

Historic Summerside

The growth of the settlement stemmed from the shipyards that lined the shorefront from west to east. Summerside, once known as Green's Shore, was a handful of farms that lined the shorefront of Bedeque Bay until shipbuilders such as George and James Walsh and J.C. Pope saw the advantages of building ships along the shore.

The town of Summerside dates its origins to the year 1840. Land lots began to sell, Queen's Wharf went under construction, and its premier inn was licensed. The inn, known as Summerside House Summerside's first inn was established with four stands for horses, four beds for public, and an enclosed yard. Its name was coined after a remark by Major Compton who said to Joseph Green "Why is it much warmer here?" You must have the summer side." By 1852, more streets were being developed with the creation of Water Street and Central Street (but in some town maps both of these streets were called Broadway Street.)

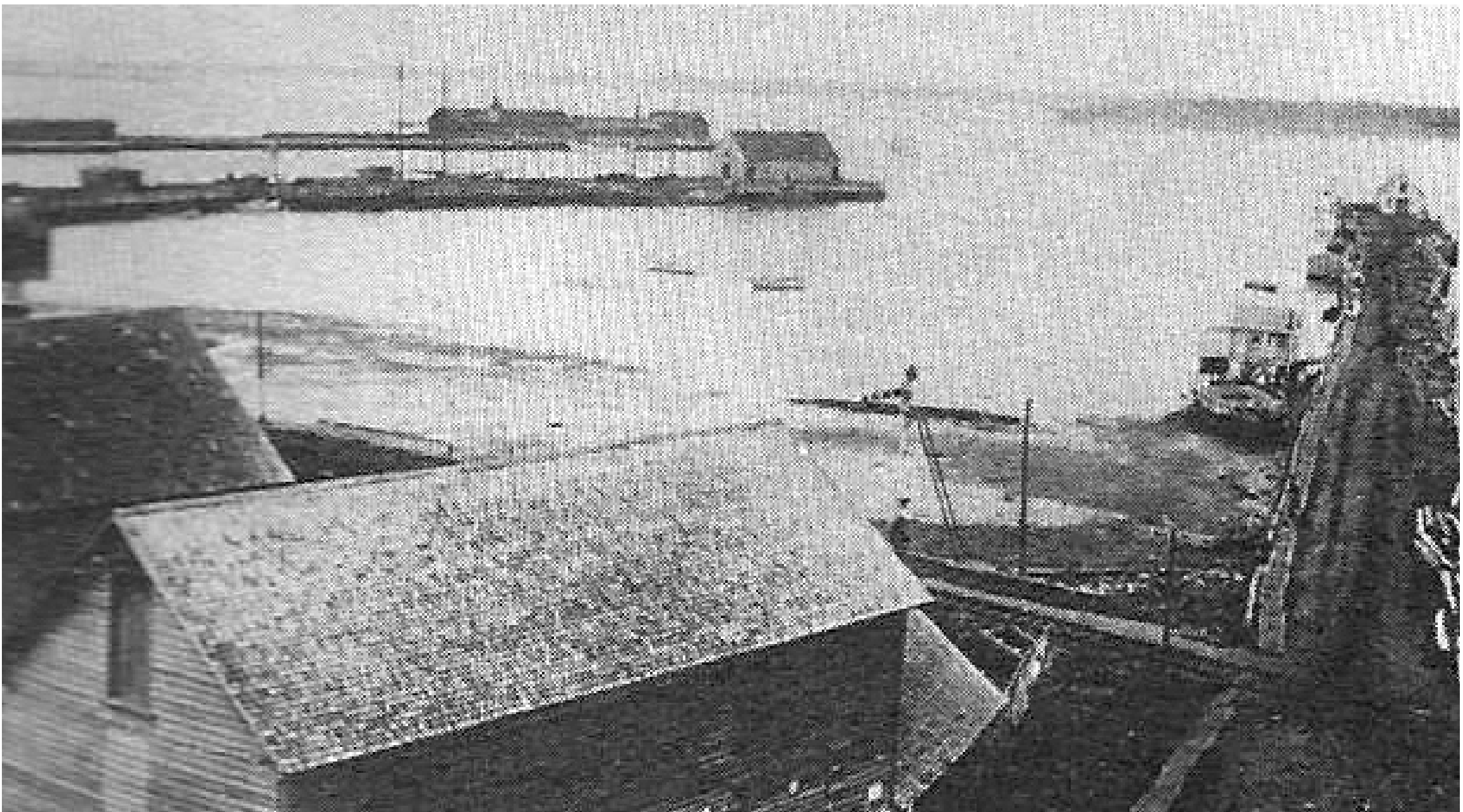
Summerside was open for business with the building of Green's Salt Store. Next came a log building which operated as a granary and

salt storage, and then Green' Blacksmith Shop. In 1840, four blocks of Queen's Wharf (originally Green's Wharf, or The Wharf) were built. In 1865, a lighthouse was fixed to the wharf for ships to see before coming to shore.

Eventually Summerside was added as stop to the Island stagecoach route, around the same time ship building was in full swing in the town.

Come the 1860s, shipbuilding was at its height, with a large number of accommodations were established for the workmen. They were a stark contrast to the fine heavy-timbered houses of previous builders. 1860s Water Street consisted of a brick kiln operation, a salt store, a lumberyard, blacksmith shops, a shoemaker shop, liquor stores, and general stores. There were also several inns where boat passengers and travellers could stay.

Shipbuilding changed the landscape of Summerside. Not only did it transform our waterfront, but it also brought merchants and shopkeepers to the area, who then began to build their businesses on Queen and Water Streets. Greens Shore emerged as a shipbuilding town in the 1850s - bringing aspiring mercantile class, shopkeepers and tradesmen.



Beginnings of Summerside

Our sires -brave hearts that crossed estranging seas,
And broke the hush of the primeval wood,
Who lit their candles in solitude,
And met the saffron morn upon their knees -
What though their homes were void of luxuries,
Learning ne'er begged, nor altars smokeless stood,
Nor cheer, nor friendship lacked the joys their rude,
Kind, log-heaped heaths could give. - It is to these
I bare my head!

- **Alexander Louis Fraser**