

To defend the infant colony by a well organized and efficient militia, was one of the first considerations of Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe. His sympathy and familiarity with the case of the loyalists is well known to you. How he had been appointed to the command of a Provincial corps known as the Queen's Rangers, after the British victory at the Brandywine on the 15th of October, 1777, and how, after the surrender of Cornwallis, at Yorktown, with many of the Rangers on board the ship "Bonetto," he returned to England, his corps being disbanded at the Peace of 1783 (Army List 1798: 573). Many of the original officers in the Queen's Rangers, however, formed the nucleus of another regiment of the same name, and accompanied their leader to Canada. Among these were William Jarvis, the secretary; John McGill, late quartermaster and commissioner of public stores in Upper Canada, and Lieutenant for the County of York; Captain Shank; Allan MacNab, father of Sir Allan; and William Merrit.

As territorial limits are essential considerations in militia matters, a brief retrospect of the history of the limits of the territory now embraced in the County of Wentworth, is appropriate. The Niagara Peninsula, in 1788, was a part of the District of Nassau, which had for its eastern boundary the Trent River, and for its western limit, Long Point in Lake Erie. Of a total militia force in the Province at this time of 4,213, the District of Nassau contributed 600 men. These, with the other disbanded loyalists, are they to whom Sir Isaac Brock referred, in 1812, as having settled Upper Canada, "a band of veterans exiled from their former possessions on account of their loyalty." They belonged to what has been styled "the heroic period of Upper Canadian history."

Simcoe, by his proclamation at Kingston, defined the limits of the Counties of York and Lincoln. And in dealing with the names of districts and counties, we are mindful that the township is our municipal unit, and as population increased, the grouping of the townships only, was changed. The townships which at the present time comprise the County of Wentworth, were, in the time of Governor Simcoe, in the west riding of the County of Lincoln, with the exception of the township of Flamborough,