

Notes re Telegraph System. Nova Scotia, circa 1795

(From the Winslow papers, Nova Scotia Archives)
Extract from St. John City Gazette, Sep. 10, 1799. " The Duke of Kent arrived at Halifax. The news was communicated to Windsor by Telegraph in less than 20 minutes."

(Note: This was the second visit of the Duke of Kent)
(Note at foot of page 438, Winslow papers) --" This mode of telegraph necessitated a chain of signal stations. Messages were received by means of ~~telescope~~ telescope and repeated from hill to hill by use of the semaphore or (more probably) by a system of flags and balls. George E. Fenety in his book "Life and Times of Joseph Howe" says, "Near Prince's Lodge was the telegraph station, a wooden structure 20 feet high supporting a flagstaff and yard-arms for communicating with Citadel Hill, six miles distant, by means of flags and balls." At one time the Duke of Kent advocated establishing stations all the way to Quebec but the idea was found impracticable. (A)

(Winslow papers, page 441) "Capt. Lyman to Edward Winslow. " Feb. 3, 1800. The Duke returned on Saturday (from Annapolis) I am told they have established telegraphs all the way to Annapolis so that there was a continual communication of orders and counter orders while he was away, even to the approval of courts martial and ordering men to be flogged. I was at the barracks on Saturday and out of the window I saw preparations that I did not understand. (Preparations for a punishment) Expressing my surprise at it during the Duke's absence, I was told the men were to be flogged by Telegraph. So though the Duke was a hundred miles off he was still acquainted with what was going on and giving orders the same as usual. You will have this mode of communication all the way to Fredericton very soon. I hear it is to be communicated across from the high grounds back of Cornwallis to the Isle of Haut, thence towards Pleasant Valley (Sussex Vale). I suppose our friend Leonard will have one atop his windmill."

Lieut. Clements to Major Murray, or Officer Commanding King's New Brunswick Regt., dated Sussex Vale, May 31, 1800. -- " Sir, On the evening of the 29th inst Sergeant McFarling arrived at this place from Cape Chignetto where he left Mr. Schwartz with his party erecting the Telegraph and necessary buildings at that place. Schwartz expects the officer commanding the detachment has every necessary implement# (such as glasses, axes, compasses, spades, pickaxes) for forwarding the erection of the Telegraph from Martin's Head (the high land on this side the bay) to Sussex Vale, tho' at the same time don't appear to be aware of the difficulty in transporting those things 20 miles through a wild and woody country. I shall endeavour to get a few axes at this place and send Sergt. McFarling with a party to commence clearing the gap that may be necessary without which you will not be able to ~~communicate~~ see across the Bay at that place, the distance being seventeen miles."

(Winslow papers. General Carleton's observations re telegraph, Feb. 10, 1802. Page 458)
"As regards establishing Telegraphic communication from St. John to Fredericton and on the coast at Cape Musquash, Point LePro and on the southern Wolf, the orders of H.R.H. (cannot be carried out) because the fogs in the Bay of Fundy during the principal part of the summer are so thick and impenetrable that objects cannot be discovered even at very small distance. Nine stations are required from St. John to Fredericton, most of these taken on heights difficult of access and not cleared. It was necessary to clear away places for erecting buildings and also to open views through the forest. A hundred men (at least) would be required to attend such a chain of telegraphs. (Carleton had only the N.B. Reg't., consisting of 290 effective men, and could not furnish the complement for the Telegraphs without abandoning some of the most important posts in the province.) " The Telegraphic stations are far apart. Some of 'em were fixed on prominences in the Bay formed entirely of rocks. From these inhospitable spots it would have been impossible to prevent desertions, especially as American vessels are constantly fishing in the Bay and might take them off with the utmost facility. An instance of the kind happened on the coast of Nova Scotia with a sergeant and party of the 66th Regt in July 1800, who were never recovered."

*copy to Fredericton 77 miles
copy to Halifax 7 miles - part*

(A) Murdoch Vol 3 P. 180

"Friday Sep 6, 1799. A signal was made for a frigate in the offing.
At 8 a.m. the telegraph announced she was from England & bore General Edward
Saxe of Kent, on board. (Signals were made with flags, balls, lanterns, etc,
each of the signal stations being on a point visible to the next.)

Memo of Capt. Bartlett, commanding Royal Engineers. July 19th, 1800.

" If General Carleton wishes to know the distance of the different stations -- from Partridge Island to the high ground near Mispec, 4 miles; from the high ground near Mispec to Cape Musquash, 12½ miles; from Cape Musquash to Point LePro, 13 miles; from Point LePro to the south end of the southern Wolf (the best situation on them for a look out down the Bay), 17 miles. The land at Point LePro is very low, and on the Wolf too low for the distance."

Extract from Miss M. Ellis' notes, from War Office papers, London. (no date)
Dispatches of Prince Edward from Halifax -- " A telegraph has also been ~~established~~ fixed upon and brought so far to perfection that I am enabled from Citadel Hill by means of it to give orders to the different outposts. Beacons have been established all along the coast. Every possible exertion has been made to guard against surprise."

Extract from Perkins' diary:--

" Nov. 25, 1799. News of the cessation of hostilities. It came in the packet and was sent to Annapolis by telegraph in six hours, & came to Shelburne by vessel, thence to Liverpool

Prince Edward

Arrived at Halifax May 10, 1794 in the Blanche frigate, twelve days from St. Kitts. Landed under a salute of 21 guns. Held a levee at Hfx May 14th. Reviewed Hfx garrison under General Ogilvie, May 24.

Jan. 22, 1795 ^(really) 1794 He set out by land (for Quebec, Akis says) but he was in Boston Feb. 5th, stayed there 10 days, then sailed for the West Indies, calling at Hfx en route, Feb 25th. (Akis is wrong here. Edward went by land from Quebec to Boston in late Jan. 1794)

During 1795 at Prince Edward's request, the N.S. militia were employed on Hfx fortifications throughout the summer.

1796 St. George's Day. Prince Edward present at the English Society dinner in Hfx.

June 4 (King George's birthday) Sir J. Wentworth entertained Prince Edward at Govt. House.

Mal. 17 St. Patrick's Day. Prince E. attended Irish Society dinner.

1797 Prince E. lived in Hfx throughout the year.

Winter of 1797-98, Prince E. ordered troops to clear snow from road between Hfx & Prince's Lodge.

1798 Aug 8 Prince E. injured by a fall. Sailed for England Oct 21

1799 Prince E. returned to Hfx Sept 6 from England. Telegraph announced his arrival, news reaching London in 20 minutes.

1800 Nov 25 Perkins says telegraph in use between Hfx & Annapolis.

over

1800

Ponce G. lived at Ponce's Lodge until summer, when he took his
final departure, Aug. 4th.