

Journal

Begin Sep 7 1891

A journal, my journal. What is it to be!

A record. A record of what? Of thought, events, impressions, feelings, emotions, acts and deeds!

What is the rule! Why should there be a rule to guide out in keeping a journal? If the necessity is as apparent the execution should not be difficult. Then why should I have deferred itemising the make-up of my days – the gathering up into words in this book the products of my daily life, until this day and date of the year '91 at the age of 31. The 7<sup>th</sup> of September is not a turning point in my history, nor in any body's else that I know of. It is the first day of the week and a rainy one and has nothing in it that is suggestive of journal. Nor have I taken up the work as an evil man takes up good work by a resolve to shun his evil ways. If I have sinned by anything my fault has been one of omission. Again, if the keeping of a journal is a beneficial and necessary thing why should I wait till the year begins or the month enters before I enter up on the duty? Have not done as well by commencing on the first day of the week? A good resolve is better made at once without delay, lest the difficulty of choice of day should cause the resolve to vanish or to be swallowed up in the more perplexing and less important matter of date. Yet I have not resolved up on anything. My book lies before me every day and my pen is near. Surely the minor item of brain action will not be the cause of daily or weekly omissions. So, my journal, let us be constant and daily intimates.

Sep 15. Archibald found under a sand hill 6 ft. deep stone of a wall pieces of brick or burnt clay with rootlets running through them, charcoal and half burned sticks. A piece of wet marsh which was once salt lies just south of the road and beyond this was the knoll of sand. West on Hamilton's place while a 4 ft ditch was being dug a stone wall was encountered & a hammer was found by Amos along with pieces of earthenware. Fitch next place has old French apple trees cut down on his farm. On Johnson's farm the story goes an old French tree was visited at night by persons and the mark of a pot & the remains of it broken were found in a hole dug under the tree.

On Haliburton's land years ago was a large stone with marks on it such as might be made by a plow-share. Two Frenchmen asked where it had come from. It was supposed that it marked in its first resting place the position of buried treasure. Nobody knew where the stone came from (A. Johnson).

Mrs A. Johnson tells that a privateer or pirate vessel in trying to escape a man-of-war ran into Bay of Fundy & up into Basin of Minas. The vessel landed two men at Blomidon & a cave there seen years ago but now buried up is thought to hold the treasure the vessel carried. The vessel wintered at W. creek & was repaired there People were suspicious of them as

everything was paid for in doubloons. At last they were shunned. One of the sailors entered a shop kept at (*Mud*) bridge (Dewolf ?) and asked for a glass of grog & two chickens. Having received them he paid a gold doubloon & the shop keeper putting the gold in his pocket said " Just the money, my dear" & the supposed pirate dare not question the practice much less insist upon a return of change.

(Mrs A. Johnson) On the Church place in Falmouth is a rubbish hole in where the church valuables were hidden before an attack made upon the Acadians then living there. The Church site is known & the cemetery is well known as 30 years ago small head stones were still standing. This hole has never been cleared and all the farm clearing of a hundred years has been thrown in it.

At the Green farm a lot of coins were found while a ditch was been cut.

Sep 21. Monday morning appear to be most prolific of journal thought. By the late census return New Brunswick shows an increase of 61. An article in L'Evangeline says that the French of Canada increase more rapidly in population than the English. French counties in N.B. have increased 12000 & English counties decreased 5000 & at the rate of increase N.B. will become a French province

Likewise the French districts of Ontario, Prescott, Russell, North Essex, Nipissing. The Eastern States show also a rapid increase of French. France & England through many countries have remained distinct in nationality. Have fought & struggled along the way of civilization. The Saxon of England was conquered by the Norman. The French of New France was defeated by the Anglo-Saxon. The Saxon is a fighter the France-Latin is not. But as stubborn a nature underlies the nationality of the individualized Frenchman as under the descendant of the German. France & Saxon is fighting over the world to-day the fight of past centuries. In Canada if it is France & England there will be constant war. If it is Canada there will be peace.

Sep 24. Pride of family

Mrs Patterson (née Borden) " I always have my own way in my family. *Tho'* my husband does not always bring home what I want I get it in the end; The Pattersons are a sot (*set*) lot but the Borden are full sotter (*more set*).

Sep 28. Mrs Harrington gave us interesting fact regarding Longfellow. She is first cousin to L. her father & his mother were brother & sister. She & her husband visited him before he died & saw the collection of walking-canes from Grand-Pré of which were those sent him by conductor Edwards. He never

came to the scene of his poem Evangeline. He seldom went from home. The sad end of his second wife hastened his end. She was lightly dressed and making seals with small wax tapers when one which had fallen set fire to her clothes and although L Longfellow burned himself so badly that he was unable to be out for some days his wife died the next day from the result of the accident. His brother Samuel & his sister have seen Grand-Pré.

Mr Archibald has found in the old site the floor, buried on top a drain of stone leading down to what was a creek or brook a file a pipe copper coin hand-made nails, pieces of slate of like shape & size burnt clay & considerable soft clay on the north side as if a dike had been made to keep out water, a trigger guard, pieces of a broken pot, round quartzite stone broken heel-shapes for dressing stockings. The size of the building was about 10X10

Dec. 9 1891

{Acadian village & orchard at Upper Dyke village on the farm of Mr. Will E. Newcomb}

Mr. Robert Starr and myself drove from Wolfville yesterday Dec 8<sup>th</sup> the day being cold and windy. He informed me that the old French trail led thro' the willow swamp near the tannery between the Main Road and the Railway and led

Along the high land near the dyke. There were two fords over the Cornwallis River one near Pt Williams as the bend of the river makes near the high land there and another above where the river bends near the opposite or South highland. There may have been a ford near Starrs point. At least the trail we saw making a north west direction led from some settlement in Starrs Point. A pear tree & two apple trees stood near the church Mr Starr attended when a boy. This trail we saw as came out near the road rising beyond the village of Pt Williams and another one came in and joined it from the direction of Kentville South-West. They became one and continued up a kind of gully or ravine & finally came out on the main road beyond the steepest part of the clay hill and was there lost. They are plainly marked the bottom being level & appears to have been much used the earth in places being cut down at least a foot & wide enough for a cart.

#### Dykes

On the way across the Grand Dyke we saw the last of the three dykes built by the French to shut out the tide. The road crosses a bridge which is erected where the old arboiteau stood. This was to let off the water from the dyke-lands that stretch as far as Kentville five or six miles. The creek required a very large dyke & a well built arboiteau. The English took up the lands left by the French & had to build another dyke & arboiteau

## Wellington Dyke

before the Wellington Dyke was built. This is near the shore and by means of a short dyke the whole valley of the Cornwallis was reclaimed from the tide 9 miles long. This dyke however is very high & the expense almost ruined some of the builders. The arboiteau being so large and so much of the material was carried away as fast as placed in position that it seemed an impossible undertaking. 100 men & 50 teams with brush and mud could build a considerable portion of the work, but the first tide that would pass over it and run back would take away the greater part of the work. So before it could be made high enough to be above high tide the expense and vexatious labor was tremendous. Had the results not been so profitable many of the shareholders would have been financially ruined.

## Side Dykes

Near the north side of the dyke we saw the side dykes such as were run along the side of the high lands before the cross dykes were put in to shut off the water from a small cross or valley of dyke which ran into the upland. We drove then east and saw the Middle dyke and other side dykes that have not been used for over 150 yrs. This Middle dyke

was the second one made. The first one Upper Dyke is near the head of the C. valley. On both sides of the valley are these side dykes apple trees willows and old Acadian cellars. The north side seems to have been more thickly settled as the land is good and they took advantage of the sunny side of the valley for the location of farms,

#### Acadian Village

On Mr. Will E. Newcombe farm and in that vicinity we saw a large French orchard with trees still alive & being arranged in 8 by 12 rows of about 100 trees growing. This had been surrounded by a growth of wood. We saw also foundations of 16X60 & 15X30 feet. Large buildings t<sub>(hat)</sub> seem to prove the existence of a large & important village there in early times. Some 12 or 15 foundations are in the near vicinity. There is also a piece of dyke about 30 acres which was at one time dyked at the mouth. A deep ravine makes into this small dyke from the west and it would appear that there had been a wide dam for it is well fitted naturally for it. The dykeland comes up the ravine part way and then the land is black loamy as if very wet & a thick deposit of 3 feet of loam have been taken off by Newcomb. The sides are steep and over the

bottom are old pieces of wood that had been under this loam. Freshets would have washed out this ravine & made it more level but by some obstruction being presented to the water the loam was collected & trees & shrubs have grown up where the dam probably was. A trail leads west from this village. And near it in the next field from that in which are the large foundation is a well-like hole 4 ft deep and walled with stone. Under the steep side of the ravine too deep to have been used to drain the 25X30 building is a drain 12 or 14 feet below the flat land above.

Slate sand-stone & trap are used in the foundations some very large & beautifully arranged. Large stone are in Mr. Newcomb's house foundation & he says there are inscriptions, not French possibly Latin on them. They are large & flat & were not in the old foundations. They lie East & West. The long building has a very deep cellar. In the 25X30 he found a lot of pipes & cast-iron pot, 1 leg broken off & in good condition, One leg has been mended with malleable iron. The pot would hold 2 or more gallons. On a farm just east a French apple tree blew down in Oct. of this year. I have the best apple fruit Newcomb ever

ate. He has a tree from it growing in his orchard. The fruit is fair size early sweet clear long & part red skin tho' not a good carrier. This is the most important site of an Acadian village in the county. In a few years there will not be much left. But as it is now it is well worth a trip to see it. I hope to be able to dig in the old cellars for relics next spring. Mr. Newcomb tells a story as told him by his mother. Years ago a Frenchman came among the people and looked for a tree that had a chain hanging in its branches. He said Acadian treasure had been buried at the foot of the tree. The owner of the farm remembered that he had cut a tree (hard wood I think) down which had a chain hanging to it, but he did not know where it stood. Some years after his farm was sold and the buyer owner became suddenly rich. Conjecture had it that he found the treasure.

Dec 6. Isaac Huntly of Avonport (on the road to Oak Island) has an anvil and blacksmith's hammer he found about 18 inches under ground while digging a hole for water. He says copper articles were found on Oak Island some time ago

Jan 13 1892

I have had several pleasant trips with Mr. Robert Starr about the vicinity searching for Acadian remains & relics and locating French cellars & villages. Mr S. has written a very valuable paper on the historical references to the French in Kings Co. gathered from all sources, and in addition to the results of his own examination and knowledge of their location and extent in the county.

Digby and the Acadians.

I have just come from Digby Co. where the descendants of the exiles Acadians are living in large numbers some of whose ancestors escaped from the authorities at Annapolis and finally settled on the shore of the St Mary's Bay. Gliding by the large farms and beautiful & rich land along the Annapolis River I thought of the happy location of our ancestors in Nova Scotia as they then were before 1755 holding the best land along the marshes and at the same time exciting the envy and doubtless the cupidity of the English. When the train entered Digby Co. The rough and unwilling appearance of the land was in violent contrast to the fertility & freshness of that we had left. Here the French settlement began. I saw a good reason why the Acadians have not prospered as well as the English. They were without the invaluable marshes they had to take poor land and the forests stood to the very shores of the Bai de St. Marie

Yet they loved their own province and settled down tho' with the constant fear and menace of the English as they had shown themselves in the matter of the expulsion. They were permitted to stay probably as an act of divine magnanimity and condescension.

The thought of it all can not engender pleasant feelings in one who traces his ascent from those unfortunate people.

### The Gaspereau

From Mr . Fred Benjamin across the river we gathered little regarding the French. An old road ran through his farm near the east line to Bearbine's Hollow. This hollow was named after a Frenchman left at the expulsion 1855 (sic). For some reason he shunned the French. Bearbine used to carry grain from the fields left by the French and on the trail leading to the old French mill that stood on the Miner Property on Duncan Brook. This mill was not burned by the English. The Burbine then took his flour back to the hollow where he lived even after the English settled in the Valley. The place & hut was known by some of the older inhabitants. Sue, a French girl lived near B's farm and had 14 acres which Bs' father bought when she was very old and had lost her husband McIntosh a tinker (Tinker's brook gets its name from him as he lived near it.) This money was paid to her as she needed it by the week. She left children. (He says she was left by the French but it is doubted)

Duncanson told us there is a burying ground & cellars up Duncan Brook. Old ford on John Coldwells another French mill stood near Andrew Duncans on River. Dam across the river & led long way up to head of tide where mill was. And oak stick found there was kept by Mr Miner. At Anderson a village of 15 cellars. Bridge below Vaughan bridge a low water ford.

Lot of French relics plowed out on Coldwell's farm. Tomahawk on brow of hill & 2 copper kettles (refer to Chas Coldwell) also a skull & piece of large stillyards. Charged to Coldwell family that they suddenly became rich.

See Wm Anderson down G. River

Grand Pre

Isaac Huntly of Avonport has anvil and hammer found on his farm. Copper plates & vessels were found on Oak Island (Kings Co)

Wolfville

A lot of pewter plates ( 1 doz.) were plowed out by Wallace (father of Geo & John) on the Haliburton farm.

Jan 18<sup>th</sup> 1892

Remarkable weather for Jan. Farmers done some plowing to say that they plowed in January.

Still on the search for Acadian relics and remains. We visited New Minas and saw some fine specimens of iron work just taken from an old French cellars. There are a number of old cellar near the river and one very large one. The village was evidently an important one.

#### French Fort

The story goes that many years ago in the recollection of living men three young men Lovelace and two others from New Minas were wandering or lost in the woods about two miles back of the village. They suddenly came upon an old house resting upon stones piled up in the form of a square. Hearing strange and awful noises they decamped and separated. They got home after a time and related their experiences. Small piles of stones have been seen in the woods by various persons which is thought were the places of the camps of Frenchman who escaped at the time of the expulsion. The house was built by these Frenchmen who had found a suitable pile of rock in the woods on the side hill and had arranged them in walls and had covered this in using it as a fort and as a church. From a prominent point they watched the Bay for the arrival of French ships which they looked for to assist them. The vessels did

not come and they departed.

Mr E. Leaman says his father told him a Frenchman called at his house and spoke of the old fort and a spring near it in which was buried something of value . He had come from some Acadian town in Digby and had a plan of the county large trees and a brook being point of identification. The stump of an old tree yet stands where the Frenchman stood to get his bearings . This plan the F. got of his father who had been with the ones who escaped and who lived for a time in the wood near the fort.

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Mrs Duncanson (L.E. Duncanson's mother) living in Gaspereau for a great numbers of years. Her husband was about 1830 in the employ of Mr Jos Crane at Grand Pre. Near the Miner house was a barn which had in the recollection of the oldest inhabitant then living been always standing. The roof was thatched and on the inside of the roof was a long board the only one. D. was often in the barn with young men . A young Frenchman came and stayed there some days paying his way. He disappeared and the board in the barn was found down and the glass of a case bottle were found broken & two coins were also found

Nov 1st 92

Mrs Mc Dougal (née Brown sister Mrs John Simson) states that she remembers well Col. Crane when a very old man at Grand Pré. He knew the officers with and Col Noble himself.

An old French barn with thatched roof stood in grand Pré. Old French trees were standing and many French cellars

Fred Curry said his father tore down & carried away the ruins of an old fort which stood near a barn now opposite his house on a very commanding position on the bank of the Gaspereau. Before the Dyke was built which runs north on the west side of the river a large creek made in west and swept towards the upland. Before the dyke boats row up this and it was his brother's opinion that this was a landing used in the deportation of the Acadians. Good sized ships would float easily in the creek and the distance was the shortest to the main village of Grand Pré.

There was another fort built at Grand Pré but demolished by the French.

Montague Fort built by English at Curry's. Dead Dyke built by French.

Mrs Mc Dougal states that she knew an Avery who was stepson of Gardner of Gardner's Island.

Mr Starr says Boudros Point was Starrs point and was a good place for vessels to lie when tide was out. There were remains of wagons and furniture here left by French when they embarked at that place there being no space on board to stow it

Howard Fuller (an old man) below Hortonville says he saw taken out of a cutting when railroad was built

2 plowshares cutting edge welded and as well done as could be done now. Metal was good to be shaped as it was.

2 dyke spades

2 wiffle-tree chains

2 narrow axes (now Herbin's) Joe Armstrong had one of the plowshares (now Herbin's)