

## The naval establishments

by Barb McConnell,  
Information Officer,  
Huron Historical Parks.  
Whitewashed, log  
buildings scattered about  
the hillside overlooking  
Penetanguishene Bay  
comprised the Naval and  
Military Establishments  
in 1820. Paths winding  
through the high, weedy  
grass connected the  
buildings and eventually  
led to the dusty track  
which ran the half-mile

length of the outpost.  
A few children,  
browned by the sun, may  
have fashioned mudpies  
on the road, scampering  
away when the guard  
marched past on its way  
to replace the sentry at  
the naval storehouse. It  
was a bustling commu-  
nity of nearly 70  
people.  
The Establishments  
began in 1817, after the  
War of 1812-14. The base,

the British Admiralty had  
decided, would keep two  
schooners in reserve,  
without masts or rigging,  
but ready should there be  
renewed aggressions  
from the south. The war  
was not long over and the  
British were still wary of  
the Americans.  
Progress was steady.  
Progress, if not speedy,  
was steady and by the  
early 1820's, the Royal  
Navy had completed

barracks, offices a  
blacksmith shop, homes,  
a hospital and a number  
of outbuildings. A  
working dockyard, slip,  
sawpit and huge  
storehouse edged the  
shoreline.  
The three-storied, red  
storehouse was the most  
important structure on  
the base. Piled high to the  
20-foot ceilings were  
*Cont'd on p. 16*



Midland Bugle Band  
hockey team of 1938

A little fanfare please for the Midland Bugle Band Hockey team of 1938 - a team that didn't blow important games.

Ken Lowes of Sunnyside submitted the photograph, a handcolored one showing red striped sweaters on the players and the green seats in the Midland Arena background. The photo was taken in February 1938 by Watson's Studio.

From left to right: Ed Lymburner, Ken Lowes, Jake Thomson, H. Hamilton, Charles Hansford, Gerald Blevans, Fred Scott, L.D. Bowman, Les Gerard, Gordon Logan, Willie Scott, Lorne Woods, Meb Ralph, and Hughie Hamilton.

## Penetanguishene's beginnings

On August 1, 1615, Samuel de Champlain, later to be first Governor of Canada, landed at Toanche (probably the North West Basin) in Penetanguishene Harbour. He found the surrounding country "very fine, mostly cleared, with many hills and several streams which make it an agreeable district." With him were two Frenchmen, one of them the interpreter Etienne Brule.

Father Joseph Le Caron, Recollet priest, accompanied by twelve French, had arrived a few days previously. Champlain joined them at Carhagouha (near the western shores of Penetanguishene Harbour), a village strongly fortified by a triple palisade, 35 feet high.

On August 12, Father Le Caron celebrated Mass at Carhagouha and "a cross was set up near a little cabin apart from the village," which the Indians had built for him.

Champlain's chief interests were exploration and the development of the fur trade with these distant tribes, but specifically he had come to fulfill an earlier promise that he would assist the Hurons in warfare against their enemy the Iroquois.

He accordingly departed from Carhagouha on August 14 for Cahigue (near Orillia) a palisaded village of 200 "fairly large lodges" where the Huron warriors, and a band of Algonquin warriors under their chief Iroquet, were to gather for the attack on an Iroquois tribe in the present state of New York. The army set out from Cahigue on September 1, and returned, unsuccessful, on December 20.

A month later Champlain re-joined Father Le Caron and the other French at Carhagouha. He spent four months in the Huron country, and a short period in the country of the Petuns, to the west. He had planned more distant explorations with the Nipissing tribe of Algonquins but this was prevented by an urgent request to mediate in a

dispute that had arisen over the treatment of a prisoner, between the people of Cahigue and Iroquet's Algonquins who were wintering near them.

In May the Hurons assembled for their annual voyage to trade on the St. Lawrence, and

Champlain and Father Le Caron accompanied them. They left these shores on May 20, 1616, and arrived at the St. Louis Rapids (La Chine) at the end of June, 1616.

The Penetanguishene Peninsula where Carhagouha, Toanche and their neighbouring

villages were situated, where French traders, scouts and missionaries lived until the destruction of the Huron nation in 1649, is therefore the first locality west of Quebec to be inhabited by Europeans in the years when Quebec itself was but a tiny-trading post on the St. Lawrence River.

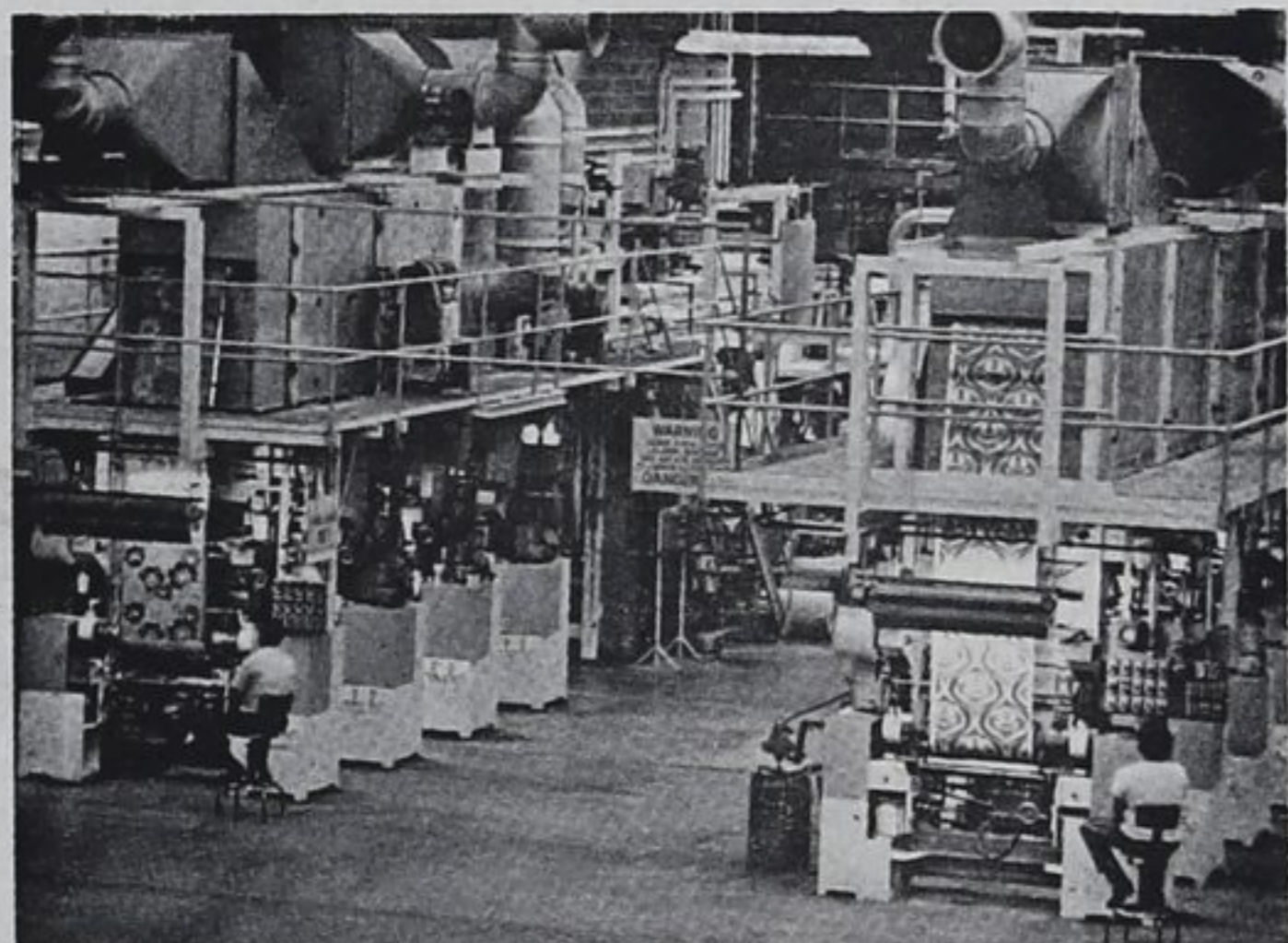
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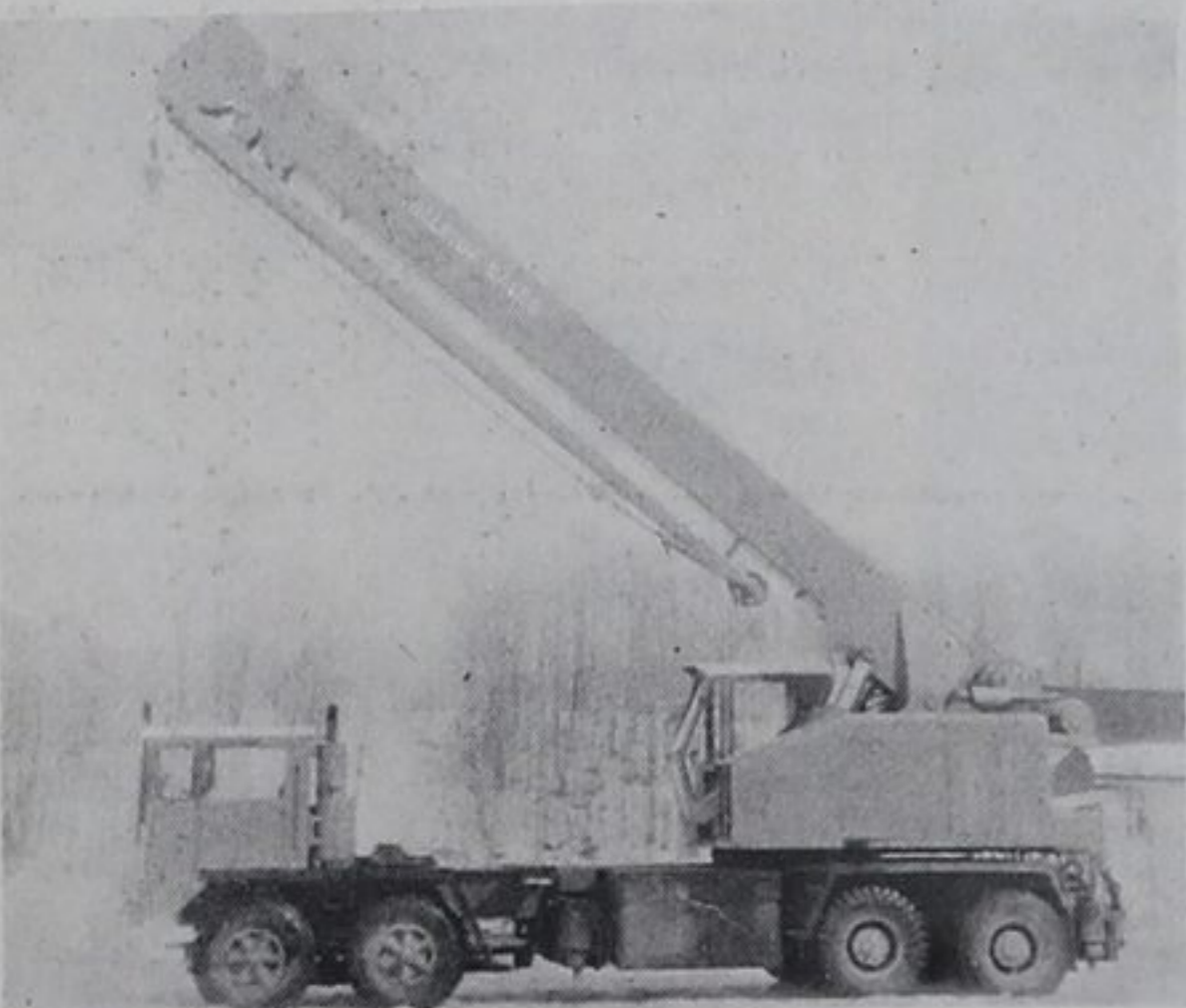


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