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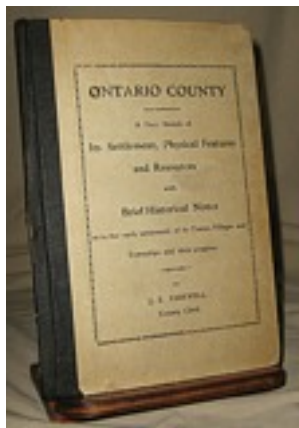
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Ontario County; A Short Sketch of its Settlement, Physical Features and Resources - 1907 CA0365



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About this CD.

The cover title continues, "With Brief Historical Notes as to the early settlement of its Towns. Villages and Townships and their progress. By J. E. Farewell, County Clerk." But the Title Page names the book as: "County of Ontario, Short Notes as to the Early Settlement and Progress of the County and brief References to the Pioneers and Some Ontario County Men who have Taken a Prominent Part in Provincial and Dominion Affairs. By J. E. Farewell, LL.B., K. C., County Clerk and Solicitor." To me the Title Page is more descriptive of the book's content but I suspect it depends on your point of view. Certainly, the book provides plenty of information suitable to satisfy both titles. The book contains 88 pages plus 9 plates.

There is also the question of location. Ontario County ceased to exist as the result of a municipal reorganization in the early 1970's, the various areas that it used to contain being ceded mainly to the Durham (Co.) Region but with some northern parts, e.g., the Townships of Mara and Rama going to Simcoe County and the area of Simcoe Lake areas which joined with York County. While it existed Ontario County was an approximately rectangular area spanning between Lake Ontario and the southern shore of Lake Simcoe at the East-most part of the "Home District" of (now) Toronto in the County of York. It is probably easiest to locate the area by listing the (currently existing) Townships, Towns and Villages which appear as chapter headings in the book:

Townships: BROCK.; EAST WHITBY.; MARA.; PICKERING.; RAMA.; REACH.;
SCUGOG.; SCOTT.; THORAH.; UXBRIDGE.; WHITBY.;
Towns: WHITBY.; OSHAWA.; UXBRIDGE.
Villages: SUNDERLAND; PORT PERRY.; CANNINGTON.; BEAVERTON.

While J. E. Farewell is the author of record, the Preface gives credit to numerous others who prepared and submitted historical and genealogical input for their individual area of interest. The "Short Sketch" format adopted by Farewell allows a compaction of these facts into an extraordinarily small number of pages giving rise to what can only be called a concentrated history book. Following a Preface there is a section which traces the social development of the area following its initial visit by Champlain in the early 1600's also reviewing the geological features. Then follows individual chapters reviewing each of the major centres of settlement, making note of early settlers, individuals responsible for social and economic progress and others of note in the social development and growth of the town and / or County. While the list given above identifies the major areas, where appropriate, other closely related settlements - Port Oshawa, within the Town of Oshawa for instance - are also given space so their history can be similarly reported.

Ontario County, by the fortune of its geographic location has been economically important in the development of the whole Province of Ontario from the earliest times but its abolition in 1971 makes it harder to identify and study it as a single source. The early histories of Simcoe and Durham can not include the beginnings of these important townships, cities, towns and villages simply because their merging into the boundary of the County did not occur until well after the histories were written. This is then an important book to all those trying to trace roots in this highly important and productive area.

The compact format of the book leaves no space for Tables of Content, much less for an Index of any type so the full search-ability of this digital edition is a boon to laying open the valuable information which - up to now - has laid hidden in this wonderful book. We have also enhanced the speed of your searches by enabling our FastFind technology.

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COUNTY OF ONTARIO

SHORT NOTES

AS TO THE

EARLY SETTLEMENT AND PROGRESS

OF THE COUNTY

AND BRIEF REFERENCES TO THE

Pioneers and Some Ontario County Men

WHO HAVE TAKEN A PROMINENT PART IN

PROVINCIAL AND DOMINION AFFAIRS

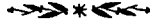
—BY—

John Edward Chandler
J. E. FAREWELL, LL.B., K. C.,

County Clerk and Solicitor.

WHITBY
GAZETTE-CHRONICLE PRESS
1907.

PREFACE.



The following rough sketches relating to the history of the County were prepared at the request of the County Council.

For much of the information the writer is indebted to notes kindly furnished by Municipal Clerks.

As to the Township of Reach reference has been frequently made to a pamphlet written many years ago by the Rev. Mr. Monteith and first published in "The North Ontario Observer" and to the late W. H. Higgins' "Work on the Life and Times of Joseph Gould."

The sketch of Oshawa was written principally by Dr. T. E. Kaiser, its present Mayor.

It will doubtless be claimed that many of the incidents contained herein are incorrect as to names and dates. The writer is aware that in several instances such different statements have appeared in print. He has given them according to the best information obtainable.

He regrets that he had not more space at his disposal and trusts that imperfect as these notes are they will cause others who have the time and means to give their attention to the important matter of collecting materials for a County History, and that steps will speedily be taken to establish a County Historical Society to continue the work.



COUNTY OF ONTARIO.

Ontario, the Keystone County, is wedged in between Durham and Victoria on the east, York and Simcoe on the west, and rock-ribbed Muskoka on the north, while its southern shores are washed by Lake Ontario.

The county was first visited by white men in the month of August two hundred and ninety-one years ago (1615).

Champlain, the French governor and explorer, accompanied by Caron and other Recollect missionaries at that time, ascended the Ottawa river, crossed to Lake Nipissing, descended the French river to Georgian Bay. Coasting along this he reached the Severn river and thence through Lake Couchiching he came to the country of the Huron Indians. He agreed to join them in an attack on the Iroquois, southwest of Oswego, in New York State. Passing through Lake Simcoe to the Talbot river, which separates Mara and Thorah Townships, he reached Balsam Lake, thence down the waters of the Trent to Lake Ontario. Afterwards communication with Lake Huron was made through Whitby and Reach Townships and through the Rouge river in Pickering Township to the Holland river and Lake Simcoe. Through this latter route

another expedition of French and Indians passed from Lake Huron to Niagara under instructions from the French Commandant at Quebec to avoid Fort Rouille, now Toronto, by taking this route.

In the old French map is a tracing of a canal route between the Holland and Rouge rivers.

The first school in the Province was established at Frenchman's Bay, in Pickering, in 1669-1670, by Fenelon and Trouve, Sulpician missionaries, who wintered there and gathered the Indians into a school. In 1778 Ontario county formed part of the District of Nassau. In 1798 it became part of the Home District, the first registry office for which was Niagara.

The first white settler was Benjamin Wilson, who settled in East Whitby, east of Oshawa harbor, in 1778. Some of his descendants are still living in the county, namely children of Benjamin and Nelson Pickell.

The first "Town meeting for choosing the officers and other regulators for the Towns of Whitby and Pickering" was held in 1801. The first meeting for the like purpose for the Township of Pickering alone was held in 1811. In these days there were County Lieutenants who had power to appoint Justices of the Peace and Militia Officers. In 1804 the County Lieutenant for York County was the Honorable David Wm. Smith, who in some way acquired the title to a great many parcels of land in the county. In 1851 this county was



COUNTY ARMOURIES.

TOWNSHIP OF WHITBY.

This township was first known as Township No. 8 of the Lake Shore townships between the Bay of Quinte and York. It was also afterwards called Norwich.

When a north of England man got the management of these matters in hand he wiped out the then names of these lake front townships and scattered Yorkshire names along the lake shore, namely: Darlington, Whitby, Pickering, Scarborough, York.

The first settler in the county was Benjamin Wilson, who settled in this township in 1790 or 1794, east of Oshawa Harbor. He came from Putney in the State of Vermont, and it is claimed he was a United Empire Loyalist, and his daughter, Mrs. Nancy Pickle, the first white child born between Toronto and Kingston.

Shortly after his arrival his place was visited by a band of Indians, who took his tools and provisions which had been furnished to him by the Government, and whatever else he had but his boat, and told him to begone and not to find his way back again. He had come around from Niagara, where the Government then was. He went down the lake shore to Ganaraska, now Port Hope, where he met Wabakischoe, a chief who ruled the Indians from the Humber to the Bay of Quinte. Fortunately for Wilson the chief was accompanied

by William Peake, who afterwards settled at Duffin's Creek. Wilson explained to Peake why he was going east instead of west. The chief learning from Peake what had happened told Wilson to go back with him. Arrived at the shanty they waited about until an Indian was discovered prowling around in the hope that he might pick up something. The chief started him off to find the Indians who had looted Wilson's goods with instructions to notify them to hunt up all the Indians who had taken anything from Wilson and to be and appear three or four days afterwards with all the stolen goods and with all their own stack of furs. The unwelcome news was passed along like the carrying of the "Fiery Cross" in Scotland.

The Indians appeared and placed back in Wilson's shanty what was left of the goods and provisions. Then the furs of each Indian were opened out and Wilson was told to go through the packs and take from each of them enough to make up the whole of his loss. Wilson took all he dared to take. The chief said it was not enough and that Peake must "pull" more furs from the packs till there was enough handed over. Peake "pulled" furs from each and added them to Wilson's stock. The chief was not satisfied. He commenced "pulling" more furs and added them to Wilson's lot until he was more than paid in value and a good

township was largely settled by west of England men and was known as the English Corners.

In the south were the Coryells, Dearborns, Demerays, Drews, Farewells, Groats, Halls, Moores, Henrys, McGills, McGregors, Rogers, Terwillagers, Annes, Hinksons, Mothersills, Pickles. In the centre were the Clarks, Doolittles, Hepburns, Beaths, Hicks, Kars, Lukes, Ashtons, McKenzies, Ormiston, Pascoes, Pringles, Gibbs, Black, Waits, Howdens, Smiths, Wilcoxson, Chandler, Dr. McMahon, Stabback, Adams, John Ratcliffe, ex-Warden of the County, Harper and Adams families.

Amongst these men of the centre part of the township two are deserving of notice. John Black, a Scotchman, kept a store at Columbus. The sign was "John Black at home." He was strong in municipal politics. His poetical effusions appeared about the end of December with wonderful regularity. The writer remembers one headed, "Arouse Columbians, Every One." Another, "Wards, Wards, Will You the Town Divide?" He emigrated to St. Louis, Missouri, and in a letter to a friend some time after his arrival stated that he was engaged in "the business of raising hogs, mules and niggers." W. H. Gibbs, afterwards more than once member for North Ontario, and afterwards an alderman of Toronto, carried on a store and built and ran the Fornax mills to the west of Columbus. He was a brother of the Hon. T. N. Gibbs.

In the north part of the township were the Fishers, Harndens, Sornberger, Rays, Prescott, Newton, Halls, Thomas Hodgson and Wm. Thompson, well known as "The Citizen" O'Boyle.

Grist mills were built by Sandy Small south of Cedardale. Peter Taylor and Morris, three miles north of Oshawa.

John Ray, Luther Harnden, near Raglan; A. M. Farewell, grist and saw mill; and saw mills by John Harper, R. Luke, Pascoe, Ray, J. Campbell, and Edward Smith. Of the Smith family, William, James, Robert and John, who settled in the village of Columbus and to the south of it, John and Robert were members of the County Council. William, a younger member of the family, served more than one term as a member of the Dominion Parliament, representing South Ontario. He was reeve and represented the Township and the County Council. He is paymaster of the 34th Regiment with the rank of major.

At Port Oshawa the Mothersill family were settlers shortly after 1833. George A. Mothersill, a Dublin man, was harbor master at Port Oshawa. His sons, Richard, ex-Warden of the County, who visited the County Council at its last session, is in his 88th year. His brothers, John and Dr. Joseph Mothersill, of Stratford, and Robert, came with their father to East Whitby. Robert returned to Ireland.

OSHAWA.

Assessment, 1907, \$1,984,831.
 Population, 1850, 1,200.
 Population, 1907, 6,400.

For convenience it might be well to divide the history of Oshawa into five periods.

1. Early settlement, 1798-1822.
2. Industrial Foundation, 1822-1840.
3. Post Office Hamlet, 1840-1850.
4. Incorporated Village, 1850-1879.
5. Town of Oshawa, 1879-1907.
 Early Settlement.

The site of the present Town of Oshawa covers an area of 2,400 acres, and is generally recognized upon a county map as occupying Lots Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 of concessions one and two, East Whitby. As most of this land is still used for purposes of agriculture it can readily be understood that it is only the more densely populated section that can pretend to play any part in the real history of the town.

In dealing with the early settlement of Oshawa we will confine our attention to lots Nos. 10 and 11 of the 1st and 2nd concessions of East Whitby, thus taking in the four two hundred acre farms which come in close touch with each other at the main four corners of the

town. Who were the first possessors of this land? and who were their immediate successors? The following table of names and dates compiled from the Registry Office will fairly answer these questions, as to the full lots or sections thereof:

- Lot 10, 1st Con.
 Up to 1798 Crown
 " 1798 Isabella Shaw
 " 1824 John Crooks
 " 1829 Chas. Arkland
 " 1832 Aaron Choat
 " 1834 Dennis Dullea
 " 1835 Phil Herriman
 " 1836 Joseph Fox
 " 1836 Nelson Amsbury
 " 1837 Edward Skae

- Lot 10, 2nd Con.
 (N. E. Ward)
 Up to 1798 Crown
 " 1798 Isabella Shaw
 " 1819 Francis Leys
 " 1832 Norris Kerr
 " 1832 William Kerr
 " 1835 Elijah Haight
 " 1839 Joseph Wood
 " 1840 Abraham Farewell
 " 1841 Henry Pedlar

- Lot 11, 1st Con.
 Up to 1798 Crown
 " 1828 King's College
 " 1828 Joseph Gorham
 " 1832 Robert & John Bradbury
 " 1837 Joseph Gorham
 " 1837 John McGrigor
 " 1837 Elijah Haight
 " 1837 William Weller
 " 1839 Thomas Gibbs

Lot 11, 2nd Con.

VILLAGE OF BEAVERTON.

Assessed value in 1884 was \$141,-332. Present assessed value, \$240,-211. Population, 966.

Beaverton was separated from the Township of Thorah and incorporated on the 5th day of June, A. D. 1884. It is situated on the Beaver River close to Lake Simcoe.

The grist and saw mill was built here by Donald Calder about 1830.

The village was formerly called Milton.

Kenneth Cameron opened the first store in the place in 1833.

The first white child born in the village was Ann Gordon, who is still living there.

In 1829 George Proctor built a grist mill. The building was made of logs. It is now superseded by a fine brick mill with the latest improvements.

The first school teacher was David Ross, a Waterloo veteran. The school was opened in 1839. The first council of the incorporated

village was composed of George F. Bruce, reeve. Mr. Bruce had been reeve of the Township of Thorah and was warden of the county in 1882. Councillors, John Leslie, Jas. Ritchie, Charles T. Young, H. Westcott. The first clerk was George Smith, jr., P. L. S., whose father was for many years clerk and treasurer of the Township of Thorah.

Mr. Smith was succeeded in 1889 by Major C. A. Paterson, the present clerk.

The first church was built in 1843.

There are two large and well finished Presbyterian churches, one Episcopal church and one Methodist church. One large, well equipped public school. The building of the Canadian Northern railway, the proximity to Lake Simcoe, the beauty of the scenery and the erection of an excellent summer hotel has made Beaverton a pleasant summer resort.

The village has good granolithic and gravel sidewalks and is lighted by electricity.