

in a private family, and drank too freely after dinner. We slept in the same room. He was a tall handsome man, extremely well dressed in the English fashion, and had nothing particular about him but a string of small bucles hung down on his breast, fastened to his long lank black hair, from each side of his head. He spoke French fluently, but not English enough to enable us to converse freely in that language; however he understood it better than he could speak, and enough to make me enjoy his company very much; his place of residence is eight or ten miles above Montreal, in the village already mentioned opposite Lasheen. In this village there are about 170 houses, in an elegant stone church. What is singular in that place I am informed is that several of these houses, covered with bark of water ash and bass wood, have stood so for three score of years, and are now so close covered with moss as to be perfectly every tight. Captain Thomas is the principal man in that place,—has a fine house, and a squaw every day elegantly dressed; he deals much in the mercantile line, mostly in furs; and can get on his credit at a call in any of the principal mercantile houses at Montreal, two thousand pounds worth of goods. I saw him pick up all the skins worth buying from the merchants in this place. I was informed there were twelve hundred pounds worth of his property seized last year, which he had hid in the woods, and meant to smuggle into the States dominions, where they give a better price than at Montreal. White people practise smuggling of this kind as well as Indians, and when detected, the goods are confiscated in the same manner.

Kingston is situated upon a broad point of land, the Grand Lake Ontario on the south, and a creek on the east and north east runs three or four miles into the country, so that it is surrounded with water on three sides. At the foot of this creek is a fine safe anchorage, and on the shore quays and wharfs are beginning to be built. The whole point of about two or three miles broad is clay lying on limestone, not high, but with an easy slope descending to the water. The limestone in this place lies in curious strata level with the surface of the ground, and cut short; some in square pieces, others in pentagons, hexagons, and polygons, and many different flat sides; and is the finest and most easily quarried perhaps in the world, and so fit for building as not to require the stroke of a hammer. The very beach on the shore is limestone, and so pounded that if a kiln were made close by it might be shovelled in and burnt into lime without any further trouble; yet notwithstanding the materials for building with stone are so easy to be had here, even on the very stance of the houses, they prefer building them all with timber. I never saw a prettier situation for an inland town than this place. The country along the coast, and about the Bay of Kenty, for fifty or sixty miles is closely inhabited, and in some parts three or four concessions deep. The timber upon this flat, but not low point, is mostly of hard wood of a fine growth and very stately, and useful for most purposes. The town is in its infancy as yet, but fast encroaching. It is well supplied with provisions of all kinds from the fertile country behind it. It is a little surprising the stir of trade that is in it already. I have been told that above 6000 bushels of wheat were bought up and stored here the preceding year and that at least a fourth more would have been so this one; and so on in proportion every succeeding year. This is a very extraordinary circumstance in a country not above eight years settled. I have been also informed that six score of Deer have been sold in this town this same year. I see venison every day in the market and pressed upon the inhabitants to buy; but the best only is bought.

Here I fell in with Lieutenant William M'Kay,<sup>16</sup> originally from the north of Scotland, and Lieutenant Daniel of the twenty-sixth regiment, an Irishman, both going for Niagara, with whom I lived in strict intimacy and friendship afterwards while I continued in Canada. In this town there are two companies of foot and some artillerymen, kept for guarding the king's stores for supplying the troops of the forts on the Upper lakes; the troops were commanded by Captains Porter and Ingram. I met with a great deal of politeness and attention from them both; with the latter I dined every day at the mess, when I was not otherwise engaged; and the like civility from Mr. Joseph Forsyth,<sup>16</sup> merchant, and Mr. Neil M'Lean,<sup>17</sup> commissary. Here I staid for several days, waiting a fair wind to proceed in one of the king's sloops to Niagara.

November 23. I took a ride into the country along with Captain Ingram who furnished me with a Horse, and Lieutenant Daniel. We went through a thick wood for about six miles, passed several settlements newly begun in the middle of the wood, every one of which was on limestone. I saw neither stone nor rock in this neighbourhood of any other quality. We returned by another road. The wood mostly hickory, straight, and almost of equal thickness for forty feet to the branches. The hickory nuts are very sweet, and very much resemble the walnut, but are not so large, and much thicker in the shell. Here are great quantities of chesnuts also, and some butt[er] nuts. On our return, we rode about a mile up the side of the Grand Lake,—passed Parson Stewart's<sup>18</sup> house and farm, who has £200 sterling salary, from the British government, and a fine farm of 200 acres, which lies on the side of the lake, and large tracts of it clear. We crossed again from Parson Stewart's along the summit of this flat and charming point, to the house of Sir John Johnston, which is situated above the town and harbour of Kingston, and commands a beautiful prospect. Near this place, but a little more in view of the Grand Lake,