

Remembering King and Water (Milltown Blvd.) Streets on Saturday Night

As I walk King Street and Water Street (Milltown Blvd.) I think of the many businesses that once offered so many services to the residents of the Town of St. Stephen and surrounding area.

One of the busiest days was Saturday, especially Saturday night, when the rural people came to town to meet with friends and do their weekly shopping. The streets were crowded. Some of the women often went to Calais, Me. to visit Fishmans, Woolworths, Newberrys and Pennys. If they made a purchase they perhaps left it at Andrews Tobacco Store to be picked up at another time. They had no fear of walking past the establishments on "Rum Row".

The men gathered to "catch up" on the news, smoke a pipe or cigarette, enjoy a "swig" behind a building or in an alley. The men did most of the grocery shopping from a prepared list, never forgetting a "dog bone" for their faithful canine.

Many gathered to hear the messages and music offered by the Salvation Army and Rev. Wynn Stairs and members of the Full Gospel Assembly.

Come 11 or 11:30 the people began to leave for home but not before they had enjoyed a hot dog and some International Drug pop from Frank Woodard's stand on Water Street or Andy Eastman's stand on King Street.

After all was quiet, the local police, Ern Hill, Bert Moore and Sandy Cleg-horn, began their patrol. St. Stephen was in good hands.

The following stores were located on the above mentioned streets. They may not be in order and some may be missing.

Business firms located on King and Water streets (Milltown Blvd.) during the 1940's, '50's and before

King Street: North Side
Royal Bank, King Café, Water-son's Drug Store, Bliss Berry Jewellery,

Pages from the Past



Doug Dougherty

Irene's Dress Shop, Courier Office, DeWolfe Hardware, Phil's Café, Loney & McCrum Barber Shop and NuStyle Beauty Shop, Sproat's Confectionery (later Speedy Grocery and Simpson Grocery), Simpson Sears, Johnston & Johnston Drug Store, Polley & Co., Sunrise Restaurant, Webber's Book Store, Alcide Arsenault's Barber Shop, B. Halstead, H.T. Jordan Grocery, Malory Bros., Weatherby's Radio, Kirk-McColl United Church, James Maguire Service Station, Lorne Groom, Optometrist.

King Street: South Side

Creighton & Carter (former Johnson Hotel), Billy Boone, International Drug Co., Farmer's Store, C.W. Hanley, Grocery, Boyd & Matthews, Clark's Groceries, A.G. Chisholm (former F.E. Rose), Hill Bros., Dinsmore Hardware, Dow's Auto, Howard Murchie Insurance and John N. Wall, Optometrist.

Water Street (Milltown Blvd.)

On the second floor of the Royal Bank building was the office of G.F. Nicholson, Dr. W.A. Sinclair, Dentist, next, McKinney's Variety Store, Hugh 'Murray Insurance, S.O. Mehan's, Roy Creamer's Restaurant, McBride's Clothing, Hyslop's (also Telegraph Office), George Cockburn, Lawyer, the Bank of Nova Scotia, Queen Hotel, F.D. Graham Barber Shop and Pool Room (later Woodcock's Taxi), Stewart & McKay Car Dealership, Lever Shoe Repair Shop, Waddingham's Barber Shop (former Maxwell Undertaker Parlors and Florist Shop), Buchanan's Furniture, Bank of Montreal, N. Marks

Mills, Ganong's, Miss Young's Millinery, Alex Hannan's Restaurant (later Bowling Alley and Earl Hayman's Taxi), Vince Nixon Jewellery, Post Office (after 1950), J.W. Sampson Service Station, Clinch's Bakery (later Larkin's Bakery), Flewelling's Insurance, Nason & Yardley Grocery, Littlefield's Jewellery, Tally Ho, Clark's Drug Store, Monument, Lance Grant's Barber, Shute & Co. Jewellery, J.B. O'Donnell's Clothing, Fong's Laundry, Lee's Fish Market, S.M.T. Post House, Hazen Ashley's Barber Shop, Garcelon Stamp Co. and Bert Linton Auto (former Nelson Grocery).

Water Street: River Side

Vroom Building, Day & Whitlock Insurance, Steven's Shoe Repair, Library, Upstairs - Harry Groom, Lawyer, Grace Trafton's Beauty Shop, Leo Shields, Lawyer, Queen Theatre, Post Office, McAllister's Feed Store, Jacobson's Scrap Metal, Liquor Store, G.E. Barbour Co., Ryder's Service Station, Salvation Army Citadel, J. Clark & Sons Car Dealership, Sadler & McCormick Coal, W.B. Sampson, N.B. Telephone, Town Office and Legion, Hewe's Shoe Repair, (Hiatt Building, later Hazen Ashley's Barber Shop), Mill's Hardware (later Flagg's Hardware), The Hat Box (Helen Garcelon), Mrs. Elizabeth Moffatt's Corset Shop, Smythe's Book Store, Pentecostal Church, NuStyle Ladies Wear, F.B. Douglas Sporting Goods, Young's Studio (later Harvey Studio), Adanac Restaurant, Frank & Randy's, O'Brien's Fish Market, Helen Kelley Restaurant, Grand Café, Wall's Bookstore, Scovil's (C.A. O'Brien's Men's Wear), Crawford's Drug Store, Pritlitsky's Shoe Store (later Agnew Surpass Shoe Store), Harold Campbell's Clothing, Fashion Frock Ladies Wear, Dominion Store, Alf Reid Men's Wear, Clarence Wry Restaurant, Sanitary Café, Outlet Store (Urdang's), C.C. Grant Dry Goods and Dress Shop, and Steadman's.

They say, "What goes around comes around." Do you suppose?



King Street in St. Stephen is shown in this image dated 1938.



Water Street in St. Stephen

History student studied impact of war on border towns

John Cunningham

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER

Canadians were swept up in a wave of patriotic nationalism with the outbreak of The First World War in August 1914. It wasn't until April of 1917 that the United States joined the war. In the intervening months, tensions developed in the St. Croix Valley communities along the Maine-New Brunswick border.

This was an initial deduction post-graduate history student Brandon Dimmel made as a result of a 2009 visit to Charlotte County, New Brunswick, and Calais, Maine, to research border town attitudes during the war years.

He found that the tensions between residents of a nation at war and a nation choosing neutrality didn't erupt into hostility. The general populace on both sides of the international bridge saw the German military as the enemy. All wished for an Allied victory.

So, when America entered the war, differences of opinion were largely forgotten. With the passage of time The Great War eventually forged a stronger bond between the border towns of St. Stephen and Calais, Dimmel concluded.

As background to his study of Canadian-United States border towns during the 1914-1918 war, the London, Ont., student re-iterated the well-known fact that while the War of 1812 claimed hundreds of lives, including those lost on the border between Ontario and Ohio, it had little impact on the St. Croix Valley.

Reading St. Croix Courier microfilm, he noted that the Calais City Band had led the Canadian Dominion Day parade along St. Stephen in the streets, across the bridge into Maine and down the Main Street of Calais in the days leading to the start of the First World War.

Then, from Calais Advertiser microfilm, he read in that war-neutral town as early as September 1914 an intoxicated German resident or visitor to St. Stephen "had his face lite up by the impact of a ripe tomato" thrown



Brandon Dimmel

at him after hailing the Kaiser a number of times over a reported slaughter of Britishers.

That fall, teams from both sides of the border continued to compete, as they always had, in baseball and other sports. In spite of the war, The Charlotte County Exhibition had more entries than ever, according to the Advertiser.

But as the war dragged on and Canadian casualties mounted, Charlotte County soldiers serving on The West-

ern Front lashed out at young American men still at home while they were fighting and dying in France and Belgium. American baseball stars would deserve a lot more credit if they would "put on khaki and join our baseball team," a Sergeant-Major McCurdy had written in a letter that was re-printed in the Courier.

And, by the spring of 1915, the St. Croix Courier editor had angrily taken his counter-part, the editor of The Calais Advertiser, to task for referring to departing recruits of the 55th Battalion as "the size of kids" rather than being "big stalwart fighting machine(s)." In an effort to quell the resulting backlash, the American newspaperman said he'd chosen the word "kid" as complement rather than derision "just as some of the greatest pugilists have been called kid..."

Animosity of this kind seemed to evaporate with news the United States - which had delayed joining the Allied forces - declared war on Germany.

"Crunching the German defences in its jaws, the great British military machine moves relentlessly along," said the Advertiser. The American entry into the war was pronounced by the Courier as having been "a renewal and strengthening of the 'tie that binds.'"

Church bells rang out, people flooded into the streets and a parade described as the most impressive in the history of the border towns greeted news of the Nov. 11, 1918, Armistice. War veterans and citizens of both nations marched to bands from both sides of the border. The procession from St. Stephen, to Milltown, N.B., Milltown, Maine, on to Calais was so long that bandsman and soldiers ending their march in Maine could look across the St. Croix River and see others stepping off from the marshaling point in New Brunswick, according to Courier reports.

"The war has served to fuse rather than separate these communities," Dimmel concluded in an essay published in the December 2011 edition of the prestigious American Review of Canadian Studies.

Dimmel, who is working towards completion of his

doctorate in history at the University of Western Ontario where he also conducts lectures in history, didn't come to the area cold.

He'd read microfilm editions of The St. Croix Courier from 1911 to 1914 prior to his visit. Based at the Blair House Bed and Breakfast, Saint Andrews, he did research at the Charlotte County Archives from where Archivist Janice Fairney and volunteer staff pointed out available material. He learned of local publications such as Ronald Rees' Historic St. Croix, and Doug Dougherty's book "St. Stephen Yesteryear," all credited in his meticulous bibliography.

A lot of Brandon's time was spent at the St. Croix Library, St. Stephen, and Calais library where he had access to the Advertiser microfilm.

Dimmel's New Brunswick research was part of a coast-to-coast project to prepare his Ph.D. thesis on Canadian border town during The First World War. As a teenager living in Windsor, Ont., he found a marked contrast between the NB-Maine border and the border between Ontario and Michigan.

"St. Stephen was quiet and peaceful," he said. "There was a relaxed attitude towards the border. It's probably the geography. The St. Croix River is narrower and the bridges are smaller.

"It was really nice and extremely convenient to be able to walk into the Canadian Border Services Office, explain to them why I was going to Calais and then stroll over the bridge to Maine. It really contributed to a feeling that St. Stephen and Calais were socially and culturally connected.

"It was a great trip and really changed my perception of how a border community could function."

According to New Brunswick Public Library sources, the University of New Brunswick library is the only one in the province to subscribe to the American Review of Canadian Studies. The story is, however, online, at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02722011.2010.496901> on a pay for view basis.



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