

The Canadian Pioneer Denison Family

. of .

County York, England

. and .

County York, Ontario

—

—A—

HISTORY · GENEALOGY

and

BIOGRAPHY



(Copyright)

RICHARD LONTON DENISON

191 Dawlish Avenue
Toronto 12, Canada

WHAT I ONCE FOUND IN OUR ATTIC

Quite often interesting forgotten things may be found in attics. Once upon a time someone found a collection of old daguerrotype-photographs in an attic, and was so moved emotionally as to write a poem about them. As far as I am aware the author of this poem is unknown. This poem means quite a little to me, and I think you will like it. First I will give you it, and then I will tell you what I once found in our attic in Grimsby, Ontario, when I was a boy, about the year 1926.

THE OLD DAGUERROTYPES

Up in the attic I found them locked in a cedar chest,
Where the flowered gowns lie folded, which once were brave as the best;
And like the queer old jackets, and the waistcoats gay with stripes,
They tell of a worn out fashion, those old daguerrotypes.
Quaint little folding cases, each fastened with tiny hook,
Seemingly made to tempt one to lift the latch and look;
Linings of purple velvet, odd little frames of gold,
Circling the faded faces brought from the days of old;
Grandma and Grandpa taken ever so long ago;
Grandma's bonnet a marvel, Grandpa's collar a show;
Mother's a tiny toddler with rings on her baby hands
Painted---lest none should notice glittering gilded bands;
Aunts and Uncles and cousins, a starchy stiff array,
Lovers and brides then blooming, but now so wrinkled and gray,
Out through the misty glasses they gaze at me sitting here,
Opening the faded cases with a smile that is half a tear.
I will smile no more, little pictures, for heartless it was in truth
To drag to the cruel daylight these ghosts of a vanished youth.
Go back to your cedar chamber, your gowns and your lavender,
And dream, 'mid the by-gone graces, of the wonderful days that were.

As a boy in Grimsby, I used to remove the stove-pipes from the stoves every spring, and after having thoroughly removed all soot from their interiors I used to place them up in the attic for the summer, from whence they would be removed and re-assembled every fall. The attic was approached by means of a step-ladder placed under an opening in the ceiling of a closet. On one of these occasions I became curious about two ancient tin cash-boxes which I found up there. They were locked securely. Upon a succeeding trip to the attic, this time armed with a trusty screw-driver, I forced the locks, and was amazed at the contents, which, instead of being pirate's gold, turned out to be many ancient articles belonging to my great-grandmother, Susan Maria Hepburne Denison. The stench of mustiness crept throughout the attic and made me feel sick. There were three pipes, quite elaborate ones, once smoked by Col. R.L.Denison the First. There were many Indian-head nickles and coppers (which I subsequently squandered, not knowing their value). There was a stack of love letters in the handwriting of Susan Denison, aforesaid, of the old-fashioned kind which lacked envelopes and which were folded over and sealed with the Hepburne family crest (a horse's head erased with an undecipherable motto). They were all postmarked Chippewa with an ancient wood-cut post-mark stamp. While of the love-letter type, they told much of the life and times in old Chippewa, Ontario, in the long ago. My mother, having been a nurse in Victoria Hospital, London, Ont., feared as nurses of her day would, that the terrible mustiness of these letters might infect me or all of us with black diphtheria, ordered that I burn them. I had a lovely bon-fire of them in the backyard, not knowing what I was destroying. One item only was rescued from these tin cash-boxes. It was an old scrap-book of pocket-size, which contained many news-clippings pasted therein by my great grandfather, Col. R.L.Denison of Dovercourt. When my aunt, Minnie Denison Boyd of Bobcaygeon, visited us later that year, she prevailed upon me to give her this scrap-book, saying that it meant more to her than it did to me, which was undoubtedly true at the time. Later she discovered that those cash-boxes belonged to

105

my great-uncle, Albert Edward Denison; and so, eventually the old scrap-book was sent by her to him, as he was the rightful owner. However, my aunt carefully copied these clippings longhand into a note-book, which recently her daughter, Marjorie Boyd Allen, has graciously lent me. The clippings consisted of a series of articles which my great grandfather, Col. R.L. Denison, once wrote for a Toronto newspaper called "The Leader" in his capacity as First President of the York Pioneers, now the York Pioneer and Historical Society. The articles tell of his boyhood days in early York (Toronto) in the years around 1821-1830. They are of considerable interest not only to the Denison Family, but to anyone interested in the story of Toronto. First I will give you a biographical sketch of the life of Col. Richard Lippincott Denison the First of Dovercourt, who wrote these articles for The Leader so long ago.

COLONEL RICHARD LIPPINCOTT DENISON THE FIRST OF DOVERCOURT

Colonel Richard Lippincott Denison the First was born in a log-cabin in the woods near York (Toronto) in what is now the Trethewey Park District (Keele Street and Eglinton Ave., and the land north and west of that point), on June 13, 1814.

During the Rebellion of 1837-1838 he commanded the Queen's Light Dragoons (later the Governor-General's Body Guard). In 1848 he left the active force, and was gazetted Major in the 4th Battalion of Sedentary Militia, and 1851, Lieut.-Colonel of that corps. In 1876 he was elected to the City Council for St. Stephen's Ward, and represented Toronto at the Centennial Exhibition. In January 1878 just before his death he was again returned to the council for the same ward.

In 1861 he unsuccessfully contested York Riding in the Conservative interest against the Hon. W.P. Howland. Col. R.L. Denison was a pronounced party man and was one of the committee of the U.E. Club. When the York Pioneer's Society was formed, he was elected the First Vice-President, and two years later he was chosen President of the United Canadian Association. He was the President of the York Pioneers at the time of his death. For many years he was also Treasurer of the Board of Agriculture of Upper Canada.

He was present at a meeting in the St. Lawrence Hall on Aug. 21, 1860, representing the approaching of the then Prince of Wales, in which probably for the first time in Canada "The Maple Leaf" was adopted as Canada's National Emblem. He was on the platform on this memorable occasion. He had also been present on opening day at Upper Canada College, and his name appears on the first page of the register of enrolment along with that of Dr. Scadding.

Col. R.L. Denison, well known as an excellent horseman, was also a breeder of fine horses--cavalry horses to be sure--and might be seen about the streets of Toronto driving a superb trotter called "Milkmaid". He appeared at Carlton Race Course in 1857 as a visitor driving this celebrated trotter. He was also a breeder of fine Ayrshire cattle.

He was a man of great physical strength, and was also referred to as "the handsomest man in Toronto". He was the owner of Old Dovercourt, as referred to in an earlier volume.

An old news-clipping says: "Although Canadian born, Col. R.L. Denison was a perfect type of English gentleman of the old school, and possessed excellent qualities of head and heart". His hospitality was a Toronto by-word.

He died of erysipelas in the head on March 10, 1878, leaving besides his widow, one daughter, one step-daughter, and eight sons. He lies buried in the family cemetery at Weston, where a handsome tall monument marks his last resting place. His grave originally was under a tree upon which he had at one time carved his initials.

I will now give you the text of the old clippings in the old scrap-book which was in the old cash-box in our attic in Grimsby. The early section of Toronto which is described in these clippings in the present time is the downtown business section. I know this part of the city well, having spent the years 1931 to 1934 as junior-clerk-messenger at the Dominion Bank, York and Adelaide Branch, which took me afoot into much of this district. Your understanding of the following will be aided if you know this part of present-day Toronto well.

106

YORK OR TORONTO

SERIES OF LETTERS WRITTEN TO "THE LEADER" BY R.L.DENISON, 1877

People can only guess at this late day what Toronto was like under the name of MUDDY YORK. There were no stone roads, no sidewalks, no posts to prevent people from driving their wagons on what are now sidewalks. I must say that below the St. Lawrence Market in some places an attempt was made to shape and form sidewalks of a primitive kind, but everywhere else the teams, mostly oxen and carts, took possession of the roads from fence to fence; and when they stuck fast, the rails of the fence were often requisitioned to pry them out of a hole; and often these rails were laid down to make the road firm enough to pass over safely. In winter the fences were removed in places to let people get past the snow-drifts, across fields, etc.,-- much as is done in these days. It is hard to imagine such things in the City of Toronto, but this was the year 1820.

SCHOOLS OF EARLY YORK

The summer of 1820, I spent at the school of Mrs. Sweeny. Her school stood at the corner of King Street, opposite George Duggan's Store, which was still standing after sixty years, as was also Henry Drear's on the north side of King Street; and John Munro's garden was nearly half a square, well filled with fruit-trees and flowers. The corner, where the school was kept, was some years afterwards occupied by George Munro's large brick store. Mrs. Sweeny, the mistress of the school, was a small lady. Her son, a sailor, had fitted out a full-rigged ship in miniature, which was my admiration, and which, if I mistake not, was later placed over the door of the Mansion House kept by DeForest which was burned down in 1827---ship and all.

In 1821, I attended Mrs. Goodman's school on the corner of George and Duchess Sts., just in front of the farm of the Hon. S.P. Jarvis. Mrs. Goodman, assisted by Miss Purcell, Miss Rose, and Miss Sherman, kept a school for young ladies and very small boys, of whom I was one of four, the others being M.B. Forward, William Allan and James Smith. I was accepted because I was a very curly-headed little boy who had two older sisters to take care of me attending the same school. During the bad roads we three rode together to school on two horses. As we passed a farmer one day he remarked "Oh, look, two loads on a trap-stick!", because I was riding on a pad behind my sister. Buggies were not known at that time in York. In any case we did not possess such a vehicle. It was the fashion to ride. I suppose this was because of the bad roads; and I have been told by my father that I rode many a long mile on my mother's knee at a much more tender age. This kind of riding may have given me a taste (in addition to my Yorkshire blood) for a good horse, which I have never for a day been without. I have driven in Toronto, or ridden on horseback for the last fifty-five years. Mrs. Goodman's house was a long two storey frame building, with two windows in the parlour or music-room on the north side of the front door, and three windows on the south side or school-room, and six windows upstairs all facing George Street and the house opposite which belonged to Captain Fitzgerald and afterwards burned down. Mrs. Goodman used to sail into the room about eleven o'clock a.m., with great majesty and ample skirts. She weighed between two and three hundred pounds. When Her Majesty appeared, we were all expected to stand and pay homage to her nice old face, which I never grudged to respect with any befitting formality. There are still living in Toronto, say many parts of Canada, ladies who are grandmothers and great-grandmothers who were educated by the ladies of this famous school which was for both day-scholars and boarders. Some will readily remember who the old pioneer is who penned this, and who knows Muddy York long before it was Toronto. This was written, as near as I can find out, in about 1875, of the years 1820 and 1821. I do not think many have a like record, or can many of those old school fellows be left now.---

In 1822, Lot Street (now Queen Street) west of Denison Ave., was full of logs and stumps, and all south of it was dense forest to the lake. You were almost without sight of the water until you got to the "Dug-way", so called because the settlers cut through the steep clay bank to make a passage for the teams to get to the lake beach, on which they could drive nearly all the way to "Oakville", or at least as far as "Marigold Point" where I frequently turned up into the upper ground on which the road stretched to the Sixteen-Mile Creek, now called Oakville. During this year (1822) I went to school in a log house just where the Asylum Lodge now stands on Queen Street. At that time there

was a little village of two or three cottages, an Indian blacksmith shop, an interpreter's cottage, and then the school conducted by Mr. McConicle, a worthy Irishman. As far as I can remember the Indian Settlement at this place was across Lot Street from the Park Lot of Colonel James Givins, who was the Superintendent of Indian Affairs at that time and for many years thereafter. This fine old officer was the father of Rev. Saltern Givins, Rural Dean of the City of Toronto.

Lot Street, at the time of which I write, was the muddiest swamp hole in the world. During spring and fall the farmers' teams were constantly sticking fast in the mud. About this time Mr. John Farr put up a little frame building quite amongst the bushes and quite hidden by them on the west side. A man named Bowler was the brewer in the winter and the shearer of all the farmers' sheep during the summer. Mr. Farr became a wealthy man and retired from business many years (at least thirty) before his death (the small house giving place to a nice residence). Alderman Cornwell carries on the same business on the same site but in a much larger scale. At this late date I cannot remember one of my school fellows of this school now living. It was a common thing in those days for a boy to carry his shot-gun or rifle with him to school; and I have done it frequently especially during the pigeon season. The path from my father's to the school was almost entirely through the woods which offered cleaner walking in the spring and fall and cooler walking during summer. Upon one occasion a large hen hawk alighted upon a tree near the school; and a neighbour's wife (Mrs. Gerben) took down her husband's gun and shot it "dead as a hawk". This ends school no. 3.

YORK NO. 4

The scene changes and your old friend, the York Pioneer, leaves his Indian School for one supposed to be in advance; and which was on the corner of Bay and Richmond Streets ---south side of Richmond and the west side of Bay Street. It was a large one storey log-house, the logs of which were not flushed, nor was the bark removed. The teacher at this school was Mr. Hugh Howard, who lived a little west in a cottage with a large orchard of apple trees. The same cottage was later occupied by a Mr. Crowther, a kind of Alderman Baxter man (very large). Mr. Howard had one son about my own age who left for the southern states about 1830. I never heard of him again, and take it for granted that he is dead like all the rest of my school-fellows. The square our school stood upon was almost a common. From the corner of Richmond Street to the corner of Newgate Street (now Adelaide Street) where Mr. John Doll afterwards built, there was no settler; but on the opposite side of York Street stood the house of a loyal old Canadian, William Myers, who reared there a family of sons and daughters well known in this town--- some of whom are still alive. The youngest son was John. He was at school with me, but is now dead. On our school square facing York Street stood the old blue residence of Mr. Humphrey, whose very fleshy wife I greatly admired; and a little way farther up lived old Fox and his wife with one eye. Later on Harry Sheppard moved his axe factory into the square where Sheppard Street now divides it. He also erected a good family mansion. Before Sheppard came to this part, his shop was on the south side of King Street, just in front of Mr. Higgins'. Higgins was a blacksmith on the north side of King Street. His lot is the only one on the north side of King Street which is now vacant. It will someday be of great value to his family. When Bill Higgins was a boy (I refer to the late much respected High Constable of forty years) he was in his father's garden; and being full of mischief, he threw a turnip at a lot of people standing with Mr. Sheppard across the road, which unfortunately hit his own father who happened to be one of them. This I heard from his own lips before he became High Constable of the District which of course embraced the whole city and all the adjoining counties.

YORK NO. 5

Speaking of the school on the corner of Bay and Richmond Streets and its surroundings, I remember that the square opposite the school on the east side of Bay Street and the south side of Richmond Street was fenced in as a field and was the property of Jesse Ketchum, a farmer of York, who lived on the square on the corner of Yonge Street and Newgate Street (Adelaide Street) in a large good looking family mansion. His bark mill, with its large stocks of hemlock bark, were on the opposite side of the street. (Much of this ground is now covered by the new opera house). The square fenced in, which I have mentioned, was curtained all around on four sides with hides of sole leather, hauled out and in every morning and evening, and spread upon the fence to dry. This much respected citizen afterwards surveyed a street across his land from east to west and called the new street Temperance Street.

102

He was the first advocate for the temperance movement in Toronto that I can remember; and though he lived to be an old man in Buffalo, he never gave up hope that man could be persuaded to be sober; and he spent large sums of money, both in Buffalo and Toronto, with that object in view. I could write pages on the history of this good man that would be acceptable to the York Pioneers, but I must not forget your wide circulation amongst those who will not refuse a glass of whiskey.

During the year 1824, I was moved to a school kept on the corner of Toronto and King Streets. The house was the property of Bob Johnson, a carpenter. Some few may yet remember when it was the store of R.A. Parker, and known far and wide as the "Checker Store" from the manner in which it was painted. One morning when I went to school, I saw a man named Richard Lawrence ploughing just where Rice Lewis' store now stands, and he said that they were going to make bricks for a new jail and court-house, which soon followed. I kept my eye on them every day, and frequently ran across the street to take a turn at driving Dick's oxen. When the ground was prepared and spread out in bricks to dry, a circular hole about twelve feet in diameter and about two feet deep was made; quantities of water were thrown in, and the poor oxen turned in to tread the clay to make the bricks which were moulded in a six-brick mould, each time plunged into a trough of water to keep them from sticking fast in the mould. This as far as I remember, was the first work done in this square between King and Newgate, Church and Toronto Streets, excepting of course clearing it of heavy timber which grew there a few years before. The erection of the jail and the court-house was soon followed by the Methodist Meeting and St. Andrew's Church on the two northmost corners of the square, and then again by brick shops along King Street. I think I hear some of your readers say, "When will this old fogey have done with his letters that have so little interest to people of the present day?" If I took the trouble to give you the names of the old fogeys who started the brick era in York, you would be surprised to find how nearly related to them by blood or friendship you are. You, at all events, "Mr. Editor of the Leader", could realize what I say is true, and will go on giving space to more ramblings.

YORK NO 6

The year 1825 saw me a pupil in Mr. Spragg's school, called the Central School, taught on the "Lancastrian Plan", where everything was done in military order, even to the clearing of our slates, one of which was hung by a string around the neck of each pupil. A strip of board, an inch square, was nailed to the floor from one side of the school to the other---one strip for each form---; and the boys had always to stand with their toes apart and up to the mark and their heels together. When we rose from our bench or sat down, it was by order of the monitor, who gave the time for each motion by a wave of the hand. He sat in front of his class on a wooden box, which contained our books, slates, pencils, etc.. When Mr. Spragge found it necessary to punish a boy, he always mounted the boy on another and larger boy's back, and tickled him sweetly with a bundle of birches tied together with string. When under punishment for a flagrant crime, he was obliged to let down his small clothes, and take it on the bare pelt. I am proud to think that I never arrived at that stage of flagrant offender against the laws of the school and of morality. Mr. Spragge was a fine old English gentleman who always rode to school on horseback. In those days no one ever rode in a buggy, nor did we know any kind of vehicle by that name. The writing desk was placed all around the walls of the school-room. When a class was ordered to write, the master opened his box upon which he sat, and took out and distributed the copy books, then the quills (steel pens were not known to us in those days), and distributed them. He then placed in an auger-hole in front of each boy a small glass cup, and then gave each boy a share of his ink. When all was ready, attention was called, and every boy stood up, and faced right or left as ordered, then by measured tread marched to his place. With perfect military precision he cocked over one leg and then the other and sat down. The master picked up his pen, and all followed, taking their cues from him, and went to work. When the task was done, Mr. Spragge came behind our backs, and with a pencil made marks upon any bad spelling or bad writing, and occasionally on a fellow's back as well.

The central school stood upon the south-east corner of the Grammar School lot; and was fenced off from that ground, where Dr. Strachan taught larger boys. I am afraid the very best feelings did not exist between our boys and those of Dr. Strachan's School --- especially during the snow-balling season. On the south side of this street, since Nelson Street, and now Jarvis Street, stood a cottage of old Jack Murray, who was the only carter by profession then in York; and I believe from what I have heard he was the pioneer

carter of the town. South of our school, across Adelaide Street, stood the public house of George Garside, a man whose name was in many mouths at that time; and opposite his tavern was John Wilmot's with a sign upon which was painted:--"Robin Hood is dead and gone; so come and drink with Wilmot John." The invitation on his sign was accepted by many, I should judge by the roundness of his waistcoat and the breadth of his back. At the upper corner of the square, and at the entrance into the property of Hon. S.P. Jarvis, that gentleman and most of the owners of the Park Lots, thought, or pretended to think, that Lot Street was their property, as well as the square in front of their Park Lots down to Richmond Street. Consequently they kept Lot Street closed all east of Yonge Street. Some went so far as to defend their rights, and give considerable difficulty to the town authorities.

YORK NO. 7

From the Central School, I passed into the private school of the Rev. James Padfield in 1820, whose assistant was Rev. Adam Elliott. The masters of this school were not clergymen at the time I refer to, but were preparing for ordination. Mr. Padfield was a strict and severe man, but so honest that every boy got fair play at his hands; and with such treatment boys will stand any severity of punishment; but once let the boy think that a master shows partiality amongst the pupils, and his authority is greatly weakened, if not entirely gone from him. Mr. Elliott was himself a student at the time I refer to, and working hard for his ordination. He, on the contrary, was a meek and humble man, wishing to be at peace with all the boys, and, I should say, all mankind. Between these two gentlemen the school was well managed, as far as a scholar could judge. In these days every boy was expected to do a fair day's work, and act honourably in all circumstances. One year the school stood on Duke Street, the first house east of Sir William Campbell's about fifty yards, and was the property of George Duggan, who after he retired from active business built a substantial brick house where the school stood, and there he ended his days. The square in front of our school was the garden and orchard of John Baldwin, Esq., who kept the store where the Canada Company's office now is. A large orchard bounded our school-house on the north side and on the two opposite corners east of us (one of which was Issac Columbus, the gunsmith) were also orchards; and I remember how very hard it was for the boys to keep honest and out of the orchards from August to October. In fact I think some few did not quite succeed, or apples would not have been plentiful amongst the boys during that season of the year. Mr. Columbus was a great favourite with the boys, for he would sometimes lend a gun during the pigeon season, and was always available when anything went wrong with our gun. I spent many an hour watching him at his work, for we were great friends, and two of his sons lived at my father's and one of them married out of his house. I could yet show two jobs of his work; and much of it yet remains in this town after half a century. Mr. Columbus always behaved with the greatest politeness indeed, --quite a Frenchman of old France. Mr. Padfield's school during part of my time there with him was on Victoria Street and Stanley Street; and one day when a fire broke out, we ran with all our property and stored them away in old Mr. Patches' place. Mr. Patches was a carpenter from Yorkshire who lived on the corner of Stanley Street. (I would give the names of the streets of the day in question; but who knows anything about them now but old pioneers.) Just east of our school Mr. Thomas Johnston had a slaughter-house, and Mr. Summersett another. The latter butcher had a son William, who attended the same school with me for one year or two. Our school being very much on the increase, Mr. Padfield got up a fine new one on Richmond Street (just opposite the farm of Captain McGill) and a cottage for himself. He had taken a wife for himself in the daughter of one of York's oldest inhabitants, Mr. Lewis Bright, who was the father of six sons and six daughters. (Now his descendants are counted by hundreds, and rank in numbers next to my own family, the Denisons.) To go back a little, I must mention that Mr. Padfield resigned his school in 1827 to Mr. Vaux, while he went to take a Grammar School in the country. Mr. Vaux's school stood on the corner of Duke and Berkeley streets. It was a brick building, years afterwards used as a firehall. Quite a creek ran through the school-grounds, which afforded fishing for the boys, and an excellent place for wet feet and mud-pies. Every day Major Small with upright dignity rode through our school-ground and through the creek (for there was no walk then on Berkeley Street) on his black pony, with a short dock. The old Major is just as fresh before my mind as he was fifty years ago. He sat upon his horse in about the same style as Judge Boulton or Captain Denison, and few days passed in York without their presence in the street on horseback. Everyone knew them. Indeed it was seldom necessary to ask who anyone was in those days, for we were all known to one another.

110

These old gentlemen were as well and better known in these days, as Mr. Gooderham is now; and although so well known in the present days, in fifty years but few will remember him, changes are so rapid in this life.

YORK NO. 8

While at Mr. Vaux's school on Berkeley Street, there was a celebrated negro chimney-sweep called "Black Joe", who went up and down the streets of York, muddy or otherwise, calling---

"Ho Ho Black Joe
Sweep your shimley clean,
From the bottom to the top,
Without no ladder, or a rope."

This old sweep will only be remembered by the Pioneers of York before 1827, for, if my memory serves me right, he died that year, by falling out of the stable-loft of Tom Bright, who then lived on the corner of Duke and Ontario Streets. It was supposed that he went there to sleep after taking too much whiskey. Tumbling out of the window, he broke his neck. In those days whiskey, like everything else, was honest liquor, and not likely to drive a man mad, or kill with such a thick head as old Joe's. Whiskey such as poor Joe would drink in the present day, were he alive, would kill a black hog if he went on drinking for years as old Jimmy O'Hara (otherwise Shoot Aisy) did in his day. Among a score of anecdotes of the latter celebrity, "Shoot Aisy" (Easy), I remember one which I must give you, in order that you may somewhat understand the character of this old soldier. One morning he met Major Allan on his way to his store, or his bank, or his post-office or his magistrate's office, or perhaps his customs-office, for he filled many offices in these early days, and yet his hands might not be too full, such was the slowness of the place. From Major Allan, "Shoot Aisy" asked for some assistance which he was in the habit of receiving from all the old settlers, the Major in particular. So Allan handed him half a crown, and said to him, "Jimmy, don't drink it!" "Shoot Aisy" pushed back the money into the major's hand, and replied, "Take back your dirty money, for I will make no stipulations". So the Major was obliged to withdraw the condition before the old Irishman would receive the money. If any old pioneer would like to refresh his memory as to the appearance of this old wit, he may see a copy of him (by asking at the office of this paper) taken in 1825 at the instigation of Sir Allen MacNab and Charlie Heward, who found him on the street and forced him into a room, where a picture was cut of black paper, pasted on white, and framed and preserved by MacNab till 1860, when he sent it by express from the walls of "Dundurn", Hamilton, to grace the walls of the writer. Sir Allen in his note with the picture said, "There is no one here now who knows about old Jimmy; and since I lost my poor boy, I would rather you had it than anyone else, for you remember him well".

YORK NO. 9

The close of the year 1829 brought the closing of Mr. Padfield's school, which was at the time in a most flourishing condition, and was just where the Jewish Synagogue now stands on Richmond Street. After Mr. Padfield closed his school to enter Upper Canada College as a master, the building was converted into a Gymnasium, where the writer had the distinguished honour of wearing the belt for boxing, more on account of his great strength and endurance than for science-- though not very deficient at that--- always a heavy hitter from the shoulder, and difficult to knock off his pins or out of time. Many will say a poor accomplishment for a man. My idea of a man differs very much from such as judge harshly of one who is able and willing upon all occasions to defend and protect himself. A man who feels pretty safe under difficulties is not always the aggressor. I have passed into a ripe old age, and have never been accused of tramping upon weaker men than myself, or prone to kick up a row, or strike a woman.

Upper Canada College opened on the old Grammar School ground, and in the old school-house, which for the purpose was removed to Nelson Street and subdivided into rooms enough for the different masters, both upstairs and down, and for the writing-master a small new building was erected on the south side, the masters were as follows: Rev. Dr. Harris, Dr. Phillips, Rev. Mr. Mathews, Rev. Mr. Boulton, Rev. Mr. Dade, Mr. De la Hay, Mr. Drury, Mr. Padfield and Mr. Barber. I was amongst the first to enter Upper Canada College in January 1830, which happened in this wise:-- A large party were going in from the west of town--- I may say escorted by Colonel Fitzgibbon, who had his three eldest sons with him-- and when about a hundred yards from the college he said, "Now boys, let us see who will be the first at the new school. Suiting the action to the word, he started off at full

speed holding two of his boys by the hands, and helping them along. I was the largest fellow in the party, and soon passed all the rest and entered first. Furthermore my name happened to be placed on the first page of the register, where Dr. Scadding's also can be found, if I mistake not after forty-seven years. Even at this late date (the year 1830) Queen Street was not opened through Captain Magill's or Mr. Jarvis' or Col. Allan's farms. Mr. Jarvis' gate stood across what is now Jarvis Street on the north side of Richmond Street. Many a time I was at that gate with two of the oldest boys, Sam and William, the latter now many years dead, the former now a colonel in the British Army.

The old Blue Grammar School was occupied as a college till the new college on Russell Street, which was in the course of erection, was completed with dwellings for the chief professors. Beginning at the east was the Principal's house (undivided), then the French master's and Mr. Mathew's, west of the college, Mr. Dade's and Mr. Boulton's, and last of all Dr. Phillips', the vice-principal. He was a rare old favourite with the boys, and dressed in a fine old English style for a parson. I am sure he was never mistaken for anything else from his earliest days in the Church. I had the melancholy satisfaction of assisting five others of his old pupils to carry him to the grave, from his own home on the Humber. At his desire he was buried under the chancel of St. Phillip's Church, when it boasted of a full united congregation, but very little educated in the ritual of the present day in that parish. I believe of the six bearers of that good old man, I am now the only survivor. If I am under mistake, I shall be glad to hear from any other through the pages of The Leader, which is the rightful paper of the old pioneers.

YORK NO. 10

Before Russell Square was taken to build Upper Canada College upon, it was a rough pasture field with some old logs decaying upon its surface. It was cut in halves by the slaughter-house creek which emptied into the bay at the foot of Simcoe Street, and derived its name from the Government slaughter-house, built about ten feet west of the creek, and twenty feet from the shores of the bay. It was used for killing government cattle during the war. This old structure remained there until 1829. Russell Square was fenced in with a split-rail fence, and had an entrance-gate just opposite the entrance to the government stables, which were nearly where they are now, on the south side of King Street. Although they were not very valuable buildings or very grand, they answered very well for a theatre in the absence of a Grand Opera House, such as now stands on Ketchum's old tan-vats. Although I am no great theatre-goer, I frequently attended good plays in the old stables of Government House, which were used for want of a better building. The tier of lots from the bay to Lot Street were nearly all open fields or commons. First, next to the water, was the square that now holds the Parliament Buildings, South of Front Street, the hill was covered with woods of natural growth. The path from the Garrison leading to town was nearly all the way through woods, and a far prettier walk than now. The City in 1860, when the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII) left Toronto, attempted to renew this woods, and planted fresh trees, which were allowed to be destroyed by cattle and vagabonds. The square behind the Parliament Square was occupied by the governor-- just the one house upon it. The next, Russell Square, was a field. The next square had only one house, the old residence of the Hon. Angus Macdonell. The last square, the one which reached up to Lot Street, was the property of Sir John Beverley Robinson, on which he had a brick cottage, called "Beverley House". This whole block from the bay to Lot Street extended from Simcoe Street to John Street. At that time, Simcoe Street was Graves Street, named after Simcoe's middle name. North of Lot Street, extending to Bloor Street, the city limit, and to the rear of these squares was the property of D'Arcy Boulton and Judge Powell, being Park Lots 12 and 15, which in these days were a wilderness, in which I spent many a day shooting, excepting just the twenty acres or so, across each lot which were cleared and cultivated. On Mr. Boulton's lot, directly north of Beverley House, stood a large one room log shanty occupied for years by old Mr. Goodall and his large family. The gateway into Mr. Boulton's lot was on the corner next to Judge Powell's, where Dummer Street was later laid out. The gateway into Judge Powell's lot was where Chilon's blacksmith shop was afterwards built, and on which a blacksmith shop still stands.

In 1835, a mile-stone was planted on the south side of the street, just opposite the shop. The mile was measured from the City Hall on King Street. The second mile-stone was planted just where the Primitive Methodist Church stands on Queen Street; the third mile-stone just opposite Wesleyan Methodist Church on Dundas Street; and the fourth in Brockton by the railway's bridges, and quite out of the city of the day. Since I have got out of the city, I had probably better remain there. The mile-stones were all cedar.

112

POST-OFFICES

YORK NO. 11

At the Pioneers' pic-nic at Queenston Heights, last week, a discussion arose about the early Post-Offices of York; and I promised to send to your paper what recollections I held of them. Of course, if my account be not correct, I shall be pleased to be put right, for I write entirely from memory.

The first Post-Office was on Frederick Street, midway between Col. Allan's house and store, and the same spot that the Canadian Company afterwards occupied with a brick office. The building was of logs with a plank-platform about twenty feet wide in front, extending to the sidewalk. Col. Allan was postmaster, and J.S.Howard, Esq., his deputy.

POST-OFFICE NO. 2

Post-Office No. 2 was on George Street between King and Duke Streets, and on the west side. Mr. Howard was the postmaster, and Mr. Doll the letter-carrier.

POST-OFFICE NO. 3

Post-Office No. 3 was on the north side of Duke Street, midway between George and Caroline Streets, and just east of the old Bank of Upper Canada.

POST-OFFICE NO. 4

This was on the corner of Yonge and Front Streets, on the property of the late Judge Macaulay, where the Bank of Montreal now stands.

POST-OFFICE NO. 5

This was opened in an addition to the house of Peter McDougall on Wellington Street, where the Exchange was built, and where the Imperial Bank now is.

POST-OFFICE NO. 6

This was opened in a regular government-built building on Toronto Street, where the Receiver-General's Office is now. (Note: 1953: now The Bank of Canada)

POST-OFFICE NO. 7

You all know this one, on Adalaide Street, looking down from Toronto Street. It is a beautiful stone building, surrounded by some of the best buildings in the City. This new office, so commodious and so substantial will most likely answer all the purposes of Toronto for the rest of my days, unless I should live as long as Taulal-a-Bogus lived, in which case I should expect to see it in the neighbourhood of Osgoode Hall or even farther west.

July 1877.

To the Editor of The Leader:

Sir: Two or three years ago, the attention of the York Pioneers was called to the disgraceful state of the burying-ground near the old Garrison, where the soldiers and the old settlers were interred. At a meeting of the Society, the Rev. Mr. Givins, Mr. Oates and myself were appointed a committee to confer with the proper authorities and endeavour to have the graves protected. Two of the committee called upon Col. Coffin, when we found that he was the proper person, and he promised to have the square fenced in, and made safe, which promise was soon performed. You may guess my surprise when driving up Wellington Place (a wide stretch of land reaching from Graveyard Square to Clarence Square) to find a house had been erected and people living in it, at the very west end of Wellington Square, upon the square in question. My first thought was to confer with Col. Coffin again, but I reflected that others besides the Pioneers had an interest in protecting the Garrison Grave-yard Square. I think it the duty of the public, the press, and yours in particular as the oldest representative of that "engine" in Toronto, to look after our rights, and not allow any more of the square to be disposed of, and, if possible, to have that portion already disposed of, restored to the public.

Your obedient servant,

R.L.Denison,

President, York Pioneers, Toronto.

Dovercourt, July 4, 1877.

End of Diary of R.L.D.
the First of Dovercourt.