

TORONTO GENERAL HOSPITAL.*

By JAS. F. W. ROSS, M.D.

President of Ex-House Staff Association.

Accept my thanks for the honor you conferred upon me by electing me as President for the year that is just passing.

It is my intention to endeavor to interest you in a few of the details connected with the lives of medical men who lived in Toronto and were active in connection with hospital life here during the term of my incumbency as hospital interne, and who have passed away. It is not my intention to say anything regarding the living.

The General Hospital was established in 1819 through the efforts of the Military Surgeons when there were about one thousand souls living in Toronto. The Chairman of the Medical Board was Dr. Christopher Widmer, and he held the position for thirty-five years. He was the recognized leader of the profession at that time. He died in 1858. I have often talked to my mother about him, as he attended the family of my grandfather, John McIntosh, who lived on Yonge street, near the corner of Queen, and he attended my grandfather in his last illness. His conduct as a Doctor was exemplary. He came in, pulled off his coat and hat, saw his patient, and went out as he came in, in a purely professional capacity, strictly attending to his own business. Widmer lived on Wellington street, near York; I remember the house quite well. It was a double story roughcast building with a verandah around it and placed on an ample lot. Hard by was the gaol, and as Widmer was gaol surgeon, the gaol was conveniently situated for him. In front of his residence was a large square called the Fair Green, where the boys of the time played games. His funeral was very largely attended. On the 7th of May, 1858, after it was over, a meeting of the prominent members of the medical profession was held, and it was resolved that a full length portrait of the deceased be painted and placed temporarily in the Board Room of the General Hospital, until such time as the contemplated Medical College should be erected.

Widmer was a founder, and the first President of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Upper Canada, established in 1833, so that he may be looked upon as at least one of the pioneers of medicine and surgery in Upper Canada or Ontario. The Medical Board

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