

two lakes—Simcoe and Huron—being only a short nine miles between waters. It must have been used from very early times. There was one other route, with several carrying-places, and considered more difficult for large canoes or boats—the route by the Severn River into Lake Couchiching, through the Narrows, on to the Talbot River; up it as far as it would carry their canoes; then to Balsam Lake, the chain of lakes of the Trent, to Bay of Quinte, and on to Kingston. This was a sort of covered way, used to carry intelligence from the rear to the military and naval headquarters at Kingston. Two things, it is thought, led the authorities to take up and occupy the strategical points on the eastern part of Lake Huron. It was this occupation which gave the initiative to the first settlement of the country. The first of these things was the fact that it was most important to keep open communication with Mackinaw, the Sault Ste. Marie, to Lake Superior. The route by the St. Clair might be more easily closed, being nearer the centre of American power. The other thing was: our authorities had received intelligence that the Americans were preparing a force to attack the centre of our country from the narrowest point between Lakes Huron and Ontario. It was to meet both of these things, and to put obstacles in their way, that these strategic points were sought out and occupied. It was comparatively easy marching up Yonge-street and crossing Lake Simcoe. Then the work began. A road for waggons was made on the old Indian carrying-way, bridged and crosswayed. Storehouses of logs, with their floors of flatted logs, and strong doors, were built at each end of the Portage, with one or two dwellings for the caretakers and for general accommodation. Most of these constructions were standing and in use in 1824-25, when I was familiar with them. The storehouses at the Nottawasaga end were quite large, as large as farmers' good-sized log barns. At the Barrie end they were not so large. One of them stood in Barrie till 1838 or 1839. It took fire from some lime which Mr. Carney had stored in it. The dwellings at the Nottawasaga were a mile south of the storehouses, on the high, dry ground, the shores of the stream being low and swampy. There never was any fortification here, not even a stockade. When I first knew the present site of Barrie, in 1824, there were two pretty good houses of logs, with a good chimney of brick in the centre of each. They were in a line from the wharf and storehouses, between fifty and a hundred yards from the Bay. One house was very good, and was occupied by Mr. Alexander Walker and his men, who did the teaming on the Portage. A Mr. Edgar lived in this house up to the time that the town site of Barrie was surveyed, in 1834. I think it was burned a little before that time. The other house