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DesBarres's Plans for Sydney CONTINUED FROM BACK COVER I mean, Captain Samuel Holland, who surveyed Cape Breton just previous to this (see "Capt. Holland's Plan for Cape Breton, 1767" in Issue 33 of Cape Breton's Magazine), was a little bit shyer person. DesBarres was always very outgoing, and always pushy. He was always writing petitions asking for jobs. I don't know where he got the time. You'd have to live to be 103 or 104 (which he did) just to have the time. I think he spent at least 10 years of that just sitting down writing. Anyway, he got the job, and he did the surveys. He was given a crew and a couple of ships. But he literally, literally, did the work. He went out in boats for weeks, months, at a time. And they'd work all summer. And in the winter, they would pull them together, draw maps of the coastline, which were later published as the Atlantic Neptune. There's charts, from above, which give the depths, like a regular map. And then, there are some that he did as views-- how it would appear from the sea. So you might see a view of Sydney Harbour, let's say, which can be very strange looking at it from the sea--it's just 2 little humps and the entrance, you know, Cranberry on one side and Low Point on the other. (That's a guide for coming safely into the harbour.) Exactly. What to look for. There's a sandbar here--so there might be a chart from above, showing the depths and the sandbars and the difficulties. And it's hard to believe this hadn't been done much before. And it's DesBarres who did this. So this is an enduring monument. They would do the surveys. And then in the winter, they'd go to a place he'd purchased in the Falmouth area of Nova Scotia. A large estate, he'd built this huge mansion which he called Castle Frederick, with which the people up around Windsor are familiar. And that's where he would spend his winters, putting the maps together, drawing them up, and preparing them for the Admiralty. And when this was done, they were sent over to England for publication. The difficulty is that he kept taking some maps out and putting new maps in, changing it. So you can't point to anywhere and say, "This is the complete Atlantic Neptune." The Atlantic Neptune--typical DesBarres. There was no one copy that you can say is the Atlantic Neptune. It's sort of like quicksilver, and an awful lot like him. So he was working on this all through the 1770s and early '80s. And, typical of the bureaucracy, money was always late coming in. Policies of the government would change, and they lost interest in it. Then they got very interested when the American Revolution broke out, extremely interested in charts he'd done. As the Revolution went on, well, they weren't so interested any more. But of course, DesBarres, being the type he was, he was determined he was going to finish this. He was out of pocket quite often--paying his surveyors, the money was late coming across the ocean. So the government owed him money--always seemed to owe DesBarres. And there was always controversy over his accounts, which were never accurate. Now, I don't know if that was on purpose, or if it was just the way he was, or if it was because the Colonial Office was always in such a mess. And that's something we often forget. The government didn't have enough clerks, their records weren't good. The government would lose accounts! Extremely



inefficient. But they always owed him. CONTINUED NEXT PAGE