

# The Fife and Drum

The Newsletter of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common

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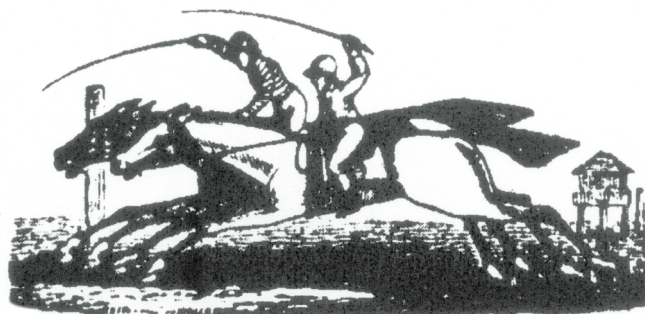


## Jockeys Up at the Garrison Common

by David Roberts

By the end of the 18th century, around the west end of Lake Ontario, horses were commonplace in agriculture, transportation, recreation, and military life. Horse racing in its many forms—trotting, flat racing, jumping, and fox hunting—was a favourite recreation of British officers stationed in Upper Canada, as was winter sleighing. At Niagara's Fort George, a hotbed for racing as early as the 1790s, simple straight races evolved in the years after the War of 1812-14 into grand social and sporting events, complete with regimental bands, banquets, and dandies, in addition to the time-honoured fixtures of betting and horse dealing. In the early newspapers of both Niagara and York (Toronto), advertisements for lost horses, strays, steeds for sale, and saddlery were frequent. Throughout the countryside in the 1810s and 1820s riders paired with horses of all kinds, with prizes ranging from sizable purses to lumber and other desirable commodities.

Informal racing and carriage riding at York had probably begun in the 1790s on a hard-sand stretch on Toronto Island (then connected to the mainland), but the rural surrounds and flat, 1,000-acre Garrison Common of Fort York were equally suitable for many sports. A good number of the town's finest horses were owned by its officers. In 1801 a fox hunt was run out of the garrison, and an island race pitted the horses of a Mr McNabb and a Sergeant Purvis. War brought racing to a halt; when it resumed at York is uncertain, but the tandem and garrison racing clubs founded about 1818 in Quebec City provided worthy models, as did the organized races in Montreal



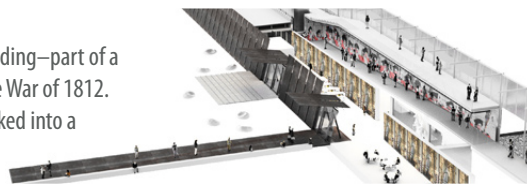
This decorative type from a Toronto newspaper of the 1840s was often used at the head of racing announcements. Though small in scale, it includes a finishing post and stewards' tower. (Credit: Toronto Public Library)

and La Prairie in the early 1820s. Closer to York, horses were being moved around Lake Ontario for sale, breeding, and racing. Historian Louis E. Cauz emphasizes the indebtedness to officers at Niagara and York who brought in thoroughbreds, many from the United States. In 1819, at York's first annual fair, a race was run on Wellington Street. Early accounts also record highly popular races from Small's Corner at King and Berkeley into the market-place; miller and court clerk Charles C. Small was an avid horse racer. (Races along public highways would later be prohibited in several counties in Upper Canada.)

Inaugurated in 1827, the York Races mark the beginning of documented, organized racing at York. Newspapers provide virtually our only source of information. On 20 October 1827 the *U. E. Loyalist*, in its news of "The Turf," reported that the "Officers of the 68th Regt. have prepared a Race Course, on

On December 16 *Canadian Architect* magazine announced that the Fort York Visitor Centre has been recognized with one of its Awards of Excellence for 2011.

Designed in joint venture by Patkau Architects of Vancouver and Kearns Mancini of Toronto, the building—part of a \$23 million upgrading of Toronto's birthplace—will start construction during the Bicentennial of the War of 1812. It will sit just outside the gates to the ramparts of the fort, within the National Historic Site and tucked into a slope in the ground that was once a bank on the shore of Lake Ontario.



the grounds attached to the York Garrison. We understand that a match Race takes place on Monday next at noon, and that several Horses will be entered for Races which are to be run, on the Monday following. There will be no objection we believe to allow any individuals the benefit of the Course for training Horses." The 68th Foot had been in garrison in 1819-22 and then from 1826, and clearly its officers wanted to race their horses. The course itself, likely a straight one, ran from Fort York to the area later occupied by the new fort, a distance of about three-quarters of a mile; there were no doubt end markers for turning.

Whatever the reception to the new course in 1827, the public response to spring and fall races the following year was enthusiastic. On 25 June 1828 the *Colonial Advocate* reported that a "Town Purse of 40 dollars, the owner of each Horse paying 2 dollars entrance, was run on Tuesday last on the Garrison Race Course. Three horses started, and was won after a fine contested race by Dr. McCague's Diamond." The races of October 6, 8, and 10 were covered by both the *Colonial Advocate* and, in greater detail, the *Canadian Freeman*. The *Advocate*, perhaps with some exaggeration, noted that "half the people of York" turned out on opening day. The excitement was due in good part too, Edith Firth notes, to the zeal of the officers and the provision of substantial purses, one by Lieutenant Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland. Among the horse owners were iron-founder Frederick R. Dutcher, impulsive Irish physician James McCague, and Lieutenant Richardson William Huey of the 68th, while a Mr Nelles came from the Head of the Lake (around Hamilton Harbour) and a Mr Davis from Stoney Creek. The October races were conducted as a form of selling match, whereby, "according to the rules of the managers," winners had to be sold on the course if interested parties came forward within two hours. Though such matches were disappearing from the British scene and were disparaged by the *Freeman*, the York Races had quickly established themselves as a premier event, with entrants from around the lake, weigh-ins for riders, and jockeys and horses from the United States. Dutcher's Hornet, a winning favourite, was Yankee-bred. This superiority of American riders and mounts also piqued the *Freeman*: "We have not horses here to match them," it ranted, "and we must be the losers, at least in bets."

Though the York Races were likely held annually into the 1830s, it is difficult to find annual coverage in surviving newspapers, although advertisements for horses and saddlers were common. The fall running of 1833 on the "Garrison Course" was late, 29-30 October, with touches of snow and one and two-mile heats for four prizes: the Trail Stakes and the York Purse on day one, and the Garrison Plate and the Inn-keepers' Purse on day two. The *Canadian Correspondent* described a vibrant event, with no fewer than 13 owners and a large crowd. Overseen by six stewards, among them Sheriff (and races treasurer) William Botsford Jarvis and Captain Warren and Lieutenant Dames of the 66th Foot, then stationed at the fort, the races were regulated to avoid

earlier complaints. The Trial Stakes were restricted to horses bred in Upper Canada, all entrants were obliged to subscribe at least £1 5s, a winner had to pay 10s towards the expenses of the course, stray dogs on the course would be shot, and riders were obliged to wear "full jockey style." One can picture a carnival-like event on the common, with townsfolk, visitors, grooms, jocks, breeders, bookmakers, hawkers, and soldiers all mingling on the chilly field.

Racing on the Garrison Common proceeded into the late 1830s with little prospect of change. In 1836 John Maitland, a lieutenant in the 4th Battalion of York militia, became secretary of the races and collected subscriptions, which totalled £60 for the year. The scene soon moved westwards, however, to the Simcoe Chase course of miller-distiller John Scarlett. The first meeting there took place in September 1837. Fort York had become preoccupied with the civil unrest of 1837-38, which likely prohibited racing within range of guns and musters, and the planning of a new fort (Stanley Barracks) to bolster the defences.

Thus ended horse racing on the Common, though the sound of pounding hoofs there would be prominent for many more years. Both the Garrison course and the York Races remain important as the cradle of organized horse racing in Toronto.

*A former editor and historian with the Dictionary of Canadian Biography/Dictionnaire biographique du Canada, David Roberts lives in Scarborough.*

## The Friends of Fort York have appointed Palatine Hills Estate Winery of Niagara-on-the-Lake as an Official Supplier

of its 1812-brand wines for a three-year period. Palatine's offerings of VQA Chardonnay and Merlot Cabernet wines are sold in select LCBO outlets throughout the Greater Toronto area. Each bottle sold in this market will give rise to a donation by the winery to the Friends. These monies will be used to support the Guard and other initiatives at the fort. A similar arrangement exists between Palatine Hills and The Friends of Fort George at Niagara.



# Pike's Pikes

by Gary M. Gibson

In July 1812 Zebulon Montgomery Pike was commissioned a colonel and ordered to command the Fifteenth Infantry Regiment, then training at Greenbush across the Hudson River from Albany, New York. At that time, American infantry regiments fought in linear ranks, two men deep. Based on his reading of military history, Pike decided to experiment and created a third rank behind the first two. They would carry some unusual equipment.

Privates in the third rank were armed with a flintlock musket with a barrel about 46 cm (18 inches) shorter than the standard musket and, to replace the usual bayonet which would not fit on that musket, a sword for use in close-quarters combat. The reduction in firepower was offset, so Pike believed, by providing these men with a pike. These pikes were a 3.7 metre (12 foot) long wooden pole made from ash and tipped with a 33 cm (13-inch) iron spearhead. This type of weapon had a long history.

Derived from a simple spear, pikes had been in use for thousands of years, falling in and out of favour as the importance of cavalry on the battlefield waxed and waned. Alexander the Great's Macedonian phalanx had each man armed with a six metre (20 foot) long pike called a sarissa. Pikes continued in use well into the 1600s both as an offensive weapon—masses of pike-armed infantry would “push” up against each other hoping the enemy would give way first—and as a defence against cavalry. A cavalryman may want to run into and over a mass of pike-armed infantry but his horse was smarter.



An American Fifteenth Infantry Regiment pikeman. The pikes were at least a meter (three feet) longer than shown here. Note the short barreled musket and the sword. (From Don Troiani's *Soldiers in America, 1754-1865*, used with permission.)

With the development of the flintlock musket, and especially the socket bayonet, pikes fell out of favour. By the 1700s they had disappeared from a European battlefield. By 1800 pikes were considered to be useless as an infantry weapon. Colonel Pike, however, felt otherwise.

In the early spring of 1813, Pike's regiment, with two of its six companies armed with pikes, travelled from Plattsburgh to Sackets Harbor. At Sackets, Pike was promoted to brigadier general, leaving the regiment under the command of Major William King.

Captain John Scott, commanding one of the Fifteenth's pike-armed companies, was enthusiastic, hoping to meet “the 49th British Regt. on some plain.” He believed the additional length

would be effective when “we charge bayonet.” So far no record has been found describing what Major King thought of Pike's pikes, but as the regiment was to participate in the American raid on York barely a month later, there was no time to consider any change in weaponry. By 23 April 1813, 450 men of the Fifteenth Infantry were on board the corvette *Madison* and the schooner-gunboat *Governor Tompkins* ready to sail for York. The pike-armed men, about 150, carried their pikes on board with them.

On their arrival at York, the men disembarked into small boats and were rowed ashore. With many of these men probably seasick from the rough spring sailing, getting themselves into those boats would have been difficult enough, but the men who also had to carry their pikes had a much harder time.

Once on shore the uselessness of these pikes in combat, and especially combat in a wooded area, quickly became apparent. Even after considering the lighter weight of the short barrel musket and the absence of a bayonet, carrying the pike and a sword added about 5½ kg (twelve pounds) to the soldier's load. Furthermore, participating in a “bayonet” charge while carrying a long pike was not an effective use of that weapon even in its European prime in the 1500s. Also, the pike was too long and too heavy to be thrown like a spear. Colonel Cromwell Pearce, commanding the American Sixteenth Infantry at York, made the understated observation that Pike's pikes were “found not to answer the purposes anticipated.”

So far nothing from Pike himself has emerged that justifies arming one-third of his regiment with an ineffective and obsolete weapon. So long as the enemy remained some distance away from the pike-armed men those weapons were totally useless. Presumably they would then drop their pikes and fire their muskets. Accuracy and range, however, was not great even with the regular musket and would be worse with the short barreled version. Pikes would be useful in repelling a cavalry attack, but cavalry (as opposed to dragoons or mounted infantry) was never used in combat by either side during the War of 1812.



Zebulon Montgomery Pike from a mural at Flower Memorial Library, Watertown, NY. (Photo by the author.)

Unfortunately Pike was mortally wounded during the raid. With their sponsor now dead, it is almost certain that those pikes, or most of them, never arrived at Niagara along with the Fifteenth Infantry in early May. There is no record that they were present during the attack on Fort George at the end of that month. Many might have been dropped quietly overboard while sailing to Niagara or simply left at York.

There is no record that pikes were ever used again by an American regular army infantry regiment.

*Dr. Gary Gibson of Sackets Harbor, NY, is a vice president of an Internet service company and a distinguished historian of the naval war of 1812 on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence. He is a trustee of the Sackets Harbor Battlefield Alliance and a director of the Sackets Harbor Area Cultural Preservation Foundation.*

## Bicentennial Timeline

During the next three years the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 will be a matchless opportunity to get to know better the history of our province and country. Doubtless the major events in the conflict will get wide attention, but smaller things by which individual lives were measured may well pass unnoticed because they lie buried within surviving newspapers, handwritten letters, and diaries. The editors of *Fife & Drum*, therefore, propose to offer from now 'til 2015 glimpses into the passing quarters 200 years ago. We start with January to March, 1812:

- Jan. 1** In the *York Gazette*: "The regular Post, which has now commenced, from Lower Canada through to this place and Niagara once a fortnight, will be continued all the Year (and to Sandwich for six months.)"
- Jan. 10** The annual meeting of subscribers to the Toronto Library was held at 12:00 noon in the Library's room in Elmsley House, York. Annual subscription \$4. (*York Gazette*)
- Jan. 16** "For our part, not as individuals inhabiting the probable scite of war, but as subjects of the British Empire, as wishing to perpetuate the connexion between this country and Great Britain, we wish for war now." (*Quebec Gazette/La Gazette de Quebec*)
- Jan. 23** A colleague in Quebec to Brock: "Fortunate you, that are in a milder climate, for we are suffering dreadfully from excessive cold. By your description of your pastime in shooting wild pigeons, you certainly possess a very great advantage over us in these respects."
- Jan. 24** For the past two weeks more snow has fallen in the neighbourhood of York than anyone has seen before. "The Snow is considered as a rich coat of manure by our Farmers generally." (*York Gazette*)
- Jan. 29** Letter to editor of *York Gazette* regretting town does not support yet a hairdresser or a barber.
- Feb. 3** Major General Isaac Brock in addressing the opening of the Parliament for Upper Canada: "We wish and hope for peace, but it is nevertheless our duty to be prepared for War."
- Feb. 22** Anne Powell to her brother in New York City: "Amusements . . . have been unusually frequent this Winter. Pic Nics & assemblys employ alternate Thursdays; the former I always join, the latter sometimes; the Genl. [Brock] kindly attends whenever I go that I may have a good Rubber; he gives a Ball on Monday." (Powell Papers, TPL)
- Feb. 24** Brock to the Chief Justice: "I rejoice that Doctor Strachan has consented to come to the Capital. . . every possible indulgence will be extended to enable him to repair to York in the most convenient manner."
- Mar. 2** York's population was exactly seven hundred: 417 were males, 284 females, and 305 under 16 years of age. Another 745 people lived nearby in York Township. (List of Inhabitants)
- Mar. 17** The editor of the *Kingston Gazette* remarked that with passage by both houses of the Militia Act "all from the age of 18 to 45, will have to turn out six days in each month to drill."

## What the Friends of Fort York Do: Our Accomplishments for 2011

- invited former members of Fort York Management Board to join us after Council stopped appointing advisory boards for city museums; in the process we secured three new directors.
- expended \$160,000 on a Guard and Drum Squad of 28 young men and women to animate the site. Once again, they participated and won awards on CNE Warriors' Day and in re-enactments at Fort George, Niagara.
- worked with the fort staff to establish a kitchen garden in the northwest bastion and with over 80 volunteers who tend 38 raised beds in the community food garden on the north ramparts.
- published a quarterly newsletter, *Fife & Drum*, and sent it by e-mail to almost 3000 addresses. Issues included pieces on horseracing and music and at the fort, the Smith lumber mill (now co-op housing) at Strachan and Wellington, book reviews on Isaac Brock and Stanley Barracks.
- provided as in other years two or three days of volunteer time weekly to organizing the growing collections of books, files, and images in the fort's research centre.
- ran three full-page ads supporting the fort and 1812 Bicentennial in award-winning *Spacing* magazine.
- held our 13th annual Georgian Dinner where Lt-Gen. Jonathon Riley, Master of UK's Royal Armouries, proposed a toast to Isaac Brock, the subject of his latest book.
- successfully urged Council to exempt Fort York from a study to combine local museums with Heritage Toronto and Preservation Services branch based on the fort's size and significance.
- saw seven years' work bear fruit when title to Victoria Memorial Square was transferred from the Government of Canada to the City, and landscaping of the park completed.
- held a Directors' Dinner for those closely connected with the Friends and the fort.
- put eight more images in process to decorate the walls of the Assembly Room, Blue Barracks.
- held 11 monthly board meetings. One director at least, often more, attended every special event and function held at the fort.
- continued to operate parking concessions concurrent with major events at Exhibition Place.
- overcame problems in securing an acceptable design for our website, then refocused our efforts in concert with a new designer.
- sponsored six events in the Parler Fort series and helped plan a new series of notices in the *Toronto Star* advertising each event.
- co-sponsored two ceremonies where up to 40 people at each received Canadian citizenship.

*News From*

# *The Birthplace of Toronto*

*Contributions from the Staff at the Fort*

## Administrator's Report

*by David O'Hara, Site Administrator*

It was welcome news when we heard that the **Fort York Visitor Centre, designed by Patkau Architects of Vancouver and Kearns Mancini Architects of Toronto**, had been awarded a 2011 *Canadian Architect* Award of Excellence. Initiated in 1968, Canadian Architect's program is to evaluate projects that are in the process of being built, or are about to be built. By evaluating unfinished concepts and projects, the idea is that the jury will have assessed the merits of each submission based on a purer set of architecture and urban design ideas. Submissions are judged on their response to the client's program, site, geographic and social context, physical organization, form, structure, materials, and environmental features.

Every year, a notable jury of distinguished architects from across Canada and abroad is assembled. This year the jury, which included Peter Sampson (Principal, Peter Sampson Architecture in Winnipeg), Walter Francl (Principal, Walter Francl Architecture in Vancouver), and Diarmuid Nash (Partner, Moriyama & Teshima Architects in Toronto), reviewed a near-record number of submissions from across Canada, and selected a total of 8 Awards of Excellence, 4 Awards of Merit, and 2 Student Awards for projects in locations ranging from Vancouver to Halifax to the Arctic Circle. Each of the winning projects will be featured in the December issue of *Canadian Architect*.

Co-winners in the Award of Excellence category include Zeidler Partnership Architects / Snøhetta for *Ryerson University Student Learning Centre, Toronto, Ontario*; Saucier + Perrotte / HCMA Architectes for the *Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences/CDRD, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia*; Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects, in association with Smith Carter Architects & Engineers for the *Remai Art Gallery of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan*; MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects Limited for *Two Hulls House, Nova Scotia*; gh3 for *Stormwater Quality Facility SWQF, Toronto, Ontario*; Williamson Chong Architects for *Abbey Gardens, Haliburton, Ontario*; and B+H Bunting Coady for *West Coast Middle School, Anmore, British Columbia*.

While the building design of the Visitor Centre continues to win rave reviews, its construction has been delayed. When

building tenders were received after the recent 'Request for Quotations' they were much higher than anticipated. City staff and the project management/design team are currently working closely with all stakeholders to prepare the project for re-tender as early as possible in 2012. This means that the Visitor Centre will be completed in 2013 to open during the Bicentennial, as planned. The project continues to have the full support of all levels of government, the Fort York Foundation, and other stakeholders.

On 'The Common' we can report that we have successfully recaptured over two acres of original battlefield with the recent removal of the Garrison Tree Nursery. On December 5th, Quartz Restoration, our landscape contractor, arrived on-site to begin removing the fencing and hedge, and grading the area for a Spring phase of work when the weather is better for seeding/sod. The addition of this parcel of land will have a tremendously positive impact on the site, providing additional space for programming and events while physically and visually connecting the walled fort with the Common and military burial ground to the west. <http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=10150514069471233>

Another update relates to the Fort York Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge, which was approved at City Council on November 29-30, when staff reported on a number of alternative, lower cost options for the bridge along with funding possibilities. Of the five options, ranging in cost from \$11.2 million to \$19.7 million, three will be looked at in greater detail before a final approach is selected. Staff also reported on the Master Planning process for the Ordnance Triangle lands north of Fort York, being undertaken by Build Toronto, where it is expected that the majority of Section 37 and other development-related funding will be identified to fund the bridge.

On the programming front, our 2012 season kicks off with Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball: Queen Charlotte Salutes Scotland on January 21 and on February 8 Senior College of the University of Toronto presents 'From the Ashes of War, the Birth of a Nation' - a one-day exploration of 1812-inspired literature and music, the battle at Fort York, the participation of women, and the contribution of Aboriginal peoples. See Upcoming Events on page 8 below and on our website for details.

# Patrick Hartney: An Exemplary Barrack Master

by *Chris Laverton*

Details of Patrick Hartney's early life remain somewhat a mystery. He was born in King's County, Ireland, in 1754 or 1764, and enlisted as a soldier in His Majesty's 60th (Royal American) Regiment of Foot about 1779. Later he transferred to the 6th Foot (1st Royal Warwickshire). His service history in Canada is unknown, but he was certainly in Kingston in July 1788 when his first child was baptized at St. George's Anglican Church there.

By the summer of 1805 his regiment was under orders to return home to England, but Hartney did not accompany it. Earlier that year he accepted the appointment of assistant barrack master at York in the Civil Branch of the Storekeeper General's Department. He was the second to hold the situation at that post. He and his family arrived at York from Kingston on 8 November 1805.

The duties of a barrack master were several, but his primary responsibilities were to monitor the physical condition of the various government buildings at his particular post, and maintain the "King's Stores" under his charge. This meant keeping an eye not only on the structures themselves—the condition of the ceilings, walls, floors, windows and doors, the paintwork/whitewash, etc.—but also the "Utensils" provided within them (berths, bedding, tables, forms, arms and accoutrement racks, cooking pots, wash, water, and urine tubs, fireplace implements, posted regulations and orders, and so on.) Most having formerly been soldiers themselves, barrack masters were well acquainted with the habits and tendencies of the common soldier.

Soldiers were very often poor "tenants," and rarely left a barrack in the same condition as they had found it. With the constant rotation of troops from one post to another, it was the job of the barrack master to record the damages and deficiencies, charge the commanding officer of the regiment or detachment for it accordingly, and prepare the barracks for the new arrivals.

In 1813, the war had made the usual scarcity of specie in Upper Canada particularly acute, and Hartney, who was having difficulty honouring his drafts, could not even muster enough currency with which to pay the washerwoman who laundered the barrack bedding, nor the man who swept the chimneys at the garrison. As might be expected, the barrack master was required to maintain meticulous records of all such transactions which, for the most part, Hartney managed to do very well over the course of his long career. Happily, many of his reports from York survive amongst the millions of documents pertaining to the British army in Canada as part of Record Group 8 series at Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

Hartney's family had grown to seven children by 1812 and he was clearly finding it difficult to make ends meet.

Sometime in June that year he gained some relief when his son Edward was appointed to work in his office. A decade later his son John also joined his staff as Issuer of Stores, replacing an unreliable fellow who absented himself without leave. Lieutenant Governor Maitland in assenting to John's appointment noted that, "...Mr. Patrick Hartney has now served His Majesty nearly 43 years: 26 years of that period (16 of which he held the rank of Serjeant), he served in the 6th Regiment of Foot [sic]; and for 17 years he has been in charge of the Barrack Department at York. — He has a Wife and large family to maintain."

When Commodore Isaac Chauncey's fleet appeared off York, on 26 April 1813, it became apparent that the long-awaited American attack was imminent. Ever the old soldier, Hartney voluntarily attached himself to the Grenadier Company of the 8th Regt., which marched to oppose the attack. Firing on the troops and boatmen as they landed on the beach, Hartney received no fewer than three gunshot wounds in quick succession, one ball perforating his right leg, another embedding itself in his right thigh, while the third tore the skin off his left thigh. In a way, he was lucky—other elderly civilian volunteers, such as Donald McLean, were killed. Hartney was carried off through the woods in the retreat to the garrison, and the severity of the lower wound to his right leg later resulted in its amputation at the knee.

Sometime in the same year Hartney's beloved wife of many years, Ann, died leaving him a widower. Having such a large family to care for, Patrick remarried quickly. On 12 January 1814, the Reverend John Strachan officiated at his wedding to Mary Marshall, of the town of York.

By 1829, clearly feeling his advanced age, Hartney requested permission to retire. Sadly, as his personal vitality had diminished, so too had the condition of many of the buildings at the garrison which he'd superintended for so many years. Owing to constant neglect these had reportedly become by May of 1829 "too dilapidated for repair." Patrick Hartney officially retired as Barrack Master on 14 August 1829, after twenty-four years of service to His Majesty in that capacity. He died at York sometime in 1836, and was buried at the cemetery of St. James Anglican Church.

Not only did Patrick Hartney manage to raise himself up from his humble origins, but he went on to distinguish himself in an era when polite British society considered the Irish a separate and quite inferior race, unworthy of the public trust. His achievement is perhaps all the more remarkable considering it occurred during an era when mediocrity, incompetence, and corruption pervaded all corners of the various military departments in the Canadas. Perhaps his most enduring legacy remains his stalwart defiance of all expectations in both stereotypes, by quietly and conscientiously fulfilling his private and professional duties as best he knew how, even under the most trying of circumstances. His strength of character, bravery, and resilience in the face of adversity remains an inspiring example.

*Chris Laverton, on the Staff of Toronto Culture, worked as an interpreter at Fort York from 1983 to 1986.*

# William Chewett's War of 1812 Orderly Book: A Historian Welcomes a Gift to the Fort

by Richard Gerrard

## *We should begin with the question, what's an 'orderly book'?*

An 'orderly book,' more accurately a Regimental Order Book, is book number 2 of the 15 required under the British Army's 1811 Regulations for managing the internal affairs of a regiment.

This example is a small, brown, leather-bound notebook (22.9 x 17.8 cm) of 78 pages filled with manuscript entries in several hands recording orders issued to the York Militia during the War of 1812. Its back cover is conveniently labelled, "Orderly Book / 3r Regmt / York Militia / 1814".

## *Why is this document important?*

Since it contains copies of various Regimental Orders, Garrison Orders, District General Orders, and Garrison After Orders it provides a significant level of detail about the day-to-day operation at the York garrison and shows the militia's working relationship with the other units serving at York.

Entries are divided into two distinct periods: 27 April to 19 October 1812 and 7 July 1814 to 10 June 1815. The first section covers the period from the raising of the flank companies of the Upper Canada Militia to just after the Battle of Queenston Heights. It begins again 7 July 1814, two days after the Battle of Chippewa, and ends on 7 July 1814.

The gap in the dates is an interesting feature of the book's material form. Finding it only partially filled when the last entry was recorded in 1812, someone decided to make use of the blank space at the back of the book by turning it over and making it the front for the entries beginning in July 1814. The recorders continued to fill the book until they ran into the earlier text and were forced to stop.

## *How do we know this is William Chewett's book?*

To be honest we don't know for sure. His signature is nowhere inside. However there is good circumstantial evidence. First, both sections of the book are titled "Regimental Orders, by Lt. Colonel Chewett commanding the 3rd Regiment of York Militia" but since every captain

commanding a company was required to keep an orderly book, it is possible that it belonged to one of the eight captains to serve with the regiment. Second, the entries are in several hands and I think this is a strong indication that we have the regiment's book, not that of a specific company officer whose personal property would be in only one hand. Finally, its provenance shows that it remained with the Chewett family, even after they moved to the UK about 1910. The book returned to Canada in the 1990s when it was passed to the donor's family.

## *How rare is it?*

It is unique. There must have been another Regimental Order Book covering the period from 20 October 1812 to 6 July 1814 but it is unlikely that it survives. Of at least eight Company Order Books there is only evidence for two: a partial transcription of Captain Samuel Ridout's in the Library and Archives Canada collection and an intriguing entry in Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto* indicating that Captain Stephen Heward's book may have existed as late as 1894.

Interestingly, the Chewett book (but not its location) was known before it was acquired by the fort. A typescript is held in the Baldwin Room at the Toronto Public Library. However, after comparison with the original we can see that the typescript is both incomplete and flawed. Realizing this, we have begun a project to produce an illustrated digital transcription of this rare document.

Thanks to the generous gift of Mr Arthur Beatty (6th generation descendant of William Chewett), the Orderly Book of the 3rd Regiment of York Militia joins the 1813 Regimental Colours (*Fife & Drum*, July 2007) in Fort York's collection.

*Richard Gerrard holds the post of Historian, War of 1812 Bicentennial, on Toronto Culture's staff.*



*Candidates for Canadian citizenship take their oaths of allegiance at a ceremony on November 10, one of two held at Fort York annually. (Credit: Photo by City of Toronto staff photographer)*



*Some of the Fort York Gardeners who tend the 38 raised beds on the fort's north ramparts stand in front of their new tool shed, built with the aid of a grant from Walmart-Evergreen to look like one of the many 'necessaries' that once dotted the site. It will be whitewashed in the Spring.  
(Credit: Photo by Mark D'Aguiar)*

*The largest crowd in years, estimated at 650-700 people, attended the Remembrance Day service for 2011 at Fort York's Strachan Avenue Military cemetery.  
(Credit: Photo by Andrew Stewart)*



# 2012 | Upcoming Events Historic Fort York

*Compiled by Nawfal Sheikh*

## JANUARY

### Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball: Queen Charlotte Salutes Scotland Sat. January 21, 1 to 10:30 pm

Learn the customs of the Georgians and live like royalty for a day! Enjoy an afternoon dance demonstration and workshop; attend an illustrated talk about the period; then sit down for an elegant Georgian-inspired buffet dinner and an evening ball with live musicians. Costumes encouraged!

*Pre-registration required 416-392-6907 x 221*

*Full day: \$88.50 + tax; afternoon workshop and speaker: \$26.55 + tax; dinner and ball: \$66.37 + tax.*

## FEBRUARY

### From the Ashes of War, the Birth of a Nation Wed. February 8, 9 am to 5 pm

Presented by Senior College of the University of Toronto and Fort York National Historic Site, this one-day event will explore the literature and music inspired by the War of 1812, the battle at York, the participation of women, and the contribution of Aboriginal peoples. Throughout the day guests will be treated to 1812 food and ambiance while hearing lectures and discussions from leading historians. A concluding panel of scholars will discuss the significance of the war for Canada, for the United States, and for the world.

*Tickets \$35, available at [www.uofttix.ca](http://www.uofttix.ca) (<http://www.uofttix.ca/>)*

### Family Day

#### Mon. February 20, 11 am to 4:30 pm

Explore Toronto's diverse and exciting history at Fort York. Visit the historic kitchen and sample some delicious, traditional baking from the hearth. Hot chocolate and a roaring fire will make this a heartwarming and memorable visit.

*Regular admission.*

### Mad for Marmalade, Crazy for Citron! Sat. February 25, 10 am to 3:30 pm

Join Fort York National Historic Site in partnership with the Culinary Historians of Canada for our fourth annual celebration of marmalade. Enjoy a marmalade themed workshop, lunch, and tastings, or enter the Marmalade Competition. Your ticket includes a tour of Fort York.

*Pre-registration is advised. For more information please call 416-392-6907 x 225 or to register x 221.*

## MARCH

### March through Time

#### Mon. to Fri. March 12 to 16, 10 am to 3 pm

Bring the kids down to the fort during March Break for a variety of fun-filled activities. Children can dress up, try cooking in the historic kitchen, or drill like an 1812 soldier. There are lots of timed and ongoing activities to make an educational day fun or the whole family. Recommended for ages 3-12.

*Admission\* \$7.62/adults, \$2.85/child, \$3.81/youth & senior, FREE 3 and under (\*all prices plus HST).*

### Parler Fort: Exploring Toronto's Past, Present, and Future March (date TBD), 7 pm

This ongoing speaker series will delve into matters facing Toronto today and those that will arise in the future. What can we as a city learn from our shared past? Speakers from a variety of backgrounds will discuss and debate the tough questions facing our urban environment. Check the Fort York website for full event listings and speakers.

*Pre-registration encouraged 416-392-6907 x 221.*

*Admission \$8.85 + tax, Students admitted FREE*

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**TORONTO Culture**  
[www.toronto.ca/culture](http://www.toronto.ca/culture)



Regular admission to Fort York:  
Adult: \$8.61, Senior (65+) & Youth (13 – 18 yrs.): \$4.31, Children: \$3.23,  
Children (5 and under) FREE (all prices include HST, where applicable)