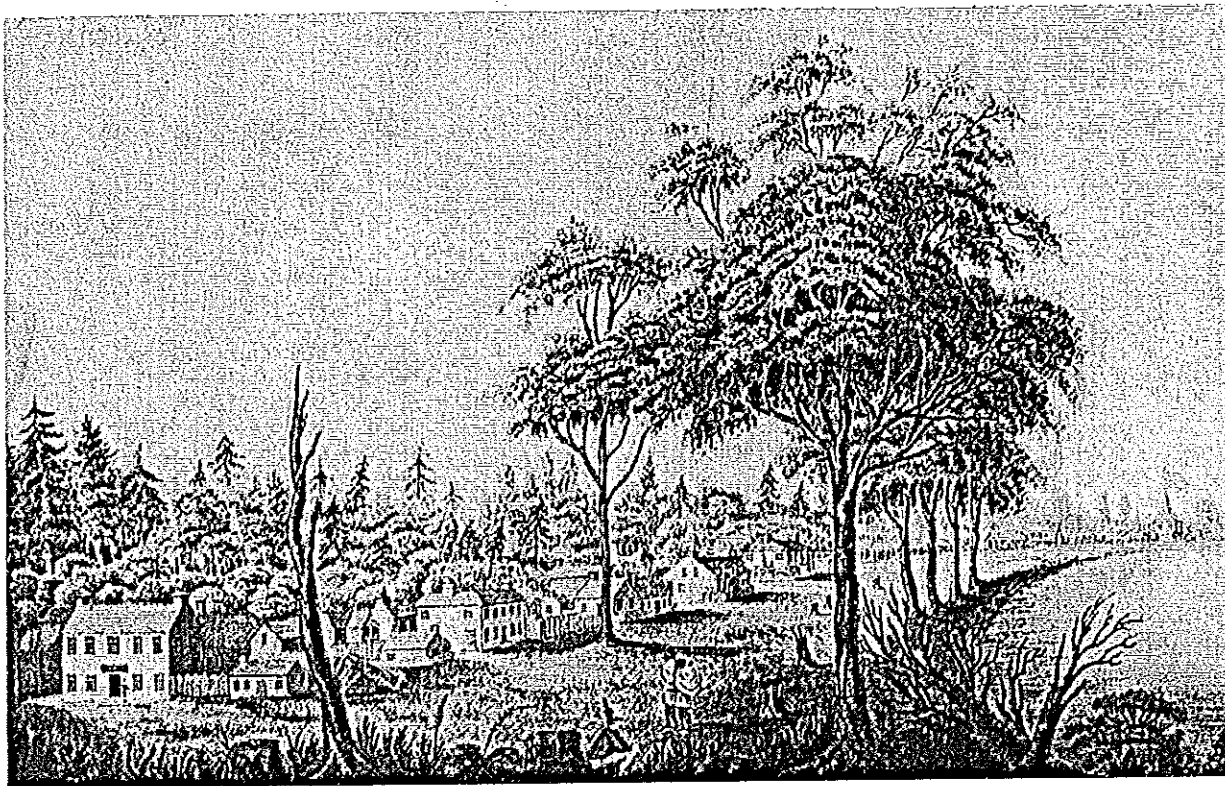


# Old Town Toronto

## *A Heritage Landscape Guide*



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The Heritage Resources Centre  
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General Editor: J. Gordon Nelson

This working version is the result of a series of discussions and consultations that took place over the past year, and will continue in 2001. It will also be used in a variety of trial situations, including the Heritage Canada Foundation Annual Conference in Toronto, October 11-14, 2001. Comments and advice on the Guide are welcomed!

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J. Gordon Nelson is the Chair of the Heritage Resources Centre at the University of Waterloo and the Ontario Governor for the Heritage Canada Foundation.

Rollo Myers and colleagues were responsible for collecting most of the material used in this Guide. Rollo and colleagues, notably from the Citizens for the Old Town, also worked with Heather Thomson in the organizing and writing of the Guide. Gordon Nelson participated in the planning and organization of the Guide and in review and editing of the document.

## Partners

Several organizations were involved in the development and production of this Heritage Landscape Guide. Two organizations have been basically responsible for the research, design, writing, consultation and physical creation of the Guide. These are:

- *Citizens for the Old Town*  
A grass-roots community organization (recently incorporated) working to raise awareness of the valuable heritage character of the historic "Old Town" areas in Toronto.
- *Heritage Resources Centre, University of Waterloo*  
A non-profit organization that conducts research and networks with concerned agencies, groups and individuals about natural and cultural heritage and related planning issues.

Numerous other individuals and organizations also contributed to the document by providing valuable comments, additional research materials and constructive advice. Many thanks to all of the people who gave their time toward this project including Marjorie Mercer, Beth Hanna, Dr. Carl Benn, Dr. Steven Otto, Michael McClelland, Alan Seymour, Dr. Mima Kapches, Nancy Mallett, Louise Bridge, Helene St. Jacques and Manuel Oliveira. Other people will be involved subsequently in reviewing the Guide and in other support work. Thanks are also due to the people who helped with the actual production of the Guide including Dulce Da Silva, Cynthia Franklin and others at the Heritage Resources Centre and Graphics Centre, University of Waterloo as well as Dolphin Direct, Toronto.

Special appreciation is due to the *Ontario Heritage Foundation* for providing advice and support.

## About this Heritage Landscape Guide

While many cities celebrate their early beginnings, the history of Toronto is relatively unknown to most visitors and even to many locals. Sections of Toronto contain a wealth of heritage resources. More people need to be aware of the fascinating history they tell. This Heritage Landscape Guide will focus on one of the oldest parts of the city, aptly named the "Old Town."

The sections of the Old Town examined in this Heritage Landscape Guide are in rapid transition and the heritage resources they contain are under pressure on a daily basis. The objectives of this Guide are therefore twofold: both to raise awareness about the Old Town's past, and to promote responsible decision-making for its future.

This Heritage Landscape Guide is seen as the first of a possible series of guides for other parts of the City.

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## ***Toronto's "Old Town"***

Among the many neighbourhoods and districts in the City that may be considered "old," a few areas have been identified as particularly significant to Toronto's development, and a number of local organizations are working to preserve and promote these important places. This Guide will set out to explore one of these areas, the "Old Town", defined by the Citizens for the Old Town as the land from Victoria Street to the Don River and from Queen Street to the Esplanade (see attached map).

The Old Town provides a wonderful snapshot of the evolution of Toronto. Its buildings, landscapes and archaeology tell the stories of our early government, land use, economics, education, architecture and social life. It was on this stage that a remarkable cast of characters performed the drama that is our past. We are mindful, of course, that Toronto's history predates the arrival of the British by centuries of First Nations settlement and French fur trade activities. For the purposes of this guide, however, the goal is to focus on the beginnings of the modern city itself.

Today, Toronto's Old Town has one of the largest concentrations of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings in Ontario, and is a tremendous heritage resource. Its historic buildings and landscapes have the potential to serve as a unique framework for cultural and economic revitalization.

### ***The Heritage Landscape Guide:***

This Guide is intended to complement walking tours by providing the following:

- An overview of the history of early Toronto in terms of a number of key themes: historic figures; landmark historical events; early government; the development of public services; law and order/crime and punishment; the role of religion; social life; working class history; immigration; Black history; industrialization; architecture; land use.
- An increased understanding of how these themes were manifested in the Old Town's buildings and landscapes.
- A brief outline of potential challenges and opportunities to conserving and managing the Old Town effectively.

### ***Field Trip Sites:***

The attached map shows the sites in the Old Town that are part of this Guide. In some cases the sites are individual buildings, and sometimes they are larger groupings of heritage features or landscapes. Each site relates to particular themes in Toronto's history, as follows:

1. **First Parliament Buildings, 1798.** The centre of public life in the early development of the town, this site is one of the most important in Toronto, if not in Ontario.
2. **Front Street Factories.** The factories, distilleries, breweries, foundries and mills of Corktown drove Toronto's growth and prosperity for more than a century.

3. **Corktown.** Once at the edge of town in the marshes of the Don, Corktown has retained its working class character and special landmarks including several National Historic Sites.
4. **Lucie and Thornton Blackburn Site.** Fugitive slaves from Kentucky, the Blackburns came to Toronto in the 1830s prior to the establishment of the Underground Railroad and the eventual growth of a Black community in the City. The Blackburns lived here for fifty years and enjoyed business success. The site has received national recognition.
- ✓ 5. **Gooderham & Worts.** In its heyday, it was the most successful company in Toronto, and possibly in Ontario. Today it stands as a 160 year-old reminder of the City's industrial past.
- ✓ 6. **St. James' Cathedral and its Predecessors.** An important meeting place for the people of early York and Toronto, including some of its most influential citizens.
7. **King Street Retail District.** Once Toronto's grandest street, coming back to life as a centre of fashion, design and public amenities.
8. **Adelaide Street.** The oldest bank building and the oldest operating post office in Canada, adjacent to other early properties of distinction.
9. **The Original Town of York.** Although few vestiges remain from the earliest period in Toronto's modern history, this area represents the birthplace of the city.
- ✓ 10. **The St. Lawrence Market.** Rebuilt several times since 1803, the Market is still a community focal point as it was in the early days.
11. **Front Street warehouses (Toronto's "postcard" district).** Front Street, as its name suggests, once faced the harbour. The three miles of parkland between the Parliament Buildings and Fort York were surrendered in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to railway related development. Although Toronto lost its shoreline parks reserves during the process, today this area boasts a large stock of attractive warehouses, banks and other buildings dating to that prosperous period.
12. **The site of the *Colonial Advocate* office.** Run by firebrand William Lyon Mackenzie, later the City of Toronto's first mayor in 1834, this newspaper resisted the elitist dominance of the Family Compact in public life.
- ✓ 13. **The Flatiron Building.** Once slated to be demolished, the Flatiron Building is a prime example of how the conservation of heritage pays economically today. Meticulously restored by caring owners, its popularity and fame have resulted in a successful business enterprise.
14. **Modern development in the Old Town:** The theatre district intersperses the old and the new, creating an interesting mix of styles and adaptive uses for sections of the Old Town.
15. **Toronto Street.** The economic powerhouse of Victorian Toronto: banks; insurance companies; and public utilities.
16. **Queen Street.** Here the Dominion Brewery complex, established in 1873, stands as a reminder that this was once the heart of the thriving brewing industry in Toronto.



## Historical Overview

### Natural History

The Old Town is situated on terrain that has undergone considerable natural evolution over many millions of years. The following chart illustrates the major geological changes that have taken place in the Toronto area (Key Sources: *Bring Back the Don*, pp. 21-26 and *Special Places: The Changing Ecosystems of the Toronto Region*, p. 11-27)).

Period	Landscape Evolution
450 million years ago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The region was covered with shallow seas; sediments from the seas became blue-grey shale.</li> </ul>
150,000 years ago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bedrock became buried under glacial drift made of till and clay.</li> </ul>
12,000 years ago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Don River Valley was covered with a body of water called Lake Iroquois. The old shoreline from that period can still be seen today: at the top of the Scarborough Bluffs, around Lake Ontario and at Toronto (the Davenport hill, visible along Avenue Road -- Casa Loma stands on the Lake Iroquois shoreline).</li> <li>At that time, the Don River carried sand and sediment into Lake Iroquois, resulting in the existing baymouth bar from the Scarborough Bluffs west to the Lower Don Valley.</li> </ul>
10,000 years ago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When Lake Iroquois drained, Lake Ontario began to be formed, the Don River curved to flow around the sand bar. Since then, it has continued to carry sediment which helped form the Toronto Islands (which were once a peninsula).</li> </ul>

The diaries of early travellers such as Mrs. Elizabeth Simcoe, the wife of Governor John Graves Simcoe who arrived in 1793, provide some details about the natural environment at that time: the Don River was full of salmon and other fish; the valley was thickly forested with mixed deciduous and coniferous trees; wolves, deer, wolverine, lynx, bear, and various migratory birds flourished in the area.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For those with a strong interest in natural heritage, the following recent publication is an excellent source: Roots, Betty I., Donald A. Chant and Conrad E. Heidenreich, eds. 1999. *Special Places: The Changing Ecosystems of the Toronto Region*. University of British Columbia Press: Vancouver, BC.

## First Nations History

The earliest First Nations presence in the Toronto area has been traced to the recession of Lake Iroquois, approximately 10,000 years ago. A brief overview of the periods of First Nations' activities is provided in the table below (key source: *Special Places: The Changing Ecosystems of the Toronto Region*, p. 63-75).

Period	First Nations Presence
Palaeo-Indian c. 9000-7000 BC	These people were likely hunters with spears, who migrated through the Toronto area between their winter and summer ranges. Large mammals such as mastodon and mammoth were present during this period.
Archaic c. 8000-1000 BC	Heavy woodworking tools were used after 7000 BC, and people manufactured dugout canoes. Fishing appears to have been a greater source of food during this period. Copper tools appear after 4000 BC.
Early and Middle Woodland c. 1000 BC – AD 700	Pottery making makes its appearance after 1000 BC and the introduction of cultivated plants indicates a transition toward a more sedentary way of life.
Late Woodland c. AD 600-1650	Society became much more agricultural during this time, and the cultivation of corn, beans and squash was common practice. The Toronto area, however, continued to be occupied by hunting and fishing peoples until about AD 1100. The spread of cultivated plants led to more permanent settlement. Clusters of villages could be found after AD 900.
The Historic Period AD 1650-1800	Contact with European explorers and settlers led to new activities such as the fur trade.

It is known that several First Nations including various Iroquoian peoples made use of the Toronto area for hunting and food gathering. A few First Nations encampments were found near the mouth of the Don River and some evidence has been found of small seasonal activities in the lower and middle Don Valley area. Various archaeological finds have provided evidence of First Nations activity, a most important one being the Withrow site. It was discovered in 1886 on Withrow Avenue near Broadview and East Riverdale Park, and contained both Archaic (pre-3000 BC) and more recent artifacts.

By about 1660, the Five Nations Iroquois from New York had largely destroyed the indigenous societies of southern Ontario and had begun to colonize the region. One such

village was Teiaiagon near the junction of Lake Ontario and the Humber River. The Humber trail was called the "Carrying Place" because it served as a portage for those travelling between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe. Teiaiagon was eventually abandoned and the Mississauga people began making use of the area for hunting, fishing, and food gathering.

### *European Settlement*

Possibly the first European to see the future site of Toronto was the French explorer Etienne Brulé, when he and 12 Hurons were instructed by Samuel de Champlain to investigate the general area in 1615<sup>2</sup>. The first fur trade posts seem to have been constructed near the Humber and the present site of Toronto in the early 1600s. Although documentary evidence is sketchy, it is likely that trading continued in the Toronto area into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is known that a formal French trading post called *le Magasin Royal*, or king's shop, existed in 1720.

In 1750, a new trading post called Fort Toronto was built on the east bank of the Humber. The structure was quickly deemed inadequate, and another larger fort was built later that year, this one called Fort Rouillé in honour of the French Minister of Marine and Colonies. Fort Rouillé (sometimes also known as Fort Toronto, causing some confusion) was constructed on what is now the grounds of the Canadian National Exhibition, and is commemorated with a monument there. In 1759, after the British victory at the siege of Niagara, the French destroyed Fort Rouillé in order to prevent it from being used by their enemies.

In 1787, the "Toronto Purchase" was negotiated with the Mississaugas under Sir Guy Carleton, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Dorchester. The boundaries were not clearly defined and are still disputed. An initial survey for the site of the potential new town was completed in 1788.

The American Revolutionary War (1775-83) brought a flood of Loyalists to the area. In 1791, the British pragmatically divided the original, larger Province of Quebec into two: Upper Canada to accommodate the new Loyalist settlers, and Lower Canada which was primarily inhabited by the early French colonists.

In 1792, John Graves Simcoe was sent from England as Upper Canada's first Lieutenant-Governor. At that time, the province's capital was Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake), a site close to the British-American border. With invasion an ever-present threat, it seemed prudent to relocate the capital. A number of sites were considered but early in 1793, Simcoe's Queen's Rangers arrived in Toronto and started construction of a Fort to protect what was thought to be the new temporary capital.

What made the site especially attractive was its large, sheltered harbour with only one entrance. At that time, today's Toronto Islands were actually a peninsula. The town was to follow the plan set out by Simcoe's surveyor Alexander Aitkin in 1793. It featured a grid of 10 blocks bounded by George, Berkeley, Front and Duke (now Adelaide) Streets

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<sup>2</sup> Key source: Robinson, Toronto During the French Regime, 1615-1793.

that still exist today. Toronto's name was changed soon after to York to honour the Duke of York's victory over the French in Holland.

The limitations of the early plan, with marshes to the east and privately owned land to the north, restricted the Old Town's growth and caused it to move westward. The original ten blocks became known as "Old Town" when "New Town" was created to the west. The area east of the Old Town was reserved as parkland, known as the King's Park.

A large tract between the old and new towns was set aside for churches, a school, the market, courthouse, jail and other public buildings. South of Front Street, the entire shoreline as far as Fort York was retained for public open space, offering an unobstructed view of the lake and the peninsula. In the early days, buildings were primarily made of wood, in some cases brick, and occasionally stone.

By 1797, York's population had grown from a handful of Queen's Rangers to 241 people, one quarter of them Loyalists.

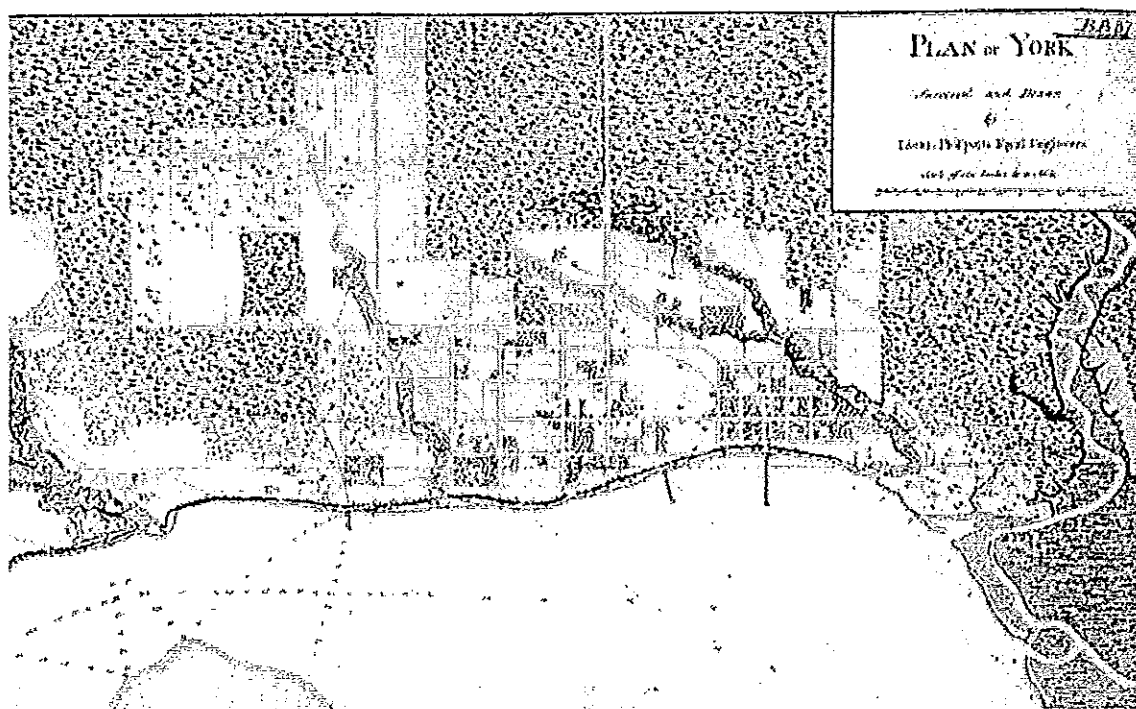
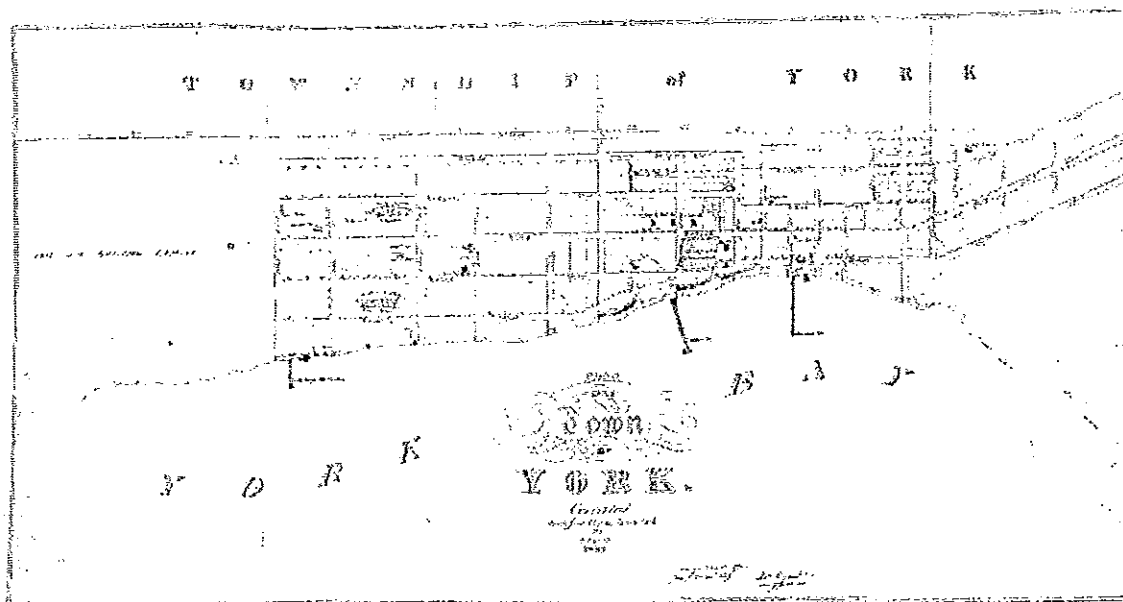


Figure 1. Plan of York, 1818 drawn by Lieutenant Phillipotts. Shows the original ten blocks and growth to the west.

At the time of the American invasion in 1813, the population was 650, and many of the residents were involved in the administration of the capital. When the war ended, Toronto saw a surge in commercial activity and immigration. The town's population continued to grow by leaps and bounds.



**Figure 2. Plan of the Town of York, 1827.** Shows the subdivision of the park reserve east of the original town site.

It numbered nearly 10,000 by 1834, the year York became the first city in Upper Canada, its name changing back to Toronto. The city extended from the Don River to Dufferin Street, and north to Bloor Street.

Toronto's first city council was made up of 12 Reformers and eight Tories, with the outspoken Reformer William Lyon Mackenzie as Mayor. The City was divided into five wards. The original ten blocks, as well as some of the surrounding areas, became St. Lawrence Ward.

To assist in putting events, personalities and this Guide into context, the following is a chart outlining significant historical developments in the history of the town that became Toronto.

### The Modern History of Toronto – A Chronology

Date	Developments
1615	Etienne Brulé and a party of Hurons arrive at Toronto, a site that had been occupied or used by native people from the end of the last ice age.
1720	<i>Le Magasin Royal</i> , the first formal French trading post, is in operation.
1750	Fort Toronto is built.
1750-1759	Fort Rouillé is built; The fort is destroyed following siege of Niagara to prevent its use by the English.
1787	The Toronto Purchase is negotiated between the British and the Mississaugas.

1788	A plan is developed for the site of a potential new town.
1775-1783	American Revolutionary War: Loyalists begin to come to the area.
1791	Old Province of Quebec is divided into Upper and Lower Canada; John Graves Simcoe is named Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada.
1792	First statute of Upper Canada introduced English civil law, except the poor laws; Simcoe introduces antislavery legislation.
1793	Surveyor Alexander Aitkin sets out his town plan; Fort York construction begins; Name of Toronto is changed to York, and the town is chosen as temporary capital; The first houses and roads constructed, including the beginnings of the first "highways" – military roads to the north (Yonge Street) and to the west (Dundas Street).
1796	Land set aside for a market and church.
1798	Parliament buildings are constructed; bricks made on site; Berkeley Street blockhouse is built at Parliament site; Population: 241.
1799	First jail is built in York.
1803	Construction of first church begins; First brewery begins operation.
1807	First church opens; Home District Grammar School is started in rector's home.
1809	First brick house is built in York.
1812	United States declares war on Britain and its North American colonies.
1813	York invaded; British troops blow up Fort York and retreat to Kingston; First Parliament buildings burned to the ground; The church is used as a hospital for the wounded; Population: 650.
1814	War of 1812 comes to an end. Britain retains possession of the Canadas.
1815	First courthouse is built.
1816	York's first post office, a log building, is built at what is now 43 Frederick Street.
1818	Second Parliament buildings built on site of the first.
1819	First market is started.
1820	First hospital building begins construction; First stone house is built.
1823	First public well is opened.
1824	<i>The Colonial Advocate</i> begins publication; Second Parliament buildings burn down;

	Enoch Turner's brewery begins operation.
1826	York Fire Company is established (church bell is used to sound the alarm).
1827	King's Park subdivided and sold.
1828	Church of York is consecrated to St. James
1829	Upper Canada College is founded; Osgoode Hall is constructed; Third Parliament Buildings are built in the New Town on Front Street West.
1830	The York Mechanics' Institute is founded – the first trade school.
1832	First cholera outbreak; Gooderham's windmill is built for his grist mill (later converted to a distillery).
1833	Fugitive slaves Thornton and Lucie Blackburn escape to York from Detroit; Population: 9,000. St. James Church rebuilt.
1834	York incorporates as the City of Toronto extending west to Dufferin Street, and north to Bloor Street; First city council is elected, with William Lyon Mackenzie as Mayor.
1835	First full time police force is created – five constables are hired.
1836	First taxi service started by fugitive slave Thornton Blackburn.
1837	The Rebellion of Upper Canada is led by Mackenzie and defeated by government forces.
1839	St. James' Church burns in January, and reopens in December as a Cathedral as the diocese separates from Quebec.
1842	Consumers' Gas Company, Toronto's first public utility, is founded.
1843	Little Trinity Church is built.
1848	The city receives a large influx of Irish immigrants, and Corktown grows rapidly; Enoch Turner schoolhouse is constructed (Toronto's first free school).
1849	First public transportation system – William's Bus Lines – begins operation; University of Toronto is founded; Fire destroys large sections of the city including, Church, Jarvis and King Streets, City Hall, the Market and St. James' Cathedral.
1851	St. Lawrence Hall is constructed on the site of the first city hall and farmers' market.
1853	Railways arrive in Toronto; Shoreline parks along Front Street are surrendered for development.
1861	Toronto Street Railway begins operation.
1865	Toronto's population near 60,000.

1867	Confederation: Toronto becomes the capital of the new province of Ontario.
1871	Major depression in the 1870s; School attendance was made compulsory.
1872	Typographical workers go on strike, demanding a nine-hour day.
1881	Neighbouring communities such as the Town of Yorkville are annexed during the 1880s.
1884	The light bulb is invented by Charles Woodward at the corner of King Street East and Ontario Street.
1887	The Toronto Humane Society is founded for the protection of children and animals;
1891	Children's Aid Society is created.
1892	Fourth Parliament Buildings (at Queen's Park) are built.
1899	New City Hall (today's Old City Hall) constructed; architect: E.J. Lennox.
1904	Toronto's population: 226,365. Great Fire destroys huge tracts along Front and Bay Streets. More areas annexed by the City between 1905-1939.
1914	Toronto's population: 470,151. World War I begins.
1929	The Great Depression: one in five of the total population is unemployed.
1939	Toronto's population: 649,123. World War II begins.
1945	World War II ends and the modern economic and industrial development of Toronto moves ahead.
2001	Toronto's population: estimated at 3.5 million

Many of the individual sites or buildings included in this Heritage Landscape Field Guide have been identified as locally, provincially or nationally significant. These have been identified as follows:

- Listed landmarks ★
- Provincial plaques ★ ★
- National historic sites ★ ★ ★

**Site 1: First Parliament Buildings, 1798 ★ ★**  
**(Southwest corner of Parliament and Front Streets)**

Although the first legislature of Upper Canada met in Navy Hall in Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake), the first official Parliament buildings were located here. These were also Toronto's first brick buildings, the bricks crafted nearby on the banks of Taddle Creek.



In 1812 the United States declared war on Britain. Having suffered a series of defeats in 1812, the Americans decided in early 1813 to attack York to maintain enthusiasm for the War and to capture naval and military supplies. The outnumbered and under-equipped



Figure 3. First Parliament Buildings at York (rectangular buildings at center).

British troops blew up Fort York, burned the twenty-eight-gun frigate under construction on the shoreline and retreated to Kingston, leaving the militia and the townspeople to negotiate with the invaders. The first Parliament buildings were burned to the ground during the American occupation, as was the governor's home at Fort York. The grievously affronted British retaliated the following year, burning government buildings in Washington, including the Congress and the White House, which was whitewashed to cover the damage.

This site is arguably one of the most important in Toronto. The source of early legislation, the court of law and the place of worship, the building was at the centre of social activity in the new Town of York. The Parliament

buildings are directly connected to institutions today such as St. James' Cathedral, Osgoode Hall, Toronto City Hall, and the Ontario Legislature.

Today, the Parliament site is a parking lot and car wash. Various groups have been actively working to have the property protected, to continue archaeological investigation, and to properly commemorate this very important part of our history.

For more information about what is being done in an effort to protect the Parliament Site contact Citizens for the Old Town at (416) 861-1793.

For more information about the War of 1812 and the Battle of York, see Carl Benn's *Historic Fort York, 1793-1993* (Toronto: Natural Heritage, 1993) or visit Fort York in person at 100 Garrison Road. For information, call (416) 392-6907.

## Site 2: Front Street Factories

(Start at the corner of Front & Berkeley Streets)

Standing at the corner of King and Berkeley Streets, looking south, one is presented with a late 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial landscape. When the Parliament Buildings were still here in the early 1800s, the entire area stretching to the east as far as the Don River was known as the King's Park, an extensive crown reserve for anticipated public buildings. This was sold off for development in the 1830s to raise funds for a new hospital. The park-like area quickly adopted a dramatically different character, as the busy factories of the 1860s, 70s and 80s, and the residences they attracted, spread across the landscape.

- Berkeley Castle, former Toronto Knitting and Yarn Factory, 1866 ★ (renovations in 1896, 1898, 1905, 1909, 1910, 1979-82) (2 Berkeley St., 250 The Esplanade)
  - One of the best kept secrets in the Old Town is the secluded courtyard, accessible from Berkeley or from the Esplanade.
- Former Consumers' Gas Co. purifying house (239 Front St. E.); condenser and engine house, 1887-88 (24-26 Berkeley St.)
  - The buildings that now house Canadian Opera Company spaces and the Canadian Stage Company theatre were constructed by the Consumers' Gas Company in 1886 and 1892. Gas was big business until electricity became economical, and it was used to light Toronto's homes and streets.
  - In the 1880s, many early homes were demolished to make way for the gas company's complex that stretched over four city blocks. It was one of many industrial uses in this former park and residential area, which characterized this part of the Old Town.
  - In 1971, these buildings were to be torn down, but the wreckers refused, recognizing their historic and aesthetic value. In a remarkable gesture of civic goodwill, they bought the buildings and restored them.
- Former Standard Woollen Mills, 1882 (renovations in 1893, 1904) (223-237 Front St. E.)
- Former woollens and later cigar box factory, 1885 (219-221 Front Street E.)
- Former Toronto Street Railway Co. Stables, 1887-88 (165 Front St. E.)
  - This building originally housed the horses that pulled Toronto's early streetcars. The horse-drawn cars could achieve a maximum speed of 6 miles an hour. The building later served as the streetcar company's electric powerhouse.
  - It is now used as the Young People's Theatre.

### Site 3: Corktown

(Start at the corner of King and Trinity Streets)

This little neighbourhood, named in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was once filled with working class Irish immigrants. Thanks to the devoted efforts of community members, several buildings in the area remain to help the careful observer piece together the way a working class community may have looked at that time.

- Little Trinity Church Rectory, 1853 (417 King St. E.)
- Little Trinity Church, 1843-45 ★ ★ (425 King Street East)
  - Trinity Anglican Church, nicknamed "Little Trinity" so as not to be confused with Holy Trinity Church located behind the Eaton's Centre, is the oldest existing Church in Toronto. Built for the adjacent working class Irish community, it became known as "The Poor Man's Church."
- Enoch Turner Schoolhouse, 1848 ★ ★ (106 Trinity Street)
  - This was Toronto's first free school. Brewer Enoch Turner generously donated the funds to build the new school, and to provide school services free of charge to parents. This may have been in part because of the early controversy over the funding of public schools in Ontario. The School Act of 1847 required municipal authorities to increase taxes in order to

pay for the entire cost of schooling, as opposed to collecting user fees from parents. This Act was rejected in Toronto. The City refused to impose the new tax and the Province therefore cut off its portion of funds. The common schools in Toronto were forced to close for a full year, from June 1848 to June 1849. Turner was likely aware that the situation would end in this sort of crisis when he set out to build the school, which was completed in November of 1848. In 1850, when the City finally did take over funding of the schools, public school trustees rented the Trinity School. It retained its public school and Sunday school functions until 1859 when the Palace Street School was built. At that time, Little Trinity Church again took over the schoolhouse and it had a wide variety of subsequent uses since then. It was saved from demolition and converted into a museum in the 1970s. It is also used for conferences, weddings and other events. For more information, call (416) 863-0010.

- 105-109 Trinity St., 1885 (three workers' cottages)
- 115-127 Trinity St., 1886-87 (seven-house row)
- Taddle Creek
  - With headwaters near St. Clair and Bathurst, Taddle Creek was one of the numerous waterways in the city that have been buried over time. These were substantial creeks that defined the topography of the area and the layout of the town. Today, only the major rivers, the Humber and the Don, have survived. While Toronto is renowned for its numerous ravines, the original waterways are hard to find. The careful observer will note that the rear yards of the Berkeley Street row houses are significantly lower than the front because they backed onto Taddle Creek, which entered the Lake near Parliament and Mill Streets. Enoch Turner and others used water from the creek to make beer at their early breweries. The creek still flows, but now runs underground as part of Toronto's sewer system.
- 55-79 Berkeley St., 1871-72, 1969 (13-house row)
  - These were once humble workers' cottages.
- 106-108, 110-112 Berkeley St., 1886; 111-113 Berkeley St., 1882
- Old Berkeley Street Firehall, 1886
  - In 1970, the Firehall was about to be torn down, but it was saved and turned into a popular theatre.
- Greenshield's Grocery Store, 1878, northwest corner of King and Berkeley (300 King Street E.).
  - This was the first building in the neighbourhood to be saved and restored, setting an example for other nearby historic buildings.

#### **Site 4: Lucie and Thornton Blackburn Site (Eastern Avenue at Sackville Street)**

The Blackburns were fugitive slaves who fled Kentucky to Detroit, only to be captured by bounty hunters and thrown in jail. They were rescued, however, and taken safely across the border to Canada. Upon hearing of their escape, the United States government

demanded that they be returned, since Canada and the U.S. had just signed an agreement stating that each country would arrest criminals who had escaped across the border. Canada, declined, however, arguing that because escaping from slavery was not a crime in Canada, the treaty did not apply. The Blackburns finally settled in York in the 1830s. They have been recognized as Persons of National Historic Significance.

Thornton Blackburn created Toronto's first taxi service, using a brightly coloured black and yellow horse-drawn cab. His business was a great success, and the Blackburns came to be prominent members of Toronto society. He was also very active in the anti-slavery movement. He was a delegate at a landmark anti-slavery conference at St. Lawrence Hall in 1851, and he and Lucie Blackburn provided support and funding to help fugitive slaves find homes and jobs in Toronto.

The remains of the Blackburns' house have been discovered, recorded and protected until a suitable form of commemoration is decided upon. Inglenook Community High School, formerly Sackville Street Public School, 1887 (19 Sackville Street.) now stands on the property. This is the oldest public school building in continuous use in Toronto.

Also, be sure to have a look at numbers 21-33 Sackville St., 1890 (7 units of an 8-house row). These houses complete the late 19<sup>th</sup> century streetscape.

#### **Site 5: Gooderham & Worts ★ ★ ★ (55 Mill Street)**

The Gooderham & Worts Distillery complex, tracing its history to 1832 and expanded and modified since then, still exists at 55 Mill Street. The company was a major employer and, at one time, paid more taxes than any other company in Canada. It is a National Historic Site.

The property was earlier used as a grist mill owned by William Gooderham and James Worts, powered by a windmill. The operation changed, however, from milling to distilling. The company was tremendously successful, and George Gooderham, who ran the company later in the nineteenth century, came to be the wealthiest man in Ontario.

The complex contains close to 50 buildings. The oldest structure, built in the 1850s, is the limestone warehouse at the south end of the property. A striking red brick building with elaborate masonry and a cupola stands as a reminder of the company's golden age.

Today, the site is to be redeveloped, and its historic character is its most marketable feature. Already, residential units have been built, and there have been plans for a mix of other uses, including retail, office space and a market.

**Site 6: St. James' Cathedral and its Predecessors ★ ★****(65 Church Street, Northeast corner of King and Church Streets)**

Land was set aside for the first church in York in 1796, but the church was not actually constructed until 1807. In the meantime, church services had been conducted in the Parliament Buildings. This is the site of that first church, a wooden structure on a stone foundation. Although it was an Anglican church, people of many different Christian denominations attended.

The original church was taken down in 1830. Another was built in 1831, and that one burned down in 1839. Later that year, the new Diocese of Toronto was created, with John Strachan as its first Bishop, and the church was rebuilt as a cathedral. Ten years later, it was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1849.

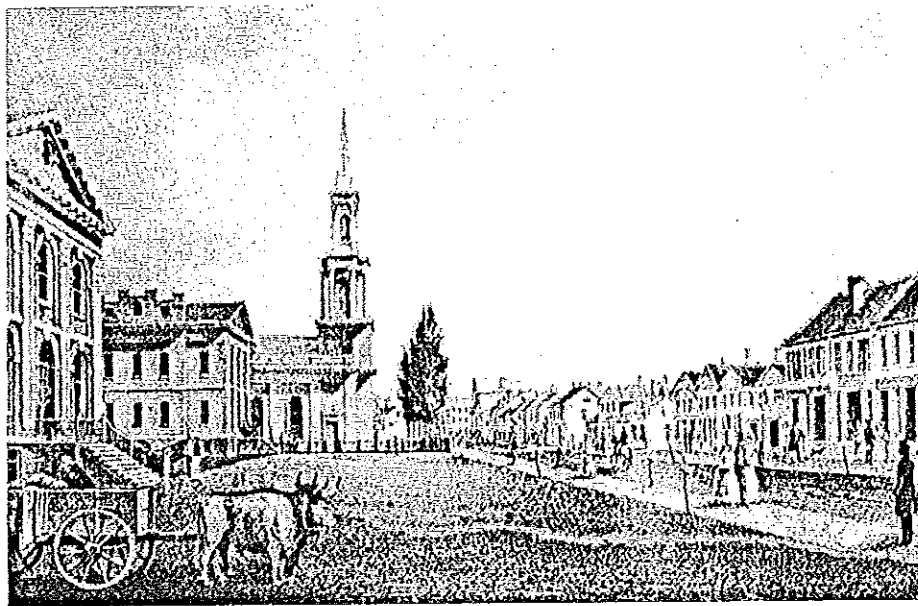


Figure 4. The St. James' streetscape in the 1830s (the church spire was added by the artist).

The present cathedral was opened for services in 1853, to a design by Frederick Cumberland in an English Gothic style in vogue in Britain. Contrary to many artistic renditions of the Cathedral, the steeple was not completed until 1873, due to lack of funds. Today it is still the tallest spire in Canada, and the second highest in North America.

Headstones from the early cemetery beside the church are displayed in the porch of St. James'. One bears the name of John Ridout, killed by "blight." In fact, he was killed in York's last duel in 1817.

St. James' was attended by many prominent local citizens, but members of its congregation came from a variety of economic backgrounds. Pew rents were collected, as in other churches, in order to help pay for the church's construction and ongoing maintenance. Those who were unable to pay pew rents would sit on benches in the middle of the aisles. Dismayed at the cost of these fees, many working class Anglicans

attended Little Trinity Church, known as “the poor man’s church.” Little Trinity was built in 1843 and is still standing, further east on King Street in Corktown.

Segregation of rich and poor was not exclusive to Anglican churches in early Toronto. St. Andrew’s Church, designed by John Ewart and built in 1830 on the southwest corner of Church and Adelaide Streets (now demolished) was known as the wealthier, more conservative Presbyterian church. Presbyterian tradesmen tended to belong to more modest (but often more radical) churches, and supported a clear division between church and state. Such was certainly the case with Knox Presbyterian Church, which was attended by William Lyon Mackenzie.

Today, St. James’ Cathedral is a valuable community meeting place, offering a wide range of programmes including an archives and museum, counselling, nursing, a drop-in centre, food drives, foot care clinics, and musical performances, among many others. For more information, please contact the Cathedral office at 416-364-7865.

The Victorian Gardens to the east (owned by the City of Toronto) are a recent addition initiated by the Toronto Garden Club, designed to evoke the 19<sup>th</sup> century feel of the area.

The streetscape along the north side of King Street on the Cathedral side was very grand in the 1830s. West of the church were the Classic Revival jail and courthouse buildings, divided by the ornamental Courthouse Square ★, an early attempt at creating a civic square. Two of the members of the 1837 rebellion, Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews, were hanged in that Square in 1838. The leader, William Lyon Mackenzie, escaped to the United States. As with the Parliament Buildings and City Halls, these buildings became inadequate and were replaced to accommodate the growing population.

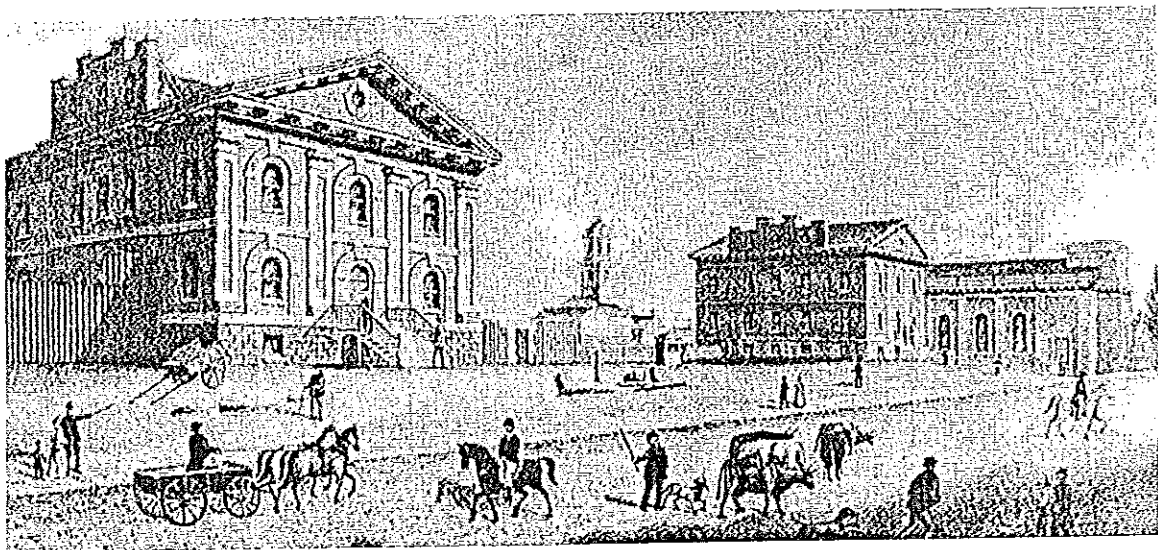


Figure 5. King Street, 1835, looking east from Toronto Street. Notice that St. James’ Church at right is missing its spire.

**Site 7: King Street Retail District ★**

King Street was the Town of York's main street, and it continued to be the fashionable retail and commercial centre throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the mid to late century, the wealthy class in Toronto loved "doing King." The streetscape of today reflects something of the character of that era with its specialty shops and cafes. This section of King Street also boasts the oldest retail buildings in the city, some dating to the 1830s. Several of the most notable are described below.

- 107-111, 125 King St. E., 1841, 1885
  - These Georgian shops were among the few that survived the Great Fire of 1849, and are typical of Toronto's commercial architecture in the 1840s and 1850s. A local Old Town developer is currently restoring numbers 107-109 to their original appearance.



Figure 6. View from St. James' Cathedral looking east along King Street in the 1870s. St. Lawrence Hall is in the foreground. Photo courtesy of St. James' Cathedral Archives.

- The Sculpture Garden between numbers 111 and 125 provides a display of contemporary sculpture. It was especially created to provide a striking view of St. James' from Front Street.
- 133-35 King St. E., 1887-88
  - These buildings have impressive brick and terra cotta facades and two-storey-high windows, and were considered technically innovative in their day.
- 137 King St. E.
  - The building has been demolished but in 1854, it was the office of the *Provincial Freeman* newspaper edited by Mary Ann Shadd. Shadd was

the first black female newspaper editor in North America, and possibly the first female publisher in Canada.

- St. Lawrence Hall, 1850-51 (151 King Street East) ★ ★ ★
  - St. Lawrence Hall replaced the old Market and Town Hall building built in 1831 and destroyed in the Great Fire of 1849. See Site 4.
  - For 75 years, some of the most important social and cultural events were held here: balls, lectures, musical performances, public meetings and so forth. It is interesting to note that the first three events to be held in St. Lawrence Hall were anti-slavery lectures. The Hall is a fine example of Victorian classicism. The domed cupola contained the City's alarm bell.
  - St. Lawrence Hall fell on hard times in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It partially collapsed while it was being restored in 1967 as Toronto's Canadian Centennial project, but now it is a valuable gem in the Old Town community. One of its storefronts contains the office of the Citizens for the Old Town. For more information about their ongoing conservation initiatives and advocacy work, call (416) 861-1793.
- 150-154 King Street E., 1850
  - The Georgian building on the northeast corner of George and King originally housed the *Monitor* newspaper office. Traces of the fireplaces of the adjacent, now demolished building can be seen on the east side.
- 167-185 King St. E., 1834-43 ★
  - #169-185 is the oldest row of commercial buildings in Toronto.
- Former Little York Hotel, 1879-80 ★ (187 King Street E.)
  - This was originally the site of the Home District School (see Site 2). After 1816, other uses included a private residence and a general store until a hotel was built in 1879.
  - York was nicknamed "Little York" to distinguish it from New York, and that name was clearly still familiar fifty years after the town's name had changed back to Toronto.
  - Today, the name has carried on in the "Little York Bookstore" that now occupies the building.
- George Brown College, 1874-1914 ★ Originally Christie, Brown and Co. (200 King St. E.)
  - This was the factory built to make William Christie's famous cookies which were distributed by horse-drawn cart all over Toronto in the company's early years. A former Christie's granary and stable complex (built in 1906) is still standing at 95 Berkeley Street. This complex was one of the first heritage buildings in the area to be renovated and converted in 1972 into office space. It retains many of the original features of the granary building and stables inside and out.

### Site 8: Adelaide Street

(Start at the corner of George and Adelaide Streets)

This section of Adelaide Street (formerly Duke Street), and south on Frederick down to King, was the centre of the Town of York's financial district. At one point, the first Bank



of Upper Canada, the Canada Land Company (administering land in the western part of the province for settlement), William Proudfoot's Wine and Spirits (Proudfoot became the second president of the Bank of Upper Canada) and the home of Laurent Quetton St. George (the wealthy general store owner) all stood within the same few blocks. This streetscape was certainly one of the most important to the history of Toronto's economic development. It also offers a fascinating lesson in heritage conservation.

- Toronto's 1<sup>st</sup> Post Office, 1833-34 ★ ★ ★ (260 Adelaide Street East)
  - Actually the fourth post office building, but the first after York's incorporation as Toronto. The first and second post offices are discussed in Site 9. The third was on the west side of George Street, south of Adelaide (then Duke) Street. It was built by James Scott Howard in 1830, and was partly his family home. He built this fourth post office in 1833. He remained postmaster until he was dismissed in 1838, having been suspected of disloyalty in relation to the Rebellion of 1837. Interestingly, Charles Berczy, the man who had accused Howard of treasonous activities, assumed the postmaster's position.
  - The post office employed six people and was the busiest in Upper Canada, serving a population of nearly 10,000. There was no local mail delivery service in York; people were notified in the newspaper if they had received mail. Locals would not only come to the post office to pick up their mail, they would also respond to their letters immediately at tables in the office itself so as not to have to make a return trip.



Figure 7. Toronto's First Post Office, c. 1912

- The building has been restored and now continues to operate as a post office as well as a postal museum. It is the oldest remaining building in Canada built specifically as a post office. For more information about the Post Office and its museum, call (416) 865-1833.
- Former De La Salle Institute, 1871-72 ★ (258 Adelaide St. E.)
  - This mansard-roof Second Empire style building was an urban infill project of the 1870s. It was owned by a Roman Catholic boys' school that eventually purchased and used all three buildings on this section of Adelaide Street.

- **Former Bank of Upper Canada, 1825-27 ★ ★ ★ (252 Adelaide Street East)**
  - This is the second building that housed the Bank of Upper Canada, Upper Canada's first bank. Initiated and promoted by John Strachan and other members of what came to be known as the Family Compact, legislation was passed to ensure the prominence of the Bank of Upper Canada in York and in the province as a whole. The bank was the object of attack by the 1837 rebels because the treasury gold was kept in its vaults. Although it eventually failed in 1866, the Bank of Upper Canada helped to ensure York's early commercial success.
  - The Bank of Upper Canada building is the oldest commercial building in Toronto and still stands on its original site. It is also the oldest remaining bank building in Canada and is a National Historic Site. The bank has been restored to its impressive 1833 appearance through the efforts of Sheldon Godfrey, a former Chair of the Heritage Canada Foundation.
- **Campbell House, 1822 ★ (relocated to the corner of University Avenue and Queen Street)**
  - This neoclassical style brick house was built for Justice William Campbell and was originally located just to the east of Toronto's First Post Office at the head of Frederick Street. Campbell first became prominent in Cape Breton Island, later moved to York, and became Chief Justice of Upper Canada in 1825.
  - Campbell House is one of the oldest residential buildings in Toronto, but was moved to its new site at University Avenue and Queen Street in 1972 by the Advocates' Society to save it from demolition. Tours are available: (416) 597-0227.

### **Site 9: The original Town of York**

The small ten-block area bounded by George, Berkeley, Front and Adelaide Streets was the original site of the Town of York, surveyed by Alexander Aitkin in 1793 under the direction of the Lieutenant Governor. There are few visible remains of the town from that period (see Site 6: Adelaide Street). However, by identifying the sites of some of the first significant buildings in and around this area it is possible to imagine how the Town may have looked in those early days. One clue is the original street grid pattern. As a residential area, the block size was smaller than the layout for the commercial areas that followed to the west. The bends in Richmond and Adelaide Streets at Jarvis reflect this change in grid from the Old Town to the New.

- **Site of first brick house in York, 1809 ★ – northeast corner of King/Frederick Streets.**
  - Built by Laurent Quetton de St. George, a successful French entrepreneur who owned general stores all over Upper Canada. The house was considered a grand mansion for York at that time. It is after M. Quetton de St. George that St. George Street is named.
- **Site of the Home District School, 1807 ★ – southeast corner of King and George Streets.**

- The Home District School was the first school in York, held in the home of the Rector, George Okill Stuart. The well-known Anglican priest John Strachan took over as schoolmaster in 1812, when he was appointed as Rector to the Church in York and as Chaplain to the garrison at Fort York.
- Schools in Upper Canada were all privately funded until the Common School Act in 1816, which provided some public funds to existing and some future schools.
- The Home District School moved to a six-acre block bounded by Church, Adelaide, Jarvis and Richmond Streets in 1816. That building became known as “the Blue School.” The Blue School was occupied temporarily by Upper Canada College, and was a predecessor of Jarvis Collegiate Institute.
- Site of the first jail, now the King Edward Hotel, 1903 ★ – 37 King Street East
  - The King Edward Hotel stands on the site of first jail in York, constructed in 1798. Interestingly, the jail was built before the first courthouse, church or market. Made of logs and clapboard, it would have been a terrible place, with no beds or stoves until 1811 and surrounded by a cedar log stockade to keep prisoners from escaping. Public hangings and punishment in the stocks took place outside. One prisoner was hanged for trying to pass a forged note for less than a dollar.
  - The King Edward Hotel is also an important heritage resource in its own right. Named for King Edward VII, who became King the year before it was built, it was the grandest hotel in the city for many years. Some would argue it still is. It was built by the Gooderham family (see Site 5: Gooderham & Worts or Site 13: Flatiron Building).
- Site of the first post office in York, 1816 – east side of Frederick Street, south of King Street.
  - The first Postmaster, William Wilcocks, worked out of his home from 1798 to 1801. The second Postmaster, William Allan, also initially used his house as the post office, but built the log building that stood on this site in 1816.
- Site of the first market in York ★ – the area bounded by King, Jarvis, Front and Church Streets. (See Site 4.)
- Site of first stone house in York, 1820 – northwest corner of Church and Lombard Streets.
  - The stone James Hunter used to build this house was likely brought to York from Kingston because there were no stone quarries nearby.

#### **Site 10: The St. Lawrence Market ★ ★ ★ (Corner of Front and Jarvis Streets)**

In 1803, an area (bounded by Front, Jarvis, King and Church Streets) was set aside for a farmers’ market, designated the “Market Block.” Along with St. James Cathedral, the Market has maintained its same purpose since those early days, and continues to be a significant anchor point for the Old Town community.

The first market building in York was a simple wooden shed built in 1819 where St. Lawrence Hall now stands. The Market Square was a central public space at that time. As well as the market building, there were also a whipping post, stocks and pillory on the site. The first public well ★ was established next to the market in 1823. Today, in the courtyard area on the west side of St. Lawrence Hall, there is a water pump sculpture commemorating this first well and the first market. When it was decided that a larger building was needed, the shed was moved further south toward Front Street, while plans for a new building were drawn up. The new building was built in 1831, surrounding a central courtyard. It also served as Toronto's first City Hall for ten years following the City's incorporation in 1834.

The North Farmers' Market was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1849, along with a large section of Old Town Toronto. At that time, the site was divided into two sections: the north side facing King Street where St. Lawrence Hall was constructed in 1851, and the south section where a new North Farmers' Market was constructed and used until 1903. This market was replaced in 1904 and used until 1967 when it was taken down and replaced with the present structure.

Built to accommodate the rapidly increasing population of the city, Toronto's second City Hall (1845-1899) was built on the south side of Front overlooking the harbour. It also housed the civic centre and police station. In 1846, Canada's first telegraph was installed there, linking Toronto and Hamilton (note the National Historic Site plaque).

The council chambers and municipal offices were used until 1899 when today's "Old" City Hall was opened at Queen and Bay Streets. In 1901, what was the Front Street City Hall and Civic Centre was virtually demolished, except for the centre section with the former council chamber. The South Merchants' Market was built around this centre section.

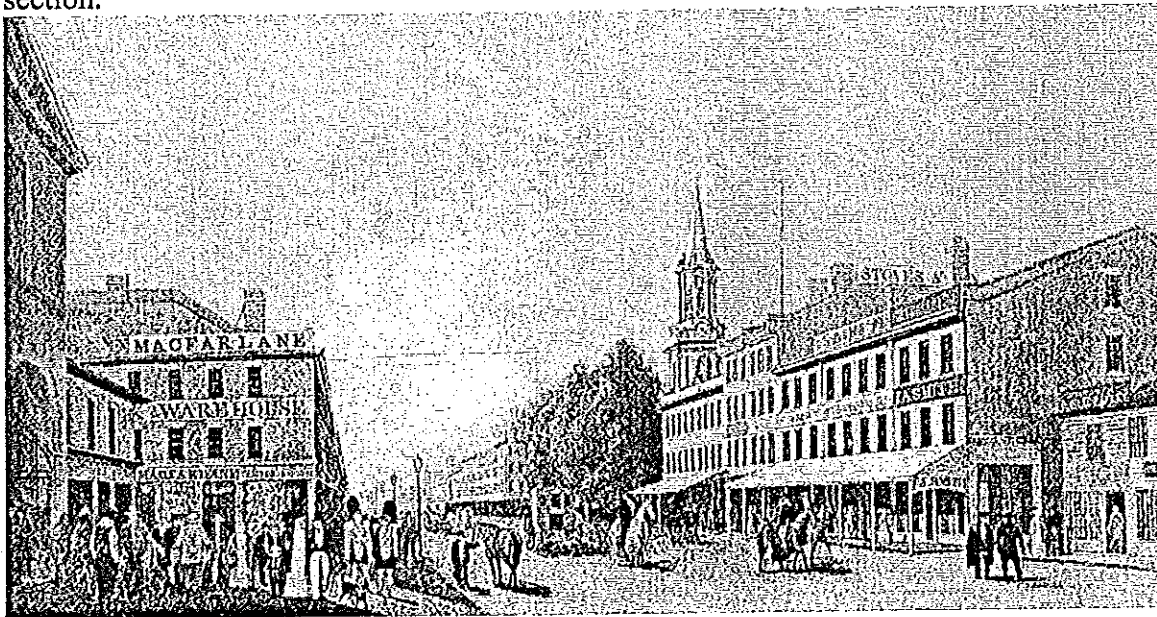


Figure 8. Looking west along King Street in the 1840s with Market at left

In 1971, the South Merchant Market was threatened with total demolition, but strong public opposition and funding from the federal government saved the building from the wrecker's ball. Today, this historic council chamber is the home of the Market Gallery, where ongoing public exhibits reflecting the history of Toronto are displayed. For more information about the Gallery, call (416) 392-7604.

It is important to remember that the shoreline as we know it today was not the original shoreline of early Toronto. Significant waterfront lakefill was undertaken to accommodate the railway lines that were built along the lake edge. The approximate location of the original shoreline is at the foot of the slope that runs south from Front Street.

#### **Site 11: Front Street warehouses**

The area on Front Street near Church was the prime hotel district in 1830s Toronto. It was practically the centre of town, right on the water with the Market nearby. Later in the century, with the advent of the railway, the city flourished economically. The area's character changed forever as the shoreline parks were surrendered to commercial interests. These handsome rows of warehouses with retail on the main floor are the legacy of changing economy and values.



Figure 9. Corner of Church and Front Streets, viewed from St. James' Cathedral in the 1870s. Photo courtesy of St. James' Cathedral Archives.

- Front Street warehouses: former Dixon Building, 1872-73 (45-49 Front St. E.); former F&G Perkins Co., 1874-75 ★ (41-43 Front St. E.); Beardmore Building, 1872-73 ★ (35-39 Front St. E.)
  - Three of these warehouses have cast-iron fronts.
- Front Street 19<sup>th</sup> century retail/warehousing buildings including 87 Front St. E., 1865, 1871; 81-83, 85 Front St. E., 1861; 77 Front St. E., 1861; 67-69 Front St. E., 1877
  - These warehouses, which were originally located by the water, had pulleys at the top to load and unload goods through the loading bays (now windows) to the ships docked behind them.

**Site 12: Site of *Colonial Advocate* office (14 Church Street)**  
**(Northwest corner of Front and Frederick Street)**

William Lyon Mackenzie was a principal character in Toronto's history. Even before he became the City's first mayor and later led the 1837 Rebellion, he was someone to be reckoned with in the early Town of York. He was most widely known as a radical Reformer who was extremely critical of the elitism of Upper Canadian government. He was a self-declared "man of the people." He promoted his views through his own newspaper, the *Colonial Advocate*. Within two years of its first publication, the *Advocate* became the most widely read and controversial newspaper in Upper Canada.

The house at 14 Church Street was built in 1804, and first occupied by William Baldwin (another significant figure) and his new wife.

When he arrived in Toronto in 1824, William Lyon Mackenzie moved into the house, along with his family and the staff of the *Colonial Advocate*, which began publication that same year. He left in 1826 after his press was destroyed and the type dumped into the nearby bay by the sons of several of the prominent citizens criticized in his paper.

He was elected to the House of Assembly for the province in 1828 and 1831, and although he was ejected from the House several times for his fiery speeches against the Family Compact, he continued to be re-elected.

Mackenzie became Toronto's first Mayor in 1834, but his apparent incompetence lost him the election the following year. His continued frustration with the Tory government incited him to organize the celebrated Rebellion of 1837. When the uprising was quelled by Tory forces, he fled to the United States. Joseph Cawthra, a pharmacist who supplied the army during the war of 1812, moved into the house in that year.

Mackenzie was eventually pardoned and moved back to Toronto in 1849 to a townhouse at 82 Bond Street ★ donated by grateful citizens. Now operated by the City of Toronto, the building operates as the Mackenzie House museum. For more information, call (416) 392-6915.

**Site 13: The Flatiron Building, 1892 ★**  
**(Convergence of Wellington and Front Streets)**

The design of the Flatiron building suits its awkward location, at the converging point of Front and Wellington Streets. Before the existing building was constructed, another unusual building had stood there since the 1830s. Known as “the coffin block,” because of its distinctive shape, it was constructed by the prolific Toronto architect John Ewart and it served a variety of uses: a stage coach booking office, a warehouse, military officers’ quarters, a confectionary, and a restaurant. It was as much a landmark then as the Flatiron Building is today.

First known as the Gooderham building, after its builder and first owner, this much loved Old Town favourite was once marked for demolition. It was built ten years before the Flatiron building in New York City, and later acquired the same name. George Gooderham had an office on the third floor, from which he could see the head office of his Bank of Toronto across Wellington St. and his distillery complex on Parliament.

The mural on the back of the building replicates the windows of 41-43 Front Street, and was painted in 1980.

**Site 14: Modern Development in the Old Town**  
**(Start at the corner of Front and Scott Streets)**

Obviously, much industrial, residential and commercial development has occurred in the Old Town, particular in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. In this context, a number of significant modern buildings can be found along Front Street that have contributed to the vibrant social life of the Old Town in recent decades. This recent architecture juxtaposed against 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings creates a provocative visual landscape. Today, many of these recent buildings are not yet recognized as part of the Old Town’s heritage. However, the tendency is growing to build such recognition into the general understanding of heritage from the past. Some buildings that the visitor could note would include:

- O’Keefe Centre for the Performing Arts, 1956-60 (1 Front St. E.)
- St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 1967-70 (27 Front St. E.)
- The corner of Front and Scott Streets, looking west
  - A mix of new and old: the Hummingbird Centre, the CN Tower, the Dominion Public Building, Union Station and the “new” Hockey Hall of Fame.

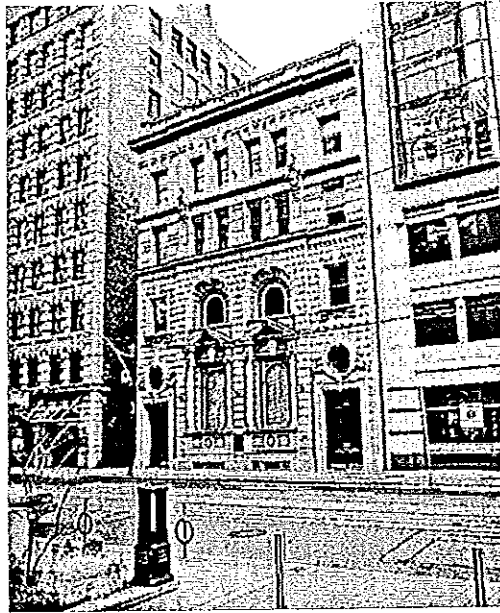
**Site 15: Toronto Street**  
**(Start at the corner of Toronto and Adelaide Streets)**

In the 1870s, Toronto Street was home to the major banks, insurance companies and utilities, making it one of the City’s most influential streets, not to mention one of its most attractive. In addition to some of the grand buildings listed below, there was a Greek Temple style Methodist church on the corner of Toronto and Adelaide from 1832-

1870. The eighth post office was also a sight to behold, located at the head of Toronto Street on Adelaide.

- The seventh post office, 1851-53 ★ ★ ★ (10 Toronto St.)
  - This imposing Greek Revival building, built by Cumberland & Storm, was a Post Office between 1853-1873. The postmaster had living quarters above the office and there was a separate entrance for women. The building later housed a variety of other prominent institutions and organizations including Canada Customs, the Bank of Canada and the Argus Corporation.
- Former Consumers' Gas Co., 1852 ★ (renovations in 1876, 1882, 1899) (17-19 Toronto St.)
  - A Renaissance Revival "palace" with many notable architectural details and gas-powered lamps.
- Former Trust & Loan Co., 1870-71 (25 Toronto St.)
  - Another attractive Renaissance Revival building. This one is missing its original cornice and parapet.
- A 12-storey office tower designed by E.J. Lennox, 1914-15 ★ (36 Toronto Street)
- Court Street
  - This narrow street leading from Toronto Street to Church provides access to a handsome courtyard garden, a reminder of the old Courthouse Square. Adjoining to the north is the Greek Revival style York County Courthouse, 1852-53 ★ (57 Adelaide Street East). Built by Cumberland & Storm, it was the third courthouse in Toronto.
- Former Canadian Birkbeck Investments Company, 1907-09 ★ ★ ★ (10 Adelaide Street East)
  - This building is not located on Toronto Street, but just west of it on Adelaide. First owned by the prominent Birkbeck Investment Company (later known as the Canada Mortgage Co. and the Debenture & Securities Corporation of Canada), this striking Beaux-Arts style building by architect George Gouinlock is a National Historic Site. It also contains one of the few remaining hand-operated elevators in Toronto.
  - Today, beautifully restored by the Ontario Heritage Foundation to its 1909 appearance, it is the Ontario Heritage Centre, housing not only the Foundation headquarters, but also other heritage organizations such as the Ontario Black History Society and the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario.
  - For information about the Ontario Heritage Foundation's programs, call (416) 325-5000.
  - For details about Black History bus tours or other OBHS activities, call (416) 867-9420.
  - To find out more about the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, call (416) 367-8075.





**Figure 10. Formerly the Birkbeck Investment Company, now the Ontario Heritage Centre**

**Site 16: Queen Street  
(Start at 468 Queen Street East)**

In 1873, Robert Davies, the third son of one of the most prominent families in the history of Toronto brewing, established the Dominion Brewery and built on this site in 1878. At its peak in the late 1880s, the Dominion Brewery comprised a vast array of buildings, courtyards and stables in Corktown, which had become the heart of Toronto's brewing and distillery district. The brewer gained international acclaim for its lagers and ales and continued production for over 60 years until 1936, when its doors were closed. The entire complex was carefully renovated between 1978 and 1990 by the Sorbara Group, in association with the Easton/Phillips Development Corporation.

*Postscript*

This Heritage Landscape Guide is basically intended as a vehicle or tool which local people and visitors can use to increase their awareness and understanding of things coming to us from the past through the workings of nature and the people who have gone before. This Guide should also increase the appreciation of visitors and local residents about the environmental, cultural, economic and spiritual or inspirational value of heritage and of the importance of conserving it and using it sustainably. In all these respects, the Guide should provide a framework whereby people can think about, respond to and plan for change.

In its present format this guide is a product of extensive consultation with numerous people, many of whom were acknowledged at the onset. However, the Guide should not be considered as finished but rather as a project which can be added to an evolving way in the future.

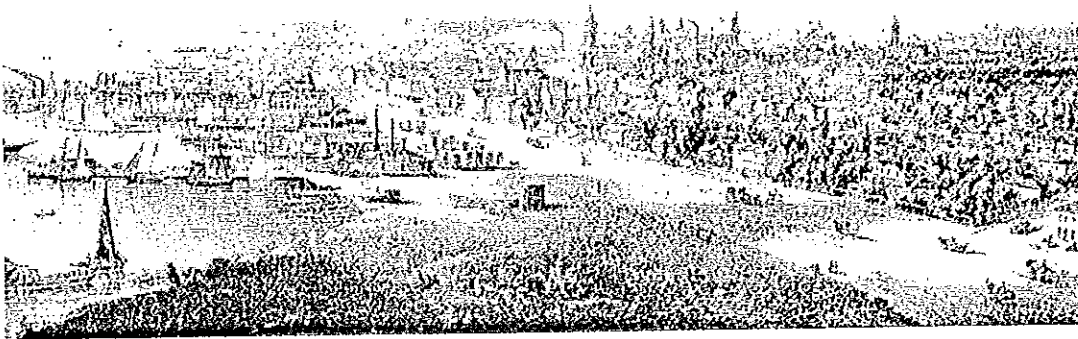


Figure 11. Toronto in the 1850s, before the railway.

## Selected References

Few specific references were identified in the text of the Heritage Landscape Field Guide so as to improve its readability. The following is a list of some of the major sources that were consulted in the development of the Field Guide.

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