

a very strong interest in introducing and maintaining the self-governing institutions of the former colonies. Yet some of the first and nearly all of the later arrivals, being largely farmers and civilians, such as those settled in Fredericksburg, Adolphustown and the Prince Edward peninsula, at once attempted to reproduce in Canada their familiar institutions. Thus, while in the townships in the immediate neighbourhood of Kingston, there appears to have been little anxiety with reference to town meetings, yet in the townships named, town meetings were established before there was any legal warrant for them, as, for instance, the record of Adolphustown will show.<sup>1</sup>

But we must turn now to that change in the fortune of the western settlements which came with the passing of the Constitutional Act of 1791. By it the western districts were formed into an independent province, with a representative assembly and an opportunity to introduce English laws and institutions.

To preside over the formative period of this new Government, General John Graves Simcoe arrived in Upper Canada. Simcoe was a man whose life had been spent in the profession of arms. He was, from all accounts, a most efficient officer, saturated with the military spirit. A man of simple, straightforward ideas, devoted to military methods, when in authority he was accustomed to give his commands to go and come and find them obeyed without question. Almost incapable, by temper and experience, of recognizing any other form of administration, he sought to organize his Government as nearly as possible on a military basis. Self-government by the people at large he fervently and frankly abhorred. Aristocratic military and ecclesiastical rule he considered to be the only possible form of stable government for a decent and respectful people and a well-meaning ruler. As governor of Upper Canada he felt that the whole responsibility for the successful administration of the colony rested upon his shoulders. His sense of responsibility, however, was felt not towards the colonists, but towards the Home Government, hence his extreme unwillingness to share with the colonists the administration of the country which they occupied. Canada did not belong to the colonists, but to Great Britain; the governor was not appointed by the colonists, or in any way responsible to them. He was sent out to administer a British colony in the interests and for the glory of the country which sent him. True, those interests and that glory were to be expressed in a happy and prosperous condition of the colony, but the proper methods and means for accom-

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<sup>1</sup> Early Municipal Records of the Midland District, in Appendix to the Report of the Ontario Bureau of Industries, 1877.