

Lake Couchiching to their outlet through the Severn River, and thus reaching Matchedash Bay. This was the route followed by Gov. Simcoe and his suite in their expedition to Penetanguishene Bay in 1793 to select a site for a military station; also by Alex. Henry and his Indian captors on their way to Niagara in 1764 after the massacre at Mackinaw. The first known white man to follow this trail was Etienne Brule, Champlain's ill-fated interpreter who left the historic rendezvous at the Narrows (Orillia) in 1615 on his way to hasten the promised Huron allies from the south in their expedition against the Iroquois. Miss K. M. Lizars, in her recent monograph on the Humber River, speaks of Brule as the first white man who stood on its shores, on his further progress to Niagara and the countries beyond Lake Ontario.

At an early date English fur traders from Albany and regions south of Lake Ontario used this trail to reach Mackinaw, but as the Iroquois still dominated Lake Ontario, the French could not avail themselves of this route till Fort Catarauquois (at Kingston) was built by Frontenac in 1672, after which date we have extracts and copies of letters written by La Salle and the missionaries from Sault Ste. Marie in 1673. (Canadian Archives, 1885, page XXXV). La Salle built Fort Niagara in 1679 and in the following year passed over this trail with twenty men on his way to the west. After 1680 traders from the domain of Col. Dongan, Governor of New York, still poached on the French preserves by using this trail, rousing the jealousy of the French authorities, especially that of Governor Denonville who, in 1686, posted La Durantaye at the Toronto portage "to guard against the passage of the English to Mackinaw." Memoirs of an extensive correspondence between Denonville and Dongan on this subject may be found in the Canadian Archives for 1885, from page XLV. to LIV. From this time onward the Pass remained in possession of the French, who built Fort Rouille (Toronto) in 1749, to be destroyed by them at the conquest ten years later.

The right to use these carrying places was apparently regarded as a valuable franchise. At an early date, and in fact as soon as the authorities contemplated opening these routes, M. Rochblave applied for the right to transport goods over the Trent Portage, which he himself had discovered, from Catarauqua to Lake Huron, and three years later he applied also for the "exclusive privilege" of carrying goods across the Toronto Portage from Toronto to Lake La Clie