and here we leave the story for some local student to take up. These notes may be sufficient to start some one to write up the history of the town and to fill in the spaces with interesting personal sketches of the men and women, whose history would add much interest to a story that is thus roughly sketched:



ADDITIONAL NOTES.

On April 7th, 1817, a Provincial Statute was passed, entitled *An Act to Establish a Police in the towns of York, Sandwich, and Amherstburg.*

On March 16th 1831, there was passed a statute entitled, *An Act to Establish a Market and to Establish Wharfage fees in the Town of Amherstburg in the Western District.*

The market was to be on Lot No. 7, west side of Dalhousie street. The Commissioners of the Peace were to make regulations and to impose fines and permission was given to erect a wharf on said lot and to impose tolls.

Bouchette, in his work on the British Dominions in North America, Vol. I, pp. 103-6, says (1832), that Amherstburg has nearly 200 houses, a church, court house and gaol, many good shops and a population exceeding 1,200 souls; the works have been partly restored and a military detachment is kept in garrison there, a subdivision of which is stationed on Isle au Bois Blanc.

1850. On 27th September, 1850, the limits of the municipality of Amherstburg were fixed by proclamation of the Governor General. The village, or town, as it was regularly called, was to include Lots 1, 2 and 3 and Block D, Anderdon. The latter was doubtless the old Indian cession of 1800.

1878. In January 7th, 1878, Amherstburg became an incorporated town, all the requirements of the municipal act having been complied with.

When was the third Fort, known as Fort Malden, constructed? We leave this for some local historian to answer. In 1859 the barracks were fixed up and occupied as a branch of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum. For how long a time were they thus used?

Since the above was compiled the writer has found the following note in *The Upper Canada Gazette*, Vol. III, No. 27, printed at Newark, or Niagara, 26th April, 1797. It is interesting as showing how the Editor of that paper applied the name of the township to the new Fort then being built on the Detroit River:

"We hear from Fort Malden at the mouth of the Detroit River, that in the

beginning of March last, Captain Mayne, Ensign Pierce, and one Bliss, a private, all of the Queen's Rangers, in passing a river on the ice, which giving way, they fell in, the Captain and Bliss were fortunate enough to get out, but Mr. Pierce perished; a few days after his body was taken up and interred. Bliss soon perished by the severity of the weather."

Another subject that should be worked up in connection with Amherstburg is a connected account of the various regiments or companies stationed there; for instance, from a list of the subscribers to the Wolfe and Montcalm Monument at Quebec I find that the following officers at Amherstburg subscribed one pound each in 1828: Capt. North, 68th Regt.; Ensigns McLean and North; Dep.-Asst.-Com.-Gens. Baily, Stanton, and Blackburn; Asst. Surgeon Dr. Huston, Barrack Master Duff; also George Ironside, Supt. Indian Dept., and Dr. Richardson, of the Indian Dept. In 1839 the 34th Regt. of Foot was stationed at the Fort.