

Prince Edward County

A SHORT SYNOPSIS OF ITS HISTORY FROM INDIAN DAYS

Prince Edward County is old in our country's story. In early days, the Hurons and Algonquins hunted and fished in its pleasant woods, lovely streams and delightful bays.

The Iroquois, most powerful of the Indian Tribes, coveted the smiling land. The Wars of Annihilation followed . . . the Hurons were massacred, and the country left to the victors for a hunting ground.

From this period come the lovely legends of the Indians . . . the mysterious Lake-on-the-Mountain has a haunting tale . . . the great fish of Lake Concou . . . and The Dwarf of the Sandbanks.

For two centuries, France ruled our country and here too, Prince Edward was noted. Champlain, Father of New France, traversed our Bay of Quinte. He was the first white man to camp in what is now the town of Picton. LaSalle, the great French explorer, received a grant of land in the county but soon gave it away. The Sulpician Fathers, at their mission on East Lake, first started the famous Prince Edward farms. But these too faded away and the county brooded quietly until the Revolutionary War in the British Colonies to the south erupted.

Many citizens, loyal to the crown, were forced to flee and others were forced to find new homes. The British Government decided to open up new lands to the north for them.

Thus the United Empire Loyalists came to the fair county of Prince Edward.

In 1784, Lieut. Archibald MacDonell and his party of 153 men, 99 women, 67 children and 2 servants landed at Prinyer's Cove to settle the Fifth Town or Marysburgh. The white man had come to stay!

Dense forests covered the land. They were teeming with wild life. The streams, lakes and bays were filled with succulent fish. Today the forests are gone but the fabulous fishing grounds remain.

The Pioneers were of hardy stock, steadfast in their beliefs, and together they carved new homes in the wilderness. Throughout the county stand today many monuments to the firm purpose of these men and women: the Conger Chapel—vintage of 1810—early home of Methodists; Bloomfield, a lovely village, settled by the Quakers; VanAlstine's Mill at Glenora, scene of the early labours of our country's first Prime Minister. The Reynold's home in Wellington, visited by Governor Simcoe; these and many others fill our hearts with pride and glory.

The Outlet, a famous beach, also has its tale-buried treasure. This treasure has never been found though many have searched.

The county was settled, forests gave way to farms and the life of the people advanced. In the early days transportation was by water, on ships built from Prince Edward's oaks, now, on modern highways, the automobile takes the beautiful drives along our miles of coastline.

Agriculture has always had a firm hold on our people. The great canning industry developed from the crops grown and today is the main industry.

The traveller today finds the old blended with the new. Modern hotels, comfortable farms, good wayside inns are all in the tradition of Hovenden's Inn, first stop-over where Picton now stands.

Prince Edward, the garden county of Ontario has well and truly earned its title; and, as the days go on, will continue to grow in the best traditions of its people.