

kept the tavern for several years until it was destroyed by fire. In those times the nearest saw mill was at Big Creek in Barton. In 1813 the site of the city was laid out in town lots by George Hamilton, who was at that time and for several years after member of Parliament for Gore district. This gentleman was remarkable for his energy and public spirit and used every exertion to attract settlers to the locality but not with very great success, for in 1830 it was still a small village. The future city was named in honor of Mr. Hamilton.

In 1813 an act was passed for the construction of the "Burlington Bay Canal," uniting Burlington Bay with Lake Ontario. This work gave a great impetus to the trade and general prosperity of Hamilton; warehouses, wharves, stores and dwellings were erected—vessels were constructed, and large numbers of workmen arrived. This canal was not completed till April, 1832, and Hamilton, then became the head of navigation on Lake Ontario. The construction of Desjardins Canal, uniting Dundas with Burlington Bay, was chartered June, 1826, and for some time added materially to the prosperity of Hamilton.

In 1830 emigrants arriving here were obliged to depend upon farmers in the vicinity for the purchase of necessaries. King street did not exist in those days. Main street was the chief thoroughfare. Peter Horning was at this time Pathmaster of the village, and his premises fronting on Main street, he was frequently solicited by immigrants wanting relief and shelter. To escape their importunities in some measure he had the road now known as King street opened out as the chief street of the village.

On the 12th of February, 1833, an act was passed, on account of the great increase in the population of the town, to define its limits, and to establish a market and police and town officers therein. The town of Hamilton was incorporated in 1833. In the preceding year (Friday, Nov. 16th.) a fire destroyed "Miller's Hotel, the stores of Messrs. Ferguson & Co. and McNab, the Post-office, Desjardin's Canal office, *Western Mercury* office and the dwelling house and shop of Mr. Scottie, which were consumed in less than three-quarters of an hour from the first appearance of the fire."

On the 12th of July, in the same year, the cholera reached Hamilton, and several citizens fell victims to this dread destroyer, and the prisoners in the jail were all liberated.

In the year 1836 the population of the town was 2,846, and the assessed value £14,020. In 1838 the population was 3,358, and the assessed value £52,130. On the 9th of June, 1846, an act was passed incorporating Hamilton as a city, the population having increased to 6,832, and the assessed value being £113,720.

For several years previous to 1856 the progress of the city was rapid and satisfactory. In that year the population was estimated at 27,500. Then, however, came a season of depression. The young city became too ambitious; it undertook too much.

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