

Clements Library

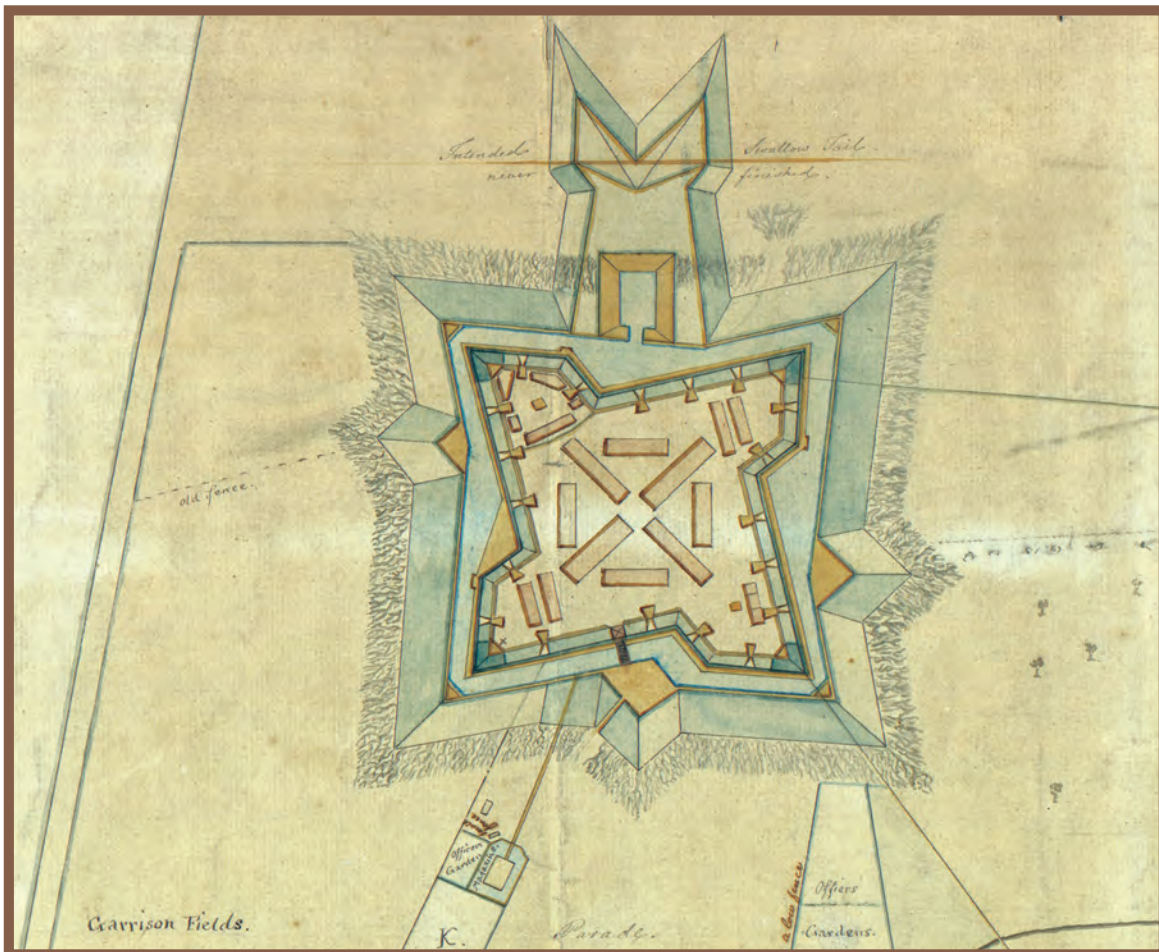
Occasional Bulletins

SCETCH OF THE KING'S DOMAIN AT DETROIT

— Louie Miller and Brian Leigh Dunnigan

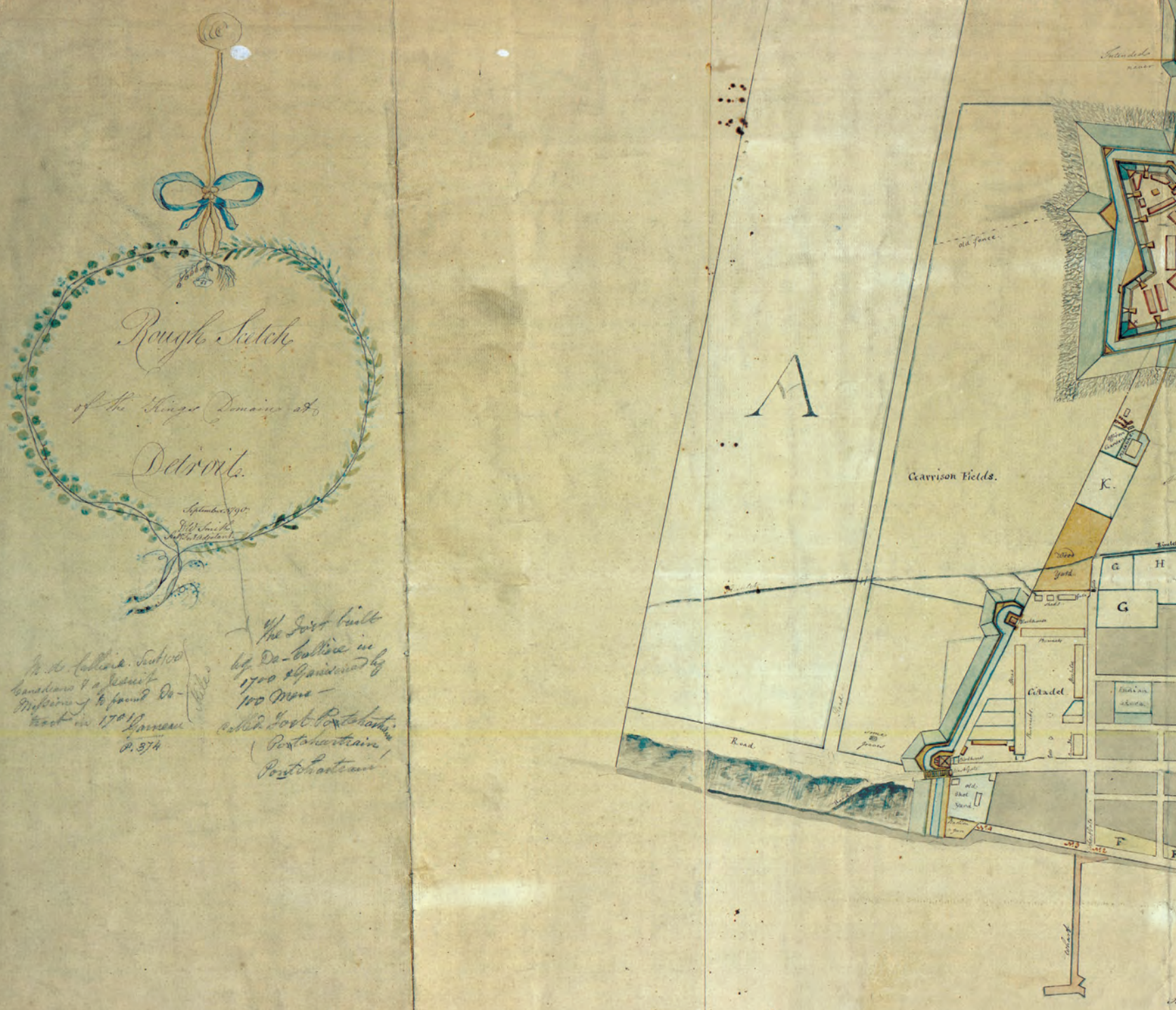
Anyone familiar with the history of the Clements Library knows that we have a long tradition of enthusiastic collecting. Our founder and our four directors (in 94 years) have been dedicated to the proposition that an outstanding research library must expand its holdings to maintain its greatness, and we have used every means available to pursue interesting primary sources on early America. The curators of our four collecting divi-

sions—Books, Graphics, Manuscripts, and Maps—have always shared that commitment to enhancing our holdings for the benefit of the students and scholars who come here for their research. We buy from dealers and at auction; we cultivate collectors and other individuals to think about the Library as a home for their historical materials; and we are constantly on watch for anything, from single items to large collections, that we can acquire to help illuminate



Fort Lernoult, the linch pin of Detroit's defenses, was rushed to completion during 1778–1779. It was a simple earthen redoubt with four half-bastions and a ditch surrounded by an abatis (an entanglement of tree branches placed to impede an infantry assault). The “swallow tail” fortification on the north (top) side of the fort was designed but never completed. Fort Lernoult stood at what is today the intersection of Fort and Shelby streets in downtown Detroit. This is a detail of the Smith plan of 1790.





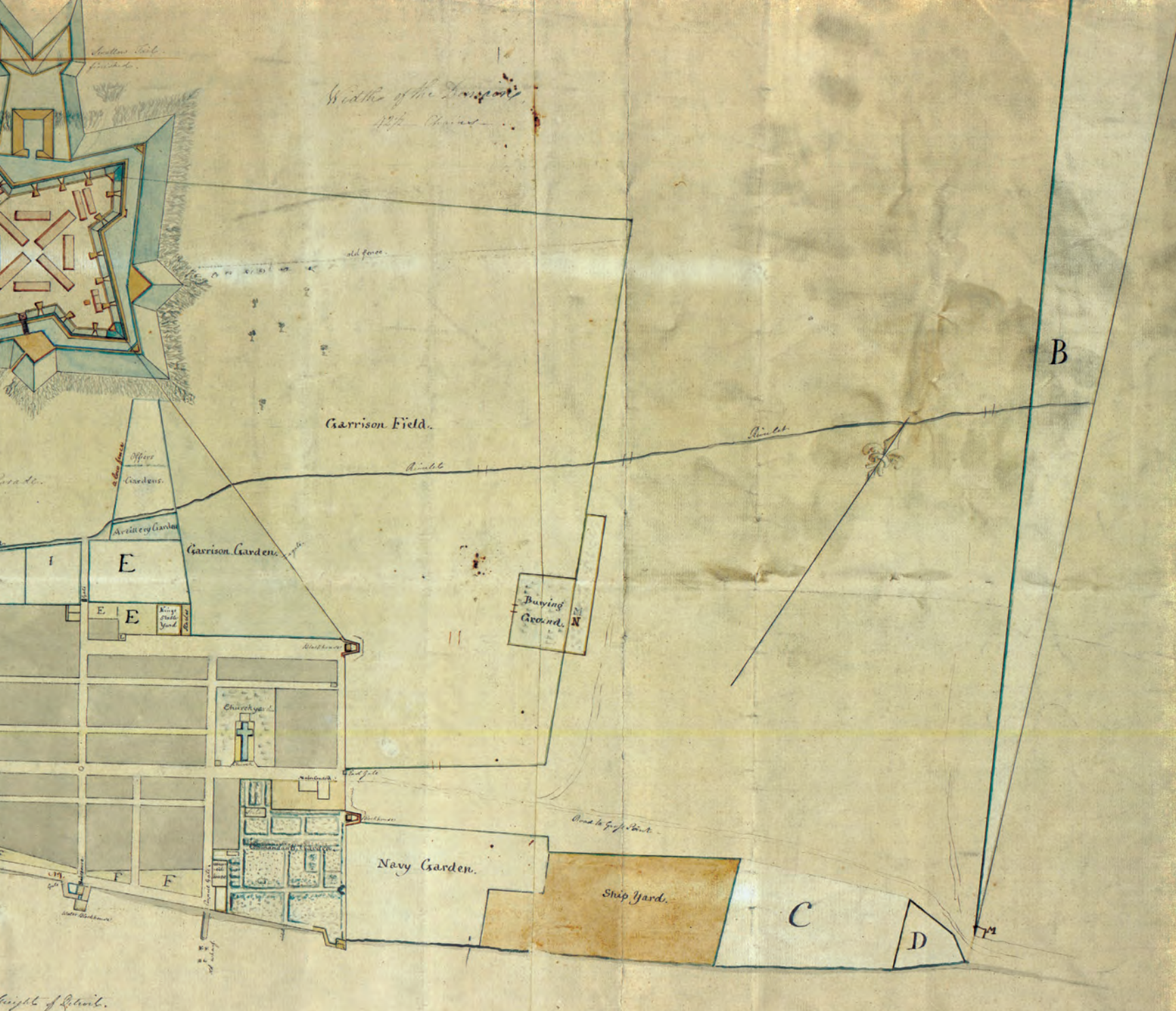
Lieutenant David William Smith's impressive 1790 survey of Detroit measures 21 by 40.5 inches.

America's heritage between 1492 and 1900. As Jeremy Belknap, principal founder of the Massachusetts Historical Society, wrote to a friend in 1795, "There is nothing like having a *good repository*, and keeping a *good look-out*, not waiting at home for things to fall into the lap, but prowling about like a wolf for the prey." Here at the Clements Library we know that Jeremy Belknap was a wise man, and we conduct ourselves accordingly.

The results of all this hard collection development work have been impressive and gratifying. Since our doors opened in 1923 the Library's holdings have quintupled in size. The need for more collections space provided a good deal of the impetus for our 2013-2016 renovations-and-expansion project. While that \$18 million initiative and substantial improvements in our off-site storage facilities have given us some breathing room, in time we will outgrow our space and need to expand again. That's what

great collecting institutions do, and you don't need a crystal ball to know that it will happen here in due course. The financial challenges of some future capital project notwithstanding, it will be a happy day for the Library when we do run out of room, since it will mean that the next generation of WLCL curators and administrators have kept their eyes on the prize and continued to bring in books, maps, photographs, prints, manuscripts, and other sources on the important events, individuals, issues, groups, and movements of the early American experience.

This Occasional Bulletin details the acquisition and historical significance of a very special individual addition to the Library. Sir David William Smith's 1790 manuscript plan of Detroit is a real highlight for a library that collects the extraordinary. That it came in unsought, apparently as proof that the clean living and pure thoughts all Clements staff practice can build good collecting



karma, adds joy to the serendipitous nature of its arrival. Essays by Louie Miller and Brian Dunnigan provide background on map and mapmaker and assess the new information Smith's work contains on late eighteenth-century Detroit. All Clements constituents know that Brian is the ranking expert on early Detroit, so his careful analysis of the Smith map as a valuable new source carries considerable weight. Over the past decade the Library has acquired dozens of early American maps, including some great rarities, but "Smith's 1790 Detroit" tops them all.

As Director, and also as a lifelong, mad-dog Americana bibliophile, I take real pride in the Library's collections. Acquisitions like the Smith map send my pulse-rate soaring and more than offset the time and energy spent on budgets, personnel, and administrative meetings. Apart from the personal satisfaction that noteworthy additions bring, however, I also recognize that the Clements attracts great acquisitions because it is a great library.

Dealers and auctioneers don't offer material to us because we have an inexhaustible budget (we don't); collectors don't give or bequeath their treasures to us because they don't have other options (they do); and rarities like the Smith plan don't wind up here because we're the only outstanding research library around (we're not). Instead, nine decades of collecting and making accessible an astonishing range of source materials have given the Library a well-deserved reputation as one of the best American history repositories. When people from Maine to California ask, "Where should this remarkable historical item go," the Clements is one of the half-dozen best answers. All members of the Clements Library family can be proud that the previous owner of the Smith map realized it and that knowledgeable Americanists everywhere agree.

— J. Kevin Graffagnino
Director

COLLECTING BY SERENDIPITY

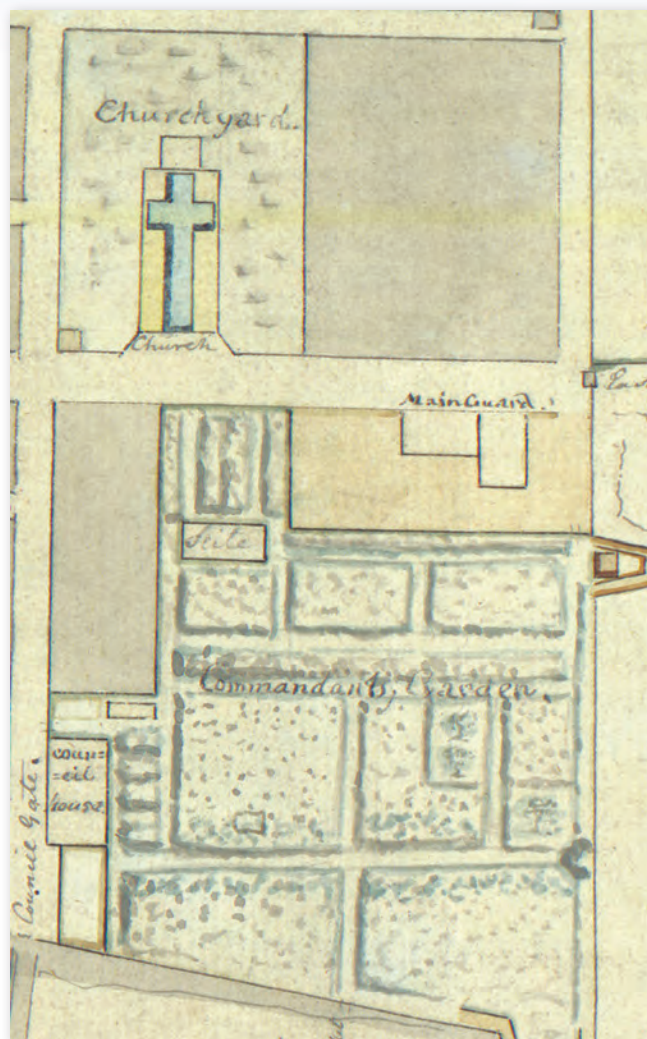
— Brian Leigh Dunnigan, Associate Director & Curator of Maps

The William L. Clements Library is a research institution that collects, preserves, and provides scholarly access to original primary-source Americana—manuscripts, books, maps, and graphics—from the time of the first European encounters with the “New World” until the early twentieth century. The Clements is, and has been since its opening in 1923, a library that actively collects to strengthen its documentation of traditional areas of study and to assemble source material to support new and developing fields of historical inquiry. Additions to the collections are obtained either as gifts-in-kind or purchases.

One of the joys of working at the Clements Library is the challenge of finding and acquiring suitable additions to our outstanding collection of Americana—and of coming into the office each day to see what has been newly acquired by each of the Library’s four divisions. The Library’s Director and curators work with collectors and potential donors who wish to see the fruits of their years of collecting and study valued far into the future by scholars from around the globe. The curators also carefully peruse the many catalogs that arrive each month—some advertising live or online auctions, others listing offerings from knowledgeable



The “J. WHATMAN” watermark can be found on the paper of both the 1790 plan of Detroit and Lieutenant Smith’s drawing of the officers’ quarters. Although the maker’s name is not easily seen in this image, the lighter lines in the paper reveal its location.

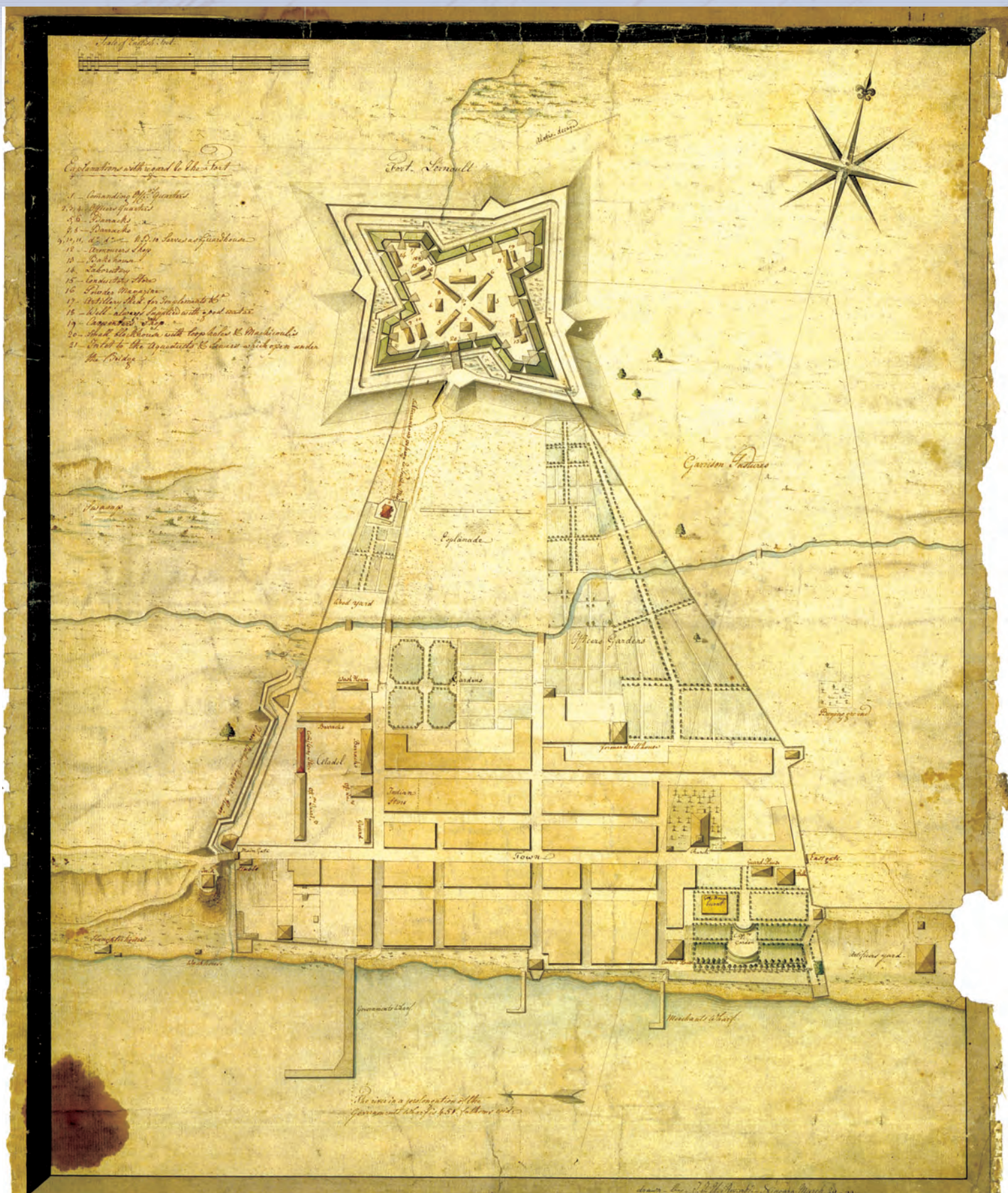


The commanding officer’s formal garden was laid out with manicured paths and decorative trees. Ste. Anne’s with its churchyard is across the street. Detail from the 1790 Smith plan.

dealers. Whether we acquire by gift or by purchase, Library staffers strive to identify items that have true research content and are within collecting scope in terms of time, geography, and subject matter.

In collecting, no matter how diligently one seeks appropriate material, there remains always the element of chance—coincidence, luck, fate, or whatever one calls it—in finding suitable acquisitions. Serendipity often plays a part, and collection items that were not being sought (usually because we simply did not know they existed) suddenly become available to enrich the Library’s holdings. In recent years, for example, important gifts of manuscripts have come from descendants of the original compiler or collector after they have learned through the internet or other sources that the Clements holds a significant part of their ancestor’s archive and they have the remainder. Several of these situations have resulted in gifts-in-kind that have reunited long-separated

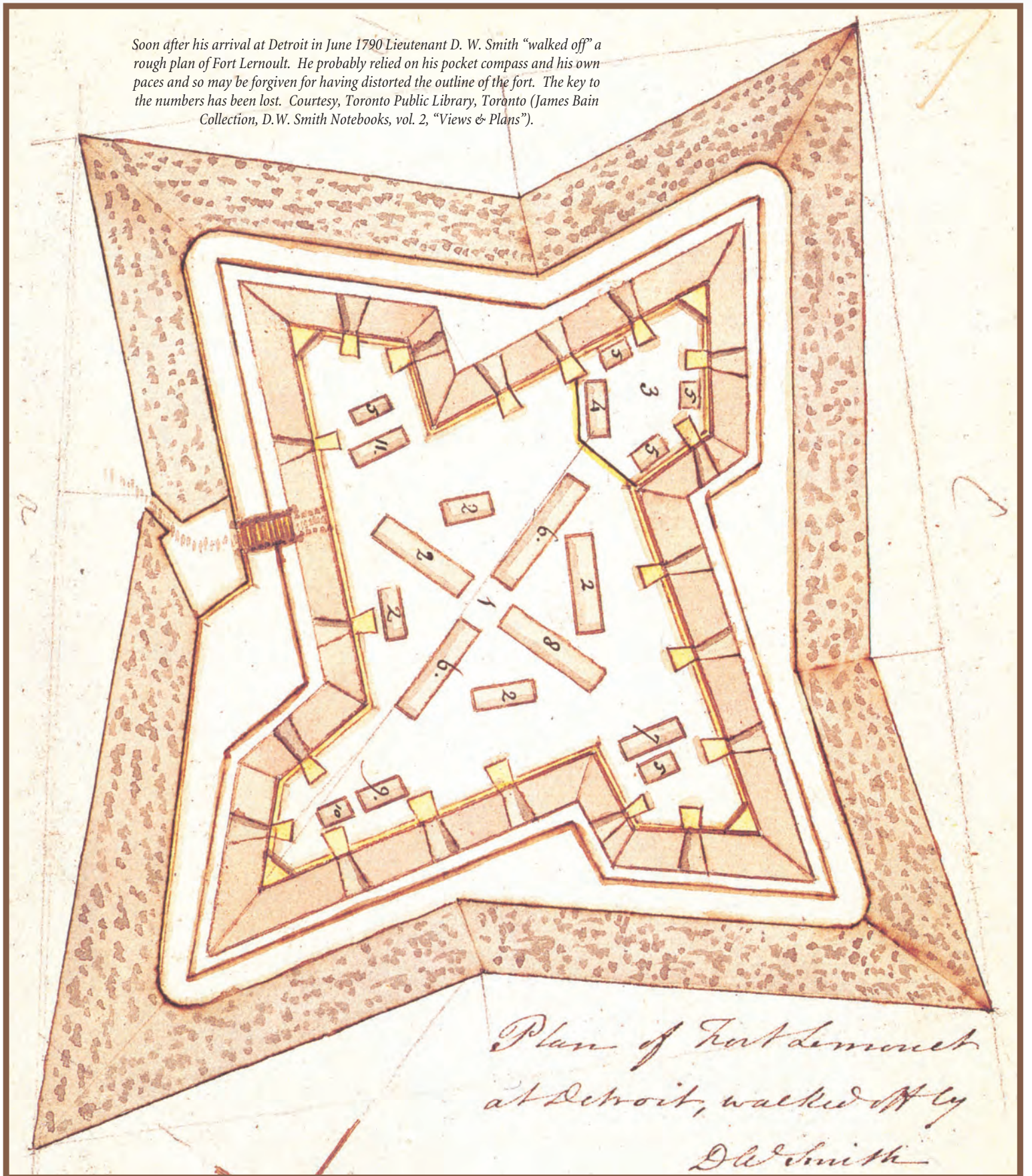
you do not want any discussion in your favour I can therefore very well spare him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the close of the year...



United States Army Major John J. U. Rivardi (d. 1808) produced this plan of Detroit in 1799 for Major General Alexander Hamilton (1757–1804). It was largely based on observations made in 1796–1797, soon after the British relinquished Detroit to the United States. This is undeniably the finest plan of pre-1805 Detroit, containing superb architectural details. The Citadel is at the left, and the officers' quarters is the gray-roofed building butted up against the red provision storehouse.

you do not want any discussion in your favour I can therefore very well spare him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the end of the year whether at any rate it may be done to inform you that

Soon after his arrival at Detroit in June 1790 Lieutenant D. W. Smith "walked off" a rough plan of Fort Lernoult. He probably relied on his pocket compass and his own paces and so may be forgiven for having distorted the outline of the fort. The key to the numbers has been lost. Courtesy, Toronto Public Library, Toronto (James Bain Collection, D.W. Smith Notebooks, vol. 2, "Views & Plans").



*Plan of Fort Lernoult
at Detroit, walked off by
D. W. Smith*

Rough Scetch of the King's Domain at Detroit

January 2018



Clements Library conservator Julie Fremuth removes the Smith plan from its frame.

segments of collections, thereby greatly enhancing their value to researchers.

Occasionally, pure coincidence reveals the existence of an important but previously unknown item. Such was the case in March 2016, when I received an email from a Canadian historian, long-time colleague, and good friend. The historian, who resides in the Ottawa area, had received an enquiry about an antique map. An acquaintance (the husband of a close friend of the historian's wife) had recently purchased it and wanted to know "something about this map and perhaps an idea of [its] value." The only provenance was the seller's statement that he had purchased it from a neighbor whose great-great grandfather had discovered the map in the 1930s hanging on the wall of a Montréal tavern. The elder gentleman liked it, talked the barkeep down to an acceptable price, and took his framed map home. There it presumably hung until 2016.

The historian attached three images to his email: a shot of the entire map; one of a floral cartouche enclosing the title "Rough Scetch [sic] of the King's Domain at Detroit Sept 1790 D. W. Smith. Actg Fort Adjutant," and another detail showing part of the town of Detroit. The images provided enough information to tentatively confirm that this manuscript map was a previously unknown survey of the largest and most important town and military post on the upper Great Lakes (above Niagara Falls) during the late eighteenth century.

The owner of the plan was willing to consider a sale to the Clements, and, in fact, expressed the hope that it would go to an appropriate public institution. It was apparent, however, that the Smith plan would have to be purchased rather than accepted as a gift-in-kind. Further discussion established a price that was acceptable to both parties, and the plan arrived at the Clements Library at the end of July 2016.

Our first task was to definitely confirm the authenticity of the plan, though it was an unlikely object to be counterfeited. The Clements Library's conservator, Julie Fremuth, removed it from the early twentieth-century, red wooden frame. Nothing else was found behind the plan, such as additional information, a report, or a table of references explaining the alphabetically identified parcels of ground. An examination of the paper revealed three irregular sheets pasted together to construct a surface of 22 x 40.5 inches (55.5 x 103 centimeters), large enough to accommodate Smith's drawing. The heavy paper is watermarked "J. WHATMAN," a particularly fortunate discovery because the paper is of the same weight and bears the same watermark as found on a beautifully drawn and colored east elevation of the officers' quarters in the Citadel at Detroit. This is known to have been drawn by David William Smith in 1790, the same year as the "Rough Scetch of the King's Domain."

The discovery of an unknown plan of Detroit was of particu-

Rough Scetch of the King's Domain at Detroit

January 2018

lar personal interest because of my own efforts in the late 1990s to locate and document all images that depict Detroit before the advent of photography. Altogether I located nearly two hundred items produced before 1839, the year the photographic process was perfected and the new technology began to spread around the globe. The pre-photographic images of Detroit included printed and manuscript maps, plans, and views of architecture and events, carvings on horn or bone, and designs on wampum belts. Together they provided the foundation of a 2001 book, *Frontier Metropolis: Picturing Early Detroit, 1701–1838*.

Fewer than a dozen new Detroit images have come to light

since publication of the book. Each discovery, however, broadens our knowledge of the early history of the town and nearby settlements. Smith's "Scetch" is the most significant find since 2001 and includes details not seen on the seven other known plans of Detroit made between 1784 and 1799. Each was drawn for a particular purpose, and that usually determined style and what details were recorded. David William Smith's plan of 1790 is clearly a survey that identifies property, both town lots and parts of farms, claimed as the Domain of King George III but either encroached on by local property owners or granted to individuals as a reward for loyal service.



Although not constructed until 1802, the Hamtramck house was typical of the small, Canadian-style farmhouses that lined the banks of the Detroit River in the 1790s. The structure, which was located east of the town, stood until 1898. Watercolorist Isabella Stewart captured this image of the aging structure.

SIR DAVID WILLIAM SMITH

— Louie Miller, Curatorial Assistant

Sir David William Smith (frequently spelled Smyth), author of the 1790 plan of Detroit, was the only son of Major John Smith (d. 1795), a career officer in His Majesty's 5th Regiment of Foot, and Anne Waylen. He was born September 4, 1764, in Salisbury, England. Anne, like many officers' wives of the period, often accompanied her husband to the different posts to which his regiment was assigned, but in the case of David's birth she remained in England while her husband took his regiment to Ireland. Anne most likely made the journey not long after David's birth, remaining there with the 5th Regiment for the next decade. During that time she became a close friend to the Countess of Moira, Elizabeth Rawdon (1731–1808), and subsequently maintained a decades-long correspondence with her. In the

winter of 1772, after hearing a rumor that the 5th would be ordered to Gibraltar, Rawdon wrote that she had “some Card [toy] Soldiers bespoke for” eight-year-old David as a present, though she lamented that “there is not a trumpeter. Dear David will break his heart at it.” David appears to have been more concerned with different matters of the heart—a little-boy's crush on one of Lady Elizabeth's teenage daughters, Selina, for he was assured “that he shall not quit Ireland without possessing a Locket of Selina's Hair.”

In 1774, after the posting to Gibraltar did not materialize, the 5th Regiment was ordered to Boston to strengthen the garrison of that restive New England city. The 5th would thereafter serve in North America and the West Indies until 1780. From personal correspondence it appears that ten-year-old David did not at first accompany his father and mother to America. The boy was tutored in military skills with the thought that he would follow in his father's footsteps. While in Boston, Anne kept up her correspondence with the Rawdons as the soldiers prepared for open rebellion. Fighting began in April 1775 and soon intensified to the scale of the Battle of Bunker Hill fought on June 17. Major Smith “acted as Brigade Major & was not out [on the battlefield] that day,” so he was not among the heavy casualties caused by the British assault on the fortified “rebel” position. Anne returned to England in 1776, and it



David William Smith (1764-1837) in his robes as speaker of the House of Assembly of the Province of Upper Canada (1797-1800 and 1801-1802). Théophile Hamel (1817-1870) painted Smith's portrait twenty-two years after the officer's death. © House of Commons Collection, Ottawa.

appears that she did not rejoin her husband's regiment until after its return to Britain from the West Indies in September of 1780. During that time David received his first commission with the rank of ensign (a junior officer who carried one of the regiment's two colors). Although his formal appointment took effect on September 8, 1779, David did not join his regiment until almost a year later.

The 5th Regiment of Foot was stationed at various posts throughout Ireland from December 1780 until May of 1787. While in Ireland, the younger Smith received his lieutenantancy on December 29, 1781. The 5th embarked for Québec on May 24, 1787, much to the chagrin of David's mother, arriving almost exactly two months later on July 26. It is not clear

whether or not David sailed with his regiment at this time because he was in Ireland, probably on marriage leave, when he wed Anne, daughter of John O'Reilly of Ballykilchrist, on November 3, 1788. Elizabeth Rawdon expressed regret that she had been unable “to have the pleasure of his company & Mrs. David Smith's to pass a day at Moira House” before he reported to his regiment in Canada.

By the time the 5th moved from Montréal to Detroit in June of 1790 Lieutenant Smith was with his regiment, now commanded by his father. As acting garrison adjutant of Detroit David was responsible for various administrative duties within the garrison, including surveying. He was later appointed clerk for the land board of the District of Hesse (in the western part of the Ontario peninsula), serving from December 26, 1791, to June 7, 1792. Other civilian appointments would follow.

Lieutenant Smith seems to have had more of an appetite for administrative work and land development than for military duties. By 1790 he had tired of army life and submitted his resignation (unsuccessfully) sometime within the first few months of the year. Although he was promoted to captain in September 1795, Smith finally resigned his commission in 1797. Newspaper notices termed his departure a “retirement,” and he apparently did not go on half pay.

you do not want any diversion in your favour I can therefore very well spare him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the close of the year but till then at any rate I'll say he is gone from you that is my opinion



In 1764–1769 Detroit's garrison constructed a defensible compound known as the "Citadel." Located within the western wall of the town, its purpose was to separate soldiers from the civilian population and provide defensible quarters for the troops. Its six buildings included this impressive, Georgian-style officers' quarters, likely home to Lieutenant Smith. Painted red, the handsome building was surely the grandest manifestation of King George III's authority west of Niagara. Smith drew its east elevation in 1790.

However, not long after the 5th Regiment left Detroit in June of 1792 to garrison Fort Niagara, Smith's career prospects took an upturn. He had a knack for cultivating relationships with prominent and powerful individuals such as the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada John Graves Simcoe (1752–1806) and Detroit merchant John Askin (1739–1815). In 1792 Simcoe appointed him acting surveyor general of the province. Smith enthusiastically took on his duties and carried out work in this position until his official appointment on January 1, 1798 (with pay retroactive to 1792).

As surveyor general, he compiled a comprehensive map of Upper Canada first published in 1800 and then produced in another thirteen editions by 1862. His father passed away in 1795, while in command of Fort Niagara, and his remains were interred beneath the garrison chapel there.

David Smith was elected a member of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada on August 27, 1792, thanks in part to the support of his friend Askin. Smith frequently corresponded with Askin about his prospects for election, hoping to achieve success by having Askin supply "an ox roasted on the common & to give the Mob a barrel of Rum." Smith wrote to Askin, "the more broken heads & bloody noses there is the more election like," and he often referred to his constituents as "peasants." Although clearly not enamored of democracy as a form of government, Smith served in the Assembly until his departure from Upper Canada in 1802. As surveyor general he had been allowed to personally acquire land, and

eventually accumulated more than 200,000 acres. A few complaints were heard, but the law permitted Smith's actions, and he was able to build a comfortable fortune in property.

Smith also carried on extensive correspondence with the Mohawk chief Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea; 1742/43–1807), a loyal ally of the British during the War for Independence. The Mohawk leader often corresponded with Smith complaining of promises broken by the British in their dealings with the Six Nations of the Iroquois. On April 3, 1796, Brant wrote, "it grieves me to observe that it seems natural to Whites, to look on lands in the possession of Indians with an aching heart, and never to rest 'til they have planned them out of them." Smith encouraged Brant to educate his children in England (which the Mohawk politely declined), while also agreeing to Brant's request that he serve as a trustee for the Six Nations. Brant's struggle to defend the rights of his people is well documented in Smith's incoming correspondence held today by the Toronto Public Library.

David W. Smith left Upper Canada in 1802 on leave to recover his health. He never returned, officially resigning all of his posts in the province in 1804. For his services in Upper Canada he was created a baronet on August 30, 1821. In keeping with his earlier resourcefulness, David Smith was able to use personal connections forged while in the 5th Regiment to obtain a choice position for himself back in England, where he became the estate manager for the immensely wealthy Hugh Percy, 2nd duke of Northumberland

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(1742–1817), former colonel of his regiment. With this salary he was able to purchase a home in Alnwick, Northumberland, where he lived out the rest of his life. Smith never lost interest in North America, however, and kept scrapbooks of various articles from British, Canadian, and American newspapers and magazines until his death on May 9, 1837.

By his first marriage to Anne O'Reilly, described as “a woman of beauty and charm,” David William Smith had eight children,

three of whom survived to adulthood. One of his sons, David William Jr., was killed on May 11, 1811, at the age of sixteen by a cannon ball fired from a French battery while on board a Royal Navy warship in Quiberon Bay, France. Anne died on November 5, 1798, after a long illness. Smith remarried on April 11, 1803. He and his second wife, Mary Tylee of Devizes, Wiltshire, had one child, a daughter named Hannah.



A company officer and private soldier of the 5th Regiment of Foot. This print, published in 1792, is from drawings made in London by Edward Dayes (1763–1804) about 1789. Service in the Great Lakes region took its toll on the snappy, parade-ground uniforms seen in London. A young American captive saw the 5th at Fort Niagara in 1793 and recalled their “drab underclothes” (vests and breeches), and the officers’ long coats “without any ornament.” The enlisted men wore their long, flour-powdered hair in a queue. Courtesy of Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University.

THE 1790 SMITH PLAN OF DETROIT

— Brian Leigh Dunnigan, Associate Director & Curator of Maps

The settlement and town of Detroit were nearly ninety years old when Lieutenant David William Smith first saw the place in the early summer of 1790. For thirty of those years Detroit had been a part of the British Empire. The governor of New France had only just surrendered his colony at Montréal on September 8, 1760, when Major General Jeffery Amherst (1717–1797) dispatched a detachment of troops led by Major Robert Rogers (1731–1795) to take possession of Detroit and the other small posts of the *pays d'en haut* or the Upper Country. Rogers and his men accepted the surrender of Detroit without incident on November 29, 1760. The settlement would prosper under the Union flag for the next thirty-six years.

Lieutenant Smith arrived at Detroit late in its British period, and, like nearly all visitors, first saw the place from the water as his vessel ascended the river. Miles before the town came into view he could see that both sides of the strait were occupied by long, narrow farms, each with houses and outbuildings clustered on the riverbank. The impression, a fellow British officer had written four years earlier, was that “for some miles before you arrive at Detroit it is almost a continued village.” The old French and Canadian pattern of “long lots” or “ribbon farms” would soon become very familiar to

Smith. The inhabitants of the farms were primarily francophone but, while many French still resided in the town, English was increasingly spoken within the walls, and many of the houses and stores were owned by British merchants.

The town of Detroit as depicted in David William Smith’s plan of 1790 was protected by two lines of twelve-foot-high upright wooden pickets each commencing at the riverbank and marching northward toward Fort Lernoult. The two picket lines gradually inclined toward each other until they reached the fort so that the overall plan of Detroit presented a rough triangle with the town at its base on the river and Fort Lernoult at its apex. Inside the walls was a town laid out on a grid of four east-west streets and several north-south lanes, though only the rue St. Honoré ran the full north-south width of the enclosure. The closely packed blocks of houses were interrupted by three clearly defined areas of “official” ground. On the western end of Ste. Anne Street stood the Citadel, with quarters and storehouses for Detroit’s garrison of roughly four hundred British soldiers. A stockade enclosed its seven large buildings and shielded the garrison against attackers from within the town walls as well as from without. By 1783 the east wall of the Citadel had been greatly strengthened by the addition of a ditch,



A British sentry and mounted officer at the western gate of Detroit. This detail, from Lieutenant Edmund Henn’s watercolor of 1794, shows the Citadel and the upper west façade of the officers’ quarters at left. The supposed cemetery is just out of the picture at left.
Courtesy of Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.



In 1796 General Anthony Wayne (1745–1796) commissioned surveyor Patrick McNiff (d. 1803) to map the long lots on the Michigan side of the Detroit River. This included the broad width of the “Public Ground” (formerly the King’s Domain). Macomb’s and Askin’s encroachments are clearly identified in this detail.

two blockhouses, and a substantial earthen glacis. This feature extended the length of the Citadel and protected the side of Detroit from which an enemy would be most likely to approach.

Facing the main thoroughfare—Ste. Anne Street—at the east end of the town were the church and cemetery of Ste. Anne parish. Across the street was a verdant patch of open ground known as the Commanding Officer’s Garden. In the summer of 1790, however, a blackened ruin marred that neatly landscaped space. Fire had destroyed the commanding officer’s quarters earlier in the year, and the troops had not reconstructed it. Between the town and Fort Lernoult was a spacious open area of gardens, pastures, and a drill field for the troops.

The garrison certainly had reason to hone its military skills. The 1783 Treaty of Paris had concluded the American War, but the newly recognized United States had not acknowledged, much less addressed, the situation of the Native Americans of the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes region. The Indians had not lost the war on the frontier and were not about to admit American farmers into their lands. Their unequivocal stance was an excuse for war, and by 1786 the greater part of the tiny U.S. Army was serving in the Ohio country constructing forts and preparing to attack the hostile Native American nations. Any serious blow against the Indians would, however, take American troops near the forts and towns—Oswego, Niagara, Detroit, and Michilimackinac—that, although they stood on the American side of the new boundary line, were still occupied by British troops. That increased the possibility of an incident between U.S. and British forces that had the potential of setting off another widespread conflict. The red-coated garrisons had to remain cautiously alert and judicious in their contact with the Americans and the hostile Native Americans who opposed them, many of whom had been allies of the British during the late war.

Fort Lernoult was central to the defense of Detroit. Most trained military engineers, however, considered it to be merely a “field work” of the sort that could be rapidly dug to provide temporary protection to troops encamped in the open. This relatively unsophisticated structure, simply a square redoubt strengthened by four half-bastions and a ditch, had been built in 1778–1779, when the advance of rebel troops from Ohio and Indiana threatened Detroit. The fort occupied an elevation that overlooked the town and denied commanding (higher) ground to an enemy. Captain Henry Bird’s report of August 13, 1782, stated that there was no position within eight hundred yards of Fort Lernoult that was equal to it in height.

While the distinctive shape of Fort Lernoult (formally renamed Fort Detroit in 1805 and then Fort Shelby in 1813) appears on all maps of the place from the 1780s to the 1820s, the Smith plan is unique in mapping a proposed addition to its defenses. Projecting from the north wall of Fort Lernoult is a fortification described by military engineers (for obvious reasons) as a “swallow tail.” According to Captain George Smith’s *An Universal Military Dictionary* (London, 1779), a swallow tail was an outwork similar to a *tenaille* but without parallel sides. This sort of structure was well flanked by the guns of the main fort. Swallow tails were very uncommon in North America, and one wonders why such an exotic construction was attempted at Detroit. Post engineer Lieutenant Henry Duvernet had designed the feature in 1779 or 1780, probably to cover dead ground on the reverse (north) side of the hill on which the fort stood. The project was abandoned soon after it had begun, however. Duvernet’s successors felt that Detroit’s swallow tail was vulnerable to a nighttime assault and would require too many men to be practicable. Smith depicted the structure as if completed but bearing the notation, “Intended Swallow Tail never

you do not want any divisions in your favour I can therefore very well spare him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the close of the year not later at any rate. It may be due to inform you that



Silhouette portrait of William Macomb (1751–1796), one of Detroit's most prosperous merchants and land-owners. The first ribbon farm west of the Domain belonged to Macomb, and his substantial encroachment is identified on the Smith survey by the letter A.

finished.” No other plans of Detroit show the swallow tail on Fort Lernoult. Only Lieutenant Smith visually recorded its existence, though it is unclear if he drew from observation of the incomplete ruins or copied from an earlier survey.

In addition to the boundaries created by Detroit's fortifications, the town was defined by its location within the largest and broadest of the settlement's ribbon farms. Known locally as the “Domain,” the property measured twelve arpents (French acres of 192 French feet—a total frontage of about 2,500 feet) in width on the river side in contrast to the usual two- to four-arpent width of most ribbon farms at Detroit. The Domain was originally a grant of land made by Antoine Laumet dit de LaMothe Cadillac (1658–1730), founder of Detroit, to himself. Cadillac laid out the original fortified village within his Domain and granted lots to settlers inside the stockade. The east and west boundaries of the Domain would, from 1808, mark the original east-west extent of the nineteenth-century city. At first this property was known as Cadillac's Domain. After the revocation of Cadillac's grants in 1716, however, the land became the King's Domain, first under the French monarch and then the British sovereign. United States authorities changed its name to the more democratic “public ground” follow-

ing their arrival in 1796. This open land gradually came to be treated as a common by the inhabitants of Detroit, and attempts by British commandants to fence the space to exclude them from the garrison ground were unsuccessful. Encroachments occurred, and successive post commandants, French and British, also made small grants of property in the years between 1701 and 1790. As expressed in Smith's title, his primary purpose was to record property conflicts and to render a plan illustrating the state of the King's Domain.

Several surveys of the Domain had been made over the years, notably by Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry in 1749, Captain Harry Gordon in 1765, and Detroit merchant James Sterling in 1777. Others would be done after 1790, notably Ralph Adye's in 1792, John J. U. Rivardi's in 1796–1799, and Patrick McNiff's in 1796. The surveys by Chaussegros, Gordon, and McNiff documented the agricultural properties along the strait, while Sterling's 1777 effort was specifically a survey of “the Domain of this Fort.” No example of Sterling's survey is known to survive (unless, of course, it served as the basis for the 1790 Smith map). On July 31, 1790, however, George Park, a resident of Detroit, delivered a copy of Sterling's “Dimentions” of the Domain to an unidentified person at Detroit. It is possible that the recipient was Lieutenant Smith, who had only arrived at Detroit in June but was able to complete his survey of the Domain by September. Access to Sterling's 1777 effort would have provided him with useful information and speeded completion of his rough plan.

While the primary purpose of the Smith plan was to document encroachments on the King's Domain, it also depicts important features of the town's defenses. In addition to identifying major elements of the post (the Citadel, Ste. Anne Church, the Navy Yard, Fort Lernoult), eighteen properties are identified with uppercase letters from A to N, a clear indication that a report or table of references once existed. Some of the lettered parcels are highlighted in white. Three letters mark more than a single piece of property: E (3 parcels), F (4), and G (2), a suggestion that at least three individuals controlled multiple lots within the boundaries of the Domain.

Despite the absence of a table of references, it is possible to identify eight of the lettered areas by using other sources. The largest are parcels A and B. The first of these is a significant encroachment on the King's Domain by William Macomb (1751–1796), owner of the first farm west of the boundary and one of Detroit's wealthiest businessmen. This was a dispute of long standing, not resolved until a decade after the arrival of the Americans in 1796. The encroachment appears in Adye's survey of 1792 and McNiff's of 1796. Lieutenant Adye's plan provides some additional details of Macomb's claim. About 120 feet east of Macomb's acknowledged

you do not want any discussion in your favour I can therefore very well spare him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the close of the year but either at any rate it may be of use to inform you that I am your obedient servant



British officials study a wall map of North America. Possession of the forts along the Great Lakes and suspicions that the British were covertly encouraging Native American resistance in the Ohio country were major diplomatic issues in America from 1784 to 1796. This cartoon was discovered in the John Graves Simcoe Papers.

eastern boundary Adye drew a rough north-south road and noted on it, "Lane said by Mr. Macomb to be the Boundary of the King's Domain." In 1793 Detroitier Charles Smyth (d. 1794) sketched and labeled a satirical map of the settlement on which he showed a track identified as "Love Lane" running between Macomb's farm and the western boundary of the Domain. Smyth might well have been poking fun at the ongoing property dispute.

To the east of the boundary is parcel B, known from other surveys to be an encroachment by John Askin (1739–1815), former Michilimackinac fur trader, and another member of Detroit's business community. How Askin's and Macomb's encroachments came to be is currently unknown.

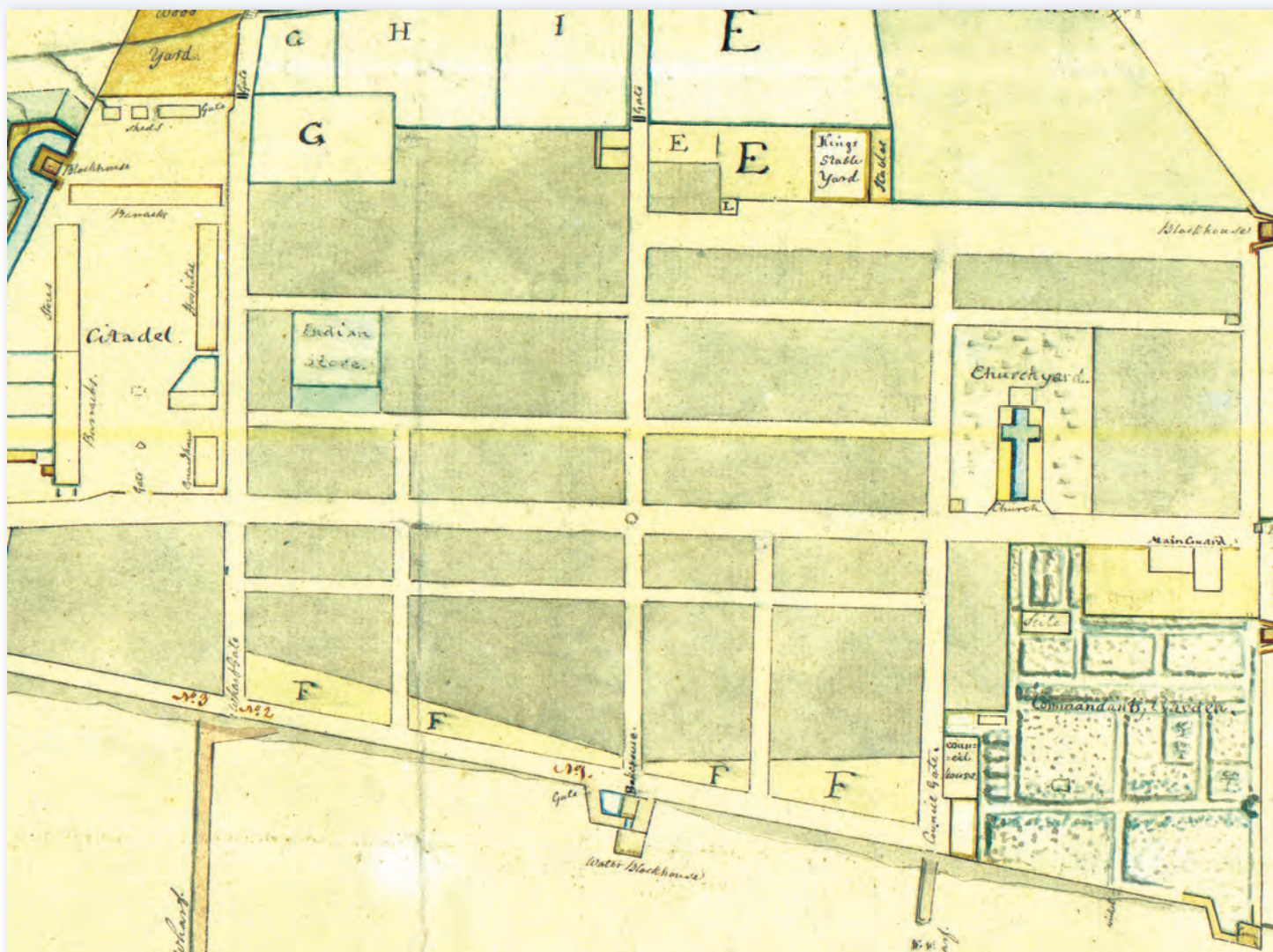
Parcels C, D, and three marked E represent a very different situation. These were lots granted as rewards for faithful service to King George III during the American Revolution. The earliest was for the largest of the three parcels marked E. This was conveyed to Captain Henry Bird (fl. 1764–1801) of the 8th (King's) Regiment of Foot, designer of Fort Lernoult and leader of a particularly successful raid in 1780 against the Virginians who had established them-

selves in Kentucky. Post commandant Arent S. DePeyster (1736–1822) granted Bird the largest of the lots labeled E (and probably the two smaller ones as well). The property, with a small house, was in a conspicuous location, and DePeyster hoped that the grant would be "a means of improving the appearances in front of the Fortifications and grand parade." He described the property as located at the northwest corner of rue St. Honoré and otherwise confirmed that this was Bird's land.

The parcels marked C and D, both located on the riverbank immediately east of the Navy Garden, were also acquired legitimately by Captain Alexander McKee (ca. 1735–1799) and Captain Guillaume Lamothe (fl. 1759–1800). Both had been active in the British cause during the wilderness war out of Detroit, Lamothe as a militia officer and McKee as a leader in the Indian Department.

The land marked C is the "small lot of ground, of half an acre in front, and one acre in depth" purchased by Captain Lernoult for the accommodation of McKee. A house on the property was described as "very old and of danger of falling." Letter D marks the property where Lamothe was living in 1783, described as "the house

you do not want any diversion in your favour I can therefore very well spare him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the end of the year but till then at any rate It may be of use to inform you that



The principal part of the town of Detroit showing the street plan and the properties labelled E through I. Lacking a key to the letters on the plan, specifics about each lot can only be surmised. The three marked E are known to have been granted to Captain Henry Bird.

and lot he now occupies situated near the river opposite to Captain McKees." A "Hut" on the land had been the residence of one Pike, overseer of the timber yard, who had been evicted for "misbehavior." Lamothe offered to take on Pike's duties if he could live in the house. He subsequently converted it to a "snug little Dwelling" and improved the land and garden, all at his own expense. The commandant recommended that the lot be granted to the captain for his services. In September 1784 Frederick Haldimand, Governor of Canada, approved deeds for both men. The 1792 Adye survey labels both small buildings with the names of their new owners.

The only other marked property that can be identified is part of a cemetery outside the eastern wall of the town. The letter N marks a narrow, rectangular addition to the "Burying Ground," which Father Louis Payet reported he had opened since his arrival at Ste. Anne parish in 1782.

Parcels F (4), G (2), H, K, L, and M remain unidentified. Four

of these border the open fields between the fort and town and were most likely gardens. In addition to the lettered plots, Smith's map preserves a wealth of minute details permitting us to know the sizes and locations of such features as the gardens kept by different components of the population, the locations of gates within the town, and details of the defenses that are not otherwise known, such as the abortive construction of the swallow tail on the north side of Fort Lernoult.

Lieutenant David William Smith's plan of 1790 was unknown to historians until 2016. The fortunate discovery and acquisition of this important historical document answer a few more questions about late eighteenth-century Detroit just as they raise others. The lack of a table of references increases the challenge, but the Smith plan nonetheless provides one more important primary-source building block for understanding the story of colonial Detroit.

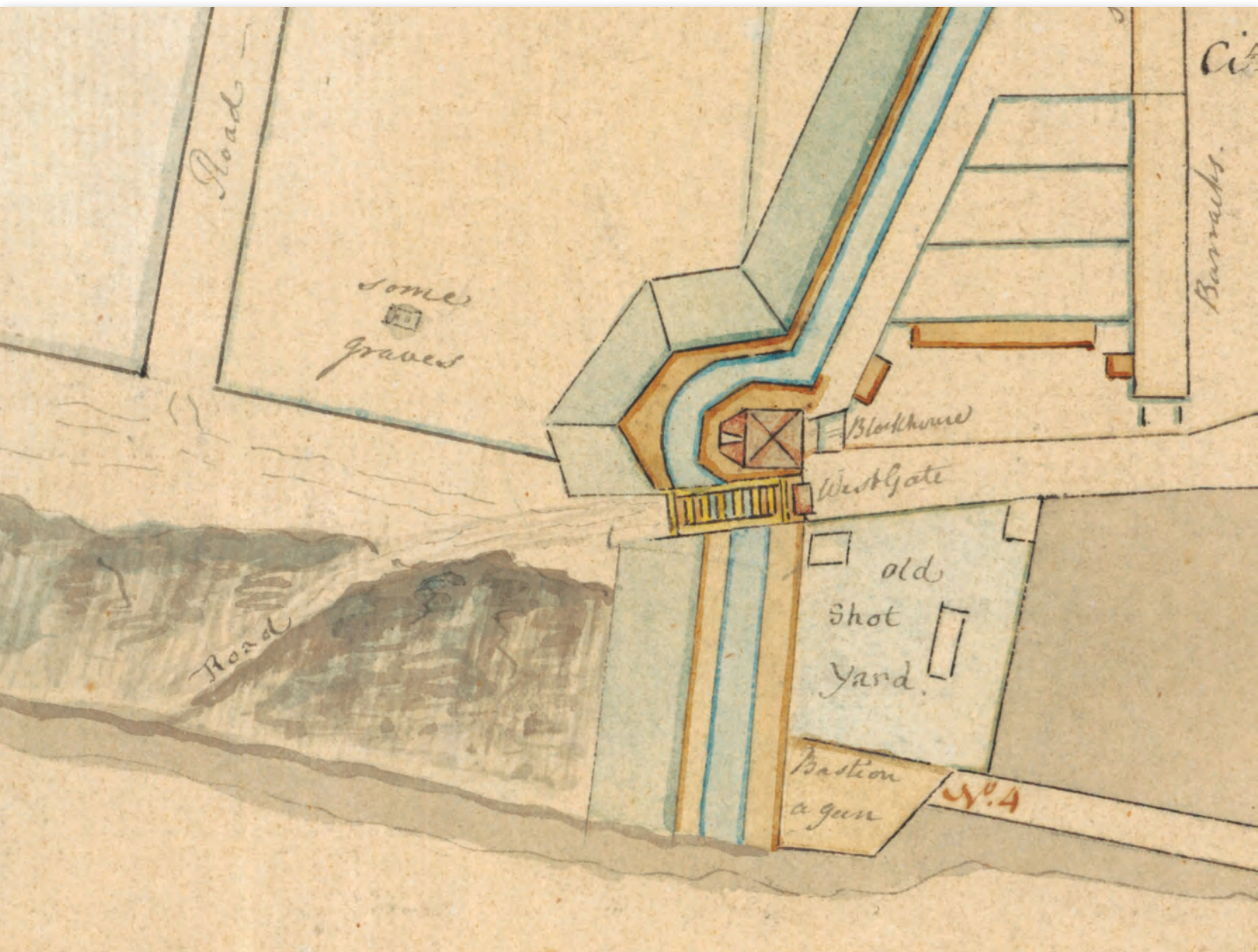
you do not want any discussion in your favour I can therefore very well spare him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the close of the year not till then

“SOME GRAVES” A CARTOGRAPHIC PUZZLE

— Brian Leigh Dunnigan, Associate Director & Curator of Maps

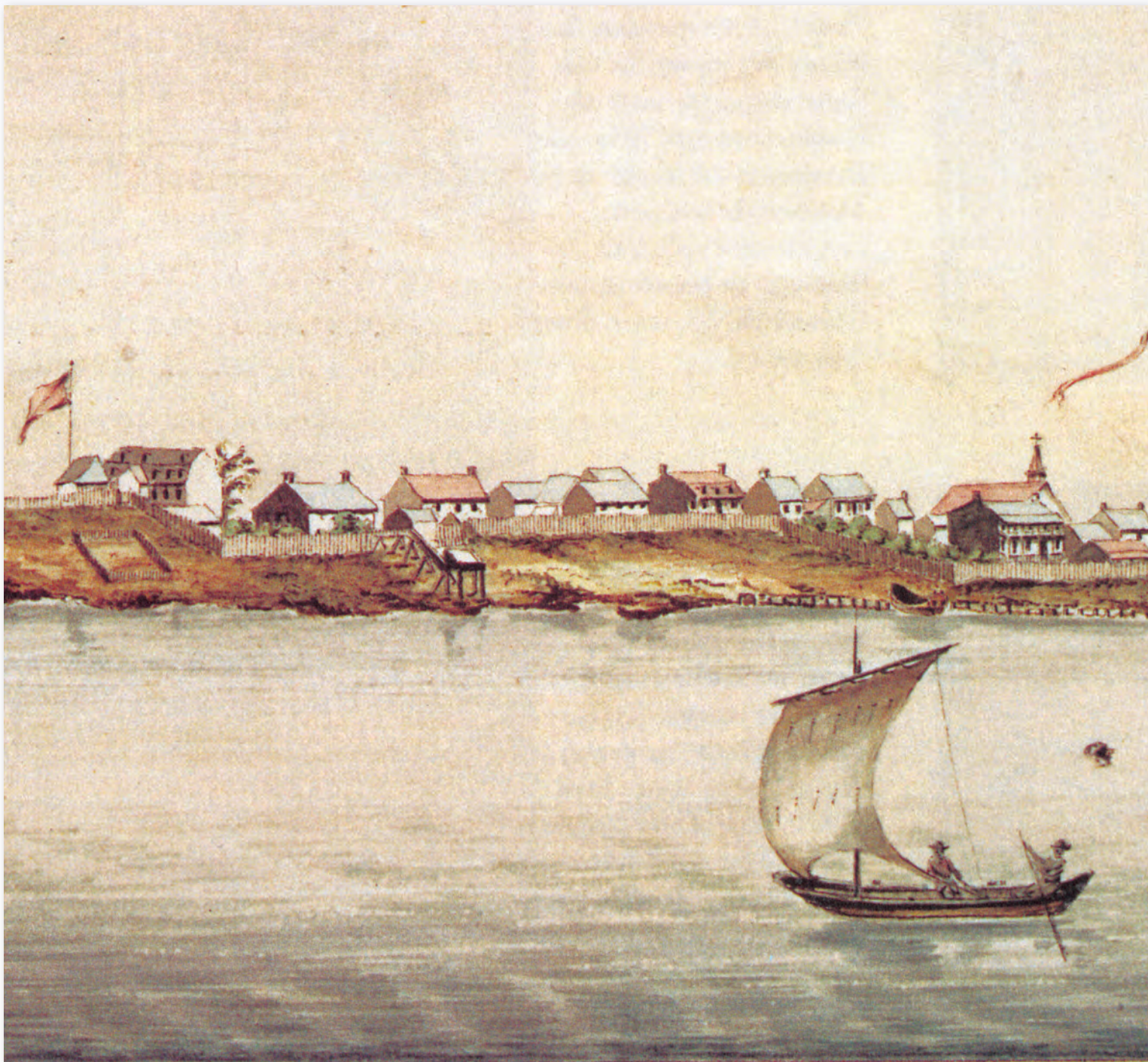
Despite the loss of its table of references identifying each of the lettered plots in the King’s Domain at Detroit, the Smith plan of 1790 has much to tell us. It remains mute, however, on one small detail. Just outside the western gate of the town, alongside the road leading down the river toward Lake Erie, is a small rectangle enclosing two tiny squares. The figure is labelled simply “some graves.” With a churchyard surrounding Ste. Anne’s inside the walls of the town and a burying ground east of the stockade that had been expanded as recently as 1782–1783, why would any graves be found outside the west gate on the opposite side of the place?

Fortunately we have some additional clues. The location of the graves on the Smith plan corresponds with that of a fenced plot depicted on a view of Detroit, possibly drawn by British Lieutenant Henry De Bernière of the 10th Regiment of Foot about 1773. It has the look of a cemetery but is considerably larger than the enclosure labeled “some graves” in the 1790 plan. Its proximity to the Citadel suggests that the fenced area might have had some connection to the officers and soldiers quartered there. The argument that it was the military cemetery (or one exclusively for officers) is strengthened by the discovery, in December 1829, of a headstone bearing the name of Ensign John Gage of the 31st Regiment of Foot. The stone was



A tiny detail of the 1790 plan, just outside Detroit’s western gate, is cryptically identified as “some graves.” Does this mark the resting places of Captains James Dalyell and Donald Campbell as described in 1767? Was this the burying place for all officers and military personnel? The robust earthen fortification and ditch at right center were constructed in the 1780s to strengthen the western side of the Citadel.

you do not want any discussion in your favour I can therefore very well
show him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the close
of the year but then at any rate It may be of use to inform you that
I am at all times your obedient servant



This view of Detroit was drawn in the 1790s, though it actually represents the town as it appeared about 1773. The fenced enclosure outside the stockade at left might have been the military cemetery and the location of “some graves” in 1790. The Officers’ quarters in the Citadel is to the right of the flagpole. Ste Anne Church is visible at the far right. Courtesy, Service historique de l’armée de terre, Château de Vincennes, France, No. 7-B-61.

uncovered by workmen removing dirt from premises adjoining the Mansion House, a popular early nineteenth-century hotel on West Jefferson Avenue near the site of the western gate of British times and the “some graves” notation on Smith’s plan. The event was recorded in the *Detroit Journal* of December 9, 1829. Detroit historian Silas Farmer (1839–1902) believed this recovery to have

come from a small graveyard for the garrison conveniently situated just outside the Citadel. Lieutenant Ralph Adye’s 1792 survey does not specifically depict a cemetery outside the western gate, but it does include a parcel in the right place enhanced by fencing, formal paths, and ornamental trees.

The graves shown on the Smith plan of 1790, seem, however,

you do not want any discussion in your favour I can therefore very well spare him 1500 men I shall try something certainly towards the close of the year but either at any rate it may be done before you that

to have been set off and maintained with greater care than those of a normal post cemetery. This suggests the intriguing possibility that the Smith plan records a pair of burials that had been treated with particular attention to preserve the memory of British officers killed during Odawa leader Pontiac's siege in 1763. Four years later, on November 11, 1767, Detroit's commandant, Captain George Turnbull, informed General Thomas Gage that he was "Putting a Stone and Rail to the Graves of Cpts Campbell and Dalyell." Turnbull expressed surprise that this had not been done in the four years that had elapsed since their deaths. He took action after being "credibly informed that General Amherst gave orders for it." Donald Campbell (ca. 1735–1763) had commanded Detroit before Major Henry Gladwin (1729/30–1791) arrived in 1762. Following a council with Pontiac, the Odawa held Campbell as a diplomatic hostage until he was murdered by an Ojibwa warrior in

revenge for the death of a relative. James Dalyell (1730–1763) had arrived at Detroit late in July 1763 with reinforcements for the garrison. The well-connected young officer (a former aide-de-camp to General Amherst) persuaded Major Gladwin to let him lead an ill-advised "surprise" attack on Pontiac's camp on July 31. Dalyell and his men were themselves ambushed, and the captain was killed. Troops recovered the remains of both Campbell and Dalyell and buried them near the fort.

The supposed graves of Campbell and Dalyell, if these be they, appear on no other image of Detroit. The existence if not the identity of the burials was known from 1763 until at least 1790, but the transient nature of Detroit's military garrison assured that memory would fade with the deterioration of the grave markers.



Captain George Turnbull (1730–1810) commanded the garrison of Detroit from 1766 to 1769. Turnbull took the initiative to respectfully mark and fence the graves of Captains Dalyell and Campbell. Courtesy, Alizon and Tristram Reynolds.



Captain James Dalyell (1730–1763) lost his life leading an unsuccessful attack on Pontiac's camp on the night of July 31-August 1, 1763. Dalyell's comrades recovered his remains and interred them at Detroit. Courtesy, Kathleen Dalyell.

Rough Scetch of the King's Domain at Detroit

January 2018



The 5th Regiment of Foot was notable for awarding medals to enlisted men who demonstrated good conduct over a period of years. The practice was introduced on March 10, 1767. The obverse displays St. George slaying a dragon beneath the regimental motto *QUO FATA VOCANT* ("Wherever the Fates Call"). The reverse bears the regimental number above the word *MERIT* and the date of the establishment of the award. This example from the Clements Library's medal collection is an early design that was possibly worn during the American Revolution and into the 1790s. The background is the regimental facing or trim color known as "gosling green."

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