

KERBY JAMES COL. 1785- died 1854

James Kerby was born near Sandwich in 1785 at a place called Park Farm , the son of John Kerby . At the age of twenty he was employed by Thomas Clark in the village of Queenston . Clark in turn was employed by GEORGE HAMILTON. In 1796 Kerby started in his own business as shipping clerk and merchant. In 1796 Clark went into business with a Samuel St. and Robert Nichol and their Partnership lasted three years, They built warehouses at Queenston Chippewa and Fort Erie. Kerby went into his own Partnership with a Robert Grant; and under the firm of Grant and Kerby, they leased the warehouses at these three locations. Sometime in 1811 Kerby married a Jane Lambert of Queenston. Kerby had been connected with the local militia at this place for four years, and he was appointed Adjutant.

In 1815 Kerby took over the Red Mill in Fort Erie Mills and later erected a warehouse and Warf at the sight. He hired Nelson Forsyth to operate a Ferry from this dock. During the war the government took over the stone warehouse by the fort; and occupied it till 1813 when the troops left. Shortly afterwards it was burnt by the enemy.

In 1817 the government offered Kerby the superintendancy of the Ferries in the area and his warf was considered the Official Landing. The war took great toll on Krby's holdings along the Niagara however the partnership of Grant and Kerby stayed in effect , and they took up again as forwarders and shippers of merchandise from over the Niagara Portage.

It was in 1816 that Kerby's first child was born, and baptised Mary Margaret Clark Kerby by the Rev. Robert Addison at Niagara Falls.

In 1818 Grant and Kerby gave the government permission to use their Warfat Fort Erie and half part of the warehouse at the cost of sixty pounds ten shillings per year.

In 1820 Kerby held tthe offices of Magistrate; a member of the Court of Requests for minor trial of Civil Causes; Commandant of a Regiment of Militia; Postmaster; Church Warden ; Town Warden and added to these public offices was the pressure of operating his own business.

KERBY'S RED MILL : 1800's

In 1796 a Thomas Clark went into partnership with a Samuel St and a Robert Nichol. It lasted three years and they built warehouses at Queenston, Chippewa and Fort Erie. In the early 1800's James Kerby along with a Robert Grant formed the Partnership of Grant and Kerby; and leased the warehouses built by Clark and Street.

In 1815 Kerby took over the Red Mill owned by Benjamin Hardison. It was situated at the head of the Rapids about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile south of the Waterloo Ferry Landing. A channel had been deepened in the rock along the shoreline of the River to make the Mill Race. The next closest Mill was at Chippewa; so all the wheat grown within ten miles of the village was brought to Fort Erie Mills. Kerby had a warehouse built and also a wharf; and he employed Nelson Forsyth to operate a Ferry from this landing. In order to keep the Mill fully employed it was necessary to import grain from other areas, and this entailed a great deal of work for Kerby and his partner. During the winter the Mill was often idle because of ice jams in the River; and at other times of the year it was out of operation from lack of sufficient water. Kerby sought help from the government to have a Canal built; which would not only assure a plentiful supply of water, but it would allow safe passage of boats upstream in the area of the Rapids. To further this dream a committee of prominent men in the village was formed; and for several years heated discussions for and against this venture were heard around the village. Finally the idea was shelved because of financial reasons; and lack of interest in the right places.

In 1812 the Government had taken over the stonewarehouse at the Fort and held it till 1813 when the troops left. It was soon afterwards burnt by the enemy. The war had done great damage to Grant and Kerby's holdings in the district, however they kept the Partnership; and took up again as forwarders and shippers of Merchandise from over the Niagara Portage to Fort Erie. In 1823 Kerby and Grant sold a third of their interest in the Mill to Benjamin Hardison. In 1831 Kerby & Grant broke partnership at the Mill which they had kept for twenty years. Kerby went into business on his own; but poor health and the pressure of other Public offices which often took him away from the village, made his Mill unprofitable. In 1851 Kerby's office and Papers were destroyed in a fire, and he sold out to Buffalo interests.

James Kerby was born near Sandwich , in 1785 ; at a place called Park Farm. He was the son of John Kerby. At the age of twenty he was employed by Thomas Clark , in the Village of Queenston. Clark in turn was employed by George Hamilton. In 1796 Kerby went into business on his own, as Shipping Clerk and Merchant. In the same year Clark went into a Partnership with a Samuel St., and Robert Nichol; and this Partnership lasted three years. They built warehouses at Queenston, Chippawa, and Fort Erie. Kerby went into a Partnership of his own with a Robert Grant. Under the firm of Grant & Kerby they leased the warehouses at these locations. It was in 1811, that Kerby was married to a Jane Lambert of Queenston. Kerby had been connected with the local Militia at this place for four years, and he was appointed Adjutant.

In 1816 Kerby's first child was born, and baptised Mary Margaret Clark Kerby; by the Rev. Robert Addison , of Niagara Falls.

In 1818 Grant & Kerby gave the Government permission to use their Warf at Fort Erie; and half part of their warehouse at the cost of sixty pounds, ten shillings per, year. These properties were adjacent to the "Fort " on the south side.

In 1820 Kerby held the offices of::: Magistrate: a member of the Court of Requests for Minor Trial of Civil Cases Commandant of a Regiment of Militia: Postmaster: Church Warden: Town Warden: and added to these offices , was the pressure of running his own business.

In 1821 Kerby's second daughter ^{JANE} was born on Jan. 15th. and baptised at Queenston ; where Kerby was living at the time.

In 1822 Kerby moved his family to a house in the Village of Waterloo , near the "Mill", that Robert Grant his partner had taken over in 1820, from Dunbar. In the same year his son was baptised James Robert Nichol Kerby , on Sept. 15th., in this very "Mill" .

In 1823 Grant & Kerby sold a third of their interests in the "Mill" to Benjamin Hardison.

Much destruction had been done during the war to his holdings and the Military holdings at the "Fort"; and Kerby applied for, and received permission to occupy a tract of land there; on what was known as the Military Reserve. This order came April 22nd., 1822, and shortly Kerby built a large barn back from the river; and began to cultivate several acres of these new holdings.

Kerby was a devout member of the Anglican Church , and in 1824 , he wrote the Government for permission to haul stone for the construction of a new Church at Waterloo.

In 1826 Kerby was elected Warden of the Township of Bertie; and he again held office in 1829, and in 1831.

He succeeded to have a postoffice built, and he became its first Postmaster.

As Warden in the Township; it was among his other jobs, his duty to administer Government Funds to the poor.

In 1831 Grant & Kerby broke up their Partnership, which had lasted some twenty years. Kerby went into the business on his own, taking over 80-90 acres of the Fort Erie Mills Property including the Mill . He sold out to buffalo interests in 1832.

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KERBY JAMES:

In 1822 Kerby moved his family to a house in the Village near his Mill then known as Waterloo Ferry.

In 1823 KERBY AND GRANT sold a third of their interests in the Fort Erie Mills to a Benjamin Hardison.

In this very Mill his only son was baptised in 1822 Sept. 15th. under the name of James Robert N. Kerby

Much destruction had been done to the Military holdings at the Fort ; and Kerby applied for and received permission to occupy a large tract of land there, on what was known as the Military reserve. This order came April 22nd./1822 and shortly after Kerby built a large barn and proceeded to cultivate several acres of his new holdings.

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In 1831 Grant and Kerby broke up their Partnership which had lasted some twenty years. . Kerby then went into the business of purchasing wheat on his own.

In 1831 Kerby received notice of his appointment to the Legislative Council.

In 1832 he applied for and received permission to take over a tract of land at the Fort on the Military Reserve ; building a large barn and putting several acres of it under cultivation.

In 1834 Kerby was appointed Collector of the Customs in the place of George Hardison. He had a great deal of territory to cover; and he was forever being outsmarted by Forsyth and his brothers who were noted smugglers on the Niagara. River. There were six to eight ferries in operation at the time, and Kerby with the help of the government tried to make his ~~W~~arf the official entry spot. Mr. Lewis and his partner had a dock by his place of business near Catherine St.; and caused no end of trouble , as did everyone else in town that owned even a small boat.

It was around this time Aug . 16th. 1834 that Kerby as head formed the first Board of Health in the village of Waterloo. Others on the Board were; DR. B.P. HALL W. SMITH., Edmund Riselay, Issac Johnson, James Johnson, C. Hall William Powell and William Buck.

KERBY:

In 1838 Kerby was in command of the Queen's Own Fencibles at Waterloo; which met in the old Drill Shed on Waterloo St., near Queen. It consisted of Upwards of 600 men; including a Company of the 24 Reg.; who were serviced by the REV. JOHN ANDERSON of St. Pauls Parish in Waterloo.

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| CAPTS: | SAMUEL USHER | LTS. | J. USHER |
| | JAMES EGEN | | W. B. ROBERTS |
| | EDMUND RISELAY | | Jno. MC. F. Wilson |
| | JOSEPH CLARK | | |

| | | |
|------|------------------|----------------------|
| Eng. | William Thompson | ADJ. Dennis Kerby |
| | George Roberts | |
| | Kenneth Reid | Paymaster K. Roberts |
| | James Hoggan | |

Surgeons William Sutherland and Angus Hall
ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER John Martin.

As Collector of Customs Kerby was constantly being attacked by the people of the village ; and a number of the Village notables added their names to the Petition sent to the Government for his removal from the job.

Kerby had long since sold his interests in the Mill; but the loss of his son-in-law; the sickness of his wife along with the pressing duties of his other public offices and his own bad health which seemed ever present prompted him to finally give up the Customs Job.

In 1854 COL. James Kerby died of the Cholera; the very disease that he had thought so hard to combat in the Village with great honours he was laid to rest in the graveyard of St. Pauls Waterloo Parish.

JAMES KERBY:::: cont.

In his position of Collector of Customs this meant that Kerby had to serve both of these landings as well as numerous smaller spots where goods could be landed illegally. There were six to eight Ferries running at this time and Kerby sought with the help of the Government to make his the official landing. He was thought every way. Nelson Forsyth, found the competition from the lower Ferry so great, that without word to Kerby; he took his Ferry and moved down the river to a spot by his fathers home; in hopes of getting the trade that came along the river Road. He was in constant battle with the Forsyth's who became notorious smugglers on the Niagara River.

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Kerby had long since sold his interests in the "Mill" and the loss of his son-in-law, and the ill health of his wife; and his own poor health which seemed ever present, prompted him to finally give up the Customs job.

In 1854 Col. Kerby died of Cholera; the very disease that he had thought so hard to combat in the Village. With great Honour (and seemingly all ill feelings forgotten) he was laid to rest with great prompt fitting a hero; in the graveyard of St. Pauls, just behind the High altar.

KERBY:::

On March 21st., 1818 Grant & Kerby wrote to Capt. Vaisour from Queenston:::

" We beg leave to acquaint you in answer to your request that you can have the use of our wharf at Fort Erie for Government purposes, and half part of the Store House partitioned off. (25 by 40 ft.) under lock and key; at the rate of sixty pounds ten shillings, currency per annum."

1840 Letter wrote by Kerby to Mr. S.B. Harrison LT.Govonor's Secretary
Sept. 16th,-1849

'It was not until yesterday that I felt myself enabled to assume the SUPERINTENDENCE of the Ferry at this place, under the management of a trusty person Mr. Nelson Forsyth; and although Kenneth Mackenzie the late encumbent on this side the full benefit of it's employment up to the present period without my causing him any interuption; he has still manifested every disposition since last Saturday, the day I apprised him of my intention to ferry to the other side upwards of fifty of my passengers; and appears determined to do so. I feel as if the Att. General should be apprised of this, preparatory to the approaching Assize at Niagara; to the end that Mr. Mackenzie may be made sensible of the error in opposing me.'

Shortly after Kerby seized James Haggart's Boat the old Horse Ferry which failed to report at the Port of Entry; and it was to be returned only on the payment of a fine. He informed Mr. Mackenzie and Lewis who were joint partners with Mr. Haggart of his ententions to proceed against them for the recovery of damages.

1840 page 274 Kerby;- Letter to the Govonor General that he had again taken into hand the Horse Ferry.

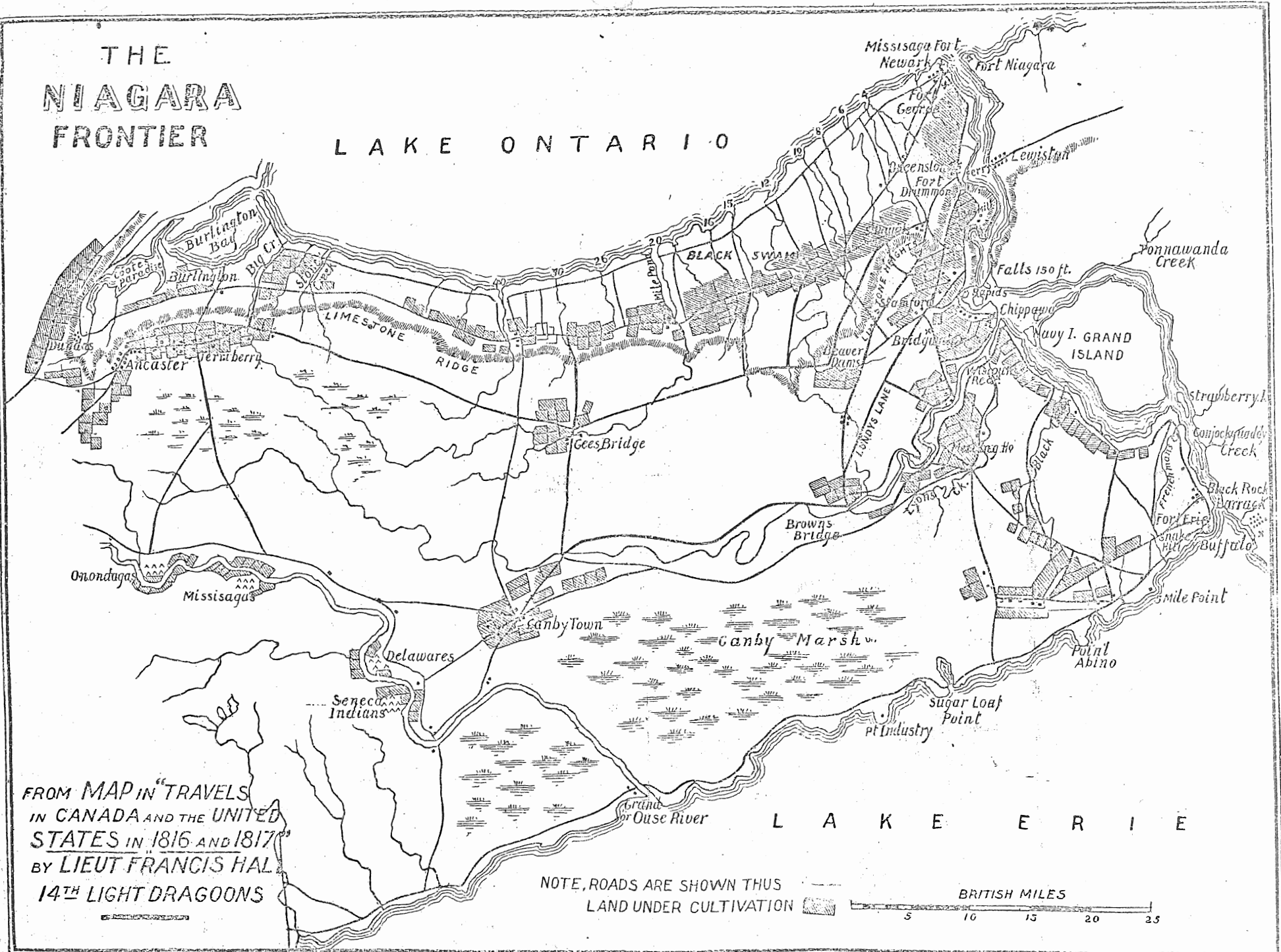
Relative to my situation with Mr. Mackenzie late encumberant of the Ferry at this place that in difference to my lease already made known to him by Notice; He Mr. Mackenzie in conjunction with a Mr. Lewis inkeeper; persists in opposing me daily, in the most vexatious manner with small boats etc. thereby collecting little benefits arinf from the Ferry to my prjudiceand injury; after having embarked to a considerable amount in the purchase of a Horse Ferry and other small boats; and Mr. Forsyth in the construction of a spacious Wharf for a safe landing place, affording every facility to the traveling public. This was known as the Water Wharf.

Kerby had continual trouble with other boatmen of the town and he was forever writing the Government with the hopes that they would put an end to the trouble. After many letters one such report was made to the Govonor by the EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

'The Executive Council have carefully considered the complaint of Col. Kerby stating certain interference with his right of Ferry at Fort Erie; also the complaints of the petitioners stating an attempt by Mr. Kerby As Collector of Customs

THE NIAGARA FRONTIER

L A K E O N T A R I O



FROM MAP IN "TRAVELS
IN CANADA AND THE UNITED
STATES IN 1816 AND 1817"
BY LIEUT FRANCIS HAL
14TH LIGHT DRAGOONS

NOTE, ROADS ARE SHOWN THUS
LAND UNDER CULTIVATION

