

*History  
of  
the Old French Fort  
at Toronto  
and  
Its Monument*

**Henry Scadding**

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HISTORY  
OF  
THE OLD FRENCH FORT AT TORONTO  
AND  
ITS MONUMENT.

BY  
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CANADA," "THE FIRST BISHOP OF TORONTO, A REVIEW AND A STUDY," ETC.

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“A community is wanting in self-respect which does not take an interest in its own history, and seek to preserve those records by which that history can be traced and authenticated.”

LORD LANSDOWNE AT TORONTO IN 1887.

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I.

### [Reason of the Old French Fort's Existence](#)

## CHAPTER II.

### [The Old French Fort Founded](#)

## CHAPTER III.

### [Name and Nature of the Old French Fort](#)

## CHAPTER IV.

### [Trade at the Old French Fort](#)

## CHAPTER V.

### [François Piquet's Visit to the Old French Fort](#)

## CHAPTER VI.

### [A Friend in need Wanted at the Old French Fort in 1752; and Found](#)

## CHAPTER VII.

### [The Old French Fort Destroyed](#)

## CHAPTER VIII.

[Notices of the Remains of the Old French Fort: Sir William Johnson's](#)

CHAPTER IX.

[Notices of the remains of the Old French Fort: Major Rogers'](#)

CHAPTER X.

[Notices of the Remains of the Old French Fort: Capt. Gother Mann's](#)

CHAPTER XI.

[Augustus Jones at the Site of the Old French Fort in 1793](#)

CHAPTER XII.

[Some Later Notices of the Site of the Old French Fort](#)

CHAPTER XIII.

[Site of the Old French Fort well known to the Invaders in 1813](#)

CHAPTER XIV.

[Remains of the Old French Fort Effaced, but Site Marked by a Cairn](#)

## CHAPTER XV.

### Cairn Replaced by a Memorial Column, which is Finally made a Memento of the Queen's Jubilee, in the Year 1887

## APPENDIX.

- I. MRS. S. A. CURZON'S POEM, "FORT TORONTO"
- II. GRANTS AND DONATIONS
- III. DIMENSIONS, ETC., OF MONUMENT

## INDEX

HISTORY  
OF  
THE OLD FRENCH FORT AT TORONTO  
AND ITS MONUMENT.

CHAPTER I.

REASON OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT'S EXISTENCE.

The domain of the Five Nations of the Iroquois Indians, which extended along the whole of the south side of Lake Ontario, was, for a time, regarded, in theory at least, as neutral ground by the French of New France and the English of New England. But both French and English soon shewed a desire to obtain a good foothold there, first for the purposes of trade, and secondly with a view, it cannot be doubted, to ultimate possession by treaty or otherwise.

By permission of the neighboring aborigines, La Salle, in 1679, erected a small stockade at the mouth of the Niagara River, to be simply a temporary receptacle for peltries brought down from Michilimackinac and Detroit, by way of Lake Erie, and a store-house for goods to be offered in exchange for the same; which stockade, by 1725, had become the strong, solid fortress which, with some enlargements, we see to-day in good condition, commanding the communication between the lakes Ontario and Erie. Had Fort Toronto been longer-lived than it was, it would have become, without doubt, in a short time an armed military establishment, like the other posts.

Following the French example, Governor Burnett, of the province of New York, after obtaining a nominal permission from the surrounding Iroquois, established, in 1722, a small store-house or trading post on the west side of the entrance to the River Oswego, a stream by which a communication could be conveniently maintained between the waters of Lake Ontario and those of the Mohawk river, the Hudson and the sea. Its ostensible purpose was, at the outset, the same as that of La Salle's enclosure at the mouth of the Niagara; but in 1728, Governor Burnett took care, again after the French example, that the simple stockade should be transformed into a regular fortress of stone, memorable as being the first military work on Lake Ontario whence waved the flag of England.



The effect of the English trading post at the entrance of the Oswego river was soon felt by the French traffickers in furs at Forts Niagara and Frontenac; and it became manifestly important that something should be done to neutralize, as far as possible, this unwelcome interference with the usual current of trade.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE OLD FRENCH FORT FOUNDED.

In an official Journal or Report on Canadian affairs transmitted to France in 1749, by the Governor-General of the day, the Count de la Galissonière, the Government of Louis XV. was informed that directions had been given for the building of a stockade or store-house at Toronto—so the “pass” here between the lakes Ontario and Huron was at this time styled. “On being informed,” the Report says, “that the northern Indians ordinarily went to Chouéguen with their peltries by way of Toronto, on the north-west side of Lake Ontario, twenty-five leagues from Niagara and seventy-five from Fort Frontenac, it was thought advisable to establish a post at that place, and to send thither an officer, fifteen soldiers and some workmen, to construct a small stockade fort there.” (See Paris Documents, Colonial History, State of New York, vol. X., p. 201. Albany, 1858, 4to). The name of the officer sent on this service was Portneuf.

The authorities at Versailles were always cautioning the governors of Canada against expense. Galissonière therefore thinks it prudent to observe: “The expense will not be great: the timber is transported there, and the remaining requisites will be conveyed by the barques belonging to Fort Frontenac.” He then shews how the new post may be sustained and how its main object can be secured. “Too much care,” he says, “cannot be taken to prevent those Indians (from the north) continuing their trade with the English; and to furnish them at this post with all their necessaries, even as cheap as at Chouéguen. Messrs. de la Jonquière and Bigot,” it is added, “will permit some canoes to go there on license, and will apply the funds as a gratuity to the officer in command there.” Moreover, it is said, directions must be given to regulate the prices at the other posts. “It will be necessary to order the commandants at Detroit, Niagara, and Fort Frontenac, to be careful that the traders and storekeepers of those posts furnish goods for two or three years to come, at the same rate as the English; by this means the Indians will disaccustom themselves from going to Chouéguen, and the English will be obliged to abandon that place.” (It is scarcely necessary to

say that Chouéguen is the same name as Oswego, with an initial syllable dropped and a final n retained. The M. de la Jonquière mentioned is Galissonnière's successor, just arrived, and M. Bigot is his co-adjutor or Intendant, as the expression was. It may be mentioned that a fort at the "pass at Toronto" had been suggested some years before, namely, in 1686, by Governor-General de Denonville, but its situation was to have been at the Lake Huron end of the "pass," and of a military character, so that English men, should they chance to trespass that way, might "have some one to speak to." No action, however, was taken on the suggestion).

As to the form and size of the fort at Toronto erected in 1749, we obtain very precise information in the "Memoir upon the late War in North America, in 1759-60," by Capt. Pouchot, the last French commandant at Fort Niagara. "The Fort of Toronto," Pouchot says (p. 119, vol. II.), "is at the end of the Bay (*i.e.* west end), on the side which is quite elevated, and covered (*i.e.* protected) by flat rock, so that vessels cannot approach within cannon-shot." The rock that crops up just below the site of the fort, in flat sheets, is very conspicuous when the lake is calm. Pouchot had seen the fort, but he writes in the past tense, after its destruction. "This fort or post," he says, "was a square of about thirty toises (180 feet) on a side externally, with flanks of fifteen feet. The curtains formed the buildings of the fort. It was very well built, piece upon piece; but was only useful for trade. A league west of the fort," he adds, "is the mouth of the Toronto river, which is of considerable size. This river communicates with Lake Huron by a portage of fifteen leagues, and is frequented by the Indians who come from the North." (The Humber was known then as the Toronto river, because it led up northward towards Lake Toronto (*i.e.* Lake Simcoe), just as the Montreal river falling into Lake Superior was so styled because it indicated one of the canoe routes to Montreal, and as Canada Creek, an affluent of the Mohawk river, was so called, because its channel was a water-way northwards towards Canada. For the same reason Matchedash Bay, on the old maps, was Toronto Bay (Baie de Toronto), as penetrating far inland towards Lake Toronto in a south-eastern direction; and, similarly, even the lakes forming the communication with the River Trent and the Bay of Quinté, were collectively the "Toronto lakes.")

We learn from Capt. Gother Mann's now celebrated "Plan of the Proposed Toronto Harbour," etc., dated "Quebec, 6th Dec., 1788," that there were five buildings within the stockade. He delineated them distinctly in his plan, as well as the bounds of the quadrangle enclosed by the palisades. The remains were then so prominent to the view and tangible as to justify the application to them of the term "Ruins." The group is labelled on his map,

“Ruins of a Trading Fort, Toronto.” Probably in 1788, when Gother Mann examined the spot, some of the pickets were still in position, and the charred remains of the cedar posts which supported the buildings would still be standing. These in later years had disappeared, utilized as fuel, probably, by camping-parties from time to time; but the long shallow trenches where the palisades had been planted in the ground, and the pits and irregularities in the surface of the soil, shewing in the usual way where buildings of perishable materials had once been, were very conspicuous down to the year 1878; although by that time a good deal of the space once enclosed within the palisades had fallen into the lake. (The writer himself remembers when the area shewing the remains of the old French fort was much larger on the southern side than it was in 1878, through the extension of the cliff out into the lake considerably beyond the line of the present shore. He also well remembers a vertical stain (as from decayed wood) extending some way down on the face of the cliff where the land had fallen off: this was the place, as he believed, where the flag-staff had been inserted in the ground: also a number of flag-stones from the adjoining beach, roughly laid down on the surface of the soil, where, as is likely, some great wood-stove, or the oven of the fort, had stood).

### CHAPTER III.

#### NAME AND NATURE OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT.

The name officially conferred on the newly-established post was Fort Rouillé, in compliment to Antoine Louis Rouillé, Count de Jouy, Colonial Minister of France, 1749-54, in succession to the Count Maurepas. This Count de Jouy was a distinguished personage, not only on account of the many high positions in the state which he had held, but also by reason of his patronage of literature. He was for a time at the head of the Royal Library, and was instrumental in having translations made of De Thou, Guicciardini, and other important writers. (He died in 1761). But, notwithstanding the eminence of the Minister in these several directions, his name as connected with the new trading post on the shores of Toronto Bay quickly fell into disuse. The expression Toronto was already familiar to the popular ear and in the popular speech as denoting the important canoe-landing near by, for the “pass at Toronto;” and the post became commonly known as Fort Toronto, *i.e.* the trading post at the Toronto landing. By that appellation it came to be generally spoken of, very soon after it was first established. In a despatch addressed by M. de Longueuil, Governor-General, to Rouillé

himself in 1752, we have both expressions used. Speaking of a missing soldier who had recently been sent with despatches from the post of Niagara to the post of Fort Frontenac (Kingston), via Toronto, he says: "The Commandant at Niagara, M. de la Levalterie, had detached a soldier to convey certain despatches to Fort Rouillé, with orders to the store-keeper at that post to transmit them promptly to Montreal. It is not known," he then adds, "what became of that soldier. About that time," he continues, "a Mississaga from Toronto arrived at Niagara, who informed M. de la Levalterie that he had not seen that soldier at the fort nor met with him on the way. It is to be feared that he has been killed by the Indians, and the despatches carried to the English." Then in a passage of the same communication, which will be given hereafter, M. de Longueuil makes use of the other expression, Fort Toronto.

The Intendant Bigot also again and again speaks of this establishment as Fort Toronto in the elaborate "Memoir" prepared by him in reply to certain charges of mismanagement brought against him on his return to France in 1763, and printed at Paris in that year, making however the incidental remark, that it was for some time known as Fort Rouillé. We learn from the same Memoir that Fort Toronto was from the outset a Royal Post, *i.e.* that the trade carried on there was for the benefit of the King's Exchequer. In a despatch to Rouillé himself, copied in the Memoir, he refers to great expenses incurred at Fort Oswegatchie (Ogdensburg) through the necessity of supplying food to the Indians there; but then he hopes, he says, to recoup himself for these expenses by the trade carried on at Toronto, "where large quantities of goods ('effets') are required for that purpose."

## CHAPTER IV.

### TRADE AT THE OLD FRENCH FORT.

During the brief span of its existence, there was not time for Fort Toronto to develop into a first-class trading post. From its proximity to Niagara it was, in certain points of view, a dependency of the fort there. In 1754 the occupants of Fort Niagara were twenty-four soldiers, five officers, two sergeants, one drummer, a chaplain, a surgeon, and a store-keeper; and the number of canoes annually despatched thither with supplies was ten; while at Fort Toronto there were only five soldiers, one officer, two sergeants, and a store-keeper; and the number of canoes sent up with goods was five. Each canoe destined for the western forts was freighted with a cargo worth about seven thousand French livres, and the price given for

good beaver was from three livres ten sous to five livres per pound. As we have already seen, a considerable supply of “effects” was required at Fort Toronto to make it answer the purpose of its establishment. From the outset it was foreseen that the business done there would diminish that done at Forts Frontenac and Niagara. But it was argued: “If there be less trade at these two last-mentioned forts, there will be less transportation of merchandise: what will be lost on the one side will be gained on the other, and it will amount to much the same thing in the end. The King will even reap a great advantage, if we can accomplish the fall of Chouéguen by disgusting the Indians with that place, and this can be effected only by selling cheap to them.”

Season after season then, for ten years, we may suppose a great variety of scenes occurring within and around the palisades of Fort Toronto, characteristic of the period and the special circumstances and condition of the immediate locality. Along the Indian road or trail from the North, bands of Mississagas (who were simply Otchipways from Lakes Huron and Superior), would come down, bringing with them the furs collected during the hunting season, together with other articles of merchandise, the handiwork of themselves and their squaws in the lodges during the winter months. Bands bearing the same tribal appellation, and laden with similar burdens, would arrive also from the West, travelling along through the “Mississaga Tract” by a path on the north shore of the lake; and some, moreover, would make their way thither from the westward in canoes. The trees which lined the broad sandy beach from the mouth of the Humber to what in modern days has been known as the Dugway, was a very favourable situation for encampments. This space would be dotted over with numerous temporary wigwams; and a double file of traffickers, male and female, would be seen on the track leading eastward toward the Stockade on the cliff a little way down the bay,—some going, eager to effect sales, others returning, pleased, or the contrary, with terms secured, or gloating over some useful or shewy purchase just made.

At this Stockade on the cliff were thus spread out for the first time in these parts the products of human industry, for critical inspection and mutual interchange.

Displayed on the greensward inside the palisades, on the one side were wares brought laboriously hither from the Old World across the sea; and on other, also brought laboriously hither, often from considerable distances, the ordinary products of the country, as it then was: the outcome of the common pursuits and toil of the natives of the land, with specimens of their

handiwork and ingenuity, rude it may be, in aspect, but evincing instincts, tendencies and capacities in germ, identical with those of the more favoured members of the human family with whom they were here confronted. On the one side, we have the Frenchman, all activity, and fluent of speech, exhibiting to the best advantage, cheap fabrics in wool, in cotton, in flax, and it may be, to a limited extent, in silk, from the looms of old France, cloths, linens, ribbons, braids, very pronounced in colour and pattern, to suit the “savage” fancy; together with cutlery of a certain class: hatchets, knives, and simple tools; kettles, of brass and iron; fusils, powder and shot and ball; beads, toys, mirrors, silver trinkets. On the other side we see the red man of the North, sedate in manner, taciturn, keen-sighted withal and shrewd, opening out his peltries of various kinds, his beaver, otter, fox, marten, deer, bear, wolf and buffalo skins; his moccasins and shoe-packs of well-cured buckskin and buffalo-hide; his birch-bark mokuks filled with pemmican or maize or dried berries; his bass-wood baskets, chequered red, white and blue; pouches, belts and leggings fringed and adorned with the stained quills of the porcupine; snowshoes, bows and arrows, carved war clubs, stone pipes.

The fascinating, fatal fire-water was forbidden to be offered in open traffic, but some supply of it was not far off, to be dispensed in occasional treats.

Here, then, at the primitive Fort Toronto was inaugurated, on a humble scale, the commerce which has been so happily since developed on the shores of the adjoining bay; the commerce now represented by manifold symbols and signs in every quarter of the widespread city of Toronto—the well-supplied stores of King Street, Yonge Street and Queen Street, the grand warehouses of Wellington Street and Front Street; the freight depôts, elevators, steamers, trains, crowded platforms and wharves of the Esplanade, and, though last to be mentioned, yet by no means the least in significance and importance, by the multitudinous assemblage of buildings with their multifarious contents, animate and inanimate; as seen during the time of the September exhibition of each successive year, in the great Industrial Exhibition Park, of which the monument commemorative of the early trading post now forms so conspicuous an ornament.

I have more than once spoken in other publications of a certain early MS. map which I once had the advantage of seeing in England, in which over a small group of little tent-shaped huts on the shore of Toronto bay, was written, “Toronto, an Indian village, now deserted.” As there is nothing to

lead us to suppose that there was ever at this point a village of sedentary Indians, it is reasonable to conjecture that the inscription in question was occasioned by a sight of the dismantled wigwams on the strand at the terminus of the Indian road from the north, without a knowledge of their origin and periodical use. Bouchette's two or three Mississaga families that, according to his experience, were the only inhabitants of the shore of Toronto bay in 1792, were perhaps simply casual utilizers of the same frail apologies for houses, during a hunting or fishing excursion.

## CHAPTER V.

### FRANÇOIS PIQUET'S VISIT TO THE OLD FRENCH FORT.

François Piquet was a presbyter of the French Church in Canada, a member of the religious confraternity of St. Sulpice. He was a man of great zeal and enterprise; and in 1749 accomplished, almost unaided, the establishment of a mission at the mouth of the River Oswegatchie (opposite the modern Prescott), in the territory of the Iroquois Indians. By 1752, the Oswegatchie mission, after some disastrous experience, had developed in the usual way into an important trading post and centre of French influence, especially among the Onondaga, Oneida and Cayuga native tribes. In 1752 Piquet made an exploratory tour of Lake Ontario. A king's boat was supplied to him for the purpose. His journal of the expedition has been printed. In June he was at Fort Frontenac. Here he found the Indian trade ruined by the English post at Chouéguen (Oswego). He complains of the fare he met with at Fort Frontenac: the pork and bacon were very bad; and there was not brandy enough in the fort to wash a wound. He passed on to the Bay of Quinté and visited the site of a mission formerly established there by two brother presbyters of the Sulpician order, Dollières de Kleus and D'Urfé. On the twenty-sixth of June he reached the new fort of Toronto, which offered a striking contrast to Fort Frontenac. "The wine here is of the best," Piquet says; "nothing is wanting in the fort; everything is abundant, fine and good." He found a number of Mississaga Indians there, who, he says, flocked around him, and spoke of the happiness their young people, the women and children, would feel if the King of France would be as good to them as to the Iroquois Indians, for whom he provided missionaries. They complained that for them, instead of building a Church, only a canteen had been constructed. He would not, however, allow them to proceed any further, and answered them to the effect that they had been treated according to their fancy; that they had never evinced the least zeal for religion; that

their conduct was much opposed to it; that the Iroquois Indians, on the contrary, had manifested their love for Christianity. He was strongly impelled to persuade them to join him at his mission at Oswegatchie, but the governor-in-chief had commanded him to confine his efforts to the Iroquois tribes; so, lest the ardor of his zeal should betray him to disobedience, he embarked and encamped six leagues from temptation. Two days more brought him round the head of the lake to Niagara, where he was warmly received by the commandant, the chaplain, and the store-keeper. The next day he proceeded to the trading place above the Falls: and in connection with his observations on these two posts, he refers again to the post at Toronto, and expresses the opinion that the storehouses there should not be kept up, because the trade at Fort Frontenac and Niagara was thereby diminished. "It was necessary," he says, "to supply Niagara, and especially the trading places above the Falls, rather than Toronto. The difference," he says, "between the two first named of these posts, and the last, is that three or four hundred canoes could come loaded with furs to the Portage (*i.e.*, the post above the Falls); and that no canoes at all could go to Toronto, except those which otherwise must necessarily have gone to Niagara or Fort Frontenac, such as those of the Ottawas of the head of the lake and the Mississagas; so that Toronto could not but diminish the trade of these two ancient posts, which would have been sufficient to stop all the savages had the stores been furnished with goods to their liking." The store-keeper at Niagara had told him that the Indians compared the silver trinkets which were procured at Chouéguen with those which were procured at the French posts, and they found that the Chouéguen articles were as heavy as the others, of purer silver and better workmanship, but did not cost them quite two beavers, whilst for those offered for sale at the French King's posts ten beavers were demanded. Thus we are discredited, and this silverware remains a pure loss in the King's stores. "French brandy, indeed," Piquet reprovingly adds, "was preferred to the English (rum); nevertheless that did not prevent the Indians from going to Chouéguen. To destroy the trade there, the King's posts ought to have been supplied with the same goods as Chouéguen, and at the same price." The closing up of the establishment at Toronto, however, as we shall presently see, was destined to be brought about in the way differing from that suggested. (See Colonial Documents, N.Y., X., 201, where the name is given as Picquet; and Parkman's Montcalm and Wolfe I., 68, and II. Appendix.)



## CHAPTER VI.

### A FRIEND IN NEED WANTED AT THE OLD FRENCH FORT IN 1752; AND FOUND.

The increasing encroachments of the English colonists on the territories owned or claimed by the French Crown, created a general uneasiness throughout New France in 1751-2. The policy adopted by these aggressive neighbours, of encouraging a strong anti-French feeling among the Indians everywhere, was very troublesome. In a despatch already quoted, dated in 1752, we learn that the inmates of the weak and solitary trading post at Toronto were kept in a state of much anxiety from this cause. M. de Longueuil, governor-general, informs the minister at Versailles that the store-keeper at Toronto had been assured by some trustworthy Indians, that the Salteaux, *i.e.*, Otchipways of the Sault, the same in fact as the Mississagas, had dispersed themselves round the head of Lake Ontario; and seeing himself surrounded by them, he doubts not but they have some evil design on his fort. "There is no doubt," M. de Longueuil then observes, "but it is the English who are inducing the Indians to destroy the French, and that they would give a good deal to get the savages to destroy Fort Toronto, on account of the essential injury it does their trade at Chouéguen." And again in October of the same year de Longueuil writes of various outrages that had been committed on Frenchmen by Indians in the south-west, on the Wabash and the Illinois rivers. "Every letter," he says, "brings news of murder; we are menaced with a general outbreak, and even Toronto is in danger. Before long the English on the Miami will gain over all the surrounding tribes, get possession of Fort Chartres, and cut our communications with Louisiana." Such a condition of things could not continue long. In 1756 open hostilities commenced between England and France on the question of boundaries on this continent: and the conflict, afterwards known as the Seven Years' War, began, which ended in the cession of almost all the French domain in America to England. In 1757 the fort at Toronto was the scene of a plot which Capt. Pouchot, the commandant at Niagara, was the means of frustrating. It appears from Pouchot's narrative (I., 82) that a contingent of Mississaga Indians to the number of ninety, proceeding to Montreal to assist the French in the defence of that place, conceived, as it seemed to them, the happy thought, of pillaging Fort Toronto, as they passed, notwithstanding that it belonged to their friends. The supply of brandy, supposed to be stowed away somewhere therein, was the temptation. The only persons

within the fort at the time were M. Warren, the store-keeper, and ten men under M. de Noyelle. The latter had been secretly apprised of the plot by a French domestic. A canoe with two men was instantly despatched, unobserved by the conspirators, to Fort Niagara across the lake. Capt. Pouchot, in command there, on hearing the story, lost no time in despatching two officers, Capt. de la Ferté and M. de Pinsun, with sixty-one men, in two bateaux, each armed with a swivel gun at the bow. They reached Toronto at four o'clock in the afternoon of the next day. They found the Mississagas still encamped near the fort; and passing in front of them the boats saluted their wigwams with "artillery and musket balls," directed, however, into the air, as Capt. Pouchot had given orders. The Indians were immediately summoned to attend a council. They were greatly astonished at the adventure, Capt. Pouchot tells us, and confessed everything; they had false news delivered to them, they said, to the effect that the English had beaten the French. But the true reason of their action, Pouchot adds, was that they felt themselves in force, and could get plenty of brandy for nothing.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE OLD FRENCH FORT DESTROYED.

The moves on the world's chess-board followed one another in rather quick succession in the remote portion of it occupied by New France. In 1756 de la Jonquière's suggestion, of which we have already heard, that the French should become masters of Chouéguen, was carried into effect by no less a personage than Montcalm himself, who afterwards fell at Quebec. This blow to English interests was, however, returned three years later by Col. Bradstreet's capture of Fort Frontenac, and the destruction there of nine armed French sloops. At the same period, Chouéguen was recovered by Col. Haldimand for its former possessors. Fort Niagara was now the only remaining strong post on Lake Ontario not in English hands. In 1758, after the capture of Fort Frontenac, M. de Vaudreuil, governor-general, the second of that name, wrote to the Minister de Messiac: "If the English should make their appearance at Toronto, I have given orders to burn it at once, and to fall back on Niagara." Then in the following year we have him informing the same Minister that he had ordered down what reinforcements he could, from the Illinois and Detroit, for the protection of Fort Niagara. "These forces," he says, "would proceed to the relief of Niagara should the enemy wish to besiege it; and I have in like manner," he adds, "sent orders to Toronto to collect the Mississagas and other nations and forward them to Niagara."

About this time, watchers on the ramparts of Fort Niagara would see ascending from a point on the far horizon to the north-west, across the lake, a dark column of smoke—sure indication of the fact that the orders of de Vaudreuil were being executed, and that in a few hours, all that the English or any one else, on approaching Toronto, would discover of the once flourishing trading post there would be five heaps of charred timber and planks, with a low chimney stack of coarse brick and a shattered flooring at its foot, made of flag-stones from the adjoining beach, the whole surrounded on the inland side by three lines of cedar pickets more or less broken down and scathed by fire.

On the 25th of June (1759), after a siege of about three weeks, first by Gen. Prideaux, who was accidentally killed in the trenches, and then by Sir William Johnson, who succeeded to the command, the fortress of Niagara fell, with the loss on the part of the beseigers of 63 killed and 185 wounded.

The fort or trading post above the Falls, known as Little Niagara and Fort Schlosser, where stands now the village of La Salle, had been also, like Fort Toronto, previously committed to the flames, after removing its contents and little detachment of guards, to the principal fort, at the mouth of the Niagara river.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### NOTICES OF THE REMAINS OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT: SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON'S.

To make assurance doubly sure, Sir William Johnson, after getting possession of Fort Niagara, lost little time in sending over to Toronto, to give, should it be found necessary to do so, the *coup-de-grace* to the fort there. On the 28th of July (1759), he writes in his Journal: "The evening of the 27th I sent three whale-boats with a party of above thirty men to reconnoitre Fort Toronto, and on their return propose to send to destroy it." Then on the 30th he writes: "At night Lieutenant Francis returned from Toronto, and reported that the enemy had burned and abandoned that post, and destroyed many things which they could not take along, viz., working utensils, arms, etc. A Chippeway chief came to me with Mr. Francis, in order to speak with me."

The subsequent interview with the chief, who represented the tribes along the north shore of the lake, was an incident of considerable importance. On the 2nd of August Sir William gave formal audience to this

chief, whose name was written down as Tequakareigh. The scene is described in the Journal at some length. Sir William writes:—"With a string and two belts of wampum I bid him welcome, and shook him by the hand. By the second, which was a black belt, I took the hatchet out of the hands of his and all the surrounding nations: recommended hunting and trade to them, which would be more to their interest than quarrelling with the English, who have ever been their friends, and supplied them at the cheapest rates with the necessaries of life, and would do it again, both here (Niagara) and at Oswego, provided they quitted the French interest. This I desired he would acquaint all the surrounding nations with. A black belt, the third and last, was to invite his, and all other nations living near them, to repair early next spring to this place and Oswego, where there should be a large assortment of all kinds of goods fit for their use; also recommended it to them to send some of their young men here to hunt and fish for the garrison, for which they would be paid, and kindly treated. Told them at the same time that I would send some of my interpreters, etc., with him on the lake to the next town of the Mississagas, with whom I desired he would use his best endeavours to convince them that it would be to their interest to live in friendship with the English, and that we had no ill intentions against them, if they did not oblige us to it. To which he (Tequakareigh) answered, and said it gave him great pleasure to hear so good words, and was certain it would be extremely agreeable to all the nations with whom he was acquainted, who, with his, were wheedled and led on to strike the English, which he now confessed he was sorry for, and assured me they never would again; and that should the French, according to custom, ask them to do so any more, they would turn them out of the country. He at the same time begged earnestly that a plenty of goods might be brought here and to Oswego; and there they, as well as all the other nations around, would come and trade; and their young men should hunt for their brothers, whom they now took fast hold of by the hand, and called upon the Six Nations, who were present, to bear witness to what he had promised. He also desired I would send some person to the Mississaga town, near where Toronto stood, to hear what he should say to their nation, and to see that he would deliver my belts and message honestly. I clothed him very well," Sir William adds, "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."

## CHAPTER IX.

### NOTICES OF THE REMAINS OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT: MAJOR ROGERS'.

In 1760, the site of Fort Toronto was visited and reported on by Major Robert Rogers, an officer distinguished in the late French war, the hero of "Rogers' Slide," still pointed out on Lake George, opposite "Antony's Nose." Although he does not happen to have made a note of the remains of the fort, but only speaks in general terms of "the place where formerly the French had a fort," he gives the interesting information that the woods had been cleared away over an area of about three hundred acres immediately around it, partly, doubtless, for fuel during the ten years of the fort's occupancy, but partly also at the outset for pickets and supports of buildings and other purposes about the establishment, and for security against sudden surprise. Major Rogers was on his way to take formal possession of the forts in the west just vacated by the French. He has left an account of his movements when on this mission. On the 13th of September he started from Montreal with two hundred Rangers in fifteen whale-boats. After describing the several stages of his journey up to about what is now Port Hope, his approach to Toronto is thus narrated:—"The wind being fair, the 30th of September (1760) we embarked at the first dawn of day, and with the assistance of sails and oars, made great way on a south-west course, and in the evening reached the River Toronto (*i.e.*, the Humber), having run seventy miles. . . . There was a tract of about three hundred acres of cleared ground round the place where formerly the French had a fort, called Fort Toronto. The soil here, he observes, is principally clay. The deer are extremely plenty 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 we could easily accomplish our journey from thence to Detroit in eight days; that when the French traded at that place the Indians used to come with their peltry from Michilimackinac down the River Toronto; that the portage was but twenty miles from that to a river falling into Lake Huron (Holland River, Lake Simcoe and the Severn, considered as one stream). I think Toronto," the Major adds, "a most convenient place for a factory (*i.e.* a trading post); and that from thence we may easily settle the north side of Lake Erie. We left Toronto the 1st of October, steering south right across the west end of Lake Ontario. At dark we arrived at the south shore, five miles west of Fort Niagara, some of our boats having now become exceedingly leaky and dangerous."

## CHAPTER X.

### NOTICES OF THE REMAINS OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT: CAPTAIN GOTHER MANN'S.

In 1788, Capt. Gother Mann, an eminent officer of the Royal Engineers, acting under orders, examined Toronto harbour and peninsula; took soundings, delineated roughly the course of the then unnamed Don where it enters the bay, and the great inlet into the marsh in the direction of Ashbridge's Bay: he noted likewise, with a double row of dotted lines on the western portion of his map, "Part of the road towards Lake La Clie," *i.e.* Lake Simcoe, which comes down with a bold zig-zag towards the mouth of the Humber. But what is more to the present purpose, Gother Mann gives a miniature ground-plan of the old French fort, shewing by dotted lines the place of the pickets which formed the stockade on the three inland sides, with five small oblong parallelograms enclosed, denoting doubtless the principal store-house (a little in advance of the rest), and quarters for the keeper, soldiers, and other men usually in charge of the place. The whole group occupies of course the exact area which used to be known to all early inhabitants as "the old French fort," and is labelled by Capt. Mann, at the top, "Ruins of a Trading Fort," and underneath, in continuation, "Toronto." In 1788, wind and weather, and camp-fires from time to time in the neighbourhood, had not yet brought about the changes afterwards so effectually wrought; and the "ruins" could be delineated with ease. The whole locality was examined by Capt. Mann in anticipation of a future town, township and settlement, to be established hereabout by the government in due time. The title of the map is as follows: "Plan of the proposed Toronto Harbour, with the proposed Town and Port by the Settlement;" and he had been directed to give an opinion as to the best position for a military work calculated to protect the new establishment whenever it should be called into existence. Accordingly, on his Plan he marks with the letter A, a little to the east of the site of the old Trading Post, the spot which he thought to be the fittest for the purpose indicated—the spot in fact occupied at the present day by the "Stone Barracks" at Toronto; and to show the character of the channel he gives, from this point slantingly across the entrance into the harbour, to the point of the peninsula on the opposite side, the soundings in fathoms: 2, 2½, 3, 4, 4, 3½, 3½, 1½, 1. To show that a military work at the spot marked A would be calculated to give protection to a settlement along the northern shore of the bay, he draws on his map a fancy town-plot exactly four-square, consisting of eleven equal-sized blocks, each way, with a broad belt of "Ground reserved" in front, and a large patch of "Common" in the rear.

Moreover, the surrounding country from the line of the Humber to some way east of the Don, he cuts up into Concessions and farm-lots and roads after the usual fashion, with the utmost regularity, quite irrespective of hill and dale, river, ravine or morass.

[It should be added that Capt. Mann, through some caprice, elected in his Plan to spell "Toronto" with an e in the second syllable; carried away, probably, like Capt. Bonnycastle at a later date, by a notion that there was something Italian in the name, and being quite unacquainted with its real origin and meaning. In his Report to Lord Dorchester, accompanying the Plan, Capt. Mann, it is to be observed, adopts the ordinary and proper form of the word.]

## CHAPTER XI.

### AUGUSTUS JONES AT THE SITE OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT IN 1793.

The pioneer land surveyor, Augustus Jones, largely employed by Governor Simcoe in laying out for the first time several portions of Upper Canada, set off and partially described, in 1793, a series of lots forming a broken front Concession on the edge of Lake Ontario, stretching westward from the boundary between the townships of York and Scarborough. The interval between this line and a line running north from the mouth of "St. John's River," *i.e.* the Humber, measured along a base line now represented by Queen Street, was divided into thirty-nine lots, each twenty chains in width, with a public roadway of one chain in width after every fifth lot. (A roadway of the same width was also left between York and Scarborough). At the western limit of each lot he passed down southward, at right angles to the base line, to the water's edge, where he planted a post. As he chains out this western limit of each lot, he makes notes of the timber, soil and character of surface. Although his descriptions have, all of them, more or less interest for the present occupants of this region, we are not particularly concerned with them just now, until we come to the western limit of lot number 29. In running this line he comes out upon the clearing in the woods which Major Rogers spoke of as having been made round the old French fort Toronto. On the 10th of July, 1793, he makes this entry in his Field Book: "Lot 29. A Post on the bank a little below the old Fort" [*i.e.* he chains down from his baseline (Queen Street) to the water's edge, and plants a post

there, a little to the east of the site of the old French fort]. His description of the surface, etc., then follows. "At 2.50 (two chains, fifty links from the base line) a wet hole; at 6.50 a small creek running to the left (*i.e.* eastward: some little affluent of the garrison creek); at 8.70 a wet hole; at 14 chains a wet hole; at 19 chains wet one chain across; at 20.50 a wet hole 75 links across; at 35 chains a swamp; at 48 chains a small creek running to the left; at 57.50 a wet hole; at 60.50 wet two chains across; at 63 chains to low wet ground, which continues to near the Lake, 8 chains. At 52 chains to where the Trees have formerly been cut down, now grown up with small saplings. Timber: tall birch, maple, black oak, hickory; a few hemlocks. The soil on the top appears black and loose; underneath, a hard clay." He now returns to his base line and chains down, as before, the western boundary of the next lot. His entry is: "Tuesday, 16th [July, 1793], Lot 30. To a Post on the bank of the Lake, At 2.50 a low wet hole; at 13.40 a swamp two chains across; at 23.70 a swamp three chains across; at 41 chains, where the timber had been cut down at the time the French built the Fort (*i.e.* he comes out again on the three-hundred-acre clearing mentioned by Major Rogers); at 54 chains on a ridge descending to 56 chains; at 61 chains to clear ground; at 66.40 on the bank of the Lake about two chains (*i.e.* 132 feet or 44 yards) above the old Fort (*i.e.* to the west of the site of the old Fort). Timber: beech, maple, hemlock, and oak: clay soil." The western boundary of Lot No. 31 is next run. Starting again from the base, it terminates, after 57 chains have been measured, at a point where a post was planted "about two chains above the Blacksmith's old house" (the remains probably of a forge for the benefit of Indians and others requiring repairs for implements, guns, etc., and placed at that distance for safety's sake). After Lot 30, as after every other fifth lot of the Broken Front range, an allowance for road (one chain) was left. This allowance for road is now Dufferin Street, at the western limit of the Exhibition Park; and is still to-day the dividing line between Lot 30 (included in the Park) and Lot 31 (commonly known, until recent subdivision into building lots, etc., as Dr. Gwynne's property).

We thus have it conclusively demonstrated from the Field Book of the original surveyor of the "Broken Front" Concession of York, that the old French Fort Toronto was situated near the edge of the lake, between the east and west boundaries of Lot No. 30, and about two chains from the said western boundary. That is, it was situated in the angle formed by the lake-shore and the said western boundary, two chains east of that boundary; and any one who may take the trouble to make the experiment by actual admeasurement, will find that two chains (132 feet or 44 yards) from Dufferin Street, *i.e.* the boundary between lots 30 and 31, will conduct him



to the spot where the monument commemorative of the old French Fort Toronto has been built.

## CHAPTER XII.

### SOME LATER NOTICES OF THE SITE OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT.

The remains of the old French fort, slight as they were, constituted, in the absence of grander "ruins," one of the "sights" in the vicinity of the infant capital of Upper Canada, and as such they were usually mentioned in the early printed accounts of the place. In 1799 appeared David William Smyth's Topographical Description and Provincial Gazetteer of Upper Canada. Its full title reads as follows: "A Short Topographical Description of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada, in North America, to which is annexed a Provincial Gazetteer. London: published by W. Faden, Geographer to His Majesty and to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Charing Cross, 1799. Printed by W. Bulmer and Co., Russell Court, Cleveland Row, St. James'." It is said in the Preface to have been drawn up by "David William Smyth, Esq., the very able Surveyor-General of Upper Canada, on the plan of the late Captain Hutchins, for the River Ohio, and the countries adjacent." Speaking of York, in the Topographical Description, the compiler of this work says: "In passing out of the harbour of York, to the westward, you see the garrison on the mainland at the entrance of the harbour, which, and the block-houses on Gibraltar Point, are its security; and a little to the westward of the garrison are the remains of the old French Fort Toronto; adjoining to which is a deep bay that receives the River Humber, on which are saw-mills belonging to government; a little way up the river the government yacht is building." Then again under York, in the Gazetteer part: "The remains of the old French Fort Toronto stand a little to the westward of the present garrison, and the River Humber discharges itself into Lake Ontario, about two miles and a half west of that; on this river and the Don are excellent mills, and all the waters abound in fish." In 1813 appeared a second edition of D. W. Smyth's work, published under the immediate inspection of Governor Gore, who was resident at the time in London. In this re-issue these allusions to the remains of the old French Fort Toronto are unchanged.

In 1805 was published in London a "Sketch of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada, by D'Arcy Boulton, Barrister-at-Law," a thin quarto volume of ninety-nine pages, very handsomely printed. At the end are seven pages of "Subscribers' Names." It has an excellent map, and is dedicated "To the

King.” The author of this work was afterwards better known in Upper Canada as Mr. Justice Boulton. In this Sketch, the remains of the old French Fort Toronto are not overlooked. In connection with York they are spoken of in terms almost identical with those employed by Surveyor-General Smyth.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE SITE OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT WELL KNOWN TO THE INVADERS IN 1813.

In 1813 York was captured by a United States force. In the accounts of that incident, the remains of the old French Fort Toronto again curiously come into view. Their site, it appears, was well known to the American authorities, and in the original plan of operations against York, the spot selected for the debarkation of the troops was there, although the landing actually took place some distance to the west of that point.

Mr. John Lewis Thomson, in “Historical Sketches of the Late War,” writes thus (p. 120):—“Agreeably to a previous arrangement with the Commodore, General Dearborn and his suite, with a force of 1,700 men, embarked [at Sackett’s Harbour] on the 22nd and 23rd of April 1813, but the prevalence of a violent storm prevented the sailing until the 25th. On that day it moved into Lake Ontario, and, having a favourable wind, arrived safely [before York] at seven o’clock on the morning of the 27th, about one mile to the westward of the ruins of Fort Toronto, and two and a half from the town of York. The execution of that part of the plan which applied immediately to the attack upon York was confided to Col. Pike of the 15th Regiment, who had been promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General, and the position which had been fixed upon for landing the troops was the site of the old Fort. The approach of the fleet being discovered from the enemy’s garrison, General Sheaffe, the British Commandant, hastily collected his whole force, consisting of 750 regulars and militia and 100 Indians, and disposed them in the best manner to resist the landing of the American force. . . . Bodies of Indians were observed in groups in different directions in and about the woods below the site of the fort, and numbers of horsemen stationed in the clear ground surrounding it. . . . At eight o’clock the debarkation commenced; at ten it was completed. Major Forsyth and his riflemen, in several large bateaux, were in the advance. They pulled vigorously for the designated ground at the site, but were forced by a strong wind a considerable distance above,” etc.

In Auchinleck's "History of the War of 1812-'13-'14," published at Toronto in 1855, a full-page plate is given (p. 186) illustrative of the capture of York. Letters identify the points of interest with great precision, as follows: A. The Humber; B. Place where Americans landed; C. Old French Fort; D. Western Battery; E. Half-moon Battery; F. Garrison Garden; G. Government House, Garrison and Magazine; H. Ships and Stores burned by British. The Lake road, Garrison road, and business part of York in 1812, are also given, and the note is appended: "The plate represents in addition, the city of Toronto as it now is. [The present streets and wards are indicated.] The woods, however, have been left as they were [*i.e.*, in 1812], to mark the difficulty which attended military movements generally." In the plate the letter C. is placed with great accuracy in the angle between the line of the shore and the road now known as Dufferin Street, on the east side of the road; and B., the spot where the Americans landed, is seen very near where Queen Street, if produced in a right line, would strike the water, which also indicates what was the generally known fact. It is understood that Mr. Auchinleck, while writing his work on the war, which appeared originally in successive numbers of Mr. Maclear's *Anglo-American Magazine* in 1853, *et seq.*, had the advantage of the best information, derived from such sources as Chief Justice Robinson, Mr. Chewett, and many other gentlemen, late survivors of the critical period, who from personal experience, were well acquainted with all particulars connected with the war. This renders the carefully prepared plate at p. 176 of Mr. Auchinleck's *History* of great value, as fixing with certainty, for future students, the exact situation of a number of localities possessing great interest, especially for inhabitants of Toronto.

#### NOTE.

Lossing's *Pictorial Field Book of the War of 1812*, published by the Harpers in New York in 1869, is a very valuable and most interesting work, which will long be a popular book of reference. It is important, therefore, and will be in place here, to point out and to correct several of its inaccuracies in regard to the old French Fort at Toronto. When Mr. Lossing visited Toronto in 1860, for the purpose of personally examining the scene of action, where the capture of York was effected in 1813, by an American armed force, and making sketches for the forthcoming publication, he sought out and obtained an interview with Mr. John Ross, a surviving veteran of 1812, and at the time the leading local undertaker of Toronto. Mr. Lossing obtained from Mr. Ross accurate information as to the situation of the old French Fort, but unfortunately, being up in years and an invalid, Mr. Ross did not accompany Mr. Lossing to the spot. "Mr. Ross gave me such

minute and clear directions concerning the interesting places in and around Toronto, that I experienced no difficulty in finding them," Mr. Lossing writes p. 592. "I hired a horse and light waggon, and a young man for driver, and spent a great portion of the day in the hot sun." Unluckily this young man had not the familiar knowledge of the different localities that Mr. Ross had; and the consequence was that Mr. Lossing mistook the "Butts," set up in quite modern times, for rifle practice, "about 60 rods west of the New Barracks," considerably east of the real site, for remains of the old French Fort. This is evident from the sketch which he gives, and his explanatory remarks thereon. Mr. Lossing writes: "The principal remains of the Fort, in which may be seen some timber-work placed there when the fort was partially repaired in the winter of 1812-13 [so he fancied], are seen in the foreground. They presented abrupt heaps covered with sod. On the right, in the distance is seen Gibraltar Point, with the trees springing from the low sandy surface. On the left are the New Barracks." The supposition that the old French Fort was repaired with a view to defence in 1812-13, was purely imaginary. The timber-work spoken of, and conspicuously shewn in the sketch, was part of the construction of the "Butts." There never were any remains of the old French fort of this conspicuous sort. The establishment here was, as I have again and again had occasion to set forth, simply an Indian trading post during the whole period of its existence, and not a military work. Curiously enough, the rough, irregular protuberances in the soil, on one of which, in the immediate foreground, the artist represent himself as sitting while sketching the view before him, with the young driver standing by him, really *were* the genuine remains which he was in search of. Exactly where he was sitting were scattered about plentiful vestiges of the vanished buildings of the old French Fort, shallow pits where the supports of the houses had been, and where the chimney stack had stood, and the shallow trenches or furrows formed by the earth slightly raised on each side, along where the palisades had formerly been planted in the ground.

The impression in the mind of the writer that the old Fort Toronto had been a military work is also seen in the wood-cut map (p. 590) where the shape of "Fort Toronto" is made to be, on the smallest scale of course, but very distinctly, a fortress in the Vauban style, with the regulation angles, bastions, etc. (In S. G. Goodrich's Pictorial History of America, another popular work published in New York in 1854, there is to be seen a cut entitled "the death of Pike," given in connection with the capture of York in 1813. In it York figures in the distance as quite an important city, with several towers, spires, etc.) While correcting Lossing, it will be as well to

point out some further errors at p. 587 in the text and appended note. The Blockhouse spoken of in line 12 from top, was situated on the bank of the artificial channel known as the "Little Don," not far from the first Parliament Buildings. It commanded the road which led from the "Carrying Places" or narrow part of the Island. This is quite a different position from "the high east bank of the Don, just beyond the present bridge at the eastern termination of King and Queen Streets." The portion of the note below that requires correction is the following: "It (the island) is low and sandy—so low that from the moderate elevation of the town (fifteen or twenty feet above the water) the dark line of the lake may be seen over it. Upon it were, and still are, some trees which, at first glance, seem to be standing on the water. This gave the name of Tarontah, an Indian word signifying "trees on the water," to the place. When the French built a fort there, westward of the extreme western end of the peninsula (which was called Gibraltar Point), they named it Fort Tarontah or Toronto." In this passage, etymology, orthography and history are all at fault. The name given to the fort built here by the French was Fort Rouillé. The word Toronto did not originate here: it had nothing to do with the trees on the peninsula here: it travelled down hither from Lake Simcoe in the north, which, at least one hundred years before the French built the fort, was well known as Lake Toronto (spelt exactly so on early maps). The predominant traditional interpretation of the word used to be "Place of Meeting," the allusion being to the populous region between Lake Toronto and Lake Huron, the grand rendezvous of the Huron or Wyandot tribes, down to the year 1649. The 'trees in the water' theory of interpretation was a late afterthought, an ingenious guess on the part of some one who had heard of an Iroquois word with some such meaning, obscurely resembling Toronto in sound. Lewis H. Morgan, in his "League of the Iroquois," wrote down the fancied term as "Deonda"; so *his* ear had caught it. Not only, as has once before been stated, was Lake Simcoe Lake Toronto, but Matchedash and Gloucester Bay was Bay of Toronto, the back lakes connecting with the Trent were the Toronto Lakes and the Humber was the Toronto River: indicating that they were, all of them, water high-ways to the great interior central rendezvous or "Place of Meeting" of the Huron tribes. After vanishing from the map in the north, it obtained by a happy accident a permanent lodgement at the spot where it now rests. Good linguistic reasons could be given for the now generally received interpretation of "Toronto," but the details would occupy too much space.— There was evidently a desire on the part of the surveyor-general's department, at the beginning of Sir Peregrine Maitland's regime, to perpetuate on the map of Upper Canada the beautiful name which had been strangely discarded for York in 1793-4. When the "Mississauga Tract" was

secured and laid out one of the new townships was named Toronto, and a narrow triangular piece of territory belonging to it was called the "Gore of Toronto." When the village in the township of Hope, afterwards known as Port Hope, was first projected, Mr. Charles Fothergill gave it the name of Toronto; and Robert Gourlay, in the curious map prepared for the first volume of his Statistical Account of Upper Canada, gave the name of Toronto to what was to be the principal city of the province, according to a new but very fanciful method suggested by him for laying out townships and roads, and figured on his map.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### REMAINS OF THE OLD FRENCH FORT EFFACED, BUT SITE MARKED BY A CAIRN.

It thus appears that the site of the old French Fort Toronto was a matter of common notoriety at York from the outset of that place. And so it continued to be after York had merged into Toronto. Most of the inhabitants of the town and its vicinity were familiar with the spot. Sportsmen in the habit of looking after water-fowl of various kinds along the beach westward from the garrison, were specially cognizant of it. Young lads at school were fond of firing on "the old French Fort," as the terminus of a half-holiday's stroll towards Humber Bay along the well-beaten path on the edge of the cliff. It was in this latter way the present writer first formed his acquaintance with the spot, his perfect familiarity with which was kept up by a visit every now and then during many subsequent years.

In 1878, a large portion of the so-called Garrison Common was secured from the Government, and set apart as a park for Industrial Exhibition purposes. A survey of the ground was made, walks and drives were laid out in it, and many buildings required for carrying out the objects of the park were erected. By a happy accident the site of the old French Fort Toronto was included within the limits of the park. Up to 1878 a space round about the particular spot where the remains were, had been enclosed by a poorly-kept wooden fence, through which foot passengers, desirous of crossing the Common, could easily make their way. The lines of this fence failed to form a correct square. One of its angles was unaccountably obtuse, as may be seen in Sandford Fleming's plan of Toronto, which shows the inclosure in question without any mention, however, of the cause of its existence. The irregularity in shape referred to had probably some relation to the former palisades, the lines of which did not run exactly at right angles either to the

line of the present Dufferin street, or the present line of the shore, as shown by the delineations in Auchinleck's plan, and also by the map given by Lossing.

The fence spoken of, was, of course, taken down when the park was prepared for exhibition purposes; but more than that; it became necessary to level and sod the enclosed area; to grade it, in fact, somewhat towards the south, and to straighten the line of the cliff on that side, which had become very irregular from the destructive action of the waves below. These necessary improvements involved the obliteration of the vestiges of the old French Fort, which for so long a time had imparted a charm to the ground hereabout, and the great probability of the site becoming obscure in the future, and possibly at length being clean forgotten, obviously presented itself. The risk was manifest of the inhabitants of Toronto losing a valuable property, so to speak, viz., the knowledge of a spot situated in their midst, possessed of very great historical interest; of more historical interest, in point of fact, than any other spot within the limits of their city, or anywhere in its neighborhood, being chronologically connected with the old French and Indian eras in the annals of Western Canada. A determination to mark the memorable site by some suitable structure was immediately come to on the part of the President of the Industrial Exhibition Association, Mr. J. J. Withrow, who had been chiefly instrumental in securing for Toronto its Exhibition Park, and was now actively engaged in making it ready for exhibition purposes on a very comprehensive scale. A cairn of unhewn stone was accordingly built through his influence with the city authorities, and a fine massive granite boulder, recently brought up by the dredging machine out of the adjoining ship-channel of the entrance into Toronto Bay, mounted upon it, bearing the following inscription:—

THIS CAIRN MARKS THE EXACT SITE OF FORT ROUILLÉ, COMMONLY KNOWN AS FORT TORONTO, AN INDIAN TRADING POST AND STOCKADE, ESTABLISHED A.D., 1749, BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LOUIS XV., IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNT DE LA GALISSONNIÈRE, ADMINISTRATOR OF NEW FRANCE, 1717-1749. ERECTED BY THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF TORONTO, A.D. 1878.

This memorial object was visited and attentively inspected by His Excellency Lord Dufferin, Governor-General of Canada, on the occasion of his inaugurating the great Industrial Exhibition, held for the first time in the new grounds.

The cairn now erected answered an excellent purpose for about the space of six years, when from partial settlement and other causes, it became somewhat deteriorated in its appearance, and it was generally felt that something more worthy of the City of Toronto, and of the important site commemorated ought to take its place.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CAIRN REPLACED BY A MEMORIAL COLUMN, WHICH IS FINALLY MADE A MEMENTO OF THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE IN THE YEAR 1887.

The year 1884 was the never-to-be-forgotten Semi-Centennial of the Incorporation of Toronto as a City, and the restoration of that beautiful and appropriate name, which for fifty years had been supplanted by that of "York." It was thought appropriate that one of the means of signaling the occasion would be the commencement, at all events, if not the completion, of a memorial object on the site of the old French Fort, Toronto, to take the place of the confessedly temporary and now dilapidated cairn. Mr. W. Barclay McMurrich, Chairman of the Semi-Centennial Committee appointed by the Corporation, and recently Mayor of the City, interested himself in the matter, and on the last day of the Semi-Centennial celebration, the foundation of a monumental pillar after a design by the Messrs. Langley and Burke, architects, of Toronto, was laid by the then Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, the Honourable John Beverley Robinson, in the presence of the Mayor of the City, Mr. A. R. Boswell, and a large concourse of citizens and visitors from the United States.

During the progress of the two following years two of the lower courses of the pedestal were built with funds contributed by the Corporation and the Industrial Exhibition Association. The process of erection seemed likely to be an affair of several years' duration, when happily the fiftieth anniversary of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria occurred in 1887, and it was determined to make the completion of the memorial on the site of the old French Fort Toronto, an incident in the City's commemoration of that event. Great good will was very generally shown to this project. On various grounds several public bodies united in promoting the scheme. The Corporation of the City encouraged the undertaking from the outset by repeated subsidies, in order that the starting point of trade and commerce in this region might be identified with precision in all future time. The Industrial Exhibition Association of the City again and again liberally aided



the scheme, deeming it most proper that a site of so much general interest happily included within the limits of the Exhibition Park, should be boldly and lastingly distinguished. The Associated Pioneers of the City of Toronto and ancient County of York, with the help of many friends in sympathy with their Society and its aims, made large contributions towards the cost of the work, being desirous that the scene of the first dawn of civilized life on the shores of Toronto Bay, in the little company of Europeans domiciled in the fort, and the rough clearance in the primitive forest of an area of about three hundred acres immediately around its palisades (as reported by Major Rogers) should be surely known to coming generations. And the Government of the Province of Ontario granted prompt and generous assistance to secure the completion of the monument in the year named, so that, besides being a due memorial of one of the most notable historical sites in the Province, it might also form one of the abiding mementoes in Canada of the Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen.

By encouragement and funds thus supplied, the erection of the monument was completed, and the ceremony of its unveiling by His Excellency the Marquis of Lansdowne, Governor-General of Canada, took place among the proceedings of the opening day of the combined Dominion and Local Industrial Exhibition at Toronto, the 6th of September, 1887.

The remarks of His Excellency on the occasion were as follows:—(It will be observed that the inauguration of the General Exhibition had just occurred in another part of the park.)

“The ceremony which has recently been concluded in another part of the ground was one which had reference to the affairs of to-day, and to the material interests, present and future, of this city and its neighbourhood. I am glad that you have asked me to take a part in another ceremony, which will for a moment carry our minds back from the present to the past. We are met this afternoon in order to preserve from obliteration the traces of the first beginnings of the city of which you are so justly proud to-day. In doing this you are, I think, showing a very proper and laudable feeling. A community is wanting in self-respect, which does not take an interest in its own history, and seek to preserve those records by which that history can be traced and authenticated. I have frequently noticed with pleasure that the people of Toronto are fond of dwelling upon the memories which live around the city, and this portion of the Province of what it is the capital; and there is certainly no part of Canada in which men of the present

day have a better right to refer with pride to the achievements of their forefathers, or to the courage with which the earliest settlers in the land, when they were as yet a mere handful of men, held their own in the face of desperate odds, fighting for the country of their adoption, and preserving to the British Empire one of its noblest bulwarks. The monument which you have asked me to unveil, carries us back, however, to a past even more remote than that upon which you are fondest of dwelling; it takes us back to a period earlier than that of the United Empire Loyalists—earlier than the age of Simcoe and of Brock. It is erected on the site of the old French Trading Post, built here nearly a century and a half ago, by the French Government; a post which was, in fact, the earliest civilized settlement established in this neighborhood; that settlement you have very appropriately described in your address as the germ of the Toronto with which we are now acquainted. I think the greatest credit is due to the public bodies, the Corporation, the Exhibition Association and the Provincial Government, as well as to the private friends and supporters of the project, who have combined for the purpose of securing the identification of so interesting a spot, and of commemorating it by the erection of a suitable monument. Standing as that monument does in the midst of these Exhibition Grounds, it will serve, I hope, year after year, to remind the thousands who frequent them of the achievements of those who have built up the fortunes of the City of Toronto upon a spot, where comparatively a short time ago the rough trading post of a foreign country was the only sign of approaching civilization, and to whose efforts spread over successive generations, you owe it that the solitude, the desolation, the dangers, the rude existence of the first settlers at this spot have been replaced by the teeming population, the plenty and prosperity which we see around us on every side to-day. I esteem myself fortunate in having been called upon to undertake this task, and I have now much pleasure in dedicating this monument to the public of the City and Province.”

To adopt the words of one of the many chroniclers of the day’s proceedings,—His Excellency then “seized the lines and undid the veil, and in a moment the round shaft was exposed to the view of the spectators. The crowd greeted the disclosure with cheers, which were again and again heartily repeated.” The monument, it is then added, which is after a design by Messrs. Langley and Burke, architects, is a plain, rounded column or

shaft, having somewhat the appearance of a lighthouse. Including the rough mason work, which forms the base, it reaches the height of thirty-two feet, and will be a conspicuous object of view from the bay. The stone is "Credit Valley Red," supplied from the quarries of Mr. K. Chisholm, of Brampton. It was executed, it should be subjoined, at the works of Mr. Lionel Yorke, on the Esplanade, and a tribute is due to the great practical skill of Mr. Vick, superintendent of those works. The following inscription appears on the north side of the pedestal:—

FORT TORONTO,  
AN INDIAN TRADING POST,  
FOR SOME TIME KNOWN AS FORT ROUILLÉ,  
WAS ESTABLISHED HERE  
A.D. MDCCXLIX.,  
BY ORDER OF LOUIS XV.

Thus a work of no slight importance was brought to a close. A site of considerable historical significance was definitively fixed and durably marked for the gratification of local residents, and the information of the Canadian public generally. And in doing this, a notable addition was made to the attractions of the parks and drives of Toronto, a monumental object being set up by the wayside in one of them, calculated to stimulate a wholesome curiosity in the minds of all beholders, especially in the minds of the many intelligent persons, young and old, who are drawn to the Capital of the Province on particular occasions year after year; a monumental object destined, when it shall itself have become a thing of antiquity, corroded, perhaps, by the tooth of time like one of the ancient round towers of Ireland, —destined even then to be still named among the "sights" of Toronto, and characterized by its inhabitants as one of their most valued heirlooms from the past.

## APPENDIX.

### I.

#### FORT TORONTO.

BY MRS. S. A. CURZON.

This is our Gilgal. Here we set our stones—  
Stones of memorial of the grace of God.  
Here, when our sons shall say, “What means that pile?”  
Ours the reply, “Here civil commerce dwelt;  
Here the dusk remnants of an antique age,  
Of the first emigrants from Old World shores,  
Indians, met of their ancient blood again—  
Blood strained and fused through many an era’s sieve  
Till brotherhood was lost. And yet ’twas there,  
But not to bless; to trade, merely to trade,  
Here, when the Hand that guides the way o’ the world  
Had, by hard stress, driven to an unknown shore  
Champlain the wise, La Salle the brave and bold,  
And the white banner, lily-strewn, of France  
Flew o’er Quebec, a promise and a power;  
Her sons, light-hearted as the morning gale,  
Struck friendly hands with Indians of the West,  
And taught them commerce of another kind  
Than their old simple rule of need and gift.  
Here, when the treasures of the forest vast,  
Of meadows, streams and pools met their wide gaze,  
The Frenchman built a post, that here might come  
Those wily craftsmen that could circumvent  
The laws of Nature, and beguile her wealth  
Into their packs; and here might trade—  
Trade ermine that should deck the royal robe  
For gew-gaws; give beaver for a bead;  
Otter for cloth; the silver fox of sheen  
So wonderful that great Richelieu admired,  
For a bright bit of red; and anything,  
Even their loves and wives, for eau-de-vie.

And here they came—to Rouillé, through the vales  
That skirt yon river with rich woods and deep  
From source to sea. How richer then than now!  
From lake to lake they came, by many a stream,  
Brilliant with finny life, where otters played,  
And beavers built their dams, and ospreys perched;  
Past lovely bays they brought their long canoes,  
Where roseate water lilies, delicate  
And spotless white, queened all the emerald plain;  
Past clear, cool depths, where the ranunculus  
Netted the surface with its tiny cups;  
And the shy bass lurked all a summer's day;  
Past pebbly beaches, where the water glowed  
And the deer bent to count his forty tines;  
O'er portages, all mossed with silken loops,  
Fragrant with ferns and skirted with morass,  
Where many a soft, sweet fruit hid luscious gifts  
To cheer the weary way; 'neath trees they came—  
The like in stateliness we ne'er may see,  
For they were darlings of the centuries.

From populous towns they came, an able race,  
Dwelling in greenwood bowers in kind estate,  
With busy acts that make a people rich.  
They knew to grow and store the golden corn,  
To twine the hemp that made their nets and lines,  
And from the seed express the unctuous drops.  
Fair Simcoe saw their bowers; and Mackinaw,  
And Mississagué that to Huron glides.  
A nation great, and rich, and flourishing—  
Their bowers were homes where winter's bitter winds  
Pierced not their children, wrapped in furs, and full  
Of rich, warm blood, fed from the net and chase;  
Their women toyed with wampum, and their men  
Lorded it royally at council fires.

And when the Iroquois swept fiercely o'er  
The wealthy region, like a prairie fire,  
And left but blackness and despair and death  
He found rich spoil that filled his heart with joy;  
For he had learned to trade, and here he came

To the old gathering place: brought peltry rich  
To change for silver toys, for raiment strange,  
And muskets, dear to the fierce warrior heart.  
The English trader loved to see him come,  
And lured him with more prize than Frenchmen gave,  
And flattered him—the powerful Iroquois—  
The Iroquois, Old England's proud ally,  
Who helped her hold her own and grasp the West;  
And for his pains got root in this rich soil  
And flourishes, the maple with the oak,  
A people e'en to-day.

Thus came the heritage in which we boast,  
These were the men, and those the daring times  
That, by potentiality of things  
They saw but faintly, built our fortunes up  
And poured into our coffers untold wealth—  
Wealth not all sordid, wealth of virtue's strain  
That finds its best return in widening  
The avenues of Nature; looks far on  
And sees humanity a unit, one—  
Spending itself to prove the brotherhood.  
And shall not we, as loyal men and true—  
Nor surfeited with glut of sordid gain  
That dulls the head and palsies the strong heart—  
Enshrine forever these rich memories?  
Theirs our Toronto, theirs our gathering place—  
How greatly greater than they e'er might dream!  
To this proud memory of brave old times—  
Times that their lesson gave, we raise this pile,  
Stones of memorial of the grace of God.”

Toronto, Sept. 5.

[The above lines appeared in the columns of the Toronto *Daily Mail*, on the morning of the 6th September, 1887, the day of the unveiling of the monument. Mrs. Curzon is the author of “Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812, and other Poems.” Published in Toronto by C. Blackett Robinson, 1887, pp. 215, post 8vo.]

## GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

City Corporation of Toronto, 1886	\$200 00
City Corporation of Toronto, 1887	500 00
Provincial Government of Ontario, 1887	500 00
Industrial Exhibition Association, 1886	100 00
Industrial Exhibition Association, 1887	500 00
Pioneers, Association of, Toronto and County of York, 1886	100 00

## DONATIONS OF PIONEERS AND FRIENDS.

George Gooderham, 1886	100 00
Henry Scadding, D.D.	100 00
Lionel Yorke	100 00
Langley & Burke	50 00
J. Macdonald (now Senator)	25 00
J. G. Howard	25 00
Senator McMaster	10 00
William Gooderham	10 00
Henry Cawthra	10 00
G. B. Smith, M.P.P.	10 00
T. W. Anderson	10 00
Charles Moss	10 00
McCarthy, Osler, Hoskins & Creelman	10 00
Maclaren, Macdonald, Merritt & Shepley	10 00
Watson, Thorne & Smoke	10 00
Kerr, Macdonald, Davidson, & Paterson	10 00
Senator Allan	5 00
A. McLean Howard	5 00
John Hallam	5 00
W. Barclay McMurrich	5 00
Kivas Tully	5 00
W. W. Copp	5 00

C. Blackett Robinson	5 00
Larratt W. Smith, D.C.L.	5 00
Senator Frank Smith	5 00
Edward Pearce	5 00
John Smith	5 00
Wm. Rennie	5 00
W. H. Doel	5 00
W. Lea	5 00
Silas James	5 00
Wm. Tyrrell	5 00
John Holderness	5 00
Taylor Bros.	5 00
Withrow & Hillock	5 00
J. Taylor	5 00
J. Ross, M.D.	5 00
John Cudmore	5 00
Thos. Thompson & Son	4 00
And. Davis	4 00
J. B. Turner	3 00
T. Meredith, sen.	2 50
John Lea	2 50
J. Saurin McMurray	2 00
John Watson	2 00
J. Davison	2 00
Hugh Miller	2 00
M. Macfarlane	2 00
John Kemp	2 00
M. Evans	2 00
Sheriff Mowat	2 00
J. W. Severs	2 00
J. H. Bull	2 00
R. Brown	2 00
Stephen Tabor, M.D.	2 00



M. Parsons	2 00
W. Barchard	2 00
C. B. Hall, M.D.	1 00
Hugh Miller	1 00
W. Elliott	1 00
John G. Reid	1 00
T. A. Heintzman	1 00
W. Smith	1 00
John Barron	1 00
J. Smithson	1 00
W. Brown	1 00
George Leslie, sen.	1 00
George Eakin	1 00
F. T. Jones	1 00

### III.

#### DIMENSIONS, ETC., OF THE MONUMENT.

The monument consists, first, of a substruction of rough stone about five feet in depth and twelve and a half feet square at its lowest part, diminishing by steps to about twelve feet square at the surface. Then, for about four feet, follows in cut Credit Valley stone, three courses, to a block forming the main body of the pedestal, five feet square and five and a half feet in height. Over this is a course projecting eight inches; and then comes a block wrought to form a transition from the square to the round form, upon which rests the column proper; a shaft in eight divisions, slightly tapering from five feet at the base, to about two feet at the summit which terminates in a conical apex. The whole height from the surface is a little over thirty feet. The estimated cost at the outset, of the cut stone portion, was about two thousand five hundred dollars. The grants and collections have somewhat exceeded this sum, and the slight surplus is to be expended by the Industrial Exhibition Association in rendering the surroundings of the monument complete. The excess over the quota guaranteed by the Pioneer Association to secure the completion of the monument in 1887, has been placed by the Committee, charged with the collection, to the credit of the Pioneers' general fund, with the approbation of the principal subscribers.

## INDEX.

Auchinleck, [32](#), [37](#).

Bigot, [11](#), [14](#).

Boswell, A. R., [39](#).

Bouchette, [17](#).

Boulton, Mr. Justice, [31](#).

Bradstreet, Colonel, [22](#).

Burnett, Governor, [9](#), [10](#).

Cairn, [36](#).

Chewett, [32](#).

Chouéguen, [11](#), [19](#), [22](#).

Dearborn, General, [31](#).

Detroit, [11](#), [25](#).

Dufferin, Lord, [38](#).

Dufferin Street, [29](#).

Frontenac, Fort, [13](#), [18](#), [19](#), [22](#).

Galissonière, [10](#), [11](#), [38](#).

Gore, Governor, [30](#).

Gourlay, Robert, [36](#).

Government, Provincial, [39](#).

Humber, [28](#).

Hurons, [35](#).

Industrial Exhibition Ass'n, [37](#).

Iroquois Indians, [9](#), [18](#).

Johnson, Sir William, [23](#).

Jones, Augustus, [28](#).

Jonquière, [11](#), [22](#).

Jubilee Year, [39](#).

Kingston, [13](#).

La Salle, [9](#), [10](#).

La Salle (Village), [23](#).

Lansdowne, Marquis of, [39](#).

Langley and Burke, [38](#).

Levalterie, [14](#).

Longueuil, [13](#), [14](#), [20](#).

Lossing, [33](#).

Maclear, [32](#).

Mann, Gother, [26](#).

Maurepas, Count, [13](#).

Maitland, Sir Peregrine, Gov., [35](#).

Michilimackinac, [9](#), [25](#).

Mississagas, [15](#), [16](#), [19](#).

Montcalm, [22](#).

McMurrich, W. Barclay, [38](#).

Niagara, Fort, [10](#), [15](#), [19](#), [21](#), [22](#).

Oswego, River, [9](#).

Oswego, [10](#), [24](#).

Otchipways, [15](#), [20](#).

Parkman, [19](#).

“Pass,” *i.e.* Portage, at Toronto, [10](#),  
[26](#).

Pike, General, [32](#), [34](#).

Pioneer Society, [39](#).

Piquet, [18](#).

“Place of Meeting,” [35](#).

Port Hope, [36](#).

Pouchot, [11](#), [21](#).

Prideaux, General, [23](#).

Quinté, Bay of, [12](#), [18](#).

Robinson, Chief Justice, [32](#).

Robinson, Hon. J. B., [39](#).

Rogers, Major, [25](#), [28](#), [29](#).

Rouillé, Count, [13](#).

Rouillé, Fort, [13](#).

Ross, John, [33](#).

Semi-Centennial, [38](#).

Seven Years’ War, [20](#).

Simcoe, Lake, [12](#).

Simcoe, Governor, [28](#).

Smyth, D. W., [30](#).

Tequakareigh, [23](#).

Thomson, John Lewis, [31](#).

Toronto River (Humber), [12](#).

Toronto, Lake, [12](#).

Toronto, City, [17](#), [38](#).

Toronto, [27](#).

Trent, [12](#).

United Empire Loyalists, [40](#).

Vaudreuil, [22](#).

Vick, John, [41](#).

Withrow, J. J., [37](#).

Yorke, Lionel, [41](#).

York, [30](#).

## TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

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Henry Scadding]