

**T**HE comparative modernity of the antiques is a paradox of this Western country. There are few buildings more than fifty years old, and those which have survived are mostly sad examples of the architecture peculiar to mushroom growth.

Happily most of these unfortunate buildings must soon be demolished and most traces of the real estate booms of early western settlement will disappear, leaving the less ornate and more substantial structures of maturer years.

It is fortunate that those who went before us in the Hudson's Bay Company did not permit Lower Fort Garry to suffer the fate of Upper Fort Garry, Fort Edmonton and other old fur trade establishments, which were demolished to facilitate town planning. Lower Fort Garry, though young in the years of the Hudson's Bay Company, is one of the oldest buildings of Manitoba and, with Fort Prince of Wales at Churchill, is built of materials which will survive the older homesteads of the Red River valley. When the last Victorian structure is demolished the Lower Fort will remain, and then and in the centuries to



The Fort from above the Red River.

R.C.A.F. Photo.

## Lower Fort Garry

The White Walls, Bastions and Recessed Windows of Lower Fort Garry Are Unforgettable Memories of Home to Many Scattered Throughout the World Today. These Pictures Show the Sympathetic Preservation of the Interior of This Century Old Headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company's Western Fur Trade Domain of Last Century Which is Now the Winnipeg Motor Country Club.

come it will be to Manitobans a priceless relic of the white man's earliest days in the West.

From 1831, when it was built by Scottish stonemasons, until 1909, Lower Fort Garry was an active fur trade post, residence of governors and stage for many historical incidents. From 1909 to 1913 its fate was uncertain. Then it was leased by the Company to become the home of the Winnipeg Motor Country Club. Since that time the Company and the club, conscious of the obligation upon them, have done everything possible to preserve the fort for posterity.

Looking across from the Ball Room into the comfortable Drawing Room.

An authentic spinning wheel salvaged from a second hand store.



Constant examination of buildings for signs of decay and replanting of trees is the contribution of the Company, while the club, with nice discrimination, has bought old furniture from nearby farm-houses and has copied authentic fur trade furniture, so that the interior of the fort, though more comfortable than in the sterner days of the fur trade, may remain much as it was in the days of George IV.

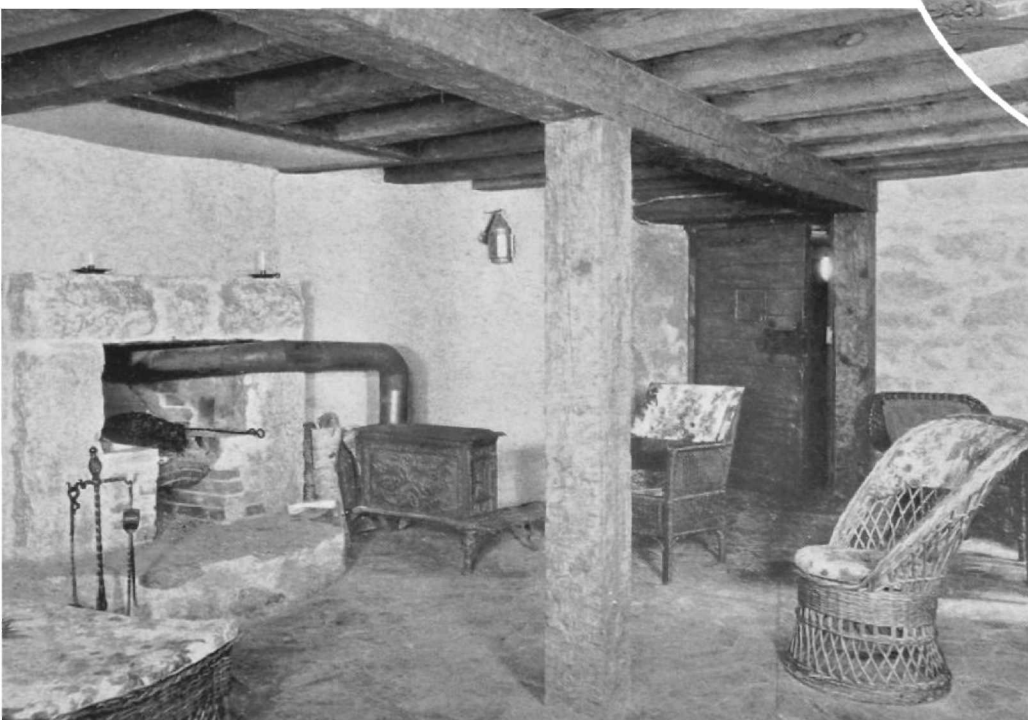
Mrs. Cowley, the daughter of the late Chief Trader William Flett, who was in charge of the fort from 1867 to 1882, has given us the following interesting description of life at the fort:

"The life at the fort was a simple but happy one. The business in a way was conducted on military lines. At six a.m. when the fort bell rang, everyone started out to their several occupations; at seven-thirty the bell rang and everyone went to breakfast. (Mr. Flett made his round of inspection between six and seven-thirty a.m.) The bell was again sounded at eight-thirty and everyone returned to work. One o'clock the dinner bell rang; two o'clock



The Mess Room, with replicas of old chairs, is now the Club Dining Room.

The kitchen below stairs, with rough hewn timbers and deep windows, is now the bar.



The old "Governor's Room," now a lounge. The heavy door was formerly in the jail.

work again. At five o'clock Mr. Flett again made his rounds. At six o'clock the bell rang and everything was closed for the day.

"On Saturdays the bell rang at five o'clock, the closing hour for that day, so as to give the men time to get their supplies.

"There were a grist mill, saw mill, blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, sale shop, provision stores (for all employed were provided with free food), stables and a big garden. The garden was in charge of an old English gardener, who got all his seeds from England, and he was a master in his work. Beginning with asparagus, he gave the officers' mess and fort everything as it came in season, but woe betide anyone who touched anything without his permission.

"In the summer the native women brought in quantities of wild fruit, such as strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, plums and, late in the fall,

wild cranberries. No money ever passed: they were just exchanged for flour, tea or small supplies."

With what pride the residents of the Red River colony watched the construction of the fort. Alexander Ross wrote:

"These splendid establishments (the stone Upper and Lower Forts), for such they really are in a place like Red River, impart an air of growing importance to the place. Upper Fort Garry . . . is a lively and attractive station, full of business and bustle. Here all affairs of the colony are chiefly transacted, and here ladies wear their silken gowns and gentlemen their beaver hats. Its gay and imposing appearance make it a delight of every visitor and a rendezvous of all comers and goers. Lower Fort Garry is more secluded, although picturesque, and full of rural beauty," and it is these qualities which make the Lower Fort today one of the most pleasant spots in Western Canada.

The Drawing Room. On the left is a copy of Sir George Simpson's chair at Norway House.

