

FURNITURE!

FINE FURNITURE FROM THE
19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES!

TELEPHONE
506 529 5124

FACSIMILE
506 529 5183

LEARN ABOUT NEW BRUNSWICK CABINETMAKERS IN OUR COLLECTION!

See more great
early furniture at the
New Brunswick
Museum &
Kings Landing
Historical
Settlement!

WHO WERE THEY?

THOMAS JEFFERSON CASWELL

Caswell was born in St. Stephen in 1806 and died there in 1894. He was a cabinetmaker who had a furniture store in Milltown, now part of St. Stephen.

ROBERT CHILLAS

Chillas came to Saint John on the ship *Anne* along with other refugees in the second wave of Loyalists after the American Revolution, in 1783.

ALBAN EMERY

Alban Emery (1893-1990) apprenticed with J.D. Howe in Saint John from 1911 to 1921 and did extensive restoration work on the Rosses' collection from 1910 to 1916. His father, James, and his brother, Frederick, were also cabinetmakers. The family firm changed names and partners over the years until it became 'Emery's Cabinet Shop' in 1948.



Rossmont hallway (92.1466)



Rossmont (92.1462 & 1466)

Rossmont was where
Henry & Juliette
lived with and
enjoyed their
collection



Visitors enjoy a personal tour with one of our guides



HPR photo of Howe chair (92-1465)

JOHN D. AND JONAS HOWE

John D. Howe was born in Saint John in 1841 while his brother Jonas was born in the same city in 1844.

Jonas seems to have been the business manager, while John who completed his training under Albert J. Lordly, was the craftsman.

ALBERT J. LORDLY

Born in Nova Scotia in 1826, Lordly was living in Fredericton in 1848 and was then established in Saint John by 1862. Sons Charles E., Sterling B., Walter A., and Harry R. Lawrence all joined the firm.

THOMAS NISBET

Nisbet was born in Scotland in 1766 and arrived in Saint John in 1813 and subsequently died there in 1850. Considered one of Canada's great cabinetmakers, Nisbet's sons Thomas Jr. and Robert became cabinetmakers with their father.

ALEXANDER LAWRENCE

Born in Scotland in 1788, Lawrence arrived in Saint John in 1817 and died there in 1843. His sons, Joseph W. and George H. carried on the family business until the late nineteenth century.

Henry Ross's diary,
February 24
1912

"Sofa tables and
chairs come and we
go into ecstasies
over them!"

The Ross Collection: New Brunswick furniture

HENRY PHIPPS ROSS AND SARAH JULIETTE ROSS AS COLLECTORS

Both of the Rosses were avid collectors but Henry seems to have had a particular passion for furniture! For an early collector, he kept remarkably detailed records about what he purchased, who he bought from, the condition of the piece purchased and how much he paid for it.

Nowhere in his records does he indicate a desire to collect specifically New Brunswick furniture. Rather, he was passionate about furniture made in the styles of designed by the great British cabinetmakers such as Sheraton and Hepplewhite—styles which were popular during New Brunswick's early cabinetmaking years.

THE TRADITION OF CABINETMAKING IN NEW BRUNSWICK

Many of the 14,000 Loyalists who arrived as refugees in New Brunswick in 1783-84 (after the American Revolution) were accustomed to elegantly furnished houses. As a province with many seaports, New Brunswick's population was also exposed to foreign influences, a factor which sustained demand for good design and fine quality.

The shipping industry and trade with the south also provided an abundant supply of mahogany. The sandy beaches of the West Indies, to which ships sailed with barrels of dried fish, were unable to provide

the large boulders generally preferred for ballast. Instead, "great heaps of logs...were piled near the trading posts. These logs were usually mahogany"* and were collected when the cargo ships off-loaded the ballast on their return to New Brunswick. Fine local woods were also used to great effect in the work of these early cabinetmakers.

By the mid-nineteenth century, New Brunswick also played a leading international role in shipbuilding, an industry which required skilled craftsmen to execute finely finished officers' quarters and passenger cabins and offered cabinetmakers an additional source of employment.

The tradition of cabinetmaking in New Brunswick continues into the 21st century. Alban Emery, who apprenticed with John D. Howe, who had in turn trained under Albert J. Lordly, hired his own apprentice in 1951. Peter Claessen, who came from the Netherlands to train in Emery's shop, now has his own two sons working with him in their cabinetmaking shop in Saint John.



Juliette and Henry Ross

Want to learn more?

One of the first and most important books on New Brunswick furniture was written by Charles Foss and is called:

**Cabinetmakers of the Eastern Seaboard*

WORKS ATTRIBUTED TO NEW BRUNSWICK CABINETMAKERS

WHERE TO FIND PIECES IN THE COLLECTION

MAIN HALL:

Coat stand (76.656)—John Howe

DRAWING ROOM:

Wing chair, originally a 'po' chair (76.416)—Robert Chillias

Sofa table (76.410)—Alexander Lawrence

Sofa (76.654)—Alexander Lawrence

Shield-back side chairs (76.383)—John Howe

Prince of Wales feather-motif chair (76.385)—John Howe

Sewing stand with bag (76.28)—Thomas Nisbet

DINING ROOM:

Tambour desk (76.370)—Robert Chillias

Dropfront desk (76.396)—Robert Chillias

Writing table with bookcase (76.378)—Thomas Nisbet

Thirteen dining chairs (76.382)—reproductions made by Alban Emery during his apprenticeship with John Howe to match two originals collected by the Rosses

UPSTAIRS HALL AND BLUE BEDROOM:

Slip-seated side chairs (76.27)—Thomas Nisbet

GENTLEMAN'S SITTING ROOM:

Two-drawer stand (76.35)—Thomas Nisbet

MASTER BEDROOM:

Five-drawer chest (76.428) (next to bed)—Robert Chillias

Four-drawer chest (76.15) (right of mantel)—T. Nisbet

Secretary desk (76.26)—Thomas Caswell

SLEIGH BEDROOM:

Nesting tables (76.384)—Alban Emery

LADY'S SUITE BEDROOM:

Washstand (76.12)—Thomas Nisbet



Our paintings, oriental carpets and objets d'art will enhance your enjoyment of the furniture collection



Thomas Nisbet sewing stand (76.28)