

EARLY TRANSPORTATION IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO

When the United Empire Loyalists settled in the Township of Niagara, most of them took advantage of the water supply and chose to locate along the Niagara River, Lake Ontario and the Four Mile Creek. At that time the Creek was a stream of pure water gently flowing from the Ravine at the south end of the Township to Lake Ontario. But it supplied more than pure water—a stream that abundantly brought fish from the Lake to the Ravine. In addition to the fish there were pheasants, quail, wild ducks, cranes and geese. Also rabbits, muskrats, raccoons, foxes, wolves and bears. The fish, some of the birds and some varieties of the animals provided meat, while other animals, not used for food, provided hides for mitts, foot and headwear.

There were Indian trails along the Niagara River, Lake Ontario, the Four Mile Creek and the foothills below the mountain. The mode of conveyance, beyond that of riding a horse, consisted of what was called a traveau. This was made from the crotch of two limbs, or tree with the end of the crotch having a hole bored through it to hitch to one or two horses. The two limbs spreading out behind were covered with boards for the convenience of the driver, his family or goods. The advantage of this mode of travel was that in passing between trees the conveyance would slide from side to side.

The road along the foothills was practically what later became a County Road under the name of the Queenston and Grimsby Road, now Highway No. 8.

Niagara Town became the distributing point for the Niagara Peninsula, and quite early a road was constructed from Niagara, through Lawrenceville, now Virgil, to the Ten Mile Creek, later called Homer, and now the Queen Elizabeth Highway.

All along Lake Ontario from Niagara to Hamilton and beyond, there were creeks emptying into the lake. These were named by the number of miles from the Niagara River where they entered the Lake, so we have Creeks numbering all the way from No. 1 to No. 40. The tendency was to connect with the road along the foothills on account of the wide Creeks without bridges to be crossed further west.

There were beaver dams on the Four Mile Creek near the west ends of Lots 85 and 86. To escape these the road