

Bouchette, who conducted extensive surveys in the western lakes, wrote approvingly of it, giving among other information, the following interesting description of it: "I distinctly recollect the untamed aspect which the country exhibited when first I entered the beautiful basin. Dense and trackless forests lined the margin of the lake, and reflected their inverted images in its glossy surface. The wandering savage had constructed his ephemeral habitation beneath their luxuriant foliage—the group then consisted of two families of Mississaugas—and the many neighboring marshes were the hitherto uninvaded haunts of immense convoys of wild fowl." Its situation certainly commended it as a convenient and safe place for the capital of the province, and when Lieut.-Col. John Graves Simcoe, the first Governor of Upper Canada, came to the conclusion that Newark, as Niagara-on-the-Lake was then called, was unsuitable for the seat of government on account of its proximity to the United States border, and its not being central enough for provincial purposes, he had no difficulty in selecting Toronto as the place best suited for his capital.

Accordingly he did so choose, and promptly made progress by water to lay the foundation of the new town, accompanied by his officers of state and a detachment of the Queen's Rangers. The town plan was very simple, and was in the form of a parallelogram, the street area being bounded on the west by George Street, on the south by Palace Street, on the east by Ontario Street, and on the north by Duchess Street. At this interval of time it is worth recalling the meaning of the early street nomenclature of the city. George Street was named after George, Prince of Wales (George IV), Duchess Street after the Duchess of York, the King's daughter-in-law, Frederick Street after the Duke of York, Caroline Street after Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales, Yonge Street after Sir Frederick Yonge, Secretary of State for War. Governor Simcoe changed the name of the new town from Toronto to York, and for many years it was so known.

At the beginning of this century the town had taken form and was spreading its buildings over the fairly large area laid out. Public buildings were erected and others were projected, and residences sprung up in goodly profusion and architectural variety. At this period the town was twice captured by the Americans. It surrendered in 1813 to General Pike, when the Houses of Parliament and the records were burned and much damage inflicted on property, and three months later the town was taken by the American fleet under Commodore Chauncey. The social and commercial life of the town was progressing very rapidly, but in this brief sketch cannot be dealt with. Some of the leading men, however, may be mentioned, and their names will revive the scenes in which they moved as controlling actors.

Following Simcoe as governor were Peter Russell, Peter Hunter, Sir Francis Gore, Sir Isaac Brock, and contemporary were Baldwin, Jarvis, Robinson, Powell, Osgoode, Small, Hagermon, Chewett, Draper, Ridout, Boulton, Bidwell, Alton, Shaw and Denison. One figure stands out pre-eminent in the person of Bishop Strachan, the sturdy Aberdonian, who was an ecclesiastic and statesman, and left his mark on the events of the day as probably no one else did. Meanwhile the town grew and prospered. Successful business enterprises were established, churches built, schools provided, and colleges for the higher branches of education founded. The printing press poured forth its broadsheets, and "York," then as now, was the provincial centre of political agitation and literary activity. As the seat of government this was only natural, but the circumstances of the time were favorable for civil commotion and public unrest.

The Family Compact reigned supreme. Popular rights were ignored or neglected, and constitutional agitation having failed in effecting redress and reform, the people, or a portion of them, arose in revolt, the outbreak being known as the William Lyon Mackenzie Rebellion. Three years before that extreme step was taken, York once more changed its name, reverting to "Toronto," and it became a city. From that year, 1834, it dates its second birth, and the man upon whom was bestowed the distinction of being the first mayor was the agitator and reformer, William Lyon Mackenzie. The steps taken to incorporate Toronto are worth reciting. Mr. Jarvis, member for York, introduced the bill for incorporation in the Legislature in February, 1834. In March it became law, providing for a city divided into five wards, with two aldermen and two councilmen from each ward, from whom was to be elected a mayor. The first meeting of the new council was held on the 3rd of April, 1834, and Mr. Mackenzie was elected mayor, and it was he who designed the city arms and motto: "Industry, Intelligence, Integrity."

Here it may be proper, as it surely will be interesting, to give the names of the chief magistrates who have ruled the city since its incorporation, viz.: 1834, William Lyon Mackenzie; 1835, Robert Baldwin Sullivan; 1836, Thos D. Morrison, M.D.; 1837, George