

SOME LAPSED NAMES IN CANADIAN LOCAL NOMENCLATURE. BY REV.
HENRY SCADDING, D.D.

(Read November 28, 1896.)

It is a matter of some curiosity to notice the vicissitudes which have taken place, in several instances, in the names of places, rivers, and other natural objects, during our short history here in Canada. In some cases, names imposed by royal proclamation, or other competent authority, have failed to be used, or have been displaced by terms and titles, resting solely on popular usage. It may be considered a matter of some interest to recall some of these now disused, or, as we may say, lapsed names, and to review very briefly their history.

The name of our own capital, Toronto, itself covers a lapsed name, so to speak.

When first laid out as a town, Toronto, as we all know, bore the name of York, and was so known for a period of forty years. It was then, viz., in 1834, incorporated as the City of Toronto, which, singularly enough, was a return to a name which had lapsed, the locality having been for a considerable time previous to 1794, known by the appellation Toronto, of Indian origin. This, again, was a name, which there is good evidence to show, had fallen into disuse elsewhere, and had been adopted here. In the time of La Salle, 1680, the lake which we know as Lake Simcoe was known as Lake Toronto, while the site of our city was marked as Ti-ai-a-gon on the maps, a name which La Salle also employs. This word Ti-ai-a-gon, I am assured, signifies a landing, and it here denoted the landing place for voyageurs, bound for Lakes Toronto and Huron, via a trail or portage well known.

When the Wyandotté population, inhabiting between Lakes Toronto and Huron, was extirpated by the Iroquois, the name Toronto came to be gradually attached solely to its Ti-ai-a-gon, or landing place on Lake Ontario, where it survived. And here, again, we have a glimpse of another lapsed name.

The trading post at the landing had been officially named "Fort Rouillé," in honor of the then Minister of Marine of that name in Paris, but the popular use having become familiar with the word Toronto as applied to the landing, failed to adopt the expression, Fort Rouillé, and employed only that of "Fort Toronto" instead. Hence the survival of the beautiful word Toronto, hereabouts, to this day.

It may here be conveniently added that the neighboring Humber River is given in the first Gazetteer of Upper Canada, dated about one hundred years back, as "St. John's River," from a French settler named St. Jean, who had a wayside inn, or place of entertainment, at its mouth. "Humber" displaced a long and rather