

dential area, constituting virtually a city within a city.

Toronto has acres of attractive parkland. Wooded ravines criss-cross the city and trees line many streets. One ravine houses the Ontario Science Centre, built to commemorate Canada's centenary in 1967. This includes a collection of educational devices including computers and simulated space modules which visitors are encouraged to operate.

Across the lake from Toronto is a chain of pleasant islands, with bridges linking its lagoons. Toronto is one of the busiest of Canada's ports; half of the 4,000 ships that tie up every year come from trans-oceanic routes.

One of the city's landmarks is Casa Loma, a baroque residence of 100-odd rooms atop a hill in west-central Toronto. Built just before the 1914-18 war by an Englishman, Sir Henry Pellatt, it cost more than one million dollars, is sometimes called Pellatt's Folly and it includes examples of Norman, Gothic, Scottish baronial, Tudor and Edwardian architecture. Sir Henry went bankrupt in 1923; the house now serves as a tourist attraction.

Toronto's answer to New York's Greenwich Village and to London's Soho or Chelsea is Yorkville, a district based on the avenue of that name north of Bloor Street and east of Avenue Road. It is the hippy headquarters of Canada. Apart from discotheques, coffee houses and antique shops, it contains notable restaurants. Reconverted houses of Victorian vintage add a special cachet.

Not far away is the University of Toronto, whose rollcall of more than 30,000 students make it the largest in the Commonwealth. A special pride is the medical training and research facilities it has sponsored. Two members of its medical faculty, Sir Frederick Banting and Dr. Best, are honoured for their co-discovery of insulin.

Once an Indian camp

The story of Toronto starts before the first Europeans set foot in North America. For the site on which the modern city stands was originally an Indian camp, marking the spot where portage trails for canoes flowed through dense forest into Lake Ontario. This was the "place of meeting" of river and lake reflected in the Indian name, Toronto.

The campsite later became a French settlement and fur trading post named Fort Rouillé, also known as Fort Royal de Toronto. The founding of the city itself is usually dated from 1793, when it was temporarily christened York in honour of a military victory in Holland by the English Duke of that name.

Two years earlier a constitutional act had divided Canada's newly settled areas into Lower Canada, the French part covering the St. Lawrence valley area, and the fur trade territory further west, called Upper Canada and known to the French as the *pays d'en haut*. The Lieutenant-Governor of Upper

Canada, appointed from England, picked the site of what is now Toronto as his capital, though it had only a handful of inhabitants, few buildings and little cleared land. It was thus as a history of the city recalls, "a town dropped by the hand of government into the midst of a virgin forest." It was renamed Toronto in 1834.

French influence fades

The early French influence faded after the English victory over the French at the Plains of Abraham in 1759, the French garrison having burnt down its post in Toronto to prevent it falling under British rule. In 1787 the British Crown negotiated the "Toronto Purchase", acquiring a rectangular tract of land of more than 250,000 acres along the northern shore of Lake Ontario.

The new capital grew slowly. In 1795 there were only a dozen houses. In 1813, American forces attacked and occupied the settlement briefly, but later withdrew. Gradually English influence increased; King George IV founded King's College, later to become the University of Toronto. When author Charles Dickens visited Toronto in the 1840s, he wrote that the



The elegant modern Town Hall in Toronto streets were well paved and lighted with gas, while the houses were "large and good" and the shops well stocked.

Some of the people who helped build the new community had come from England emigrating in face of the financial difficulties that followed England's warring against Napoleon. Thousands of new citizens arrived in Quebec and Montreal with barely sixpence. In the 1840s, potato famines in Ireland caused the British

government to step up emigration to Canada. Many of the settlers came from the Protestant population of Northern Ireland, often locating in Toronto and giving the city a temporary reputation for puritanism. The strong Irish influence, seen in the annual July 12 Orange parades, has become less noticeable in the wake of the wider postwar immigration that has turned Toronto into one of Canada's most cosmopolitan cities. ♦

Ici on parle Français.. un peu

The French language is making headway in Toronto, once a heartland of English-speaking Canada. One indication of the trend is a French-language elementary school in Don Mills, a Toronto suburb.

Francois Aubin, a French-speaking reporter from the Montreal weekly paper, *La Patrie*, stationed briefly in Toronto under a newspaper fellowship, was delighted to find that his six-year-old son was able to start his studies in French at a Don Mills school, L'École Ste. Madeleine.

Even more surprising was to find that the Toronto studies are closely aligned with courses taken in French-speaking Quebec province. This means his son will be able to return to Montreal at the same educational level as the children in that city.

M. Aubin and his wife were pleased to discover a number of former Quebec residents and French-speaking Ontarians living in the Ontario capital. They also found flourishing French cultural activities in the field of theatre, painting exhibits and social reunions.

Education, textbook and school supplies are free at L'École Ste. Madeleine, where teachers are mostly French-speaking Quebecers or Ontarians.

Toronto also has a private school where the studies are in French. The course costs \$1000 (£450) a year. Teachers here are mostly French-speaking Europeans who speak what is often called "Parisian French."

There are some differences in expression and accent between the French spoken on the European continent and that commonly heard in Quebec, partly due to the influence exerted on Quebec over the years by a predominantly anglophone North American continent.

Efforts to achieve bilingualism in Canada so far have had their greatest thrust in Ottawa, the federal capital, though recent years have seen an increasing diversification in Toronto with the influx of immigrants from different parts of Europe. ♦