

ling two or three hundred pounds "due on engine," etc., to Charles Perry, of the York Steam Engine Works, which were situate at the corner of Duchess and George Streets. The instalment of the engine must have been early in the spring of 1833 as a second payment was made thereon in May. It seems likely that its purpose was that of supplementing the windmill when in a balky or too frisky mood; or assisting it when overburdened by work, but not in supplanting it as the governing power. A run of buhr stones was obtained from or through Mrs. Crickmore, of Hamilton. They arrived on June 6th and were at once put in position, probably in connection with the new engine, thus bringing the working power up to three run of stones. Sam. Clarke, who had for some time been with the firm, appears to have been the engineer, and also the general factotum of the establishment, for which services he received one pound ten (\$6.00) per week—then considered good wages for a steady job.

The business of the mill appears to have prospered in 1833, as evidenced by the sales of flour, which totalled 2,244 barrels, against 354 for the three months during which grinding had been carried on in the previous year. The increase over the calculated amount, per annum, would be 826 barrels, showing very fair progress for an enterprise conducted at such a time, and in such a place, for it must be remembered that Muddy York was not much to boast of in those days.

CHAPTER III.

A Ramble in the City in 1834

SPECULATIONS AS TO THERE HAVING BEEN
SETTLERS PRIOR TO THE DAYS OF
GOVERNOR SIMCOE

Forty years had passed since with blare of trumpets and boom of guns the recently appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the newly-born Province of Upper Canada proclaimed the selection of York as the seat of Government. There is no evidence of previous settlement, though, in the palmy French days, forty years earlier, considerable trading was doubtless done in the vicinity of Fort Rouille, but was brought to an abrupt close in 1759, when the Fort was burned by its defenders in order to save it from the victorious English General then hastening from Niagara.

Captain Gother Mann, of the Royal Engineers, who drew a plan of the locality in 1788, saw enough of the remains of the outlines of the buildings to indicate them by five rectangular dots, which he designated "Ruins of Trading Fort," on the *Plan of Toronto Harbour* bearing the above date, but there is no indication of any other buildings. The locality was shortly after reported on by J. Collins.

surveyor-general to Lord Dorchester, who wrote of the capabilities of the harbour, and the suitability of the situation as a military post, but made no mention of any existing settlement.

Joseph Bouchette, later a lieutenant of the 14 gun schooner "Onandaga" carried out the survey of 1792, but his plan dated 1793, bears no record of any permanent landmark of human making, nor is there in his subsequent work on *The British Dominions in North America* any reference to a settlement. On the contrary, he speaks of the "untamed aspect of the district", and the "dense and trackless forests which lined the margin of the lake." "The wandering savages" said he, had constructed their ephemeral habitations beneath this luxuriant foliage, the group then consisting of two families of "Mess-assagas," and the bay and the neighboring marshes were the hitherto uninvaded haunts of immense coveys of wild fowl." This is quite in accord with Surveyor-General Russell's exclamation—perhaps intended for a pun—about there being no town in sight but the town ~~site~~—or words to that effect.

The most direct bit of evidence, in this line, has been generally overlooked by reviewers, but is to be found in a notice of the Smith family, which appears in Blackett Robinson's *History of the County of York*. William Smith, the ancestor of the family whose log shanty used to be on the east bank of the Don, on what is now Queen St., just below the bridge, and which has been since removed to the Exhibition

grounds, where it is used as a sort of head-quarters of the York Pioneers—accompanied General Simcoe on his first visit in 1793, and found three Indian wigwams, east of the Don, on the river banks (lot 15) one of which was occupied by the Chief, Kashago; the only white settlers then being William Peak and his family who had been settled there for some time, and knew the locality well, often accompanying General Simcoe on hunting and fishing expeditions—that being Peak's principal occupation. For services rendered to the new government he is said to have received a grant of land in the neighborhood of Duffin's Creek. From this it seems likely that he was related to the Captain Peeke referred to by Dr. Scadding, in *Toronto of Old* who, before the close of the eighteenth century, was the owner of a schooner in the lime business, trading between Duffin's Creek and York, and other places. He is said to have had occasional difficulties with over bibulous members of his crew when in port here. Such offenders were promptly brought under the operation of the so-called "Stump Act" which, as a penalty, demanded the removal from the public roads of as many stumps, or as much labor, as was commensurate with the offence. There is no reason to doubt the reliability of the statement that Peak was the first white settler but it is strange that Dr. Scadding makes no mention of it as the Smith and Scadding farms were almost, if not actually adjoining.

The publication of Miss K.M. Lizar's *Valley of the Humber* brings prominently forward another

possible addition to the list of original white settlers. It is true that his residence was a considerable distance from the town plot, as laid out in 1793, though at present it might be squeezed within the city limits. The owner, Jean Baptiste Rousseau, or Mr. St. John as he was better known in Upper Canada, had more than twenty years before, when in Montreal, held a trader's license, and did business with Toronto, which, about the close of the period mentioned, comprised the land between the site of Fort Rouille and the Humber—which was then called the Toronto River. During the interval St. John had officiated as trader, interpreter, guide, and general authority on matters of travel. Towards the end of the period he erected a log house near the mouth of the river, on the east side, which served as a storehouse, place of entertainment, and general rendezvous for parties entering the old Indian trail to the north, which, starting at the river, followed the long portage—the Carrying Place—to the Holland river, and thus into Lake Toronto, (Simcoe) emerging at Lake Huron. It is probably that sprinkled here and there were other dwellings, of a still more unpretentious character, which escaped notice, or were deemed unworthy of the attention of those who recorded their melancholy impressions of the site of the present city prior to the arrival of Governor Simcoe. It is more than likely that the district between the Don and the Humber with the trading place between, backed by a wealth of fine farming country, would have attracted and retained some to whom

these conditions were congenial and promising. Enough has been said to show a foundation for the claim made on behalf of Messrs. Peak and St. John and this reference may have some influence in strengthening the position.

The retinue of the Governor comprised those who accompanied him on the schooner Mississaga—a very considerable following, who ultimately became the officials and prominent men of the settlement. In these western days one sometimes hears of a town springing up in a night but a greater wonder in creative magic was witnessed when, at the same moment, the town became the Capital of the Province, the seat of Government, and the centre of education, refinement and fashion in a country which included a very considerable part of the northern continent. York never passed through the stages of infancy and boyhood, but arrived as a man, with all the responsibilities of the situation, but with no experience, and less equipment, to meet them. The struggle soon commenced, and was continued through years of privation, war, fire, pestilence, and more serious than all, a period of political oppression and strife which paralyzed ambition, and for years to come retarded the progress of the town.

As the early statistics of the population of York were for several years included with those of some of the adjacent townships it is impossible to say what the town settlement amounted to, but it may be concluded that an excellent start was made, though, as has been stated, it was not long main-

tained. In 1801, for which separate figures are available, there were 338 men, women and children in the town, and 456 in 1804. This would give an average yearly increase of 40 through the first decennial period.

During the next ten years, ending in 1813, and including the period of the first part of the war of 1812, the increase was only at the rate of 28 per annum. The population at the close of the war may be taken at 673, of whom only 116 were taxpayers. In 1823 the total is given as 1330, showing a yearly gain of 66. This increased to 476 during the next decennial, but the real growing time was from 1830, when the annual augmentation became 349, to be followed by 1109 in 1831, and 1539 in 1832. In 1833 there was a recession to 589, doubtless by dread of the cholera which carried off so many of the immigrants of the previous year and thus frightened intending settlers. The population in 1833 was officially stated as follows:—

Males over 16	2,056
Females over 16	1,772
Total over 16	<u>3,828</u>
Males under 16	1,189
Females under 16	<u>1,077</u>
Total under 16	<u>2,266</u>
Total population	6,094

This brings the writer to the time at which he should **really** have started as his subject relates to the birth of Toronto rather than of York. **How-**

ever, the digression had for its main object the stimulation of further enquiry as to the first settlers, and, as such, may be pardoned, as also details of the growth of the town up to its fortieth year, which may be useful for future reference.

The population stated above indicates a place of similar size to that of Lindsay, or Orillia, at present (1915) but it may be that Oshawa offers the best topographical comparison, though its population now is some 500 greater than that of York when it became Toronto. Statements of population must, however, be taken with a very large grain of salt. Witness, for instance, the very varying current figures for Toronto as furnished by the Dominion census; the assessment rolls; the police census, and, finally, **Might's** Directory, which always caps the climax. Even so was it in 1833, for in **Walton's** Directory, to which attention has already been directed, the figures are stated as under:—

Males above 16	2,597
Males under 16	<u>1,404</u>
Total Males	4,001
Females above 16	2,155
Females under 16	<u>1,317</u>
Total Females	<u>3,472</u>
Total Population	7,473

This evidently referred to the town, proper, to which must be added:

In Macaulay Town	558
From Osgoode Hall to Farr's Brewery	400
From King Street to Don Bridge	300
	1,258
Grand Total	8,371

The value of the property for assessment purposes, at the beginning of 1834, was estimated at \$526,026; but, only a few months afterwards, this was raised to \$747,528—about 50 per cent—by the assessors, (who are all alike; then, as now). It may be incidentally mentioned that in the roll for this year there is an entry for the rating of "Wm. Gooderham, ½ ac. with one windmill, 7 stories, with 3 run of stones, 1 storehouse, £208," which clearly shows that the civic officials were disposed to look with favor on the new enterprise.

The limits of the city at this time were fairly extensive and its configuration such as would be predicted from its long sunny water front. Its natural advantages were great, but it suffered somewhat from an over supply of creeks, of which there were at least six in the distance between the Old Windmill and the Garrison. These were admirable for drainage but objectionable from the gullies formed by thousands of year's erosion. Some of these old water courses were large and deep enough to be called ravines, which greatly interfered with the construction of roads—a condition which still exists,

to some extent, in the vicinity of Bell Woods Park, and the lands occupied by Trinity University. There was similar trouble at Tannery Hollow, the Rosedale Ravines and scores of other localities.

Lot Street east, almost from Yonge to Allan's lane, (Sherborne) has always suffered in this way, and for many years was practically closed. In the early years and long afterwards, as may be still remembered by some of the readers of this story, there was a series of very deep gullies sometimes at one side of the street and sometimes at the other, which started about the limits of Captain McGill's lot, now the Metropolitan Square, and continued to the east confines of Moss Park where a very considerable stream poured through a stone bridge, or culvert, which led it across Queen and Sherbourne Streets in the direction of its outlet. There was formerly in Moss Park a fork in the channel of this creek by which the volume of the water in the southern branch was much increased. The writer was told by the late Hon. G. W. Allen that when a boy, he had excellent fishing at this point and sometimes hooked perch of half a pound. This point now serves for the tap water skating rink of the Boys Club on Shuter Street.

One might spin endless yarns about the old creeks of the city, most of which are now doing ignominious duty in dark and noisome sewers instead of dancing in the merry sunlight, bringing more joy to the joyous and flashing rays of hope and encouragement

to the weary passers by. A word or **two** must, however, be said as to the fate of this particular stream which took a south-easterly course, passing through Vale Pleasant—a sort of little park in the block bounded by King and Palace Streets, between Berkeley and Parliament. This plot, opposite the old Jail, last occupied by Fenian prisoners of '66; afterwards became the site of Hamilton's Foundry; ultimately reverting to its original condition, as a public square. After this the stream meandered about in the low land where the gasometers now stand and taking a turn westward, near the Old Windmill, discharged its waters into the Bay, at the foot of Parliament Street.

It must not be that this notable river shall go without a name, though none of the plans or sketches give any sign that it ever possessed one. Some additional light has however, been thrown on the subject and may be taken advantage of at this stage. Robertson, Vol. I., page 316, in referring to the house of one **Pilkington** said that it was near "Goodman's **Creek**" but **Scadding**, page 261, speaking of the same residence, says it was in a grove of pines and acacias on the knoll, to the right, after passing Goodwin's Creek." On page 531 in referring to the marriage in 1804 of Jessie **Goodwin**, mariner, he makes the remark that "This is the **Goodwin** from whom the small stream which ran into York Bay, at its eastern extremity, used to be called—Goodwin's **Creek**." As Dr. **Scadding** was born and for many years lived near this locality his evi-

dence carries preponderating weight and it is **not** unlikely that the resemblance in sound accounts for the substitution. By the way there have been **Goodwins** residing in this section up to the present day, and mostly mariners. All Islanders remember Captain Joe and his sons, who like enough were the descendants of the original mariner whose name was given to the creek.

All land travel to the Island—then generally called the Peninsula, and sometimes **Presqu'île**, was necessarily around the bend of the Bay, thence across the bridges over the Forks of the Don, and along the east shore of the Bay to what is now the Eastern Channel—then a wide part of the Island, doubtless covered with trees. Even a score or more years later the writer remembers elms and pines there, a wharf, ferry, and several buildings for refreshment or amusement.

That such were in existence as early as 1833—the year the Directory was being prepared—is not generally credited but any doubt on the subject can be at once put an end to by the following extracts of which the first occurs in some introductory remarks which conclude as follows: "On the Island or Peninsula Mr. Knott has lately erected a manufactory for making starch, soap, etc., attached to which is an hotel for the accommodation of **parties** of **pleasure** visiting the Island, and for whose convenience in getting there, a boat has been established propelled by four horses. Again on page 147, the compiler says "A boat **propelled** by four horses,

called the *Sir John of the Peninsula* (named after Sir John Colborne) runs every day from the Steam Boat Wharf, to the Starch Factory on the Peninsula or Island across the Bay; her trips regulated to suit public convenience. Fare to and from the Island 1s. 3d. **An** Hotel has been opened on the Island to accommodate sportsmen, parties of pleasure, etc." To strengthen this is an item in the enumeration of tavern licenses which names **M. O'Connor** under the heading "Retreat Hotel on the Island." This evidence, which is definite enough, published at the time, and in no wise dependent on the vagaries of memory, settles a vexed question, once and for all. It may be mentioned, however, as more or less confirmatory, that Mr. Knott conducted a similar odoriferous business, a little south of Palace Street—opposite the foot of Frederick—which, would in due time be removed to the Island, doubtless to the relief of city neighbors.

It will be remembered that it was hereabouts that some of the wealthiest merchants did business in the earliest days and here was located the first business centre of the town of York. Its original "four corners" were those at the intersections of King and Frederick Streets where the north-east corner was the site of the first brick edifice. This was put up by Quetton St. George, in **1807** as previously related and was ultimately used as the offices of the Canada Company.

The city limits in 1834 comprised the **district** between Parliament and Peter Streets, extending

north to Lot Street. The part east of **Yonge** was still cut up by ravines as far as Caroline Street, from which it was open to the Catholic Church and "was intended to be continued to the Don Bridge." Lot Street, west of Yonge, was practically an almost closed, or rather unopened thoroughfare, except for the block next to Yonge Street, where there were eight buildings—one of them the old Court House—for that then in use was near the north-east corner of King and Toronto Streets, near the west end of the present Court Street, the **Gaol** being at the other extremity, where the front wall is still to be seen at the back of the offices of the Street Railway. The eight buildings on the south side of Lot Street would probably lead east to the corner of Victoria Street, as now named, but then called Upper George Street. With the exception of the residences of Messrs. **McGill, Jarvis, Allan, Ridout, McMahon** and **Dempsey** there were no other **buildings** on Lot Street, even as far as the river.

Yonge Street, now so central, was in **1834** a comparatively insignificant thoroughfare, except as a road leading to Newmarket and Lake Simcoe. It started on the west side with Sir James (Judge) **Macaulay's** house, near where the Bank of Montreal now stands, but most of the buildings as far as Market Street (Wellington) were occupied by the laboring classes, including those in a court called Hunter's **Place**, with a decided improvement in the block ending at King, though the occupancy was

decidedly mixed, **comprising** some stores, the studio of Linen, a portrait painter; **McGuire**, whose occupation is indicated by "brickfield"—which may possibly mean that he had a brickfield in this locality. Nearer **King** was the wholesale dry goods warehouse of Francis Hincks—(afterwards Sir Francis) followed by the surgery of Dr. **Warren**, and the legal offices of **Baldwin** and Sullivan, in the house occupied from 1825 to 1832 by the **Baldwin** family. At the actual corner of Yonge and King, where the Dominion Bank is now built, was the wholesale dry goods house of **A. Laurie & Co.** which was afterwards succeeded by that of **W.H. Dow & Co.** The north-west corner was occupied by William Ware who kept a general store with a leaning towards crockery. On the east side of Yonge, at the corner of Front, was located the residence of **Judge L.P. Sherwood** whose house, like that of **Judge Macaulay**, was **built** a considerable distance back from either front. The land between this and **King** Street was taken up by some eight houses, **apparently** occupied by mechanics, and at the corner, now the **C.P.R. Building**, was a general store kept by William Crawford. On the opposite side of **King** was the warehouse of **Ridout Brothers** where it remained until the relinquishment of the site in favor of the Royal Bank.

Yonge St. from **King** to Lot St. showed an improvement over the lower part but the stores only numbered about fifty and seem to have been small. Jesse Ketchum—whom everybody **remembers**—

operated a tannery at the corner of **Newgate St.** (Adelaide) and owned at one time or another, all the frontage from that point to Lot St. and west to Bay, besides the block on the east side of Yonge as bounded by Lot & Hospital St. (Richmond), Bell's Soap & Candle Works, the York Foundry and a number of tradesmen's shops also took up considerable space on Yonge St. which must have presented a decidedly mixed appearance.

The west side of **Yonge** Street, above Lot, is treated by the Directory as a separate district called Macaulay Town which included the north side of Lot Street, as far as Osgoode **Hall**, and north to a continuation of **Macaulay's Lane** corresponding with the present Albert Street. This formed part of the original grant by Governor Simcoe of 100 acres to Dr. Macaulay who, according to **Scadding**, was surgeon in the Queen's Rangers and formerly of the **33rd.** regiment. One of his sons, Sir James, has already been mentioned as a resident; the other—Colonel **J. Simcoe Macaulay**, of the Engineers, at a later period occupied Elmsley Villa, further north. The original cottage of the Doctor was near the site of Trinity Church.

Macaulay Town was fairly populous at the time under review but the residents were mostly small storekeepers, mechanics, laborers, and the like. Perhaps the most notable place was the Sun Tavern kept by **T. Elliot**, of **Mackenzie** fame, to which reference has been made in a previous chapter.

The present Yonge Street front of the Eaton-Woolworth block was in 1834 occupied by two tavern keepers; three carpenters, one general store-keeper, one butcher, two blacksmiths, a turner, a person without occupation, a house in similar condition.

Across Yonge Street from here were a few places north of Lot Street, ten houses in all, which, according to the Directory, terminated Yonge Street proper and commenced Yonge Street Road. The enumeration of names, as far as what is now Bloor Street, may be reproduced: Jas. Newbigging, Esq., Dr. Robinson, Prop. Steam Saw Mills, near Windmill; The Hon. John Elmsley, Henderson & Sons, (tailors) W. Adams and W. Franks, nursery, seedsmen and market gardeners. Bloor's Brewery, J. Price, Red Lion Inn; and York General Burying Ground.

Having arrived at a stage which seems appropriate for the termination of this instalment of random and very disconnected notes, the writer lays down his pen and begs the indulgence of the unwary reader who may have been beguiled into the multifarious confused and confusing details with which he has had to struggle.

CHAPTER IV.

In the Days of the Distillery

It is impossible to say when and how the idea originated of combining a distillery with the mill. Similar arrangements were, however, at that time common enough in Upper Canada. Every miller had occasionally on his hands quantities of offal, consisting of waste grain, sweepings, etc., which he could not readily dispose of for feed, and there was seldom much market for the middlings separated in the making of flour. The conversion of the starch of this unsaleable waste material into alcohol, for which there was always a demand, was resorted to by many millers who thus turned a loss into a profit, and helped out the latter by utilizing, for swine and cattle feed, the residue of distillation.

The proprietors of the Windmill had only to look around them for precedent for such an undertaking. William Arthur, who had a distillery across the Don, seven or eight hundred feet north of Gerrard Street, just about where the old Smallpox Hospital sheds used to stand, had a good deal of his grinding done at the Windmill, and bought largely of middlings. John Maitland, who conducted the City Distillery, located on the wharf,