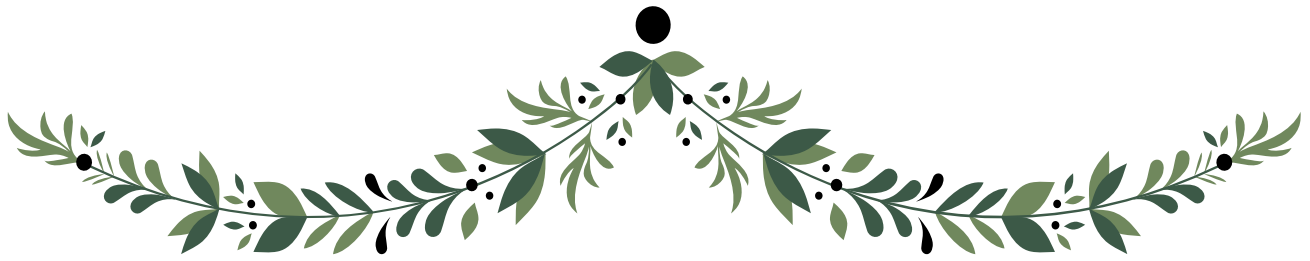


1842

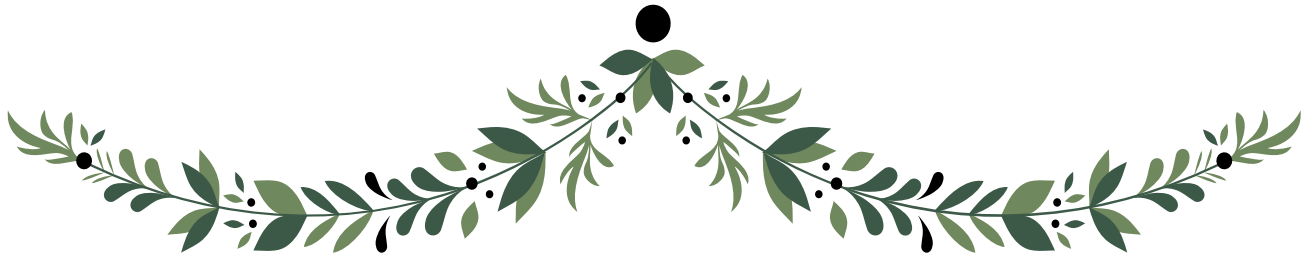
CATHERINE
FAIRBANK'S
POEM

on the occasion of the marriage
of their cousin, Martha Prescott,
daughter of
Hon. Charles Ramage Prescott
to George Augustus Allison,
at Acacia Grove.



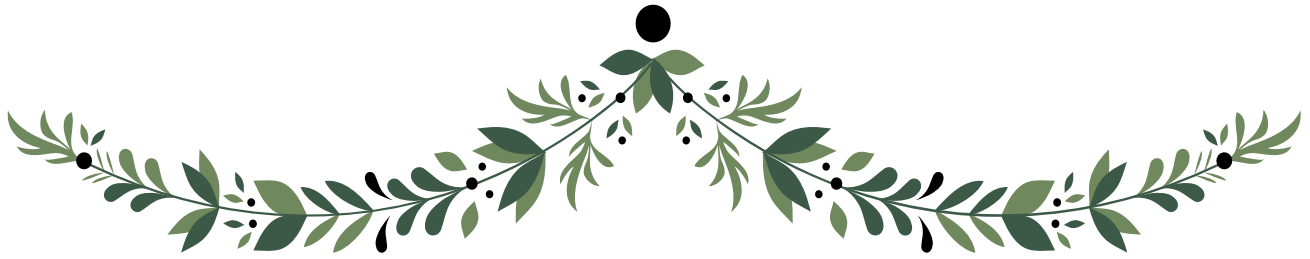
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

To the Misses Fairbanks, Woodside,
The bridal is over, the guests are all gone,
And the young bridesmaid sits in her glory alone.
The flowers and favours are thrown on the floor,
And the guests are departed, expected no more.
But the gay scene still lingers in memory's cell,
And o'er time has power its hues to dispel,
I'll seize on the picture and send it to town,
And call on the Muses to help pack it down.
Believe me, dear sisters, I cannot express
In words, what I feel, and in writing, much less.
But I'll try all I can, and I know you'll excuse me,
If I only succeed in my plan to amuse ye.



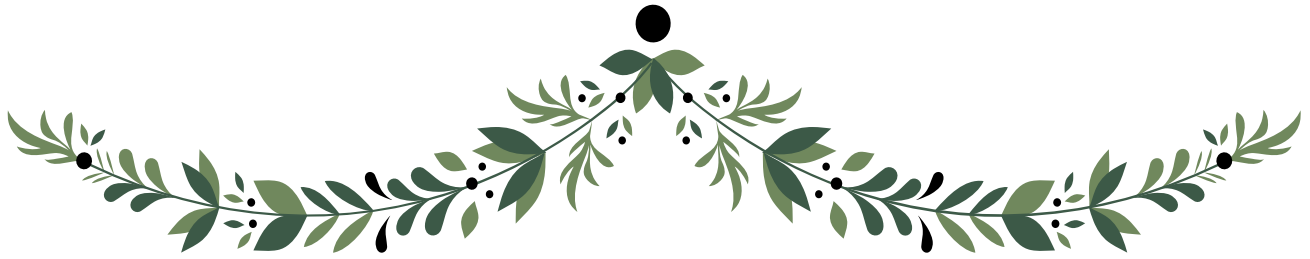
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

At five in the morning we rose from our bed,
Completed arrangements, said all to be said,
Made elegant bouquets, verbena and roses,
Geraniums and pansies
With *arricula borealis* twined with box for the cake.
Oh Sisters! A lovely display they did make.
This was done before breakfast, and when that was past,
To dress the fair bride was our next pleasant task.
To say she looked well, is too dull an expression.
Cousin George looked entranced, and to me made confession
That n'er in his life did his Martha appear
In his fond eyes so lovely, deservedly dear.
To assist in arrangements and "talking a few,"
Bessie Rand and Joe Whidden (to give them their due)
Were useful as could be; indeed I can't say
That we could have got on, had the two been away.



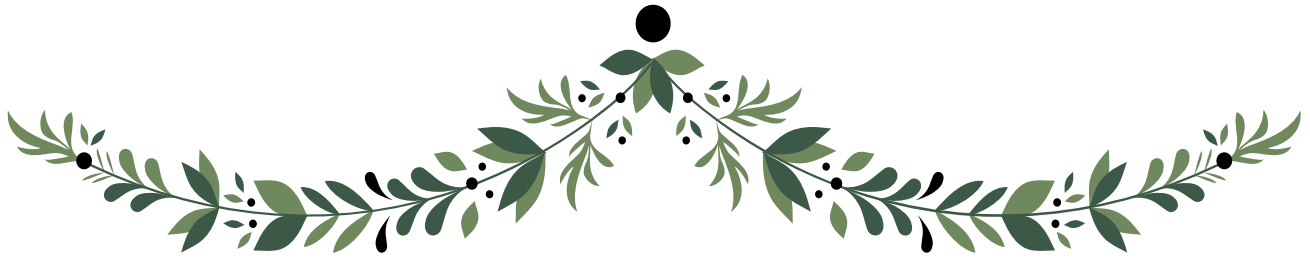
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

Bess and I being bridesmaids, dressed nearly the same.
Of the bridegroom's appearance we could not complain.
Oh! Had you seen Robert, my sisters, I fear
Your hearts would...Oh dear!
For he looked so resplendent in bridal attire
Was polite and attentive as we could desire;
Had his raven locks twisted with curling-tongs aid,
And with gloves and white flowers was also arrayed.
Mr. Whidden, I would not for worlds fail to mention,
His looks our young guests all regard with attention
And they all spoke in terms of the greatest delight
When his handsome form rose in full view in their sight.



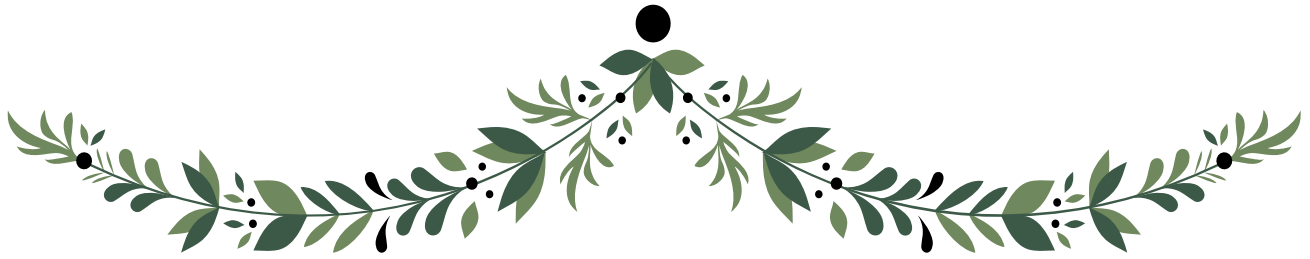
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

I must not forget to inform you how we
In order all drove to the church. You shall see.
At ten in the morning, precisely at ten,
We were all dressed and ready, dear sisters, and then
The carriages; all were in readiness here,
So the party were seated - and presently, there.
The morn was so lovely, the sun was so bright,
All the merry young faces it cheered by its sight.
The birds they were singing as gay as could be
As the bridal group passed, amid frolic and glee.
With her Father and Mother the bride took a seat,
I followed with George (which to me was a treat,
As I had not before had of minutes a dozen
To improve my acquaintance with George, my new cousin).
I was really delighted with dear Martha's choice;
He's pronounced most a saint, with unanimous voice.
He's very good-looking, at least in my mind,
In converse agreeable, sensible, kind,
Devotedly fond of his amiable bride,



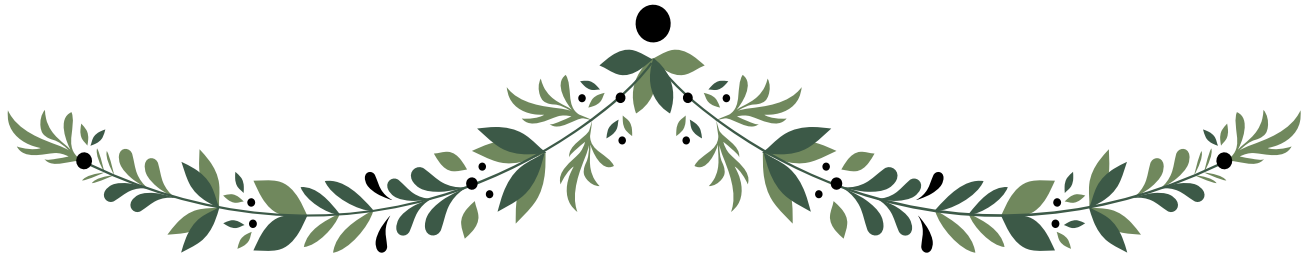
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

Good wishes attend them from every side.
To go on with the party. The next in the train
Of our gay cavalcade. T'was that sprightly young swain
Count Robert, our groomsman, with him in the fly,
Mrs. Allison's daughter, young Mary, passed by.
Bess Rand and Joe Whidden the next gig contained,
Mr. Fraser behind with Miss Hammill remained.
Not forgetting Miss Norris with her horse and carriage,
Who drove Cousin Mary herself to the marriage.
Arrived at the church, we all paused at the door,
Other friends gathered round us, a plentiful store;
Mrs. William DeWolfe, with her husband and son
And daughter and nephew, young Calkin's among.
The rest of the neighbours soon hastened to meet us,
And with kind enquiries and bright looks to greet us.



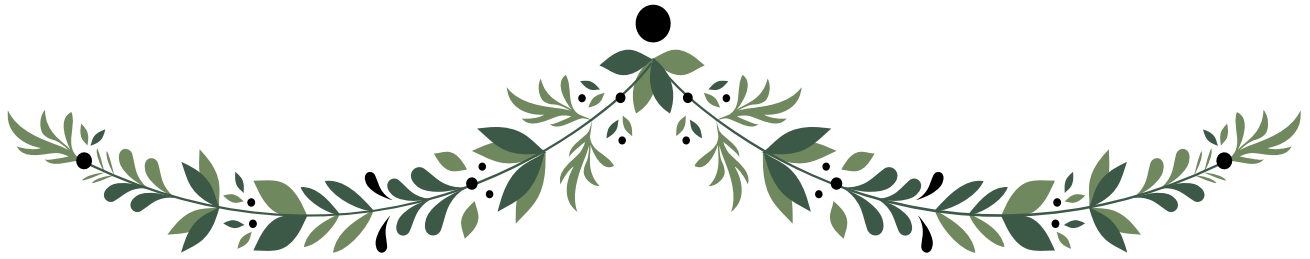
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

Their names - if you wish it - I tell you their names.
There was old Mr. Allison with his son, James,
Mrs. Leonard and old Mrs. Whidden were there
(And whom with the latter can ever compare)?
Mr. Rand and a young Mrs. Allison too;
Miss Ruth Crowe from Sackville, all these met our view;
And no words can express our unbounded delight
When Allison Rathburn at last met our sight.
Not knowing he'd come, t'was a pleasing surprise
When at the church door, he appeared to our eyes.
Joseph Whidden and I then with basket in hand,
Found gloves and white favours to meet the demand.
And having dispensed them with exquisite grace,
He proffered his arm and we each took our place.
Count Robert then followed with fair Bessie Rand,
And all round the altar at least took our stand.
The bride, though she trembled, with audible voice
Repeated her vows to the man of her choice.



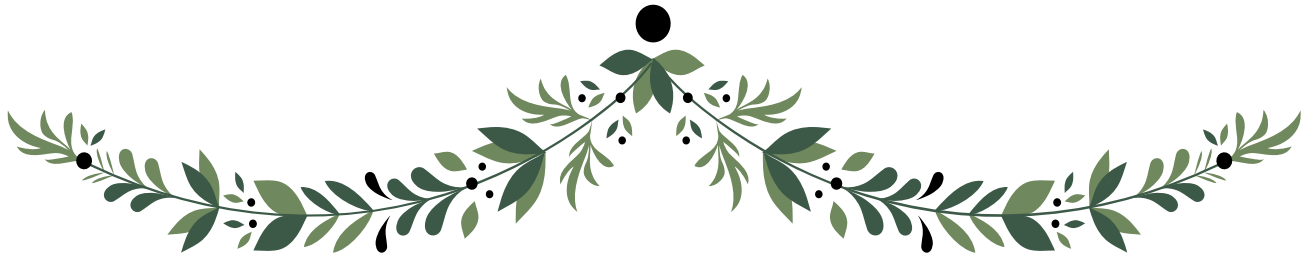
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

I drew off the glove in most elegant style,
Mr. Whidden assisting the bridegroom the while.
The ring was p[resented, the names were all signed,
The father his daughter forever resigned.
The rite was concluded. The bridegroom and bride
Passed forth from the church, with kind wishes supplied.
They rode back together. With Uncle and Aunt
I took the bride's place on our homeward bound jaunt.
I could not but feel I was honoured indeed;
Tho' I feared my dear Aunt my assistance might need,
I was happily wrong. She kept up very well,
And looked, my dear sisters, uncommonly well.
Arrived at the house where a lunch did await,
The bridesmaids were called to distribute the cake.
The bride kindly lent us the glittering ring,
And all the unmarried their bride cake would bring
To be passed through the circlet, with each counting time
The mystical ... to the owners resign.
(This some people tell us inspires gay dreams;
It failed with your sister, which singular seems).



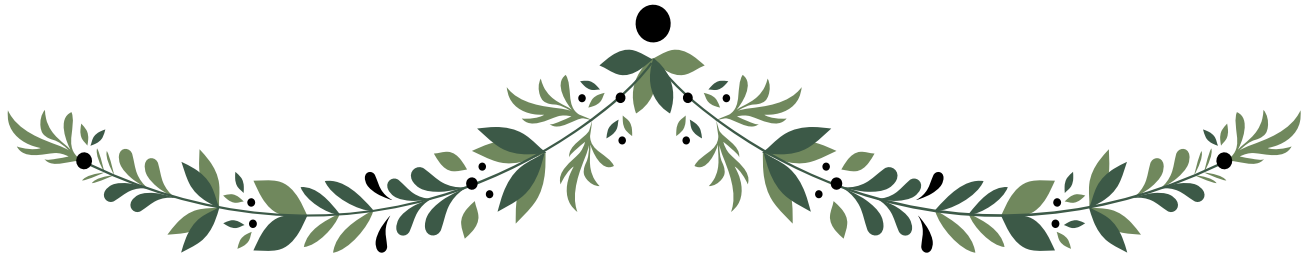
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

The healths that were drunk and
the toasts that were given,
Would fill up this paper, dear girls, as I'm living;
So I'll wait till I meet you at Woodside once more,
And then of my news, you shall have the full store.
The lunch once concluded, the whole without fail,
We walked to the seaside to see them set sail.
The farewell kiss given, we bade them adieu,
And some friends departing, there yet stayed a few.
We returned to the Grove, and oh! Hadn't we fun!
Of laughing and talking, of course, we had none!
James Fraser, of all the amusements that are
Is the funniest person that I ever saw.
He kept us all laughing the whole livelong day;
I wish I could tell you some things he did say.



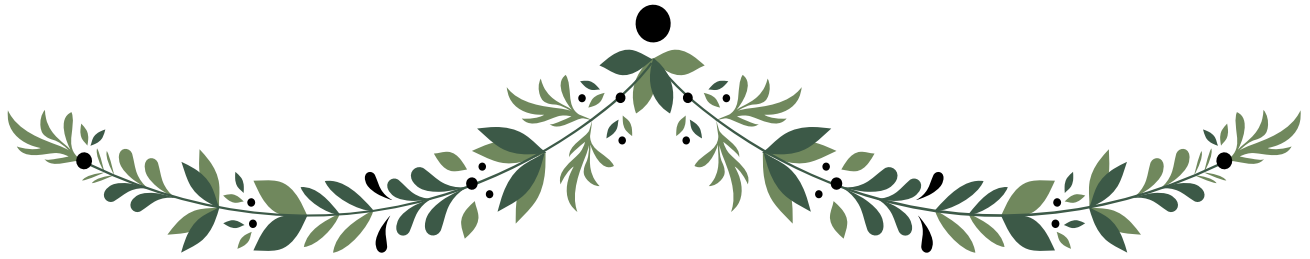
1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

Mary Fairbanks' conduct, I can't justify;
In this present instance 'tis dreadful, oh my!
For all the day long she was ever seen talking
With the prime beau of Wolfville, surnamed William Calkin.
Now as he's a young man whom we all do admire,
It is not very pleasant to see her acquire
The whole of his smiles; so we felt rather ryled
To think to her service our beau she has wiled.
I just now expect to be sent for to-night
To return to dear Wolfville, so more cannot write
Except to express my best thanks to you both
For the elegant letters so lately you wrote.
Mislaid was yours, Annie, at least for some days,
But I send it this morn after many delays.
I'm sorry to find that I homewards must go;
I have not stayed a month, my dear sisters, you know,
And must ask that a fortnight, instead of a week
May be granted; for more I won't certainly seek.



1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

I'm requested by Uncle and Aunt to send love;
Miss H. also joins them (in penning above
I forgot to inform you aunt Whidden is staying,
And a long promised visit to Aunt is now paying).
She said that her love Katie must not leave out,
And that you'll receive it, I have not much doubt.
Now goodbye my children, make needless erratums
And mind ... excuse all poetica vatmus.
Don't let any persons see this, I request,
But read, and obey this, my simple behest.
Give love to my friends, Motts, Katzmans and all,
And anyone else who may happen to call.
And now, dearest sisters, tho' crazy you think her,
Believe me, the writer's your loving Katrinka.



1842 CATHERINE FAIRBANKS

IP.S. To Joanna McNab with my love, will you say,
 I forwarded Littleton's books, by the way.
 I cannot account for their strange not appearing;
 I hope they're not lost but I cannot help fearing.

Original letter belongs to Miss Nancy Forrest, Halifax, NS

This copy was made and presented to the Public Archives of Nova Scotia by Miss Helen Whidden, Milford Station, Nova Scotia, November 1962.

Letter written by Catherine Fairbanks, bridesmaid, about the marriage of her cousin, Martha Prescott, Daughter of Hon. Charles Ramage Prescott, to George A. Allison, at "Acadia Grove", Starr's Point, in 1842.