

desired I would send some person to the Mississaga town, near where Toronto stood, to hear what he would say to their nation, and to see that he would deliver my belts and message honestly. . . . I clothed him very well, and gave him a handsome present to carry home; then took from about his neck a large French medal, and gave him an English one, and a gorget of silver, desiring, whenever he looked at them, he would remember the engagement he now made.

On the third, the *Journal* contains a brief entry: "I gave Lieut. Nellus and de Couange<sup>1</sup> orders to go over the lake with the Chippeway (Missisauga) chief, and call the Missessagays, and speak with the commanding officers of Niagara and Oswego; also to trade with and hunt for their brethren the English." And on Sunday, the nineteenth of August, Johnson, who was now as Oswego, notes in his *Journal* that he had news that two sachems of the Missisaugas would be at Oswego in four or five days, and that they had a great many furs and skins to trade, and that they hoped there would be plenty of goods for that purpose. A little later he remarks: "By letters from thence (Niagara) I learn that the Mississageys came there on my invitation, and have made peace with us, as by Colonel Farquharson's letter, and Lieutenant Nellar's (Nellus's) will appear which letters must be entered in the Indian Records." And on Monday, the 24th of September, "the Mississagays, of whom there came about one hundred and fifty, to Niagara, brought and delivered up two of our men taken at Belle Famille in the battle of the twenty-fourth."

These extracts from the *Journal* of Sir William Johnson describe the alliance now formed between the Missisaugas and the English. The French had lost their allies. All that was now left of their former power on Lake Ontario was the two insignificant schooners, the *Iroquoise* and the *Outaouaise*, which continued to cruise about the lake during the summer of 1760. The *Iroquoise*, which we have seen flitting between Niagara and Toronto with despatches, was the last to disappear.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He was retained by Johnson as interpreter after the fall of Niagara.

<sup>2</sup> SEVERANCE, *An Old Frontier of France*, Vol. II, p. 386.

It was after the destruction of these last vestiges of French power on the lake that Major Robert Rogers set out from Montreal on September 13, 1760, with two hundred Rangers in fifteen whale-boats to take formal possession for the British of the forts in the west vacated by the French. Rogers was a native of New Hampshire and his exploits in the war with the French made him famous; his subsequent career was not so glorious; six years after this expedition he was tried for treason, and passed into the service of the Dey of Algiers; returning to America at the outbreak of the War of Independence, he was suspected of acting the part of a spy; he finally declared openly for the British, but ended his life in obscurity. In the summer after the fall of Niagara we find him at Toronto. He records in his *Journal* that they had left the ruins of Fort Frontenac on the twenty-fifth of September, and on the thirtieth the *Journal* proceeds:

We embarked at the first dawn of day, and, with the assistance of sails and oars, made great way in a south-west course; and in the evening reached the river Toronto, having run seventy miles. Many points extending far into the water occasioned a frequent alteration of our course. We passed a bank twenty miles in length, but the land behind it seemed to be level, well timbered with large oaks, hickories, maples and some poplars. No mountains appeared in sight. Round the place where formerly the French had a fort, that was called Fort Toronto, there was a tract of about 300 acres of cleared ground. The soil here is principally clay. The deer are extremely plentiful in this country. Some Indians were hunting at the mouth of the river, who ran into the woods at our approach, very much frightened. They came in, however, in the morning, and testified their joy at the news of our success against the French. They told us that we could easily accomplish our journey from thence to Detroit in eight days; that when the French traded at that place (Toronto) the Indians used to come with their peltry from Michilimackina down the river Toronto; that the portage was but twenty miles from that to a river falling into Lake Huron, which had some falls, but none very considerable; they added that there was a carrying-place of fifteen miles from some westerly part of Lake Erie

to a river running without falls through several Indian towns into Lake St. Clair. I think Toronto a most convenient place for a factory, and that from thence we may easily settle the north side of Lake Erie.

After leaving Toronto, Rogers proceeded to Niagara and then by way of Lake Erie to Detroit, which passed into the hands of the British on the twenty-ninth of November. Michilimackinac and some of the remoter posts in the west remained in the possession of the French till the following year, when they, too, surrendered to the British. Hardly had the English asserted their authority when the conspiracy of Pontiac broke out, gravely imperilling the lives of the isolated garrisons in the wilderness. The Indians did not readily submit to their new masters, who treated them with less consideration than the French. On March 19, 1762, Governor Burton of Montreal found it necessary to issue a warning to treat the Indians with humanity. In the summer of 1761, the year after Rogers' visit to Toronto, a general plot had been formed to attack Detroit, Niagara, Fort Pitt and other posts garrisoned by the British; and on June 17th, Captain Campbell, commanding at Detroit, wrote to Major Walters, in command at Niagara, to warn him of the impending danger. "I hope," he said, "this will Come time Enough to put You on Your Guard and to send to Oswego, and all the Posts on that communication they Expect to be joined by the Nations that are come from the North by Toronto." From this letter it is learned that the Missisaugas had wavered in their new fidelity to the English and had been employed by the Six Nations to carry wampum belts to the northern nations inciting them to war. Although the attack upon Niagara did not develop at this time, we may imagine that there was much coming and going across the Toronto Carrying-Place, which formed so easy a method of communication with the tribes in the north and with Michilimackinac.

On April 1, 1762, General Gage at Montreal issued a proclamation declaring the fur trade free to all, but forbidding

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the export of peltries to France. The rivalry between Montreal and Albany for the control of the trade flared up again. This time the French in Quebec found powerful allies in British trading interests in Montreal and in England. It was largely, as Professor McArthur has shown, this trade rivalry between the mother country and the American colonies which determined a little later the boundary provisions of the Quebec Act.

In the summer of 1762, three years after the French had abandoned Toronto, there was again trading at that place; a certain Monsieur Baby and others were operating on passes granted by Gage himself. The Babys of Detroit had been engaged in the fur trade in the lake region, especially with the Mohicans and the Chaouenons, long before the conquest. After a stout defence of the French cause, they had shown themselves equally loyal to the British. Jacques Duperon Baby, the friend of Pontiac and of the British, is the best known of the four brothers engaged in the trade at Detroit, which he resumed again under British auspices. At a later date, Baby became superintendent of Indians and died at Sandwich, Ontario, in 1789. It is of interest to note that his more distinguished son, the Hon. James Baby, established himself on the site of the old Seneca village of Teiaiagon on the Humber, which was so near the scene of these trading operations of 1762.

Under date of July 2nd, Major Walters, commandant at Niagara, had written to Amherst in New York that he had seized fifteen barrels of brandy of eight gallons each (presumably at Toronto); and on the twenty-fifth of the same month, Amherst wrote from New York to Major Wilkins, the new commandant:

As I conclude Major Walters will be set out before this reaches Niagara (I am writing to you). . . . He had seized fifteen barrels of brandy belonging to a Monsieur Baby who had Governor Gage's pass. . . . Walters transmitted (to me) copies of Gage's passes permitting traders to carry rum for the use of Indians at Toronto. . . . you will keep the brandy till I write Gage."

On the seventh of October, Gage himself wrote from Montreal to Wilkins:

Complaints have been made here from Michilimackinac that the traders of Toronto debauch all the Indians from those quarters by selling them rum, I suppose you have a detachment at Toronto as I am told no traders are permitted to go where there are no troops.

Gage also wrote to Amherst, and the latter wrote to Johnson, enclosing an extract from Gage's letter. From the *Johnson Papers*<sup>1</sup> we learn the names of the offending traders, Schuyler, Stevenson, Everart, Wendel and Company, all of them Albany people. They had summoned the Indians from Michilimackinac, had taken all their skins in return for rum, and had left them destitute. This sinister incident throws a light upon the savage fury of the Indians at Michilimackinac during the conspiracy of Pontiac.

On the twenty-fourth General Amherst wrote from New York to Wilkins; he had written to Gage about the passes. "I believe," he writes, "that he (Gage) will allow no rum carried . . . but I fear the traders fall upon very unfair means of getting up that pernicious liquor even by altering passes." Amherst had given a pass to Steadman,<sup>2</sup> a sutler to the Niagara garrison, and he remarks, "One of his partners, Mitchell, had the assurance to present it to me . . . in the old pass he was permitted to carry wines but no rum. The words 'but no' were scratched out and the following substituted in their room, 'he is permitted to carry wines, spirits and rum.'"

On the eighth, Wilkins informed Amherst that the Indian interpreter, de Couange, a Frenchman whom Johnson had retained after the capture of Niagara, had written to him a letter of complaints made to him by the Indians from and about Toronto that they had been cheated and very ill-used by the traders at that place, and that they begged for redress from the commandant at Niagara.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Vol. III, p. 943.

<sup>2</sup> The lessee of the Niagara Portage.

On the twenty-first of November, Amherst wrote again to Wilkins from New York:

What you mention of the distressful situation of the Indians occasioned with their being supplied with that pernicious liquor at Toronto fully proves that the traders fall upon very unfair means to get it up. . . and as that place is near your post I desire you will send parties thither whenever you think it necessary and seize every drop of rum or spirituous liquor. . . in the traders' stores.

Gage from Montreal wrote again to Wilkins on the second of December in a very peremptory manner:

If Toronto was a little nearer Fort William Augustus, I should soon put an end to their rum-selling and had I been acquainted with your unwillingness to go thither without particular orders, I should most undoubtedly beat up their quarters. For the future if you see a gill of spirits in any of my passes you may conclude it put in clandestinely. I shall not grant a single drop to any soul and shall secure every pass the moment the waters are navigable in the spring.

At the same time, Sir William Johnson, writing from Johnson Hall on the twenty-second of December, repeated Amherst's desire for Wilkins to send parties to Toronto.

Apparently the situation was now critical; Amherst, Gage and Johnson would hardly have combined to focus their attention upon a mere trifle at an obscure outpost; possibly defection was feared.

To all this pressure, Wilkins responded slowly; the Babys were still powerful persons in the wilderness; he waited till the spring of 1763.<sup>1</sup> On May the tenth, he reported to Amherst:

I have sent a lieutenant, one sergeant, two corporals and twenty men on a visit to Toronto and they are returned with one Knaggs, a trader, and one servant and all his goods which are very considerable and are lodged in a house with the traders of this place. When the party arrived at Toronto he had left

<sup>1</sup> On the 4th of March, 1763, "Joseph Dubois, marchand-voyageur" of Montreal, engaged "J.-B. Senecal, pour transporter des marchandises à Toronto, en canot." Senecal would be a "milieu," i.e., a man hired to paddle in the middle of the canoe who would be paid less. E.-Z.M.

only about ten gallons of rum which he gave to the party at a gill a man a day. But Knaggs says he was in daily expectation of his partners with another pass and goods from Montreal to trade at Cataraqui . . . No other trader was found there on this visit. I shall send parties on the same occasion as often as possible, though it is above 100 miles by the coast and not prudent to venture across in an open boat. . . The Indians at Toronto made no objection to the party's bringing Knaggs away but assisted them in repairing their boats etc. Since the above, many Indians are come here to complain of the treatment received from other traders lately arrived at Toronto . . . local traders complain about others getting passes to trade at Toronto and places where there are no troops (they want the same permission).<sup>1</sup>

From another source we learn that the Missisauga chief at Toronto, Wabecommetat, engaged to allow no further trade at that place. With the outbreak of the conspiracy of Pontiac, Gage forbade all trade with the Indians. In 1764, so far as Quebec was concerned, the trade was restricted to Carillon on the Ottawa and the Cedars on the St. Lawrence; the Indians were compelled to bring their peltries to these places, and traders were to refrain from penetrating into the interior.

Already, however, the English traders, who had followed in the wake of the army into Quebec, had begun to take an active part in the fur trade; and these adventurous spirits were as difficult to control as the *coureurs-de-bois*. Alexander Henry, the most adventurous of them all, was at Mackinac in 1763 when that place was captured by the allies of Pontiac; he escaped the massacre, but was made prisoner by the Missisaugas, who brought him with them in 1764 when they came to Johnson's great council at Niagara. The route which the Missisaugas followed with their prisoner was the familiar route by the eastern shore of the Georgian Bay, Lake Simcoe and the Toronto Carrying-Place. Henry recounts his experi-

<sup>1</sup> For the details of this incident I am indebted to Professor W. B. Kerr, of the University of Buffalo, who has placed at my disposal material drawn from the Amherst correspondence in the Public Records Office, London, England.

ences in his *Travels and Adventures*. He remarks, after describing the trip down the Georgian Bay:

The next day was calm, and we arrived at the entrance of the navigation which leads to Lake aux Claies. We presently passed two short carrying-places at each of which were several lodges of Indians, containing only women and children, the men being gone to the Council at Niagara. From this, as from a former instance, my companions derived fresh courage. On the 18th of June, we crossed Lake aux Claies,<sup>1</sup> which appeared to be upwards of twenty miles in length. At its farther end we came to the carrying-place of Toronto. Here the Indians obliged me to carry a burden of more than a hundred pounds weight. The day was very hot, and the woods and marshes abounded with mosquitoes; but, the Indians walked at a quick pace, and I could by no means see myself left behind. The whole country was a thick forest, through which our only road was a foot-path, or such as, in America, is exclusively termed an Indian path. Next morning, at ten o'clock, we reached the shore of Lake Ontario. Here we were employed two days in making canoes, out of the bark of the elm-tree, in which we were to transport ourselves to Niagara. For this purpose the Indians first cut down a tree; then stripped off the bark, in one entire sheet, of about eighteen feet in length, the incision being length-wise. The canoe was now complete, as to its top, bottom and sides. Its ends were next closed, by sewing the bark together; and a few ribs and bars being introduced, the architecture was finished. In this manner, we made two canoes; of which one carried eight men, the other, nine. On the 21st, we embarked at Toronto, and encamped, in the evening, four miles short of Fort Niagara, which the Indians would not approach till morning.<sup>2</sup>

Some conception of the rapidity of the movements of the Indians can be formed from the fact that, according to Henry, the Missisaugas crossed Lake Simcoe on the eighteenth and were at the mouth of the Humber on the morning of the nineteenth at ten o'clock; and of the vigour of Henry himself, who carried a load of a hundred pounds on his back twenty-nine miles in so short a time.

<sup>1</sup> Lake Toronto has now become Lac aux Claies. Consult Hunter, *A History of Simcoe County*, Vol. I, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Travels and Adventures*, Alexander Henry, edited by Dr. James Bain; p. XIX, note. *Ibid.*, pp. 170-172.



## VIII

### FROM THE CONSPIRACY OF PONTIAC TO THE QUEBEC ACT: 1764-1774

THE first act of the British government after the signing of the Treaty of Paris was to define by proclamation the boundaries of the new Province of Quebec. Its western limits were determined by a line running from the St. Lawrence River, at the intersection of the forty-fifth parallel, to the south-east corner of Lake Nipissing. Ontario and all the western country was thus outside the new Province, and although the governors of Quebec passed regulations with regard to the Indian territory, and issued licenses to those who went there to trade, this vast region was somewhat loosely governed. The original intention of placing the whole of the western country under one general control and government by Act of Parliament was not carried out. The New England colonies regarded the regions south of the lakes as their natural area for expansion. The traders from Albany lost no time in appropriating as much as they could of the fur trade of their conquered French rivals in Quebec on both sides of the lakes. Sir William Johnson, while admitting the authority of Sir Guy Carleton, continued to divert the fur trade to New England, and through his great influence with the tribes, and his authority as Indian Agent, controlled great portions of the new territory.

It is not likely that much trading went on at the mouth of the Humber for some years after the conspiracy of Pontiac.<sup>1</sup> Both sides of the lake were now under one crown, but the trade rivalries continued, and for the moment the furs passed down the Mohawk to Albany. Toronto, however, was a post too valuable to be neglected. In a report on the value of the trade at the three posts on Lake Ontario, submitted to the French

<sup>1</sup> "It was not till 1771 that the western fur trade recovered from the conspiracy of Pontiac." Atcheson, *Origin and Progress of the North-West Company of Canada*, 1811, p. 5.

government in 1757, it is stated that a hundred and fifty bales of peltries might be collected at Toronto in a year,<sup>1</sup> two hundred and fifty to three hundred at Niagara, while at Fort Frontenac, which seems to have sunk into insignificance, only twenty or thirty were to be expected. After the fall of Chouéguen, Toronto for a short time appeared as the rival of Niagara. Johnson made every effort to control this trade in the interests of the merchants of Albany, but not always with success. In the beginning of 1767 we find him writing to General Gage, at Montreal:

Capt. Browne writes me that he has, at the request of Commissary Roberts, caused two traders to be apprehended at Toronto, where they were trading contrary to authority. I hope Lieut.-Gov. Carleton will, agreeable to the declaration in one of his letters, have them prosecuted and punished as an example to the rest. I am informed that there are several more from Canada trading with the Indians on the north side of Lake Ontario, and up along the rivers in that quarter, which, if not prevented, must entirely ruin the fair trader.<sup>2</sup>

Later in the summer, Wabecommegeat, the chief of the Mississaugas at Toronto, visited Niagara; he had an interview with Norman M'Leod, the Indian Agent at that place, who writes in his journal:

July 17th (1767). Arrived Wabecommegeat, chief of the Mississaugas. July 18th.—This day Wabecommegeat came to speak to me, but was so drunk that no one could understand him.—July 19th. Had a small conference with Wabecommegeat. Present—Norman M'Leod, Esq.; Mr. Neil MacLean, Commissary of Provisions; Jean Baptiste de Couange, interpreter. Wabecommegeat spoke first, and, after the usual compliments, told that as soon as he had heard of my arrival, he and his

<sup>1</sup> "Toronto, situé au nord du lac Ontario vis-a-vis de Niagara, établi pour empêcher les sauvages du nord d'aller commercier à Chouéguen n'existant plus, ce poste devient inutile. Le roi en fait le commerce, les effets y montent des bateaux conduits par des miliciens comandés pour cela; les sauvages qui y traitent sont les Mississagués et les Salteux. Il en peut sortir cent cinquante paquets de pelleteries." "Mémoire sur l'état de la Nouvelle France, 1757," *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec*, 1923-1924, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Publication of the Canadian Archives*, 1890, State Papers, p. 31, Q 5-1; *Ibid.*, p. 24, Johnson to Carleton, p. 25, Carleton to Johnson.

young men came to see me. He then asked me if I had any news, and desired I should tell all I had. Then he gave four strings of wampum. I then told them: "Children, I am glad to see you. I am sent by your father, Sir William Johnson, to take care of your trade, and to prevent abuses therein.—Children, I am sorry to hear you have permitted people to trade at Toronto. I hope you will prevent it for the future. All of you know the reason of this belt of wampum being left in this place. (I then showed them a large belt left here five or six years ago by Wabecomme-gat, by which belt he was under promise not to allow anybody whatever to carry on trade at Toronto.) Now, children, I have no more to say, but desire you to remember and keep close to all the promises you have made to your English father. You must not listen to any bad news. When you hear any, good or bad, come to me with it. You may depend upon it I shall always tell you the truth." (I gave four strings of wampum.)

Wabecomme-gat replied: "Father, we have heard you with attention.—We will allow no more trade to be carried on at Toronto. As for myself, it is well known I don't approve of it, as I went with the interpreter to bring in those who were trading at that place. We go away this day, and hope our father will give us some provisions, rum, powder and shot, and we will bring you venison when we return." I replied, it was not in my power to give them much, but as it was the first time I had the pleasure of speaking to them, they should have a little of what they wanted.

It is plain from these two incidents that Sir William was having a good deal of trouble in excluding traders from Quebec from the regions north of the lake, and especially from the foot of the Toronto Carrying-Place. Later in the year he made up his mind that a new system was necessary, and we find him writing to the Earl of Selbourne under the date of December 3rd, advising that exclusive rights to trade should be given to approved persons at certain posts in the wilderness, and selecting Toronto to illustrate his point. He remarks:

On the other hand, every step our Traders take beyond the Posts is attended at least with some *risque*, and a very heavy expence, which the Indians must feel as heavily on the purchase of their commodities, all which considered, is it not reasonable

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to suppose that they would rather employ their Idle time in quest of a cheep Market, than sit down with such slender returns as they must receive in their own Villages; as a proof of which I shall give one instance concerning Toronto on the North shore of Lake Ontario formerly dependant on Niagara, which notwithstanding the assertion of Major Rogers "that even a single trader would not think it worth attention to supply a dependant Post" yet I have heard traders of long experience and good circumstances affirm that for the exclusive trade of that place for one season they would willingly pay £1000, so certain were they of a quiet Market from the cheapness at which they could afford their goods their, and I am certain that a handsome Fund would arise from farming out the places of Trade to Merchants of Fortune and Character, they giving security to be answerable for the misconduct of the Factors, which could not be more than we find at present.<sup>1</sup>

Apparently Sir William had been no more successful than the French in coping with the evils of the trade, drunkenness among the Indians, illicit trading and the bad conduct of store-keepers and garrisons.

Three years after this, a Frenchman from Montreal, St. Jean Rousseau, established himself at the mouth of the Humber and, in 1774, with the passing of the Quebec Act, the whole of the "Old North-West," which included the territory north and south of the lakes to the Ohio and the Mississippi, was annexed to Quebec. Under the leadership of a group of Scotch and French fur-traders, who afterwards grew into the North-West Company, Montreal recaptured the ascendancy. We shall find that the North-Westerners immediately turned their eyes to Toronto.

<sup>1</sup> *New York Colonial Documents*, Vol. VI, p. 1000.

## IX

### FROM THE QUEBEC ACT TO THE FOUNDING OF YORK: 1774-1793

THE Quebec Act of 1774, which restored to the French their language and religion, restored also that rich and fertile region lying between the Ohio and the Mississippi to its original owners. It is said that English statesmen, discerning the growing independence of the American colonies, intended the Act as a salutary warning; but that the colonies, gravely displeased with the liberties, civil and religious, accorded to the conquered French, and aghast at the alienation of territory which they had come to regard as their natural area of expansion, saw themselves shut in on the north and the west, and menaced by feudalism more deeply entrenched than before, and that the Quebec Act proved to be not the least of the causes of the American Revolution.

In the following year the war broke out and a veil descends upon events in the peninsula of Ontario<sup>1</sup> until the coming of the Loyalists in 1784. The colonies, after their first unsuccessful attempt to seize Quebec, seem to have been content that the Canadians should remain neutral. They did little to provoke the *habitants* in the St. Lawrence Valley, and since both sides tacitly agreed not to bring the Indians into the quarrel,<sup>2</sup> the latter, with the exception of the Iroquois, remained for the most part passive spectators, ready to declare for the victors. On August 14, 1775, however, when Montgomery's invasion was imminent, Carleton wrote to Dartmouth, "The Indians on the St. Lawrence have promised their assistance and with some Missisaugas from north of Lake Ontario (possibly from the mouth of the Toronto river) have done duty with the troops at St. John's since the

<sup>1</sup> "Neither boat nor individual could leave or enter the region without a permit, not even Mme. Langlade." McIlwraith, *Life of Haldimand*, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> BRADLEY, *The Making of Canada*, p. 119.

18th of June."<sup>1</sup> And on September 21st of the same year Cramahé wrote to Dartmouth, "The rebels have been beaten back near St. John's; the Indians behaved with great spirit, and had they remained firm the Province would have been saved this year, but finding the Canadians averse to taking up arms in defence of their country, they withdrew." And on the same date Carleton wrote from Montreal, "The Indians have left and will do nothing, unless the Canadians exert themselves also." As the war progressed, the Indians of the lake region adopted the apathetic attitude of the *habitants* of Quebec.<sup>2</sup> In 1778 there was only a single British regiment between Montreal and Michilimackinac,<sup>3</sup> and between the posts on the lakes and New Orleans there was not in that year a single fort or garrison to check the encroachments of the French and Spanish from the Mississippi Valley and the American revolutionaries from Virginia. Niagara, Detroit, Michilimackinac were not seriously menaced during the war which left the peninsula of Ontario untouched.

In March, 1779, we catch one brief, vivid glimpse of abandoned Toronto. Captain Walter Butler,<sup>4</sup> eldest son of Lieut.-Col. John Butler of Butler's Rangers, had been stationed at Niagara during the preceding autumn and winter; as he did not reach Niagara till the end of July, he had consequently no part in the destruction of Wyoming; but owing to his father's illness, he commanded in person the raid into Cherry Valley which took place in November, where the Indians again got out of hand. In the spring of 1779 Walter Butler was despatched

<sup>1</sup> *Publication of the Canadian Archives*, 1890, State Papers, p. 63, Carleton to Dartmouth.

<sup>2</sup> "That aromatic root (ginseng) which the old Jesuits used to ship to China, where it brought five dollars a pound, proved a sore temptation to the Mississagas on the northern shore of Lake Ontario. They were faithful and well-disposed to their neighbours of Carleton Island, but always clamouring for goods and rum, which they often found could be more quickly gained in the ginseng trade than by going to war." McLlwraith, *Life of Haldimand*, p. 164. Chabert on the Niagara portage had made a fortune from ginseng

<sup>3</sup> "Lieutenant-Governor Sinclair tried to find a shorter route from his post (Michilimackinac) to Niagara by way of Lake Huron and Lake Simcoe, portaging thence to Toronto." McLlwraith, *Life of Haldimand*, p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> Memoir by General Ernest Cruikshank, *Transactions Canadian Institute*, 1892-1893, p. 284; *Publication of the Canadian Archives*, 1886, B 105, p. 70.

to Quebec with the pay-lists and accounts of his regiment. He left Niagara on the eighth of March, reached the head of the lake on the eleventh, and next day camped on the shore below Scarborough Heights. He records in his diary:<sup>1</sup>

March 12th.—Set off at seven o'clock this morning; the wind at N.W.; too much off shore to sail; rowed till 11 o'clock; put into the river called the Credit, 17 miles from the last station. The shore in general good for boats to land; the land low and a good beach, except the points, which are bluff. Two Mississaugas came to me and informed me a number of them lived up this river. Gave them bread and put off at 12; rowed to the bay above Toronto; hoisted sail: found the wind too high to go round the long point forming the basin or bay below Toronto. Continuing sailing down the bay to the camping place, unloaded the boat, hauled her over and loaded again in an hour and a half; rowed from this to the beginning of the high lands, encamped on the beach and secured the boat. Toronto was built on a level spot of ground nearly opposite a long neck or point of land running seven or eight miles into the lake, forming a noble bay of eight or nine miles deep, two or three miles from the bottom of which, on the north side, ships can ride in safety. It's strange the French built the fort where they did, and not where their shipping were wont to lay, which was a few miles below the fort down the bay.<sup>2</sup> The bay of Toronto was filled with all kinds of wild fowl. Saw on the north side of the bay several wigwams and canoes turned up on the shore. The land about Toronto appears very good for cultivation. From Toronto to the river *du Credit* it is 12 miles across the bay, but better than 20 along shore, which is the way boats must take except the weather is very calm or a light breeze in your favour. From Toronto to the beginning of the high lands is nine or ten miles down the basin, but nearly double round the point.<sup>3</sup>

1 Memoir by General Ernest Cruikshank, *Transactions Canadian Institute*, 1892-1893, p. 280.

2 Probably at the mouth of the Humber.

3 (a) On September 14, 1780, Major Bolton wrote to Haldimand from Niagara, "You have, Sir, a journal of the party I sent to Lake Huron by way of Toronto." This document has not yet been discovered. *Ibid.*, p. 304.

(b) On September 13, 1782, Col. H. Dundas wrote to Major R. Matthews, "Mr. Thompson, a merchant here (Niagara) has applied to me for leave to send a person to Toronto, opposite this, to trade with the Indians. I told him I could not grant his request until His Excellency's pleasure on that head was known. I must observe that Mr. Thompson is a very moderate man and has suffered much from the rebels on the Mohawk river." *Ibid.*, p. 305.

Meantime, though Ontario remained untouched by the war, away to the south-west, near the junction of the Ohio and the Mississippi, events were transpiring in the country of the Illinois which might have had a profound effect upon the future destiny of the city of Toronto had the intentions of Lord Dorchester been carried out; and since the details of the story are comparatively unknown, it may be of interest to recount at greater length how nearly the capital of the Upper Province began its career under French auspices; for as we shall presently see, Dorchester intended, and perhaps with justice, to reward the loyal devotion of three French-Canadians to himself and to the British Crown with extensive grants of land in the neighbourhood of the proposed capital.

Kaskaskia,<sup>1</sup> on the east bank of the Mississippi, halfway between the modern cities of St. Louis and Cairo, had been a French trading-post and a mission of the Jesuits since the beginning of the eighteenth century. Indeed, the connection of the French with the Kaskaskies had begun with the explorations of Marquette. The Kaskaskies had been the allies of the French in many of their wars with the English, and had shared with the Abenakies the reputation of being the best Catholics and the most devoted allies of the French among all the tribes in America. Their chief at the time of the British conquest had declared that not one of the Kaskaskies would submit to the English. "Not a single Englishman shall come here," they said, "so long as the red men live. Our hearts are with the French; we detest the English and we should like to kill them all."<sup>2</sup> Under the tutelage of the missionaries, they had made good progress in agriculture; their wheat was as good as that grown in France; they had their vegetable gardens and their orchards, and there were three mills near their village to grind their grain; they had a large church with a clock in the steeple, and the manners of the people had become so far refined that the French were not unwilling to espouse their daughters.

<sup>1</sup> Kaskaskia has disappeared, swept away by floods of the Mississippi.

<sup>2</sup> ROCHEMONTEIX, *Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France*, Tome III, p. 546.



Kaskaskia, renamed Fort Gage, was held for the English at the time of the Revolutionary War by Philippe François de Rastel, Sieur de Rocheblave,<sup>1</sup> who had won the confidence of Sir Guy Carleton and had succeeded in reconciling the inhabitants to the new régime. On August 13, 1777, Sir Guy Carleton wrote to Lord Sackville, Secretary for the Colonies: "Mr. de Rocheblave is a Canadian gentleman, formerly in the French service, whom I have employed to have an eye on the Spaniards and the management of the Indians on that side." At this time de Rocheblave had been in charge for three years at Fort Gage, and had rendered such valuable services to the English that it was proposed to make him Governor of New Orleans,<sup>2</sup> or at least to encourage him with the hope of that office should the British acquire that city. His position was a difficult one; the intrigues of the Spanish, who were in possession of the west bank of the Mississippi, ceded to them by France in 1662, threatened the loyalty of the Indians, and on July 4, 1778, de Rocheblave wrote urgently to Haldimand for troops, adding that he would struggle as long as possible to maintain the post. Almost immediately, Illinois was overrun by the revolutionaries, and Kaskaskia was surprised at night and de Rocheblave was taken prisoner in his bed, put in irons, flung into a pig-stye and eventually consigned to a prison in Virginia, from which he managed to escape in 1780 and to find his way back to Canada. De Rocheblave had lost all his property in Kaskaskia and had suffered in a Virginia prison for his devotion to the British cause; accordingly at the conclusion of the war, he lost no time in claiming what he conceived to be just compensation for his sufferings and his losses; he asked for the site of the future city of Toronto.

It was in 1785 that de Rocheblave first discussed this matter with Lieutenant-Governor Hamilton.<sup>3</sup> There were

<sup>1</sup> "Philippe François de Rastel de Rocheblave," par Francis Audet et l'honorable Edouard Fabre Survever. *La Presse*, Montreal, December 10, 1927.

<sup>2</sup> Consult McIlwraith's *Life of Haldimand*, pp. 77, 78, 80-81.

<sup>3</sup> BRADLEY, *Life of Dorchester*, p. 158.

already others who had cast their eyes upon the abandoned trading-post and carrying-place at Toronto. The exclusion of American traders from British territory as a result of the war had given an immense impetus to the Canadian trade, and as early as 1783 the merchants of Montreal, under the leadership of the two Frobishers and others, had united to form the North-West Company, which was destined to control the fur trade for so many years and to explore the unknown west. Their first task at the conclusion of the war was to search for a passage from Lake Superior to the Winnipeg River, where their communications would be secure from interruption on the part of the Americans, and their second task was to discover some other approach to Lake Huron and the Sault than the road by the Ottawa River and Lake Nipissing.

In April, 1784, Benjamin Frobisher, one of the most active partners of the new North-West Company, wrote to a member of the Executive Council asking for definite information respecting the international boundary, westward from Lake Superior, as he suspected that the Grand Portage was included by the treaty within the United States, as actually proved to be the case. At the same time he requested a passport for twenty-eight long canoes, valued with their cargoes at £20,000, which the company intended to despatch to the North-West in May.

This large supply, added to the property the Company already have in that country, demands their utmost attention. They do not know how soon they may be deprived of the immediate, and at present the only, communication from Lake Superior, and on that account they intend at their own expense, unless Government prefer to undertake it, to discover, if possible, another passage that will in all events fall within the British line, of which they may avail themselves in case of need. Such an undertaking must prove an arduous one and be attended with great expense, while their success will remain very uncertain, on which account the Company are induced to hope that if it is discovered it will be granted to them in full right for a certain term of years, not less than seven, as a reward for their public spirit and the advantages that will result to this province from its discovery.

Frobisher also advised the establishment of a small military post to command the entrance into Lake Superior.

These proposals were favourably received by the government and Captain Robertson was immediately instructed to examine the coast and report without delay. He selected the bay at Tessalon as the most suitable site for a fort, and reported among other matters that "he had obtained some intelligence from white men and Indians of a very fertile and advantageous tract of land between Lakes Huron and Ontario, and by communication that way the trade with Canada must be carried on to put us on a footing with our neighbors from the colonies."

In July, Frobisher and McTavish arrived at Mackinac, and Robertson again wrote to the Governor:

With them I have had several conferences with regard to the future communication to this country so as to enable them or others to trade in those parts on a footing with the Americans, and after inquiry, that between Lakes Ontario and Huron is the only one to be attempted, and that very practicable, by shortening the road greatly and avoiding the Niagara carrying-place and any interference with our neighbors.

Robertson then declared his intention of returning that way (i.e. by the Toronto Carrying-Place) to Quebec when relieved of his command.<sup>1</sup> In the same year Captain Robertson, along with Frobisher, McTavish and others, applied for a grant of a tract of land along the route between the Georgian Bay and Lake Ontario in order to carry on the North-West trade.<sup>2</sup>

Frobisher and his associates were not long in discovering a route from Lake Superior to the Winnipeg River which would lie within British territory, and in the spring of the next year we find him urging upon the government the claims of the Toronto Carrying-Place as a substitute for the Ottawa route which he described in a letter under the date of May 2, 1785, to

<sup>1</sup> GENERAL ERNEST CRUIKSHANK, "The Fur Trade, 1763-1787," *Transactions Canadian Institute*, 1894-1895, pp. 75-76.

<sup>2</sup> *Publication of the Canadian Archives*, 1888. Note E. "Robertson to Haldimand, Michilimackinac, July 10, 1784." *Ontario Public Archives*, 1890, p. 371; "Carleton to Collins, May 2, 1785."

the Hon. Henry Hamilton, "as most eminently dangerous for the Transport of Goods from the number of Cataracts, and the length and rapidity of the river, not to mention the Carrying-Places, which from hence to Lake Huron, are upwards of Forty in number." Hamilton, apparently, had instructed Frobisher to inquire into the merits of the Trent Valley route from Cataracqui to Lac aux Claiés, which turned out to be impracticable and, in fact, longer than the Carrying-Place. Frobisher expresses himself strongly in favour of the latter route.

In the letter from which quotation has already been made, he remarks:

Since I had the Honour to receive your letter of the 10th of March, I have made every inquiry in my power, Not only in Town but in different Parts of the Country, respecting the practicability of a communication from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron, and I am sorry to say, all my endeavours to acquire knowledge of it are far from being satisfactory. I have seen several persons who have gone from hence to Lake Huron by the carrying place of Toronto, but have only met with one who has set out from the Bay of Kentie, and that so far back as the year 1761, and the knowledge he seems to have of the country he travelled through I consider as very imperfect. I have however laid it down in the inclosed sketch, more to show that there is such a Road, than any opinion I have of its being Correct. I am told the Lands from the Bay of Kentie to Lake La Clie abound with good Wood and are generally fit for Cultivation; there are several villages of the Mississagues on different parts of that Road who raise Indian Corn and other grains, and whose friendship it will be necessary to Cultivate, if upon survey it should be found practicable, but if I may rely on information, there is very little probability of establishing in that quarter a Communication for Boats or Large Canoes on account of the Water being generally very shallow between the different Lakes, except in the Spring, and even then it is described to me as being insufficient for large Canoes, not to mention the Carrying Places which are Six or Seven in Number to reach Lake La Clie, and I am told three of them are near three leagues in length; I am, however, informed that to the distance of the Rice, or the *folle avoine* lake, from the Bay of Kentie, there is plenty of water for Boats of any Burthen. From all these circumstances

as related to me, I judge a Communication that way without paying any regard to Carrying places, to be from the want of water totally impracticable; however as I believe there is no man in the country capable of giving any certain information about it, I think a Project that holds out so many advantages to the Province at large ought not to be relinquished until it is found upon Survey, to be as represented really impracticable, and should that be the case, the next object that offers to Introduce a Communication between the two Lakes is the Carrying place of Torronto, which from the Ontario side to Lake Huron in a direct line, is no more than 100 miles, and by water it does not exceed 160—That is, Torronto (*sic*), 45 miles, Lake La Clie, 37, thence to Lake Huron over Land, 18; or by the River as laid down in the enclosed sketch about 70.—These, Sir are my sentiments, until we are better informed of the nature of the Communication from the Bay of Kentie to Lake La Clie, and let what will be the Event of that Survey, I conceive there is a necessity for Establishing the Carrying place of Torronto as speedily as possible—On the other hand we must also consider the advantages that would arrise from so ready a Communication with Lake Huron, which while it extends, and adds strength and Security to our Frontier (if I may be allowed the expression) will with the other settlements afford effectual Protection to the Natives between the Two Lakes, who are Mississagues and some Tribes of the Chippawas, from whence I conceive there will be no difficulty in making the purchase, more especially as I believe their best hunting Lands are at some distance from the Tract that would be chosen for the purpose of establishing an intercourse of Transport between the two Lakes.<sup>1</sup>

No steps were taken immediately to secure from the Indians the tract which Frobisher considered necessary for establishing communication across the Toronto Carrying-Place. The Hon. Henry Hamilton, to whom he had addressed himself, had been appointed Lieutenant-Governor on the departure of Haldimand in 1784; he has been described as an energetic soldier and popular both with his men and with the Indians, but as an incautious

<sup>1</sup> *Publication of the Canadian Archives*, 1890, pp. 54-56; *Ibid.*, p. 48, Hamilton to Sydney, June 6, 1785. "The enclosed plan No. 1 shows the communication from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron." *Ibid.*, Q. CCLXXX, Pt. II (1794), Q. CCLXXXI, Pt. I (1795), *passim* and Q. CCXIV.

and tactless politician; he had been appointed as a reward for his activity in frontier wars and his sufferings after Vincennes and at the hands of his Virginian gaolers. It is he who had forwarded to Haldimand, from Detroit, on August 11, 1778, the news of the capture of de Rocheblave by the rebels at Kaskaskia, a fate which he was to share himself in the next year when the important post of Vincennes fell to the revolutionaries. Hamilton's term in office was brief; he was recalled and succeeded by Hope, who, in turn, was presently to give place to Carleton, who returned to Quebec in October, 1786, for his second term of office.

For two years de Rocheblave had done nothing; but with the return of Carleton, to whom he was known personally, he proceeded to press his claim for the Toronto lands with great energy. On January 16, 1787, he presented a memorial to Lord Dorchester, in which he stated that, two years before, he had proposed to His Honour Lieutenant-Governor Hamilton<sup>1</sup> that for reasons of public utility the route followed in communicating with the upper countries should be changed, and that he himself should be given the preference of the Portage of Toronto with a tract of land at that place. On the twentieth of May, he reiterated his appeal, adding that he wished to make provision for his family and for his old age. On the twenty-fifth of the same month, in a third memorial, he defined the boundaries of the piece of land which he wished to obtain at Toronto, and petitioned the government to grant him:

a thousand acres on Toronto Bay to commence at the river which falls into Lake Ontario above the bluffs to the north-east of the said Toronto and extending to the old settlement at the said place of Toronto, and to grant him in the same way without deduction from the said amount, a small island lying between the said old settlement and the said river in the same Bay on which to keep some animals; and that His Lordship should grant and concede in the name of the Government to his wife three sons and a daughter the usual amount of land adjoining those for which he petitioned.

<sup>1</sup> *Publication of the Canadian Archives*, 1890, Q. 24—1.242, p. 149, "Hamilton to Sydney, March 10, 1785."

It would be interesting to learn on what occasion de Rocheblave became so intimately acquainted with the configuration of the site of the present city of Toronto; possibly in 1786 when he received a permit to trade at Michilimackinac. He must have had previous knowledge of the value of the district and now, with the loss of the territory south of the lakes, the Carrying-Place was about to assume a new importance as the approach to the great area north-west of Lake Superior. De Rocheblave supported his request for land at Toronto by the statement that he had been the first to recommend the change of route, and to point out the advantage of the Carrying-Place. We shall presently see how the Governor and his council dealt with his application. In the meantime, acting either on de Rocheblave's petition or on Frobisher's advice, steps were taken to secure from the Indians the land afterwards known as "The Toronto Purchase."

\*

On the twenty-third of September in the same year, 1787, a meeting took place at the Carrying-Place on the Bay of Quinte, between Deputy Surveyor-General Collins from Quebec, acting on behalf of the Crown, and three chiefs of the Missisauga Indians, who expressed their willingness to convey to the white men the desired land. On this occasion the exact limits of the property transferred were not defined. The price paid to the Indians for an area which embraces about one-third of the county of York was the sum of £1,700 in cash and goods, of which it is not now possible to ascertain how much was paid to the Indians in cash. The boundaries of the tract were defined and certain defects in the original purchase rectified, in a subsequent agreement made with the Missisaugas in 1805. The second meeting took place at the River Credit. The Carrying-Place on the Bay of Quinte, which spanned the peninsula connecting Prince Edward County with the mainland, provided an historic setting for the original transfer: near at hand was the site of the Iroquois village of Kenté, the scene of the missionary efforts of the Sulpicians and of the Récollets; far to the east lay the ruins of Fort Frontenac, with its memories

of La Salle; Hay Bay and Ameliasburg were already occupied by the Loyalists; it was an historic region, rendered still more memorable at a later period by the fervours of early Methodism and the conflicts of the War of 1812. Wabukanyne, the chief sachem of the Missisaugas, whose name occurs on other Indian treaties of the period, was the first to attach his signature; Neace and Pakquan are the names of the other chiefs who transferred to the Crown the land which included the Carrying-Place at Toronto and the site of the present city; in addition to \* John Collins, Louis Protle and Nathaniel Lines, witnessed the document.<sup>1</sup>

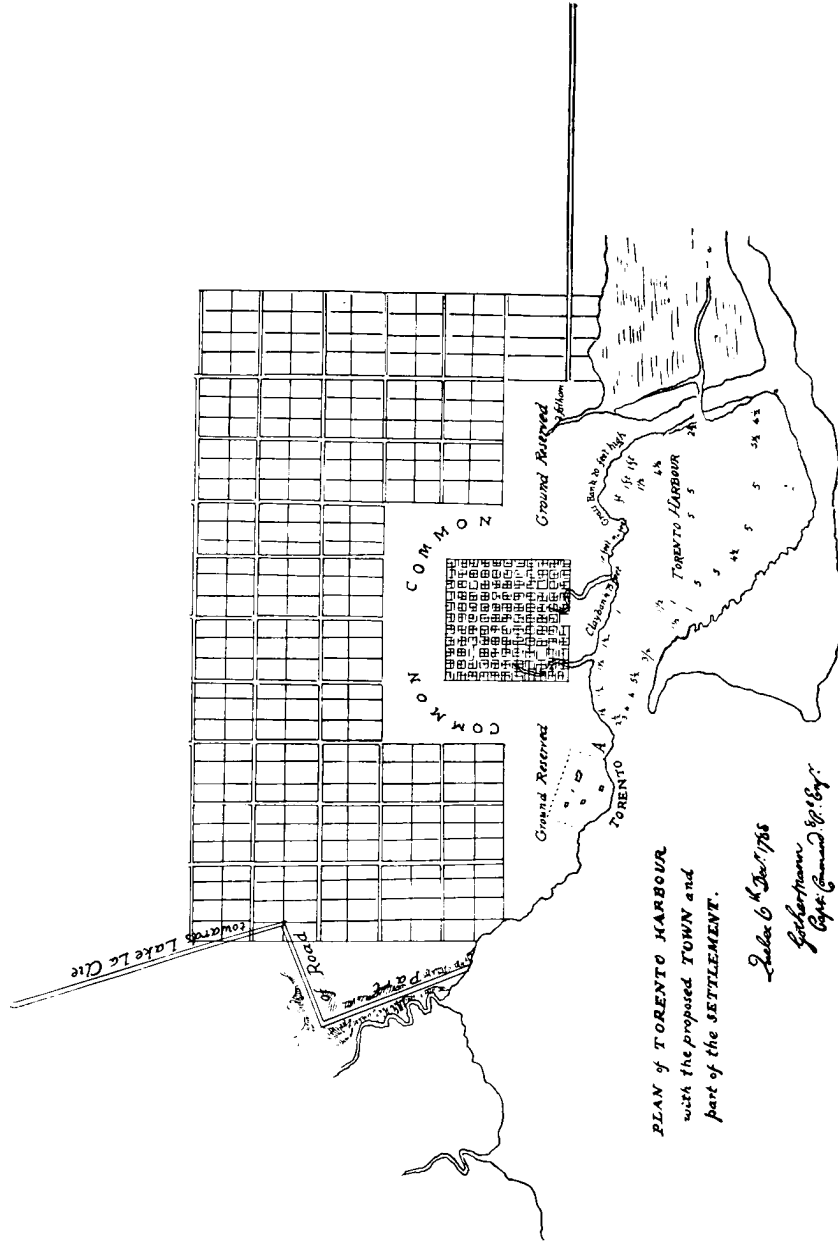
On July 7, 1788, Deputy Surveyor-General Collins instructed Alexander Aitkin to commence a survey of the land purchased at Toronto from the Indians in the preceding year. On September 15, 1788, Aitkin wrote from Kingston, describing his experiences:

Sir, Agreeable to your instructions of the 7th of July last which I received the 25th of the same month, I hired a party with all possible despatch and embarked on board the *Seneca*<sup>2</sup> for Toronto where I landed the 1st of August. For two or three days after our landing we were employed in building a kind of store house to preserve the Indian presents as well as my own provisions from the rain and bad weather. I then desired Mr. Lines, the Interpreter, to signify to the Indian Chief then on the spot my intention of beginning to survey the land purchased from them last year by Sir John Johnson and pointed out to him where I was to begin. I requested of him to go with me to the spot along with Mr. Lines, which he did, but instead of going to the lower end of the Beach which forms the Harbour he brought me to the river called on the Plan Nechenguakekonk which is upwards of three miles nearer the Old Fort than the place you mention in your instructions: he insisted that they had sold the land no further, so that to prevent disputes I had to put it off for some days longer untill a few more of the Chiefs came in, when Mr. Lines settled with them that I was to

<sup>1</sup> *Ontario Public Archives*, 1905, p. 379, "Dorchester to Collins"; Robertson, *Landmarks*, fifth series, Chap. XXXIV.

<sup>2</sup> Described as "a snow of 18 guns built at Oswegatchie, 1777, by Captain La Force." See also Snider, *The Glorious Shannon's Old Blue Duster*, p. 254.





CAPTAIN GOTHER MANN'S MAP  
Proposed Plan of Toronto, 1788.



begin my Survey at the west end of the High Lands which I did on the 11th of August having lost a week of the finest weather we had during my stay at Toronto.

Matters being settled with the Indians I continued my Survey westward untill I came to the Toronto River which the Indians looked upon to be the west boundary of the purchase untill Col. Butler got them prevailed upon to give up to the River Tobicoak but no further nor would they on any account suffer me to cross the River with ye Bound<sup>y</sup>. line between them and Government altho I had them brought twice to the spot they told us they did not look upon a straight line as a proper Bound<sup>y</sup>. the creek they said was a Boundary that could not be altered or moved but that a line in a few years unless always cut open and frequented would soon grow up with Brush and trees.

Having finished the Survey of the Front I then began the West Boundary line afore mentioned which I ran back perpendicular to the Front about two miles and three quarters untill I fell in with the creek which I found with the course I then run I would cross and have considerably to the Right. I then was obliged to stop rather than run the risk of having any disputes with the Indian Chief from whom the land was purchased and who was that morning along the line and had cautioned me against crossing it openly as Col. Butler & Mr. Lines were both gone and I left without any one to settle any disputes that might arise between me and the Indians.

The duplicate of my instructions enclosing the Plan of the Town I only received when on my way back from Toronto, however I have laid it out in what I thought the most advantageous Situation and opposite the middle of the Harbour. I would have laid it out nearer the old Fort, but then it would have been too near the Point I have marked in the Plan calculated for building a fort upon, rather than half a mile below the Old Fort.

The lands in general below the Old Fort down to the High lands are a light sandy soil and the timber mostly Oak and Pine for upwards of a mile above the Fort and the land has a clay bottom & from thence up to Toronto River it is very broken interspersed with sandy hills, Swamps and Ponds of water the land near the Tobicoak is generally pretty good, as for the Peninsula which forms the Harbour it is not fit for any kind of cultivation or improvement. The Survey I believe you

will find to be pretty accurate & I hope my proceedings may  
meet with your and His Lordship's approbation.—  
with great respect I have the Honour to be  
Sir Your most obedient

Humble Servant  
ALEXR. AITKIN D<sup>y</sup>. P.Sy.

P.S. After the land was purchased from the Indians from  
Toronto<sup>1</sup> to Pemitescutiang I thought it would be unnecessary  
to run the East Boundary. The extra expenses of a surveying  
party amount to £29. 4-Curry. A.A.<sup>2</sup>

Hon<sup>bl</sup> John Collins Esq.  
D<sup>y</sup>. Surveyor-General.

This account of Aitkin's survey at Toronto five years before  
Simcoe founded the town of York, recently came to light in the  
Ontario Archives, and is now published for the first time. I  
have not discovered any account of Col. Butler's negotiations  
with the Indians for the purchase of the land to the east of the  
Toronto Purchase along the north shore of Lake Ontario.  
These negotiations took place at Toronto during the summer of  
1788, and the presents mentioned by Surveyor Aitkin were no  
doubt part of the price paid. This newly-discovered document  
raises the interesting question whether Simcoe or Dorchester is  
to be considered the founder of Toronto.

Let us now return to Quebec and observe the progress  
Philippe François de Rastel de Rocheblave, the former Governor  
of Illinois, as he loved to style himself, was making in his efforts  
to obtain possession of so desirable a piece of property.

On Saturday, May 19, 1787, Lord Dorchester, who had  
returned to Canada in 1786 to fill for the second time the office  
of Governor-General, presided in the Council Chamber of the  
Bishop's Palace in Quebec over a meeting of the council, at which  
the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor and all the other  
members of the council were present. The minutes of this meet-  
ing contain the following item: "Mr. Rocheblave: Read a

<sup>1</sup> A council with the Indians was held at Toronto in 1788 for the purchase  
of lands between Toronto and the Bay of Quinte—*Ontario Archives Report*,  
1905, p. 410, "Butler to Johnson."

<sup>2</sup> Unpublished letter in Ontario Archives.

petition of Mr. Rocheblave's, praying a grant of the Carrying-Place, and lands at Toronto. Referred to the Committee for Lands."

I shall now give in their sequence the various entries in the minutes of the council relating to de Rocheblave's petition, as they have been transcribed from Land Books A and B of the Council Office at Quebec and reprinted in the *Seventeenth Report of the Ontario Archives* (1929). At the meeting of the council on Thursday, the thirty-first of May, no business relating to land transfers in the Upper Districts was transacted; but on June 25, 1787, the following entry is found:

Mr. Rocheblave prayed for lands at Toronto and for the Carrying Place there. The several petitions of Mr. Rocheblave read. Ordered by His Excellency by the advice of the Council that the Surveyor or Deputy Surveyor-General report the survey of a location of one thousand acres not interfering with the establishment of a township of thirty thousand acres in that vicinity. And that the several petitions be in the interim referred to Messieurs Fraser, Bellestre, De Longueuil, Sir John Johnson and Mr. Boucherville who are to report thereon for the further consideration of Government respecting the other objects of the petitions.

No more is heard of this matter till a meeting of the council on March 20, 1788, at which His Excellency Lord Dorchester was pleased to order the third, fourth and fifth reports of the Land Committee to be laid on the table for perusal. Among the extracts from the Third Report there is the following item:

Mr. Rocheblave: Mr. Rocheblave attended the Committee on the 15th of February, to pray that his application for lands at Toronto might be taken into immediate consideration, because the approach of spring presses for a decision on his request. He represents his case to merit as much attention as that of any suffering loyalist from the Colonies, now the States; that from his sincere attachment to the British Government and steady adherence to his loyalty he had been driven from his possessions at Kaskakias (Fort Gage); he lost his all and was afterwards imprisoned in a dungeon in Virginia from whence he contrived to make his escape. Lands were promised to

him in this province, but he is yet without any, for which reason he prays the committee to report to Your Lordship on his application for a grant of the portage or carrying-place of Toronto. The Committee having considered Mr. Rochblave's request as a suffering loyalist are of opinion that if Your Excellency shall see proper to establish the projected carrying-place between Toronto and Lake Leclaire (28 miles over) in consideration of Mr. Rochblave's having been the first to point out the advantages that would accrue to the upper-country trade by opening that communication, he may, if it is Your Excellency's pleasure that it be put into the hands of an individual, be indulged with a lease of it for a limited time, provided he agrees to conform to all such regulations as may be established by Government for the transportation of goods across it. The Deputy-Surveyor informed the Committee that the lands petitioned for by Mr. Rochblave, in case he obtained a grant of the carrying-place, are in Your Lordship's gift, none having as yet been laid off in that part of the province. He asks for 1000 acres for himself; and in a separate grant of lands for his wife, three sons and a daughter, to join his lands in such quantity as it may please Your Lordship to grant. The Committee see no objection, if it is Your Excellency's pleasure, to grant the lands prayed for by Mr. Rochblave, provided the place he describes shall not be found to be the fittest scite for a town, in that case the lands Your Lordship may be pleased to grant to him may be set off at a convenient distance from the town.

On Friday, June 13, 1788, the council met and among the extracts read from the Tenth Report of the Land Committee meeting on Friday, May 2nd, there is the following item:

Mr. Rochblave. Toronto Carrying Place: Read Mons'r Rocheblave's representation of 23rd April concerning the portage of Toronto, wherein he states that it is thirty miles over and that the carrying place of Niagara is but nine; he therefore conceives that the price of carrying goods across ought to be increased in proportion to the distance carried as the expense of horses, carriages and servants will be three times greater at Toronto carrying-place than it is at Niagara; and if it shall be Lord Dorchester's pleasure to grant him an exclusive privilege of carrying goods across from Toronto to Lake La Claie, he will undertake it on the following terms:

He will carry merchants' goods across at 5/ cur'y pr. ct. w.t., and every pack of peltries and furs 5/ cur'y pr. ct. w.t. The

charge for carrying across Niagara carrying-place is for merchandise pr. ct. w.t.  $4/6$  New York or  $2/9^{3/4}$  Quebec curr'y. for every pack of peltries  $5/$  New York or  $3/1^{1/2}$  Quebec money.

Mr. Rocheblave will carry *bateaux* in the same proportion. He will carry His Majesty's effects for double the price now paid at Niagara, which will make six shillings pr. barrel of two hundred weight, Quebec money; provided Government will allow him equal advantages with those granted the present contractor for carrying across Niagara carrying-place: that is to say, twenty rations per day, and that all carriages, horses and oxen taken away or destroyed by the Indians, or lost or destroyed whilst employed in Carrying the King's effects, or in consequence of orders from Government, be paid for by His Majesty.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee conceive that it may be proper to learn the opinion of the merchants concerned in the Indian trade, relative to the advantages the commerce in the upper countries might reap from a carrying-place at Toronto, and likewise to lay before them the prices at which Mr. Rochblave proposes to carry merchandise across from Toronto to Lake La Claie, if it shall please Your Excellency to suffer a road to be cut there.

On reading the report of the committee relating to the petitions of Mr. Rocheblave concerning the portage at Toronto, it was ordered by His Lordship, with the advice of the Board, "that Messrs. Caldwell, Harrison and Baby and the gentlemen of the Council residing at Montreal communicate the report to the petitioner, receive his proposals, find ways and means to make the overture known to those concerned or interested in the Indian commerce, and then to report to His Lordship what may be expedient to be carried into execution."

There is no further allusion to Mr. Rocheblave's application till the meeting of the council on October 22nd, but apparently the opinion had gone abroad that he was likely to receive his grant, for at that meeting the Land Committee among other items reported as follows:

Frederick Rastoul, Louis March a terre, Francois Jaquette and J. B. Feré: The joint petition of Frederick Rastoul, a mason; Louis Marchatere, a shingler, François Jacquette, a

<sup>1</sup> The younger Joncaire made a fortune on the Niagara portage.

potter, and J. B. Feré, a millwright and joiner, pray for lands for themselves and families at Toronto near Monsieur De Rochblave's tract, and representing that they are capable of work and faithful subjects who wish to settle at Toronto. If Your Lordship has not set apart those lands for loyalists from the States, the Committee do not perceive any objection to the prayer of those people.

Antoine Landriaux:—Antoine Landriaux states that his father served as a surgeon in the hospitals at Montreal gratis, and prays that he, his son, may obtain 400 acres of land at Toronto near Mons'r De Rochblave's tract. in reward for his father's services. The Committee can only remark on this petition that if your Excellency chooses to favour Mr. Landriaux with a grant, there's waste land appertaining to the Crown near Mr. Rochblave's tract at Toronto, where the petitioner wishes to settle.

Joseph Page: Joseph Page for four hundred acres there likewise. He does not state how many his family consists of, but if Your Lordship shall please to permit him to settle there the quantity of acres allotted may be proportioned to the number of persons in his family.

Elizabeth Lord and her brother: Elizabeth Lord and Joseph, her brother, were left a burden on Mr. De Rochblave. He has supported them from their infancy. They pray for lands at Toronto to make a settlement for themselves. The Committee are inclined to recommend a grant of the prayer of this petition to ease Mons'r De Rochblave of the burden he has long borne and to enable the petitioners to acquire the means of supporting themselves.

Jacob Weimer: Jacob Weimer (a poor German) states that he disposed of his effects in his native country to procure a passage to America, and that he might become a subject of His Britannic Majesty; he therefore prays for land at Toronto. The Committee do not apprehend that any inconvenience can attend the granting of the petitioner's prayer; if it is Your Lordship's will to allot the usual allowance.

Richard Beasely and Peter Smyth: Richard Beasely and Peter Smyth, loyalists, pray for land at Toronto and at Pemitiscutiak,<sup>1</sup> a place on the north side of Lake Ontario, having

<sup>1</sup> At Ganaraske, later Port Hope, foot of Trail to Rice Lake. Consult also *Transactions Canadian Institute*, 1892-1893, p. 301, "Trading houses existed for some years between 1770 and 1780 at Pinewood Creek and Pimincotyuan Landing on the north shore of Lake Ontario."—General Ernest Cruikshank.



already built a house at each of those places, and they petition for as many acres around each as is the usual allowance made to loyalists.

As it is proposed by Your Lordship to lay out a town at Toronto, the Committee cannot recommend a grant of lands round the house which the petitioners have built there, lest that grant might interfere with the intended plan; but if it is Your Excellency's pleasure to settle the north side of Lake Ontario at present, the Committee perceive not any objection to the petitioners having land round the house they built at Pemis-cutiank in such portion as Your Lordship may think fit to allow.

Widow Orillat: The Widow Orillat and her daughter pray for lands at Toronto near Mr. Rochblave's tract in common with the loyalists. She sets forth that her late husband performed services for Government and that he met with losses and suffered hardships at the time the Americans invaded this Province, in consequence of his loyalty to the King. The Committee can perceive no objection against granting the prayer of the Widow Orillat, if it is Your Excellency's pleasure to favour her with a lot in any of the new townships lately laid off between the upper and lower settlements.

Charles Réaume: Charles Réaume of Montreal petitions for 700 acres land at Toronto, near Mr. Rochblave's tract. The Committee see no objection to his obtaining the common allowance of 100 acres as master of a family with fifty for every person of which his family consists.<sup>1</sup>

The report which contained these items was dated Quebec, November 26, 1788, and the Report being read, His Lordship, with the advice of the Board, made the following orders, *viz.*:

Charles Réaume: That the Surveyor-General report a survey of two hundred acres to be granted to him.

And at a meeting of the Council on Tuesday, July 14, 1789, it was ordered by His Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Board, that the Surveyor-General report the following surveys:

11) For Frederick Rastoul, Louis March a terre, François Jacquet and J. B. Ferré: Two hundred acres each at Toronto near Mr. Rochblave's tract.

<sup>1</sup> TASSÉ, *Les Canadiens de l'Ouest*, Vol. I, pp. 123-135; *Ontario Archives Report*, 1931, p. 173. Réaume's name as interpreter is attached to the Lake Erie purchase of 1790.

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- 12) For Antoine Landriaux, Joseph Page, Jacob Weimer, and the heirs of Orillat: Two hundred acres each at Toronto.  
14) For Richard Beasely and Peter Smyth: Two hundred acres each, one at Toronto, the other at Pemistiscutiank, a place on the north of Lake Ontario, if in the gift of the Crown, and not interfering with any public arrangement.

It is of some interest historically to record the names of these persons, though so far as the records show none of them actually acquired lands in or near Toronto in consequence of the grants made to them by Lord Dorchester. When their applications were made and granted the term Toronto meant the Toronto Purchase, that is, the piece of land roughly twenty-eight by fourteen miles within which lay the familiar Toronto Portage at the foot of which Fort Toronto had been built in 1750. The applicants whose names are recorded in the Land Books might have been the pioneers and first settlers at Toronto. They seem to have been, with the exception of Charles Réaume, rather obscure people. We do not hear again of Jacob Weimer, a poor German, nor of the widow Orillat, who might, had fortune favoured them, have been the progenitors of opulent descendants; nor of Elizabeth and Joseph Lord, who had been a burden for so many years to de Rocheblave; nor of Louis Marchatere, the shingler, and François Jacquette, the potter, nor of Antoine Landriaux, the surgeon's son, nor of any of the other applicants with the exception of Monsieur de Rocheblave, who was the moving spirit in the enterprise.

Monsieur de Rocheblave's application for the Toronto Carrying-Place had been one of the first to come before Lord Dorchester on his return to Canada in 1786. It was followed within a few weeks by an application from the North-West Company for the possession and control of the Grand Portage from Lake Superior to Long Lake, a vital link in the communication with the great North-West. It is not impossible that there was some connection between the two applications; the Toronto Portage had now become, with the cession of the territory south of the lakes, a communication of great value.

De Rocheblave's request was referred to the officials of the North-West Company, and both applications, de Rocheblave's for the Carrying-Place and the North-West Company's for the Grand Portage, were referred to the same committee of the council for consideration; this committee consisted of Messrs. Harrison, Caldwell and Baby; the latter, being a Frenchman from Detroit, knew the history and value of the route.

On July 19, 1787, Lord Dorchester wrote to John Collins, Deputy Surveyor-General, respecting surveys and settlements in the western country above Montreal as follows:

It being thought expedient to join the settlements of the Loyalists near to Niagara, to those west of Cataraqui Sir John Johnson has been directed to take such steps with the Indians concerned, as may be necessary to establish a free and amicable right for Government to the interjacent lands not yet purchased on the north of Lake Ontario, for that purpose, as well as to such parts of the country as may be necessary on both sides of the proposed communication from Toronto to Lake Huron.<sup>1</sup>

It was on June 13, 1787, that de Rocheblave's full plan for improving the portage and securing a monopoly of the carrying rights had come before His Excellency. Lord Dorchester, well aware of the importance of the site, chose Toronto for the future capital of Upper Canada, and it is to him, not to Simcoe, that Toronto is indebted for its selection as the capital of Ontario; for Simcoe, as is well known, although he wished to make the naval headquarters at Toronto, had selected London as the seat of government.

The choice of Toronto as the capital of Upper Canada was made long before steamboats and railways; Dorchester, in touch with the merchants of Quebec, wished the new capital to command the new route to the great west and the fur trade there.

From these extracts from the minutes of the Council it seems apparent that although no lease of the portage was granted, de Rocheblave was awarded his thousand acres, and that it was

<sup>1</sup> *Ontario Archives Report*, 1905, p. 379.

generally assumed that there would be no further obstacle to his entering into possession; his land became immediately Mr. Rocheblave's tract at Toronto, and others flocked to share his good fortune. At this time, however, no surveys had been made within the Toronto Purchase and before anything was done the Canada Act was passed, and Upper Canada became in 1791 an independent Province with a land board of its own. The Land Board for the District of Nassau, in which Toronto was situated, had been constituted under the Quebec Act by a letter from Lord Dorchester of October 13, 1788. On June 10, 1791, Mr. John Collins, the Deputy Surveyor-General, wrote to Mr. Augustus Jones at Newark:

Sir:—His Excellency Lord Dorchester has been pleased to order one thousand acres to be laid out at Toronto for Mr. Rocheblave; and for Captain La Force and for Captain Bouchette seven hundred acres each, at the same place, which please to lay out accordingly and report the same to this office with all convenient speed. I am, Sir, Your most obt. Servt.  
John Collins, D.S.G.<sup>1</sup>

On June 15, 1792, a year later, we find Mr. Augustus Jones writing to the Honourable John Collins:

Your order of the 10th June, 1791, for land at Toronto in favour of Mr. Rocheblave and others I only received the other day, and as the members of the Land Board think their powers dissolved by our Governor's late Proclamation relative to granting of lands in Upper Canada they recommend it to me to postpone doing in respect of said order until I may receive some further instructions. I am your obt. Hl. Servant.  
Augustus Jones, D.P.S.<sup>2</sup>

This ended the affair so far as Monsieur de Rocheblave was concerned; but no doubt the incident added to the growing friction between Simcoe and Dorchester. Possibly the temper of the new administration was adverse to the intrusion of a group of Frenchmen into the best lands in the Province; the Loyalists,

<sup>1</sup> *Ontario Archives Report*, 1905, p. 321.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 329.

now numerically strong and beginning to take root in their adopted country, had chafed under the Quebec Act and were determined to create an English Canada. Simcoe himself was thoroughly in sympathy with these aspirations. With "the infelicitous mania for tautology of his generation," he proceeded to wipe out all the old French and Indian appellations; Toronto became York, and with the change vanished all memory of the Portage and its traditions. De Rocheblave, who had contributed so much to the selection of the site for the new capital, did not receive his land, nor did his associates, Captain La Force and Captain Bouchette, although Bouchette subsequently received grants of land in the neighbourhood of Toronto.

La Force and Bouchette deserve a more extended biographical notice. They had served the British Crown loyally on Lake Ontario during the Revolution. They missed their reward at Toronto, but their services should not be unrecorded. It was the navy on the lakes that saved the western country to the British during the American Revolution, and both these officers had a long connection not only with the British navy on the lakes but with other events of historic interest. La Force especially had been closely connected with Lake Ontario. He had had a long and varied career. Along with Pouchot and La Broquerie, who has left us a fine map of the lake, he was among the last to defend the French flag. He was among the first to come to the defence of the British. Thanks to the co-operation of Mr. F. Audet of the Public Archives, Ottawa, I am now able to present for the first time the story of his life. René-Hypolite La Force was the great-grandfather of Sir Hector Langevin and of Monseigneur Langevin, the first Bishop of Rimouski, and is the best known of the numerous children of Pierre Pepin *dit* La Force and his wife, Michelle Le Bert; he was born December 5, 1728, at La Prairie. Pierre La Force, his father, is said to have been a captain in the militia and to have been Royal Land Surveyor at Montreal; we find him in 1729, a year after the birth of his son, Hypolite, serving as *garde-magasin* at Niagara; he must have been a man of

influence, as all appointments in the interior were regarded as sinecures and opportunities for personal emolument. The elder La Force retained his office at Niagara until the year 1738, when it was discovered that he was debtor to the king's account to the amount of 127,842 *chats* (the unit of exchange in estimating the price of peltries). The *garde-magasin* was imprisoned and brought to trial, and though it seems to have been proved that he was not really dishonest, but only negligent and embarrassed with the cares of a large family, he was dismissed from the king's service.

During the first ten years of René-Hypolite's life we may imagine him at Fort Niagara, leading what must have been an ideal existence to a stirring small boy. During these years the father probably imparted to the son the rudiments of the art of surveying, an art which in later years the boy was to place at the service of the British in surveying the shores of Lake Ontario. But there were more interesting lessons to be learnt from the Indians who came to barter their peltries at the fort; from them the young La Force learned woodcraft and that knowledge of the Iroquois language which made him, in later life, a valued interpreter and leader of war parties. There was shipping, too, on the lake, and on its stormy waters the boy got his first taste for the sea. We may surmise that he made many a trip across the lake to the trading-post at Toronto, and that he soon acquired a knowledge of the adjacent shores and harbours which was to stand him in good stead later on. Indeed, he was to use all that he learned at Niagara in one way or another; for he appears as a trader, an interpreter, an officer in the French navy on the lake, a sea captain trading in the West Indies, and finally again on Lake Ontario as commodore and builder of ships and surveyor.

On June 10, 1757, Hypolite La Force married, at Quebec, Madeleine, the daughter of Gaspar Richard Corbin; he is described at this time as a merchant or trader; but commerce can have been only one of several vocations. From 1756 to

1760 he was in command on Lake Ontario,<sup>1</sup> first of the corvette, *Marquise de Vaudreuil*, a vessel carrying twenty-four guns and a crew of eighty sailors and soldiers, and later of the *Iroquoise*, the last vessel to fly the French flag on the lake.<sup>2</sup> It will not be necessary to follow in detail the naval conflicts of the closing years of the war, in which La Force, though so young a man, played his part. He did not confine himself to the water, but turned with equal readiness to raiding with the Indians on land. In 1757 he served with the Abbé Picquet as interpreter at the siege of Fort William Henry;<sup>3</sup> and in the same year we find him raiding in the direction of Schenectady, and Vaudreuil writes: "Le Sieur La Force à la tête de 4 sauvages de La Présentation tua un anglois près de la rivière de Corlat a peu distance de la ville." His name appears in the description of the Indian forces under the command of La Corne, as interpreter of the Iroquois included in that body.

After the fall of Fort Lévis on the St. Lawrence and the conclusion of naval operations on the lake, La Force and others were sent to New York by way of Oswego as prisoners of war. Released on the conclusion of peace, he embarked on the ill-fated *Auguste* with so many of the other actors in the last act of the drama. The *Auguste* was wrecked on the coast of Cape Breton; La Force was one of eight persons to escape.

For a few years after the Peace of Paris we hear nothing of him; he seems, however, to have returned to his trading. In 1767, 1768 and 1772 he commanded the *Jazon* and made several voyages to Dominica; from 1769 to 1772 he was in command of *Le Vigilant*, and from 1774 to 1777 of the schooner *Providence*, the joint property of himself and Joseph Chabot, and in it made several trips to the West Indies.

In 1775 La Force received a commission as Captain of

<sup>1</sup> VAUDREUIL'S letter dated Montreal, April 22, 1756, to the commandant at Fort Frontenac, announces the appointment of La Force and defines his duties. The governor encloses a letter to M. de Noyelle at Toronto. The original of Vaudreuil's letter is in the Baby collection.

<sup>2</sup> See La Force's journal in Knox's *Journals of the War*, Champlain Society.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal du Marquis de Montcalm*, p. 264.

Artillery in the militia at Quebec and took part in the defence of that city against the forces of Montgomery. M. Roy writes:

Sa femme Madeleine Corbin n'a pas moins de patriotisme que lui. Si La Force, raconte un contemporain, accablé de fatigue succombe au sommeil, et qu'elle entend sonner l'alarme, elle l'éveille aussitôt, lui apporte ses armes en lui criant:— "Dépêche-toi, La Force, Quelle honte pour nous, si tu n'étais pas le premier rendu sur les remparts."<sup>1</sup>

In the same year La Force leased the *Providence* to the government for service on the lakes, and two years later he was appointed "*commandore de la flotte de tous les lacs et rivières de la province du Canada*," an office which he retained till June 30, 1786, when he retired on half-pay. The winter of 1777 and 1778 he seems to have spent at Oswegatchie, for in the spring he forwarded his account to Haldimand for the construction of the armed snow, *Seneca*, at that place. In the autumn of 1779 Haldimand wrote to Lieut.-Col. Bolton at Niagara that he had given permission to La Force and Bouchette, at the request of Schank, to winter in Canada (Upper Canada). In 1780 Haldimand, although he thought him too old for the task, appointed La Force commander of ships on Lake Ontario, and we find him about this time Superintendent of the Civil Department of the Dock Yard at Carleton Island.<sup>2</sup> In 1783 Holland was employing him at Cataraqui taking soundings in Kingston harbour; later in the year, with Kotte and Peachy, La Force surveyed the north shore of Lake Ontario and round to Niagara,<sup>3</sup> on which occasion he must have revisited the haunts of his

<sup>1</sup> *Les Petites Choses de Notre Histoire*, troisième série, 1922, par Pierre-Georges Roy, pp. 224-225. It was not Hypolite La Force who escorted Washington from Venango to Le Boeuf in 1754, but his brother Michel.

<sup>2</sup> One of the first acts of Haldimand was to establish a post at Carleton Island. Fortifications and a barracks were begun under Twiss of the engineers; while Schank (see *Dictionary National Biography*) of the navy was to superintend the building of gunboats on Lake Ontario. The construction of Fort Haldimand on Carleton Island began in 1788; £20,000 are said to have been spent. In 1783, Carleton Island had a garrison of 664 including sailors. It was a rendezvous for the raid which ended in the massacre of Wyoming.

<sup>3</sup> *Ontario Public Archives*, 1905, pp. CXX and CXXI. There is a copy of La Force's map of Lake Ontario in the Toronto Public Library.



boyhood at Toronto and Niagara. From 1784 to 1786 he is again back at his trade with the West Indies and in command of the *Rose*. In 1788 there is an entry in the land book, Quebec, "that Lieut. Maxwell and Hypolite La Force have all the lands they are entitled too," an indication that La Force had already been rewarded for his services to the Crown. Next year he is again associated with Kotte preparing plans for a wharf at Kingston and surveying the east and south shores of Lake Ontario to Niagara.<sup>1</sup> In 1790 he and Bouchette were still in service at Kingston and occupied in the construction of vessels which were to be the foundations of the British navy on the lake. On June 10, 1791, as we have seen, Mr. Collins wrote to Augustus Jones at Newark informing him of Lord Dorchester's grant. It was a recognition of long and honourable services, but its value lay in the future, and the loss of it probably did not entail much disappointment at the moment. La Force continued to reside in Quebec. In 1794 he was one of the committee entrusted with the task of preparing the address to H.R.H. Prince Edward on his departure from the city. In 1800 he obtained a further grant from the government for military services, and patents were issued to his wife after his death for lands in Somerset and Nelson townships. He died on February 5, 1802, and is described in the register of Notre Dame de Québec as a "justice of the peace, lieutenant-colonel of the first battalion of the Canadian militia, formerly captain of the King's vessel, and a church warden of this parish"—a peaceful end for one who had raided with the Abbé Picquet and had lived through the Seven Years War and the American Revolution and had witnessed all the changes which these events had brought to Canada.

The Sieur Philippe de Rocheblave and Captain René-Hypolite La Force, by their devotion to the British Crown, had no doubt earned the reward which Dorchester proposed to give them when he set aside for their possession large tracts of land adjacent to the capital which he was about to establish for the new

<sup>1</sup> *Publication of the Canadian Archives*, 1890, Q. 47.1, p. 266.

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Province of Upper Canada. Captain Jean Baptist Bouchette had a special and more personal claim to compensation. M. Benjamin Sulte writes:<sup>1</sup>

J'ai vous à parler d'un simple marin qui, a servi de pivot, ou si vous voulez, de point tournant à l'histoire du Canada. Son case est rare. Il était seul et décidait du sort d'un pays. Avoir eu une heure semblable dans son existence, c'est assez pour vivre toujours.

What had Bouchette done? We see him at the founding of the new city playing a minor part as commander of the *Mississaga*, which conveyed the Governor's party from Newark to Toronto. But had there been no Bouchette, there might very well have been no Simcoe and no Upper Canada at all. Jean Baptist Bouchette in 1775 saved Governor Carleton from ignominious capture by Montgomery's forces and thereby saved Canada to the British.

Bouchette, who was born at Quebec in 1736, was twenty-three years of age at the taking of Quebec and must have served in the militia at that period; quite possibly he was present at the battle of the Plains of Abraham. Very little is known of his early life. In 1772 he married Angélique Duhamel of Quebec, a young lady of great personal beauty and charm; he is described at this time as the owner of his own brigantine and engaged in the fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In 1774 his more famous son, Joseph, was born, to be known afterwards as one of the handsomest men of his time, a distinction which he must have inherited from his mother, inasmuch as his father was by no means a handsome gallant. In 1775 Bouchette commanded a brigantine, *le Gaspé*, which he perhaps owned, and we find him already known as *la Tourtre*, from the celerity of his voyages. It is at this point that he comes into history.

In the spring of 1775 Carleton arrived in Montreal to

<sup>1</sup> "Jean-Baptiste Bouchette par M. Benjamin Sulte," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 3rd series, Vol. II, p. 67.

organize the defence of that part of Canada against the threatened American invasion; on the twelfth of November the city capitulated to the enemy. Carleton had made his escape from Montreal the day before and with a number of vessels succeeded in reaching la Valtrie, seven leagues above Sorel, where he lay windbound and exposed to capture by the invaders, who by this time lined the banks of the river. M. Sulte suggests that the Governor up to this point had relied upon the advice and the services of his British officers, but seeing the imminent approach of calamity, he now confided himself to a Canadian. Captain Bouchette, "the wild pigeon," offered to conduct the Governor in an open boat through the narrow channels opposite Bertier and to bring him safe to Quebec. The offer was accepted and Carleton entrusted his person and the future of Canada to the issue of the event. Muffling their oars, the five men who composed the party rowed as long as they dared; then sometimes paddling with their hands, and sometimes lying flat in the bottom of the boat and drifting with the current, which seemed menacingly slow, they passed the dangerous narrows where the challenge of the sentries could be distinctly heard and the water reflected the frequent watch-fires of the enemy. It was a bold adventure, but Bouchette succeeded. They reached Three Rivers and Carleton rested in a hostel with his head bowed on a table, asleep. The Americans were close at hand and had already sent officers in advance to arrange for quarters for the troops. They entered the hostel and Carleton, who fortunately was attired not in military uniform but in the dress of a *habitant*, escaped observation. Bouchette, now as ever equal to the occasion, shook him rudely by the shoulder and ordered him, as if he had been a common sailor, to get up and follow him to the boat. The ruse succeeded, and a second time Bouchette saved the Governor. On the nineteenth, the bells of Quebec rang to convoke a public assembly to arrange for the defence of the city, which in all likelihood would have fallen to Montgomery had it been deprived of the animating presence of Sir Guy Carleton.

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As late as 1790 La Force and Bouchette<sup>1</sup> were still associated in the naval service at Kingston and occupied themselves with the construction of vessels. Bouchette seems to have succeeded La Force in command on the lake about 1784 and continued in command for about twenty years. He established a dock at Kingston in 1789, and made a substantial contribution to the growth of the British navy on the lake. He occupied with his family apartments in Fort Frederick at Kingston, where he died in 1804. He had attracted the attention of the Duke of Kent, who expressed a desire to secure for him as a reward for his services a decoration or a title. Bouchette's step-niece had married Surveyor-General Samuel Holland; the two brothers of this lady, Jean Joseph Rolet and Charles Frederic Rolet, distinguished themselves in the west and in the War of 1812; the latter, Charles Frederic Rolet, in turn had married the youngest daughter of Captain J. B. Bouchette.

Bouchette and La Force are examples of the loyalty with which many of the French in Canada rallied to the support of the British in the struggle with the seceding colonies. "*Le commodore Bouchette*," writes the duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, in 1795, "*est un des plus grands détracteurs du projet de faire de York le centre de la marine du lac.*"

<sup>1</sup> *Publication of the Canadian Archives*, 1886, p. 740.

## X

### THE FOUNDING OF YORK AND THE LAST PHASE OF THE CARRYING-PLACE: 1793

WE are now about to catch a last glimpse of the Toronto Carrying-Place before it finally vanishes beneath the ploughs of the settlers who even in 1793 were beginning to claim the rich lands of the County of York.

It was one of Simcoe's first duties, after his arrival in the summer of 1792, to select a permanent site for the capital of Upper Canada. Lord Dorchester, who had learned a good deal from Monsieur de Rocheblave and the directors of the North-West Company about the geography of the Toronto region and the possibilities of the Carrying-Place, favoured Toronto. In the spring of 1793 Simcoe visited Toronto; and in August of that year, with all the ceremony possible in the wilderness, he founded York, which did not actually become the capital till 1794. Some preliminary surveys had already been made.

In May, 1792, Lieutenant Bouchette,<sup>1</sup> son of *la Tourtre*, had been despatched from Newark with His Majesty's vessels, *Caldwell*<sup>2</sup> and *Buffalo*, with instructions to survey the harbour. In 1831 he writes:

I still distinctly recollect the untamed aspect which the country exhibited when first I entered the beautiful basin, which thus became the scene of my early hydrographical operations. Dense and trackless forests lined the margin of the lake and reflected their inverted images in its glassy surface. The wandering savage had constructed his ephemeral habitation beneath their luxuriant foliage—the group then consisting of two families of Mississagas,—and the bay and the neighbouring marshes were the hitherto uninvaded haunts of immense coveys of wild fowl. Indeed they were so abundant as in some measure to annoy us during the night.

<sup>1</sup> Son of Captain J. B. Bouchette and successor of Holland as surveyor-general.

<sup>2</sup> Described as a sloop of 37 tons built at Niagara in 1774, carrying a crew of 14 men and mounting 2 guns.

Between May and August very little change can have taken place in the primeval simplicity of the surroundings. Early in July, Parliament was prorogued at Newark and the Governor was free to combine inauguration ceremonies with a glorious picnic in the wilds. The Rangers were transported across the lake. A few twelve or eighteen pounders were brought from Oswegatchie or Carleton Islands. The famous canvas house, which had once belonged to Captain Cook, was erected east of what was afterwards the Old Fort, and by the end of July everything was ready. "On Monday evening (this would be Monday, the twenty-ninth of July)," says the *Gazette*, "his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor left Navy Hall and embarked on board his Majesty's schooner, the *Mississaga*, which sailed immediately with a favourable gale for York, with the remainder of the Queen's Rangers." And from Mrs. Simcoe's diary we get further particulars:

Mon. 29th—We were prepared to sail for Toronto this morning, but the wind changed suddenly. We dined with the Chief Justice,<sup>1</sup> and were recalled from a walk at nine o'clock this evening, as the wind had become fair. We embarked on board the *Mississaga*, the band playing in the ship. It was dark and so I went to bed and slept until eight o'clock the next morning when I found myself in the harbour of Toronto. We had gone under an easy sail all night, for as no person on board had ever been at Toronto Mr. Bouchette was afraid to enter the harbour till daylight, when St. John Rousseau, an Indian trader who lives near, came in a boat to pilot us.

As the *Mississaga* slipped out from the mouth of the Niagara River under the glorious sky of that midsummer night in 1793, with the band playing, and the Governor no doubt dreaming of the future of the city he was about to found, the scene did not differ very much from that which meets the eye to-day as the shore recedes into the distance, except that the buildings were fewer and the forest to the west and east came down close to the water; the old "castle" of Fort Niagara, which Simcoe,

\* 1 The Hon. Chief Justice Dummer Powell.

knowing that it would soon have to be relinquished to the Americans, could not bear to visit, reflected the lingering light, and venerable with memories of La Salle and his successors looked out across the lake to Toronto as it does to-day.

For the Simcoes the summer was full of the beating of drums and the crash of trees, of rides on the peninsula and rows to Scarborough and up the Don, of excursions to the old French fort, and visits from the Indians, besides a great deal of routine labour for the indefatigable Governor. On Wednesday, the twenty-fifth of September, accompanied by four officers and a dozen soldiers and some Indians, Simcoe set out to visit Lake Huron by way of the Carrying-Place and Lac aux Claies. The following extracts from Mrs. Simcoe's diary tell us something of this excursion:

Wed. Oct. 2nd,—The Governor's horses returned from the Mississaga Creek, now Holland's River, from whence he sent me some seeds. I received the outside garment sent from England by Mr. Davison. The ground mice are innumerable and most troublesome here. We want the edict published in Spain to excommunicate and banish them. I send you a bat remarkable for its size, and a beautiful black and yellow bird.

Fri. 25th.—I send a map to elucidate the Governor's journey, which was attended with danger as well as many pleasant circumstances. The western side of the lake is drawn from Mr. Pilkington's sketches, the eastern from former accounts. Mr. Pilkington who was one of the party, says the scenery was fit for pictures the whole way, and from his drawings I should suppose so. They rode 30 miles to the Miciaguean (*sic*) Creek, then passed a terrible bog of liquid mud. The Indians with some difficulty pushed the canoe the Governor was in through it. The Governor went to the habitation of Canise,<sup>1</sup> the Indian who held Francis in his arms during the firing when "York" was named. Canise and his eldest son were lately dead, and their widows and children were lamenting them. Young Canise gave the Governor a beaver blanket, and made speeches of excuse for not sooner having made his bed. The Governor went to see a very respectable Indian named "Old Sail" who lives on a branch of Holland's River. He advised

1 At DeGrassi Point.

him to return by the eastern branch of it to avoid the swamp.<sup>1</sup> They proceeded about thirty miles across Lac aux Claies, now named Simcoe, in which are many islands, which Coll. Simcoe named after his father's friends and those gentlemen who accompanied him. The river from thence to Matchedash Bay afforded the most picturesque scenery, from the number of falls and rapids upon it. Some of them were avoided by carrying the canoe on shore; others they risked going down. In passing a rapid an Indian in the Governor's canoe fell over, and the canoe passed over him. He rose up on the other side and got in again without seeming discomposure. On returning, one of the soldiers cut his foot near Holland's River. Mr. Alexander McDonnell and another gentleman stayed with him, as he was unable to travel. The "Old Sail" received them hospitably, and shot ducks for them. A small quantity of provisions being left with them, and an Indian who carried a large cargo quitting the party, reduced the stock so much that the Governor set out with only two days' provisions and the expectation of five days' march to bring them to York. The Indians lost their way, and when they had provisions for one day only they knew not where they were. The Governor had recourse to a compass, and at the close of the day they came on a surveyor's line, and next morning saw Lake Ontario. Its first appearance, Col. Simcoe says, was the most delightful sight, at a time they were in danger of starving, and about three miles from York they breakfasted on the remaining provisions. Had they remained in the woods another day it was feared that "Jack Snap" would have been sacrificed to their hunger. He is a very fine Newfoundland dog belonging to Mr. Sheehan, near Niagara, but has lived at Navy Hall from the time of our coming there, and walked to Detroit with Col. Simcoe. He has been troublesome enough on this excursion, as his size was very unsuitable to a canoe, but he is a great favourite. Coll. Simcoe had the satisfaction of finding Matchadash Bay such as gave him reason to believe would be an excellent harbour for very large ships. A bay near Prince William is called Penetanguishene, a fine harbour. The fever at New York and Philadelphia amounts almost to the plague. Sun. 27th.—A road for walking is now opened up three miles on each side of the camp. I can

<sup>1</sup> There was a trail running south from the east branch of the Holland River to Bond Lake parallel to Yonge Street and about half a mile to the east. This trail is shown on a map recently discovered, Y35, Drawer 38, Ontario Archives.





THE TORONTO OR HUMBER RIVER  
Canoes did not ascend the Toronto River above Teiaiagon.

Year	Population	Area	Population Density
1980	100	100	1.0
1985	110	110	1.1
1990	120	120	1.2
1995	130	130	1.3
2000	140	140	1.4
2005	150	150	1.5
2010	160	160	1.6
2015	170	170	1.7
2020	180	180	1.8
2025	190	190	1.9
2030	200	200	2.0
2035	210	210	2.1
2040	220	220	2.2
2045	230	230	2.3
2050	240	240	2.4
2055	250	250	2.5
2060	260	260	2.6
2065	270	270	2.7
2070	280	280	2.8
2075	290	290	2.9
2080	300	300	3.0
2085	310	310	3.1
2090	320	320	3.2
2095	330	330	3.3
2100	340	340	3.4

therefore now take some exercise without going to the peninsula. Mr. McDonell arrived with the soldiers from Holland's River. He brought some wild ducks from Lake Simcoe which were better than any I have ever tasted; these birds are so much better than any in England from their feeding on wild rice.

Fortunately Mr. Macdonell, who brought the ducks from Lake Simcoe, kept a diary of the expedition which was published by one of his descendants in the *Transactions of the Canadian Institute* for 1890, and we are able to follow the progress of the party over the Carrying-Place and to identify many of the places mentioned. The diary records:

1793, September 24th.—Lieutenant Pilkington of the R.E., Lieutenant Darling of the 5th Regiment, Lieutenant Givens of the 2nd Rangers, and A. Aitken, D.P.S., with two Lake La Claie and two Matchetache Bay Indians, embarked in a *bateau*, and went that night to Mr. St. John's, on the Humber River. 25th.—Got up at daybreak to prepare matters for our journey. His Excellency Lieutenant-General Simcoe joined us from York. We shortly afterwards were ready and entered the woods, keeping our course N.N.W., crossed a long pine ridge. About one o'clock, dined upon a small river which empties itself into the Humber, and, to make the loads lighter, took the bones out of the pork. After dinner, re-loaded our horses and pursued our journey. About four o'clock, it beginning to rain, we encamped on the side of the Humber at the west extremity of the 3rd concession. We here got some wild grapes and a quantity of cray-fish. 26th.—At eight o'clock continued our journey. In the early part of the day went over a pine ridge; but from ten till six in the evening, when we encamped, went through excellent land for grain or grass, the trees uncommonly large and tall, especially the pine. Crossed two small creeks which emptied themselves into the Humber, on one of which (Drunken Creek)<sup>1</sup> we dined, and encamped on the second. The land through which we passed is chiefly wooded with maple, bass, beech, pine and cedar. During this day's march we passed the encampment of an Indian trader, who was on his way to his wintering ground on Lake La Claie.<sup>2</sup> 27th.—Proceeded on

<sup>1</sup> Duncan's Creek.

<sup>2</sup> The map Y35, Drawer 38, Ontario Archives, shows a trader's house at Roche's Point.

early in the morning. Shortly after leaving our fires went through a ridge of very fine pine, which appeared to be bounded by a deep ravine on the north. After crossing in an oblique direction the pine ridge, went over excellent land, black rich mould; timber, maple, beech, black birch, and bass. Crossed a ravine and ascended a small eminence of indifferent land. This height terminated in a point, and a gradual descent to the River Humber, which we crossed. We dined here, and remained two hours to refresh ourselves and horses. While at dinner two men with two horses, who left the end of the carrying place in the morning, met us. They were going to bring forward the trader which we passed the preceding day, and his goods. After dinner proceeded on. Went over very uneven ground, the soil in some places indifferent, but in general not bad land. Saw some very fine yellow pine and black birch. About six o'clock came to the end of the carrying place and encamped. Here we found Mr. Cuthbertson, Indian trader, and owner of hut we passed the day before, encamped. 28th.—After breakfast, Messrs. Givens and Aitken, with two Indians and two white men went up the river for three canoes which had been previously provided for the Governor, and I went with some rangers to erect a stage near the river to put the pork &c., on when brought down from the encampment. Having accomplished this, upon our return we cut a few trees to make a bridge upon a bad pass in the swamp. Returned to camp about two o'clock, and shortly afterwards to the stage with seven of the rangers, all with packs, which we put upon the stage. We here met Messrs. Givens and Aitken, having returned with the canoes. The whole then returned to camp, only me, who remained to take care of the baggage. In about two hours the whole camp came down, and we immediately embarked into five canoes, *viz.*, the Governor, Mr. Aitken, and Indian, and two rangers in one; Messrs. Pilkington and Darling, with their two servants in the second; Mr. Givens and two Indians in a third; an Indian and two rangers with me in the fourth; and Mr. Aitken's surveying party in the fifth. We dragged our canoes till we came to the river, over a part of the swamp where it would be impossible to walk without their support, it being a quagmire, the skin or surface of which was very thin. Proceeded about a mile and a half or two miles along the river, which in this short distance has several turns. Went about a quarter of a mile up a smaller river which empties itself into the former and encamped. Soon after making our fires, the Great Sail and

his family (Messessagues), who were encamped further up the river, came to visit their Great Father, the Governor, to whom they presented a pair of ducks, some beaver's meat, and a beaver's tail. His Excellency gave them some rum and tobacco.

Next morning the party proceeded on their way, and as their five canoes threaded the windings of the sinuous Holland River, the vast marsh and wooded hills on either hand in all the glory of early autumn must have charmed their eyes. They passed the village near De Grassi Point, where Chief Canise lay dying, for there was a pestilence among the Indians; they coasted the western shore of Lake Simcoe, bestowing a new nomenclature on all the bays and islands, and so on to Matchedash Bay, where they were entertained by Cowan,<sup>1</sup> the trader, the remains of whose buildings are still visible opposite Fesserton. They were unable to enter the harbour of Penetanguishene on account of one of those autumn gales with which the Georgian Bay is familiar. Simcoe, however, viewed the bay from a distance and was so delighted with the prospect that land here was purchased from the Indians in 1793. Those familiar with the northland in autumn, and the route which the party traversed, will know that the country was at its best.

One at least of the travellers seems to have had an eye for the picturesque: Mrs. Simcoe records in her diary, "Mr. Pilkington says the scenery was fit for pictures the whole way, and from his drawings I should suppose so." Macdonell's diary, too, is full of picturesque detail, but for the present we are not concerned with that part which relates to their adventures after they had traversed the Toronto Portage. We left the party on the morning of the twenty-ninth, as they embarked and paddled out of sight down the winding Holland River. Before they disappear, six of the members will deserve some further description. His Excellency the Governor, the ardent, energetic, poetical Simcoe, is too well known and

<sup>1</sup> His house is shown on Y35. It stood opposite the trail from Lake Simcoe to Matchedash Bay as Rousseau's at the south. See also Hunter, *A History of Simcoe County*, Vol. I, p. 21.

beloved to require any introduction. Alexander Macdonell, the author of the diary, was, next to the Governor, the most famous person in the party; born in 1762 in Scotland and a member of a well-known Canadian family, Alexander Macdonell had served during the Revolutionary War with Butler's Rangers. On the arrival of Simcoe he became a trusted member of the suite of the Governor, who appointed him Sheriff of Newark and York; at a later date he was for a time Speaker of the House. He was tall and commanding in figure and could converse fluently in Gaelic, French and Indian. In 1818 he erected a residence long prominent on the corner of John and Adelaide streets, and at his hospitable table most of the eminent men of the Province were at one time or another entertained; he died in 1842. Lieutenant Pilkington achieved the distinction of a notice in the *Dictionary of National Biography*; he returned to England in 1803, where he ultimately became inspector-general of fortifications, and died in 1830. The map which he made of the route followed by Simcoe on this occasion is familiar to all historians. Lieutenant, afterwards Colonel, James Givins had spent some years among the Indian tribes of the west and had acquired a knowledge of Indian languages which rendered him valuable to the Indian Department; he was subsequently appointed Superintendent of the Indian Department and held that office till his death in 1842. Of Lieutenant Darling little is known; he was an officer of the fifth regiment, which formed the garrison of Fort Niagara; the duc de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt remarks, "The officers of the fifth regiment, whom we have seen, were well-bred, polite, and excellent companions." Lieutenant Darling seems to have been fond of natural history; he made a collection of stuffed birds and animals at Niagara which Mrs. Simcoe found entertaining. Lieutenant Darling eventually became General Darling. Simcoe named an island in Lake Simcoe after him; it is now known as Snake Island. Mr. Alexander Aitkin, Deputy Provincial Surveyor, was much favoured by the Governor, and had the honour of making the first survey of Toronto and its

environs in 1788; during the latter years of his life he was a resident of Kingston, where he died about 1830. Of the rangers and Indians who composed the rest of the party, little need be said; the rangers were, no doubt, worthy fellows: according to the duc de Liancourt and Isaac Weld, the Missisaugas, from their habit of greasing their bodies to keep off mosquitoes, were exceedingly malodorous.

The camping ground where Simcoe and his party spent the night of the twenty-eighth can easily be identified from the Macdonell diary and from the Pilkington map; it was on the east side of the north branch of the Holland River. It is a spot well worth a visit, and can be reached most easily by the road which runs through the village of Schomberg. After crossing the river north of the village—at this point reduced to a mere runlet—the second turn to the east should be taken, which will lead directly to the mouth of the north branch of the Holland, a stream comparable in some respects to the lower reaches of the Humber. Looking across the channel, the visitor will see the eminence on which Simcoe encamped on the occasion of his first visit to the county which bears his name. The sides of this eminence are bare of trees and have been so in the memory of the oldest inhabitants. To the north and east are remnants of the forest, and from the crest of the hill there is a noble view south over the marsh, now drained and cultivated, towards the northern terminus of the Carrying-Place. On the horizon is the height of land which is the watershed between the Holland and the Humber; in the distance on the marsh will be seen two small buildings which lie very close to the spot where travellers formerly left the river to begin the long portage. The large house which overlooks the marsh so picturesquely was built many years ago when it was supposed that the Capreol ship-canal would follow the course of the Holland to Schomberg and then down the Humber Valley, a project which did not wholly expire till the eighties.

We now return to the mouth of the Humber to retrace in the light of the diary and other sources of information the course

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of the Toronto Carrying-Place. We have seen that the explorers gathered on the evening of the twenty-fourth of September at the house of the Indian trader, Rousseau, with whom we are familiar. Rousseau did not accompany the Governor into the wilderness. Both Givins and Macdonell had a good knowledge of the Indian language and an interpreter was not needed; the Indians who were with the party were to act as guides.



## XI

### RETRACING THE TRAIL

THE townships of York, Vaughan and King, within which the Toronto Carrying-Place lay, were surveyed and settled almost immediately, and it is not surprising that after the lapse of a century not a vestige of the original trail remains, except, possibly, as we shall presently see, at its northern terminus in the Holland River Marsh. And since there are now very few families who continue to occupy the farms which their ancestors carved out of the wilderness, it is not strange that no reliable tradition as to the course of the Carrying-Place has been preserved. In addition, there is a widespread misconception that the northern terminus of the trail was the village of Holland Landing. This misconception arose from the fact that Yonge St., which was built to replace the Carrying-Place, terminated at the Landing, and since that village, now so decayed and deserted, was at one time a busy and important little place, familiar to the early settlers as the point from which they plunged into the wilderness, it is not surprising that traditions should become attached to it, which belong elsewhere, so far as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are concerned. To add to this confusion, the Landing in the seventeenth century was itself the terminus of the eastern carrying-place to Ganatsekwyagon at the mouth of the Rouge, a trail which has a history of its own not to be confused with the history of the more important trail to the Humber mouth, known as the Toronto Carrying-Place.

In the absence, then, of definite remains of the trail and the failure of tradition, recourse must be had to early maps and surveys if the direction of the trail is to be recovered with any degree of certainty. And here, fortunately, sufficient evidence has been discovered to reconstruct the whole course of the Carrying-Place from the mouth of the Humber to a point on the Holland River which can be determined with precision.

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Passing over for the moment the evidence of the early French maps which indicate the direction of the trail but are not sufficiently definite to be of assistance in determining its course with precision, the maps and documents which have been employed in this reconstruction are as follows:

- (a) Collins' map of 1788.
- (b) Gother Mann's map of 1788.
- (c) Collins' map of the District of Nassau, 1790.
- (d) Pilkington's map of 1793.
- (e) Chewitt's map of 1805.
- (f) Augustus Jones' survey of the northern boundary of the Toronto Purchase in 1817.
- (g) Augustus Jones' notes of surveys in the township of York.
- (h) Alexander Macdonell's diary of Governor Simcoe's trip over the Carrying-Place in 1793.
- (i) Mrs. Simcoe's diary.
- (j) The maps of the Department of Military Defence on the scale of one inch to the mile.

On the margin of Collins' map of 1788, the original of which is in the Toronto Public Library, is a note to the effect that it does not agree with the survey made by Lieut. Kotte in 1783, nor with that made by Bouchette in 1793. A comparison with these maps reveals the fact that Kotte and Bouchette delineate the coast line with great accuracy, whereas Collins has indicated the shore in a very sketchy fashion. Collins, however, gives about ten miles of the trail on the scale of two inches to the mile, and had his accuracy been equal to his draughtsmanship, the difficulties of the investigator would be over. There is reason, however, to suppose that the trail as indicated is on the scale of one inch instead of two to the mile, and that the angles are indications of direction, and that the distances between these turns or angles is not accurately delineated. This would, of course, be the only possible method of indicating the trail unless it was carefully chained or paced, and there is no proof on any of the existing maps that this was ever done. To establish this point, it may be observed that

while the distance from the point near Bloor Street, where the trail turned north, as established by Jones' notes, to the point where it crossed the Black Creek, is given on the Collins' map as a little over a mile, the actual distance is about two miles. On this scale the first long reach of the trail would terminate about a mile beyond Weston on the bank of the Humber. In the same way an examination of the other two important maps of the trail, (c) and (e) in the above list, supports the view that these maps are correct only in indicating the various turns in the trail and the angle of each turn, but obviously inaccurate in the distances between the various turns. Had the existing maps been accurate in every detail, all that would have been necessary would have been to enlarge the outline to the scale of the modern maps and superimpose the enlargement, taking care to make the southern and northern ends coincide with known termini of the time. This method, however, has proved a failure, whereas the results obtained by regarding the angles as accurate and the distances between as rough approximations to be checked by the contours of the country has resulted in establishing a line which corresponds in every detail to the description of the route given in Alexander Macdonell's diary.

Collins spent some part of the summer of 1788 at Toronto; an interesting description of the harbour is included in his report to Lord Dorchester bearing the date of December 6, 1788.<sup>1</sup> Whether Collins' map of the southern portion of the trail (a) was made on this occasion, or whether it is a copy of an older map, it is not possible to determine. Lieut. Kotte had been instructed in 1785 to make a survey of the communication between the Bay of Quinte and Lake Huron by Lac aux Claires, and the Toronto portage may have been included in his commission. The inaccuracies in the shore line of Collins' map and the space assigned to the trail indicate that the chief purpose of this map was to delineate the Carrying-Place. If this is so, another sheet must be in existence somewhere showing the northern part of the trail and completing the map. When

1 Ont. Archives, 1905, p. 351.

Collins compiled his map of the District of Nassau in 1790 (c), he incorporated the 1788 map of the lower half of the trail in his delineation of the Carrying-Place.

Collins' 1790 map is the most detailed map of the Carrying-Place which has survived. The original of this map is to be found in the Ontario Department of Surveys. There is an inferior copy in the Dominion Archives. From the mouth of the Humber to the Holland River measures on this map thirteen and a quarter inches; the scale is two miles to the inch. The hills and streams crossed are indicated. The portages along the Trent Valley route and from Port Hope to Rice Lake are shown on the same scale and with equal detail, with manuscript notes as to their value as permanent communications. This map must have been prepared with the intention of determining once for all the question of the route to the great fur country of the north. The decision was given in favour of the Carrying-Place; the map shows conclusively that it was the shortest route. The letters P and Q refer to the Carrying-Place. "P.Q. Carrying Place from Toronto to a creek called Micicaguean that discharges itself into Lake Le Clie is twenty-nine miles and sixty chains at landing you ascend a high hill Eighty feet high which Continues half a mile it is almost perpendicular and two (*sic*) narrow for a Road, but it is not necessary to make use of the landing Place as the River Toronto has a sufficient depth of Water for large Canoes to where it intersects the road four miles from Toronto at R: from thence passes through excellent Country the whole of the way to a Creek at Q except in a Cedar Swamp of twenty Chains this road may be made fit for Carts or Waggon, for the sum of two hundred pounds Currency, should the Communication be made use of it will be Necessary to establish three Posts, one at each end of the road, and one in the Centre to forward the Transport." This map is of special value in indicating the extent of the Holland marsh traversed.

Gother Mann's map of 1788 and Pilkington's map of 1793 contribute very little to the solution of the problem but are important as contemporary documents.

Chewitt's map of 1805 was prepared for the ratification of the Toronto Purchase, which took place in that year at the Credit. The bargain concluded at Quinte in 1787 had been found to be imperfect; the Indians remained in doubt as to what they had transferred to the white men and there was no proper record of the proceedings. Chewitt's map repeats the peculiarities of the Collins' maps without their fullness of detail. It is the most familiar map of the Carrying-Place; it is reproduced in *Indian Treaties and Surrenders 1680-1890*. This map bears the totems of the chiefs who ratified the purchase in 1805 and the signature of J. B. Rousseau, who acted as interpreter.

There are thus two maps of the entire trail from the Humber mouth to the Holland River, and since these maps coincide in essential details, it would seem possible to recover the course of the Carrying-Place. Neither of these maps, however, indicates with sufficient accuracy the point at which the trail touched the Holland River. Fortunately we have the testimony of the Pilkington map, Alexander Macdonell's diary and the survey of the northern boundary of the Toronto Purchase made by Jones in 1817. From these sources of information, which will be considered in greater detail, it has been possible to determine with accuracy the point at which the Carrying-Place terminated. This has been confirmed by local tradition. Had it not been possible to determine the northern terminus of the trail it would have been difficult to interpret the existing maps.

Turning from the map-makers to the surveyors, very valuable information is contained in the field notes of Augustus Jones, who carefully indicated the position of the trail wherever he came across it. I am indebted to Mr. N. A. Burwash of the Surveys Department for the following items:

Jones' Notes, Index No. 294, page 95. South boundary, lot 40, concession 2, S 74 W, 18.40 chains to foot-path from St. John's to Lake La Clear (*sic*).—Line between 40 and 41 concession 1. South 16 east from rear of concession 1, 5.50 chains foot-path, 49.00 foot-path.—From front of concession 2 on west side lot 40 N. 16 W, 8.75 chains to foot-path.—Page

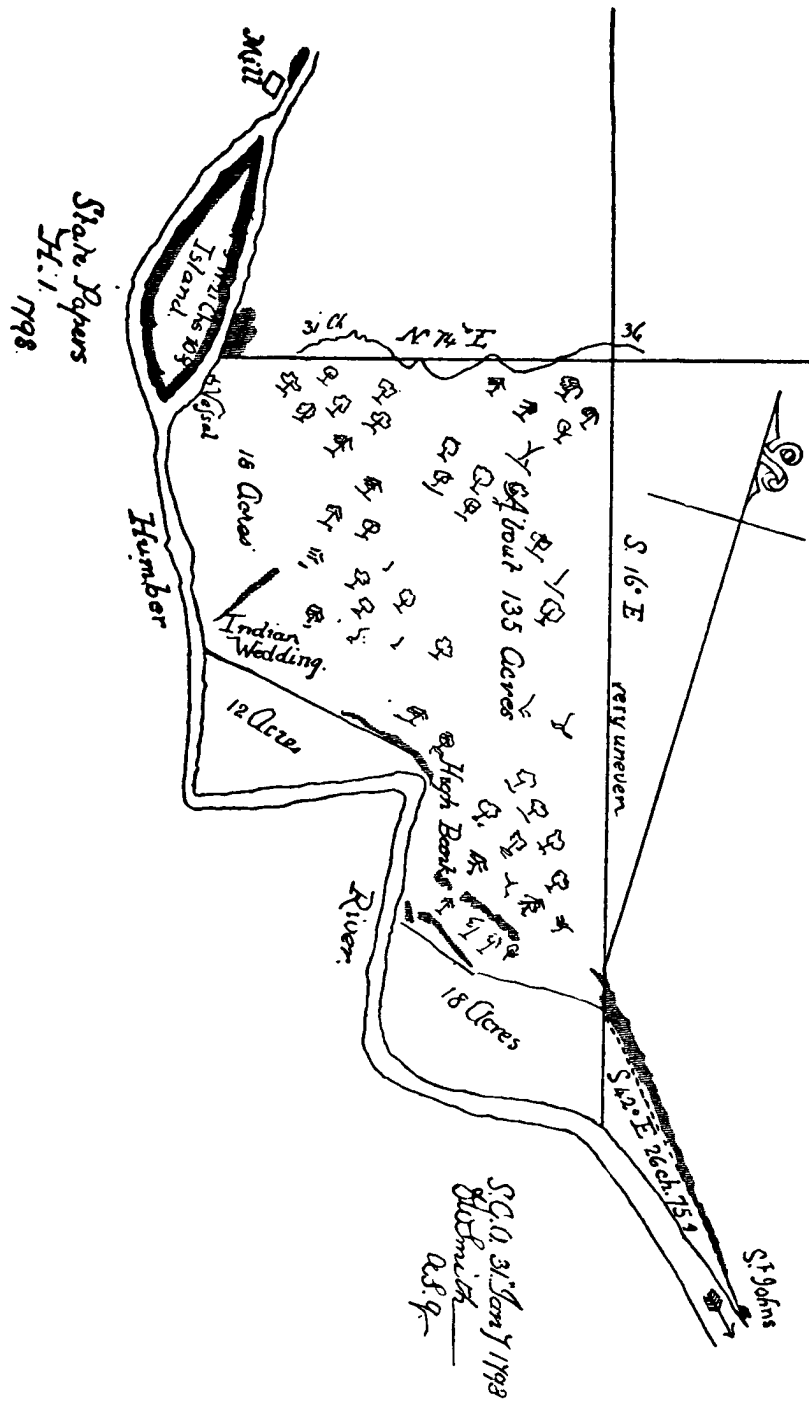
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101. From northwest corner, lot 40, concession 3, south 74 west, 13.50 chains to foot-path.—Page 103. From north east corner lot 10 on the Humber, south 74 west, 20.30 chains to foot-path.

All these items refer to the footpath to what Jones calls "Lake La Clear." Mr. Burwash has determined for me the position of these various points on the streets of Toronto. The Carrying-Place crossed Eglinton Avenue, 20 chains thirty links west of Jane Street; St. Clair Avenue, 13 chains 50 links west of Jane Street; Jane Street 8 chains 75 links north of Bloor Street West; Bloor Street West, a short distance east of Jane Street (as Jones seems to have laid out these lots north and south, and as they were sold running east and west, this point has not been determined); Jane Street, south of Bloor Street, 5 chains 50 links, and again in the same line at 49 chains. This point brings us to the "hog's-back" on the east side of the Humber, and Jones adds the note, "near a pond of St. John's or Toronto Creek."

According to D. W. Smith's map of the east bank of the Humber from the mill south, St. John's house stood on the east bank of the stream about a quarter of a mile from the mouth; this map is dated January 31, 1798. There is another small map in the Ontario Archives which confirms this statement. Mrs. Simcoe in her diary tells us that, "There is a ridge of land extending beyond St. John's house 300 feet high and not more than three feet wide; the bank toward the river is of smooth turf. There is a great deal of hemlock and spruce on this river; the banks are dry and very pleasant." The Gother Mann map of 1788 indicates that the Carrying-Place ran along the crest of this ridge for some distance and then turned sharply to the east.

Many persons will remember the path along the east bank of the Humber. It followed the crest of the ridge, descending to the level rather sharply at a point close to the site of the Rousseau house. This path has been obliterated in recent years by the houses along Riverside Drive. In the eighties of the last



A MAP OF 1798 SHOWING THE SITE OF ST. JOHN'S (ROUSSEAU'S) HOUSE AT THE MOUTH OF THE TORONTO RIVER  
 (The original is in the Public Archives, Ottawa.)

century there was a grassy spot at the foot of the hill, neatly terraced, which was a favourite resort for picnic parties; and there were still, if the writer's memory is not at fault, a number of fruit trees, the remains of the orchard and the cherry trees which used to bloom at the old trading-post. As Rousseau's house was at what was known as the Toronto Landing, it is likely that this was the site of Portneuf's first Fort Toronto.

For about half a mile the Carrying-Place followed the crest of the hill. It then turned abruptly to the right and, crossing Bloor Street not far to the east of Jane Street, it turned again north and crossing to the west of Jane Street and skirting Baby Point, the site of Teiaiagon, it ran north along the high land, never very far west of Jane Street, to a point on Eglinton Avenue close to the Humber, the point, in fact, where Simcoe and his party lunched and found crayfish. Jones' notes make it possible to indicate the course of the trail from the mouth of the Humber to this point. Beyond this, it is necessary to rely on the maps.

Collins' maps both indicate that the trail ran on for some distance beyond this point in a straight line. It may be assumed that the trail would follow the bank of the Humber as far as possible. The sharp turn on the map would be the point at which the trail turned away from the river. This point may be placed north-west of Weston, and it is a safe conjecture that the trail followed the line now followed by the C.P.R. railway to the east of Duncan's Creek. Macdonell's diary speaks of the trail crossing Drunken Creek, which, I assume, is a mistake for Duncan Creek, and the four streams indicated on the Collins' map at this point are the tributaries of that stream which are crossed in succession by the railway. In a general way the Carrying-Place would now follow the course of the Humber towards Woodbridge, swerving to the east without crossing the river. About a mile below Purpleville, a small stream falls into the Humber and where the trail crossed this stream Simcoe camped on the twenty-sixth. From here the trail ran north about four miles to the ford at the east branch



of the Humber, described rather minutely by Alexander Macdonell: "Crossed a ravine and ascended a small eminence of indifferent land. This height terminated in a point with a gradual descent to the Humber which we crossed." The point of land is the area bounded by the stream as it sweeps round the base of the hill in a wide loop. From the evidence of the maps and from the contour of the land, it seems likely that the trail crossed the east branch of the Humber close to the spot where the road crosses it to-day at the little village of King Creek.

To the north of this ford, the character of the country changes. The trail enters a wilder region, and crosses the height of land at a point some 1,150 feet above sea level; a region which La Salle dignified with the name of mountain. When the sixth concession road winds down the height of land, one has the sensation of being on the old trail. Keeping slightly to the east to avoid the sources of the numerous small streams now flowing northward into the Holland, the trail ran north a little east of the sixth concession road. The end of the Carrying-Place, where Simcoe camped with his party on the evening of the twenty-seventh, is to be found a quarter of a mile south-west of the northern extremity of the sixth concession road.

For the identification of the northern terminus of the trail there are, as has already been remarked, three sources of documentary evidence. The most important of these is the map which is preserved in the Surveys Department in the Ontario Parliament Buildings and known as the Map of the Toronto Purchase, 1817, Q. 36, Indian Drawer No. 2. This is the map of the survey made in 1817 by Augustus Jones of the western, northern and eastern boundaries of the Purchase. It establishes the fact that the Carrying-Place crossed the northern boundary of the Purchase eight and a half miles east of the north-west corner of the Purchase. As the western boundary of the Purchase is identical with the western boundary of the County of York, it is an easy matter to locate the north-

west corner of the Purchase. The Military Defence Department maps are on the scale of one inch to the mile, and by measuring twenty-eight inches from the mouth of the Etobicoke along the western boundary, the north-west corner can be determined. By measuring eight and a half inches towards the east and at right angles, we shall have the point at which the trail crossed the northern boundary of the Purchase. This point is indicated on Q. 36 by a dotted line with the legend, "Foot-path from the Humber to the Holland," and will be found to lie close to the sixth concession road in lot twenty-nine of King. About a mile to the north and adjacent to the northern terminus of the sixth concession, the Carrying-Place descended into the marsh at a point described by Macdonell as the "end of the Carrying-Place." It is the discovery of Q. 36 which removed all doubt as to the course of the Toronto Carrying-Place. It was on the evening of September 27, 1793, that Simcoe and his party arrived at the end of the Carrying-Place and camped there for the night. This spot would be about a quarter of a mile south-west from the corner of the road on the Dale farm, on which Indian relics have been found, showing that there was a village here or that articles had been dropped by travellers. Coins have been found on the adjoining Fox farm to the south.

It remains to trace the course of the Carrying-Place across the Holland Marsh to the point on the Holland River where the travellers took to the water. And here the evidence is complete and convincing. Owing to the draining of the Holland Marsh, it is now possible to explore a region hitherto inaccessible except in winter. An area which is roughly about eight miles long by a mile and a half wide has been drained, and a region of great fertility has been reclaimed. Collins' map (c) has this note about the Micicaguean Creek, as he calls the Holland River. "This Creek is thirty feet wide and six feet deep where the road intersects it and encreases (*sic*) in width and depth to where it falls into Lake le Cle where it is eighty feet wide and twenty deep." The bed of the river is now dry and its water has been diverted to two canals which diverge at a point about

three miles east of Schomberg to unite again at the Bradford bridge, embracing in an elongated ellipse about twelve square miles of very valuable land. The river, which was formerly the haunt of giant muskellunge, is now an empty channel, scarcely discernible by reason of the dense forest of reeds and rushes which choke its course. The marshes, once vocal with so many waterfowl, are now under cultivation. Research is still further facilitated by the accurate surveys embodied in the Military Defence Maps. With the map of the district before him and guided by Alexander Macdonell's diary, it is easy for any one to arrive at conclusions which a visit to the locality will speedily confirm.

The diary remarks: "Proceeded about a mile and a half or two miles along the river, which in this short distance has several turns. Went about a quarter of a mile up a smaller river which empties itself into the former and encamped." Lieutenant Pilkington's map, though not very useful elsewhere, proves useful here. He indicates Simcoe's camp on the night of the twenty-eighth, at a point on the east bank of the north branch of the Holland River about which there can be no uncertainty, for the north branch is the only stream of any magnitude on the north side. A measurement on the Military Defence map shows that the distance from the main stream of the Holland to the point where the north branch issues from the escarpment is exactly a quarter of a mile. There can be no doubt, then, that Simcoe encamped on rising ground known locally as "The Indian Burying-Ground," which, then as now, was in all probability bare of trees, as it has always been within the memory of old inhabitants. It is an ideal camping-ground and commands a magnificent view of the surrounding country. It is directly opposite and in full view of the spot where the Toronto Carrying-Place comes to an end on the south side of the marsh, and of the King Ridges which form the watershed between the Holland and the Humber. The traditional site of the "Great Sail's" encampment was further up the north branch at Lot 7, Concession 3, West Gwillimbury. Indian

relics are still turned up by the plough in the adjoining fields and there are many indications that this part of the county of Simcoe was a favourite resort of the aborigines. One old map bears the legend, "Indian Fields," at this point. The north branch of the Holland is the natural and, indeed, the only practicable outlet of the region, and inasmuch as it is only a short distance across country to the valley of the Nottawasaga, which was the main artery of the Petun country and a gateway to the Georgian Bay, it is an obvious conjecture that the north branch was an important link in the trail system of the aborigines, and that the fact that the Toronto Carrying-Place begins across the marsh immediately south of the *embouchure* of this stream was not accidental.

Let us again follow Alexander Macdonell's diary and make another measurement on the map. He tells us that Simcoe's party proceeded about a mile and a half or two miles along the river till they came to the entrance of the north branch. Allowing for the winding of the river, this measurement of a mile and a half or thereabouts will bring us back to an elbow in the river channel three-quarters of a mile north-west from the northern terminus of the sixth concession. At this point the distance across the marsh to high ground is less than at any other point in the locality, and the traveller would have had less mud and muskeg and thicket to traverse than either to the west or the east.

We have already, by means of the Collins map of 1790, and the survey map of 1817, known as Q. 36, traced the course of the Carrying-Place from the mouth of the Humber to a point just north-west of the corner of concession six and the sixth line of King; obviously the trail followed the easiest course from this point north three-quarters of a mile to the edge of the marsh, and at this point a quarter of a mile south-west from the northern end of the sixth concession road we have placed the end of the Carrying-Place, a conjecture which is confirmed by local tradition. From a point slightly west of the corner and extending across the marsh in the direction of the southern

elbow of the Holland River, already identified as the spot at which travellers took to the water, there once existed a causeway of logs or poles laid down lengthways across the wet ground for the convenience of those who wished to fish for lunge in the river. These poles are said to have been placed there by the Indians before the coming of the white men; a section of about fifty feet of these tamarack poles is still (1933) in position, very much decayed and scarcely visible. Secondly, extending from the point already selected as the obvious terminus of the Carrying-Place, there used to be a path or trail through the dense bush and across the marsh to the same elbow of the river. My informant is a lifelong resident of the locality, Mr. Joseph Wilson, of lot 34, concession 5 of the township of King, who has known and used this path for more than fifty years, having hunted and trapped over the Holland Marsh all his life. Mr. Wilson described this path as sunk about a foot below the surface and well defined and running from a point south-west of the end of the sixth concession about a quarter of a mile across the fields, and from thence in a northerly direction to the river; he pointed out a dead tree from which, according to his recollection, the path began. This path, he said, ran down to a little pond not more than forty rods from the river and connected with it. It was in this pond, he thought, that they launched their canoes. This path has now been obliterated by the drainage canals, but standing on the road 125 rods to the west of the north-west corner of the sixth concession, Mr. Wilson pointed out to me the spot where it used to run, and remarked that in the bush to the south of where we were standing, the path crossed a small creek where there was a "run of logs," a causeway extending about ten rods. (This would be the "bad spot in the swamp," mentioned by Alexander Macdonell.) I observed that Mr. Wilson used the term "creek" to describe a mere runlet, formerly known as "Duck Pond Creek," which would, however, have been sufficient in such marshy ground to make a bad bog. This spot is indicated in Collins' map. In July, 1933, guided by Mr. Wilson, I visited the

site of the northern terminus of the Carrying-Place. Pushing through the rough undergrowth and pausing now and then to admire the lovely orchids, we came to the bed of the pond which, though quite dry, was marked by a dense growth of bulrushes.

As both Mr. Wilson's path and the causeway of tamarack logs, known locally as "the poles," converged on the same point on the river, it is probable that both were links in the original portage. At any rate, the evidence of Alexander Macdonell's diary, the maps already cited, and the existing remains in the locality, combine to prove that the point on the river where travellers embarked is the elbow adjacent to the small buildings erected there by those now engaged in market gardening. I mention this for the sake of those who may care to visit the spot but may not be inclined to go out on the marsh.



#### THE NORTHERN END

The Carrying-Place descended the hill on the horizon before crossing the marsh.



#### CROSSING THE MARSH

Until recent years a trail ran through the woods to the west of the northern end of the sixth concession of King.

