

The Lockstation Offices

A recent email exchange with noted Rideau Canal historian Robert W. Passfield, brought up the issue of the proper name for the modern lockstation buildings we see along the canal, should they be called a lockstation office or a watch house? That then brought up the history of those buildings and their function. In terms of function, this type of building dates back to 1875. But of course, buildings that served a similar function, but also acted as dwelling for the lockmaster, date back to 1832.

A lockmaster needs to be aware of vessel traffic approaching the lock. Up until the mid-20th century, the lockmaster lived at the lockstation. His dwelling was positioned in a spot that provided the best view. In his original plan for the Rideau Canal, Lt. Colonel John By proposed lockmaster's houses for most lockstations. As his worries about the defence of the canal increased, he changed his plans for many of those to large and small blockhouses. At Merrickville for instance he decided to change the originally proposed lockmaster's house to a blockhouse stating "[I] have taken upon myself the responsibility of deviating from the original plan by substituting a Block House for a Lock Master's House for defensive reasons." While By got a few of his blockhouses started, in 1833, the building of any new ones was stopped by the British Treasury who now had full financial authority over the canal.

The blockhouses in most spots served the dual purpose of defence and a dwelling for the lockmaster and his family. By 1834, four blockhouses had been completed, one half completed (worked stopped) and two stone lockmaster's houses completed. In other spots, such as Davis Lock, other buildings, including former contractor's houses, were initially used by the lockmaster.

The Upper Canada rebellion of 1837 sparked a need to bolster the defence of the canal. The British Parliament, fearful of U.S. invasion of Canada and potential rebellion of some of the citizens in its colony, approved the release of funds to complete the defensive works for the canal. So By's plans were dusted off and work began. In 1838, non-defensible (no loopholes) stone lockmaster's houses were built at Nicholson's, Clowes and Old Slys, but nothing further was done.

In 1838 the British government transferred several canals to the colonial government, but the Upper Canada legislature refused the Rideau and Ottawa canals since



Davis Lock

The Lockstation Office, aka Watch House, built in 1875, still sits beside the lock to this day. Photo by Ken W. Watson

they were not seen as valuable for commerce. With the British government still very worried about the defence of Canada, they decided to transfer full control of the Rideau Canal back to Ordnance (British Army). That happened on May 20, 1840 and the Rideau returned to being operated as a full military canal. With Ordnance now in full control, a design change to the lockmaster's houses was made with defensive loopholes added to these stone buildings. Starting in 1841, several lockstations saw these defensible lockmaster houses built. The last of these was built at Bytown (Ottawa) in 1849.

In 1856 ownership and control of the canal was transferred to the provincial government and the emphasis for canal operations became the commercial use of the canal. Capital budgets for improvements basically dropped to zero. Moving ahead to 1875, it was now over 40 years since the completion of the canal and buildings being used as canalmen houses were starting to fall apart. The locks operated 24 hours a day and there was a need to have canal staff near the lock. The lockmaster's houses were just that, dwellings for the lockmaster and his family, and, unlike under military jurisdiction, the lockmaster was not on call 24 hours a day. So, at Davis Lock, a log storage building adjacent to the lock was torn down and a watch house was built. It had an office and storage on the main floor and a dormitory for any men that needed it on the

Friends of the Rideau is a volunteer, non-profit organization, working to enhance and conserve the heritage and charm of the Rideau Canal.

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Defensible Lockmaster's House at Ottawa, c.1865

This c.1865 photo shows the defensible lockmaster's house sitting above the Ottawa Locks. Directly in the background is the old 1827 Commissariat building, today's Bytown Museum. The house was built in 1849 and torn down in 1875. In 1884, a lockstation office was built adjacent to the upper lock. Library and Archives Canada, C-084724.

second floor. We then see this type of building start to appear at other lockstations. At Chaffey's for instance, the original one-storey storehouse was replaced by a two-storey watch house in the late 1800s. At Ottawa, the beautiful stone lockstation office was built adjacent to the upper lock in 1884. Of note, this building, still serving its purpose at Ottawa today, has more in common with the lockstation offices to come than with a watch house.

We now fast forward to the 1960s. The Department of Transport was running the Rideau Canal purely as a recreational canal and was looking to modernize the canal. There was a need at several sites to build new lockstation offices and so they had a new type of building designed, one that would conform to the typical park-like setting of a Rideau lockstation. These modern lockstation offices incorporated a watch office, a lunchroom, a workshop/storage space and public washrooms. Nine of these were built between 1967 and 1974. At Clowes for instance, the old two storey watch house, built in 1881, was torn down and replaced with a modern lockstation office.

Today, as you travel the canal, you'll see a mix of old and "new" buildings. They all serve the same purpose as

working buildings for the lockstation staff. You can still see several of the original watch houses at places such as Chaffey's, Davis and Jones Falls, although somewhat modernized over the years (i.e. electricity, indoor plumbing and some incorporating washrooms). Today, under Parks Canada, these heritage buildings should be maintained and preserved for future generations to appreciate. Even the "modern" lockstation offices speak to the continuing history of the canal. They speak to a time when the people of Canada realized the heritage value of the canal to our nation and initiated the transfer of the Rideau Canal from the Department of Transport to Parks Canada with a clear mandate to run the Rideau Canal as a heritage site.

So, back to the initial question, is the proper name a Lockstation Office or a Watch House? Parks Canada today calls all of these buildings lockstation offices due to their function at the site. But in terms of form, watch house is perhaps more appropriate for the older structures and lockstation office for the modern buildings.

- Ken W. Watson



Lockstation Office at Upper Brewers

This photo is an example of the new design for a lockstation office introduced in 1967. Unlike oTentiks that visually pollute some of the Rideau lockstations today, these buildings were purpose designed to be conformable with the soft landscapes of a Rideau Canal Lockstation. Photo by Ken W. Watson

Letter from the Chair

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Friends of the Rideau, now that the 190th season on the Rideau Canal has concluded, I would like to provide you with a snapshot on what we did this year.

Those of you able to visit The Depot, our visitor and interpretation centre in Merrickville, would have seen the remarkable work done by the skilled team from Parks Canada's carpentry shop. The building, which dates to the 1860s, was in poor shape. It needed a proper foundation, a new floor, new washrooms, and repairs to several of the exterior walls. The rehabilitation of the building has provided a larger open space for our displays and very comfortable washrooms. During restoration, evidence of a fire decades ago, likely from an overheated wood stove, was discovered. The charred timbers from this event were left intact as an interesting part of the building's history. Visit the Depot next summer and see for yourself.

Thanks to the efforts of the Depot operating committee of Cheryl Gulseth, Gillian Organ and Bruce Kemp, plus the excellent work of summer staff Joshua Terpstra and Elijah Loos, we had an excellent operating season from mid-June to Labour Day. While respecting public health protocols, we welcomed 9,750 visitors, which is very close to our numbers in 2019, the last "normal" year.

The Friends road show stayed home this year, as the events we normally attend did not take place. For the Board members who comprise the team this was disappointing, as meeting you at the boat shows and regattas and exhibitions is a high point of our annual program. We'll be back on the road in 2022.

Members of Friends continued to be involved with the University of Ottawa/Carleton University research project on the natural science and social science aspects of managing the Rideau Canal. On the social science side the work on governance is led by Christine

Beaudoin, Isha Mistry and Professor Nathan Young. (historicwaterways.mixsite.com/research). While Parks Canada is a partner with the researchers, the value in the work is the independent perspective of the academic team.

As you know from previous issues of this newsletter, Friends has provided comments in writing as well as taking part in virtual consultations with Parks Canada managers regarding the draft Rideau Canal Management Plan (see the Spring/Summer issue of the newsletter.) We expected to see a document from Parks Canada entitled "What We Heard" summarizing the range of public comments. As this letter is being written, there has been no sign of this communication. In our view, that there was an election in September is no excuse.

Friends continues to discuss with Parks Canada the re-printing of the interpretive brochure "How a Lock Works." Friends arranged to have this informative pamphlet re-printed several years ago, for distribution at lock stations. The content of the brochure was prepared by Friends twenty years ago (reviewed and updated by Friends with each printing), and it serves as a very valuable guide and education tool for visitors all along the Rideau Canal. The

brochure has been out of print for two years, we hope to see it return to the lockstations in 2022 if we can convince Parks Canada to support this important heritage interpretation piece.

Thank you for your support during these challenging times. Renewal of memberships and your donations are very important to us as a signal that we are in line with your interests.

- Hunter McGill



Newly Restored Depot

This heritage building, owned by Parks Canada, was beautifully restored by them in 2019–20. We were able to open again in 2021, welcoming many visitors.

Top: Here we see Cheryl Gulseth, Hunter McGill along with our two summer staff, Joshua Terpstra and Elijah Loos.

Bottom: Hunter with Joshua and Elijah inside the "new" Depot. Photos by Ken W. Watson

Hunter McGill—Lifetime Membership

At our 2021 AGM on October 16, 2021, the Board of Directors was pleased to present a long overdue honour to our Chair, Hunter McGill, that of a Lifetime Membership in Friends of the Rideau. These are rare, in the 37 year history of Friends of the Rideau, Hunter is only the 5th recipient of a lifetime membership.

Hunter's involvement with Friends goes back to 1990, when then Chair, Larry Turner, encouraged him to join the board. Work obligations took him away from Friends from 1995 to 1998 and then from 2002 to 2007 when he was based in Paris, gallivanting all over the world on behalf of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Factoring this in, Hunter is presently in his 25th year of volunteer service with Friends.

Hunter's passion of providing the public with a deeper understanding and appreciation of the rich heritage of the Rideau Canal, is apparent in everything he does with Friends. Hunter is a true champion of the Rideau Canal, he's not only involved with Friends but has many years of volunteer service with other organizations such as the Rideau Waterway Land Trust and Heritage Ottawa.

In 2010, then Chair of Friends, Ed Bebee, handed over the reins of command to Hunter. Hunter was already involved in many things for Friends, including the Depot. An initiative that Ed started, of having a Friends' booth at various events along the Rideau, was taken on by Hunter. Plus of course the many



Plaque Presentation

Friends' Director Gillian Organ presents Hunter McGill with his lifetime membership plaque at the 2021 AGM.

responsibilities as the Chair of a non-profit organization – there is a tremendous amount of behind the scenes work done by Hunter.

In addition to the sweat and mental equity Hunter puts into Friends, he's also our largest benefactor. This was also recognized at the AGM where Hunter was named a Patron of the Association, a donor category in our by-laws, never before used, but triggered by his donation to Friends this year.

2021 AGM

After a one-year gap in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Friends of the Rideau convened an annual meeting on October 16, 2021. The meeting was held in The Depot, the Friends visitor and interpretation centre in Merrickville, which was configured for a meeting of up to 25 attendees. Participation was limited due to heavy, monsoon-like rainfall that day.

Hunter McGill provided a synopsis of activities since our last AGM and tabled an Annual Report for 2019-2020. Treasurer Cheryl Gulseth tabled a financial statement for 2019 and 2020. Friends completed the financial period to December 31, 2020, in a positive financial position, despite not operating The Depot in 2020. The Treasurer noted that in 2021 the Depot had received 9,750 visitors. In addition, the support from the Canada Summer Jobs program and a grant from the Village of Merrickville-Wolford, together with revenue

from sales and donations meant that costs had been fully covered. Newsletter and website costs were offset by a Heritage Organizations Development Grant from the Ontario government.

Elected to the board of directors for two-year terms were Chris Biber, Cheryl Gulseth, Bruce Kemp, Hunter McGill, Gillian Organ, Joshua Terpstra, Sue Warren and Ken Watson.

At the end of the meeting, Gillian Organ presented Hunter McGill with an award of lifetime membership in Friends of the Rideau, in recognition of his years of service to the organization. He also was given a certificate as Patron of Friends for his financial support.

In 2022 it is hoped to return to the normal practice of a spring annual meeting, coinciding with the opening of the Rideau Canal.

BASS on the RIDEAU

"Black and green bass are as plentiful here as pollywogs in a rain barrel"

quote from "The Picturesque Rideau," 1898.

Recreational fishing has a long history on the Rideau Canal, in fact it was the main driver of early waterfront development and the beginnings of the Rideau tourism industry in the 19th century. Today it remains a significant economic contributor to this region, but there are local concerns about tournament fishing, particularly the system of catch and transport to a weighing station and its effect on bass.

At a recent meeting of the Rideau Lakes Lake Association Committee (RLLAC), Dr. Steven J. Cooke of Carleton University and Dr. David P. Philipp of the Fisheries Conservation Foundation gave a fascinating presentation about Black Bass (combined name for largemouth & smallmouth bass).

The tournament people are becoming more aware of the issue of the removal of bass from their habitat. Bass take a long time to return to their homes. Depending on the time of year caught, only 50% of largemouth bass return after 200 days, with some taking over a year to return. Smallmouth are a bit quicker, averaging about 100 days for a 50% return. The effect on bass populations of this slow return to their home territory is still being studied.

Tournament organizers are making changes. New technology is allowing catch, weighing and release at the boat. Hopefully this will become the norm for all tournament fishing. Of interest is that for the general waterfront public, displacement of bass isn't their main concern or even mortality of bass caught during these tournaments. What bothered 100% of the respondents in a survey done with waterfront owners on Big Rideau Lake were bass anglers fishing in their "private space", i.e. a fishing boat parked 10 feet off your dock while you're trying to enjoy your morning coffee. That annoyed everybody.

While tournament fishing, particularly with the new at-boat catch and release system, does not appear to have much impact on bass populations, there is a real problem with declining bass populations. Studies done on Opinicon Lake show bass reproductive output decreasing, a decline that started in the early 2000s. Several key indicators, including the number of successful nests, is down 50% on Opinicon Lake when compared to the 1990 to 2000 period.

In addition to bass mortality due to gut hooking, a significant reason for the decline appears to be fishing when the bass are nesting. An empirical study, using two anglers in a single boat, fishing a 500 m stretch for 30 minutes in a bass nesting area, showed that over 50% of the nesting bass were pulled off their nests. Even with catch and release, other fish are quick to eat the eggs or fry if the guardian bass is removed. In addition, if the bass is exhausted from being caught it guards the nest with much less vigor and may abandon the nest.

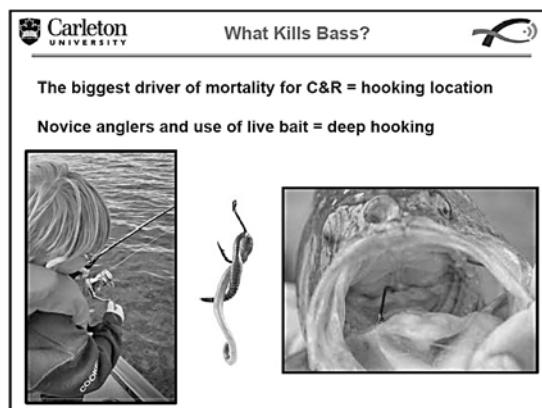
Cooke and Philipp have proposed a solution to the problem of declining bass populations, to create bass spawning sanctuaries which are off limits to all fishing in May and June. It's a solution that would protect the bass populations, yet still allow fishing in the lake for other seasonal catches such as pickerel, pike and crappie. It's a question now of convincing the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, who control the fishing regulations, to set up this system on the Rideau lakes. Ask your local lake association to take up this cause. For more information contact Dr. Cooke at: StevenCooke@carleton.ca



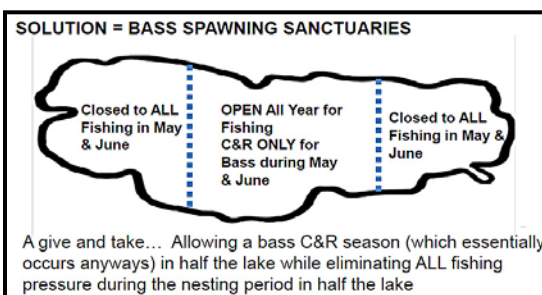
A bass guards its nest on Sand Lake. Photo by Ken W. Watson

Lake	Bass Caught	Bass Kept	Release %
Big Rideau Lake	196215	21358	89.3%
Newboro Lake	133097	10228	92.5%
Opinicon Lake	61345	8467	86.8%
Sand Lake	63587	8560	87.4%

Chart compiled by Dr. Cooke based on data from DFO/MNRF National Rec Fishing Survey.



Largest cause of adult bass mortality with catch and release is deep hooking the bass.



A give and take... Allowing a bass C&R season (which essentially occurs anyways) in half the lake while eliminating ALL fishing pressure during the nesting period in half the lake

Schematic showing Cooke and Philipp's proposal to protect the bass populations in our lakes.

The National Historic Site Designation of the Rideau Canal

In 2011, the Rideau Canal received a new, expanded National Historic Site of Canada (NHS) designation. Few are aware of this, including Parks Canada, or at least the Waterways unit, since the Draft Management Plan for the Rideau Canal used the old, out of date, designation wording (they have now been made aware of this significant error). I only became aware of the 2011 re-designation after recent correspondence with the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC). While I was aware of the 2013 re-plaquing of the Rideau, I wasn't aware that it was based on new designation wording. It turns out that the Rideau Canal has been officially designated three times, with each designation expanding on the former.

In 1919, James B. Harkin, the head of the Dominion Parks Branch, later known as Parks Canada, convinced the federal government to establish an advisory board for historic site preservation. At that board's first meeting they chose the official name, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), a name it still carries today. This board is responsible for the designation of sites and people of national historic significance to Canada.

On **May 15, 1925**, the HSMBC declared that **"the construction of the Rideau Canal be declared an event of national importance."** That date is the official NHS designation date for the Rideau Canal. But all that was recognized at that time was the construction of the canal.

Jumping forward to the 1960s we saw a huge amount of public and government heritage awareness generated by the upcoming centennial of Canada's Confederation. There was an increasing awareness of our nation's heritage and the need to protect and present it. And so it was that in **October 1967**, the HSMBC:

"reaffirmed its recommendation that the Rideau Canal is of national historical importance, and further resolved as follows:

The Board recommends to the Minister that:

- **the entire lock system of the Rideau Canal including locks, blockhouses, dams, weirs and original lockmaster's houses be declared of national historical significance.**

This wording became the new designation with all the heritage buildings and engineering structures of the Rideau Canal added to the Rideau Canal itself. In addition, at that same meeting the board recommended that:

- a National Historic Park be established to embrace all these structures and interpret the Canal System.
- the Minister should assume such responsibilities for the policies of Canal maintenance and operation as may be necessary to maintain the existing structures and preserve the unique historical environment of the Canal System."

This is part of the complex story of the transfer of the Rideau Canal from the Department of Transport to Parks Canada, which was completed in 1972. It was a request to transfer the canal to Parks Canada so that it could be protected and interpreted.

In 2007, the Rideau Canal received its UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) designation for three reasons that were not part of its existing NHS designation: 1) the innovative slackwater technique being applied on a large scale; 2) the fact that the Rideau is the only canal dating from the great North American canal-building era of the early 19th century that remains operational along its original line with most of its original structures intact; and 3) that the Rideau Canal, built as a military canal, represents a significant stage in human history – the fight to control North America, which, at that time, was between the United States of America and Britain.



New NHS Plaques

In 2013, the Rideau was re-plaqued with wording based on the 2011 designation. One was placed in Ottawa and one at Jones Falls. Unfortunately the one at Jones Falls was not located where the HSMBC recommended its placement, by the Visitor Centre where it would be highly visible to all. Rather it was placed in a flat position at the top of the dam and goes unnoticed by many visitors. Photo by Ken W. Watson

National Historic Site Designation of the Rideau Canal continued

So in 2007, we now had international recognition of heritage facets of the canal that were not specifically included in its existing NHS designation. In addition, there has been growing awareness since 1967 of the human effort and cost in the building of the Rideau Canal and also the Rideau Canal's role in the economic and cultural development of this part of Canada. Therefore, in 2011, the HSMBC expanded the NHS designation of the Rideau Canal to include both the WHS elements and the human, economic and cultural elements.

On **December 2011**: "The Board recommended that the Rideau Canal is of national historic significance because:

- **built between 1826 and 1832, it is the best preserved canal from the great canal-building era in North America that is still fully operational: its historic structures and environment speak to its ingenious design, construction, and military purpose, as well as to its social and economic functions;**
- **it exemplifies cutting edge canal design due to Lieutenant-Colonel John By's innovative "slackwater" approach, which created a navigable route from natural waterways and lakes on a scale previously unseen in North America, and because it was one of the first canals in the world engineered specifically for steam-powered vessels;**
- **its construction through more than 200 kilometers of bush, swamps, and lakes was a monumental feat. Each year, as many as 5,000-6,000 workmen assembled at over two-dozen worksites. The great majority of the labourers were Irish and French Canadian toiling under the supervision of contractors and the Royal Engineers. Working primarily with hand tools and in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions, these labourers and skilled craftsmen, such as Scottish stonemasons, endured disease and injury, with large numbers dying during the canal's construction;**
- **in the aftermath of the War of 1812, when relations with the United States were tense, it was built to serve as a military canal and represented a fundamental component of Britain's defences in the interior of North America, safeguarding the supply lines between Montréal and Lake Ontario by providing an alternative and more defensible route to that along the St. Lawrence River;**
- **it contributed significantly to the social and economic development of Upper Canada / Ontario prior to 1850, when it was a key artery for the movement of goods and people in and out of the colony. After that time, it continued to be of local commercial importance until the 1930s; since then it has served as a popular recreational route."**

The above wording is the present day National Historic Site of Canada designation for the Rideau Canal. Unfortunately, 2011 also marked the year Parks Canada made a very deliberate behind closed doors decision to abandon much of its heritage mandate for the Rideau Canal with the re-organization of its heritage canals into a Waterways unit that stripped out heritage. This was implemented in 2012 and turned back the clock 50 years, to when the Department of Transport was running the Rideau Canal as simply a recreational waterway. This is how Parks Canada is running the Rideau Canal today and a reason why nobody in Waterways was aware of the 2011 designation. In fact you won't even see anything about our National Historic Site designation on Parks Canada's Rideau Canal website. As of this writing, it remains completely silent on that topic even though it's a legislated requirement that they make the public aware of the reasons for the NHS designation.

With Parks Canada's abandonment of its heritage presentation mandate in 2012, it is now left to individuals and groups such as Friends of the Rideau to do our best to make people aware of the heritage value of the Rideau Canal to Canada. Parks Canada's abandonment of heritage has also forced us to take on a heritage advocacy role in addition to the other natural and cultural heritage work that we do.

- Ken W. Watson

2021 Rideau Canal Boating Statistics

Canal traffic in 2021 returned to pre-pandemic 2019 levels with more people taking to boating as a safe outdoor activity. Traffic was up 39.4% with a total of 61,534 vessel passages recorded through the locks, compared to 44,141 in 2020. This is almost identical to the 2019 number of 61,145 vessel passages. Moorings increased by 57.9% in 2021, back to 2019 levels, with 12,262 moorings compared to 7,767 in 2020.

In total, during 2021, 69.3% of the boats were from Ontario, 29.2% from Québec, 0.8% from the United States and 0.7% "Other". In 2019, boats from the U.S. represented 9% of the vessel passages, so we can hopefully see those boats back in 2022.

For the 2021 numbers for some of the individual lockstations go to: www.rideau-info.com/canal/statistics.html

Natural History of the Rideau in 1843

We have few first-hand accounts of the botany of the Rideau Canal in the immediate post canal period. While we can surmise with reasonable accuracy, based on native plants we see here today and scientific work to determine vegetation going back thousands of years, it is always interesting to see a first-hand written account, and we have such an account from 1843.

Philip Whiteside MacLagan (1818-1892) was a Scottish MD who served as an army surgeon with the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment from 1841 to 1853, including being stationed in Kingston from 1845 to 1846. In May of 1843 he took a trip down the Rideau Canal and noted the botany at various spots. As Dr. MacLagan stated *"As I happened to be passenger in a very slow steamer which occupied nearly four days in the transit, I had an opportunity of examining a good deal of the country, and on several occasions, by walking on from one lock to the next, collected a good many plants before the vessel came up."*

The southern part of the Rideau Canal, with the diverse botany of the Frontenac Axis, was of more interest to him. The northern section of the canal, was, in his words, uninteresting. *"For the first fifty or sixty miles from Bytown the line of canal is extremely uninteresting, passing through what is called drowned land, where the original forest has been killed by the damming up of the Rideau river. Nothing can be conceived more melancholy than the aspect of these extensive tracts of dead trees still erect, but devoid of bark and leaves."*

It was at Smiths Falls that the interesting part began, where he noted plants such as *Dentaria diphylla* [crinkleroot], *Panax trifolium* [dwarf ginseng], *Mitella diphylla* [twoleaf miterwort or bishop's cap], and *Erythronium americanum* [trout lily, yellow trout lily, or yellow dogtooth violet]. He also made observations at Davis Lock and at Jones Falls. Later, when he was stationed in Kingston he described plants at Kingston Mills including *"On one of the southern declivities of the granite with a very scanty covering of soil, the Corydalis glauca* [rock harlequin] *reappears in great profusion and beauty ..."*

I have posted MacLagan's entire article to the Articles of Interest section of my Rideau website (www.rideau-info.com). I've done my best to source the common names of the plants he references by their Latin name (names I've added in square brackets). However, I have also posted the caveat that I'm a geologist not a botanist, so I've likely made some errors (feel free to email me with any corrections).

- Ken W. Watson



Trillium grandiflorum

A field of white trilliums is something MacLagan did not report seeing. Rather he reported seeing *Trillium erectum*, the Red Trillium. But we know from other reports from that period that both were present. It may have been just a matter of timing or location as to why MacLagan didn't see any white trilliums. Photo by Ken W. Watson



Aquilegia Canadensis

The beautiful eastern red columbine was noted by MacLagan near Davis Lock and can still be seen to this day in that area. Photo by Ken W. Watson



"The drowned land - Rideau Canal 4 Augt 44"

MacLagan doesn't name the "very slow steamer" he was on but it may have looked much like this one that shows up in a painting by George Seton. This close-up crop of the painting shows a typical side paddle steamboat of the era travelling through a forest of dead trees in 1844. The location isn't noted, it is assumed to be in the southern Rideau area which experienced large flooding of existing forests due to the building of the Rideau Canal. The steamboat in this painting is likely the *Pioneer*, built in Prescott in 1841. It was 94 feet long and did a Kingston-Montreal run in that period via the Rideau Canal. Library and Archives Canada, C-150104