

Enos Collins (1774-1871)

Hallet Collins (1749-1831) was born to Joseph and Abigail Collins at Chatham Massachusetts. In 1760, he came as a boy to Liverpool, Nova Scotia, his family being among the first to settle at Liverpool; he lived out his life there. He became, as so many of the leading men of Liverpool, a fisherman and a trader. Hallet married three times. First to Rhoda Peek, then to Martha Freeman, and then to Sophia Eagleson. By his first two wives, Hallet Collins had twenty-six children. Enos Collins was Hallet's second child and eldest son.

While a young man at Liverpool Enos Collins displayed his life long trait of taking advantage of every opportunity that came along. One of those was, during the war years, running privateers, which he did mostly out of his hometown of Liverpool, a matter which we have already dealt with in our earlier work. However, the business of privateering pretty much came to an end after the war, circa 1812. Seeing that the war was coming to an end, Collins determined to headquarter himself at Halifax where there were greater connections and a larger market. His talents which he had developed at Liverpool in his earlier years served him well in his commercial activities at Halifax.

"Quick to embark upon new ventures, industrious and persevering, he traded in and out of strange ports with assorted cargoes. From Liverpool to Halifax, from Halifax to the West Indies, to Gaspé or Newfoundland for cod and salmon, to and from United States ports, he sailed his ships. He bought and sold vessels as well as goods. He carried fish and lumber to the West Indies, gypsum from Windsor to Baltimore, molasses from Havana, sugar and coffee from Martinique, flour from the United States, lumber and flour to Newfoundland, fish from Newfoundland to Massachusetts."

These trading activities added to Collins' fortune which he had made during the war years. He became a rich and influential man. In October of 1822, he was sworn in as a member of His Majesty's Council, a very prestigious appointment. In 1825 he was the dominant figure in the creation of the Halifax Banking Company, the first bank in Nova Scotia, locally known as Collins' Bank. Also in that year, at the age of 51, Enos Collins took a wife. He married, at St. Paul's church, Margaret, the eldest daughter of Judge Brenton Halliburton. The couple had nine children, of whom one son and three daughters lived beyond childhood.

A name, well known in the south end of Halifax, is, Gorsebrook: it was the Collins estate consisting of many landscaped acres. The house there was built about 1811. Collins bought the house and land in 1824. A proper and fitting place to which he brought his bride. After Collins had essentially withdrew from his business affairs, he concentrated his efforts, money and time on "Gorsebrook." Lieutenant-governor Campbell reported that Collins laid out "more money and employed more laborers than any ten gentlemen in the Province do in their private pursuits."

Collins' wife, Margaret, died in 1854. Collins went on to live to the ripe old age of 97. He died in 1871 possessed of a very large fortune estimated at 6 million dollars, reportedly being at his death the wealthiest man in British North America.

"His education had been very limited, having been confined to the three R's, but what he wanted in book learning, was more than compensated by great clearness of intellect, sound judgment and

indomitable pluck. He certainly had what is known in the present day as the courage of his opinions, and when after careful scrutiny, he was once satisfied of the correctness of his calculations, he went into a business transaction, no matter of what extent, with an amount of boldness and unswerving confidence, which nothing could restrain."

Source: Biographies <http://www.blupete.com/Hist/BiosNS/1800-67/Collins.htm>