

Nova Scotia

# Fort Anne National Historic Park



Brief history

What to look for



### **Brief History**

Annapolis Royal, or Port Royal as it was called by the French, is located at the confluence of the Allain and Annapolis Rivers in Nova Scotia. It occupied an important place in the early history of Canada as the seat of government in Nova Scotia for part of both the French and English regimes.

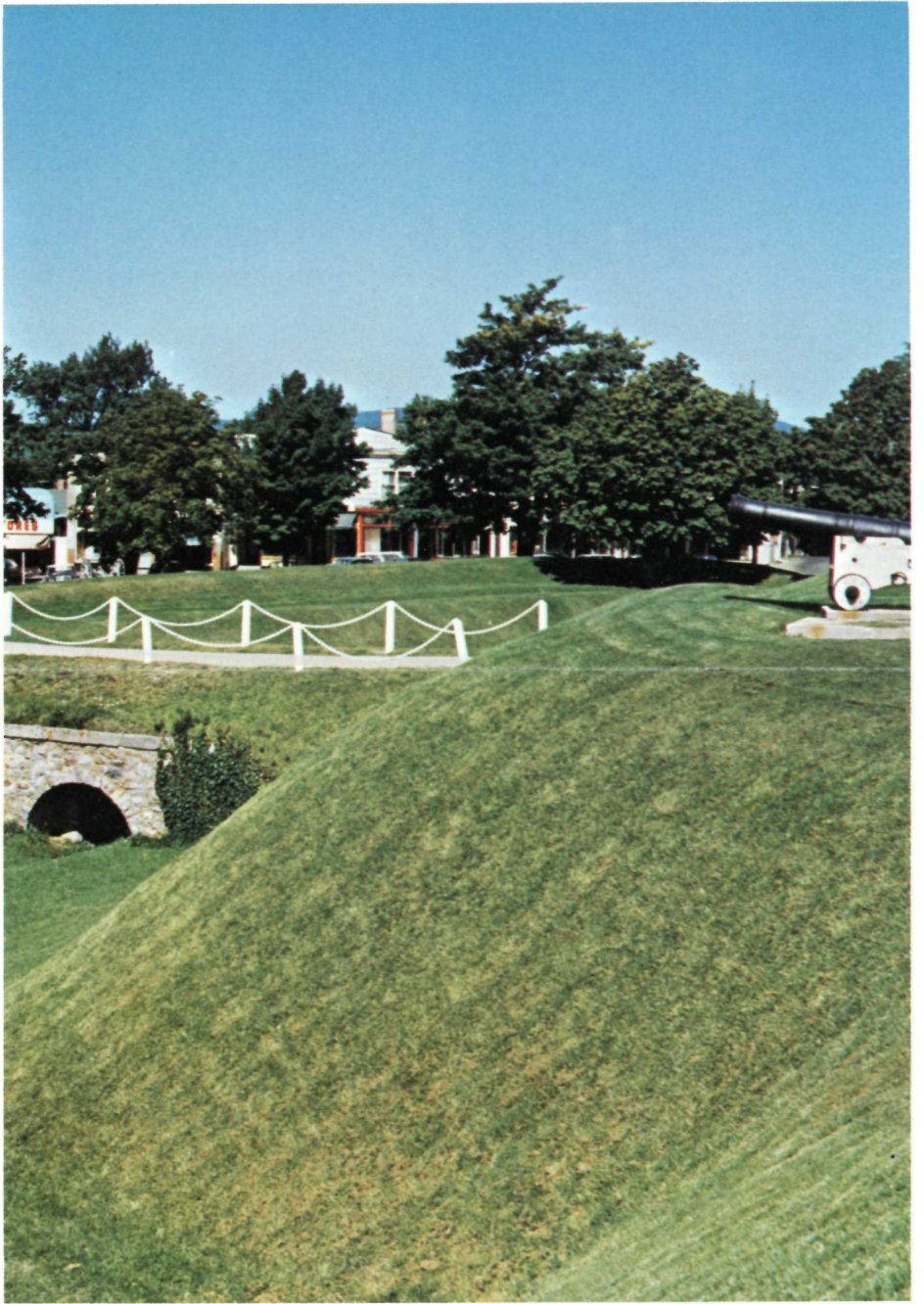
The first Port Royal settlement, established by the French in 1605, was not built here, but on a site five miles down the Annapolis River (where Port Royal National Historic Park is now located). This settlement was destroyed in 1613 by the English under Samuel Argall of Virginia. Nova Scotia was returned to the French by treaty in 1632. By 1635 the French Governor, Charles de Menou d'Aulnay, had built a new Port Royal, not on the old site down river, but on the site of the present town of Annapolis Royal. Between 1635 and 1710 other French settlements sprang up throughout the area of present-day Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island to create a vaguely defined territory known as Acadia.

Alarmed by numerous privateering attacks on their ships and by French-inspired Indian raids, the New England colonies attempted to destroy the Acadian settlements. Port Royal, as the French capital of Acadia, suffered many attacks and changed hands several times before 1690. By 1700, however, the French colonists were receiving somewhat better support from France, and were constructing a substantial fort – the present one – at Port Royal. New England forces attacked the new fort twice in 1707, but were repulsed by the garrison under the able and energetic Governor, Daniel Auger, Sieur de Subercase.

In 1710 mainland Nova Scotia, including Port Royal, was captured for the last time when Colonel Francis Nicholson the former Governor of Maryland, laid siege to the town and fort with a mixed force of New England troops and British marines. Subercase held out for two weeks, but lack of food for his soldiers and their families, and the constant rain of artillery shells finally forced him to surrender. Port Royal

was renamed Annapolis Royal in honour of Queen Anne and became the official British capital of Nova Scotia.

Until 1749 the British governors, aided by a rag-tag garrison of regular troops and New England provincials, and supported by the government of Massachusetts, attempted to maintain a British presence in a province populated by Acadians and infiltrated by French raiding parties from Quebec and Louisbourg. Their task was made none the easier by crumbling fortifications, poor morale among the troops, frequent ambushes outside the fort, and general indifference to their plight on the part of the authorities at home. The garrison was poorly fed; the soldiers were ill-paid, if at all; and the officers – when they were not quarrelling – frequently had to pool their own money to support their troops. Nevertheless, the beleaguered garrison defended the fort and town against several French attacks; and although they could not induce the Acadians to take an outright oath of allegiance to the Crown, succeeded in



obtaining at least their neutrality.

In 1749 the British established Halifax as the provincial capital and built a military base there to counterbalance the strong French fortress and settlement at Louisbourg. The fort at Annapolis Royal dwindled in importance to the status of a military outpost, and by the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763 was garrisoned by only a small detachment. It became a scene of activity once more in the 1790's when Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, was Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Canada. Prince Edward ordered repairs to the fort and installed a larger garrison as part of his policy of increasing British military strength in Nova Scotia. The last detachment of troops was withdrawn in 1854.

In 1917 the old fort was transferred from the Department of Militia and Defence to the National Parks Service, and became one of Canada's first national historic parks. It is now maintained by the National Historic Sites Service of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

#### What to look for

The present Fort Anne was built by the French between 1695 and 1708, and incorporates later additions made by the British. Its construction was based on a system perfected by the great French engineer Vauban, and consisted of a four-bastion earthwork surrounded by a dry ditch and protected on the west by a ravelin. Located at the confluence of the Allain and Annapolis Rivers, the fort was intended primarily to guard against naval attack, and the weakness of its landward defences plagued both its French builders and their British successors. In the mid-1740's, when French attacks were an annual occurrence, the British strengthened the fort by adding two detached ravelins to guard against attacks from the landward side.

The only surviving original buildings are the storehouse in the northwest bastion and the powder magazine in the southwest bastion. The museum building is a reconstruction (1940) of the officers' quarters, originally built in 1797. (see map)

1 *Road and entrance.*

2 *Northeast bastion.* A bastion is a projecting part of a fortification designed to defend the adjoining walls. The northeast bastion was called the Bastion Dauphin by the French and accommodated a bake-house and blacksmith's forge. During the English regime, carpenters' shops and gunners' quarters were also located here.

3 *Road and exit.*

4 *Northeast ravelin.* A ravelin is a triangular outwork protected by a ditch and placed in front of curtain walls for their protection. The northeast ravelin was built by the British in 1747 to protect the fort from landward attack.

5 *Southeast bastion,* built by the French and called the Bastion du Roy.

6 *South ravelin,* built by the British in 1747 to protect the fort from landward attack.

7 *Southwest bastion,* called the Bastion de Bery by the French, it covered the approach to the fort from the Allain River.

8 *Powder magazine,* originally constructed by the French in 1708. For protection, the walls were sunk into the southwest bastion. The entrance-way has been changed considerably from 1708 but the building itself has retained its original form.

9 *Sally port,* built about 1750 on the site of an earlier French gate.

10 *West ravelin.* The oldest ravelin of the three in the fort, and the only one built during the French period.

11 *Barbette battery.* Here are the faint remains of a battery built by the French and rebuilt by the British. Guns mounted in a barbette battery fire over the parapet rather than through embrasures (apertures in the wall).

12 *Northwest bastion,* built by the French and called the Bastion de Bourgogne, it guarded the approach from the Annapolis River.

13 *Underground storehouse,* used as a storehouse by the French and as an armoury by the British.

14 *Dry ditch.* This obstacle surrounding the fort formed an important part of its defences. It was widened by the British on the west and south sides when the two ravelins were added in 1747. Contrary to popular

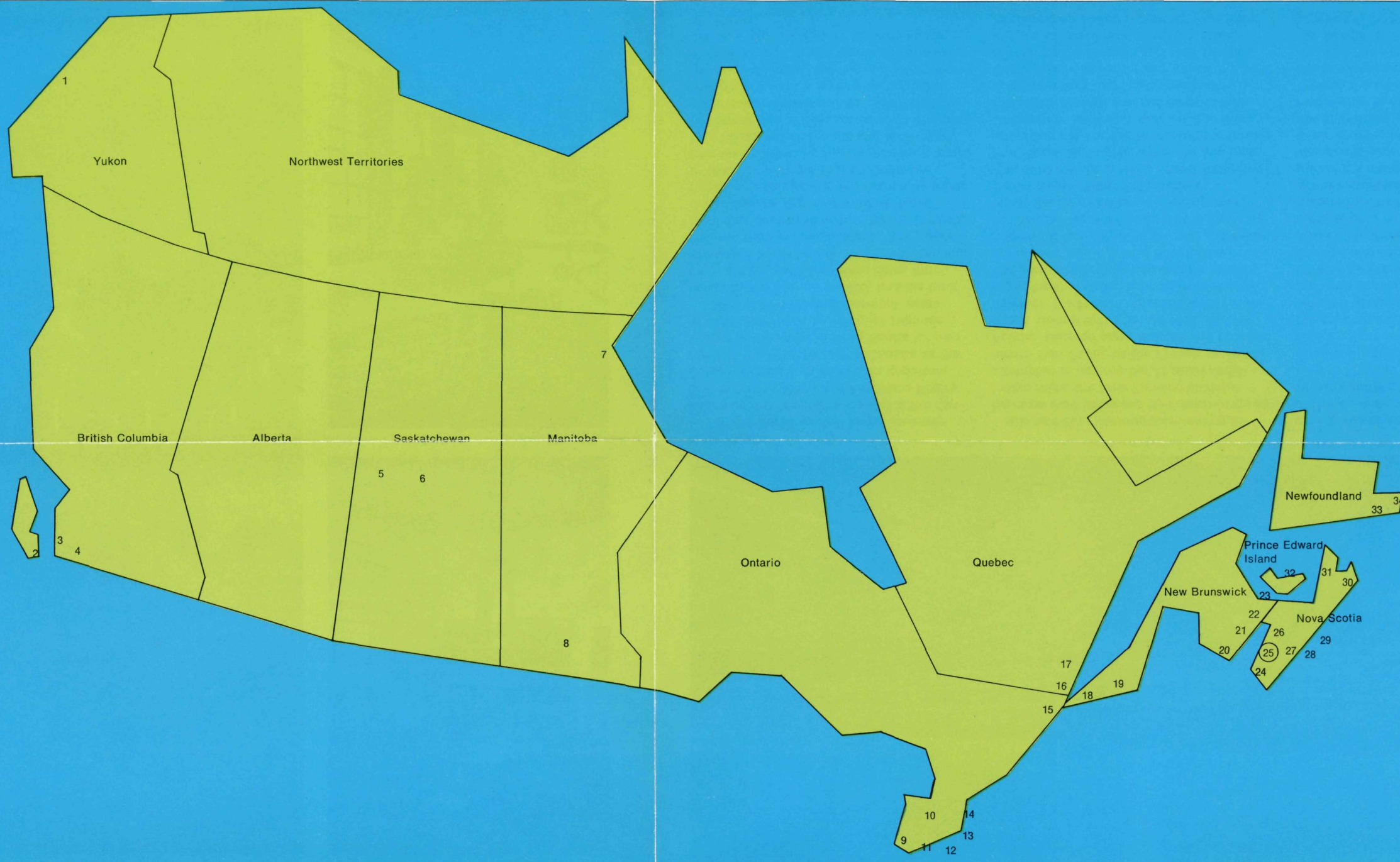
belief, the ditch was not designed to hold water.

15 *Covert way.* A road approximately 30 feet wide and protected by a small parapet ran all around the outer perimeter of the ditch. In time of siege, troops manned the road to defend the approach to the fort.

#### The museum building

The museum building is a reconstruction of the officers' quarters built in 1797 as part of the improvements ordered by Prince Edward, Duke of Kent. The original building had deteriorated beyond repair by the 1930's, and only small sections could be incorporated in the reconstruction. The original layout of the rooms has been preserved, and where interior woodwork and other fittings were replaced, the original designs were reproduced.

The main floor of the museum building is occupied by administrative offices, a library, and the museum proper. On the other floors are rooms devoted to maps, ships, Indians, natural history of the area, and miscellaneous exhibits.



**National Historic Parks & Sites**

- 1 Dawson City, (Yukon Territory) Centre of the Klondike Gold Rush. Palace Grand Theatre and riverboat S.S. Keno preserved as national historic sites.
- 2 Fort Rodd Hill, (British Columbia) Nineteenth century British coastal fortification with historic Fisgard Lighthouse nearby.
- 3 Vancouver, (British Columbia) The schooner, St. Roch, first vessel to navigate the Northwest Passage from West to East; built in 1928 for the R.C.M.P.'s Arctic patrol service; exhibited at the Vancouver Maritime Museum.
- 4 Fort Langley, (British Columbia) A partial reconstruction of palisaded Hudson's Bay Company post of 1850's.
- 5 Fort Battleford, (Saskatchewan) North West Mounted Police Post built in 1876 in the territory of the Cree Indians. Original buildings house interesting museum collection and are surrounded by a log stockade.
- 6 Batoche Rectory, (Saskatchewan) Headquarters of the Metis during the North West Rebellion of 1885 at Duck Lake.
- 7 Fort Prince of Wales, (Manitoba) The most northerly fortress on the North American continent built by the Hudson's Bay Company between 1733-1771. Opposite Churchill.
- 8 Lower Fort Garry, (Manitoba) Stone fort built by the Hudson's Bay Company between 1831-1839. Located on west bank of Red River about 20 miles north of Winnipeg.
- 9 Fort Malden, (Ontario) At Amherstburg, museum buildings, and earthworks of defence post first built in 1797-1799, destroyed by the Americans, 1813, rebuilt 1819-1823.
- 10 Woodside, (Ontario) At Kitchener, the boyhood home of William Lyon Mackenzie King, tenth prime minister of Canada.
- 11 "Navy-Hall", (Ontario) At Niagara-on-the-Lake, built in 1817 as commissariat store. Located on site of earlier naval compound, built 1775-1778; hence the traditional name "Navy Hall".

- 12 Fort George, (Ontario) At Niagara-on-the-Lake, main fortification built 1797-1801; reconstructed 1937-1940 by Niagara Parks Commission; declared National Historic Park, 1969.
- 13 Queenston Heights, (Ontario) Site of major American invasion, critical battle and American defeat during War of 1812. Monument to Major-General Isaac Brock killed during the repulse.
- 14 Bellevue House, (Ontario) At Kingston, home of the first prime minister of Canada, Sir John A. Macdonald.
- 15 Fort Wellington, (Ontario) At Prescott, defence post built between 1812-1814, with blockhouse dating from 1839, and museum.
- 16 Coteau-du-Lac, (Québec) Late 18th-century British military post and site of first canal on the St. Lawrence River at Coteau-du-Lac.
- 17 Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Birthplace, (Québec) House at St. Lin des Laurentides where Canada's seventh prime minister was probably born.
- 18 Fort Chambly, (Québec) Fort first built by French in 1665 was destroyed by fire and rebuilt between 1709-1711. It was occupied by the Americans and British. At Chambly, about 19 miles southeast of Montreal.
- 19 Fort Lennox, (Québec) On Ile-aux-Noix in the Richelieu River near St. Jean, an island fort, first built by the French in 1759, rebuilt by the British, 1776-1782. The present fort dates from 1819-1829.
- 20 St. Andrews Blockhouse, (New Brunswick) At St. Andrews, only remaining defence-work of a series of blockhouses and batteries built by civilians against American privateers.
- 21 Carleton Martello Tower, (New Brunswick) At Saint John, built during War of 1812. With the addition of a concrete superstructure, Tower became part of city's war defensive fire control center during World War II.
- 22 Fort Beauséjour, (New Brunswick) Site of major French fort in area, 1750-1755; captured by the British in 1755; defended against the Americans in 1776. Near Sackville.
- 23 Fort Gaspereau, (New Brunswick) Near Port Elgin on Baie Verte, square palisade with blockhouse at each corner, built by French in 1750 to defend Acadia (New Brunswick); burnt by British in 1756. Remains of parade square and ditch may be seen.
- 24 Port Royal, (Nova Scotia) Restoration of "Habitation" or first fort built in 1605 by Champlain, DeMonts and Poutrincourt.

- 25 Fort Anne, (Nova Scotia) At Annapolis Royal, well-preserved earthworks of fort built by the French, 1695-1708, and enlarged by the British, 1710-1750. The museum building is a reconstruction of the Officer's Quarters built in 1797.

- 26 Grand Pré, (Nova Scotia) Evangeline Chapel and museum stand near the village where the principal events in the expulsion of the Acadians took place.
- 27 Halifax Citadel, (Nova Scotia) Nineteenth-century stone fortress, one of the largest in North America, contains three spacious museums relating to Canada's naval, military and provincial history.
- 28 Prince of Wales Martello Tower, (Nova Scotia) At Point Pleasant Park, Halifax, built by British between 1796-1798. Modified in 1862 to provide powder magazine, armament, four machicolation galleries and parapet at roof level. Tower is last remaining example of this style of 19th-century fortification in Nova Scotia. Several exist in Quebec and Ontario.
- 29 York Redoubt, (Nova Scotia) Begun in 1793 by the British to defend the port of Halifax, it had a battery of eight 24-pounder guns. Remains of foundations for 30-foot stone martello tower and other defence-works built since 1798 may be seen. Most structures date from the 1880's when defences were modernized.
- 30 Fortress of Louisbourg, (Nova Scotia) The French outpost on the Atlantic coast built after 1713 Treaty of Utrecht. In 1720 work began on the defences and a sizeable town was built within its walls. Restoration of buildings and some massive defences reconstructed to the 18th-century period. About 23 miles south of Sydney.
- 31 Alexander Graham Bell Museum, (Nova Scotia) A large museum of original design at Baddeck contains extensive collection of relics of experiments in many scientific fields by Bell and his associates.
- 32 Fort Amherst, (Prince Edward Island) At Rocky Point across the harbour from Charlottetown, site of Port La Joye, French settlement of 1720, captured by the British in 1758. Earthworks of British fort built there still visible.
- 33 Castle Hill, (Newfoundland) Ruins of harbour fortifications begun by the French at Placentia about 1662. Interpretation centre.
- 34 Signal Hill, (Newfoundland) Rocky headland at entrance to St. John's harbour. Site of numerous early fortifications and the last battle during the Seven Years' War in North America. Includes John Cabot Memorial Tower.

**Fort Anne and vicinity**



**Fort Anne site**

Read "What to look for"

