

CANADIAN CITY NAMES

In the current issue of the annual report of the Geographic Board of Canada there is an interesting appendix compiled by R. Douglas, M.A., secretary of the Board. It gives the meaning or origin of the names of the different Canadian cities. Of those of Ontario, the report gives the following information:

**BELLEVILLE**, Hastings County, was surveyed and laid out in 1816; in early documents the name is spelled Bellville; this spelling prevails on the old tokens of the Church of Scotland and also on the silver communion sets of St. Andrew's Church, the oldest in the district; may have been named after Colonel Bell, one of the original patentees of the Thurlow lots. Scadding says Governor Francis Gore, Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, 1806-11, 1815-17, was appealed to and named it after his wife, Arabella, whom he addressed familiarly as Belle. Previous to 1816 Belleville was known as Meyers Creek.

**BRANTFORD**, Brant County, is situated on what was the Six Nations Indian Reserve at the point where the Indians were accustomed to cross the Grand River, known as Brant's ford, after their leader, Joseph Brant (Thayendaneja) 1742-1807. The Indians surrendered the townplot to the Government April 19, 1830. The first lot sold by the government was to William Muirhead, October 15, 1830, being Lot 8 on the north side of Colborne street, Brant's Ford or The Ferry was for many years the name applied to the village.

**CHATHAM**, Kent County, mouth of the Thames. Six hundred acres were reserved for a townplot by Governor Simcoe in 1795. The town, however, may be said to have commenced only in 1834. It is named after Chatham, England. The Thames and all the towns about London had names taken from the Thames district in England.

**FORT WILLIAM** commemorates William McGillivray, one of the leading members of the North West Company who directed the construction of the fort on the Kaministiquia River to serve as the company's headquarters instead of Grand Portage in Minnesota. Apparently the movement began in 1801. Building houses had still to be erected. Harmon notes there were 1,000 laboring men there in July, 1805. He calls it the "New Fort" in this year. Coates, New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest, New York, 1897, p. 222. A letter from George H. Monk, dated Leech Lake, April 18 1807 (Masson Papers, McGill University) refers to "Fort William." William McGillivray succeeded Peter Pond as a partner in the North West Company about 1790; member of the House of Assembly of Lower Canada June 18, 1808; October, 1809, for Montreal West; member Legislative Council of Lower Canada June 19, 1814, October 16, 1825, on which date he died in Scotland.

**GALT**, Waterloo County, takes its name from John Galt (1779-1839) the Scottish novelist. He was commissioner of the Canada Company and lived in Canada from 1826 to 1829. The city was founded by William Dickson, a school fellow of Galt, and Galt post office was opened in 1816. However, the settlers called the village (Absalom) Shade's Mills till 1827 when it was changed on the occasion of a visit from the novelist. "On the 22nd of April, . . . I went to Galt, . . . which my friend Honorable William Dickson, . . . named after me long before the Canada Company was imagined; it was arrived at the maturity of having a post office before I heard of its existence."

**GUELPH**, Wellington County, was named by John Galt, April 23, 1827, after the family name of the Royal House of Brunswick. It was after sunset when the site selected for the town was reached. There "a large maple was chosen: on which taking an ax from one of the woodmen I struck the first stroke . . . after the tree fell . . . the doctor pulled a flask of whiskey from his bosom and we drank prosperity to the city of Guelph. The name was chosen in compliment to the Royal Family, both because I thought it auspicious in itself, and because I could not recollect that it had ever been before used in all the King's dominions."

**HAMILTON**, Wentworth County, is named after George Hamilton, son of Honorable Robert Hamilton, who moved to the district from Niagara in 1812 and bought land there. In 1813 he divided a portion of his farm into building lots and his surname was given to the village. The first lots sold were on John street, south of King. Ontario Historical Society Papers and Records, Vol. III., 1907, p. 24-33.

**KINGSTON**, Frontenac County, occupies the site of the Indian village of Cataragui and of the French fort Frontenac built there, 1673. On Sep-

tember 11, 1783, General Haldimand wrote to John Collins, land surveyor, that it was his "intention to establish settlements for the provision of part of the distressed loyalists resorting to this province and in the neighborhood of Cataragui upon Lake Ontario" and directing Collins "to proceed to that place without loss of time for the purpose of surveying and laying out the several lands in the townships and lots." Township No. 1, now known as Kingston, was outlined the same year and subdivided in 1874. With the opening of spring in the latter year, settlers took up locations on the surveyed lands. In 1785 there were 50 houses in Kingston, Ontario. Archives Rep. 1905, p. 69. Documents quoted in Ontario Archives dated 1786, 1787, May 5, 1788, refer to the town as "Cataragui." A letter dated Quebec July 7, 1788, and signed John Collins, deputy surveyor-general, refers to "Kingston." Ont. Archives Rep. 1905, p. 309. The city name appears to antedate the township name and to have been given some time after the Loyalist settlement in honor of George III.

**KITCHENER**, Waterloo County, was named in 1916 after Lord Kitchener; earlier it was known as Berlin. The origin of the city is described as follows in "Busy Berlin," a jubilee pamphlet issued in 1907: "Joseph Schneider, a native of Pennsylvania, first settled on the site . . . in 1807. Joseph and Jacob Shantz took up adjoining tracts in 1808 and Benjamin Eby . . . about the same year. The location was then often called The Sand Hills and later . . . Mount Pleasant . . . Early in the Thirties . . . a group of villagers were one evening seated in the village inn, discussing the matter of a name, when two strangers walked in and called for refreshments. . . . 'Where are you from?' was asked, 'Berlin, Germany, and we are looking for homes.' 'Then,' said the questioner, 'settle here, and Berlin shall be the name of this village.'"

**LONDON**, Middlesex County, on the Thames, is named after London, England. It was laid out in 1826 on land visited in 1793 and reserved by Governor Simcoe, and settlement commenced in 1827. Simcoe wished to call it Georgina after King George III. His successor preferred the name of London. London Township, surveyed in 1796 by A. Iredell, was known by name years before any other name than "The Forks" was applied to the site of the present city.

**NIAGARA FALLS**, Welland County, has not the antiquity of the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Lincoln County, fourteen miles distant. The latter was settled by Loyalists about 1782 and selected by Simcoe in 1792 as the capital of Upper Canada, and named by him Newark. Niagara Falls owes its importance to being an international gateway, and to its proximity to the falls. It was formerly known as Clifton or Suspension Bridge. Niagara is an Indian word of uncertain meaning.

**OTTAWA**, Carleton County, was so named in 1854 after the river on which it stands. The name commemorates an Indian tribe living in the early part of the seventeenth century on Manitoulin Island and the shores of Georgian Bay. The Ottawa, whose name comes from "adawe" to trade, were noted as international traders and barterers. They claimed exclusive control of the Ottawa River reached by way of Lake Nipissing, which was the trade route to Montreal and, says the Jesuit Relation for 1667, it was for this reason that, although very different in nationality, all those who went to the French to trade, bore the name Ottawa, under whose auspices the journey was undertaken. Queen Victoria selected Ottawa as the capital of the Dominion in 1857.

The report of the Bureau of Archives, Ontario, for 1905, contains a copy of a minute of the Land Committee dated Quebec, August 5, 1791, recommending that "the Site of a Town may be laid off at the forks of the River Reddo, as delineated in a plan drawn by Mr. Chewett, March

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28, 1791, and referred to by the Land Office Board of Lunenburg, to serve as a Town Plot in the Center of four adjoining Townships, two on each side of the main Branch of the aforesaid River. . . . Lord Dorchester, the governor-general, approved of the recommendation. The land upon which the present city of Ottawa originally stood comprised six lots, three lots of Concession C. and three lots of Concession D., the boundary line between them being Cumberland, Grace McQueen received the patent of two of these in 1801, a tract of land extending from Laurier avenue to Gladstone and Bronson avenues to Rideau River. In 1802 Jacob Carman received a patent of the lot of two comprising the area between Pooley's Bridge and the Rideau on the south, which included Parliament Hill and Major Hill Park. The intervening lots were obtained by John Burrows, W. H. Smith in Canada, Past, Present and Future (Toronto, 1851) says of Ottawa: "In the year 1826 . . . not a house was standing within its present limits except one old log house where the Upper Town has since been erected, and three houses on what was then known as Nepean Point, near the Union Bridge." Ottawa practically came into existence in 1827, in the spring of which year Colonel By broke the first sod in the construction of the Rideau Canal, to unite the Ottawa River and Lake Ontario, which took six years to complete. By 1828 there were 38 stores and 150 houses. The village came to be known as Bytown. Another boom came in 1837 when the first timber slides were constructed and Bytown became a lumbering centre. At this time there were two small villages of Upper and Lower Town separated by a wooded spur of the hill. As stated, the name Bytown was changed to Ottawa when it was incorporated as a city, December 18, 1854. Much earlier, a weekly paper entitled the "Ottawa Advocate" had been published in Bytown. Post office opened as Bytown, 1829; name changed to Ottawa, January, 1855.

**OWEN SOUND**, in Grey County, was known as Sydenham after the Township of that name till January 1, 1857, when the Act incorporating the "town of Owen Sound," assented to May 16, 1856, became operative. W. H. Smith, in Canada, Past, Present and Future," Toronto, 1854, speaks of Sydenham village as "commenced about nine years ago." At this time there was a newspaper, the "Owen Sound Comet" published in the village. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company lake steamer, the City of Owen Sound, was built at Owen Sound in 1875 and ran under this name until 1886 when she ran ashore at Clapperton Island. Owen Sound was incorporated as a city in 1920. It is named after the sound which commemorates Admiral William Campbell Richard Owen (1771-1849). As commodore, he was for a time commander-in-chief of H. M. ships and vessels on the great lakes, returning to England 1815-16. His brother, Vice Admiral William Fitzwilliam Owen (1774-1857) made surveys of the great lakes under his direction.

**PETERBOROUGH**, Peterborough County, commemorates Peter Robinson, who, in 1825 came in charge of 2,000 immigrants and founded the town. It was previously known as Indian Plain or Scott's Landing. The Indian name was Nogojwanong.

**PORT ARTHUR**, Thunder Bay district, was named Prince Arthur's Landing by Wolsey in 1870, after Prince Arthur, now Duke of Connaught, then serving with the Rifle

Brigade in Montreal. In 1883 the name was changed to the present one to correspond with Port Moody, the then accepted western terminal of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Extract from "Correspondence Relative to the Recent Expedition to the Red River Settlement; with Journal of Operations Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, 1871" p. 55: "Wednesday, May 25, 1870. . . . Landed troops and camp equipment immediately and Colonel Wolsey named the place 'Prince Arthur's Landing' in honor of His Royal Highness." On their way west the troops were told that they were going to "Thunder Bay" or "Fort William," or "Dawson's Landing" or "the other end of the lake." "Dawson's Landing" seems to have been the proper name of the place before Wolsey's arrival. There Dawson had a small wharf, and there the Dawson road commenced. At the time the only buildings were those of the Public Works Department, one general store and a couple of small dwelling houses. S. J. Dawson, C. E., proposed a scheme for a road by land and water from Lake Superior to Red River settlement in 1859. The government adopted it in 1867. In his Report, p. 11, Ottawa, 1868, Dawson calls the starting place of the route "The Depot" situated on "Thunder Bay, about three miles to the eastward of the mouth of the Kaministiquia and at this point, there is in my opinion every facility for constructing wharves and forming a perfectly safe harbor."

**ST. CATHARINES**, Lincoln County, Somewhere between 1791-94 an episcopal church mission station was established in Grantham Township where St. Catharines now is and the heading of a subscription list in 1795 in connection with this church contains the first known reference to the name. The heading reads as follows: "1796 Apinment to the Church at St. Catharines with the Respective sums next to their Names." Feb. 17. . . .

On this Canon Broughnall makes the following comment: "The first word may be assinement (?). The second letter instead of a 'p' may be the old way of writing 'ss'. Compare the way Catherine is spelt above. The 'e' in St. Catharines in each case might almost be 'i'. The writing is evidently not that of a particularly well educated person." St. Catharines commemorates Mrs. Catharine Askin Robinson (died 1796), the first wife of Honorable Robert Hamilton, who married in the following year Mrs. Mary Herkimer McLean, also a

widow. Honorable Robert Hamilton, who died in 1809, is described as a merchant of Niagara, a member of the first executive council of Upper Canada in 1791, and the first judge of the district of Nassau, which extended from River Trent on the Bay of Quinte to Long Point, Lake Erie. Information from Miss Janet Carnochan, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canon L. W. B. Broughall, St. Catharines, and Rev. R. Ker's book, "St. George's Parish," a historic and centenary review.

**ST. THOMAS**, Elgin County, commemorates Colonel Thomas Talbot (1771-1853) sometime private secretary to Governor Simcoe, who received a grant of 5,000 acres in the county and settled there in 1803, subsequently bringing in other settlers. The first two log houses on the site of St. Thomas were built about 1810 by Daniel Rapelje and David Mandeville. Ermatinger says: "St. Thomas . . . in 1817 was no more than a hamlet, chiefly under the hill at the extreme west end of the present city. The hamlet in the valley was at one period called Etirling, but as the village crept up the hill and along the crest of the heights immediately above Kettle Creek, it acquired the name of St. Thomas, after Thomas Talbot." Ermatinger (C.O.) K.C., The Talbot Regime, St. Thomas, 1904.

**SARNIA**, Lambton County, is the Roman name of the Isle of Guernsey where Sir John Colborne was governor before he came to Canada. The town was surveyed, laid out, and first settled in 1833, and called "The Rapids," after the rapids at the foot of Lake Huron; in 1836 it was enlarged by Hon. Malcolm Cameron and the name was changed to Port Sarnia after the township; it was changed to the present name in 1886.

**SULT STE. MARIE**, Algoma district, takes its name from the rapids in the St. Mary River and was so named by French missionaries who in 1640 founded the mission of "Sanite Marie du Sault." Previously it was known as "Sault de Gaston" after the younger brother of Louis XIII; this is the name an Champ-lain's map, 1632.

after the younger brother of Louis XIII; this is the name an Champ-lain's map, 1632.

**STRATFORD**, Perth County, was a town on paper in the Canada Company's offices before a house was built on the Avon. In 1831 one William Sergeant was presented by the Company with a lot in the proposed town on condition of his starting a tavern there. Thus Stratford came into being. It was incorporated in 1853. It is named after Stratford-on-Avon, England.

**TORONTO** is an Indian name originally applied to Lake Simcoe. The lake, for instance, is called lac de Toronto on an anonymous map of date 1679 in the library of the Depot de la Marine, Paris, entitled "carte de la region situee aux environs du lac Ontario ou de Frontenac." From Lake Simcoe it was extended at an early date through the Severn River, also named Toronto, to the lower part of Georgian Bay, and even to the whole bay. Later through the use of the portage from Lake Simcoe to Toronto via the Humber, the name was extended to the Lake Ontario end of the portage. Similarly, Rice Lake and other lakes on the upper waters of the Trent River were first called Kentio of Quento, which name was afterwards carried down the Trent to the bay into which it entered, with the same modern result as in the case of Toronto. The meaning of the word is disputed. J. S. Clark deals with it at length in the Archeological Report for Ontario for 1899.

**WELLAND**, Welland County, formerly known as Merrittsville, takes its name from the nearby Welland River, which itself was named in 1792 by proclamation of Governor Simcoe after the Welland River, Lincolnshire, England.

**WINDSOR**, Essex County, laid out in 1834, takes its name from Windsor, England.

**WOODSTOCK**, Oxford County, surveyed and laid out in 1833, was named after Woodstock, Oxfordshire, England.

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