



# S SHEPHERD JOHNSON FROST

By Althea Douglas  
A FORGOTTEN ARCHITECT

Shepherd Johnson Frost called himself an architect in only one document that survives. But in New Brunswick in the 1820s, "architect" was a pretentious term that few would recognize; Frost's sobriquets of carpenter, house-builder, and millwright were better understood by most. Call him what you will, Frost drew plans, set out specifications, and oversaw the construction of some of eastern New Brunswick's finest early wooden buildings.

Frost's talent and his contributions to the province have been almost entirely obliterated from the collective memory. There are, unfortunately, very good

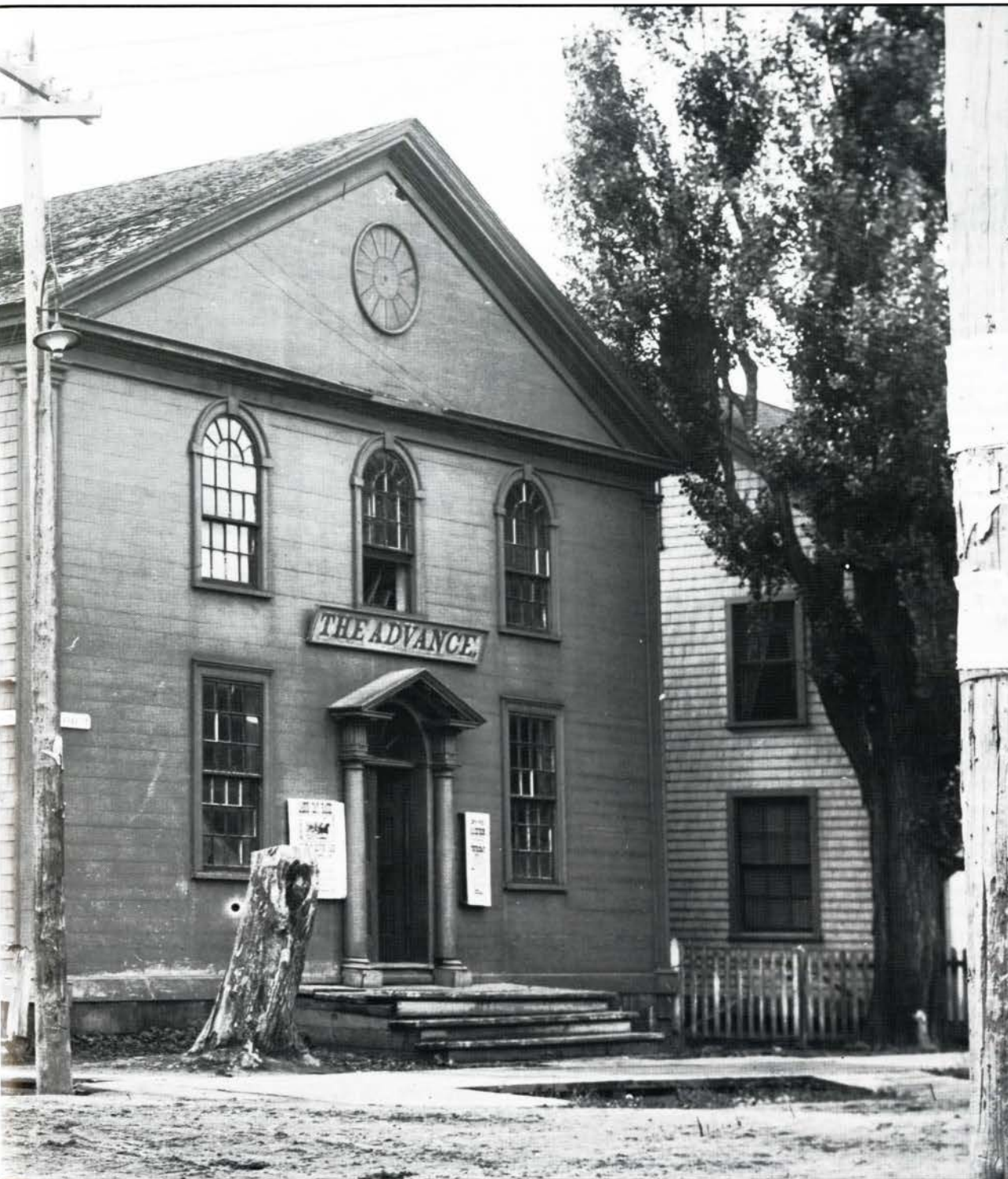


Figure 4. The former Wesleyan Methodist chapel, Chatham, New Brunswick, built in 1830-31 by Frost & Rainnie. (PANB P18-39)

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reasons why Victorian and Edwardian New Brunswickers forgot. They tended to venerate their British and Loyalist heritage and insisted on “respectability” in outward conduct and behaviour. American-born Frost may have been too much the charming self-promoter to be “respectable.” Moreover, by the end of the century, some people had undoubtedly heard about the wife and two children left in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, while two subsequent “wives” bore him 17 children in Chatham.

Although the first English-speaking settlers in the area now known as New Brunswick came from New

England, theirs was not the only architectural influence in this region. The Yorkshiremen who came to Chignecto in the 1770s, unlike the New Englanders, brought a tradition of building in brick or stone; certainly there was no shortage of clay in this region, and brownstone would be supplied to the Boston States though the next century. But by the 1820s most Yorkshire-trained stonemasons were dead. Wood, readily available, appealed to church congregations and county officials who were considering costs, and wooden buildings became the norm in New Brunswick.

Shepherd Johnson Frost was born in 1788 in Lee, New Hampshire, where his grandfather, Nathaniel Frost (1712/13-post 1765) of Lee and Durham, New Hampshire, was a carpenter (a clue to his early training?) and a farmer.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps he learned carpentry and drafting in Portsmouth, a prosperous and cosmopolitan city. Some homes there are attributed to a housewright from Dover, New Hampshire, where Frost's mother's family originated. In December 1813 a fire devastated Portsmouth; Frost was among the joiners employed there to rebuild in the "modern" Federal style.<sup>2</sup> Frost must have known books of architectural designs and plans such as those by William Pain and Asher Benjamin, which influenced builders in the Piscataqua region.<sup>3</sup>

The *New Hampshire Gazette* contains several references to Shepherd Frost, beginning in 1811 and including his marriage in 1812. He was elected a police officer at the Town Meeting of 25 March 1814, but not to any post in either 1815 or 1816. He was in Portsmouth "as late as the month of June or July AD 1816" but would appear to have left soon after.<sup>4</sup>

Frost confirmed that he came to New Brunswick in 1816,<sup>5</sup> though there is no record of where he arrived, nor where he spent those first years. An indenture dated 24 June 1822 is the earliest documentation of his presence in Westmorland County, by which time he was accepted as being "of Dorchester." In Moncton, on 12 February 1824, he signed a promissory note to pay £28 to Solomon Trites,<sup>6</sup> one of the trustees of the Free Meeting House that had recently been built in that town. There is, however, nothing to document his association with the construction of the Meeting House, a well-proportioned New England-style clapboard building with simple neoclassic details.<sup>7</sup> It is frustrating to know the names of the benefactors and trustees, yet have no idea who was responsible for a building's design. Alas, a house carpenter or "housewright" was a mechanic, not a gentleman, and so not worthy of note.

The first building that can be attributed to Shepherd Johnson Frost is St. Martin's-in-the-Woods, a little wooden church at Shediac Cape, New Brunswick (figure 1). The church's historical leaflet proclaims that it was founded 1822-23 by a Londoner, William Hanington. In reading the small four-page history it is easy to pass over a single phrase: "the plans were drawn by an American named Frost ...."<sup>8</sup>

Hanington undoubtedly knew what he was about when he saw to it that proper architectural plans were drawn for his church. Regional historian F. R. Sayre points out that the church was "modelled along the lines of an older church, that of St. Anne's at Westcock, near Sackville." A sketch of St. Martin's in its original form shows that both churches had the same semi-circular chancels and similar small spires. Both churches, however, were later gothicized. St. Anne's was erected sometime around 1820, largely through the efforts of the Hon. William Botsford,<sup>9</sup> a Loyalist from New Haven. Botsford, too, would have known what an architect was and did, but unfortunately no records survive to tell who drew up the plans and specifications for St. Anne's.

The "American named Frost," however, was almost certainly in the neighbourhood. In the indenture dated 24 June 1822 "Shepherd J. Frost of Dorchester ... architect" paid £59.14.3 lawful money of New Brunswick to innkeeper James Carter of Dorchester and took a mortgage on buildings and a triangle of land at the centre of the town. The following spring the mortgaged property where "James L. Carter and Mary his wife now dwell" was purchased by Frost (this time termed "Carpenter") for the sum of £370.<sup>10</sup> This building, now the Bell Inn, was radically "restored" some years ago, so if Frost made any modifications, few traces remain.

Frost worked in and around Westmorland County until 1825. Then Jacob Wendell, a merchant and importer of Portsmouth,<sup>11</sup> sued him for recovery of a debt, contracted there in 1816, of \$85.46, or £24 lawful money of New Brunswick. Frost moved to Northumberland County before 20 May 1826, about which time several other men from whom he had borrowed money (including Trites) decided it was prudent to try to collect their debts.<sup>12</sup>

Debts aside, such a move was a sound business venture: a series of fires had broken out in the forests of northern New Brunswick in the autumn of 1825, devastating the area and destroying the towns of Newcastle and Douglastown on the north bank of the Miramichi River. The frantic demand for housing that ensued must have been enough to encourage Frost to leave the long-established Shiretown of Dorchester for greater opportunities on the burnt-out Miramichi. Chatham, on the south side of the river, had escaped the fire and so became the base for relief operations and the slow process of rebuilding. Here Shepherd Frost soon found a business partner, Gavin Rainnie.

Here also, on 20 May 1827, Elmira Jane and Howard Douglas, daughter and son of Mary and Shepherd Johnson Frost (occupation "carpenter"), were baptized.<sup>13</sup> These baptisms recorded in the Anglican Church register are the first evidence of Shepherd J. Frost

1 Norman S. Frost, *Frost Genealogy in Five Families* (West Newton, Mass.: Frost Family Association of America, 1926), 330-35, traces Shepherd J. Frost's descent from Nicholas Frost "the apprentice," who came to the New World in 1662. Shepherd Johnson Frost, the youngest son of Winthrop and Sarah (Tuttle) Frost, married Emily, daughter of Joseph and Esther (Jackson) Akerman at Portsmouth on 27 December 1812. They had two children: Caroline Emily, b. 11 June 1814, and Charles Leonard, b. 4 April 1815.

This information was first published in *Items of Antiquity*, "by a descendant I M R" (Boston, 1894). Shepherd Frost's entry states "He died at Miramichi, N.B., 3 July, 1853. She [Emily Ackerman] died at Portsmouth, 4 August 1864."

2 John Mead Howells, ed., *The Architectural Heritage of the Piscataqua* (New York, 1937). His "Memoranda on an early Portsmouth Builder and of possible Architects and sources of design" notes the skills of one "Hopstill March" or "Hopstill Caswell" of Dover. A more recent study is James Leo Garvin, "Academic Architecture and the Building Trades in the Piscataqua Region of New Hampshire and Maine, 1715-1815" (Ph.D. thesis, Boston University, 1983); for Frost see p. 483.

3 The State of New Hampshire, Department of Libraries, Arts & Historical Resources, has issued "A List of Architectural Sourcebooks Probably Used in the Piscataqua Region of New Hampshire and Maine 1700-1820."

4 Portsmouth Athenaeum MSS. Collection, Wendell Family Papers, Letter Book B (1818-1827), copy of Samuel Fernald's Affidavit, sworn 14 June 1825.

5 New Brunswick Census 1851, Northumberland Co., Chatham, p. 61.

6 Provincial Archives of New Brunswick (hereafter PANB), RG 5, RS 42, Supreme Court Case Files, 1826, Solomon Trites vs. Shepherd Frost. The note provides a sample of Frost's handwriting and signature.

7 A. C. Hale, "Reports on Selected Buildings in Fredericton, Moncton and Woodstock, New Brunswick," Parks Canada, Reports on Microfiche, M.F. 13 (1973-1976), includes research on the Free Meeting House.

8 Apparently taken from Francis Reginald Ker Sayer's typescript "A History of Shediac Cape" (copyright 1966), 28. He cites no authority and the early Church records hold no information. Presumably he relied on local tradition and community knowledge.

9 W. C. Milner, *History of Sackville New Brunswick*, reprint ed. (Sackville, N.B., 1970), 61.

10 New Brunswick Museum Archives Section, History Department, F58 No. 47 (1822) and No. 86 (1823).

11 James Rindge Stanwood, *The Direct Ancestry of the Late Jacob Wendell of Portsmouth, N.H.* (Boston, 1882, limited edition), details Wendell's career. By 1825 he may have been forced to call in his debts.

12 PANB, RG 5, RS 42, Supreme Court Case Files: 1825, Jacob Wendell vs. Shephard [sic] J. Frost; 1826, Thomas Milledge vs. Shepherd Frost. These Case Files are indexed, and between 1825 and 1834 Frost featured as plaintiff in 6 cases, defendant in 7.

13 Chatham Anglican Parish Records, Baptisms, 1822-1884; Marriages, 1833-1932. PANB microfilm F 1096.



Figure 1 (above). The church of St. Martin's-in-the-Woods, Shediac Cape, New Brunswick, founded in 1822-23. A sketch owned by the parish showing the building with the original steeple. (Photo: Bryan Howell)

Figure 2 (left). The Northumberland County Court House at Newcastle, New Brunswick, designed by Frost and built by Frost & Rainnie, 1828-29. (Photo: author)

having a family in the Miramichi region. Mary (Carter) Frost was a cousin of the innkeeper from whom he had bought his Dorchester property.<sup>14</sup>

The County Court House at Newcastle had been destroyed in the 1825 fire. Funds to rebuild were eventually promised by the province, and on 12 February 1828 an appointed committee advertised in the Chatham *Gleaner* for plans and specifications for a new stone court house and wooden gaol for the county.<sup>15</sup> Finding that a brick or stone court house would cost £335 more than a wooden building,<sup>16</sup> the committee signed an agreement with Shepherd J. Frost and Gavin Rainnie on 10 June 1828 for “a good and substantial Court House of Wood.” The performance bond was guaranteed by Joseph Cunard and George Taylor.<sup>17</sup>

Shepherd Johnson Frost was paid £12.10.0 for “drawing Drafts and Specifications for Court House and Gaol” at Newcastle, and Frost and Rainnie eventually received £761.5.8 for “building, and finishing the new Court House” (figure 2).

On 18 August 1829 the *Gleaner* enthused:

The Court House at Newcastle is finished. It is a handsome building measuring 45 feet by 40, reflects great credit on the architectural taste of both projectors and builders, and tends considerably to embellish the town.

But who was the builder? Louise Manny, in her eulogy “William Murray, Miramichi Builder,” grudgingly admitted:

Murray did considerable work for Shepherd Frost, a native of New Hampshire settled in Chatham, a contractor and builder, and it was Frost and his associate, Rainnie, who got the contract for building the Court House [at Newcastle].<sup>18</sup>

Dr. Manny was enough of an historian that she would not contradict documented facts, but she was a friend of the Murray family and also knew Frost's history. She went on to proclaim that the court house's “design and proportions are unmistakably Murray's, as are also its woodwork and ornamental detail.”

Margaret Carter's *Early Canadian Court Houses* draws on Anne C. Hale's “Early Court Houses of New Brunswick” for modern scholarly research on the old Northumberland County Court House.<sup>19</sup> Hale's work included a thorough search in the Provincial Archives for pertinent documents. She was, however, working with the successor and the local friends of Dr. Manny (1890-1970). Hale, in her full report, repeated most of Manny's article on Murray (meticulously footnoting her source) but, since she could find no documentary evidence to substantiate Dr. Manny's claims, she credited the design of the court house to the group who signed the agreement: the committee members appointed by the grand jury plus Frost and Rainnie.

William Murray had built a guard house in Newcastle in 1822, but the earliest document associating Murray with the new court house is dated 7 September 1833. In it he petitions to be paid for “doing repairs and making alterations on the County Jail and Court House, for which an order was made out at the August Sessions of 1832 ....”<sup>20</sup> The prisoners

14 Family tradition and circumstantial evidence support Mary's identity, but no records have been located to document the marriage.

15 *The Gleaner and Northumberland Schediasma* published from 1829-1880. The first publisher-editor was James A. Pierce. His bill for the advertising is in PANB, RS 153, F 6/1.

16 A. C. Hale, “The Early Court Houses of New Brunswick,” Manuscript Report issued by Parks Canada [Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings], No. 290 (1977), Old Northumberland County Court House, p. 197.

17 PANB, RS 153 (Court House, Newcastle), F6/1,2/3, contain almost all documents relating to the first court house (destroyed in 1825), the building of the new court house, and subsequent repairs.

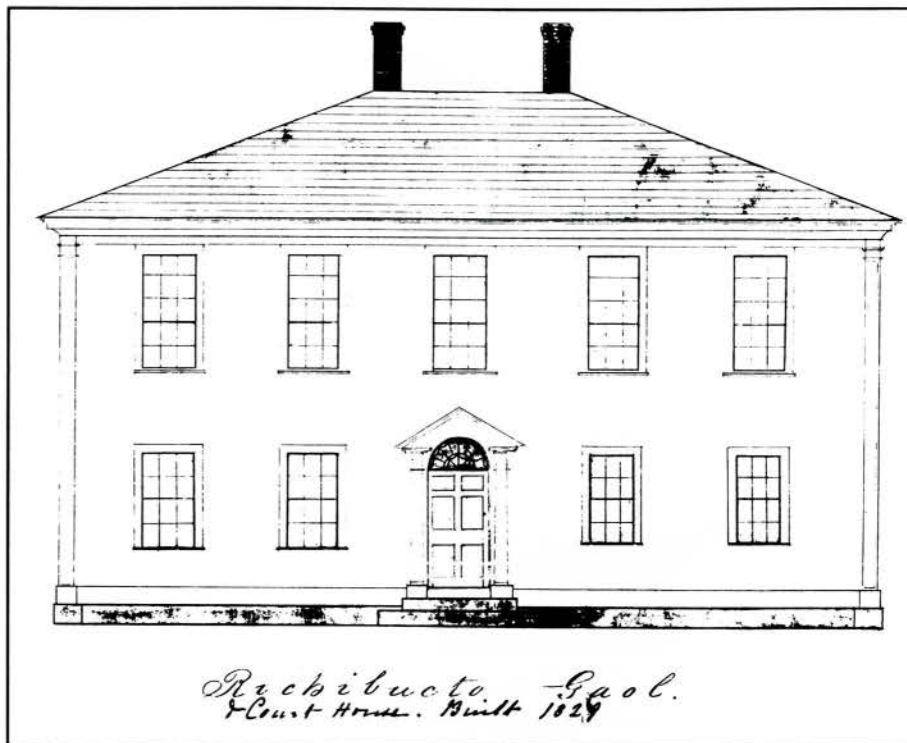
In April, John Johnston spent “12 days making out plans — specifications and rough Estimates for a Court House and Gaol at Newcastle.” He was paid £7.10.0, presumably for planning the too-costly stone or brick building. Frost drew the alternate plans in May, billing for £15.0.0 but deducting his “own chg.” of £2.10.0. Alexr. Johnston inspected the building during construction and was paid £12 for work extending from 1 August 1828 to 17 August 1829.

18 Louise Manny, “William Murray Miramichi Builder,” *Maritime Advocate and Busy East* 36 (October 1945): 14-16, 31.

19 Hale, “Early Court Houses of New Brunswick;” Margaret Carter, *Early Canadian Court Houses* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1983).

20 PANB, RS 153, F6/1. Some 40 documents, petitions for payment, accounts showing the purchase of lumber or hardware, and various memos concerning Murray's work are found in PANB, RS 153, F6/1,2/3.

Figure 3. The Kent County Court House, Richibucto, built in 1829 by Frost & Rainnie. (PANB RG9.RS 377A)



were an unruly lot and, over the years, Murray seems to have undertaken many such repairs and alterations. Little wonder that he became associated with the building in local people's minds.

A skilled joiner and woodworker, Murray was undoubtedly employed by Frost and Rainnie on the court house, and may well have been responsible for much of the fine woodwork and ornamental detail. His own home shows his skill, and his work has an ornateness and complexity that would have appealed to late-Victorian taste. As Frost's doorways are simpler in style, he may have had to restrain such a craftsman as Murray. But as any architect or designer knows, finding a skilled worker to execute your designs is a gift fate does not always bestow.

Anne Hale seems to have understood Murray's real role. She points out that Frost was a native of New Hampshire, noting that "following the American colonial domestic form, the design of the court house is careful and balanced."<sup>21</sup> She also included at the end of her discussion of the old Northumberland County Court House a copy of a drawing of the front elevation of a now-vanished Kent County Court House built at Richibucto (figure 3). The two buildings were remarkably similar, though in the Kent County building the taller windows of the court room are on the upper floor.

The original elevation drawing as well as floor plans for the Kent County Court House, located among the annual returns of the Kent County Jail,<sup>22</sup> are the work of a skilled draftsman. Both the elevation and floor plans are executed in India ink and water colours. The original artist wrote titles and identified rooms in a formal script; these were expanded later in quite a different hand (probably by the sheriff who sent them with the returns). Taking account of the fact that this was probably a formal presentation sketch, a comparison of the writing to Frost's promissory note to Solomon Trites shows considerable similarity in the formation of letters and the slant of the writing.

The Kent County Quarter Session minutes document the fact that Frost & Rainnie built the Kent County Court House in 1829,<sup>23</sup> so these could well be Frost's original sketches (that a lazy sheriff sent off later to save time). There are no documents that associate William Murray with the Kent County building, so it seems fair to credit Frost with the New England-style design of this New Brunswick building.

In 1830-31 Frost and Rainnie built a chapel for the Wesleyan Methodists which stood at the corner of Duke and Cunard Streets and in later years housed the *Miramichi Advance*. It was photographed (figure 4), and we can still see, as the *Gleaner* reported:

...[this] handsome and unassuming edifice of modern architecture, is very creditable to the mechanical skill and faithfulness of the Contractors Messrs. Frost & Rainnie, ... while it is divest of all superfluous ornament, it is neat and commodious and capable of containing upwards of 600 people.<sup>24</sup>

21 Hale, "Early Court Houses of New Brunswick," 198.

22 PANB, RG 9, RS 377, A. Other county jail returns from these years include roughly sketched plans.

23 PANB, RG 18, RS 150, A/1.1

24 *Gleaner*, 3 August 1831.

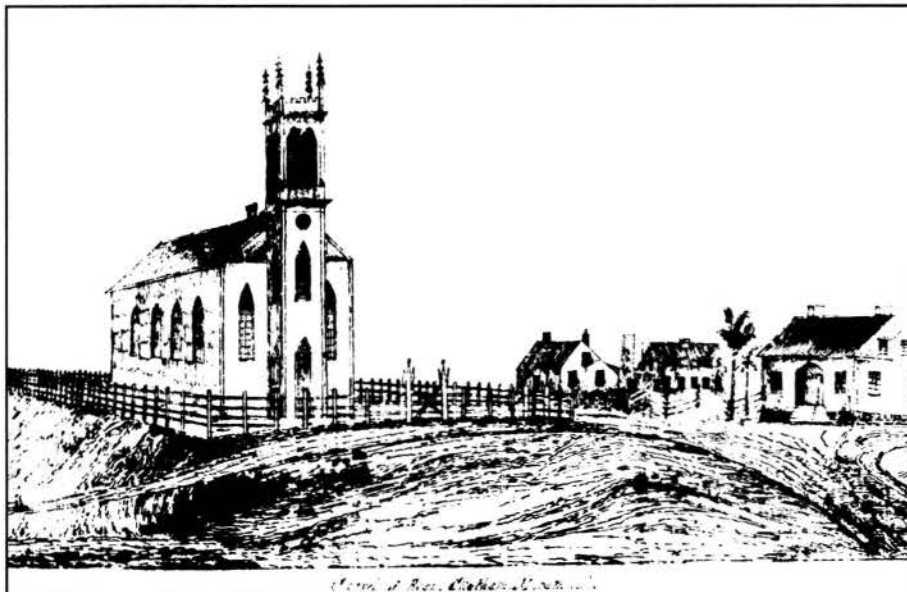


Figure 5. St. Mary's Chapel of Ease, as originally contracted. (W. A. Spray, *David's Kingdom: A History of the Anglican Church in the Parish of Chatham, New Brunswick*)

A few weeks later the chapel was described as:

... a well finished edifice of the modern kind; the lower part containing two ranges of pews, reposing under a quin-tagonal gallery, neatly embossed and resting on crowned pillars. The entrance is a well designed modern portico sustained by Grecian columns, and enclosing a double vestibule.<sup>25</sup>

The "modern portico" with its Tuscan columns is almost identical to those of the two court houses and resembles a design in Asher Benjamin's *The Rudiments of Architecture*.<sup>26</sup> The Roman-arched windows of the upper storey have frames that suggest pillars and a keystone, and there is a circular window in the pediment.

The dissenting Presbyterians subsequently commissioned their own building. In August 1832 St. John's Chapel opened. The *Gleaner* of 21 August reported:

It is a neat and commodious building, in the Gothic style, with a square tower, and has been finished in a most superior manner by the contractors, Messrs. Frost & Rennie. Standing on an elevated piece of ground in the rear of the town, it has a most pleasing effect and is a great ornament to Chatham.

Frost and Rainnie prepared plans and specifications for the lazaretto built on Sheldrake Island in 1832<sup>27</sup> and later, in September 1834, Frost was paid £225 for "the new station."<sup>28</sup> That it was Frost who was the experienced architect and builder and Rainnie the entrepreneur with capital seems evident, for when their partnership ended on 31 December 1832 Rainnie opened a brewery and grist mill, later moving into ship-building.

Frost seems to have prospered after 1832. He and John Petrie designed a steam saw mill for Joseph Cunard, and Frost with his partner John T. Carter built it in 1835-36.<sup>29</sup> In January 1837 Frost took an advertisement in the *Gleaner* to thank his customers and friends, and to announce that he and Thomas Hodgson had formed the firm of Frost & Hodgson, "who will thankfully receive Orders, which shall be executed with fidelity and dispatch, on reasonable terms."

The partnership may already have been contracted to build St. Mary's Chapel, which was to be a smaller copy of the Parish church, St. Paul's, built in 1822-23. St. Paul's is described as a "structure of the Gothic order, ornamented with a wrought tower, and castelated turrets."<sup>30</sup> St. Paul's Gothic windows are almost identical to those in St. Martin's-in-the-Woods, and to those Frost gave St. Mary's. The chapel opened on Sunday, 31 December 1837.

This neat chapel, in connexion with the established Church of England, ... is situated on the rising ground near the Wellington Road, and from its commanding position, a great ornament to the town of Chatham.<sup>31</sup>

St. Mary's Chapel was entirely remodeled in 1895 in a more fashionable style. To judge from this later version, the proportions of the original would seem to have been rather more elegant than those shown in the primitive sketch that is the only record of Frost's building (figure 5).<sup>32</sup> The tragic accidental death of Thomas Hodgson occurred just as the church was nearing completion:

25 "State of Religion in Miramichi," *Gleaner*, 23 August 1831.

26 First published in Boston, 1814; see Plate XXVI.

27 PANB, RS 153, G 2/3.

28 Doreen Menzies Arbuckle, *The North West Miramichi* (Ottawa, 1978), 146. James A. Fraser, *By Favourable Winds: A History of Chatham, New Brunswick* (Chatham, 1975), 82, states that a Fever Hospital was erected in 1834, but does not mention Frost.

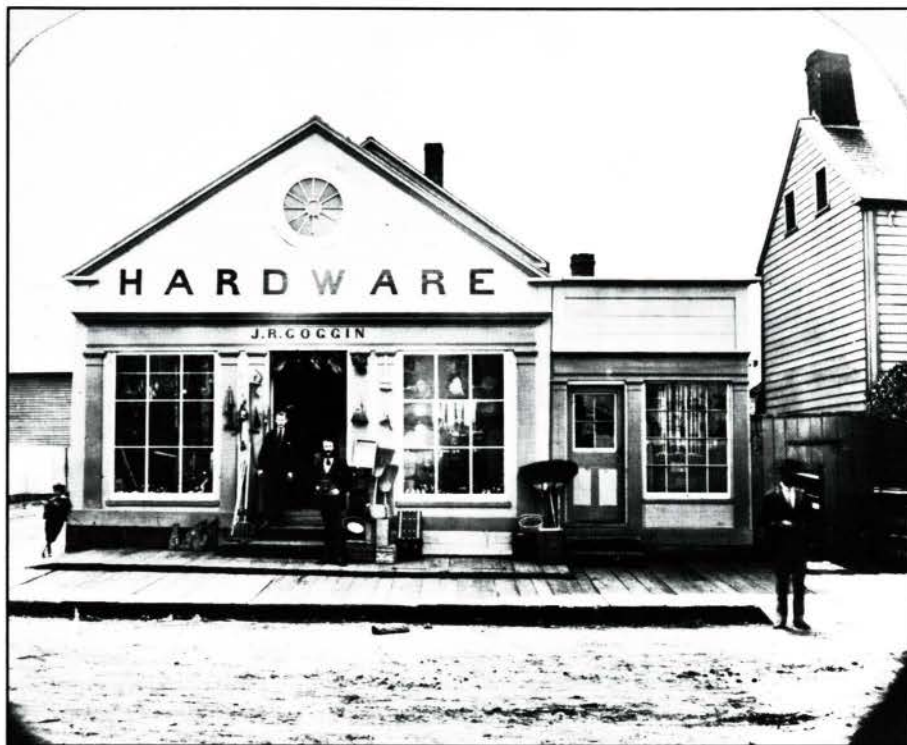
29 Fraser, *By Favourable Winds*, 235.

30 "State of Religion in Miramichi," *Gleaner*, 23 August 1831.

31 *Gleaner*, 2 January 1838.

32 W. A. Spray, *David's Kingdom: A History of the Anglican Church in the Parish of Chatham, New Brunswick* (Chatham, 1979) includes photographs of both St. Paul's and the remodeled St. Mary's. The sketch/print is on p. 28.

Figure 6. J.R. Goggin's hardware store at the south-west corner of Cunard and Water Streets, Chatham. (PANB P25/102)



while proceeding from his daily employment in the new Church, ... [he] received a blow on the head from a piece of the scaffolding of the Steeple, which the men were employed in taking down at the time he was leaving the building, his skull [sic] was dreadfully fractured ... he expired in a few moments.<sup>33</sup>

His latest partner was dead, and most public buildings in the area had been built (many by himself). Frost must have found business slow. In April 1839, Chatham staged a parade honouring Samuel Cunard on his return from England. Frost was Head Marshall and helped to write the laudatory address praising the great things Cunard had done for the Miramichi as well as the wonderful results that were to follow the general use of steam power.

That same April he advertised that he was discontinuing “the Building, House Carpenter, and Wheel Wright, Carriage, and other business connected therewith,” and a month later was calling for payment of any outstanding debts, “many of which are not of very modern date.” At the same time an advertisement appeared for “Patent SHINGLE MACHINES, constructed and made on the most approved principles.” Purchasers were referred to Shepherd J. Frost or John Petrie at the Chatham Steam Mill.<sup>34</sup>

Cunard’s steam mill never lived up to expectations and Frost seems to have left. By 6 April 1841 the *Gleaner* recorded a partnership between S. J. Frost and Benjamin Miller, “existing under the firm of Benjamin Miller & Co. is this day dissolved by mutual consent ....”

There were domestic troubles as well. A son, born 13 February 1840 and baptized Samuel Cunard Frost on 7 April, died that same day; on Thursday, 30 April, “Mary, consort of Mr. S. J. Frost” died “in the 37th year of her age.”<sup>35</sup> Mary Frost lies in St. Paul’s Church of England cemetery beside three of her ten children.

A widower, especially one with small children, usually found another wife within a year or two, so it is not surprising to find a notice in *The Halifax Times* of 9 March 1841:

Married, at Sackville, N.B. on the 4th inst. by the Rev. Mr. Milner, Mr. Shepherd J. Frost, of Chatham, Miramichi, to Widow Hardwin, relict of the late Captain Hardwin of New York.

However, a check of Rev. Mr. Milner’s register shows no such marriage taking place, nor was it ever reported in the Chatham paper. The *Gleaner* and St. Mary’s Church registers agree that the Rev. Samuel Bacon married Shepherd J. Frost and Jane Cant — Mrs. Cant the *Gleaner* called her — on 15 December 1842. This bride was Jane McRae, of Chatham, widow of Andrew Cant who had died on 3 July 1840; she was some thirty years younger than her new husband.

After his marriage to Jane, things returned to normal. The baptism records show an

33 *Gleaner*, 12 September 1837. The accident happened “On Wednesday last,” that is, on 6 September 1837.

34 *Gleaner*. Most of the notices were repeated in several issues.

35 *Gleaner*, 5 May 1840.

almost annual increase in the Frost family. In each entry the father's occupation is given as "Carpenter & Builder" or "House Carpenter," so Frost would seem to have returned to his old trade. Looking at a bird's-eye view of Chatham drawn in 1881 his three chapels stand out, but one can only speculate what other buildings are his. A store that stood at the south-west corner of Cunard and Water Streets and later housed J.R. Goggin's hardware store burned in 1884, but before that it was photographed (**figure 6**). The balanced proportions and neoclassical details of the shop front contrast with the mundane brooms, implements, and boots hung about it. The pediment with its round window is reminiscent of the Methodist chapel.

When the officers of the parish were appointed in 1848 Shepherd J. Frost was named a Surveyor of Lumber. He was one of about a dozen surveyors in this port, where the timber and lumber trade was of paramount importance. He would hold the post for the remainder of his life.

Early in 1848 it became known that Joseph Cunard was unable to meet his obligations. His bankruptcy was a major blow to the economy of the region, and must have hurt whatever enterprises Shepherd J. Frost had going at the time. In the long run, however, it would work to his advantage: a young Scot, Hugh Bain, had come to the Miramichi in 1840. In 1848 Bain acquired the Miramichi Foundry from the assignees of Joseph Cunard, only to have it destroyed in a sequence of fires in the summer of 1850, fires that also burnt the adjoining steam mill. Five months later an announcement appeared in the *Gleaner*:

**Chatham Steam Mill.**—The undersigned, having got the Mill in perfect order, and in full operation, are preparing to grind, at the shortest notice, Grain of all kinds, ...

The undersigned intending to work the Saw and Grist Mill during the next season, give Notice that they will Saw for the Public, by the thousand or on shares. They are also prepared to purchase logs.

Frost & Bain

Chatham, 19 January 1851

In the census taken that year Shepherd J. Frost describes himself as a Millwright (Prop) while Hugh Bain, whose listing follows, calls himself a Blacksmith (Prop). The "58" year old wood-worker and builder, who had had some experience with steam mills, and the 35 year old metal-worker and foundry owner combined their resources and skills, took over the Chatham Steam Mill, and got it running again.

Then, only two years later, Shepherd J. Frost died. The partnership of Frost & Bain was closed out, Chatham lost a useful and respected citizen, and New Brunswick one of its early builders and architects. His stone,<sup>36</sup> beside Mary's in St. Paul's cemetery, reads:

FROST

In memory of Shepherd Frost, a native of Portsmouth, N.H. who died July 3, 1853, in his 62nd year. Also, his children, both born Apr. 9, 1851: John, died Apr. 16, 1851 and William Henry, died Apr. 9, 1851.

The Frost family continued to have their lives recorded in the *Gleaner* well after Shepherd Frost's death, for his name was remembered, though not for his buildings. Public taste had changed and his austere, elegantly-proportioned wooden buildings were no longer in the modern taste. Some burnt, others were allowed to crumble into disrepair, and the irascible Scot, William Murray, whose descendants had continued to live in the region, was given credit for most of what survived.

<sup>36</sup> I am grateful to Clayton Sinclair of Toronto, who shared information on the Frosts and provided the transcripts of the Frost tombstones.