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IRISH SETTLERS IN QUEENS COUNTY

Oct. 20, 1766 A ship arrived at Port Mouton from Londonderry, Ireland, with 62 settlers for that place. This was one of the efforts of Alexander McNutt, who had undertaken to send large numbers of settlers to Nova Scotia from northern Ireland. The people at Port Mouton found the soil poor, and apparently employed themselves in cutting timber for export to Britain. Eventually most of them moved away. Among those who stayed were the McClearn and Stewart families, afterwards prominent in Queens County.

During and after the American Revolution, 1775-1783 A number of Irish soldiers came to Queens County in the King's Orange Rangers, Tarleton's Legion, and other British or Loyalist regiments which were disbanded in Nova Scotia after the war. Some of these stayed in Queens County.

Dec. 15, 1797 Transport "Briton" put into Liverpool in distress, and remained for the winter. She had on board part of Dillon's Irish Brigade, which sailed from Cork on July 27, 1797, bound for Halifax, N.S. The ship had contrary winds and was nearly ~~ready~~ five months on the sea. Many of the soldiers and their wives and children were sick, probably with scurvy, and possibly typhus. Perkins mentions several deaths after the ship arrived, and the dead were buried on the little hill at ~~Ballstx Cove~~ Ballast Cove, most of which has since washed away. One of the Irish women was buried on Christmas Day, 1797. At this time the Liverpool schoolteacher was an Irishman named Boyle, and Perkins mentions that on St. Patrick's Day, 1798, "the Irish gentlemen" dined together at Mr. Boyle's house. *" Presumably these were local Irishmen and some officers of the Irish Brigade."*

Summer, 1798 A road was cut out from Potanoc to Nictaux, thus connecting the Annapolis Valley with the South Shore. William Burke, of Irish parentage, was the pioneer settler in North Queens. He cut out a farm at South Brookfield.

1815

~~1815-1830~~ The battle of Waterloo ended the long Napoleonic Wars, which had been going on, with one brief armistice, for more than 20 years. In England, Scotland, and Ireland, many people were out of work soon after the war ended, and there was great distress. During the next 15 years, thousands of poor people emigrated to North America. Nova Scotia received a good many.

More's History of Queens County says that 7 Scotsmen and 2 Irishmen came to North Queens at the same time, and the Scots settled at Caledonia and the Irishmen at Hibernia. He gives three different dates, 1817, 1820, and 1824. Robert R. McLeod, himself a native of ~~Queens~~ North Queens, and a descendant of one of the Scots, put the date at 1820.

In the year 1822 Captain Caleb ^{Seely} ~~Selly~~ ~~luck~~ bought the Simeon Perkins house in Liverpool from Perkins' widow. He had been a successful privateersman during the late war, and he had ^{since} formed a sea trading partnership with an Irish captain named Patrick Gough. ~~There~~ Their business ranged all the way from Newfoundland to the West Indies. One of their ships was the brig "Caledonia", and in the summer of 1826 Patrick Gough sailed her to St. John's, Newfoundland. While there he found a number of Irish immigrants in great want. Having scraped up enough money for a passage to America, they had been dumped ashore in Newfoundland by an unscrupulous shipmaster, who assured them that ^{this} was America according to the terms of his agreement.

Captain Gough was busy with his firm's affairs in Newfoundland for several weeks; but when he returned to Liverpool in the "Caledonia" in November 1826 he brought with him 84 Irish men, women and children. They were housed and fed in Liverpool during that winter, and in the spring they were directed to North Queens, where there was known to be good arable land, free to any settler willing to clear the forest on it. ~~THEY SETTLED~~ George Parker, a descendant of one of the Scotsmen at Caledonia, told me how the Irish arrived. (etc)

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Some of Gough's Irish passengers found ~~houses~~ of various kinds in Liverpool, and remained there. By that time Liverpool had several families of Irish birth or descent, most of them Roman Catholics, and in 1829 they built St. Gregory's, the first R.C. church in Queens County. (END) 1829