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# Provincial Marine to Royal Navy: Archaeological Evidence of the War of 1812 at Kingston's Naval Dockyard

Susan M. Bazely

*The naval dockyard at Kingston, established in the 1790s, was arguably the most important physical representation of the War of 1812 in Upper Canada. Its evolution of structures and facilities, the people who worked and lived in and around it, and the material remains they left behind are symbolic of the war effort within the community of Kingston. Prior to, during, and immediately after the war, the peninsula of Point Frederick, on which the dockyard was situated, became a thriving "village" populated by hundreds of people. Although historical research on the dockyard has been conducted throughout much of the 20th century and to the present, archaeological investigations were first carried out on the point in 1995. Evidence of structures, including the hospital, blockhouse, shanties, and guardhouse, and associated stratigraphy and artifacts, has provided invaluable data for filling the gaps in the historical record. Through archival documentation and archaeological remains, the history and archaeology of the Kingston Naval Dockyard is traced from its beginnings with the Provincial Marine in 1790 to the Royal Navy during and immediately after the War of 1812, debunking a few myths of building function and construction dates along the way.*

*Le chantier naval de Kingston, construit dans les années 1790, constitue sans doute l'élément physique le plus représentatif de la Guerre de 1812 au Haut-Canada. L'évolution des structures et des services, les gens qui y travaillaient et y vivaient ainsi que les vestiges matériels qu'ils ont laissés symbolisent les efforts de guerre de la communauté de Kingston. Avant, pendant et immédiatement après la guerre, la péninsule de Point Frederick où le chantier se situait, est devenue un « village » bouillonnant habité par des centaines de personnes. Quoique des recherches historiques sur le chantier ont été menées tout au long du 20<sup>ième</sup> siècle et jusqu'à présent, les premières fouilles archéologiques n'ont été menées sur la pointe qu'en 1995. Des traces de structures telles un hôpital, un blockhaus, des cabanes de chantiers et un poste de garde, ainsi que les couches stratigraphiques et les artefacts qui y sont associés, offrent des données précieuses nous permettant de combler les lacunes laissées par les données historiques. À l'aide de documents d'archives et de vestiges archéologiques, nous pouvons tracer l'histoire et l'archéologie du chantier naval de Kingston depuis ses débuts avec la Marine Provinciale en 1790 jusqu'à la Marine Royale pendant et immédiatement après la Guerre de 1812, brisant ainsi quelques mythes sur la fonction des bâtiments et les dates de construction.*

## Introduction

Point Frederick, in Kingston, Ontario, has been occupied by the Royal Military College of Canada since 1876 (FIG. 1). Its rich military past has long been recognized, and the architectural significance of its buildings celebrated with three National Historic Site designations, including Point Frederick Buildings, Kingston Navy Yard, and Kingston Fortifications (Parks Canada, Ontario Service Centre 1998: 3–6, 7–8). The Canadian Department of National Defence began to acknowledge a responsibility for archaeological resources in 1995 (Bazely 1995). New construction and maintenance work that might impact important archaeological remains at the college are now preceded by archaeological investigation.

The earliest interest in the navy yard came with designation by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1928, and the

plaque erected in 1935 (Parks Canada 2006). A limited amount of archival research provided support for the plaque text. Extensive archival research was conducted and compiled by Richard Preston in the 1950s, resulting in the Champlain Society volume *Kingston before the War of 1812* (Preston 1959). This collection of documents and associated interpretation has been a long-standing source for local researchers and archaeologists, but not without limitations. A number of graduate research theses have also contributed to the documentation and interpretation of military, naval, and civilian use of the area (McKenzie nd.[1970s]; Mecredy 1982; Cary 2013). It is unclear how much additional, if any, archival research was conducted by the Federal Heritage Building Review Office (Parks Canada 2012a, 2012b) while assessing individual buildings on Point Frederick, but it is clear

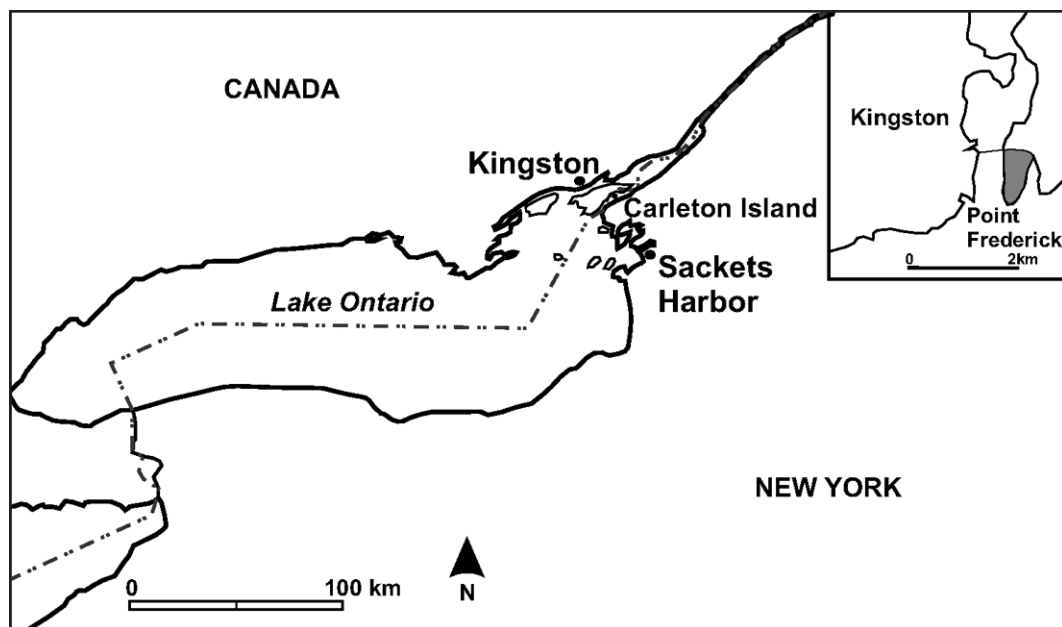


Figure 1. Location of Kingston on the north side of Lake Ontario in Canada, and Sackets Harbor on the southeast side, in New York State, with Carleton Island between. Inset shows Point Frederick in Kingston. (Map by author, 2015.)

from archaeology and subsequent research that erroneous interpretations were perpetuated.

Archival research and preliminary investigation in 2001, prior to the construction of a new dormitory for cadets of the college, suggested the selected location for the building was of archaeological concern (Bazely and Moorhead 2001; Bazely, Moorhead et al. 2002). Subsequent archaeological testing determined that the area contained large components of War of 1812–period deposits (Bazely and Feast 2003; Gromoff 2003; Bazely and Gromoff 2006). Located at a naval dockyard rather than a military barracks or any battlefield, it represented the living areas of both military and civilian personnel who worked at the dockyard or were involved in the War of 1812. The post–War of 1812 period also was well-represented archaeologically. Large-scale mitigation archaeology commenced on the new dormitory site in 2004, which led to the belief that the entire peninsula had potential for containing War of 1812–period deposits and structures. Eventually, during both contract- and research-archaeology projects, more than five additional locations on Point Frederick would yield significant remnants of the War of 1812 (FIG. 2).

Archaeological reports for investigations conducted between 1998 and 2010 provide the archival and archaeological data used here to present evidence of the War of 1812 at Kingston's navy yard.

### Overview of Dockyard History

Beginning in 1783, Loyalist refugees from the American Revolutionary War made their way to British North America, now Canada, from the newly formed United States of America. In Upper Canada, what is today Ontario, settlement was concentrated along the north side of the St. Lawrence River, the shore of Lake Ontario, and west of the Niagara River. Loyalists also settled on the east bank of the Detroit River (Lajeunesse 1960: cii). Goods and people were transported by water, and, between Montreal and Kingston, all supplies from Britain, the British Empire, and the United States were brought up the St. Lawrence River by bateaux until they reached the open water of Lake Ontario, due to the rapids and shallow water.

The city of Kingston is at the confluence of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario (FIG. 1). In the late 18th century, the settlement



rapidly evolved as the transshipment point for the bateau fleets that ascended the St. Lawrence River. At this time, however, the severe shortage of commercial ships and experienced sailors could not keep up with the desired traffic for moving goods. The Provincial Marine, which originated as a Royal Navy detachment during the French and Indian War of 1754–1763, also known as the Seven Years’ War (1756–1763), provided transport for troops and supplies for the British army on the lower Great Lakes and Lake Champlain during the American Revolutionary War (Malcomson 1998: 25). Subsequently, the ship and sailor shortage was alleviated by employing the Provincial Marine for commercial transportation (Hitsman 1999: 8).

The base of the Provincial Marine on Lake Ontario, established in 1778 during the American Revolutionary War, was at Carleton Island, located to the southeast of Kingston and northwest of present-day Sackets Harbor in New York State (FIG. 1). Merchants lobbied for the Provincial Marine to move the base to Kingston, but the Provincial Marine preferred its protected harbor on Carleton Island, citing Kingston’s Point Frederick as difficult to defend, since it was ringed by high ground and the harbor was of poorer quality (Preston 1959: xxxviii, lx, lxxx–lxxxii). The terms of the Treaty of Paris ceded Carleton Island to the United States,

Figure 2. Aerial of Point Frederick showing location of investigated War of 1812 and post-war period archaeological remains and extant structures. 1) shanty 3, 2) Provincial Marine building, 3) hospital yard picket, 4) hospital, 5) surgeon’s quarters, 6) barracks, 7) shanties 2 and 10, 8) shanties 1 and 8, 9) military encampments, 10) guard house, 11) Stone Frigate, 12) artillery barracks, 13) block house (Figure by author, 2016. Base aerial City of Kingston Ortho 1998).

although it was not officially in American possession until 1795 (Bond 1960: 15). As a result, by 1789 the Provincial Marine had taken up residence on Point Frederick, across the Catararqui River from the new town of Kingston (Preston 1959: 144). A dockyard was established by 1790 (Parks Canada, Ontario Service Centre 2007: 9) and may have been defended by a small battery at the tip of the point that was in place at the start of the war. According to 1950s archival research by Preston, several storehouses and a wharf were built, and by 1800 a transport store, naval store, deputy commissary, storekeeper's house, work shed, and sail loft existed (Preston 1959: lxi, lxxxi). Between 1800 and 1809 the schooner *Duke of Kent*; the *Earl of Moira*, a 14-gun brig/ship; the *Duke of Gloucester*, a 6-gun schooner; and the *Royal George*, a 20-gun ship, were launched at the Kingston dockyard (Preston 1959: lxxxi–lxxxvii; Douglas 1979: 10; Malcomson 1998: 26–27, 327, 329; Hitsman 1999: 110; McKenzie nd: 121, 124, 127, 129). Between 1801 and 1810, just 35 mi. (56 km) southeast across the lake from Kingston, a small settlement grew up around the sheltered deep harbor known as Sackets Harbor. By 1811 it had been recognized as the best alternative location for servicing American naval vessels and a shipyard (Malcomson 1998: 10, 19).

At the outbreak of the war in June of 1812 a few hundred men and four ships with 46 guns were based at the Kingston dockyard (Preston 1959: lxxxvii). It was necessary to improve defensive works, and although a battery reserve is indicated on late 18th-century maps of Point Frederick, it is likely that one was constructed after the war began (McKenzie nd: 142–144). A blockhouse also was built on the adjacent Point Henry (Preston 1959: lxxxix; Mecredy 1982: 25; Cary 2013). On 10 November 1812 the battery at Point Frederick saw action against the ships of Commodore Isaac Chauncey, in an artillery battle that turned out to be Kingston's only engagement of the war. The *Royal George*, from the Provincial Marine fleet, was pursued into Kingston harbor, where she took shelter. Chauncey's ships eventually retreated (Malcomson 1998: 49–53; Hitsman 1999: 110–111). This action and the need to protect the dockyard prompted Kingston's military

administrators to continually improve its defenses. Gun batteries were also in place at two other prominent locations around the harbor, Murney's and Mississauga points, and a gun battery was established on Point Henry (Mecredy 1982: 25, 33; Garcia 2006: 1).

In the spring of 1813, the Royal Navy, under the command of Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo, took over the Provincial Marine's role on the Great Lakes (Malcomson 1998: 63, 112, 119–122; Hitsman 1999: 118, 142–143; Garcia 2000; Moore 2008: 6). Yeo engaged Chauncey and successfully blockaded Sackets Harbor for a period, but no decisive action took place, and control of Lake Ontario shifted several times between the Americans and British (Malcomson 1998: 152, 155; Hitsman 1999: 162, 180, 209). From the spring of 1813 to the end of the war in February of 1815, the Kingston dockyard became a hive of activity, as a desperate shipbuilding race to attain naval superiority on Lake Ontario ensued between the British at Kingston and the Americans at Sackets Harbor (Malcomson 1998: 319; Moore 2008: 6). The Kingston dockyard, the largest British navy yard on the Great Lakes, turned out several warships during the fall and winter of 1813/1814, including the *Prince Regent* and *Princess Charlotte* (Moore 2008: 7). By the spring of 1814, the naval force on the Great Lakes was officially transferred to the admiralty, making Kingston the largest Royal Navy yard on freshwater anywhere in the world (Grodzinski 2013: 151). It is during this period that the 102-gun, first-rate ship of the line, HMS *St. Lawrence*, the largest Age-of-Sail warship ever to sail the Great Lakes, was built and launched at Kingston (Malcomson 1998: 327, 239; Moore 2008: 8).

It was important to defend the dockyard and harbor, as well as the town. In addition to the gun batteries, blockhouses were constructed to defend against both naval and land attack. A blockhouse was placed on the high ground on Point Henry to the east early in 1813 (Mecredy 1982: 25; Garcia 2006: 1). Five blockhouses connected by picketing ringed the town across the river to the west. These latter are clearly visible on maps that immediately postdate the war, ca. 1814 (Murray 1814) and 1816 (Nicolls 1816; Vidal, Renny, and Bayfield 1816) (FIG. 3). The fort at the tip of Point Frederick was begun in the first few months of the war. The small blockhouse behind the battery was



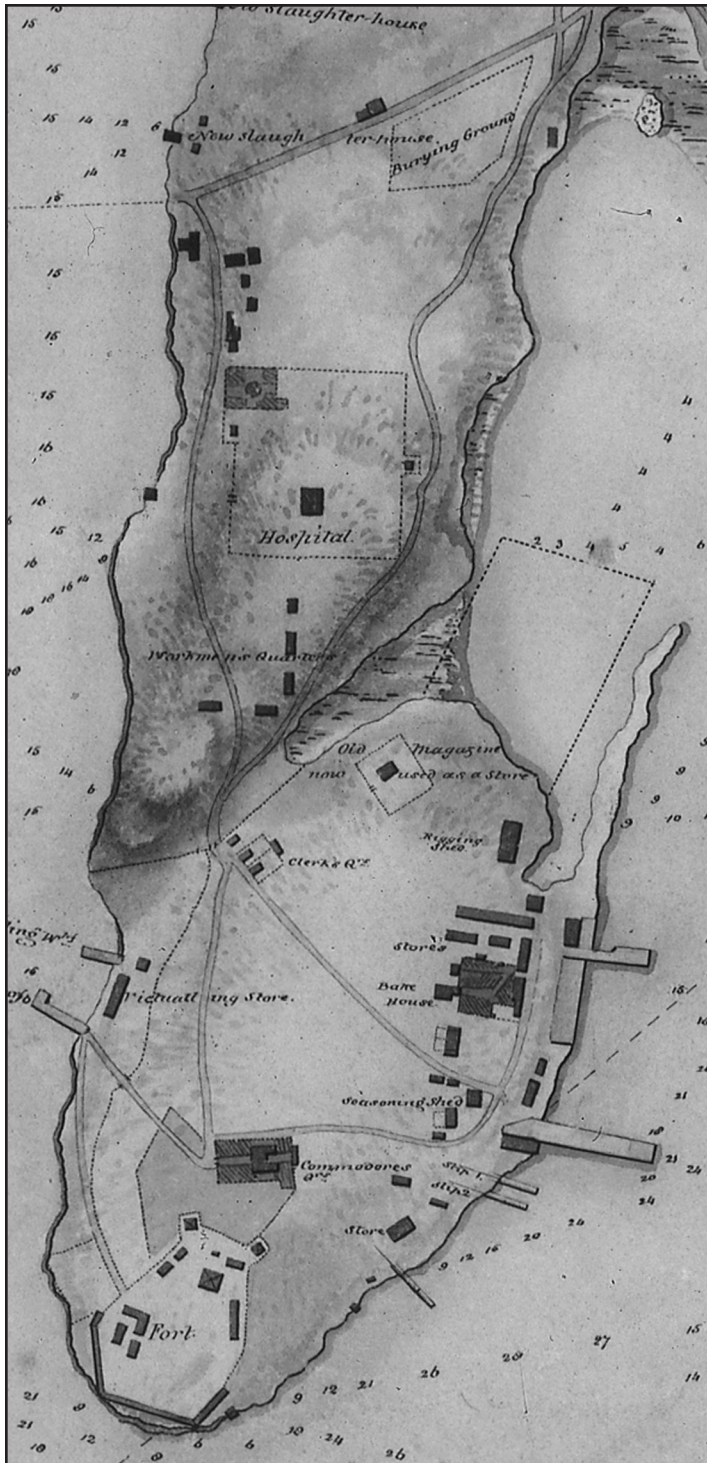


Figure 3. Detail from *Plan of Kingston and Its Vicinity*, 19 June 1816 (Vidal, Renny, and Bayfield 1816).

soon replaced with a larger blockhouse (Stanley and Preston 1950: 11). Officers' quarters, Royal Artillery barracks, log barracks, a guardhouse, a canteen, an armorer's shop, and a magazine were built as part of the fort (Vidal, Renny, and Bayfield 1816). These structures are identified in Figure 3. At the dockyard gate, the narrowest part of the isthmus, was a guardhouse, and it is plausible that a blockhouse was constructed to defend it. This is possibly illustrated in an 1815 painting of the dockyard by Hugh Irvine (Irvine 1815) (FIG. 4). The roof of the potential blockhouse is visible between the dockyard bell and the structures on the hill on the right side.

Research conducted as part of the new dormitory project in 2004 by historian Earl Moorhead indicated that hundreds of civilian shipwrights and carpenters from Quebec City were brought to Kingston to augment naval artificers and local carpenters employed at the dockyard. At its height of activity in 1814, it is estimated that up to 1,200 civilian workmen and 400 naval personnel were living in and around the dockyard (R. Hall 1814; F. Hall 1818). Soldiers and artillerymen were also put up on the point, either at the Fort Frederick barracks or in buildings or tents near the dockyard gate (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010). It was thus certain that dozens of storehouses, barracks, and other necessary buildings were constructed at and near the dockyard during the war period (FIGS. 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.)

Archival data in the form of maps (FIGS. 3, 5, 6 and 7) and



Figure 4. Painting of the dockyard, by Hugh Irvine (Irvine 1815). This view is from Point Henry (*on left*) looking across Navy Bay to the dockyard (*center*) and depicts several of the warships in “ordinary” and various barrack structures (*right*).

official reports and letters indicate that several structures were built on a small hill adjacent to the dockyard gate during the war period, the farthest north of the major buildings being the hospital (Dixon 1815; Owen 1815; United Kingdom Hydrographic Office 1815; Nicolls 1816; Vidal, Renny, and Bayfield 1816; Laws 1820). Constructed in 1814, the hospital measured 64 × 38 ft., was of frame construction with clapboard on a stone foundation, and was two stories with an attic. Four other long buildings were clustered farther south. Listed as barracks in an 1815 survey by the naval storekeeper, two are 62 × 22 ft. frame clapboard structures, and one, of log construction, is 41 × 19 ft. (Owen 1815). An 1820 survey identifies them as all without foundations (Laws 1820). There are indications on an 1838 map that these buildings subsequently served as officers’ quarters (Library and Archives Canada 1838). All of these buildings, including the hospital structure, disappear from known records by the late 1840s. The Surgeon’s Quarters, however, built in the 1820s to the north of the cluster and southeast of the hospital, continued to be depicted.

Tenders relating to the naval hospital appear in Kingston daily newspapers as early as 1813, with a request for “Proposals for building a Naval Hospital in Point Frederick” (*Kingston Gazette* 1813). The following year there is a request for “Tenders for a quantity of knees of oak, elm and spruce, for picketing in the new Hospital at Point Frederick” (*Kingston Gazette* 1814a, 1814b, 1814c, 1814d, 1814e, 1814f). This, along with a single map dated to 1813 depicting the “Yard Hospital” (Harris 1813), confirms that the hospital was in place at the navy yard by 1813.

Civilian artificers were required to construct their own shelters, and an 1820 survey notes 34 shanties of log or frame construction, ranging in size from 11 × 11 ft. to 18 × 27 ft., on the peninsula (Laws 1820) (FIGS. 5 and 6). It was further noted that the shanties were in a state of disrepair, “in a most wretched condition,” as well as being unhealthy, due to close proximity to the swamp. The shanties were described by E. Laws in 1820 as

built from the offal wood of the Yard *viz.* slabs &c the Workmanship was performed by the men after the working hours, that these lodgings

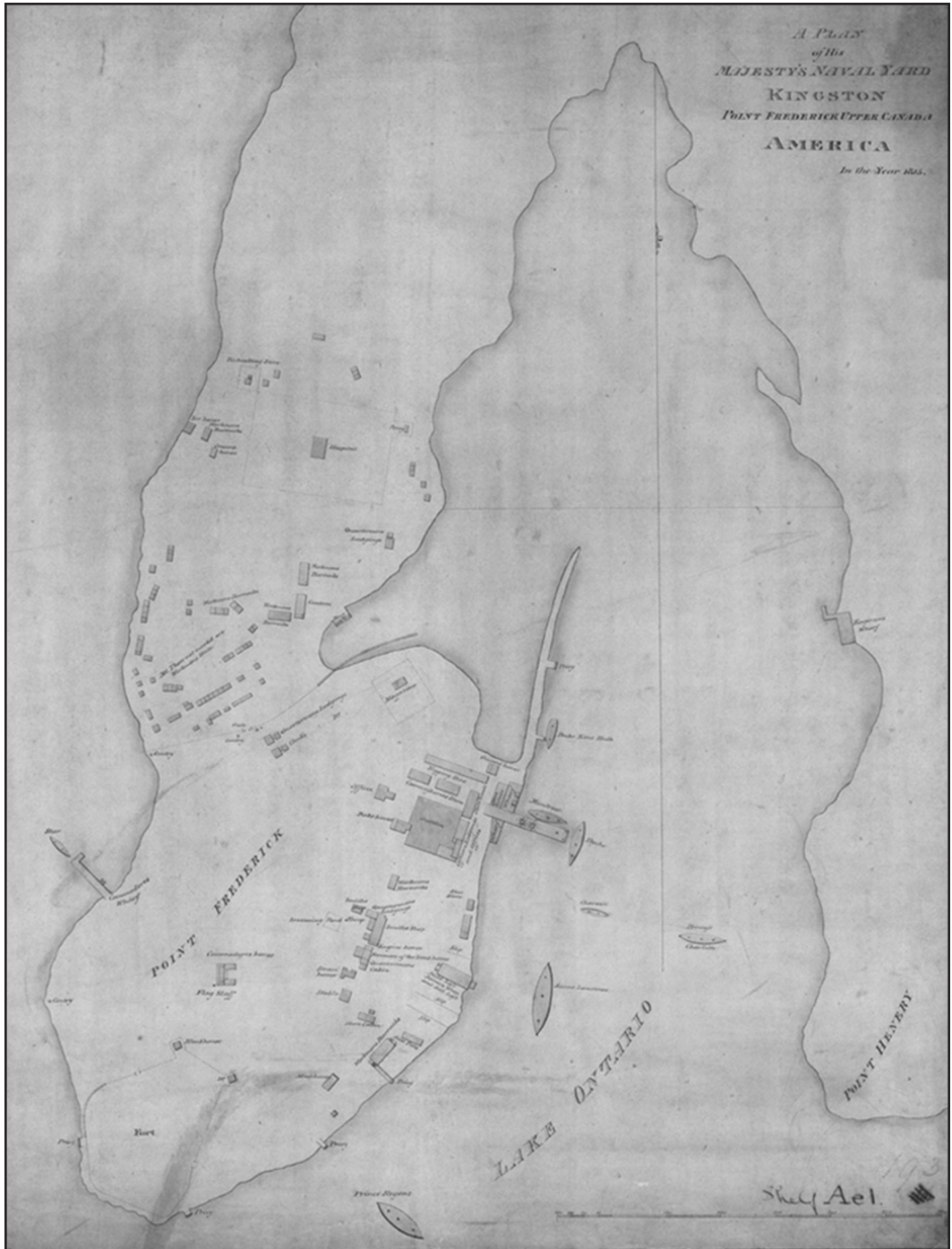


Figure 5. The 1815 Admiralty Plan: *A Plan of His Majesty's Naval Yard Kingston Point Frederick Upper Canada America in the Year 1815*, showing various buildings, including the shanties. The long barracks structures and hospital are situated to the north of the dockyard area, and the many shanties are primarily to the southwest of these, with some spread farther north (United Kingdom Hydrographic Office 1815).



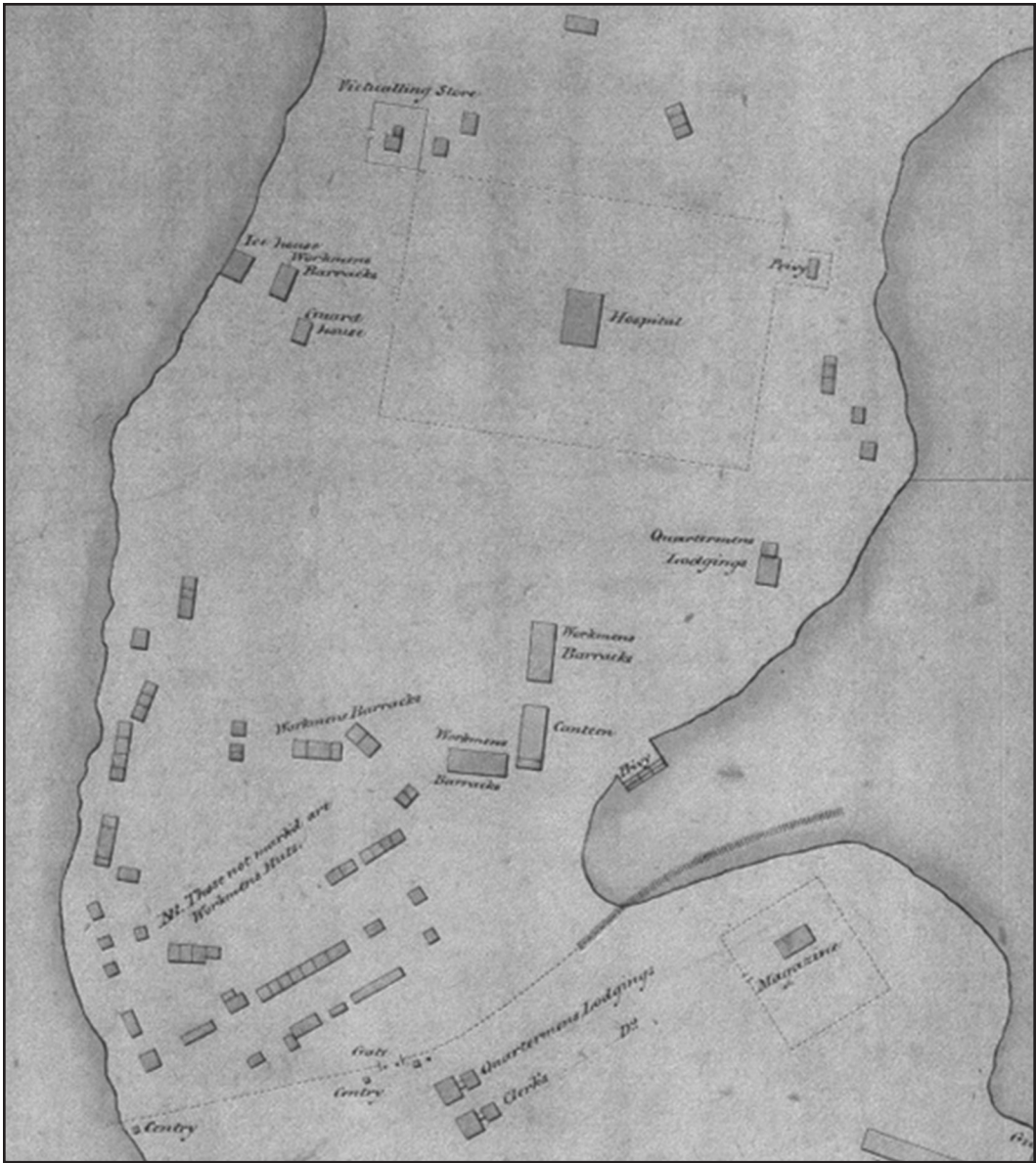


Figure 6. Detail from the 1815 Admiralty Plan: *A Plan of His Majesty's Naval Yard Kingston Point Frederick Upper Canada America in the Year 1815* (United Kingdom Hydrographic Office 1815).

have been no further expense to the Government than a small quantity of nails and glass—they are not lathed and plastered nor have they chimneys, the funnels of the Canadian stoves pass through the roofs (which are only covered with slabs) these places at first were the most miserable dwellings that can be imagined. ... Offal wood is occasionally given to the men to stop the leaks and drifting snow from coming through the roofs and sides. (Laws 1820)

This was a truly inhospitable environment for those entrusted with building and maintaining the main naval fleet on Lake Ontario.

According to the index of persons and places that appear in a series of documents relating to the dockyard, Edward Laws was the naval storekeeper at the Kingston dockyard from 1813 to 1821 (Nation 1992). He was responsible for managing supplies and contracts in the

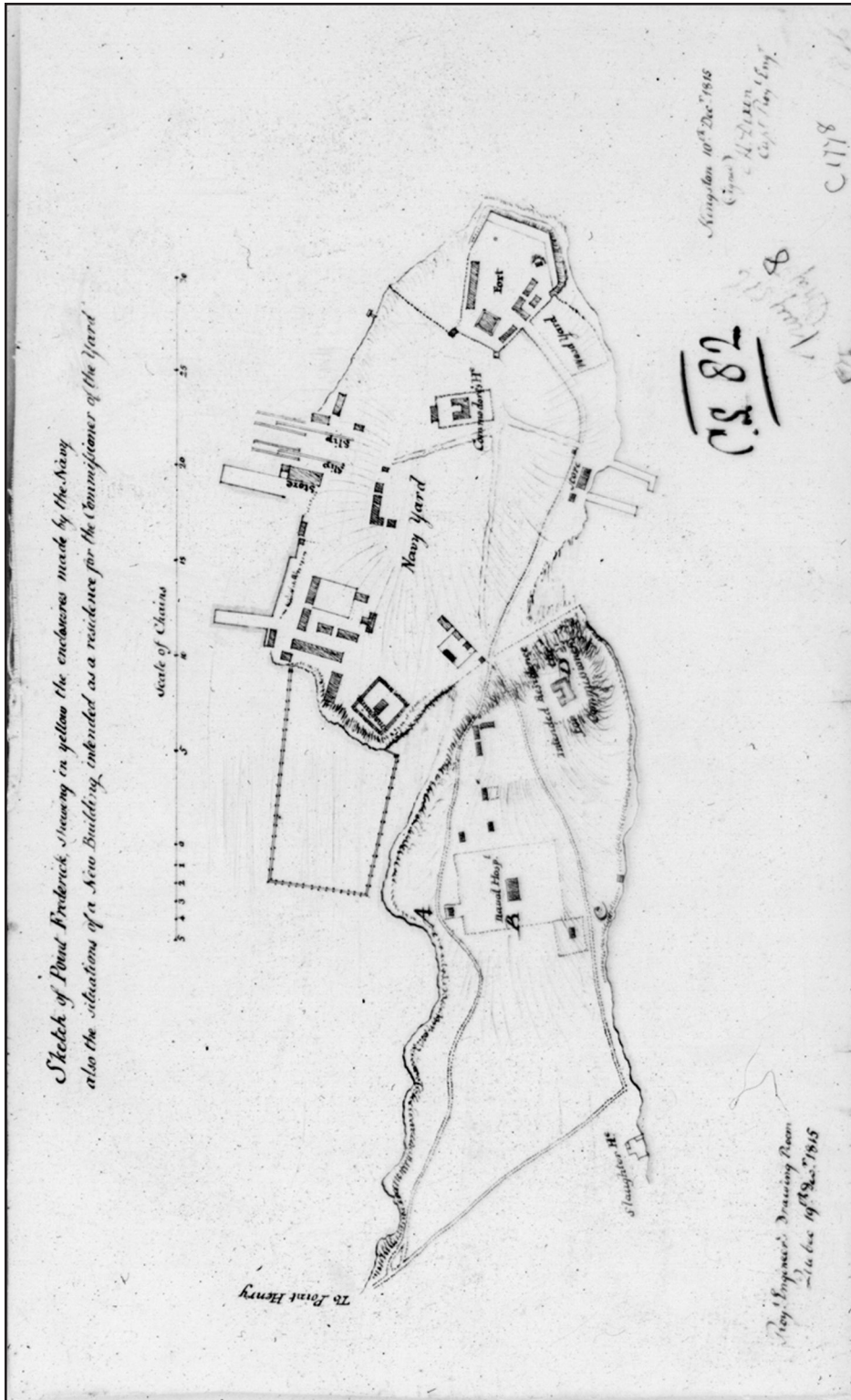


Figure 7. Sketch of Point Frederick Shewing in Yellow the Enclosure Made by the Navy also the Situations of a New Building Intended as a Residence for the Commissioner of the Yard, by M. Dixon, 10 December 1815 (Dixon 1815). The structures in the dockyard and the barrack buildings and hospital to the north appear to be consistent with other plans. The “New Building” at D was removed soon after it was built due to the importance of the topography for defensive purposes.

dockyard, advertising procurement tenders for a variety of materials, services, and construction of buildings at Point Frederick. The naval storekeeper was in charge of all money-related items, not only for the stores, but also salaries and wages (Brock 1968: 10; Mecredy 1982: 53). All operations at the dockyard were overseen by the commissioner of the yard. Captain Richard O'Connor served as the Kingston dockyard commissioner from 1813 to 1814, and was replaced late in 1814 by Captain Sir Robert Hall (Malcomson 1998: 122, 160, 230, 314; Nation 1992). For a short period or periods from 1815 to 1816, Commodore Owen was acting commissioner. Hall continued as commissioner until 1818, when Captain Sir Robert Barrie took over. Barrie was commissioner until 1826, then was also appointed as commodore and served at the dockyard until 1834 (Brock 1968; Nation 1992).

There are a variety of references to the removal of structures, their insubstantial and unsafe nature, and the expansion of boundaries after the war. In 1815 Commodore Owen instructed Edward Laws, the naval storekeeper, to extend the hospital picket northward and refit any usable huts and remove those that were not wanted:

Thinking it necessary that the ground lying to the northward of the Hospital as far as the first garden as marked on the plan which has been brought by the Surgeon and the Agent Victualler shall be taken within the picketing of the Hospital and that as many of the huts that it contains as will be useful for the persons attached to it shall be fitted for the purposes they have pointed out, I have directed them to communicate with you on this subject, and I beg you will plan to take immediate measures for removing and completing the picketing, fitting the Huts which will be useful and taking away those which are not wanted as explained in the letter I have written them. (Owen 1815)

In 1819 Commissioner Barrie wrote:

Our Dock Yard is very confined and full of little dry wooden Houses thrown up with out any order just as they were wanted for immediate purposes. ... [N]ow is the time to get rid of these dangerous wooden Buildings and where they are wanted to substitute stone or brick. (Barrie 1819)

As a result of the Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817, the dockyard remained open, but in a reduced state, with all but four vessels disarmed and no new warship construction (Grenville et al.

2000: 87). The complement of naval artificers was also reduced. In the years after the war, however, considerable construction took place at Point Frederick to take the dockyard from a state of hastily constructed buildings to one of more permanence. After much petitioning and provision of justification, a row of 16 stone cottages was built for the resident naval artificers and their families on the west side of the point in 1822 (Royal Military College of Canada Archives 1822), and the remaining shanties were pulled down. An 1863 photograph (FIG. 8) illustrates the vast improvement made by the stone row, compared to the small, hastily built shanties, and archaeological investigations confirm this (Bazely 1999, 2000, 2006; Bazely, Moore, and McKenzie 2001; Bazely, Moore et al. 2002; Bazely, Boyce, and Dunn 2009; Bazely, Dales, and Barken 2010; Bazely and Gillen 2010). Such was the state of the navy yard's housing in the years immediately following the War of 1812. As a result of the warships being disarmed and in a state of ordinary, a large stone storehouse was built for the rigging of the dismantled warships in 1820 (Grenville et al. 2000: 84; Smith 2006: 15, 23, 2009: 18–21). Previous research and interpretation of dockyard buildings concluded that a number of stone structures were in existence at the end of the war, including the stone wall enclosing the dockyard and main gate, hospital, magazine, two guardhouses, and the gateporter's lodge (Brock 1968: 6). More-current research indicates that around 1820 the stone house for the surgeon was constructed to the southeast of the hospital and confirms that the hospital was not built of stone; the guardhouse and porter's lodge were not constructed in stone prior to 1837 (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010: 17–18). The major construction works of the storehouse (Stone Frigate), Surgeon's Quarters, and naval cottages took place during Commissioner Barrie's tenure. The dockyard was officially closed in 1834, and Commodore Barrie returned to England (Brock 1968: 17–18; Nation 1992). Subsequent to this, with the onset of the Upper Canada Rebellion, the dockyard was reopened, with the final official closure occurring in 1853 (Stanley and Preston 1950: 17).

Archaeological research and investigation on Point Frederick, particularly between 2001 and 2009, has uncovered a variety of remains



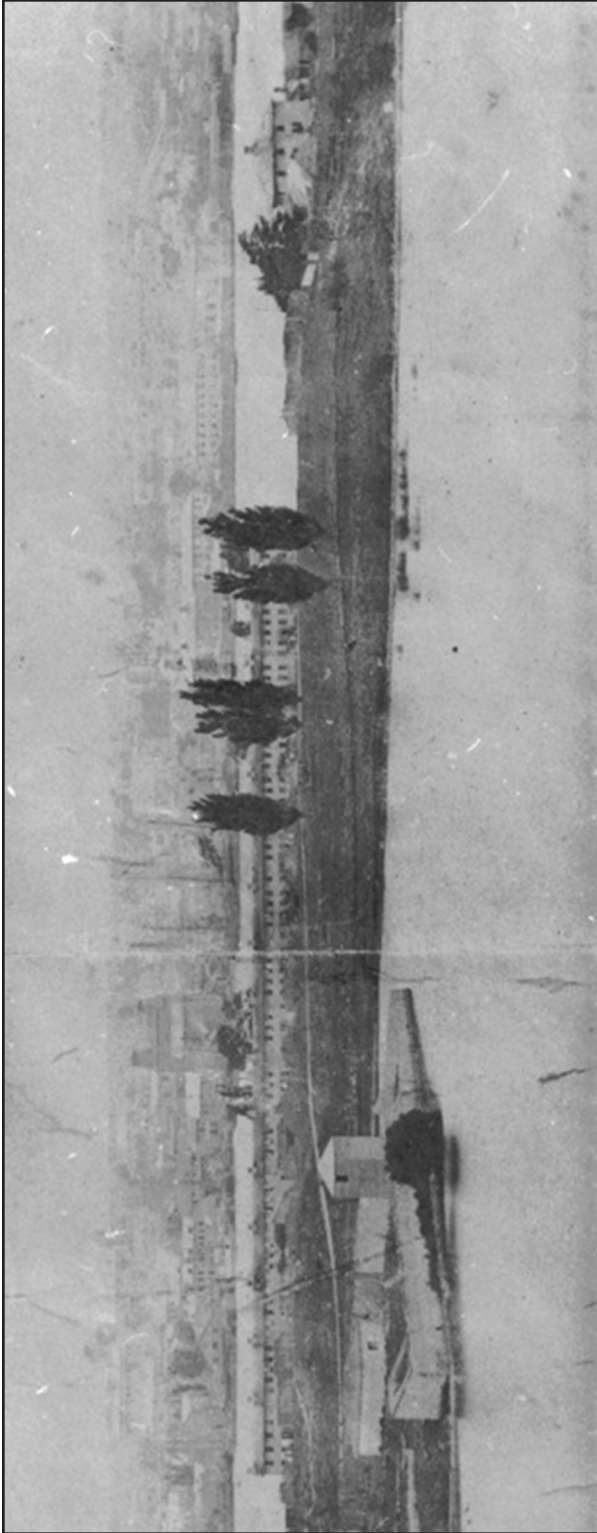


Figure 8. Photo showing the row of two-story naval cottages built in 1822 to replace the widely scattered shanties, ca. 1863. Note the Surgeon's Quarters to the right (Queen's University Archives 1863).

that have been linked to the War of 1812 period and the years of the immediate postwar period. Evidence includes structural elements of stone and wood, artifacts, and faunal material. During and immediately after the investigations, limited analysis was conducted on the material culture remains that are now part of the Royal Military College of Canada Museum collection.

### Archaeological Finds

Several War of 1812-period structures on Point Frederick were located and investigated or recorded to a minimal degree starting in the 1960s. These include the blockhouse and artillery barracks in Fort Frederick, along with the immediate-postwar Surgeon's Quarters, and the storehouse, the Stone Frigate (FIG. 2). The blockhouse in Fort Frederick was not excavated archaeologically, and more recent investigations found that it had been entirely dug up in the 1960s (Berry 2004; Bazely, Berry, and Campbell 2005; Bazely, Campbell, and Flower 2006). Small sections of the artillery barracks in Fort Frederick were found to survive, although most of the building was removed by the 1846 construction of the present martello tower (Berry 2004, 2006; Bazely, Berry, and Campbell 2005). The Surgeon's Quarters remain extant, although much altered and enlarged; the building is currently used as the RMC commandant's residence. The Stone Frigate, built to house the masts and rigging of the ships in ordinary, is also extant (Bazely 2003). Limited archaeological investigation was conducted in these areas primarily for research and field-school purposes, or for monitoring and recording during



renovation. Several other locations have undergone more extensive investigation since 2001, with proper archaeological methodology, examination of the archival record, and use of the staged approach prescribed by Province of Ontario regulations. It is these sites that have yielded significant evidence of the War of 1812.

#### **Provincial Marine Building ca. 1789–1815**

The earliest known structure to be located on Point Frederick is the remains of what was initially thought to be a War of 1812 shanty, but more likely to be and currently interpreted as a Provincial Marine–period building. Based on archival records, it dates between ca. 1789 and 1815. The 1815 “Admiralty Plan,” (FIGS. 5 and 6) (United Kingdom Hydrographic Office 1815), that illustrates many of the temporary War of 1812 shanties, shows a structure in the area north of the yard or enclosed ground of the naval hospital. Based on the scale of this plan, the structure measured approximately 18 ft. wide by 36 ft. long (5.49 × 10.97 m). Excavations in 2009 exposed sections of a foundation built on bedrock consisting of soft yellow limestone with some blue-gray limestone and granite boulders (Bazely and Dales 2010)

(FIGS. 9 and 10). The foundation was laid out in an orientation offset from the typical, standard north–south grid common to the British establishment. This orientation is, in fact, consistent with that of Fort Frontenac, built across the river under the French regime, and rebuilt and used by the British military between 1783 and ca. 1820. It thus suggests an earlier period of construction. The excavated foundation measured 18 ft. wide by 24 ft. long (5.49 × 7.32 m). When compared to the 1815 Admiralty Plan, it is suggested that an addition without a foundation was made to the structure during the War of 1812 period that elongated the existing building. Cuts into the bedrock with fragments of wooden beams were located to the north of the stone remains. The foundation measured 17–22 in. (43.18–55.88 cm) in width and was four to five courses in height. The chimney base for the structure was located on the interior in the center of the southeast foundation wall, with chimney-collapse debris scattered to the exterior. Despite limited investigation of both the interior and exterior of the structure, no occupation deposits were identified, and the cultural material recovered was post-demolition, with no material readily datable to the occupation period.

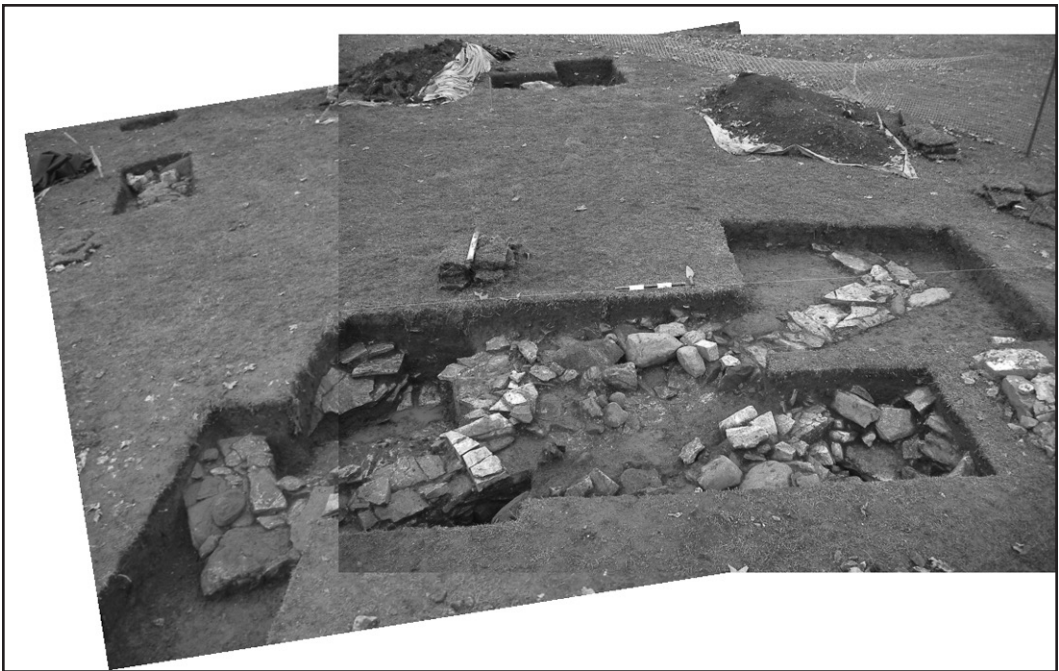


Figure 9. Excavated remains of the Provincial Marine–period structure (Bazely & Dales 2010).

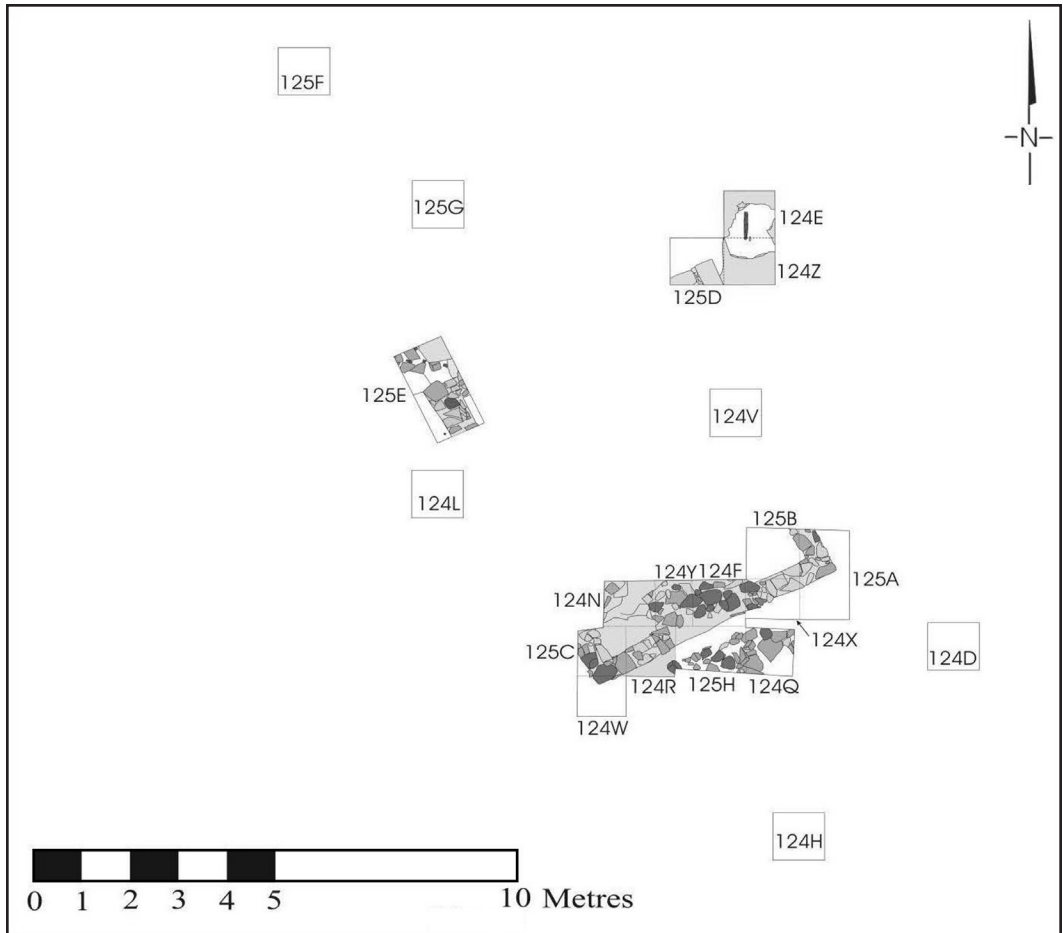


Figure 10. A plan view of the remains as found (Bazely & Dales 2010).

### Military Encampments

During excavations immediately north of the dockyard gate on the slope and base of a small hill in 2004, an intact 160 m<sup>2</sup> deposit dating from the 1812 period was discovered (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010) (FIG. 2). At the base of the hill were numerous ash deposits and burn features, indicative of campfires, determined to be part of a military encampment. At least 20 ash and burn features were identified in relatively close proximity. The scattered refuse that was pressed into the surface of the slope was dominated by plain creamware; early palette polychrome, hand-painted pearlware; and large pieces of ungulate bone, including articulated hocks and trotters. Glass tableware, including stemware, tumblers, and decanter stoppers, was also common in this deposit, as

were hand-blown wine bottles. A few pieces of grapeshot and .77 caliber musket balls were found, along with a large number of military buttons. The majority were 1812-period Royal Artillery,  $n=30$ ; and 15 Royal Navy. Two Nova Scotia Fencibles and one 10th Royal Veteran Battalion button were also found, along with a U.S. button. The burn features contained similar ceramics, wrought nails, and animal bone. The mixed material does not give a clear picture of who was using this area, and appears to represent both ordinary soldiers and officers. What is clear is the large volume of people using a relatively small area over a short period of time.

### Shanties ca. 1812–1820

A few meters to the north of the previously noted military encampment, a roughly built

fireplace cut into the limestone bedrock of the side of the hill was discovered (FIG. 2 NO. 8: Shanties 1 and 8). The bedrock of the hill functioned as both the base of the fireplace and its back wall, with a brick-and-stone hearth and sidewalls. Much of the fireplace was constructed of dry-laid limestone fragments (FIG. 11). Extending out from the fireplace on either side was a cut into subsoil representing a sill trench up to 5 ft. (1.52 m) long, with the remains of a wooden sill plate and several floorboards. These were represented by dark organic stains from the decayed wood and discovered over a square area of the same dimensions as the sill trench. Below the wood floor and occupation level was a stone subfloor. This structure, estimated to be roughly 12 × 12 ft. (3.66 × 3.66 m), matches the dimensions of the smaller shanties described in the 1820 survey of the dockyard. A number of military- and naval-related items were found within and directly outside the shanty, including a

musket ball, three gilt buttons, a copper Royal Navy button, two gilt Royal Navy buttons, and eight copper buttons (13–14 mm), likely used for sailors' clothing, although the assemblage was primarily domestic in nature, with ceramics, bottle glass, and animal bone. The fragments of at least three different pearlware figurines (FIG. 12) were initially interpreted as the Madonna or an unidentified saint. Likely Prattware figurines, at least one is thought to be of St. Barbara (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010). St. Barbara is the patron saint of artillerymen, armorers, military engineers, gunsmiths, and miners (Catholic Online 2015). The 1820 report (Laws 1820) refers to the funnels of the Canadian stoves being present in the shanties, which suggests that the fireplace was utilized in an earlier phase of the shanty's life. Other material includes wrought nails, animal bone, creamware and pearlware ceramics, clay smoking pipes, a ¼ real coin minted in Mexico City in 1774, an 1814



Figure 11. Partially excavated shanty remains at the base of the hill, showing a fireplace constructed of limestone and brick (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010).



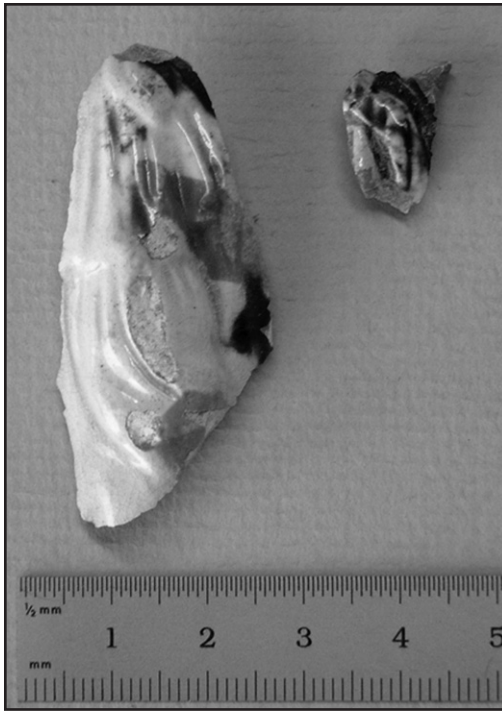


Figure 12. Possible Madonna or St. Barbara figurine fragments found at the base of the hill near Shanty 1 (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010).

Wellington halfpenny token, and tumbler and stemware glass. With finds including the noted military items, however, the structure may have been occupied by navy personnel and subsequently been used as a guardhouse.

In 2007 and 2008 (Bazely, Boyce, and Dunn 2009; Bazely, Dales, and Barken 2010; Bazely and Gillen 2010), while investigating Barrie's 1822 naval cottages along the west shore of the peninsula, fragmentary remains of a limestone rubble foundation were uncovered within Cottage No. 10 of the 16-cottage-long row (FIG. 2 NO. 7: Shanties 2 and 10). This poorly constructed foundation was not aligned with the known walls of the naval cottages and not consistent with the construction methods. The small dry-laid pieces of limestone sat on the natural clay subsoil and likely supported a wooden sill beam. This would appear to be a small section of one of the long, narrow, three-part structures, measuring approximately 18 ft. wide by 36 ft. long (5.49 × 10.97 m), depicted on the 1815 Admiralty Plan (United Kingdom Hydrographic Office 1815) (FIGS. 5

and 6). Despite considerable investigation of the 1822 naval cottages from 1998 to 1999 and 2007 to 2009, no other evidence of the plentiful shanties has come to light, supporting their ephemeral nature and the thoroughness of construction of the subsequent replacement stone row of naval cottages.

Evidence of what is likely the most northern shanty (FIG. 2 NO. 1: Shanty 3) was uncovered in 2009 (Sheldon 2009). Constructed on the shallow bedrock along the eastern shore of the peninsula and west side of Navy Bay, the structure consisted of several noncontiguous limestone blocks and a granite cobble. These likely supported a beam for floorboards, but no overall dimensions could be ascertained. Cultural material was consistent with a late 18th- to early 19th-century occupation and carpentry-related use: creamware and pearlware; wrought nails; and tools, including files, the hinge of a folding ruler, a hammerhead, knife blades, and a saw blade. Several other items indicate military connections, including regimental buttons, a ramrod guide from a British musket, and nails and buttons bearing the Board of Ordnance broad arrow. One button, inscribed: RNH and with the broad arrow, was identified as being from a patient smock from the nearby naval hospital (FIG. 13).

### Naval Hospital, ca. 1813–1848 and Hospital Yard Picket, ca. 1814–1816

Until definitive archaeological results between 2001 and 2004, and archival documentation in 2006, it was long thought that the current Commandant's Residence, a large 19th-century stone structure, was the Naval Hospital (Stanley and Preston 1950: 15; Preston 1959; Angus 1966: 107; Parks Canada 2012a, 2012b). A review of the 1815 and 1816 plans (FIGS. 3, 5, 6 and 7) and other later depictions clearly indicates a consistent alignment and orientation of barrack buildings with the hospital structure. The hospital is either in direct alignment with or slightly to the west of the north-south oriented Long Barracks, which is not maintained with the existing stone Commandant's Residence, being farther to the east. The 1815 and 1820 descriptions note the hospital as a wooden structure on a stone foundation. Archaeological investigations to the south between 2001 and 2004 supported the map orientation and indication for the





Figure 13. Button with: RNH (Royal Navy Hospital) and the broad arrow, from the most northern of the shanties, Shanty 3 (Sheldon 2009).

hospital being located farther to the west of the current Commandant's Residence. The discovery by Parks Canada historian Bob Garcia of an 1837 plan and key description has led to a reinterpretation and subsequent

locating, in 2007, of the limestone foundations representing the remains of the east-west oriented north wall and fragments of the east wall of the hospital to the northwest of the current Commandant's Residence (Ford 1837;



Figure 14. Remnants of hospital-yard picket in an east-west orientation along the original north boundary (Bazely and Dales 2010).

National Archives Public Records Office 1837; Bazely, Boyce, and Dunn 2009; Bazely and Gillen 2010: 35). The hospital disappears from cartographic sources in the 1840s. The stone building commonly thought to have been the hospital is, in fact, the Surgeon's Quarters, located on Figure 2. It was constructed by 1820, as noted in the naval storekeeper's survey (Laws 1820) and clearly identified in the 1837 plan and key as "Building No. 5," described as "Surgeon's quarters—Stone building—roof covered with shingles—43.10 × 33.3 ft.—some repairs necessary" (Ford 1837; National Archives Public Records Office 1837).

A section of the original hospital-yard picket was encountered during 2009 investigations

(Bazely and Dales 2010). The evidence presented as a linear feature oriented east-west, representing the northern perimeter (FIG. 14). It likely served the dual function of drain and fence line, and consisted of a stone-lined ditch cut into subsoil. The lining was comprised of small to medium limestone spall and small granite boulders. This would have helped to channel water from the hospital-yard surface. The ditch was, on average, 50 cm (1 ft. 7 11/16 in.) wide and 45 cm (1 ft. 5 23/32 in.) deep at the center. The trench fill contained large amounts of typical late 18th- to early 19th-century cultural refuse, the majority of which was faunal remains. The balance of the trench fill consisted of a loamy clay with mortar chunks and wood fragments. Remnants of one vertical wooden post, which measured 10 cm (3 15/16 in.) in diameter, was located. This suggests that 4 in. diameter pickets were used, consistent with the 1814 call for tender for picketing (*Kingston Gazette* 1814).

Archival data that support the interpretation of the hospital-yard picket are seen in Figures 5, 6 and 7, and include the 1815 Admiralty Plan (United Kingdom Hydrographic Office 1815), the 1815 plan by Dixon (Dixon 1815), and the 1816 plan by Nicolls (Nicolls 1816). All of these clearly indicate the north hospital picket in a consistent manner and location. Using a number of physical landmarks, archaeological remains, and extant structures, the position is consistent with that found archaeologically. Two other plans, one by Vidal, Renny, and Bayfield (1816) (FIG. 3) and the other by Ford (1837), along with Commodore Owen's 1815 letter (previously referenced) regarding the ground to the north of the hospital (Owen

1815), illustrate the extension northward of the hospital picket. This second northern boundary of the Naval Hospital yard was also located during the 2009 investigations (Bazely and Dales 2010). Measuring from the 1815 and 1816 plans, it was determined to be 90–100 ft. (27.43–30.48 m) farther north. The archaeology located it at 92 ft. (28.04 m) north, illustrating the accuracy of the historical plans.

#### **Barracks ca. 1813–1840s**

The barracks and canteen buildings on the hill outside the dockyard gate were found to have wooden sills that were laid on the flat bedrock. During the 2004 investigations a demolished chimney base was located (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010). A quantity of chimney brick had been dumped into a depression cut into bedrock. Northwest of this area an intact chimney base was also discovered (FIG. 15). There a shallow cellar pit adjacent to the chimney base contained several carpenters' and shipwrights' tools, ranging from a square to a chisel. Carpentry and potential shipbuilding-related artifacts were found over

this whole area and include the brass hinge of a folding ruler, drill bits, a wedge, a hammerhead, and a marlinspike.

A possible sill trench for a building was found east of the intact chimney base, but no associated trench was identified on the west side of the chimney base. This trench was, however, filled in the late 1820s before the building likely to have stood there was demolished. The trench pitched gently toward the east and Navy Bay, and may have been a drain or, alternatively, may have been dug for a picket fence. The southern end was filled with subsoil and rock, and the odd artifact, including several liquor-bottle bases, mammal bone, and two brass spigots—likely for rum casks.

Two hundred coins were excavated from the area. The majority were Canadian halfpenny tokens, but a number of British halfpennies from the 1770s and some state tokens were also recovered, as well as an American large cent. A dozen small, Spanish silver coins were found, many cut like pistareens. The most interesting and unusual coin-related find was made north of the demolished chimney base



Figure 15. Intact barracks chimney base (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010).



and west of the trench; a stack of four silver coins: three Spanish silver dollars dated 1797, 1802, and 1805, and a British three-shilling coin dated 1811. This small fortune was likely stashed under the floorboards of the barrack building related to the demolished chimney base and never recovered by the owner. Perhaps he was one of the soldiers that took part in the attack on Sackets Harbor in 1813 and did not return to the dockyard to claim his possessions. Later in the 1840s, as the buildings were demolished, the decayed purse that held the coins would have been inconspicuous among the general refuse of the site. Eventually it was covered over with debris and fill. Another 1806 Spanish silver dollar was found close by, in the refuse-rich fill within the trench only a few meters away.

To the east of the trench, roughly in line with the chimney base, was a pit cut a meter into subsoil and the underlying limestone bedrock (FIG. 16). The pit measured 3 m in diameter and was filled with stones, ash, and soil, along with

an incredible array of 1812 to 1820s artifacts. It was interpreted as the cess- or privy pit for the adjacent barracks. The 1815 Admiralty Plan (United Kingdom Hydrographic Office 1815) notes a "Canteen," and the 1816 plan (Vidal, Renny, and Bayfield 1816) identifies this structure as "Workmen's Quarters" (FIGS. 3, 5 and 6). The later 1838 *Sketch Showing the Proposed Site of the Ordnance Establishment at Kingston* (Library and Archives Canada 1838) indicates the structure as "Officers' Qrs," while the 1837 plan (Ford 1837) and accompanying report (National Archives Public Records Office 1837) indicates "Old Barracks." Dozens of broken pearlware and creamware dishes, including large tureens and matching tableware and tea ware sets, chamber pots, and some kitchen ceramics, were recovered. Glass tableware included a variety of stemware, tumblers, and decanter bases and stoppers. Hundreds of bones (including three articulated puppy skeletons), two padlocks, another cask spigot, and a seemingly never-ending stream of liquor bottles were also pulled



Figure 16. Cesspit cut into bedrock for the barracks/officers' quarters (Bazely, Curtis et al. 2010).



from this pit. Gilt buttons of the 10th Royal Veteran Battalion and Royal Navy, as well as a gilt, braided epaulette, were also recovered. In general, the material is representative of a domestic and military use, reflecting high-end items more consistent with officers, rather than rank and file.

### The Guardhouse

The dockyard was closely monitored during the war period to ensure that spies could not gather information or facilitate attack, and that materials were not stolen (Mecredy 1982: 53). It is therefore logical that a guardhouse was used as a control point at the entrance to the dockyard facility. The extant stone guardhouse at the dockyard gate (FIG. 2) has long been thought of as an immediate-postwar structure of ca. 1816–1819, a result of the Royal Navy building program under Commissioner Barrie (Berry and Bazely 2005: 3; Parks Canada 2012a, 2012b). However, some local scholars have suggested that it was present by the end of the war (Brock 1968: 6), and this has led to a common interpretation of the guardhouse at the entrance to the dockyard as a late-war to immediate-postwar structure associated with the adjacent stone wall of the dockyard. Various maps and plans from 1815 (Dixon 1815; United Kingdom Hydrographic Office 1815) and 1816 (Nicolls 1816; Vidal, Renny, and Bayfield 1816) depict a number of buildings in this location (FIGS. 3, 5, 6 and 7). It was thus assumed that two of these were the same structures present today. It was only during excavations around the perimeter of the guardhouse in 2005 that it was noted there was no early 19th-century material present (Berry and Bazely 2005: 11–26). This was an unexpected occurrence, given that just a few meters to the north in the previous year large War of 1812–period deposits were encountered. In fact, all the artifacts from the guardhouse excavations were determined to be post-1830, suggesting there had been a thorough clean-up around the exterior. Again, the 1837 plan and key (Ford 1837; National Archives Public Records Office 1837) shed light, clearly indicating that the structures in that area were of frame construction. This archival detail confirmed that the extant stone guardhouse is considerably later than thought, being post-1837 and, therefore, part of the Upper Canada Rebellion or later building

phase, and not an immediate post-War of 1812 structure. This is confirmed in the Commemorative Integrity Statement for Kingston Navy Yard and Point Frederick Buildings National Historic Sites (Parks Canada 2012a, 2012b).

### Conclusion

Excavations on the peninsula of Point Frederick will continue, as the Royal Military College of Canada maintains its role within the Canadian military, and it is likely that more War of 1812–period structures and occupation deposits will be uncovered. Thus far, the structural remains and associated deposits, relating to the War of 1812 period, uncovered across the Point Frederick Peninsula consist of portions of three shanties; the barracks and officers' quarters and associated cellar pits; the Naval Hospital and picket fence; artillery barracks; blockhouse; at least 20 encampment fires; a cesspit; and chimney bases, along with numerous other pits, ditches, roads, and paths. An enormous amount of archival research has now been added to the wealth of data compiled by Richard Preston in the 1950s and long-time RMC Museum Curator Ross McKenzie, primarily the result of Earl Moorhead's (2004) work on the large-scale mitigation project for the new dormitory, now known as Fort Brant. Discoveries of previously unknown depictions, such as the painting by Irvine and detailed plans of the dockyard in 1815 and 1837, have unraveled longstanding interpretations very much cast in stone.

The subterranean remains, which include the fill in cellar pits, a cesspit, and fire pits, as well as ditches, indicate that the associated barrack buildings and probable officers' quarters date between ca. 1812 and the mid-1840s. Material culture, although dominated by domestic items, gives strong support to the carpentry activities of the occupants and the naval and military associations of the personnel. The most intensive use of the structures and the adjacent areas was during the War of 1812 period and immediately after the war, up to the first formal closure of the dockyard in 1834. The remains of individual shanties are much more ephemeral, although widespread, and support the temporary nature of their construction. The material culture associated with Shanties 1 and 3, and archival documentation confirm a date of use between

ca. 1814 and 1820. Given the number of shanties documented on the peninsula, there is a strong likelihood that evidence of more shanties may be discovered during future excavations. New archival material, as well as archaeology, has proved that the large limestone structure known as the current Commandant's Residence was constructed in ca. 1820 as the Surgeon's Quarters. A wooden structure on a stone foundation served as the Naval Hospital, in existence by 1813 and until the 1840s, and located to the northwest of the Surgeon's Quarters. It is now clear that no buildings remain extant from the War of 1812 period at Point Frederick, and no stone structures were in existence at the end of the war. Rather, a series of stone buildings was erected after the war during the tenure of Commissioner Barrie, including the stone storehouse known today as the Stone Frigate; the stone Surgeon's Quarters, which, much altered and enlarged, is now the Commandant's Residence; and the no-longer-extant row of 16 stone cottages for naval artificers.

The archaeological investigations on the site of Point Frederick have made it possible to assemble much more of the story of Kingston's navy yard. It is also clear that the archival and archaeological data must function together in a way beneficial to the historian and archaeologist. Analysis and interpretation of the material recovered during projects spanning 2001 to 2009 has provided valuable data on the domestic life of the Royal Navy and civilian artificers who served the Kingston Naval Dockyards during the War of 1812 and subsequent years, until their closure in 1853. Continued archival research and archaeological investigation at Point Frederick will, no doubt, fill in more gaps and possibly provide a few more surprises.

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