

WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to write my first President's Message. I will start with a little about myself. I am a retired public servant (Senior Project Manager) who grew up in our beautiful village of Dorchester. I moved back to New Brunswick in 2019 and live on the shore of the Northumberland Strait in Cocagne with my husband, Guy, and our two Australian Labradoodles. I am honored to volunteer for the WHS, as my family has deep roots in Dorchester. I am a direct descendent of the Keillor family and my forefathers owned the Chapman Shipyard. I look forward to leading this organization through a very charged agenda over the next months and years.

Our AGM had a great turnout and a special thank you to Gene Goodrich for stepping in at the last minute with an amazing presentation on the Memramcook Valley from the perspective of his plane's cockpit. Thanks also to Bernie Melanson and his events team for a lovely

evening and a grand opening of Keillor House. Our volunteers are what keep us going and without you we are nothing. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or joining our board of directors please let me know. We are need of a treasurer and secretary so if you have some time we would love to hear from you. (Some of us are doing double duty.) We have a bookkeeper and an accountant at the treasurer's disposal, so finances are in good hands.

The Keillor House and St. James Textile museums have had a very busy summer with a full compliment of staff. Under the management of Keegan Hiltz the museums have hosted some very interesting workshops on rug hooking and basket weaving. These workshops are very well received by the public and are great community events. We have had summer teas and the museums

are bustling with activity. We have also done some outreach to area events to promote our museums... Good job to all involved!

The Bell Inn has recovered from its small fire in the spring and we have a new commercial space rented called Peep and Keep. It is a lovely little boutique that focuses on area tourism and local artists. We hope you can visit if you already haven't had the opportunity. We have had a lot of movement within the apartments but are hoping to have everything rented by the end of September.

The Payzant-Card building is fully rented and we are negotiating a new lease with Tantramar for the library. It is a valued resource in our community and has expanded its hours and activities.

Looking to the future, we have some heavy lifting to be done to ensure

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KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM — SPECIAL EVENTS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Dinner with the Keillors-Keillor House Museum

Sept. 23 6:00 pm

Join us for a Yorkshire-inspired dining experience that you will not soon forget. Wine included. Reservations required

\$25.00

506-379-6633

www.keillorhousemuseum.com

Victorian Christmas Dinner Keillor House Museum

Nov. 25 & Dec.2: 6:30-10 pm

An elegant four-course dinner served in the glow of candlelight with crackling hearth and live music

\$75.00 (tax receipt)

Be sure to book early

506 -379-6620 Alice Folkins

www.keillorhousemuseum.com

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MUSEUM MANAGER'S REPORT

WITH OUR 2023 SEASON COMING TO A CLOSE, the summer is a blur. Having only dived into the position this past May, the learning curve has been steep. Yet, I am pleased with my own progress and see this as another successful year for the two museums. Despite also navigating new roles within the Historical Society, Bonnie Chapman-Roy and Julie Mulhern have provided me with valuable guidance to keep things running smoothly. Alice Folkins and Donald Alward's institutional knowledge have made the transition all the easier.

I extend my thanks to the dedicated cast of summer employees. At the beginning of the hiring process in May, I did not dare to hope for such a cohesive and amicable team. Each one brought their own strengths and interests to help contribute to an engaging learning environment for our visitors.

Curatorial Assistant *Amy Colpitts* proved she had a knack for her object database upload assignment, thanks in part to strong organizational skills. She made excellent progress on this front with limited supervision. Although new to work in a museum setting, she proved a capable interpreter as well.

Patrick Robichaud filled our Young Canada Works in Both Official Languages requirements which made him an even bigger asset to our daily operations, quite apart from his personality with guests and a readiness to tackle disparate tasks. The interest he has taken in the upkeep of the gardens has helped us to expand our interpretation outside of the museum walls.

Museum Docent *Bill Hovey* has remained dependable, and the time he has put into reading from our many written resources has helped him greatly to develop his skills as an interpreter over the summer. Of particular value is the ease with which he adapts tours to better reflect a group's personal interests.

A later addition to the team was *Mirren Lithwick*. To encapsulate her enthusiasm and eagerness to learn, I need only say that within her first week of work she took it upon herself to tackle *In Search of John Keillor: A Historian's Odyssey*. Aside from being a capable and detail-oriented tour guide she has proven skillful at rug hooking and even made some forays into hearth cooking.

Textile Museum Assistant *Abby Secord's* practical skills as a wool spinner and fiber artist have set a new standard for interpretive content at St. James Textile Museum. Aside from being a natural educator, her eye for detail and colour allowed her to progress quickly as a weaver to the point where she is finishing the season with an ambitious overshot weaving project far beyond what could have been reasonably expected of her.

Caleb Corkerton was our latest addition to the team, joining us via funding from Inclusion N.B. at the beginning of July. Despite the short window he has demonstrated steady improvement. Once introduced to a task his efficient and no-nonsense approach lets him blaze through to-do lists faster than I can write them. Consistent compliments about the beauty of the flower garden, the cleanliness of the museums, and the bounty of the vegetable garden are testaments to his contribution.

Although she could not join us full-time as I might have hoped, *Tina Sharapova* agreed to work with us once a week as a consultant for the planning of new weaving projects, loom set-up and maintenance, and troubleshooting the many technical issues that are bound to arise. Her expertise is invaluable and has helped to spark my newfound interest in weaving.

our buildings are around for another hundred years. Keillor House is need of exterior mason work that will be costly but necessary. We will engage an architect experienced in historic preservation as a first step. The Bell Inn also requires some new wooden windows and work on the front wall, as it appears that we have some water damage behind the exterior cladding. We are currently reviewing this work. Please stay tuned as we will be brainstorming on fundraising events in the coming months to help us offset costs.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your support and to all of those who give freely of their time and resources to this amazing organization.

Bonnie Chapman Roy

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Such a good summer staff did not go to waste, with a steady increase in visitor numbers as the region's tourism and heritage sector emerges from the past few troubled years. A strong showing from visitors from within the Maritime region indicates a promising continuation of the trend towards "backyard tourism." A large contribution to attendance came from the summer's various events held at the museums. The success of established activities such as the Victorian Garden Parties and the new Rug Hooking Workshop shows that there are ways to draw in people who might not have visited otherwise. In future I hope to invest more time in planning workshops, both as fundraisers and incentives for new and repeat guests. Meanwhile, the inclusion of a St. James Textile Museum booth at more regional craft markets has boosted sales of our textile products while raising awareness about the two museums among new audiences. I believe that continuing with these strategies while also striving to cooperate with other organizations' efforts will be key to reestablishing and securing this institution's place as a valuable service to the community. Broadly speaking, there is today a renewed interest in heritage crafts and art forms. The accessible introductions we offer to weaving, spinning, hearth cooking, and other traditional skills put us in a unique position to cater to this rising demand. Perhaps in response to a consumer culture centered upon disposability, durable hand-made goods are more desirable than ever, while reminding people why we value the study of the past.

This season has been a rewarding learning experience for me as I adjust to this new role. While there are still more offerings from the Historical Society to look forward to this year, I am already excited for a 2024 season that brings even more to these two museums which for now remain Southeast New Brunswick's best kept secrets.

Keegan Hiltz

WHO WAS THE 'EDWARD BARRON' OF EDWARD BARRON CHANDLER?

ANYONE WHO IS AT ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE HISTORY OF DORCHESTER—and this will include many members of the WHS—certainly knows the name of Edward Barron Chandler, one of the Fathers of Confederation and the builder of Rocklyn, still standing as the shiretown's most elegant home. But have you ever wondered where his given names 'Edward Barron' came from? I have known for a long time that Chandler was named after an Edward Barron who was some kind of a big shot over Minudie way who also gave his name to Barronsfield, once a large settlement between there and River Hebert. But why did our Dorchester luminary's parents name their second son and fifth child after him? It was not uncommon for parents in those days (Chandler was born in 1800) to name a child in honour of some prominent personage. In fact, two of the other seven Chandler children had the name 'Botsford' in their full moniker, 'Botsford' being Amos Botsford of Westcock who was not only the leading squire of Westmorland County, but also a prominent lawyer in Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, where Edward Barron Chandler was born. So, what made Edward Barron of Barronsfield a prominent personage after whom status-conscious people like the Chandlers wanted to name their own children? I had not thought much about this critical question until our WHS Research Associate Jamie Heap—who has contributed to quite a number of articles in this Newsletter—informed me that he was doing some research on Edward Barron, prompted, no doubt, by the fact that he lives in River Hebert, is thoroughly familiar with Minudie and Barronsfield (he has published several books on Amos 'King' Seaman, the Minudie 'grindstone baron') and has had a long association as tour guide with the Minudie Heritage Association, for which Edward Barron is also a 'person of interest'. When he learned that I was again on the prowl for Newsletter material, he generously offered to share his quite extensive notes with me. I gratefully accepted even though the topic is a little further afield than I generally wander in these pages because a preliminary perusal of them convinced me that Edward Barron was an interesting personage in his own right, and also because I just happen to have some additional material in my own files—the legacy of research projects undertaken some time ago and now half-forgotten—that I can finally use. The

result that follows may be a somewhat tenuous link to Dorchester's Father of Confederation, but I trust you will find it interesting nonetheless.

The inspiration to name the Chandler's fifth child 'Edward Barron' most likely came from his father, Charles H. Chandler, who at age fifteen fled to Nova Scotia with his very prominent Loyalist family from New Haven, Connecticut. In this he was preceded by his sister and his brother-in-law, Amos Botsford, who, like Chandler's father, Joshua, had been a very successful lawyer in New Haven and had also remained loyal to the King. Soon after the Chandlers' arrival in 1783 disaster struck. As a wealthy Loyalist who had lost all his property during the American Revolution, Joshua Chandler was entitled to a large compensation from the British government. Together with his family he was sailing from Halifax to Saint John to file his claim when the vessel was caught in a sudden storm and wrecked off Partridge Island. Not only Joshua, but his eldest son and two of his daughters were lost in the tragedy, and along with them all the documents needed to back up his claim. The result was that, instead of a full, or at least a generous, compensation, the British government took the opportunity to do a little penny pinching and ended up awarding each of the surviving family members £1000, no paltry amount compared to what ordinary folk had but hardly enough to re-establish them as the elite they knew themselves to be. This meant that Charles was forced to scramble a bit to make a living and indeed, as you can read more fully in the article on Edward Barron Chandler that appeared in the July 2017 issue of the Newsletter, our Dorchester star grew up in relatively modest circumstances. Few details have come down to us, but it seems that after wandering around for a while Charles married Elizabeth Rice in 1790 and settled in Amherst, by then the shiretown of Cumberland County. As someone who would naturally gravitate toward the great, it was all but inevitable that he would soon get to know Charles Baker, who was the holder of many county offices including Justice of the Peace, Registrar of Deeds and Wills, Judge of Probate, Judge of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas, and—of most relevance

here—was also the son-in-law of Edward Barron of Barronsfield. The surviving details are sketchy, but Chandler appears to have collected fees from the various townships in the county on behalf of Judge Baker and in this capacity he would also have become acquainted with Baker's brother, Hance, who was county sheriff. Some years later, Charles Chandler would follow Hance Baker in that office and stay in it for thirty-eight years. In the meantime, he would have plenty of opportunity to get to know Edward Barron, who was even more of a Big Man in the county than Charles Baker. So, who was this Edward Barron and what made him a 'Big Man', at least on the local scene?

The surviving record of his life before 1765 is extremely thin, offering only a few dots to connect. We know for sure that he was born in England in 1720. With reasonable confidence we can surmise that he was of a substantial but not outstandingly wealthy family and that he married a very young girl, Ann Tweed, not long before their son, Edward Junior, was born. Records show that the birth occurred in 1745, when she was just fourteen. We can guess with considerably less confidence that the family was among the British emigrants settled at Halifax by Governor/Lt. General Edward Cornwallis in 1749 and that that is where the second child, Ann, was born in 1751. (The date is certain but not the place; it is also possible that the family first emigrated to New York.)

If Edward was indeed among Cornwallis' settlers, it may suggest that he was already thinking of joining the British Army. As a man of good family he would have wanted to do so as an officer, not an enlisted man, but he probably didn't have the money to buy a commission, which was the usual way for men of means to become an officer. (More on this below.) His chance came in 1756/57 when a new regiment, the Royal American, also known as the 60th Regiment of Foot, was raised in the American colonies following the disastrous defeat of General Braddock's expeditionary force at the hands of the French and Indians in 1755. From the wording of the officer's commission granted him in 1759, it appears that he joined the second battalion as a "gentleman ranker," a volunteer who signed on as a private with the understanding that he would later be given a commission without purchase. Such men trained and fought as ordinary soldiers but

"messed" (dined and socialized) with the commissioned officers and so enjoyed a status somewhere between the two. In 1758 the second battalion, which had earlier been in New York (raising the possibility that Edward joined it there), arrived at Halifax from Philadelphia to take part in the second conquest of Fortress Louisbourg. (The first one was in 1745 but the British handed it back to France during the peace negotiations.) Among the other participants in the same battalion was a Swiss lieutenant, engineer, and surveyor by the name of Joseph Frederick Walle DesBarres, a man destined to play a major role in Edward Barron's life. No information has survived on Barron's activities during the successful siege, but DesBarres distinguished himself as a map maker and after the shooting was over he was promptly assigned the task, together with soon-to-become-famous Captain James Cooke, of mapping out a safe route up the St. Lawrence to the principal quarry of this historic expedition—Quebec and the conquest of Canada. From later events it is clear that Barron and DesBarres got to know one another as comrades in arms. Both were at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in September 1759 and this time we do know something of Edward Barron's role in that pivotal event, although in describing it I may have to challenge parts of a cherished family tradition that, save for one document, is our only source of information on the subject.

During the years 1875-1885 Gilbert Seaman, eldest son of Amos Seaman and also a descendant of Edward Barron, kept a journal of miscellany very much like William Trueman's Memorandum of Events mentioned several times in the last two issues of the Newsletter. Among many other things it included a short essay on the British Conquest. Apparently drawing on notes left by his father as well as stories told in the family, he said that Barron "*was attached to General Wolfe's army, who, while at Levis awaiting his ascent to the Plains of Abraham and his attack on Quebec appointed Mr. Barron to a position in his army by a certificate under his signature, which was in our family. This became known at the Archives Department, Ottawa, who said they were destitute of the signature of General Wolfe. Their beggary was successful and so we lost it.*" Fortunately, however, they sent Seaman a copy and in 1941 his granddaughter, Jennie Wootton, donated it to

the Fort Beauséjour Museum where Dr. J. Clarence Webster, onetime fiancé of Nellie Palmer, was curator. Seaman then added a dramatic detail that was clearly savoured by Barron's descendants: "*It is said that on the Plains of Abraham General Wolfe gave the order to advance, perhaps his last order. It was seen that the drummer had fallen. At this moment Mr. Barron, taking in the situation, took the drum and beat it to a successful issue.*" Jennie Wootton repeated the story in one of her chatty letters to Webster: "*Edward Barron heard General Wolfe say they were to advance as he took the drum from the dead drummer and beat the advance...*"

According to family tradition, then, Barron was specially commissioned by Wolfe himself just before the famous predawn ascent and fought close enough beside or behind him, viz. in the battalion under his command, to hear his order to advance. If he picked up the drum of a fallen drummer and was able to "beat the advance" he must have had previous experience as a drummer, for drumming was not something learned in a day, let alone in an instant. Using standard beating patterns, often accompanied by fifers playing martial music, drummers relayed the various maneuvering orders from the officers to the troops, something learned only through constant drill. They were never officers but usually ordinary enlisted men and often enough mere boys, although it is conceivable that as a "gentleman ranker" Barron first trained as a drummer. As an officer he would not have been expected to take up the dead soldier's drum and doing so must have won him some credit with his superiors. That he could do it without hesitation probably reflects the short period of time he had been an officer. According to the commission that was indeed signed by General Wolfe, Edward Barron was appointed an Ensign in the second battalion of His Majesty's 60th Regiment of Royal Americans on September 4th 1759, just nine days before the battle that decided the fate of Canada. The letter (of commission) was addressed to "Edward Barron, *Gentleman*," which is my reason for identifying him as a "gentleman ranker," rather than an ordinary enlisted man or non-commissioned officer such as a sergeant. Although it may dim his lustre somewhat, I must point out that Ensign was the lowest rank of commissioned officer. (It was later changed to 2nd Lieutenant.)

Perhaps more seriously, the idea, hallowed by family tradition and repeated on various websites, that he was personally solicited by Wolfe to fight in the battle is based on a misun-

derstanding of what a letter of commission was. Normally, it was a patent letter ostensibly from the King himself following a more or less standard form, very much like the letters of appointment for High Sheriffs and other officers of the Crown. But in war officers were frequently killed and had to be replaced long before a formal patent letter could be written up in Chancery (in London) and sent to the battlefield. So field commanders like General Wolfe were empowered to commission replacement officers on the spot. The vacancy that Barron filled was probably created in early July during a skirmish on the Île-d'Orléans (where the army had landed to prepare for the assault on Quebec) when a sudden attack by French and Indians killed fourteen men of the 2nd battalion. He may have been recommended to Wolfe by one of the senior officers of the battalion, but remember that his quick action on the Plains of Abraham occurred *after* he was commissioned. What probably weighed more heavily with Wolfe was the fact that Barron was an Englishman, not a colonial. Officers in the 60th Regiment of Royal Americans were recruited exclusively from Europe. They included English, Scots, Irish, Dutch, Swiss (like DesBarres), and Germans, but not colonials. Whatever the reason for his battlefield commission, it would not have been unique, and the letter Wolfe signed followed a standard form. He probably had a basketful of them just for such occasions.

Having dispelled the notion that Barron was specially commissioned by Wolfe to fight in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, it is now time for the other bad news, that he wasn't part of the General's famous close range volley that shattered the French ranks and cost him his life. Wolfe commanded the main line of four regiments, none of them the 60th. Barron's battalion, together with the 3rd battalion of the Royal Americans and the 15th Regiment of Foot, was on the left flank under the command of Brigadier General George Townshend. Its assignment was to protect the main line from sniping militia hiding in the scrub near the bank of the Rivière St.-Charles. The 2nd battalion did indeed exchange fire with the enemy and even captured a small group of houses and a gristmill to anchor the line. This, if anywhere, is where Barron could have picked up the drum

from a fallen drummer and beat out the signal to advance, but there is no way the order could have come from Wolfe, who was well beyond shouting distance and in any case would not have been the one to give it.

Although perhaps not quite as illustrious as family tradition had it, Barron's service in the British Army was honourable enough. After the victorious Battle of the Plains of Abraham his battalion was part of a force that was defeated at Sainte-Foy in April 1760 when the French tried (unsuccessfully of course) to re-take Quebec. It may have been about this time that he was promoted to Lieutenant in the 3rd battalion, a position he kept for the rest of his time in the British Army. (That's what he called himself in his will drawn up in 1798.) In 1762 the 3rd battalion was part of an expeditionary force led by Brigadier General Robert Monckton (who was also at Quebec) to capture the French island of Martinique in the Caribbean. The British then went on to besiege and capture Havana, paying dearly in the form of heavy losses from sickness during the hot months that followed. Among the other units in that expedition was Goreham's Rangers, specialists in guerilla warfare led by Joseph Goreham whom Barron would meet again in Nova Scotia.

Evidence is very sketchy as to when Barron returned to North America where he had left his wife and daughter. Jennie Wootton told Dr. Webster that "afterwards" (meaning sometime after the Battle of Quebec) he "went to Virginia to quiet the Indians..." If there is any truth in this, and I know of no evidence to refute it, it could mean that he was part of one of the expeditions sent in 1764 by General Thomas Gage, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in North America, to put down an uprising of Indians angry over their treatment by his predecessor, General Jeffery Amherst, who was recalled because of his harsh policy. (The uprising is known as Pontiac's Rebellion.) In her letter to Webster Wootton added that Barron enrolled his daughter, Ann, in a school in New York, that he took her there himself on horseback using a double saddle called a pillion, and that Ann told this story to her children again and again for the rest of her life. This little detail lends some credence to this bit of family lore, again raising the possibility that the Barrons first emigrated to New York, rather than Halifax. It may not be without significance that General Gage resided in New York at this time.

Meanwhile, while Edward Barron was serving His Majesty's cause in Martinique, Cuba, and (possibly) Virginia and New York, his comrade-in-arms at Louisbourg and Quebec, J.F.W. DesBarres, was making his reputation as an engineer, surveyor, and map maker in Nova Scotia. Following his praiseworthy service in Quebec, he worked on the defences of Halifax and in 1762 was an assistant engineer at the recapture of St. John's (taken by the French in a surprise attack), after which he did extensive surveying in Newfoundland, again in conjunction with James Cook. His superiors were so impressed with his work that they commissioned him to do a coastal survey of Nova Scotia, which he commenced in 1764. The result, over the next thirty years, was the famous *Atlantic Neptune*, a wonderfully detailed and richly illustrated set of maps, charts, and coastline views that served navigation well into the 19th century and even became a popular collector's item. It was while doing the preliminary surveys that he became convinced of the potential of the colony for settlement and decided to acquire as much land as he could as cheaply as he could. The most obvious way of accomplishing the latter was to get a grant, for which his service in the military and his association with high government officials in the course of his survey work stood him in excellent stead. By grant or purchase he eventually got his hands on some 80,000 acres in the Tatamagouche area, in Falmouth Township, between the Memramcook and Petitcodiac rivers, and, of most relevance here, at Maccan and Minudie. The Minudie grant, issued May 15, 1765, was for 8000 acres, an egregiously large amount for one individual, especially one who was also applying for other grants. To cover up what was really going on DesBarres applied not only for himself but also for seven others, at least three of them certainly, and the others probably, also former officers in the Royal American Regiment. Among the 'certains' was Edward Barron who must have somehow remained in contact with his old comrade after the conquest of Canada.

Barron must have been personally closer to DesBarres than were the others as he was the only one who didn't sell out to him, leaving the visionary Swiss specu-

lator with 7,000 acres that included an extensive marsh he promptly dubbed the 'Elysian Fields' after Homer's mythical land of perfect happiness at the end of Earth. Apparently he was impressed by the wildflowers. Barron probably was as well, as he decided to retire from the Army and make his home on his share of the grant, which was 1000 acres and included a tract of marsh in the Elysian Fields as well as upland and timber further downstream near the mouth of River Hébert. (DesBarres put Acadian tenants, most of them refugees from the Expulsion who had lived there before, on the rest of the Elysian Fields.) Barron established a home farm and erected a substantial house with barns and other outbuildings on perhaps a couple hundred acres of upland about two miles south of the Amos Seaman School Museum, which he dubbed 'Barronsfield'. (It is still shown on the map, as is the 'Barronsfield Road', but there is not much there today.) Here he was joined by his wife and daughter, both named Ann, and a black slave girl called Phebe, whom he probably bought in Halifax (where slaves were regularly sold) as it is unlikely that he kept a slave while he was soldiering. The work on the home farm appears to have been done mainly by Anglophone hired men, who were paid by the month or the year. He also hired larger temporary crews of twenty or more Acadians, including some women, to do the haying. The rest of his grant he leased out to tenants, but unlike those of DesBarres, they were not Acadians but Anglophones, most likely Irish and/or Scots, and there were only three of them, Peter Mills, Duncan 'Monro' (probably more accurately Munroe), and James Walsh. I know all this from a journal Barron kept (like Gilbert Seaman and William Trueman), preserved in part in the Nova Scotia Archives, that offers further information on his farming operations as well as his other activities. It was customary for such tenants to pay their landlord one third of the cereal crops grown on their lease and half the offspring of the cattle and sheep lent by him. There are several references in the surviving portion of the journal to wheat collected from the tenants and to the division of the young animals. In neither case were the amounts very large—twelve bushels of wheat from Munroe; sixteen from Mills; three heifers from Mills; two steers and a heifer from Munroe; a yoke of steers and a cow and calf from Walsh, etc.—but Barron also farmed his own plots and kept his own herd of cattle and a flock of sheep. In 1799, the last year of the journal, he notes that he sowed 7½ bushels of wheat, which would have yielded on the order of 50 or 60 bushels, hardly enough for a commercial enterprise but plenty

for bread for the family and hired help, with enough left over—especially with that collected from the tenants—for modest selling or bartering. He mentions shearing 55 and 60 sheep (in different years), but some of them were his tenants'. A poll tax return for 1795 preserved in the Nova Scotia Archives records that he owned 30 sheep and 20 beef cattle. In 1799 he noted in his journal that he had contracted to deliver eight steers to Partridge Island (Parrsboro) for a Mr. Rogers, who would then take them by ferry to Windsor and from thence to Halifax, the selling price £95. In 1794 he dug about 800 bushels of potatoes (used for cattle and hog fodder as well as human consumption). According to his estate inventory drawn up in 1800, at the time of his death he had 30 sheep, 19 beef or dual purpose cattle, 4 calves, 5 horses, 13 swine and 8 teams of oxen, most of them likely used by his tenants.

Again, these are substantial but not egregiously large figures, being about the same as those I have discovered for William Trueman and other prosperous yeoman farmers of the area at that time. He also had other sources of income. One of them was a water-powered gristmill in which he, or more likely a hired man, ground grain for his tenants and neighbours as well as for himself, keeping a portion of the flour as payment. Another was a small store for which he sometimes ordered in goods from England but more often, it would appear from references to him in the journal, from William Harper who ran a nimble little trading schooner, the *Weasel*, out of Saint John and later Moncton into the Isthmus of Chignecto. On the list of one such order were bleached bed sheets, Irish linen, corduroy and other fabrics, small knives, nails, files, and other essential items. It was probably the only store in the area at that time and it will appear again in our story, below. He probably didn't make a lot of money from it, but he also had a small tannery on the farm. His journal records small numbers of cow hides, calf skins, sheep skins, and horse hides that he—or most likely one of his hired men, as it was a dirty, smelly job—tanned for "Mr. Robinson," "Mr. Keever," "Mr. Glenie," and other of his neighbours as well as for himself.

The fourth and probably largest and most reliable source of Barron's income apart from his farming operations was no doubt his half pay as a retired officer in the British Army. The poll tax return mentioned above lists a 'salary' for him of £40 per annum. This was hardly a huge amount—about what a good carpenter or blacksmith could have expected to make, while Anglican ministers got £200/annum—but together with his other income it would have supported a moderately genteel lifestyle. That he never became rich is proven by the size of his estate, assessed at £610. This would have put him in the upper half but by no means at the top of the estate assessments I have examined in Westmorland County 1785-1808, which ranged from £54 to £3230. William Trueman of Point de Bute died in 1826 worth nearly £2800.

But, if Edward Barron was hardly a squire by virtue of his wealth, he became one by virtue of the fact that all his neighbours were tenants while he was the only landlord in the district apart from DesBarres, who resided at Falmouth until he left for England in 1774 to prepare the *Atlantic Neptune* for publication. In 1786 Barron received an additional grant of 1100 acres somewhere in the area around Athol on the Mac-can River. I found no evidence that he had tenants there, while much of the land appears from the warrant of survey to have been wilderness, but at least it gave him bragging rights. More important than his lands were his connections with members of the Governor's Council, probably made through DesBarres, which netted him prestigious public offices in Cumberland County. One of them was Judge of the court of probate where wills were authenticated and the estate administrators authorized to distribute the proceeds. Another was Justice of the Peace, the office that John Keillor worked so hard to get in Westmorland County. Justices of the Peace (a number were appointed for each county) were local magistrates who adjudicated minor cases in their own homes and more serious criminal ones (assault, theft below a certain amount, fathering an illegitimate child liable to become a public charge, etc.) in conjunction with their colleagues at a twice-yearly meeting in the shiretown (in Barron's case Amherst) called a General Session of the Peace. The General Sessions was also the governing and administrative body of the county where bylaws were passed, taxes assessed, town

or district officers such as road supervisors appointed, and too much else done to go into here. Justices of the Peace were ranked, and in the surviving portion of the record of the Cumberland County General Sessions (unfortunately only from 1789) Barron always appears first in the list of attending Justices, indicating that he was the one who charged the jury and discharged other duties associated with the presiding magistrate. As the leading Justice of the Peace in the county he was also a Judge of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas, a county-level civil court that adjudicated minor to mid-level cases (debt recovery, breach of contract, trespassing, etc.) between subject and subject. Justices of the Peace were entitled to use the honorific 'Esquire' with their names, thus guaranteeing their status as gentlemen standing out from the common herd. From the journal we also learn that he was the county administrator of the poll tax, which he received from the collectors in the various towns and districts and passed on to the Provincial Treasurer, with whom he was in frequent correspondence. He was also a Collector of the customs and duties that traders like William Harper had to pay on imported goods when they sold them.

Probably even more than his public offices, what made Edward Barron a Big Man on the local scene was his position in the county militia. He retired from the British Army as a Lieutenant, the second lowest of the commissioned officers' ranks, but his military experience must have recommended him to the Halifax authorities because at some point (I was unable to determine exactly when) he was commissioned Colonel (i.e. commander) of the Cumberland County Regiment of militia, a purely defensive force that could be (but in the event never was) called up for military action in an emergency. The Colonel's duties included commissioning the other officers of the regiment and recording the date of their commission. From the journal we learn that Charles H. Chandler was commissioned Ensign on June 28, 1797 and was promoted to Lieutenant on October 1, 1799, one of Barron's last acts as Colonel. Perhaps it was in grateful memory of this that in the following year, a few months before Barron's death, Chandler named his newborn son, Dorchester's future Father of Confederation, after him.

Barron's other duties as Colonel were not particularly burdensome, nor did they bring additional military glory (having been with Wolfe at Quebec must have brought plenty of that) but he seems to have appreciated the title nonetheless.

A town meeting for Cumberland Township in 1784 addressed a question concerning a bridge and aboiteau to the Cumberland County General Sessions of the Peace. It was answered in a letter from Justice Barron whom the minutes of the meeting were careful to call *Colonel* Barron. In his 1875-1885 journal of miscellany mentioned above Gilbert Seaman also consistently calls him Colonel Barron. Taken together this is pretty good evidence that both he and his descendents preferred to talk about his rank in the Cumberland County militia, rather than the one in the British Army, which as stated before was the one he identified himself with in his will drawn up near the end of his life. No doubt 'Colonel' had more cachet in social circles—or even among the tenants—than 'Lieutenant' and probably contributed to the family myth that he had been personally solicited by General Wolfe to fight in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham.

Now that we know what made Edward Barron a Big Man in Minudie, can we say anything further about his life and character? The surviving evidence is too meager to construct a continuous narrative but I did manage to scare up a few details that convey some sense of the man.

One highlight of his life was no doubt the marriage of his daughter, Ann. The lucky man was Charles Baker, a Virginian who had moved with his family to Pennsylvania where he was hired by Philadelphia land speculators well connected to the Nova Scotia government to survey the township of Hopewell on the Petitcodiac, granted them in 1765. Soon after arriving Baker was appointed a deputy crown surveyor for the province, in which capacity he may have surveyed the Minudie grant (as he certainly did others) and thus became acquainted with the Barrons. The article on Baker in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* relates a "family tradition" that he fell in love with Ann at Quebec and followed the family to the Chignecto to woo her. But this presupposes that he was at Quebec in 1759-60, for which there is no evidence, and that Ann, who would have been eight or nine at the time, was there as well. The latter is not impossible, as wives and children did sometimes follow soldiers on campaign (the women serving as cooks, nurses, etc.) but I think it unlikely, given that Wolfe moved his army up the St. Lawrence by boat. Jennie Wootton speculated to Webster that "Ann may have met him while in Virginia with her father," but the hole in that argument is that, if he was there at all, Barron would have been in Virginia in 1763-64, while the Bakers had moved to Pennsylvania by 1756. So I prefer the 'surveyor the-

ory', and not just because I came up with it myself.

However it happened, Ann and Charles met, married in 1770 or thereabouts, and proceeded to produce five sons and two daughters in fairly rapid succession, starting with Edward in 1771. To judge by the wording in his will, Barron (and his wife as well, of course) was very fond of the grandchildren. He bequeathed them all his lands "to be equally divided or occupied between them as they can agree together" and even added a provision that if any of them wanted to sell his share to one of his brothers (to whom sales were restricted in the will) and they can't agree on a price "let it be decided by two or more judicious neighbours." He willed his officer's ceremonial sword to Charles, whom he called 'Charley' and the scabbard to 'Billy' (William). The sword became the treasured possession of Ruth C. Symes, like Jennie Wootton a granddaughter of Gilbert Seaman in whose Minudie house she was born and spent her long life (1916-2015) surrounded by artifacts of family history and sustained by the hope that after her death it would become the "King Seaman Museum." Alas, that didn't happen and the house is now in a dilapidated condition, about to fall down. To add insult to injury the sword was stolen soon after the house became vacant.

Edward Barron's other great joy in life was the distinguished military career of his son, Edward Junior. Although still only sixteen, Junior is known to have joined the 40th Regiment of Foot on November 10, 1761, most likely at Halifax where the regiment was then stationed (thus adding to the confusion over whether the family emigrated to Halifax or New York). He must have been a very good soldier because by October of the following year he was a lieutenant, having been promoted from Ensign. (How or whether he paid for his commission is unrecorded.) The 40th was part of the force that took Havana in June 1762, so he must have been there with his dad, although not in the same regiment. The 40th returned to Nova Scotia in 1763, when Edward Senior was probably with General Gage putting down Pontiac's Rebellion, and was sent to Ireland in 1767 where (or perhaps it was in

England) in 1770 Junior transferred to the 4th or King's Own Regiment of Foot, again as a lieutenant. Distinction came his way two years later when he was made a grenadier, one of an elite company of exceptionally strong and able soldiers attached to every regiment. At the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War the King's Own was sent back to America where it first took part in the opening skirmishes at Lexington and Concord. In June 1775 Barron again saw action as a grenadier in the bloody if victorious Battle of Bunker Hill where he was severely wounded in one of his legs. As a result he was given leave to recuperate at his parents' home in Barronsfield, but not before being promoted to Captain, the next rank above Lieutenant. His father was very proud of that, always referring to him in his journal as 'Captain Barron' (although it may have also been a motivation to refer to himself as Colonel).

Captain Barron arrived in Barronsfield early in 1776, just in time to learn of a plot being hatched by some locals sympathetic to the Revolution to encourage General Washington to seize Nova Scotia. He found a messenger to get word to Halifax and that is probably how he came to the notice of Joseph Goreham who had been at Havana with him and his father and was now Colonel of the Royal Fencible Americans, a regiment he had personally raised to meet the menace. When the regiment was ordered to garrison Fort Cumberland (Fort Beauséjour under the French) Goreham recruited Captain Barron to act as engineer in charge of shoring up its dilapidated defences. Thus he was there in November when a ragtag force of rebels led by Jonathan Eddy attempted to capture the fort. Believing the force to be much larger and more formidable than it actually was, Goreham (whose regiment was almost equally ragtag) decided not to engage it immediately but to get a message to Halifax to send reinforcements. Captain Barron volunteered to go by way of Windsor but at first Goreham declined because Barron "appeared anxious only for the safety of his father" whose farm was on the way. Next day, however, he acceded to the Captain's anxious pleas and unwittingly precipitated him into another adventure. Barron was to go with a small party in Goreham's command vessel, docked in Cumberland Creek just below the fort. Unbeknownst to them, on the previous night a party of the besiegers had captured a supply sloop in the same creek,

took the crew prisoner, and were still gloating over the spoils when Barron's little group, unable to see the rascals in the November morning fog, arrived at the dock just in time to join the other prisoners. Goreham had also sent word to all the militia in the area to come and defend the fort. Those sympathetic to the rebels (and there were quite a few of them) declined but the loyalists among them answered the call, or tried to. Of course they included Colonel Barron, who left his wife at home and arrived under cover of darkness in a large wooden canoe with a number of guns and a barrel of gunpowder, only to learn that his son had been captured that morning. This must have been very painful news, as it is evident even from the few scraps of evidence we have that the two were very close.

Nor was this the end of the trouble that Eddy's siege inflicted on the Barrons. Besides besieging the fort (unsuccessfully of course) some of the rebels decided to use the occasion to plunder the homes of loyalists who had joined the garrison. One victim was Yorkshire settler Charles Dixon who only narrowly escaped having his silverware swiped because his wife had the wit to hide it in a barrel of pig feed. Less lucky was Christopher Harper, another Yorkshire loyalist, who was hated by American sympathizers for his arrogant manner in carrying out his duties as a Justice of the Peace. He got his house and barns burned down and a lot of stuff stolen. And of course the plundering party didn't want to overlook Colonel Barron, especially after they learned that his wife was home alone. Ann had to watch aghast as the villains ransacked the store "removing thirty beaver hats, two guns with 200 flints and forty pounds of gunpowder, tools, snowshoes, and many other items." They also made off with thirty sheep and as much of the rum as they could carry. Entering the house (without knocking), the leader, William How, was immediately attracted to the Barrons' "best curtains and a silver bowl," so he took them as a present for his wife. They were later salvaged from his house before it was burned by the reinforcing troops that scattered the rebels and returned to the rightful owners, but Barron wasn't as lucky with the beaver hats, guns, etc. He filed a claim for compensation but it was turned down on a technicality. Bureaucracy was obtuse, then as now.

In the meantime Edward Junior was carted off to Boston (now occupied by Washington's troops) where he spent the better part of a year as a very obstreperous and uncooperative

prisoner. After his release he must have enjoyed some freedom of movement as he was married to a Mary Frazier at Boston Trinity Church (Anglican) on Christmas Day, 1777. (No other details have come down to us.) He and his bride must have somehow made it through the lines and rejoined the British Army in New York because he was back in Nova Scotia in 1778 where he was employed in drawing up plans and sketches of various forts. However, his leg must have still been bothering him because in July 1782 he was made Captain of an invalid company and shipped over to Chester Castle, England. Invalid companies were made up of men too old or wounded to serve in the regular forces but still serviceable for garrison duty, which was purely defensive. We may assume that Edward Junior and Mary had a good visit at Barronsfield before they left, but I can't prove it because the part of Colonel Barron's journal that would have surely mentioned it did not survive. The Barronsfield Barrons got good news from Chester in early 1785 when their son was made commanding officer of Chester Castle and even gladder tidings came their way in November, 1790 when they learned that a granddaughter, Althea Maria, had been born. That family ties were very close was again confirmed when Edward and Mary decided to make a trip home so that the senior Barrons could meet Althea. Perhaps they had an intimation that time was of the essence, for not too long after their arrival Ann Barron died on July 4, 1791 at the age of sixty. It must have been a family reunion of about equal parts joy and sorrow.

During the months leading up to that unhappy event the Barrons must also have been under considerable stress for another reason. As before few details have come down to us, but it seems that Colonel Barron was not popular with everyone in Cumberland County. David Brown, a Surgeon's Mate at the military hospital (presumably in Amherst, but I don't know that for sure), together with two school teachers, John Glenie and David Forster, wrote a scurrilous pamphlet against Barron and nailed it to his gatepost at Barronsfield. We don't have the complete text, only a couple of lines quoted in the record of the General Sessions of the Peace, but they are enough to show that it was quite insulting, containing the words "the noted old stallion, King of the Beggars," and "Mr. Pride, a Yankee rebel." I will attempt to explain them in a minute, but first we have to note that they made the Barrons *very* angry. We can't know exactly when the offence occurred but on Tuesday June 1, only a month before Ann died, Edward Barron Senior and Edward

Barron Junior were called before the Court of General Sessions of the Peace to answer a charge of assault and battery on David Brown. (Even senior Justices of the Peace like Edward Senior were not immune to prosecution in the court of which they were a member.) They were found guilty and each fined five shillings (a relatively small amount) plus costs of suit. At the same Sessions Sheriff Hance Baker preferred a charge of seditious libel against Brown, Glenie, and Forster for writing and publishing the pamphlet, the intent of which was "to ridicule and bring to disgrace Edward Barron Esq. Justice of the Court of Common Pleas and him the said Sheriff." Although no further clues are offered, one can't help thinking that "the noted old stallion, King of the Beggars" was a smutty allusion to improper relations with Phebe as well as a mocking reference to the poverty of Barron's tenants, and perhaps also to his putting on unwarranted airs. Jennie Wooton told Webster that "Edward Barron was Church of England and when the minister visited Barronsfield would stand out on one of the hills and blow a horn to let all interested know." Perhaps this did not sit too well with the Congregationalists and Presbyterians in the area.

As a Virginian Hance Baker would not have thought of himself as a Yankee (which originally meant a New Englander) but British snobs were already using it as a derogatory term for any American. Accusing his son-in-law's brother of being not only haughty but potentially disloyal to the Crown would have made Brown richly deserving of a beating in Barron's eyes. But not everyone in the court agreed. Following standard court procedure (abolished in Canada in the 1970s) the libel case was sent to the grand jury, which had to vet it before it could proceed to trial. Although under examination David Forster admitted that the pamphlet was a "dirty piece of work," the grand jury found "no bill." In other words it quashed the

case. The Barrons didn't take their conviction of assault and battery lying down. They appealed it to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. In August the presiding judge ordered the General Sessions to turn over the record of the proceedings, but I have no evidence as to the outcome of their appeal. The fact that they made it suggests that they were very sensitive about their reputations, and rightly so, given the nature of the libel.

Although not unprecedented, it was highly unusual for a Justice of the Peace to appear as a defendant. At all the other General Sessions he attended Barron was there as a judge, and some of the cases that came before him and his colleagues offer little glimpses into the temper of the times and even add a touch of humour to our perhaps too somber narrative. For these reasons I will share a couple of them here.

At the February 1794 Sessions George Minard of Maccan was charged with stealing a cow and the rope she was wearing from Peter Wood. Asked by the court if he had any evidence to prove the theft, Wood answered that he had none regarding the cow, but that he still had the rope, which he had somehow recovered. He therefore asked the court to acquit Minard of stealing the cow—thereby releasing him from the jail cell into which he had been clapped when the charge was laid—and to try him instead for stealing the rope. This was duly done and the case laid over for trial at the June Sessions. Minard was also in trouble over another incident. At the same February Sessions Henry Ripley charged him with stealing a bag with about one and a half bushels of flour out of his gristmill. This case, too, was bound over for jury trial at the June Sessions, and there he was convicted of stealing the rope and the bag of flour. The court ordered “twenty-five lashes on his bare back,” to be administered by the Constable. It seems that trouble with the law ran in the Minard family. In 1808 George Minard Junior was charged with fathering an illegitimate child liable to become a public charge on Elizabeth Black.

Regular meetings of the General Sessions of the Peace were always held in February and June, but in July 1791 an additional ‘Special Sessions’, presided over by

Edward Barron as leading Justice of the Peace, was called to deal with what was perceived to be a serious matter. Augustus Baxter was hauled into court “for expressing himself in a manner tending to stir up sedition.” He had been telling people that they should only pay the recently assessed poll tax when “they sent troops from England to collect it,” and that if and when ‘they’ did so, “he would then pay it in powder and ball.” Confronted now with the full majesty of the law—which could have landed him in jail—his braggadocio faded and he excused himself by saying that his words were only a joke, and that he had “thought no evil.” Fortunately for him, the court satisfied itself with a severe reprimand and an order to find two men willing to post bonds for his good behaviour, after which the “late laws respecting the poll tax” were read out loud. Apparently the poll tax was not popular, and the fact that Edward Barron was its county administrator may have been another reason for David Brown’s scurrilous pamphlet.

The same Special Sessions that dealt with Augustus Baxter also heard the charge that Esther Herring, a young servant girl in the employ of John Newton of Fort Lawrence, brought against three young men, Robert Watson, Jesse Bent Junior, and Isaac Covert, all of good family. (Two of Bent’s sisters married sons of William Trueman Junior of Point de Bute.) It seems that young Covert, having invited the other two lads to join him in fetching his father’s cows for the evening milking, asked young Watson to go after a particular animal that had strayed some distance from the others. Robert found not only the cow, but also Esther Herring, who had been similarly sent by her master to round up the cows. On an impulse he playfully threw her skirts up over her head for the delectation of his companions as well as himself, but according to her own testimony did her no further violence. Nonetheless, when he and his wife came home and found her crying, an outraged Newton encouraged her to bring charges and testified before the court that she was “a very harmless girl who never showed any inclination of immodesty or lewd behaviour.” Watson tried to explain that he only wanted to see if she was a boy or a girl, but unfortunately for the young rascals the court failed to see the humour. He was fined a hefty £2 and costs, eight times what the Barrons had to pay

for their assault on Brown, and ordered to post a bond of £20 as surety for good behaviour for a year, while Bent got rapped ten shillings and costs, plus a bond of £20. It was adjudged that Covert “did not meddle with the girl [who] seems to acquit him,” and he was let off with a warning.

By the time of the Minard case in 1794 Edward Barron was again bereft of his son, daughter-in-law, and granddaughter. Captain Barron was back on duty with the British Army, posted for a time at Gibraltar, but his duties seem to have been mainly administrative, no doubt owing to his war wound. By April 1797 he was Assistant Barrack Master General and was promoted to Major in 1799. Father and son kept up a steady correspondence until shortly before the Colonel died. Between March 2, 1794 and February 6, 1800—when he had the pleasure of addressing him as Major—Colonel Barron recorded in his journal no less than twelve times that he had sent letters to his son, twice including a gift of £20. Unfortunately, he noted nothing about the contents but I think it is pretty safe to say that they expressed his love for his son and the rest of his family. Further evidence that he did so may be found in his will, drawn up in June, 1798. We have already learned that he divided his lands among his grandsons. To “my son, Captain Edward Barron and my daughter Ann Baker” he bequeathed all his cash and outstanding debts owing to him as well as all his livestock, to be divided equally between them. Speaking of cash, in his journal Barron kept a running account of what he had on hand in the various currencies circulating in Nova Scotia at the time: English, French, American, Spanish, etc., all calculated in the purely notational pounds, shillings, and pence of Nova Scotia, which did not mint its own currency until after his death. Ann was to get the silverware and Edward Junior his watch as a keepsake. Nor did he forget his granddaughters. From the money bequeathed to them both Edward Junior and Ann were to give Althea Maria £100 “when of age,” while Ann and Charlotte Baker (daughters of Ann [Barron] and Charles Baker) were to get £50 “from that part of the estate left to their mother.” He would never know this, of course, but if he could have, Barron would no doubt have been very pleased to learn that his son was eventually made Inspector General of Barracks for all England with a salary of £400 per annum and lived to the age of ninety-one, while his daughter made it to eighty-nine.

Phebe, too, was in his thoughts when he made out his will, indicating that he must have considered her part of the family—which she may well have been in more senses than one. She was to be freed

upon his death (slavery was still technically legal, but increasingly frowned upon and difficult to enforce at law), as was her son, Hugh Cumming “at the age of twenty or sooner if she desires.” He also bequeathed “two cows and six ewes” to “the child or children she is now pregnant with” and earmarked five pounds “towards the building of a house for Phebe” on land his executors were to apply for. The house was to be built of “sound spruce logs well squared and dovetailed... in such manner as are generally built by the French at Minudie.” It appears then that he was in general a kindly man, at least towards those who were kindly disposed towards him.

Another bit of the all too scanty surviving evidence on Barron also points to his kindly disposition but to explicate it I will have to take you down a bit of a rabbit hole. Until New Brunswick became a separate province in the late summer of 1784 to accommodate the influx of Loyalist refugees, and particularly their leaders anxious to procure government offices and other privileges, Cumberland County extended well beyond the Isthmus of Chignecto to include the Memramcook and Petitcodiac river valleys, and so, too, did Edward Barron’s authority as the leading Justice of the Peace. It was in this capacity that Superintendent of Indian Affairs Major George Henry Monk wrote to him in July, 1784, just before that authority ended, informing him of a complaint made against his son-in-law, Charles Baker, by Francis Armigeau, chief of a band of Mi’kmaq on the Petitcodiac where Baker had recently received a grant from the Nova Scotia government. The Indians claimed that the land had previously been granted to them, and that Baker had threatened to invite in some Mohawks, deadly enemies of the Mi’kmaq, to “distress” them if they objected to white settlement on their hunting territory. Barron duly passed Monk’s letter on to Baker and received a written reply acknowledging that he (Baker) had indeed spoken to Armigeau, who “expressed his fear of the Refugees [viz. Loyalists] & complained of the hardship of being drove from their hunting grounds & fisheries, &c,” but denying that he had even so much as men-

tioned Mohawks and assuring Barron that he had listened with sympathy to the Mi'kmaq's complaints, which he attributed to the machinations of one, Geldert, a Loyalist competing for the same grant. When he had defeated Geldert's dastardly scheme, Baker said, he sent word to the Indians that "they were welcome to make use of any part of my land they chose & that they should not be disturbed," but that he was unwilling to give up any part of his grant for a reserve, as he didn't want "to have an Indian town at my Elbow." (Although reduced to beggary and beset with every kind of social problem, Indians were still feared by many whites as potentially violent.) Not surprisingly, Barron accepted his son-in-law's explanations and denials and in his reply to Monk professed himself "well convinced" that none of the grantees on the Petitcodiac "have in any respect attempted to interfere or prevent the Indians in their Hunting &c," and that "their [i.e. the Indians'] complaints are frequently trifling and sometimes groundless." Nevertheless he declared that he "had always been ready to hearken to and assist the Indians of this Country upon every occasion & would gladly use every means in my power in order to conciliate their minds..." Like other well-intentioned whites, he genuinely felt sorry for the plight of the defeated Mi'kmaq, erstwhile allies of the French enemy, but was also genuinely unable to understand its full dimensions. That a crusty British army officer and onetime Indian fighter could nonetheless reach across an enormous cultural gap to acknowledge a common humanity speaks well for his character, which all the surviving evidence suggests was honourable.

Edward Barron signed his name to a last codicil in his will on September 19, 1800 and according to his tombstone, which can still be visited beside that of his wife in the family cemetery at Barronsfield, died eleven days later on September 30. His will was probated by his son-in-law, Charles Baker, who had succeeded him in the office of Surrogate Judge of Probates. As he noted in his journal, he almost went to his Maker in June 1797 when he had a "providential escape from being crushed to death by the old barn falling." (He left it just seconds before it collapsed.) He was in his eightieth year when he died and, to judge from entries in his journal, vigorous and alert to the end. Still collecting payments in kind from his tenants and dividing the increase of the herds and flocks with them, he noted in his journal—unfortunately without revealing their contents—numerous letters he had written to various important people as well as to his son, some as late as July 17. The important people included—and had for several decades—Chief Justice Thomas Strange; Isaac Deschamps, one of the puisne judges of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court; Provincial Treasurer Benjamin Green; Provincial Secretary Richard Bulkeley and his son and successor, J.M.F. Bulkeley and *his* successor Benning Wentworth; Sampson Salter Blowers, Attorney General; Brook Watson, merchant and Lord Mayor of London; and Sir John Wentworth, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia. It is an indication of Barron's status and importance in Cumberland County that he had official business with these highly placed men, and in some cases at least the relationship seems to have been social as well. Both Sampson S. Blowers and Isaac Deschamps were witnesses to his last will and testament, as was Charles H. Chandler, so they must have been with him at Barronsfield during his final days on earth and were probably frequent visitors there long before that.

Edward Barron Chandler, Dorchester's Father of Confederation, had every reason to be proud of the man he was named after.

Gene Goodrich



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