

PREFACE.

In apologizing for my temerity in presenting this little volume to the public I bespeak their kind indulgence for its obvious shortcomings. My intention in studying the troubles and misfortunes of Robert Randall, from whom a cruel fate robbed the honour of being one of the builders of the future Capital of Canada was not that I might be rated as a local historian, but merely to afford myself the pleasure of drawing aside the curtain which was hiding what had happened in the backwoods bordering on the Chaudiere water power before the days of Colonel By. My friends to whom I mentioned the story have urged me that it should be made available both to those who take an interest in the early history of the Capital of Canada as well as to those whose interest might be aroused by having the narrative brought to their attention.

Not being endowed with a facile pen I regret that I have not done justice to the facts I have endeavoured to present. My feelings in this regard are similar to those which prompted the late William Pittman Lett to insert the following lines in his "Recollections of Bytown":

"And O ! deal leniently with me while I try
To bring the vanished past before your eye,
When all around the spot on which I stand
Was trackless forest and primeval land,
The "Barrack Hill," a wilderness all o'er
And Lower Town to Rideau's ancient shore
A gloomy cedar swamp, the haunt of deer
In which the ruffled grouse drum'd when
 spring was near;
While here and there a great pine on high
Towered with its spreading branches to the sky."

HAMNETT P. HILL.

Ottawa,
April 22nd, 1919.