

September 28, 1964.

B.N. Holtham, Q.C.,
P.O. Box 23,
Sherbrooke, P.Q.

Dear Mr. Holtham,

It was very kind of you to write, and I'm glad you have enjoyed my books.

The exact origin and ultimate fate of Prince Edward's mistress, Julie Saint Laurent, have always been a mystery. English author Roger Fulford, in his carefully researched book "The Royal Dukes", came to the conclusion that Julie was a French-Canadian, although there was no proof. Her first definite appearance in his life was in his first year at Quebec, and the only authentic letters of hers, written in subsequent years, show that her deepest and most affectionate ties were with French-Canadian people, notably the De Salaberrys.

Edward's infatuation for her was deep and long lasting; he never made a secret of the fact that she was his mistress; indeed he compelled everybody to accept her. If she had borne him a child he would have acknowledged it with gusto, as his rollicking brothers acknowledged their own numerous offspring by ladies not their wives. When at last he was compelled to part with Julie, he bared his heart to Creevey the diarist, pointing out that a decent provision must be made for her (including servants and a carriage) and adding proudly, "I am the first and only person who ever lived with her." Here again he would have mentioned a child or children, if there were any. He had every reason to do so and none whatever for keeping them secret.

McKenzie Porter's book is, I fear, largely fiction. He did not consult me, although he acknowledged using my book "Halifax, Warden of The North"; and he made no attempt to consult the public archives at Halifax. As far as I can see Porter lifted his chapter on the Prince and Madame at Halifax entirely from my book, transposing it into his own phraseology, and making some utterly wrong deductions and elaborations.

The mystery that has always surrounded Edward and Julie has led various people to imagine themselves as "descendants" of the happy pair. According to the chief archivist at Halifax, Edward and Julie must have had at least ten children born in Quebec and Halifax --and the list could go as high as sixteen! -- if all these suppositious descendants are to be believed.

Nearly all of these people speak of mysterious documents which establish their claims, but which cannot be revealed to the public.

Porter does the same. I have a hunch that his story really goes back to a novel written by the notorious Mary Robinson, who at one time was mistress of the Prince of Wales. (He became George the Fourth.) He jilted her, and from that time she had an acid hatred of the royal house. Desperate for money, she lived for years on the Continent with various paramours, and dashed off a number of books and squibs about members of the royal family.

One of these was published at Leipzig, Germany, in 1797, under the title "Julie St. Laurence". It was reprinted there in 1812. No copy is known to exist today, even in the University of Leipzig and the British Museum; but this is not to say that a copy or copies do not exist -- or that one of the numerous "descendants" did not have access to the Robinson novel at some time or other. The elaborate detail given by Porter sounds very much like Mary Robinson's clever imagination anyhow.

The commission of George Henry Monk, which you saw in a shop, is probably authentic. In 1769 John Wentworth, in addition to being governor of New Hampshire, held the post of Surveyor General of the King's Woods in America. The salary was £800 a year, out of which he had to pay four deputies at £100 a year. He made a trip to Nova Scotia in HMS "Beaver" about that time, to look at the mast supply there. (See "The Governor's Lady", foot of page 82.) Monk was born in Boston about 1748 and came to the new settlement of Halifax as an infant with his parents. His mother was a relation of Frances Wentworth, and he married a member of the vast Wentworth clan; hence, probably, the appointment. Eventually he became a Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, retired to Montreal, and died there in 1823.

Sincerely,

December 4, 1964

Mr. E.N. Holtham, Q.C.,
Box 23,
Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Dear Mr. Holtham:

Four years ago I had some correspondence with A.J. Hanna, professor of American History at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida. He had published in 1938 a work on the Confederate expatriates entitled FLIGHT INTO OBLIVION, which included a brief account of Captain John Taylor Wood. In 1960 he and his wife were preparing a further work on these lines, and he wrote to me enquiring detail of Wood and the others who came to Halifax. I haven't heard from him since, and I don't know if or where his books can be obtained. If he is still at Rollins College you could reach him there.

John T. Wood seems to have been a man of means, despite the Civil War. At Halifax he was a keen yachtsman, one of the most prominent members of the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron; and until his death he was active in various Nova Scotia matters, such as the building of the Halifax & South Western railway.

Many years ago I had a letter from G.M. Black, who was born in Halifax in 1875. He wrote, "Grandfather Black, of Irish descent, was living in New Orleans when the war between the North and South started. He fought in the Navy on the side of the South. The family got out before the Northerners took New Orleans, and left Charleston on the last blockade runner to Bermuda. Then he settled down in Halifax, and started the Plant Line of steamers between Halifax, Quebec and Boston. When the Inter-colonial Railway came in, it ruined his business, so he moved West." (G.M. Black was a member of the firm of Black & Armstrong, Winnipeg.)

Rec No
Commodore Josiah Tatnall was the man who uttered the famous phrase "blood is thicker than water" when (as commander of a U.S. Navy gunboat on the Yangtze in the 1850's) he came to the assistance of a British gunboat under attack by the Chinese.

"His Majesty's Yankees" is out of print at the present time. "West Novas" can be obtained from The Book Room, 54 Granville Street, Halifax.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

120 Vimy St
Sturbridge Mass

Feb. 14/80

Dear Mr Raddall:

After a long search I finally
found a copy of "Tallahassee" by
Andrew Merkel.

Receipt of a appraisal by
you on the "Wrupper" reminded me again
of the great pleasure I have had from
your books.

Apart from my law books, from
which I learn my bread & butter,
and the daily papers, I spend every
spare ~~minute~~ reading moment on History
primarily the history of Eastern
Canada & the United States.

I find in my reading that
an episode will start me off on
a wider search of a person or
an event. For example in your

short visit to Halifax and escape
therefrom on August 18th.

In the official report there is no
reference to the Tallahassee escaping
by the Eastern Passage, Commander Stevens
of the U.S.S. Pantosue who was at Eastport
Maine was ordered to blockade the
Tallahassee, but he reported from Halifax
that he had missed Capt Wood by seven
hours. It may have been a face saving report
but true or false the escape was an interesting
episode.

From what little I have been able to learn
from my limited sources, ^{Capt J.T. Wood} was a son of a
daughter of Zachary Taylor & Surg. General
R.C. Wood (U.S.A.) - a son of Capt. Wood
Zachary Taylor Wood became a commissioner
of the R.C.M.P. - and a son of Z.T. Wood,
Stuart Taylor Wood also became a commissioner
of the same force. At this moment a son of
Stuart Taylor Wood (namely John Taylor Wood
bearing the same name as his famous ancestor

② "Halifax, Maritime" your account of
the Tallahassee directed me to John
Jayles Wood captain of this famous
raider.

That met "Captain Wood" or Colonel
Wood when he was travelling South
with his famous uncle Jefferson Davis -
And your reference to the fact that
Capt. Wood had returned to Halifax,
lived out his days & died there, made
me want to know more about him.
And I still know so little about him
& would like to know more - and I
will before I am through.

I did procure Part ii of the Civil
War Naval Chronology (1861-65) which
covered 1864. - in which there are
many many references to Capt. Wood,
the many Union Ships he captured, a
picture of Capt Wood & of his famous
ship, with a long reference to his

The Capt. of the Tallahassee" is a member of the
R.C.M.P.

Shirley Taylor Wood with whom I had
some correspondence ^{told me} on the 29th of Dec. 1964
that Capt. Wood returned to Halifax about
July, 1865, where his family eventually
joined him - that they lived at 67 Morris
St. - had a family of 5 boys & 4 girls.

I received a book printed by Indiana
University Press (Bloomington) written by
A. J. Hanna (Professor of History, Rollins College,
Winter Park, Florida, entitled "Flight Into
Oblivion", in which many pages with
minute detail is devoted to the Escape of Capt.
Wood, General Buckinridge, Col. Wilson, the
Florida soldiers & a slave escaped from the
Jefferson Davis party captured at Ironville
Georgia, May 30, 1865.

Capt. Wood & Gen. Buckinridge both left
records of their escape.

If a life of Capt. Wood exists, or if
ever written, I would love to read them.

Kind Personal regards, Sincerely, R. N. Hollman

February 19, 1970

Mr. E.N. Holtham, Q.C.,
120 Viny Street,
Sherbrooke, Que.

Dear Mr. Holtham:

Merkel's "Tallahassee" is authentic in all its basic people and their activities; in fact it was the fruit of long research in the Provincial Archives of Nova Scotia, with the assistance of Dr. Martell, of the Archives staff.

The whole affair of the "Tallahassee" at Halifax was well covered by the Halifax newspapers of the time, also.

Jock Fleming, the Halifax pilot who took the "Tallahassee" out through the Eastern Passage by night, afterwards became a partner in the sailmaking firm of Bentley & Fleming. He gave Bentley's daughter the Confederate cutlass presented to him as a souvenir. Many years ago I knew Mrs. Guy Minard, a descendant of the Bentleys who had the cutlass in her possession. I persuaded her to present it to the Maritime Museum at Halifax later on. She herself could remember Captain John Taylor Wood when her own family lived on Morris Street.

In 1872 Captain Wood, using the pseudonym "Forward", wrote a letter or letters to the Halifax Morning Chronicle urging a railroad along the south shore of Nova Scotia -- typical of his interest in his adopted country and of a farsighted mind. (The Halifax & South Western Railway became a fact more than thirty years later!)

Two or three years ago my brother-in-law (since deceased) made a short movie, with voice in explanation, covering the story of "Tallahassee" and her escape at Halifax, showing the Eastern Passage, etc., and finally a shot of Wood's tombstone in Camp Hill Cemetery, Halifax. His widow, my sister, lives in Alabama. I shall write to see if I can borrow this film for your perusal.

For the life of me I cannot find my source, but I believe that as a lieutenant C.S.N. in 1862, John Taylor Wood was in charge of the party which destroyed the "Merrimac" when the Confederates had to abandon Norfolk, two months after her spectacular debut.

With my best wishes,