

THE TORONTO CARRYING PLACE AND PURCHASE

The Huron Indians used trails along both the Rouge and Humber Rivers in their trading trips, and war expeditions, and the first settlers followed the same routes.

In the early 1600's Samuel de Champlain, a Frenchman, sent a young lad named Etienne Brule, to live in the country of the Huron savages and make himself acquainted with their habits and customs. With no companions but primitive aborigines and 800 miles from any white friends he learned Indian habits and customs too well. He betrayed his country France and returned to the Huron Indians. He died by treachery.

Among white men Etienne Brule is undoubtedly the first, as a boy of eighteen he reached the Huron country five years before Champlain, and first travelled the Humber trail in 1615, as recorded in J.H. Cranston's Book "Etienne Brule" - Immortal Scoundrel". "Brule" and his twelve Huron companions travelled down the present Lake Couchiching, through Lake Simcoe and up the Holland River until they could go no further. Shouldering their canoes they completed the long twenty-mile portage to the mouth of the present Humber river, which is today Lake Ontario. This has since been called the "Carrying Place."

La Salle crossed the carrying place in 1680 and said "All baggage must be carried over the crest of high mountains". The canoes used by La Salle were 20 feet long, 3 feet wide and each carried about 12 hundred weight of merchandise.

Why the trail ran from the mouth of the Humber and not from some point nearer to its source was the fact that all rivers flowing into Lake Ontario were blocked by beaver dams and fallen timbers which the aborigines were unable to remove. The Holland river which was a dead water could not be dammed by beavers and was too wide to be obstructed by fallen timbers.

This trail according to the Indian Pioneer's map went up the West of Laskay and there was a tenting camp at Hackett's Lake, which is now at Lot 13, and Lot 14, on concession 6, King Township, about 2 miles north of Laskay.

Now a new highway named "400" between the mouth of the Humber River and the West branch of the Holland River and beyond, follows closely the course of the Toronto Carrying Place; the main route between Lake Ontario, the Huron Country and the Georgian Bay in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This new highway is one-half mile east of Laskay and crosses the Humber River directly east of Laskay.

Between 1720 and 1759 Lake Ontario was controlled by French Posts at Niagara, Toronto and the Bay of Quinte; the English were disputing their sway and secured a fair share of the trade.

In 1785 the Humber Holland Trail was surveyed and in September 1787, the preliminary negotiations with the Indians took place on the Bay of Quinte. The Township of King is part of the Toronto Purchase arranged by Sir John Johnson, as

THE TORONTO CARRYING PLACE AND PURCHASE Cont'd.

Superintendent of Indian Affairs and comprised about one-third of York County. The price in trade goods was paid to the Indians and Nathaniel Lines invoice of the goods reads as follows: "Memorandum of bales and boxes brought from Cataraque by Mr. Lines to Toronto and delivered to Colonel Butler:--6 bales Strouds 5 pieces each 30 pieces; 4 Bales Moltons each 10 pieces 40 pieces; 4 kegs hoes 49 each, 196; 8 half barrels powder; 5 boxes guns; 3 cases shott; 24 Brass Kettles; 10 kegs of ball; 200 lbs. Tobacco 47 carrots; 1 Cask containing 3 Gro. Knives; 10 Doz. looking glasses; 4 trunks of linen, 1 Hogshhead containing 18 pieces of gartering; 24 laced hats; 30 pieces Ribbon; 5 Gro. Fish Hooks; 2000 gun flints; 1 Box 60 hats; 1 bale flowered flannel 10 pieces; 5 bales 3 point blankets 16 pair each; 1 bale Broad cloth 4 pieces; 5 pieces embossed serge; 1 case Barley Corn beads; 96 gallons of rum".

The total number of Indians who had an interest in this transation was, men, women, and children, 1,107 persons.

The exploratory trip which Simcoe made in the Autumn of 1793 over the whole communication between the Lakes is the last glimpse of the Humber Holland portage. The early surveyors were careful to note it's existence when their lines crossed the old path, but as York county beacme farm land all traces vanished except at the Northern and Southern extremities. As soon as Yonge Street was opened the Humber Holland route was abandonēd.

King Township data taken from Historical Atlas of York County, 1878.

From one of the oldest records in the county, the minute book of King Township, commenced 6th of March, 1809. -- Inhabitants names 33.

James Rogers	William Hughes
John Doan	Joseph Cody
Enos Dennis	William Haines
Amos Hughes	Jacob Hollinshead
Isaac Rogers	William Tyler
William Doan	William Kennedy
Joseph Doan	Henry Harman
Mahlon Doan	Isaac Davis
Ebenezer Doan	Caleb McWilliams
Rufus Rogers	John Devine
Levi Dennis	David Love
Nathaniel Gamble, Jr.	James Love
Isaac Phillips	John Hunter
Isaac Hollinshead	Michael St. John
Thomas Taylor	Henry Sagle
John Nicol	Benjamin Kester
Benjamin Pearson	

March 28th, 1809

Total number of inhabitants -- 160

Heads of Families -- -- -- 33

May 13th, 1820 - King Township increase in inhabitants -- 278

1825	"	"	"	450
1830	"	"	"	766
1842	"	"	"	2,625
1850	"	"	"	5,574
1871	"	"	"	7,482
1881	"	"	"	6,664
1957	"	"	"	9,673

PIONEER'S REQUIREMENTS.

The Surveyor General issued from his office the 15th of July, 1794 notice -- "that all persons who have obtained assignments for land including Yonge Street leading from York to Lake Simcoe unless a dwelling house shall be built on every lot under certificate of location, and the same occupied within one year, such lots will be forfeited on the roads".

These conditions were required from settlers --

"They must within the term of two years, clear, fit for cultivation, and fence, ten acres of the lot obtained; build a house 16 X 20 feet of logs or frame, with a single roof; also cut down all the timber in front of, and the whole width of the lot, (20 chains, 135 feet wide), 35 feet of which must be cleared smooth and left for half of the public road."

In 1796 Yonge Street north to Lake Simcoe was cleared and levelled so that it was possible to travel the route with a vehicle.

PIONEER DAYS

In 1800 when the township was first surveyed King township had 30 settlers. BY 1830 King township had 766 population.

The erection of a saw mill was always the first marked event in the formation of a settlement in the bush; as the settlement increased grist or flour mills were erected. In some cases there were settlers on land before there were deeds granted, and some were squatters occupying a favorable location in the hope that they would not be disturbed.

A growing population requires the necessities of life at hand, thus stores were opened, taverns licensed and in a few years a thriving village, particularly where there is a river or stream and a good water power.

The first farming in York County was done by methods most primitive when compared with those of today. Loyalists recalled that a forked trunk of a tree was at first hauled over the ground by oxen, and that the ground so scraped, was then sown among the stumps by hand. Some pioneer farmers had the old Bull plough, with only one handle and a wooden mould-board. Heavy iron tools were used until later replaced by steel.

In harvesting the flail was early used to beat the grain out of sheaves, or horses treaded it on barn floor. In 1816 the "summerless year", almost all the grain was frozen off.

There were "bees" for all manner of activities, both of men and women. Primitive log houses and barns were erected in raising bees. The same in felling trees, making hog-heaps and burning piles and stumps; Women had bees for quilting, preserving, etc., and men joined women in husking corn, paring apples, and others, which were more frolics than work. Cattle and pigs were slaughtered at home and provided the settler with barrels of salt meat for winter or export.

Rough hewn furniture did not give way to finer until there was time and money to get it. Much hard labour was expended upon making potash and soap from hardwood ashes; making maple sugar, lime, shingles, boards and numerous other necessities. Women often rose as four in morning to spin flax and resumed that industry in evening after regular work. From flax was made ropes, harness and much of the first clothing for both winter and summer. Leather was tanned, and boots and harness made. To save shoe leather, adults and children went barefoot in homes at all seasons and outside during summer months.

If sickness came the doctoring was rough and ready, but none the less effective in most cases. What syrup and concoctions those grandmothers used to make from herbs and barks that grew in the woods about them. For colds they used

PIONEERS DAYS Cont'd.

boneset, coltsfoot and hoarhound. If they had cramps, colic or fits a little wild turnip would be grated and taken. If they took too much the cure would seem worse than the disease. For sore mouth there was gold thread, saffron for measles, sarsaparilla and burdock for the blood, onions for the croup. All kinds of bark, black cherry, prickly ash, pine, balsam and tamarac, were made into remedies for various maladies and preserved in plenty of whiskey.

Comparison of Prices:

<u>1853-58</u>		<u>1870</u>	<u>1949</u>
18 lb. - \$2.40	sugar	10 lbs. \$1.00	.9¢ lb.
1 lb. tea .96¢		.80¢	\$1.10 & up.
barrel \$5.00	flour		\$1.75 - 24 lb. bag
butter 16½¢ lb.			.73¢ per lb.
Eggs 2½ doz. -.31¢			.40¢ per doz.
raisins .13¢ per lb.			.21¢
currants - .9¢ per lb.			.23¢ per lb.
Print . 18¢ per yard			.39¢, 45¢, 69¢ per yar yard.

The first list of prices was taken from a page in the ledger book of

Joseph Baldwin, dated 1840 to 1864.

FENCES

The story of Fences goes back through the dim ages to the very beginning of man. Always there have been fences or dividing walls or stockades or bulwarks or hedges of one separating kind or another. Amongst the few municipal officers which the Government of Upper Canada permitted were the fence viewers. The word "fence" derives from the Latin "fender", to ward off, implying a confining or enclosing against human or animal intrusion.

"Good Fences make good neighbours" - Robt. Frost "Love your neighbours, yet not pull down your hedge", Geo. Herbert. In Canada rural fences have grown up with the country. Whilst materials used and construction methods varied, one might even trace it back to the lower animals for what is a beaver dam but a water fence?

Deer pounds and buffalo pounds were a form of fencing originated and used by the Indians long before the advent of the white man to North America. Undoubtedly one of the first of our North American fences was the palisade surrounding an Indian Village. A fence of posts or thick pieces of bark standing eight to nine feet high built solidly side by side was supported by heavy crosslogs and an overlapping indirect entrance. In case of enemy attack this entrance could easily be blocked by heavy logs.

Abraham Lincoln in his day was affectionately known as the "rail splitter" because of his prowess at this very tricky job. Even in those days snake rail fences meandered up hill and down dale. Because of sharp angles, and interlocking joints, they were strong and solid, but they had two drawbacks, they sheltered weeds in their corners and they took up a lot of room, but served as eating and resting places for harvesters in hot weather.

St raight rail fences built much the same way but lacking the two bad features of the snake rail fence. They succeeded the snake fence, which in turn, succeeded the stump fence, which comprised simply large tree stumps piled in a row. Stumping bees were organized in the long ago pioneer days, when neighbours assembled including their families, and their team of oxen and oversized bulding hampers of food, consisting of cooked hams, chickens, home-made pork sausage, doughnuts, pies, cake, buttermilk and raspberry vinegar. Mostly the oxen were called Buck and Bright. The soil would be loosened about the stumps and all except the tap roots cut, then with a "good all-together" steady pull by the oxen, out came another section of fencing. After a tremendous supper the local fiddler cleared a space and 'called-off' for the dancing that usually followed, accompanied by lusty singing and genuine olden time frolics.

FENCES

3

A foundry at Bolton, Ontario, made iron fences of beauty and dignity. Ornamental fencing is an important architectural feature in enclosing parks, cemeteries, reservoirs and public works of all kinds. The cost of brick fencing in Canada is now so high that it is seldom used. A hundred years ago the farmers often made their own bricks on their own farms and then built good solid brick houses, many of which are standing today.

This, then, in brief is the story of "Fences".

Material taken from the book "Fences" written by Harry Symonds, and formerly originated through the efforts of his father-in-law, the late William Perkins Bull, K.C., B.A., L.L.D. of Peel County, Ontario.

PIONEERS AND EARLY SETTLERS

1800 (Eighteen Hundred.)

In 1800 the first survey of the Township of King showed the presence of twenty residents. At this time, Indian trails, and rivers were used for travel.

Development

The development of Laskay was divided into two parts. The east and west.

East

In 1832 Joseph Baldwin, who had immigrated to this country two years before, from Yorkshire England, settled on the Lot 3, Concession five, of King Township, on the East branch of the Humber River. This property stretched from the top of Laskay Hill to the Church Road, on the East of the sixth concession.

During the same year, Joseph Baldwin married Elizabeth Simpson. Her people were Quakers and had come to this country about the same time as he. Her native home was Kirby Moorside, Yorkshire England.

Mr Baldwin had the front of his farm sub-divided into village lots, but did not register his plan. On these lots were erected a (Wollen) Woollen Mill, General Store, Post Office, Shoe Shop, Photograph Gallery, Tavern, Cooper Shop, Church and parsonage.

The mill dam was built north-east of Shields residence. A sluice was dug to take water to the mill, which was a Grist Mill and situated a little west-down the hill from Shields.

Mr Layman was the miller. Later the Stevenson Brothers took it over.

The Cooper shop was between Shiel'd farm buildings and house. Mr Warren was the cooper.

The General Store was built in 1845, at the intersection of the Mill Road and Concession six. This is its present location-our sole link with the industries of the past.



The mill dam built East of the farm buildings on the Baldwin Farm, now known as Charles Shields.