

DIARY OF MRS. SIMCOE

schemes of government and war. Those who were fond of sport might gratify their desire to the full in the forest which surrounded York, where bear, deer and wolves and small game abounded. Woodcock and snipe were plentiful on the peninsula and east and north of the east end of Toronto Bay. In the early days salmon was speared at night in the Don, and the bay and Lake Ontario were filled with fish of all kinds. Until Governor Simcoe's departure in 1796, Castle Frank's rough roof covered many a gay party, brought up by canoes and rowboats from the Fort, or on horseback.

"After Governor Simcoe's return to England Castle Frank was occasionally used by President Peter Russell and his family for a picnic, excursion party or ball, when the guests were in summer taken up the Don in boats and in winter by the same route in sleighs. That these trips must have given great enjoyment to those concerned is evident, for there is a letter extant from Mr. Russell, written in December, 1796, in which he says: 'I hope the ladies may be able to enjoy the charming carioling (sleighting) which you must have on your bay and up the Don to Castle Frank, when an early dinner must be picturesque and delightful.' Captain John Denison, an officer in the English militia, came to Canada from Hedon, Yorkshire, in 1792. He first settled in Kingston, but in 1796 he moved to York, and during the summer months he lived at Castle Frank by permission of the Honorable Peter Russell."



NEAR CASTLE FRANK.

(From a Drawing by Mrs. Simcoe.)

Colonel Talbot in a letter to General Simcoe dated July 17th, 1803, writes of a trip to York and a visit to Castle Frank. He says: "I paid a visit of duty to Castle Frank, which I am sorry to add is uninhabited and going to ruin. Some rascals had, a few days before I saw it, broken off the window shutters and gone down to the lower apartment, where they broke down the chimney in order to carry away the bar of iron that supported it."

In 1807, Mrs. Simcoe, the widow of the late Governor, wrote to Sir David W. Smith, Bart., who resided at Alnwick and in 1798-9 was Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, concerning the Scarborough lands of her late husband. Sir David replied that he understood that the Government long before he left Canada made some entry in the Council books, and that he considered Castle Frank as making up the residue of this land. But, added Sir David, the General told me that the person who made out the deed of the Castle Frank property mistook 'G' for Graves and