



Newcastle Village and District Historical Society Newsletter

April, May, June, 2003 - Issue # 80

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President - *Myno Van Dyke*
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Coming Events

Monday, April 28- 7:30 pm- "Old House Restoration"- Lion's Room-Newcastle Community Hall- Darrell & Eleanor Cook will speak on the restoration of their home on Mill Street- Mike Trudeau, owner of Restorama Design and Contracting, Bowmanville will do a presentation on old house restoration with time for questions after. Hope to see you there.

Ed Burt was to be our speaker for April 8/03. Unfortunately Ed was called away on urgent family business, but has promised to make his presentation later this year. The new date will be posted as soon as it is set. An excellent article on the Speedy by Myno Van Dyke appears in this issue

The Massey Show will take place June 21 & 22, 2003. This should be a fantastic show. At the Massey Meeting on March 27 committees were set up and volunteers will be accepted for all positions. To volunteer

please call Myno at 905-987-5482. All interested parties are welcome to attend the meetings.

Rambling Comments From The Editor

Again I am late getting the newsletter out. I had originally planned to have it out before the Burt presentation, which was postponed and a meeting to replace it had to be planned. Well you know how it is, just one thing after another. Enough of my problems, on to the newsletter. Myno has spent many hours researching and re-writing the "Speedy" story to get it correct and to show our local association and we thank him for that.

Also in this issue to correspond with Pat Macdonnell's Life Membership Award you will find a tribute authored by Pippa Schmiegelow. Pat is most deserving of this award, but has not been available to officially receive the plaque, but when she is we will have photos here for your perusal. Pippa also has delved into the ongoing "Newcastle Woolen Mill information pit", with yet more facts on this fascinating narrative (from a local business that very little was known to almost enough to write a book). Nor has the ongoing "Sir Francis Bond Head" chronology escaped Pippa's interest as she adds yet another installment to the continuing saga of the man whose name adorns our local community.

RL

Deja Vu!

The sign on the glass at 35 King West reads "Cureatz and Lovekin"

Sound Familiar?

Some years ago it read "Lovekin and Cureatz" when Dick and Sam were in law partnership. This ended when Dick was appointed to the Bench. Sam continued in law practice and then went into politics. In 2002 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace for the Central Region of the Ontario Court of Justice, and has since moved to Cobourg.

Russell Lovekin, son of Professor James and Ann Lovekin, and nephew of Dick, is continuing the general law practice in Newcastle. Currently he is in the office here twice weekly. He is connected with the firm of Legge and Legge in Toronto.

We welcome Russell to the Village and wish him well in his new undertaking.

Submitted by Dorothy Brown

Thanks to Leslie Wilson for her thoughtfulness in suggesting to people who she does research for, that she won't take money, but they may make a donation to the Newcastle Village and District Historical Society. Donations have arrived from Leslie's clients.

Correction

In the article by Helen Schmied in the last newsletter (#79) entitled *Newcastle Woolen Manufacturing Company* The name Emma dark should have been Emma Clark.

The Wreck of The H.M.S. Speedy

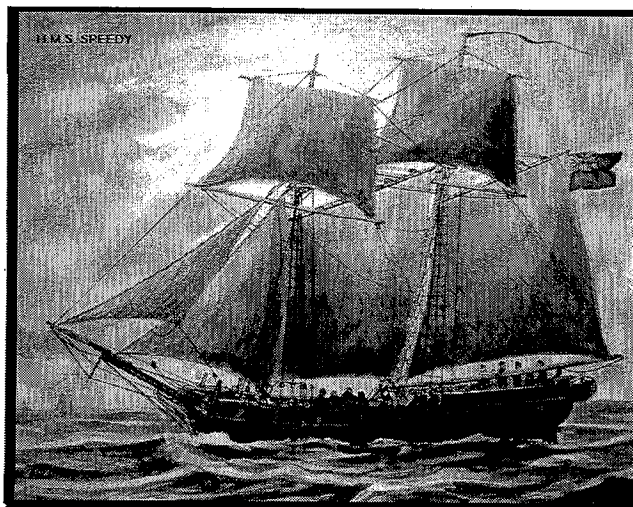
By

Myno Van Dyke

(with assistance from Ed Burt)

It was around 1841 when the community we now know as Newcastle received its name. The ill-fated journey of the H.M.S. Speedy in 1804 has an interesting connection to Newcastle.

The H.M.S. Speedy was a schooner built at



Point Frederick (Kingston) in the early part of 1798 and set out on her maiden voyage in September of the same year. It was believed to be about fifty-four feet long and weighed about ninety-three tons. Various references indicate that from 1798 to 1804, the vessel carried out the

usual duties of transporting goods, materials and men to and from various points along Lake Ontario, notably Kingston, Fort York and Fort George.

As a Provincial Marine vessel, the standard rigging was a topsail schooner and carried two carronade cannons on the back deck with a smaller bore cannon of the fore deck. The lower hull was painted in the standard white and the upper hull painted black, with a strip of yellow along her length in the area of the chain-wales. Even though a number of refits had taken place, the Speedy, by 1804, had become somewhat un-seaworthy. This was due to the green wood used in construction, hot summers, cold winters and poor ventilation in the lower hold. This resulted in large amounts of dry rot in the hull timbers.

Records show that the "Speedy" had some unusual activities during her life. Two sailors deserted the vessel in 1802 and then shortly after transported mutineers from the 49th Regiment from Fort George to York. There is also a report that the Speedy was involved in a collision in the open part of Lake Ontario with some apparent spooky circumstances.

Back in 1803, things were not going well between the native Indians and the white folk. Especially, at Ball Point on the shores of Lake Scugog, where a Chippewa Muskrat called Whistling Duck was murdered by a white British fur trader named Samuel Cozens.

Almost a year had passed and the British had done nothing about the murder. Under Indian law, justice had to be done within a year. Whistling Duck's brother, Ogetonicut, decided to take justice into his own hands at the Farewell Brothers Store and Trading Post at Ball Point. A soldier, John Sharp, a member of the Queen's Rangers, was found dead with his skull caved in.

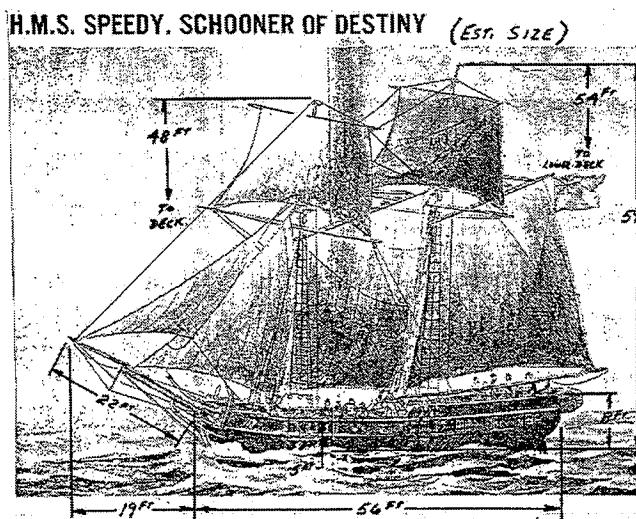
On his return to York, Ogetonicut bragged about his achievement to some other Chippewa Muskrats. The Chief, Wabbekiseco, turned Ogetonicut over to the British stationed at Fort York where Ogetonicut was arraigned for murder.

Under British law a case has to be tried in the District it was committed in. By some questionable coincidence, it was established that the murder of John Sharp had occurred exactly one hundred feet within the new boundaries of the new District of Newcastle (Presqu'ile Point). The new District had been formed in 1801 with about twenty people living

in this new community at that time. Plans began to "inaugurate" the new capital with a murder trial and perhaps even a hanging.

The Lieutenant Governor, Peter Hunter, ordered Lieutenant Thomas Paxton to transport the large party via the H.M.S. Speedy on Sunday, October 7, 1804, in the evening. Paxton, at first refused, but under threat of court marshal, he reluctantly sailed the leaky, overloaded

"Speedy" out of the port of Fort York.



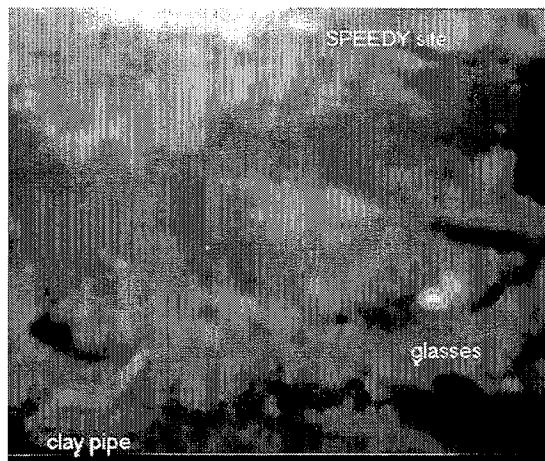
Immediately, the "Speedy" ran aground. There was some question as to whether this was intentional or perhaps a sign of things to come. After two to three hours the "Speedy" was free with some minor repairs to the hull timbers, and got under way with water coming into the hull as a result of the quick repairs. Hand pumps had to be manned continually. As the "Speedy" passed the area where Bluffers Park is now, Ogetonicut's mother, Bitterskin, danced a curse on the high bluffs.

Between twenty-five to twenty-seven people were thought to be on board the "Speedy". The crew, the accused, jury members, lawyers, judge, surveyor, witnesses and even two children went down with the ship.. Some of those on board were; Mr. Justice Cochrane, Robert I.D. Gray, Esq., Solicitor General and member of the House of Assembly, Angus McDonell, Esq., Advocate, also member of the house of Assembly, Mr. Jacob Herchmer, merchant, Mr. John Stegmann, surveyor, Mr. George Cown, Indian interpreter, James Ruggles Esq., Mr. Anderson, law student, Mr. John Fisk, the High Constable.

The "Speedy" proceeded east with a soft westerly October breeze all that night and the next day and was spotted around present day Colborne in the early evening of October 8. A horseman was sent to inform the party at the Salt Point docking area at Newcastle (Presqu'ile Point) to prepare for the arrival of all these important people. As the "Speedy" rounded the southern point of Presqu'ile Point, a howling north-east wind with snow, which reduced the visibility, hit the overloaded ship. Lieutenant

Paxton fired a starboard cannon to announce his distress in not being able to see the shore. A large bon fire was started down behind the lighthouse to guide the "Speedy" in. The lighthouse was at Salt Point, (the large one on the south point wasn't built until 1846). The "Speedy" was never seen or heard from again.

In the May previous, another military ship had been becalmed in Presqu'ile Bay with no wind. Startled sailors spotted a large flat rock, eight inches below the surface and forty feet in diameter next to their ship. A long boat was launched and the rock area was surveyed and bearings recorded as to its location. This information was forwarded to Fort York and Fort Henry to warn future schooners of the danger. They called this underwater rock the "Devil's Horesblock" . A horse block was the round block of steel the milkman took out of his milk wagon and placed on the curb when he left the wagon to place the quarts of milk on your door step in the morning. It was believed that the "Speedy" struck this pinnacle of rock and broke it off, as it could not be found after the disappearance of the vessel. There were no survivors and only a small amount of wreckage was ever found.



Ed Burt, a wreck finder and historian from Belleville

was intrigued about the loss of the Speedy and how it happened. He along with several others began collecting information on the Speedy in 1974. Burt advises that nautical charts of Presqu'ile show Dobbs Bank Shoal in the shape of a horses head. And, on the west end there is a round pinnacle of rock forty feet in diameter. It was suspected that the masts were snapped off

the "Speedy" when it came to a jolting halt upon hitting the rock pinnacle. Two masts lay beside what is left of the rock pinnacle. Side scan surveys also show anchor drag marks where the "Speedy" was blown by the high winds until it eventually sank in deep water where she still lays undisturbed. Lieutenant Paxton knew where the rock was but had only a compass to take land bearings, which he was unable to see in the dark blinding snowstorm. A final odd twist is that in the 1980's the federal government did aeromagnetic surveys of Presqu'ile Bay. They found that the magnetic readings change dramatically from day to day. They also discovered that compass readings cannot be relied upon for accuracy in navigation and certainly not coming into Brighton Bay with no visibility.

The new capital of the District of Newcastle was not to be. The port was considered to be too dangerous no one seemed to want to move there. In 1828, the town-site was vacated and

moved three miles north to become the port of Brighton.

For a number of years there was confusion about the two Newcastles, but that seemed to end in 1845 when the Newcastle Post Office was officially opened. The present community of Newcastle was incorporated as a village in 1856. Today, the Speedy lies on the bottom of Presqu'ile Bay but the significance of this fateful journey remains an important part of our history.

The Newcastle Village and District Historical Society will host a presentation on The Wreck of the H.M.S. Speedy by shipwreck Ed Burt, a shipwreck finder and historian from Belleville, Ont. It will take place in the Fall of 2003 at a time and place to be published in a future newsletter. Call Myno Van Dyke 905-987-5482 for more information.

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Tribute to Pat Macdonnell

by

Pippa Schmiegelow

In my earlier biographical notes on our newly retired archivist, Pat Macdonnell, (NVDHS Newsletter, March, April, May 2001), I erroneously named Pat as founding president of the Newcastle Village and District Historical Society. Mabel Goode has reminded me that, in fact, Pat was the founding Chair of what was initially known as the Newcastle Village Historical Group. The history of the formation of that group has already been recorded and can be read in the society's room in the Community Hall where Mabel has prepared a file containing copies of all the newsletters published during the Society's existence. Pat was the early editor of the newsletter to be followed by Herb Taylor who held the post for seven years.

In 1986, Pat took over the presidency from Lynn Lovekin, one of many enthusiastic volunteers that had been fired by Pat's enthusiasm & dedication to the young society.

During Pat's two years as president the Society held several fund-raising events. We danced to big bands in the Community Hall, held Flea Markets, Heritage Days and annual Collectors' Fairs. There were pleasure trips to Black Creek Pioneer Village & Markham Museum; we raffled quilts and even forayed into the realm of publishing. These events drew in the larger community and generated enthusiasm and loyalty to the cause of collecting, disseminating and preserving local history. While reminiscing about some of these events, Dorothy Brown wrote:

I well remember the dedication Pat brought to the Society, organizing two (or three?) fairs; these exhibited such a wide variety of items that were of interest to a wide segment of the community. I remember the play that was written by Charles Ewert - "The Copper Beech" - and put on by school children. Pat managed to involve young and old in the Society's programs. The response from the community was very positive.

Pat would be the first to say that none of it would have happened without the enthusiastic help of a loyal band of volunteers. Many of those volunteers remain or are once again members of the executive or of the general membership of the society. Ron Locke, our immediate past-president, was the society's first president. Francis Jose, long-time treasurer, was Pat's vice-president during her term of office while Dorothy Brown was secretary. Mabel Goode helped in those early days with archival work just as she is doing once again. Lorraine Lover, Jean Rickard, Ron Locke, Lynda Willsher, Grace Rudell, Denis Schmiegelow, and Lynn Lovekin served as Pat's executive.

In 1984, Pat was awarded an Ontario Bicentennial Medal for service to the community. On her retirement as archivist of the Newcastle Village and District Historical Society, the society presented her with a plaque commemorating her many years of dedicated service. These are tangible rewards, something to handle or to hang on a wall.

Perhaps more important though is the knowledge that Pat's dedication and determination will benefit generations to come as they delve among artifacts or sit poring over databases in an effort to retrieve lost family members or village happenings long forgotten. For the fun and frolic and sheer hard slogging a big "thank you" from all of us, Pat.

Unraveling the Threads

In Issue #78 of the newsletter Helen Schmid asks why the Newcastle Woolen Mill was not rebuilt. Perhaps these newspaper extracts go some way to providing the answer.

West Durham News, Friday 5 November 1880

Newcastle. We have lost the factory, i.e. the Durham Woolen Manufacturing Co. have decided to build again, but at Hespeler, notwithstanding the offer of \$6000 bonus made by the corporation. The remains of buildings and grounds, with dwelling, are for sale, -and the bonus added.

3 December 1880 Mr. Robt. Brodie, the Manager of the Woolen Manufacturing Co., left on Monday morning for England. He goes to purchase machinery for a new Woolen Mill.

28 January 1881 Rumor says that the old factory site is about to be purchased by a company, and a woolen factory to be built: Mr. Andrew McNaughton as president.

1 April 1881 Francis Nicholson jr. assistant postmaster, is about to leave for Hespeler to take charge of woolen mills there. (Newcastle column. Courtesy of Helen Schmid)

1 December 1882 We were pleased to see the smiling face of Mr. A. Brodie, who was an assistant in the Woolen factory here, and is now carrying on an extensive business in Peterboro', known as the firm of "Brodie & Son." We are sorry that we had not the facility, in the shape of water power, to induce them to come here.

It doesn't seem too far-fetched to surmise that Robert Brodie's son Alexander was the A. Brodie referred to as an assistant in Newcastle. The family appear to have relocated to Peterborough and started up their own mill there because of the lack of water power in Newcastle. It would be interesting to find out who their backers were. The trustees of the the Newcastle Woolen Manufacturing Co. reads like a roll call of the founding fathers of the village: James P. Lovekin, Asa Wallbridge, Frederick Farncombe, Hart A. Massey, John J. Robson, Thomas Tamblyn, George Jacobs, John Treleaven, & Andrew McNaughton. Hart Massey is listed as the head of the company in the DNCB (701). A call to the Historical Society in Peterborough may supply the answer.

Philippa Schmiegelow

An interesting footnote:

I have among my files a copy of a letter written on March 2, 1870 from North Andover Depot, Mass. addressed to:

R. Fothergill Esq.,

Newcastle. Canada West

It reads:

Please write us what you think of our proposition about selling you the claim against Durham Woolen Co? Your str. Daniel F(Th)urber.

Canadian Connections

Lady Julia Valenza Somerville Head and Sir Francis Bond Head

by Pippa Schmiegelow

Genealogy is a complicated business and none more so than that of these eighteenth and nineteenth century alliances. James Roper Head, FBH's father, inherited his title and his Kent properties through his mother, Anna Gabriella, daughter of The Rev. Sir Francis Head, Baronet, rector of Higham. The ancestral home, The Hermitage, included 30,000 acres and the village of Higham. Her two sons assumed their mother's maiden name of Head, the younger James inheriting her Kent properties including The Hermitage at the age of 15, the elder Francis, her Norfolk properties. In 1781 James married Frances Anne Burges with whom he had eight surviving children. In 1794 a ball at the Hermitage had among its guests Frances Anne's brother, the Tory supporter of Pitt, Sir John Lamb Burges and James Roper Head's radical Whig friend, the influential Charles James Fox.

Charles James Fox, uncle to the 3rd Baron Holland lived with Holland at Holland House in Kensington. In the early days of the nineteenth century Holland House was the social center for Whig politicians and literary men, among them Scott, Sheridan, Sydney Smith, Byron, Wordsworth and Thomas Moore. The Honourable Henry James Boulton, George Boulton's brother, who succeeded John Beverley Robinson as Solicitor General of Upper Canada in 1818, was born at Holland House. In 1829 he succeeded Robinson again, this time as Attorney General. In 1831 JHB built a replica of Holland House in Toronto on the south side of Wellington Street, between Bay and York. Two years later, he left Toronto to become chief justice for Newfoundland. The house was demolished in 1904. (Eric Arthur, *TORONTO: No Mean City*. Toronto: U of T. Press, 3rd ed. 1986, 48)

These threads lead us to Toronto some years ahead of FBH's arrival in Upper Canada and provide a glimpse of the ties that bound these early administrators and brought them to the young colony.

In spite of opposing political persuasions, James Roper Head and John Lamb Burges were fond of each other's children and when the overburdened James fled to the continent to avoid pressure from creditors, Frances Anne moved in with her brother. Francis Bond Head was raised, not at the Hermitage as one might expect, but at Beauport, his uncle's seat. History records that Julia Valenza Somerville was raised at the home of her aunt Maria Burges. Whether Maria was Sir John's wife or sister-in-law is as yet unclear.

In 1814, James Roper Head died leaving Francis Bond Head's family estate in chancery. (The Lord Chancellor's Court, a division of the British High Court of Justice). The estate was sold and the following year, 1815, the two cousins, Francis and Julia became engaged. Francis was assigned to General Count Ziether of the Prussian Army before joining Wellington at Waterloo. Two of his brothers, George and James, and his cousin Somerville Burges accompanied him. (J. Cameron Head, *The Families of Head and Somerville*, 1917, printed privately). [James Cameron Head was FBH's grandson.]

Julia Valenza Somerville, sister of Admiral Kenelm, 17th Baron Somerville, (see *Royal Naval Biography*, John Marshall, London: 1823 v.2, supplement 3, 381, 1829) married her cousin on the 20th May 1816. With Julia came a dowry of twenty thousand pounds. With admirable foresight, the money was immediately invested and remained untouched in trust for any future children. The first of their children, Frank Somerville Head, was born in May 1817 the year Francis Bond Head was posted to Valenciennes. (Future Prime Minister, The Duke of Wellington, was his neighbour in Valenciennes.) In 1818 Head and his family were moved once more, this time to Edinburgh Castle where the three remaining children, Henry, George and Julia were born.

In 1820, George IV visited Scotland. Novelist Walter Scott planned the procession welcoming him to Edinburgh. Julia's nephew, the 18th Earl Errol, Hereditary Lord High Constable of Scotland,

accompanied by her husband, Francis Bond Head, accompanied the King. In 1825, Francis Bond Head was appointed supervisor of the Rio Plata Mining Association and resigned from the army. He arrived in Buenos Aires at the end of July.

On his return to England, Galloping Head as he had become known (see Myno Van Dyke, "Sir Francis Bond 'Galloping' Head", NVDHS newsletter, Issue #78, 10), was invited by Wellington to resume active duty. He refused, choosing instead to launch his literary career. The House of Murray, the publisher responsible for the Tory Quarterly Review, published his best-selling *Rough Notes from the Pampas* in 1826. Head was knighted on 13 September 1831 after demonstrating the military uses of the lasso to the new king, William IV. In 1834 he was named assistant Poor Law Commissioner for Kent under the new poor law of that year.

In November 1835, Francis was offered and at first refused the position of Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada arguing that [he] *was grossly ignorant of everything that in any way related to the governing of our colonies*. Ever the adventurer, however, he was soon persuaded that *Upper Canada was not considered a difficult province for an inexperienced man to govern*. Little did he know! Head set sail on 8th December, arriving at the end of January after a 46-day voyage. In January 1837, Julia Valenza, accompanied by her son George, her daughter Julia, and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Dalrymple, set sail for Canada. They were reunited with FBH late in March and joined by their son Henry and his regiment, the Queen's Bays. Lady head and her family returned to England almost exactly one year later leaving ahead of Sir Francis. (Sydney Jackman, *Galloping Head: The Life of the Rt.Hon. Sir Francis Bond Head, Bart. 1793-1875*. London: Phoenix House Ltd. 1958)

Chief Justice John Beverley Robertson, as he had become, was a strong supporter of Sir Francis during his time as Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. It is probable that the two were well acquainted long before Sir Francis took up his post in Upper Canada. On his departure from the colony, Sir Francis bequeathed his bay mare to Robinson. In a letter written on the 24th January 1838, he writes:

*My Dear Robinson,
I bequeath you my bay mare on condition
that you will never give her away,
but sell or exchange her as soon as you can...
with anything that suits you better. FBH*

The two continued to communicate and to collaborate until JBR's death. On 27 September 1839, wearing a different hat, author FBH writes to Sir John as JBR prepares to leave for a lengthy stay in England:

*My Dear John,
I send you 2 copies of my article which will not
regularly be published for a few days. I would wish you
therefore not to show it, or mention that you are the bearer of it,
and especially that I have sent it before the review has actually
appeared. There is no great harm in my having done
so, as the review will be sure to be out long before you
get across. Please apologise to the Attorney Genr for the
shabby copy I have sent him of my book. I had sent for a new one*

of the 3rd edition but Murray [his publisher] has failed to send it.

John Robinson, jnr, and his wife, Mary Jane, visited the Bond Heads at their home in England in the summer of 1860. Fifteen years later the correspondence between the families is still going strong even though Sir Francis has been finally forced to give up his daily three to four hours on horseback. On January 14, 1875, FBH writes to John Robinson:

My wife and I (now both of us in our 83rd year) are quite as strong as can be expected. We continue to (as we have throughout our lives) to sleep with our window open, be the weather what it may, & she continues to drive out in her little open carriage almost every day. Time has knocked me out of my saddle but by the addition of 2 sticks he has turned me into a quadruped, a change to which I have become quite accustomed.

On the 28th September of the same year following her husband's death in July, Lady Julia writes to John's wife:

*My Dearest Mary Jane,
Your affectionate tribute of love and respect for your old friend, my beloved husband who for nearly 60 yrs has been my companion in many changes and trials of life with unceasing and faithful affection-is very gratifying to me.*

Enclosed in the letter was a lock of FBH's hair.

*Sir Edmund Walker Head, 8th Baronet, Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick 1848-1854, Governor General of Canada, 1854-1863, was FBH's friend and cousin.

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