

was sworn of the privy council November 7, 1873, and was secretary of state from that date until appointed speaker of the senate January 9, 1874. During the illness of Liêut.-Governor Crawford, he was appointed administrator of the government of Ontario, May, 1875, but was not sworn in on account of the death of that officer.

He is a member of the Presbyterian church, and a high-toned christian gentleman.

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HON. WILLIAM H. MERRITT,

ST. CATHARINES.

A BIOGRAPHY of William Hamilton Merritt, of more than four-hundred pages, has been published by his eldest son living, J. P. Merritt; therefore we propose to give only a brief sketch of his life in this work—briefer than would otherwise seem to answer our purpose. His father, Thomas Merritt, a Loyalist of the revolutionary time, and a cornet in the regiment known as Simcoe's "Queen's Rangers," married Mary Hamilton, of South Carolina, left the United States with other Royalists for New Brunswick in 1783; removed to Canada in 1793, and it was while on this journey that our subject was born in the State of New York, on the 3rd of July 1793. The family settled on the Twelve-mile Creek, in the old Niagara District. Here the boy, then three years old, grew to manhood, and made his history. He commenced his education under Mr. Cockerell, at Burlington, now Hamilton, continuing his studies at Niagara, and received a slight classical polishing at the hands of Rev. John Burns. At fifteen years of age he visited St. John, N. B., where he had relatives, and where he studied surveying, algebra, trigonometry and other useful branches.

In June, 1812, when the United States declared war against Great Britain, he immediately drew his sword, having just received a Lieutenant's commission. Three months later he was a Major; and, at the battle of Queenston Heights, October 13, 1812, holding the position of commander of militia cavalry of Upper Canada, he was deputed by Gen. Sheafe to receive the swords of the American officers captured. He was in other engagements, including those at Stony Creek and Lundy's Lane, and during the latter engagement was taken prisoner.

At the close of the war Mr. Merritt returned to St. Catharines; went into the commercial trade in company with another man, and continued in trade until 1819.

In 1818 he had a survey made of the land from the south branch of the Twelve-mile Creek, now Allanburgh, due south two miles to the Chippawa, in order to see if it was feasible to supply his mill by means of a canal with a full supply of water from the latter stream. This apparently trifling undertaking, finally suggested to Mr. Merritt the more gigantic enterprise of connecting the waters of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, by means of a canal. This grand idea—the Welland canal, which he conceived, was commenced in November, 1824, and completed in