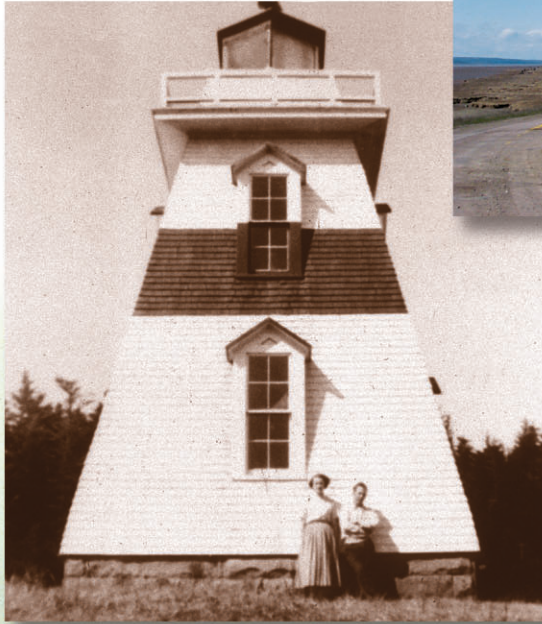


A SHORT HISTORY OF BEAUMONT, NEW BRUNSWICK



By:

HELEN KRISTMANSON

NEW BRUNSWICK MANUSCRIPTS IN ARCHAEOLOGY 37

*A Short History of Beaumont,
New Brunswick*

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By
Helen Kristmanson



Culture and Sport Secretariat

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Abstract

Beaumont tells the story of the Fort Folly Mi'kmaq, whose ancestors lived, danced, sang, prayed, and buried their dead at this site for nearly a century before moving on. But no community, however small, is an island, and without reference to the friends and neighbors with whom the Mi'kmaq at Beaumont share a history, the story is incomplete.

At the height of its occupation Beaumont, now enjoyed for its tranquil scenery, was part of a busy area that rippled with human activity. On the more fertile ridge just a ten-minute walk above the site, farmers tended to their orchards while children attended school in the one room schoolhouse nearby. Not far down the road from the chapel, industrial minded men worked in quarries and brickyards, and local people operated post or "way" offices out of their homes. Those not employed in local industry worked as fishermen, hunters, domestics, teachers, laborers, coopers, blacksmiths, craftsmen, and at many other occupations. Together the Aboriginal and Acadian people sustained this community from 1840-1955, forming a richly textured chapter of New Brunswick history.

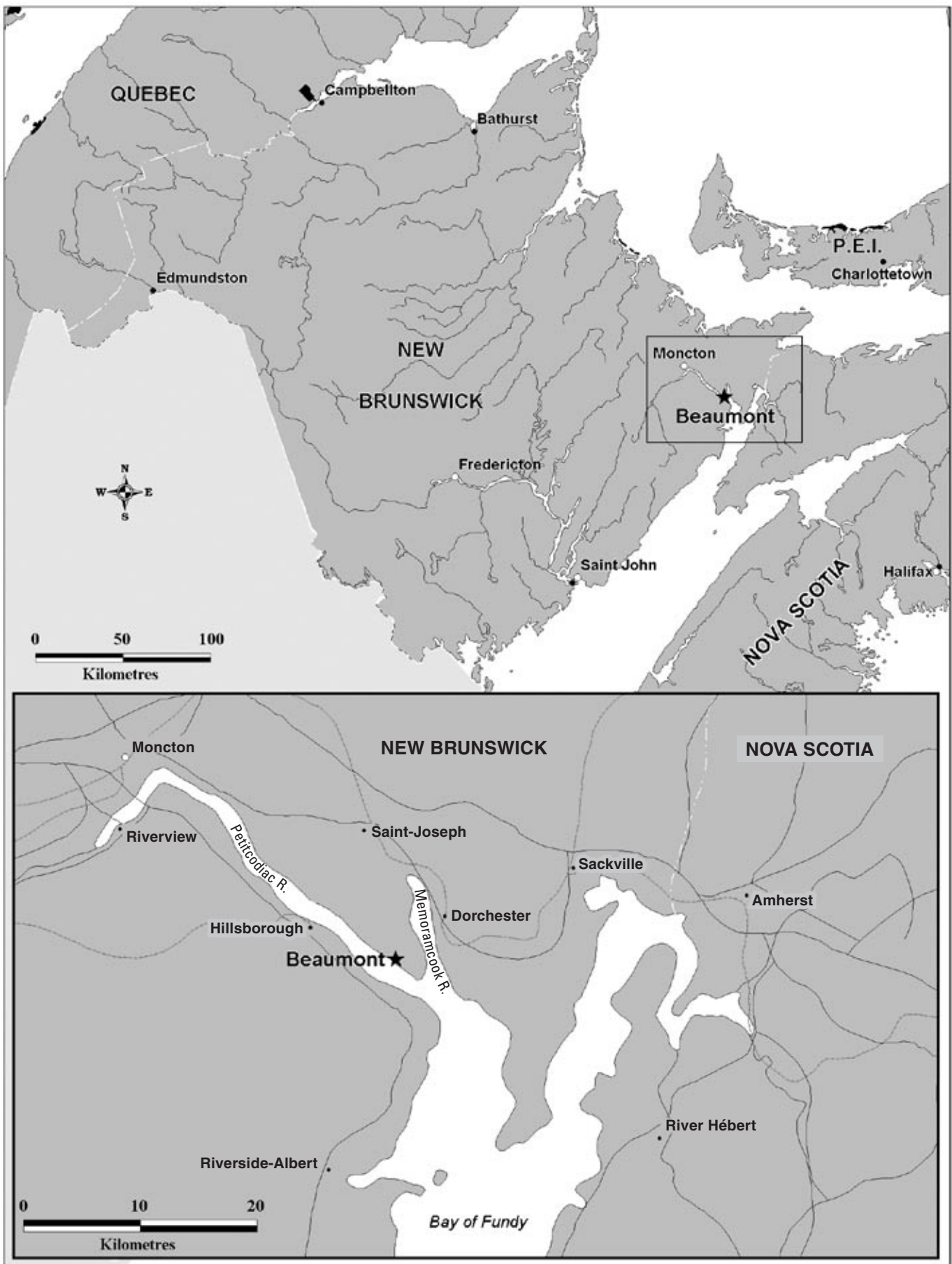


Figure 1: General location map - Dan Page

Introduction

Prior to their historical segregation on reserves, Aboriginal people did not live a sedentary lifestyle. Rather than settling permanently in centralized locations, as did the colonists, the Mi'kmaq were a mobile and fluid society that gathered into large semi-permanent villages during the summer months, and dispersed into smaller more viable units during the leaner winter months. As such, prior to the arrival of Europeans, Aboriginal society was dispersed across the landscape, taking advantage of seasonally available resources.

Archaeologists often predict that beneath historical Aboriginal settlements lie the remains of an earlier era, and many times they are proven to be right. Such was the opinion of famed New Brunswick historian William F. Ganong (1899: 230), who speculated "from its very favorable situation [Beaumont] is probably an ancient campsite." Although Ganong may have been correct, site reconnaissance has not yet supported the assumption (Kristmanson 1993) and the historical record suggests that an ancient campsite may in fact be closer to Dorchester from where the Beaumont residents were relocated in 1839-1840.

The Mi'kmaq

Beaumont is an unincorporated area in Westmorland County, New Brunswick (45° 53' 05" N - 64° 34' 30" W). The site is located near the Bay of Fundy on a finger of land separating the Petitcodiac and Memramcook Rivers (Figure 1). Aboriginal people had long occupied the Bay of Fundy region when Europeans first arrived. After an initial period of seasonal visits by fishermen, European visitors soon became colonists, encroaching upon Aboriginal lands and lifestyle. Savvy Europeans, such as the colonists of Port Royal in the early 17th century, quickly recognized that good relations with their new Aboriginal neighbors would mean survival in the "horrible wilderness" of Canada (Father Pierre Biard in Thwaites 1898: 33). The newcomers, however, were not without their own colonial agenda, which was tainted by a view of Aboriginal people as less than human and in desperate need of civilization. This led to the development of prejudiced policy regarding

Indian Administration and the displacement of Aboriginal people from their traditional lands, as aptly summarized by Ganong (1904:38):

"The French, like the English later seem never to have recognized any right of the Indians to the soil, but extended their settlements as they pleased, with the passive acquiescence of the Indians. There was actually some tendency for the smaller French settlements to be formed near the Indian villages, partly for environmental reasons, but also because of the facilities thus offered for trade, and because Indians and French could thus use the same churches and be served by the same priests. Such a double settlement was that at Burnt Church and no doubt there were others in the province."

Ganong's general description has a wide application and could as easily describe the historic setting at Beaumont. In eastern Canada, the Indian Reservation dates as early as 1783 when large tracts of land were set aside for displaced Aboriginal people. The administration of these early reserves was shifted to the Dominion Government at Confederation in 1867, and many more have been established since then. The Aboriginal settlement at Beaumont was and is considered a Special Status Reserve in that it represents a parcel of land set aside for the exclusive use by Aboriginal people prior to Confederation.

One report suggests that in 1763 there were three thousand Mi'kmaq in the entire Beaubassin area, and that the largest population in this region was located in *Amlamgog* or Memramcook (Nowlan 1989:1). In Westmorland County, the historic Mi'kmaq are reported to have resided at the following locations: Westcock, Dorchester, Johnson Mills, Memramcook, Indian Island, Grindstone Island, Midgic and Beaumont, which one writer has referred to as "Indian Point", and where the Mi'kmaq and Acadians are known to have peacefully cohabited (Nampahc 1950:1-2; Nowlan 1989:2-3).

The precise sequence of events that led to the historic settlement at Beaumont is unclear. With reference to the Memramcook settlement, it has been reported that Aboriginal people had once

settled on the site where today stands Le Foyer Saint Thomas, which is an apartment complex for senior citizens in St. Joseph. It is believed that they left the area at around 1840 to settle at Beaumont. This might explain the following sketch made by Moses Perley in his Indian Reports of 1842. On his return trip to Saint John, having visited many reserves, Perley

“met the Rev. Ferdinand Gauvreau, P.P. at Dorchester, who furnished me with a list of Indians under his pastoral charge at the Memramcook, amounting to 126 souls. The Reverend Gentleman stated to me that they occupied a piece of land containing 63 acres, purchased for them two years since... granted for that purpose by the Provincial Legislature” (Perley 1842:cv).

While in the Memramcook area Perley observed that the Aboriginal people “did not cultivate the soil so much as they would do, if they had more land,” but that they owned boats, fished in the Bay of Fundy, and were impressively self-sufficient given their circumstances. Beaumont, located at the mouth of the Petitcodiac River near the Bay of Fundy, and not far from Memramcook, is closer to the water and is situated on much less arable land than that available in Memramcook, suggesting Perley may have been referring to the former in this passage. Although “the forest in the rear abounded with game and the river in front was teeming with salmon, shad and other fish” (Nampahc 1950:2), the rough and exposed land at Beaumont did not make farming a viable livelihood for its occupants.

Historically the Mi’kmaq and Acadians lived as neighbors at Beaumont. The parcel of land designated for use by the Mi’kmaq was described by Ganong (1904:131) as a small permanent village of sixty-two and one half acres purchased for the Mi’kmaq on August 15, 1840, to replace a former settlement near Dorchester. Not only did the Mi’kmaq and French both live on the reserve land set aside by the government, but they also shared the chapel at Beaumont, the local post office, and their children attended the same schools. Both probably participated to some extent in the local stone quarry industry, and the Mi’kmaq traded or sold their crafts, and/or utilitarian items, to local residents along both rivers.

In the historic period, colonial efforts to civilize Aboriginal peoples were often frustrated by their adherence to a mobile lifestyle, which was based on centuries of living off the land. The fluctuating population density over time suggests that between 1842 and 1895, Mi’kmaq society retained an aspect of social mobility and did not necessarily view Beaumont as a permanent settlement. But a problem with using census records to study historic demographics is that they were arranged by County and Parish, and did not always designate specific settlement names. Therefore, although the census recorded Aboriginal people in Dorchester Parish, it is not always clear whether this included people at Beaumont. The 1895 census lists ninety-seven people at the “Fort Folly Reservation” which can only refer to Beaumont as it was set aside for the Mi’kmaq long before the reservation at Dorchester was created (Nowlan 1989:2-3). By 1913 the community had dwindled to approximately three or four families, the last of which left Beaumont in 1955 (Bourque 1971; O’Rook 1994).

Looking back to 1842 there may have been approximately twenty-four “cabanes” at the site (Gaudet 1984:70). Archaeological survey at the site did not produce evidence for twenty-four houses, but the original count likely included smaller ephemeral structures and wigwams.

Official 1851 census records for Dorchester Parish, Westmorland County, indicated that there was an “Indian settlement in the Parish of Dorchester containing a good chapel, four wood houses and ten camps” (New Brunswick Census 1851:17). Ten years later, there were at least thirty-seven Aboriginal people in Dorchester Parish, but it is unclear how many were settled at Beaumont. Family names included Turnett, Toney, Paul, Nocote, Nocoud, and Bonas. Abraham Bonas, who was aged seventy years in 1861, was the Chief.

By the year 1870 there were said to be twenty Aboriginal dwellings or “huts” at Beaumont (Bourque 1971), and census records reported forty-four families including Bernards, Pauls, Alexanders, Hammonds, and Nocotts. Most of the men worked as coopers, and at least one made his living as a *journalier* or day laborer. By 1881, the small community at Beaumont was well established

with, four log cabins, ten wigwams, and a steady population of about forty people that at times grew to over one hundred residents (Perry 1988:17). At the same time, as census records indicate, there were a least sixty Aboriginal people in Dorchester Parish including the Bernards, Nocouts, Noquods, Stephens, Thomas, Jeromes, Angelines, and Francis. Most family men worked as coopers, laborers, farmers and hunters.

The Chapel

The Sainte Anne's Chapel at Beaumont has been standing on the east bank of the Petitcodiac River since 1842 (Figures 2 and 3). It was the first chapel built by and for the Mi'kmaq people in New Brunswick. In 1967 the Sainte Anne's Chapel at Beaumont was one of many churches in Canada recognized by the Canadian Centennial Commission as a church building predating 1867. In 1989 the chapel was declared a Provincial Historic Site by the government of New Brunswick. Today numerous tourists and local residents visit the site regularly. The church is often said to have been built by the Mi'kmaqs and French together, and that both attended services regularly (Perry 1988: 17); however one former resident maintained that the Mi'kmaq people alone built the church (O'Rook 1994). The natural beauty of the landscape at Beaumont attracts many visitors; during fieldwork there we encountered numerous people who related to us a personal connection with the site.

As with other Aboriginal people, the French introduced the Mi'kmaq to Catholicism, and it was for this purpose that missions were established early in New Brunswick (Ganong 1904:32). The design of the Ste. Anne's chapel conforms to the classical style of churches of the period. The contractor was Hilaire Louis Arsenault of Barachois who had also built several churches in Saint John and Nova Scotia. The altar at Ste. Anne's is thought to have been crafted by Thomas Berlinguet (1790-

1863) a well-known sculptor-architect who also created the Quebec National Assembly and St. Thomas church in St. Joseph (Perry 1988:17). Each Saturday a priest from St. Thomas Church would travel by horse to Beaumont, spend the night there, and serve mass in the Ste. Anne's chapel on Sunday. Reverend Camille LeFebvre, who founded St. Joseph's College (today the Memramcook Institute), was one of the first priests to perform mass at the chapel. In the early 1900s, a house that had once belonged to Chief Bill Paul was moved beside the church as its rectory. Since then, priests travelling from St. Joseph for Sunday masses spent the night at the new rectory (Perry 1988:17).



Figure 2: St. Anne's Chapel Exterior n.d. - Acadian Center, Champlain Library, University of Moncton PA2-1130.



Figure 3: St. Anne's Chapel Interior - Helen Kristmanson 1992

Overlooking the water from the rising landscape at Beaumont is a large cemetery. The true number of graves within the cemetery is unknown, but it is certain that there are more than the 79 listed in the surviving documents. One long time resident of Beaumont, who would now be over 100 years old, remarked that the cemetery cross used to sit well back in the woods to the east of its current location, suggestive of a graveyard much larger than it first appears (Boudreau 1992). Between 1862 and the early 1900's a plague struck the community, and they could not keep up with the large number of sudden deaths. Graves could simply not be dug in time and it is documented that as many as seven people were buried in single graves (Marshall 1991). Family members occasionally visit Beaumont in the hopes of finding some trace of their ancestors among the few remaining historic headstones.

Having touched so many lives, Beaumont is the subject of many folk tales and legends. One of the most popular stories is associated with an early wooden cross, perhaps the first erected at Beaumont. It is said that in the 1840s an 18-year-old Mi'kmaq girl from Beaumont, Henriette Mercure, fell in love with Rene Belliveau, a young French boy with whom she attended school. One day Rene was out rowing a boat on the Petitcodiac River during a storm and, watching from the land, Henriette saw Rene tipped into the water as his boat capsized. She quickly swam out to rescue him, and although she was able to save his life, Henriette drowned. In her memory a white cross was erected in the cemetery at Beaumont (Perry 1988:17).



Figure 4: 1920s St. Anne's Day Celebration at Beaumont - Courtesy of Sylvia Yeoman

Mi'kmaq people from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have been gathering at Beaumont since 1842 and have participated in numerous missions there (Marshall 1991) (Figure 4). It is reported that there was a memorable mission in 1920, which was observed by French missionary priests, Father Pacific and Father Placide. Pacific delivered his sermons in the Mi'kmaq language and a Mi'kmaq interpreter translated Placide's French sermons (Marshall 1991). The Ste. Anne's Day celebration at Beaumont, which had not taken place since the 1920's, was again revived in 1984 thanks to the efforts of Chief Stephenson Bernard. Religious activity continues at Beaumont with the traditional Feast of Sainte Anne, which takes place each year and includes a church service, potluck picnic, and Mi'kmaq festivities.

Related Sites:

A Network of Mi'kmaq Communities

Most of the Fort Folly Band members are descendants of those who lived at Beaumont; however, before and during the time Aboriginal people settled at Beaumont they occupied at least two settlements in and around Dorchester suggesting that the Dorchester area was probably occupied in the precontact period as well. According to Ganong, early maps dating to 1755 or 1779 indicated that Aboriginal people were living in a number of houses on a stream south of the present Dorchester, but he could not precisely locate the settlement (1899:230). This represents but the bare minimum of reported Aboriginal sites in the vicinity; oral histories in Mi'kmaq and non-Aboriginal communities tell of historic campsites in the region too numerous to list here, many of which can be found in the works of Ganong (e.g. 1899).

In addition to suggested camping grounds or settlements that possibly relate to ancestors of the Fort Folly Band, are the routes of travel used historically, some of which likely had been used since the precontact period. Ganong (1899: 91), who documented many portage routes in New Brunswick, specified that one "trail of the Dorchester Indians was up the Palmer Brook, down Bulmer Brook, out to Wood Point at Sackville." Bowser, who believes that it dates at least to 1779,

described another Aboriginal trail: (It should be noted that Bowser's use of "Keillor Creek" is interpreted here as Palmer's Creek as that is the only water to empty into the Memramcook River in that area.)

"Keillor" creek is adjacent to [Dorchester Island] at its mouth and extends back across the marshes well into the village [Dorchester]. This creek drains a considerable amount of upland area before emptying into Shepody Bay near the mouth of the Memramcook River. The creek was once called Ruisseau de Port Royal (Port Royal Creek) by the Acadians. A map dated 1779 shows a trail proceeding from Westcock through the forest to Memramcook, thence overland to the Petitcodiac and Edgett's Landing. It led to Dorchester Island, not Dorchester Corner, on the west side of Palmer's Pond. (Bowser 1986:8-10)

This account extends the route across both the Memramcook and Petitcodiac Rivers and would position a traveler almost directly across land from Beaumont. An historical account by a local resident also suggests that there was a trail from South Rockland to Beaumont in 1779 (Bannister n.d.; Snowdon n.d.). Such reports are not surprising. The vast network of trails, many of which pass through and connect vanished historic settlements, some of which are marked by what are reputed to be historical hand-made signs, is testament to the miles covered on foot or by horse and cart in an earlier era. Local residents have, for instance, indicated that it was common for the inhabitants of Beaumont to cross the Petitcodiac by foot in winter to get supplies in the Edgett's Landing region, a lengthy and precarious venture by modern standards, yet once a well traveled route. Mi'kmaq people similarly crossed the Memramcook River at Dorchester Island, at the mouth of Palmer Creek, and then over to "Indian Brook", in South Rockland, on the other side (Gillcash 1994). Local residents have never found any Aboriginal artifacts on Dorchester Island but some believe that archaeological excavations may prove otherwise, despite a feeling that artifacts nearest the water could have washed away with tidal erosion (Bowser 1986:8-10).

For centuries, perhaps longer, ancestors of the Fort Folly Band moved about freely in the local area. If and when evidence of pre-contact life is discovered, it will expand our understanding of the history of this area.

Beaumont: Part of a Larger Community

Fort Folly Point

Beaumont was once part of a bustling community, as attested to by the many historical sites and stories in the immediate vicinity (Figure 5). One of these is Fort Folly Point, located at the tip of the length of land that separates the Petitcodiac and Memramcook Rivers and extends in to Shepody Bay (Figure 6). Surrounded by old growth forest,

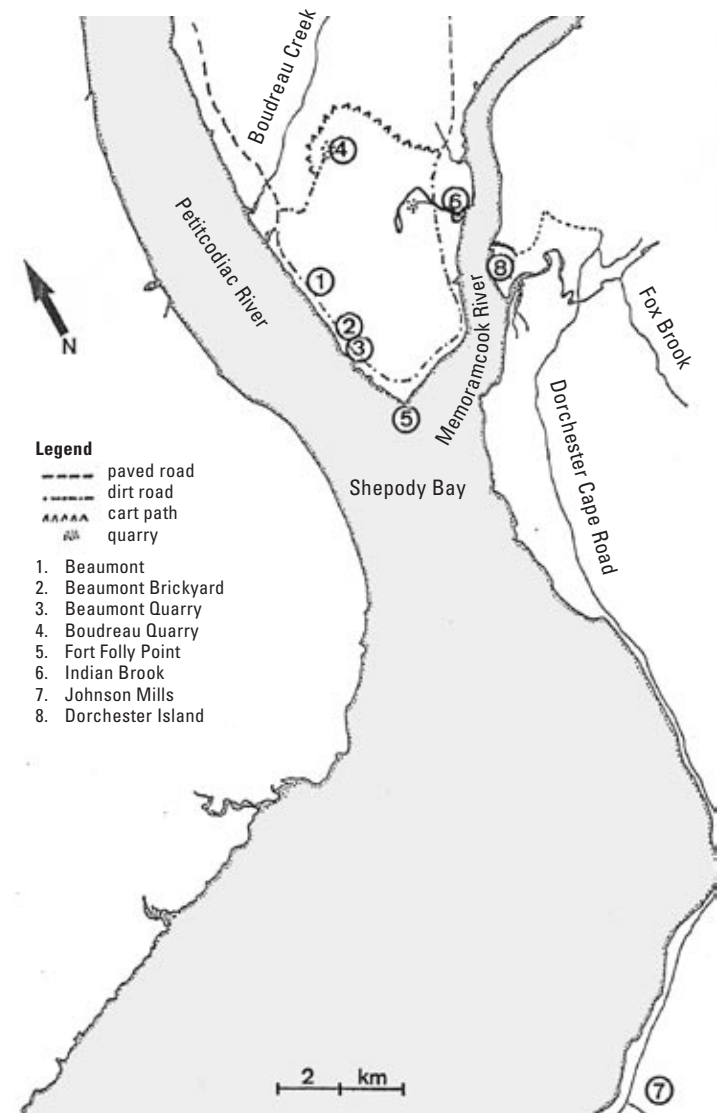


Figure 5: Sites in Beaumont Region - Helen Kristmanson 1992

the actual point itself is mostly clear of trees, and drops rapidly to the rocky beach below where a bed of mud separates the land from the water.



Figure 6: Fort Folly Point - Helen Kristmanson 1992

Fort Folly was originally called Fort de la Galissonniere (Perry 1988: 17) or Pointe Rocheuse (O'Rook 1994), but there is no archaeological evidence for a fort at the point. Archaeological excavation could reveal whether the stone foundation, situated in a clearing in the middle of the wooded point was associated instead with the lighthouse erected there in 1890 (Times Transcript, January 9, 1890) (Figure 7).

Although the fort generates a good deal of local interest, as early as 1750 there may have been other buildings at Fort Folly Point.

"A memoir of 1750 by Lery mentions "A l'embouchure de la riviere de Memeramkouk," certain buildings,— a bakery ... 10 feet square, a hospital... of 18 and a house of 12 (feet square), all of round stakes and covered with bark" (Ganong 1899:122).



Figure 7: Lighthouse at Fort Folly Point 1953-1954 - Acadian Center, Champlain Library, University of Moncton PA3-343.

Ganong was not sure if this referred to the post at Fort Folly Point or if it was at Dorchester. There is no surface evidence to indicate that there were once this many buildings there.

The fort has generated tremendous interest over the years, and at least two stories have emerged which relate to its original function. The accounts, which are probably old stories themselves, present vastly opposing sketches of the events that occurred there. The first story, related below, comes from an article that appeared in the Sackville Tribune-Post in 1950. Cyril Chapman of Dorchester wrote the article, using the pseudonym "Nampahc," Chapman spelled backwards. According to Chapman, the lighthouse at Fort Folly Point was historically a vital structure as Shepody Bay and the estuaries of the Petitcodiac and Memramcook Rivers were alive with shipping activity. Chapman reported that "very few people know that in the

days of the French occupation of Acadia that a Fort was situate(d) approximately at the side of this Lighthouse, and still fewer are aware that in the mud at the bottom of the cliff there reposes two large French Cannon(s). These are visible only at extremely low tide." Fifty years ago, the doorframe at the entrance of the magazine could apparently still be seen standing (Nampahc 1950:1). Chapman believed that the French outwitted the English at Fort Folly Point. He described an incident in which the "the guns of Fort Folly" faced "the British fleet under the command of a Captain Frye... sometimes... called the Battle of Petitcodiac or Shepody". Mi'kmaq legend, he said, described fire from the guns of the fort as being so heavy that the British squadron was forced to withdraw down the Bay. However, Captain Frye used the cover of night to land further up the peninsula and set fire to the Acadian homes and barns. Meanwhile, the troops holding down the Fort, saw what was happening and rushed home, leaving the fort unattended. The French, having left their post, thus cleared the way for the English to land, and the fort was captured. Chapman reported casualties on both sides and recommended that there be a marker to commemorate the place where the Acadians, with the assistance of a few Mi'kmaq, made a "heroic" stand against the English.

The second account, taken from Bowser's book, tells a different story. According to this version it was participants in the Eddy Rebellion who built the fort. "The Eddy Rebellion was led by Colonel Jonathan Eddy Sr. and supported by Colonel John Allan and other New Englanders who had settled in the Chignecto Isthmus area" (Bowser 1986: 38-39). The Eddy Rebellion was an armed attempt to win control of Fort Cumberland in order to initiate the process necessary to make Nova Scotia a rebel colony. At that time the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were still one. As he sailed, Eddy organized a group of French, Mi'kmaq, and New England men, and dropped off a small troop at the mouth of the Petitcodiac River on his way to Chignecto. Their job was to watch for any reinforcements that might be coming to Fort Cumberland. "Tradition has it they built a small, temporary fort and since that period the location as been called Fort Folly" (Bowser 1986:38-39). It

is speculated that some of Eddy's men were also positioned on Dorchester Island to help survey the Memramcook River.

"The remains of an old trench about 40 feet long can still be seen and is located a few feet from the river bank running parallel to the river. The trench is situated too far from the old shipyard sites to have been used for a saw pit so it may have been dug at one time for defensive purposes. It is obviously a very old trench and there are signs it was originally somewhat deeper. Many who have seen it tend to believe it was dug by Eddy's forces due to its commanding view of the Memramcook River" (Bowser 1986:38-39).

The two accounts tell vastly different stories; archaeological excavation could possibly shed some light on the existence of and true function of the fort. It is local tradition, and has been reported elsewhere, that two large cannons, which had been mounted in defensive position in front of the fort, are buried in the mud floor of the bay immediately below the fort location (Perry 1988:17). In 1972, Harold Lister, acting as Chairman, formed a committee to investigate the possibility of locating and recovering the lost cannons off Fort Folly Point (Westmorland Historical Society Newsletter 1972). Whether he actually took action is unknown.

Industry

Rock quarrying, particularly in Rockland and Beaumont, was an industry that prospered in the area for many years. Thanks to a building boom, the market for cut stone expanded (Gaudet 1984: 102; Martin 1990:163; Spicer 1993:103). Since there was no local building stone available for the construction of heavy buildings on the American coast and no railroads or canals to move it from the interior, Americans were attracted by the enormous amount of quality building stone available on the Fort Folly peninsula and the quarries exported by water freight huge quantities of freestone, fine-grained sandstone or limestone to expanding cities on the American east coast.

During the last half of the 19th century there were approximately a dozen quarries in Westmorland County; and these activities transformed the area into one of the “largest sandstone producers in eastern Canada” (Martin 1990:50). “In 1861 some 125 men were employed in the production of 5000 tons of stone” (Spicer 1993:103). Grindstones and pulp stones were also produced and sent to the United States until the end of Reciprocity when the United States placed a high tariff on building stone and grindstones which severely affected the market (Spicer 1993:103). Included in the many major quarry operations, which were mostly on either Fort Folly Peninsula or Cape Maringouin Peninsula, were those in and around Beaumont Village (Martin 1990:50). These were the Boudreau quarry, the Beaumont Quarry (also known as “la carriere de Laurent a Sylvain” after the land owner), and one in Memramcook (Martin 1990:50).

Boudreau Quarry

The Boudreau Quarry was located approximately one mile north of Beaumont at the end of the dirt road (Figure 8). The landscape is spectacular; the quarry, partly enclosed by vertical cliffs of sandstone, sits on the ridge overlooking the

Petitcodiac River. The deep beds of rock are surrounded by and partially draped with forest and plant growth wherever roots could take hold. A loading dock made of stone stands in the center of the first pit; there are stacks of wooden palettes, and some old iron tools rest on the cliff faces at some spots, as though they had been left there yesterday.

For over forty years, beginning in 1855, stone from the Boudreau Quarry was shipped throughout New Brunswick and the United States. The stone from the quarry was desired because of its olive colour, durability and the ease with which it could be removed in large blocks and worked. Some of the stones removed were up to thirty feet long and twenty tons in weight.

“It was said that one of the stones shipped from the Boudreau quarry was so immense that it made up the cargo of a three master. Its transportation was considered so dangerous that the crew of the ship had to be paid a premium or bonus before they would sign on for the voyage. But the trip was made without mishap and the stone is now part of the fabric of the said state capital [at Albany] (Nampahc 1950:2).



Figure 8: Boudreau Quarry n.d.-Acadian Center, Champlain Library, University of Moncton PA2-54.

The first company to operate the quarry was the Dorchester Olive Freestone Company, an American company based in New York since 1858. When the company began operation in New Brunswick they met with opposition regarding land rights, which, after some legal maneuvering, they were able to overcome. With a depression in the United States and the onset of Civil War (1859-1863) the business suffered and eventually collapsed. The quarry then exchanged hands, due to the Dorchester Freestone Olive Company's financial and legal commitments, and the Dorchester Union Freestone Company took over. Albert Smith, who had

financed the mortgage for the Dorchester Olive

Company, acquired its holdings on its demise. He then transferred portions of the land to the Dorchester Union Freestone Company. He procured nearly a dozen properties on the peninsula, some quarries, and added these to their holdings between 1866 and the 1870's. While all of this was taking place, the quarry was busy extracting and transporting as much as 5000 to 7000 tons of stone.

By 1885 there were only about twenty men working part time at the Boudreau Quarry; the depression in the United States had weakened the market. The operations diminished until 1895 when the quarry was sold again. It was used briefly in the 1890's, but shut down for good around the end of the 19th century (Martin 1990:50-54).

Beaumont Quarry

The Beaumont Quarry was located approximately a mile and a half south of Beaumont on the west side of the road (Figure 9). As with the Boudreau Quarry, the Beaumont Quarry is characterized by picturesque scenery, a trait that has lured many tourists to the spot each summer. As one approaches the site, along the rough and bumpy dirt road, there is little indication that a quarry once operated there. Once upon it, however, one is immediately impressed by the cavernous, water lined pit, which drops away from the ground surface only feet from the road's edge. A small sign and wire fence sit at the edge of the cliff as a warning to visitors, but most people cannot resist standing at the brink and peeking over into the green, murky water below. An old, rather large piece of machinery, probably from quarrying days, can be detected lying under the water surface. About twenty feet south there is a path that skirts around the cavern and through the thicket. The path quickly sprouts into a network of small, overgrown trails that wind all over this small point of land separating the river from the cavern. Along the bank of the river there are still signs that ships once

landed here to collect stones. Some old cables and wooden beams are still scattered among the plant growth in a couple of places. Most interesting is a stone, which had been partially cut and shaped and then left. This may have been destined for use as a pulp or grind stone.

The Beaumont Quarry, in the late 1800's, shipped its product by sailboat down the Petitcodiac River and eventually on to purchasers in the United States (Perry 1988:17). It has been reported that the quarry was possibly opened in the 1860's, closed in 1872 and opened again in the late 1890's (Martin 1990:58). In the early period of operation the stone was removed using hand derricks and then transported to the wharf by teams of oxen



Figure 9: Beaumont Quarry n.d.-Acadian Center, Champlain Library, University of Moncton PA2-55.

or horses (Martin 1990:58). In the 1890's a local brick maker, Leslie Chapman, acquired the property, using it for pulp stone; some time later ownership shifted to Fred Palmer, and little is known of the happenings at the quarry at that time (Martin 1990:59). In 1909 operations began again under the Dorchester Stone Works Ltd. which employed fifteen to twenty men living in Beaumont Village. Over the next ten years the quarry produced 730 tons of large grindstones and 1050 tons of pulp stones before it closed in 1919 (Martin 1990:58). Pulp stones were round, about four feet in width

and several feet in thickness and were used in paper mills for grinding up pulpwood (Spicer 1993: 103). A few years later the Read family, who also operated the Rockland quarry across the peninsula, reopened the quarry. Stones from both quarries were taken by ship to the Dorchester pulpstone mill for processing. Their last job was to contribute dimension stone to the west wing of the St. Thomas church in 1934, and then the quarry closed for good (Martin 1990:59).

Beaumont Brickyard

At around the turn of the century a brickyard operated on the east bank of the Petitcodiac River. Frank Dobson of Dorchester remembered the brickyard and provided the Westmorland Historical Society with his recollections, including a drawing of the Brickyard at Beaumont, showing the brickyard to be a complex facility (Dobson 1981).

Founded by a Captain O'Neil and a Mr. Denier, the brickyard was located about one mile south of the chapel at Beaumont. As was the routine with some of the quarry operations, brick from this yard was taken by scow to the Island Wharf at Dorchester. The clay was taken from the banks of the small stream, described above, which flows into the Petitcodiac at that point. The clay was then formed into at least two types of brick which differed mainly in form, and therefore perhaps slightly

in function as well. The bricks with rectangular indentations along each face, which were probably a more recent innovation, may have been preferred for free standing structures such as fireplaces. A stronger bond would have been created by an increased amount of mortar within the cavities formed between the bricks. Both types of brick can be found at the site today.

In 1907 a kiln fire forced the brickyard to close, and it was never reopened. With a broken water pump there was no way to fight the fire. Whatever bricks remained were salvaged and sold. One local building constructed from this brick is the Tribune Press building in Sackville.

Conclusions

The peaceful landscape at Beaumont today betrays few obvious traces of its vibrant past (Figure 10). Although some families have remained in the area, it is used mostly by seasonal visitors and cottagers attracted by its tranquility and natural beauty. The chapel and rectory at Beaumont, situated on a slightly elevated piece of land, offer a commanding view of the waterscape. Nestled behind the chapel the large cemetery, though few headstones have survived, serves as a poignant reminder of the lives lived and others cut short at the site, but there is little else to conjure the human presence that once brought life to the entire point.



Figure 10: Beaumont Site 2003 - Helen Kristmanson.

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