

Early History of Hastings County.

In 1792 Governor Simcoe issued a proclamation dividing Upper Canada into nineteen counties for purposes of representation. The counties formed thereby are as follows in the order named:- Glengarry, Stormont, Dundas, Grenville, Leeds, Frontenac, Ontario, Addington, Lennox, Prince Edward, Hastings, Northumberland, Durham, York, Lincoln, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent.

We give below that section referring to the County of Hastings:-

"That the eleventh of the said counties be hereafter called by the name of Hastings, which county is to be bounded on the east by the westernmost line of the county of Lennox; on the south by the Bay of Quinte until it meets the boundary on the easternmost line of the River Trent; thence along the said river until it intersects the rear of the ninth concession; thence by a line running north sixteen degrees west, until it intersects the Ottawa or Grand River; thence descending along the said river until it meets the north westernmost boundary of the County of Addington. The said County of Hastings to comprehend all the islands of the said Bay of Quinte and River Trent nearest to the said County in the whole or greater part fronting the same."

The name of Hastings is of great antiquity. William the Conqueror pitched his tents at Hastings and prepared to do battle with King Edward of England in 1066. The name has played an important part in British history.

Lord Francis Rawdon Hastings was a young Irish officer. He was the son of Sir John Rawdon of Moira, later Earl of Moira and the Lady Elizabeth Hastings, daughter of the 9th Earl of Huntingdon. Names of these interesting personalities have been given to the townships of our fair county.

The proclamation goes on to give the distribution as to representation to the assembly. Hastings, Northumberland and Lennox (except Adolphustown, which was put with Prince Edward County to form an Electoral Division) were comprised within a single division with the privilege of returning one member.

In all sixteen members were elected by the nineteen counties to form the first parliament of Upper Canada.

This proclamation was signed by William Jarvis, Private Secretary to the Governor and countersigned by the Governor affixing his initials "J.G.S."

In the year 1839 Hastings was separated from the Midland District. The County since that date has made gigantic strides. It has increased in every way, and few counties in the Dominion can boast such rapid and systematic progress.