

WALL, JOHN P.

The Old Markets of New Brunswick

1914

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*The*  
**OLD MARKETS**  
OF  
**NEW BRUNSWICK**  
BY  
**JOHN P. WALL**

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**1914**



# The Old Markets

OF

## New Brunswick

BY

JOHN P. WALL

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HIRAM STREET MARKET



# THE OLD MARKETS

## OF

# NEW BRUNSWICK

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The early settlers of New Brunswick brought with them many of the traits and customs of their old home towns, among these being the habit of trading at a central place and bartering with the farmer for his produce. At first the business was done in the open field, but as the townsfolks prospered they built at first covered sheds, and later on good, substantial buildings with stalls, which took the place of so many small stores.

A market for the citizens of New Brunswick was one of the first accommodations looked after by these sturdy old settlers. The earliest record we have in reference to this matter is the following ordinance:

### "Regulations for the Market.

"Be itt ordained by the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and Assistants in Common Council convened. and by the authority of the same itt ordained, that the market place under the Court room be and is hereby appointed to be the publick Market place of this City, and that all flesh, poultry, Eggs, butter, Cheese, herbs, roots, fruits, &c., that shall be exposed to sale on the markett days in any other place in this City, than in the public markett aforesaid, shall be forfeited to the poor of this City, whether found in the hands of the buyer or seller; and that itt shall and may be lawful for the Clerk of the market, Sheriff, or any other magistrate of the said City, the same to seize and thereof dispose to the poor as aforesaid.

### "No Huckster to Buy Till Two Hours in the Markett.

"And be it further ordained by the authority aforesaid, that no person or Huckster to sell again shall buy any flesh, fish, fowl, butter, Cheese, Eggs, herbs, roots, &c., or any other sort of provisions, saleable till it hath been two hours in the markett upon forfeiture of Six Shillings, and also what shall be so sold or bought. And be it further ordained, by the authorities aforesaid, That on Markett days no person shall buy or cheapen any provisions going to markett, upon the forfeiture of Six Shillings. And be it ordained by the authority aforesaid, That no unwholesome or Stale Victuals be sold in the markett under the penalty of forty shillings."

This must have been adopted on the receipt of the city charter on December 30, 1730, or very shortly thereafter, as on November 12, 1733, "The former Law relating to the Markett is renewed and confirmed," which is proof that the law was in force for some time previous.

The ordinance under which the first market was built was passed at a meeting of Common Council held at the Court House May 3, 1743, the preamble of which is as follows:

"Whereas Lawrence Williamson by Deed bearing Date the Sixth Day of February 1742 hath granted and Conveyed unto Dirck Van Aesdalen and William Duke a Certain Lot of Land Scituate Lying in Trust and for the use and benefit of the Inhabitants of this City to and for the



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Erecting and building of a Market House in this City. And whereas it appears to this Common Council that Divers of the Freeman and Inhabitants of this city have Subscribed Sundry Sums of Money for and toward building of the said Market House on the Lot aforesaid, and have also Exhibited a petition to this Common Council approving of the Situation of the place and Judging it Highly reasonable and necessary that a market house should be built on said Lot and the Market kept under proper Regulations."

The Market House was to be "thirty foot in Length and fourteen foot in Breadth and to stand on a stone foundation, and the Roof to be supported by brick pillars, the roof to project at least two foot over on Every side, the same to be placed in the most commodious and uniform manner that the said Ground can or will admit of." The full ordinance will be found in the "Charter and Ordinances" issued by the New Brunswick Historical Society.

The last market the city had stood on Hiram street, between Neilson and Dennis streets, on the site now occupied by the office of the city weigher. This is the market place shown in the accompanying picture. The early minutes of Common Council gives a very complete account of the agitation for and building of the Hiram street market.

At the town meeting held at the Court House, April 5, 1796, it was voted that a market house be built by the inhabitants at a cost of 120 pounds (\$600), and that the choice of the house and lot be decided by vote. No tax levy was made for this appropriation. On April 19, Councilmen Hardenbergh, Neilson and Schureman were appointed a committee to select a site for a market lot, and this was all that was done in the matter until the annual meeting held at the old market house on April 4, 1797, when it was voted that the old market house be repaired or torn down and a new one built on the old site.

The matter ended up in the old market having some slight repairs

made to it, as Common Council did not feel that the Corporation could afford to expend the necessary money for a new one. The agitation died out, and it was not until early in 1810 that "New Market" talk broke out again. On June 8 of that year Mr. Boggs, for the committee on market, which had been appointed at a previous meeting, reported the following:

"That they had visited two sites, one at the corner of Richmond and Queen streets and the other on the south side of Hiram street. The committee recommended the purchase by the corporation of 30 feet on Hiram street, which, with the present width of the street, would give them a space of 70 feet in width and 200 feet in length, upon which a long market house could be built and yet leave a good driveway at each side.

The report was received and adopted, and Messrs. Boggs and Paterson were appointed a committee to buy the lot. At the next meeting of the Council, held June 25, a petition was received from a number of citizens asking that the market house be built at the north end of the town, at no cost to the city, the petitioners agreeing to guarantee the money for the payments of the same. The petition was laid on the table and no further action was taken upon it. The committee reported at this meeting that they had contracted with Ezekiel Kennen for thirty feet on Queen street along the south side of Hiram into Dennis street, at a cost of \$450.

The next move was made on May 22, 1812, when \$200 was voted for the new market house. The committee in charge had plans prepared and submitted them at the meeting of Council on August 28, and Council adopted them. They provided for a house one hundred and fifty feet long and twenty-five feet in width, with watch tower over the end of the pier adjoining Queen street. Councilmen Dennis, Hardenbergh and Hance were appointed a committee to contract for the erection of the house on the submitted plans.



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On Nov. 6 the committee reported that they had let the contract, but could not agree in regard to the sale of the old building and lot. After a long discussion it was decided to make the ground a public square, and on April 29, 1813, the bill declaring the ground at the junction of Peace and Burnet streets a public square forever, was taken up, and after a hot debate was adopted. An appropriation of \$200 was made at the meeting of Aug. 23 for the purpose of paving the same.

The contractors for the new market building were John L. Voorhees and William Lowe. They were paid the first installment of \$200 for work on March 29, 1813. On May 7 it was decided to have \$850 voted for at the annual meeting, for the purpose of completing the new market. This was not done, but instead \$500, the balance due Lowe and Voorhees, and \$740, the amount estimated it would cost to finish the market, was voted.

On July 9, the Council notified the contractors "that unless they began work at once and completed the market before August the first, they would be compelled to take the contracts from them and have the work done by other men."

Jacob Wykoff was paid on Nov. 19, \$60.62½ for lathing the market. On Jan. 14, 1814, Lowe and Voorhees presented their account, which was referred to the mayor, and on his recommendation the claim, amounting to \$1,100, and an extra one of \$53.86 for material, and work on watch house, was allowed at the meeting of Feb. 14, 1814; also one of \$75.75 from Peter Wykoff for extra work and materials; also one for \$14 in favor of James Williams, for gilding and painting the market. The mayor was instructed to draw his order in favor of Lowe and Voorhees for the full amount due them.

At the meeting of Council held March 25, it was decided that the floor of the market should be laid with good hard bricks, and that eight extra shambles or stalls be built at the expense of the corporation. The committee had the work done at a cost of \$130. Councilmen Hence,

Taylor and Potts had the matter in hand when the project of a new market was launched.

On July 5th, 1814, the sale of the stalls at auction took place, two having been previously sold at private sale: No. 1 to Jane Boor, for \$11.50, and No. 2 to Joseph E. Tunison, for \$9.50; No. 3 to Ambrose Stell, brought \$10 annually; No. 4 to David Stell, \$10; No. 5 to Joseph Runyon, \$10; No. 6 to John Green, \$10; No. 7 to Benj. Dunham, \$10; No. 8 to John Boice, Jr., \$10; No. 9 to John Van Liew, \$10; No. 29 to James Fisher, \$10. No more leaders appearing the vendue was closed. The city watch occupied the watch house or tower above the market and Council later purchased a bell for it.

The market ran along causing all kinds of trouble to the city, and the following proceedings of Common Council tells fully the story of our city market's rise and fall:

#### Common Council Proceedings.

##### Market House Proposition.

On Monday evening, March 3d, 1862, the Committee on Public Buildings, presented the following reports for the consideration of Common Council and the citizens of New Brunswick:—

To the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Councilmen of the City of New Brunswick.

The Committee to whom was referred for examination the condition of the Market House, respectfully submit the following report and recommendations:

They have examined the condition and location of the Market-House, and find the building in a very poor condition, and not at all calculated in its appearance or convenience to add any credit to the city. They believe that the location is very good, but that there is not sufficient room.

They therefore recommend that Bayard street be opened through to Dennis street; that all the buildings and land between Bayard street and the Market be purchased by the city, which purchase will take three dwelling houses and one store on Neilson street, two dwelling houses, blacksmith and wheelwright shops in front of the Market, and part of a small house in Dennis street. This will make a square two hundred and eight



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feet, from the Middlesex Hotel to Mr. Vandeventer's grocery store, and two hundred and ninety-five feet from the fence of the First Reformed Dutchen Church, to the dining rooms of Mr. R. M. Clare. This would make a large and handsome square, capable of containing a Market House, City Hall, or other public buildings that may be desired and decided upon by the citizens of New Brunswick hereafter.

Your committee would suggest, that the amount required to purchase the land and buildings be ascertained, and the amount per centage of tax be made known to the public for at least two months, at the end of which time an election be held, so that the citizens of New Brunswick may decide for themselves if they are willing to make the improvements.

Your committee also suggest that Dennis street be opened through to New street, believing that it would add much to the convenience and improvement of the city.

A good market place and the changes in the streets above recommended, would well repay the citizens for the expense it would put them to, in the convenience, beauty and business it would add to the city.

Your committee recommend that this report be published in the papers of the city for the space of one month, in order that the citizens may consider the propriety of these recommendations, and make any suggestions in reference thereto that they may think would be desirable.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

E. B. WRIGHT,  
H. M. PRICE.

This is remarkable for its reference to the opening of Dennis street, to New, and Bayard to Dennis.

New Brunswick, March 17, 1862.

The Committee on Public Buildings, at the request of many citizens of New Brunswick, beg leave to offer the following report and recommendations concerning the Market : First, that the city purchase the property belonging to the Neilson estate fronting on Burnet street and Dennis street. Said lot is about 80 feet on Burnet street, from Mr. J. Danberry's store to Mr. C. McGinnis's house; from Burnet street to Dennis street about 335

feet, and about 84 feet on Dennis street. They would recommend that Bayard and Dennis streets be opened as described in their report, they believe that this would make a good and convenient Market place. The old Market could be taken down, and the square kept for scales, hay, wood, and cattle. They have been informed that some fifteen hundred dollars will be given by parties in the immediate neighborhood. If the Board think best to adopt this plan, the committee recommend that the same course be taken before purchasing as recommended in their other report.

EDWARD B. WRIGHT.

March 7, 1862.

Monday Evening, March 17, 1862.

The Board met pursuant to adjournment of March 3d. All the members were present except Councilman Price.

The following recommendations and resolutions were presented and read to the Board, and after a brief discussion were laid on the table, for the purpose of giving the members time to think about them before acting upon them:

Deeming the Public Market House in this city (because of its ruinous and dilapidated appearance, and for many other causes), a public nuisance, and comparing the benefits arising from a continuance of the old market system with the impossibility almost of keeping the Market House and adjacent streets cleanly and in order, collecting dues, etc., and finding many large cities, viz., New Haven, Bridgeport, Newport, etc., neither of which have a market or any other people could desire, without the expense of building, or any of the attending difficulties.

I would respectfully suggest the propriety and expediency of removing the old market house entirely, as soon after the first day of May next as possible, by sale at auction to the highest bidder, and I would recommend the conditions to be the removal of the house, and all rubbish caused by taking down the same from the street, as clean as it can be swept, in ten days from the time of sale.

Sale to be for cash, or approved



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short note to the city treasurer, immediately after sale, or property at once to be put up again; which condition shall be made known before the sale.

And I would further recommend the removal of the city scales from the present site to the square opposite the Second Presbyterian Church, at or near the east end of Livingston avenue, trusting thereby that the city may avoid the expense of keeping up a sewer to drain the pit in which the scales must be located.

And I would recommend placing two rows of nicely turned and white painted posts, with a space of three or four feet between the rows, in Market square, extending from Neilson to Dennis streets, with a continuous chain attached, for the accommodation of two rows of wagons, standing back to back against said chains, for sale of vegetables, fruit, fish, etc., etc.; the square to be so occupied without charge, and kept clean by direction of the city marshal, as inspector or overseer of streets; and the ordinance prohibiting the sale of fish, meats, etc., in wagons throughout the streets of the city, to be hereafter strictly enforced by the marshal.

I would add that all market rents due the city have now been paid up to the first of May next, to the city treasurer, as required by ordinance. In accordance with the recommendations I would offer the following resolutions, and move their adoption, believing they will meet the approbation of nine-tenths of our citizens.

LYLE VAN NUIS.

Monday Evening, May 29, 1865.

The Board met pursuant to adjournment—all the members present.

Alderman Henry offered the following preamble and resolution in reference to the old Market House:—

Whereas, The present Market House is a nuisance as well as a disgrace to the City of New Brunswick; and whereas, all appeals for the erection of a suitable building for a public Market have been voted down by our citizens; and whereas, this Board have ascertained that the present occupants of stalls therein

are gradually giving up the same, thereby making the said Market House a bill of expense, instead of a source of revenue to the City; therefore,

Resolved, That the City Clerk notify the occupants of stalls in the Market House that it is the intention of The Mayor and Common Council of the City of New Brunswick to cause the same to be removed on or before the 1st day of July, 1865.

Resolved, That the Committee on Public Buildings be directed to advertise the said public Market House at public auction to the highest cash bidder who will remove the same within fifteen days from the date of sale.

Resolved, That from and after the date of the sale the office of Clerk of the Market be abolished, and that the President of the Board together with the Committee on Markets be directed to revise the Market Ordinance and Supplement, and report the same to Common Council.

Resolved, That the Committee on Markets be directed at once to cause the 25th section of the Ordinance concerning Markets, relative to the sale of fish in the public streets, to be strictly enforced.

On motion of Alderman Jenkins, it was agreed that the public sale of the Market House should take place on the 15th of June. The preamble and resolutions were then adopted by the following vote: Ayes—Castner, Cheesman, Grover, Henry, Jenkins, O'Gorman, J. Runyon, Walling. Nays—Anin, Cook, Dunham.

Monday Evening, July 17.

A regular meeting of Common Council was held, pursuant to adjournment, on the above mentioned evening—all the members present except Alderman O'Gorman.

The Committee on Public Buildings reported as follows in reference to the sale of Old Market House: Cash received for the building above ground, \$59; for the bell, \$10.50; for the brick on floor, \$30; total, \$99.50. Less commission for selling the Market House, \$5; leaving balance of \$94.50. The Committee thought proper to reserve the curbing for the use of the city, and have put said curbing in the charge of the Street Commissioner. The report was accepted and ordered on file.



The auctioneer was A. P. Provost, and the purchaser Nicholas Stobbe.

### Market Boomed Again in 1912.

On July 8, 1912, the New Brunswick Public Market was incorporated with a capital stock of \$50,000, the shareholders and the amounts subscribed were. Alvin A. Hastings, \$100; Isidor P. Hirsh, \$200; Theodore Cohn, \$100;

Julius D. Posner, \$100; Henry B. Zimmerman, \$150; Edwin R. Van Pelt, \$100; William F. Schlosser, \$200; William C. Jacques, \$100; Morris Fischler, \$125.

The funds were returned some time after and the corporation dissolved. The building this corporation had under consideration was King Block, on Burnet street, with an entrance on Dennis street.

### A LAMENT FOR THE OLD MARKET

(By a Former Lodger.)

O. where are the fondly loved scenes of  
my childhood,  
The place where so oft I have lain me  
to rest.  
What to me is the rose-scent and  
and sweets of the wild-wood,  
When inhaling the scent of the market  
with zest.

As I lie on a stall in the summer eve  
dozing,  
Soothed to slumber by rats at their in-  
nocent play;  
With the odor of half-decayed mutton  
my nose in,—  
Alas! all these pleasures have vanish-  
ed away.

O Bob, my old chum, we are exiled  
forever,  
And gaze on those ruins with tears of  
regret;  
But tears can't restore, though they  
flow like a river,  
Those times of enjoyment we ne'er can  
forget.

Now, turning away with a sigh of  
deep feeling,  
And hearts sore oppressed with the  
weight of our woe,  
The thought to my mind rises silently  
stealing—  
"O, where will poor Bob and his Theo-  
dore go?"

—Daily Fredonian.

July 18, 1865.