

Preliminary Directions

Ontarians historically have had an odd sense of direction.

The province was first called Upper Canada, to distinguish it from Lower Canada, which became Quebec. Upper Canada was not, as one might assume, geographically above, or north of Lower Canada; most of it was to the southwest. However, the official view was from London; Lower Canada was closer at hand, Upper was above and beyond.

The fertile triangle between Lakes Erie and Huron was called "Western Ontario" although it lies east of most of the rest of the province, and the shores of Lakes Huron and Superior are called "Northern Ontario" (as well as *Nouvel-Ontario*), although they are in the province's southern half. The reason once more was the point of view. The first Ontario settlements were made in the southeast. (The same early settler viewpoint in America caused Ohio to be considered Midwest, though it is much closer to the Atlantic than the Pacific.)

In the interest of reality we will refer to all the cities considered here as parts of southern Ontario. They are near the bottom of the province and rather close together, from Peterborough and Kingston near Quebec to Thunder Bay at the head of Lake Superior.

Statistics

Ontario has more than a third (35.4 per cent) of Canada's people and it produces about half (48.9 per cent) of its industrial output.

Its statistics bulge in all directions—it produces almost two-thirds of the country's transportation equipment, rubber, machinery and electrical products; and more than half of its metal, furniture, publishing and chemicals.

The Pioneers

Southern Ontario was founded in the image of Great Britain with its social classes firmly in place. In the late eighteenth century an abundance of English-speaking settlers moved in on the few French farmers and Indian villagers who lived among endless forests and potentially fertile fields.

Most were Tories displaced by the American Revolution. Many had been persons of means. They would call themselves United Empire Loyalists, sometimes putting the initials U.E.L. after their names. The King gave them land in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and was willing to sell them chunks of Ontario at a shilling an acre.

The other principal source of early settlers was the British Army, retired officers and soldiers.

