

CITY OF HAMILTON

Hamilton lies on the south shore of Burlington Bay, at the western extremity of Lake Ontario. It covers a space about two miles in length of the level which reaches from the Lake shore to the mountain, and is about a mile and a half in width. Away to the east stretches a section which has gained a wide celebrity as one of the finest fruit countries in the world; to the south, west and north, lies a fine rich agricultural territory; and to the north-east stretch the broad blue waters of Lake Ontario, whitened with the swelling canvas of a thousand ships, and bearing upon their bosom the commerce of two nations. The mountain is but the escarpment to the broad plateau of Western Ontario, worn down by the ceaseless dash of the waters of the ancient lake. It stretches away to the east, forming the precipices over which leap grandly the thundering Niagara and the dashing Genessee, and loses itself finally in the wild savagery of the Adirondacks. North west of the city are Burlington Heights, a tall wall of concrete, built up and cemented together by the action of the water, in the same way that Burlington Beach, which separates the Bay from the Lake, is now being compacted. On the Heights are still visible the breastworks thrown up during the war of 1812, whence issued the force under General Sheaffe, which fell upon Generals Winder and Chandler at Stoney Creek, captured them and routed their army. "Beautiful for situation," Hamilton has also many fine buildings, public and private; and the magnificent residences, surrounded by exquisitely kept grounds, in the outskirts of the city, have more than a usual celebrity.

The site of the City of Hamilton was originally covered with a dense growth of tall, coarse, serrated Indian grass. The land between the mountain and the bay consisted chiefly of deep ravines and patches of swamp, affording a favorite haunt for rattlesnakes, which at one time abounded here, frogs and quail. The monotony of the immense patches of the Indian grass was relieved here and there by a tall water elm and close, low and almost impenetrable shrubbery, which formed a safe retreat for packs of wolves. On the plot now occupied as the Market Square there was a particularly dense growth of this thicket which was the rendezvous of wolves innumerable. When this part of Canada was first settled a deer trail extended over the brow of the mountain, past where the reservoir is now situated, to the bay. An Indian trail extended from the villages on the Grand River through the Dundas Valley down to the bay near the foot of Emerald street, near which the Indians had a burial mound, where it is probable their chiefs were interred. This mound was fifteen feet high and fifty