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Yorkville in Pictures

1853
to
1883

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Outside front cover
Coat of arms for the village of Yorkville

Inside title page
Cottages and children, 190-?
Davenport Road, north side, near McMurrich Street
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library





Stephanie Hutcheson

Yorkville
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1853
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The Early History of Yorkville

To place the history of Yorkville in perspective it is necessary to relate briefly the early history of Toronto.

Teiaiagon, a Seneca village, was situated near the mouth of the Humber River in the 17th century when the French fur traders first came into the area. After the conquest the British became interested in the Humber River Route and in 1787 bought about one-third of York County from the Mississauga Indians. Surveys were made; John Graves Simcoe was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada in 1791 and arrived in July, 1793 with the Queen's Rangers. The village was laid out near the Don in ten four-acre blocks along Lake Ontario and renamed York. The year 1817 saw it incorporated as a town and 1834 as a city, with a population of some 9,000 and William Lyon Mackenzie as its first mayor. It was then renamed Toronto and at confederation it was made the capital of the province of Ontario.

To the north the village of Yorkville existed as a political entity for thirty years — from 1853 until 1883 — at which time it was annexed by the City of Toronto. It was bounded on the south by Bloor Street, on the east by Sherbourne Street, on the north by a line near the Canadian Pacific Railway Station jogging north along Yonge Street to Walker Avenue, and on the west by a line near Bedford Road. Six stone monuments marked the boundaries of the 557 acres.

The existence of Yonge Street, the toll-gate and the Red Lion Inn were instrumental in the settlement of the village. Yonge Street was opened by Augustus Jones and about thirty of the Queen's Rangers in 1796 but the section between Lot Street (now Queen) and the First Concession (Bloor Street) soon fell into disuse. Yonge Street was the main route to York's hinterland and the farmers coming in to the St. Lawrence Market had to turn east at the First Concession Road and travel down what was later known as Parliament Street. The importance of the intersection on Yonge Street at the First Concession was recognized in the early 1830s when a toll-gate was erected on the north-east corner.

Some twenty years earlier Daniel Tiers had built the Red Lion Inn on the east side of Yonge just above the First Concession. This pleasant-looking hostelry soon became an important social and political focus. Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto* speaks of it as "the germ of what was afterward the

flourishing incorporation of Yorkville."¹ An important factor in its success was a peculiarity of the toll system: since one had to pay the toll only once a day, farmers could avoid a double toll by leaving their homes early in the morning and returning as far as the Red Lion in the evening rather than staying overnight in York. The Inn was a welcome sight to the traveller after toiling down the "Blue Hill" (so named for the blue clay found there) which was always treacherous, particularly in the spring. In 1833 Rowland Burr, a visionary engineer undertook the grading and straightening of Yonge Street and by 1846 it was macadamized as far as Richmond Hill. It is interesting to note the number of inns and taverns along Yonge Street and their importance to the growth of the little communities at crossroads as one progressed north: Deer Park, Davisville, Eglinton, Bedford Park and so on.

Across the road from the Inn was the Potter's Field — The Stranger's Burial Ground — or, to give its correct name, the York General Burial Ground. Complete with its neat Sexton's house close by the gate, this six-acre burial ground stretched along the north side of Bloor Street almost to Avenue Road (and incidentally held back the development of that portion of the village for some fifty years). In 1825 a group of concerned York citizens had banded together to buy a cemetery for "persons of all creeds, and persons of no creeds." It was incorporated in January 1826 and governed by five trustees who were chosen for life. Contrary to popular belief this was not a paupers' burial ground but simply a non-sectarian one. Prior to 1825 only the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church had consecrated burial grounds so that with the growth of York's population and the cholera epidemics of the 1830s and '40s the need for this type of cemetery was great.

When the Potter's Field became full the Trustees acquired land for the Necropolis and in 1854 the Yorkville citizens presented a petition to the council to close the old cemetery. Subsequently an act was passed allowing the Trustees to sell the land as soon as the bodies had been removed. This took about twenty-five years and there are boulders with bronze plaques in both the Necropolis (at the end of the west walk) and Mount Pleasant Cemetery (plot K, close to the northern boundary, midway between

Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road) marking the final resting place of these early pioneers. Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews who were executed in 1838 for their part in the 1837 Rebellion were among those whose remains were moved to the Necropolis.

Industry came to Yorkville around 1830 when Joseph Bloor opened his brewery in the Rosedale Ravine just north of the street that was named for him, between the Huntley and Sherbourne Street bridges. The Severn Creek provided a good supply of running water to Bloor and John Severn who established another brewery nearer to Yonge Street in 1835. Shortly afterwards brick yards were opened on the other side of Yonge Street utilizing the clay and sand deposits of the Blue Hill. They produced the distinctive "white" (or yellow) brick that was used in the construction of many of the public buildings in town to the south. Bricks and tiles were also, of course, in great demand to meet the building needs of the growing community of Yorkville.

The first significant settlement had begun around 1836 when Sheriff William Botsford Jarvis and Joseph Bloor engaged in land speculation and began laying out the village lots in Yorkville. It is not clear why they entered into this scheme but since both lived in the area, they presumably realized its potential as a suburb of York. The village population grew steadily with the majority being self-employed craftsmen, shopkeepers, labourers and clerks who were employed locally. Some of the merchants and professionals, however, would have travelled to York to their place of business. At first they would have had to walk, go on horseback or ride in a carriage but after 1849 they could have taken William's Omnibus Line.

Under provincial law a thousand petitioners were required before self-government would be considered for any community. It is said — and seems probable — that to reach this figure some of the names were taken from the tombstones in the Potter's Field in 1852. The citizens considered calling their village Rosedale, Cumberland or Bloorville but finally decided upon Yorkville. *The Globe*, foreseeing annexation, took a distinctly condescending (not to say haughty) attitude toward the village.

INCORPORATION OF YORKVILLE.

Yorkville, that little offshoot of Toronto which a few years ago consisted of a couple of taverns and a store, has waxed populous and strong, and now takes upon itself the cares and responsibilities of villagehood. It has been gazetted a municipality, and the first election of councillors takes place on the first Monday in January next. It will soon come to be a subject of discussion whether Yorkville ought not to be annexed to Toronto. It is not to be expected that the city will remain "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd" within its present narrow limits for any great length of time; it will soon grow too large for its garments, and a good slice of the township of York will be necessary, that it may have "ample room and verge enough" for its gambols. Yorkville would then of course be swallowed up; but in the meantime we presume that, by way of apprenticeship to the higher and graver duties of citizens of Toronto, the people of Yorkville may be allowed to become villagers.

The Globe 6 May 1852, p.218
Courtesy The Globe and Mail

Five newly elected council members met on 17 January 1853 and chose James Dobson as Reeve. These five and their occupations — Dobson the builder, James Wallis the blacksmith, John Severn the brewer, Peter Hutty the butcher, and Thomas Atkinson the carpenter — are all remembered in the Yorkville Coat of Arms. Carved in stone, it featured their initials and devices of their trades in the four quarters of the shield and the centre. It was mounted in the gable of the Town Hall but is now to be seen in the face of the Firehall on Yorkville Avenue. The first council was concerned, among other matters, with the appointment of a tax collector and a constable; restraining "the running at large of Pigs and Swine and Poultry"; the planking of sidewalks; the cleaning of drains; the licencing of taverns; the opening of streets; provision for the weight and sale of bread; and the prevention of immoderate driving.² In 1859-60 the splendid Town Hall designed by William Hay was erected on the west side of Yonge Street opposite Collier Street.

This was to be the focal point of the village long after it had been annexed to the city.

Civic pride ran high. An appeal, for example, was made for money to outfit a brass band. It states that "when Eglinton and Davisville, unincorporated villages, have efficient Brass Bands it is time Yorkville was waking to its sense of inferiority in this respect so that our public demonstrations may assume a more cheerful aspect."³ A sense of local identity is further born out by the fact that the village had at least two newspapers. *The Yorkville Times* was a weekly newsheet published from 1877 to 1881 and *The Yorkville News* was produced in 1883. The former was edited by E. DeVine and printed at the office of *The Toronto Advertiser*, while the latter was produced by one T. A. Edwards who later founded *The Parkdale News*.

Familiar street names commemorate some of Yorkville's important citizens. Bloor and Severn Streets are named after the two early brewers; Berryman after Dr. Charles Berryman, a loved and respected practitioner; Hazelton after either a landowner, George Hazelton White or Joe Hazelton, a well-known cab-driver. The name Scollard came from Maurice Scollard of the Bank of Upper Canada and Pears from the brickmaker of that name. At annexation in 1883 the names of Sydenham and William Streets were changed to Cumberland (the English county from which many citizens originally came) and Yorkville (to keep alive the village name). The winding Davenport Road led to the residence of that name owned by Colonel Joseph Wells.

Transportation was always an important factor in Yorkville's growth. William's Omnibus Line opened in 1849 with carriages that ran from the Red Lion Inn to the St. Lawrence Market. The service was every ten minutes in the beginning but was later less frequent. In 1861 the first street or horse railway was inaugurated, largely through the influence of Alexander Easton, a resident of Yorkville. This ran from the Yorkville Town Hall down Yonge Street to the Market. At one time the barns located between Yorkville and Scollard Avenues behind the Town Hall, housed over 200 horses. The next development was the building of the electric street railway in 1892 and brick car barns replaced the old stables.

From 1853 to 1861 the population doubled from about 800 to 1,600; by 1881 it was approximately 5,000.⁴ The city of Toronto was booming and moving northwards as Yorkville became more and more a dormitory town. The village had many amenities such as quietness, attractive residential streets, and good transportation, not to mention taxes lower than Toronto. The 1876 *Directory of the Village of Yorkville* states that "the air being pure and healthy, Yorkville has for many years been a favourite place of residence for those who prefer to live away from the noise, dust and turmoil of city life."⁵ The village must have had a very rural look with gardens and orchards, barns and stables adjoining many houses, and there was a fair green on Scollard Street. Some homes had outdoor bake ovens and ice houses which were sheds placed over large pits and filled with ice each winter. By 1861 Yorkville had become basically residential: it was never more than semi-autonomous and was always economically dependent on Toronto to a greater or lesser degree.

Reading through various reminiscences one gets a good idea of the kind of people who lived in Yorkville. There were certain grand families — Jarvis, Macphersons and the like — but most were of middle-class, hard-working gentle folk. The 1870-71 *Census* shows that the birthplace of approximately half the citizens was the British Isles (England 655, Ireland 540, Scotland 243) while half were born in Ontario (1,102).⁶ The occupations of people on a typical street (Birch Avenue) were painter, carpenter, timekeeper, shoemaker, tailor, labourer, gardener, bookbinder, blacksmith, picture framer, brass finisher and a professor of music according to the 1876 *Directory of the Village of Yorkville*. It was a small, friendly open society and as one author stated, if you didn't remember the story about eccentric Dr. Philbrick who divorced his wife but gave her visiting rights to see the dog, you weren't a true Yorkviller.

Annexation in 1883 was no doubt a good thing for both the village and Toronto. Yorkville Council had prided itself on keeping the taxes down — at the expense of public improvements. The water supply was particularly bad; the streets were unswept and badly paved; watering was done almost exclusively on Yonge Street. At any rate by

that time Bloor Street had become a nominal boundary. The city was able to adopt a uniform policy for such services as police, water and gas supplies, and roads — and to levy higher taxes. Yorkville became St. Paul's Ward and was annexed by and to the city by the Act 46, Vict. Chap. 46.

Today only remnants of Yorkville's former attractiveness remain but local identification must have been strong well into the 1910s and '20s. During this period the Old Boys and Girls Association met regularly to discuss "the good old days."

The boundaries of Yorkville contained part of what is today known as the Annex and Rosedale. For the main part, the history of these two areas lies outside the years of the focus of this study — the early development of Yorkville until annexation in 1883 — but they do deserve some mention. In the Annex only the area between Avenue Road and Bedford Road from Bloor Street to Davenport Road was an integral part of Yorkville. The five cross streets — Prince Arthur, Lowther, Elgin, Victoria (Boswell) and Dufferin (Bernard) — were laid out from 1850 to 1875. Most of the inhabitants owned their own homes and were employed in the village. Further west, as early as 1874 Robert Baldwin subdivided part of his extensive property into 18 lots off Walmer Road to attract wealthy Torontonians from the established residential areas of the city. Only a few lots had been built upon by 1884 but around this time Sidney H. Janes purchased much of the land lying between the two settlements. The streets were extended and substantial houses in the Romanesque revival style were built during the 1890s. It is the architecture of this central core area that has established the character of the Annex. The man of substance built his large private house and worked in town usually travelling not by private coach but on the street railways. The children had spacious lawns to play on (and few parks) and Huron School had to be expanded several times in the 1890s.

Interestingly enough from an 1890 population survey, it appears that some of the typical Annex residents moved into the old western part of Yorkville while the Yorkville merchant and artisan remained there and did not venture west of Bedford Road.⁷ The Annex defined as lying between Bloor and Dupont, the western boundary of Yorkville

and a line between Brunswick Avenue and Walmer Road, was annexed in 1887 — some four years after Yorkville.

Rosedale took its name from the original farm which stood overlooking Yonge Street in the 120-acre property running from Lamport Avenue to Yonge Street and Park Road to Roxborough Street. The farm was built in 1821 and purchased by Sheriff William Botsford Jarvis three years later. The deep, wooded ravines which have historically afforded Rosedale a measure of protection and privacy, made road and bridge building very difficult. The first road into the property started south of Severn's Brewery on Yonge Street and wound down into the ravine, crossed the creek and climbed up to the farm. Around 1835 Jarvis built a more direct route down Roxborough Street and today's Cluny Drive.

The first development in the area is shown on the John Stoughton Dennis map dated 1854 (in the Metro Toronto Library) of Rose-Park — a subdivision of the Rosedale Estate. This winding street plan so markedly different from the rest of the city's grid pattern, was the second example of picturesque planning in Toronto (St. James Cemetery being the first). At this time the Sheriff divided the house itself into two parts and at various periods his three daughters and their families lived with him until his death in 1864.

Meantime Edgar Jarvis, a nephew of the Sheriff, had purchased a large piece of land from him and in 1866 built "Glen Hurst" — a fine house which today is part of Branksome Hall. As a land developer Edgar had a continuous battle with the Yorkville Council over the state of the roads and bridges in Rosedale. He opened a number of new streets including Elm Avenue and Maple Avenue which were planted with those trees. Other streets bear the names of his family: Beau, Percy and May for three of his children, Beaumont for his wife, Rachael for his grandmother and of course, Edgar for himself. In addition he built the first iron bridge on Glen Road in 1881 which the City finally bought from him at a fraction of the cost.

In 1891 Sir David Macpherson, another developer and owner of "Chestnut Park", offered for sale a number of lots to the south and east of his property which stood on Yonge Street north of

Roxborough. Part of this area was to become a charming garden suburb with brick sidewalks, distinctive lamp standards and solid, detached houses.

Another map in the Metro Toronto Library — North Rosedale Park ca. 1908 — shows lots for sale by the Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company around the Lacrosse Grounds (Rosedale Park) along Highland Avenue, Roxborough Drive, Edgar and Whitney Avenues. This marked part of the last phase of the development of Rosedale which was largely completed by the First War.

The portion of Rosedale lying east of Sherbourne Street was added to St. Paul's Ward in 1887 and North Rosedale was taken into Ward 2 in 1906.

More recently Yorkville was the centre of the Canadian hippie movement in the mid-sixties, much to the dismay of some local merchants. The area is now one of relatively expensive shops and seems very self-conscious of its image. Many of the houses have been altered — either renovated or "restored" beyond recognition, including a number on Hazelton Avenue. Hazelton, however, has the fine advantage of being an uninterrupted streetscape and many of the buildings have been sympathetically altered. One can still imagine the nineteenth century village on quiet Sunday mornings as one cycles through the streets looking for architectural delights.

The Yorkville Council *Minutes* (to date only indexed to 1869) and other material in the Municipal Archives are the most important source for the future researcher. Should anyone have further information or photographs of the area, please consider sharing this knowledge with others. Your local library will be able to refer you to the proper archive or library which would be interested in your material.

I would like to thank all the librarians and archivists in the city who have helped me in this work and all those who have shared their photographs with me, particularly Mr. William Dowson. Douglas Richardson kindly read the manuscript and offered additional information and help.

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Map of Yorkville and Its Vicinity by Alfred T. Cottrell
From: *The Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of York*
(Toronto: Miles & Co., 1878. Reprinted, Toronto: P. Martin
Associates, 1969)

Red Lion Inn, ca. 188-?

Yonge Street, east side between Bloor Street and
Asquith Avenue

Stood ca. 1808 — ca. 1888

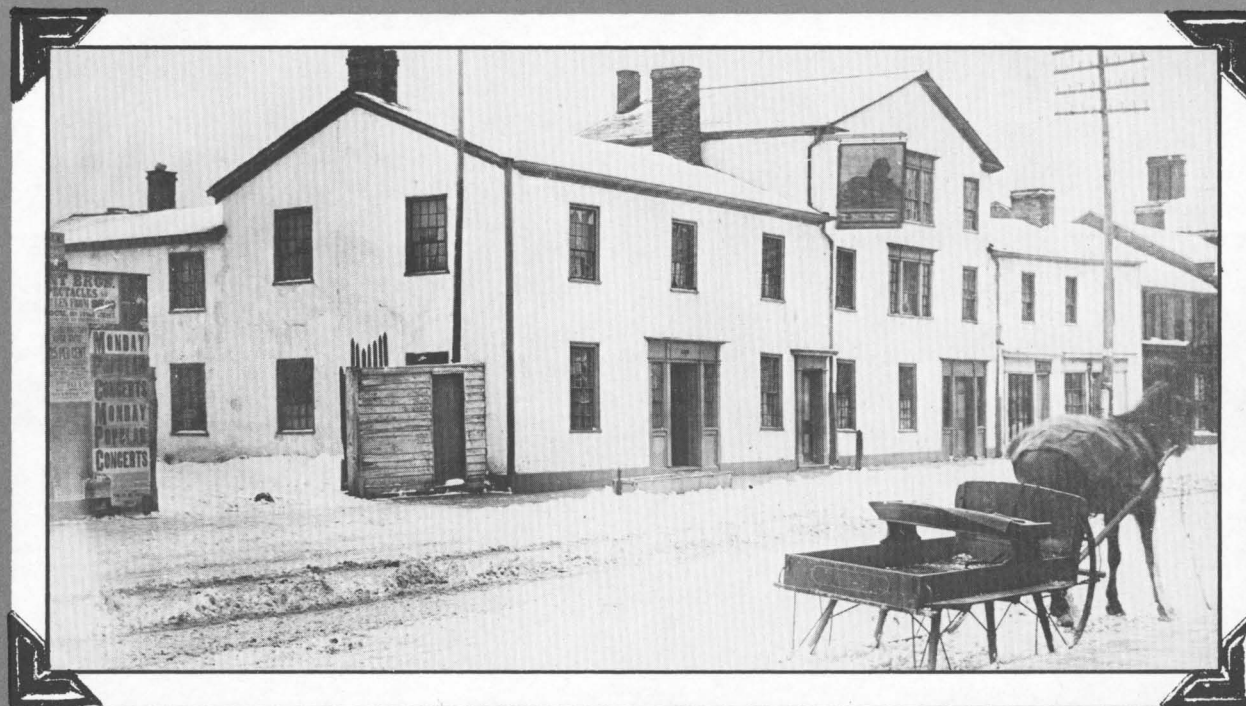
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

Around 1808-1810 Daniel Tiers who had kept a beefsteak and beer house in York, built the Red Lion Inn on property which had originally belonged to Mr. Playter. Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto* describes Tiers as "a typical landlord, pleasant and affable and much inclined to give oracular opinions on every question that might arise".⁸

The Inn quickly became an important social and political meeting place for farmers coming to the St. Lawrence Market from the surrounding countryside. They could avoid a double toll by staying there overnight, proceeding to market early in the morning and returning the same day.

The Reformers held meetings in the Red Lion and the most notable event occurred on 21 January 1832 when William Lyon Mackenzie was re-elected after his expulsion from the Legislature. Some 2,000 people congregated and Mackenzie was presented with a gold medal and chain. A large procession accompanied him down Yonge Street to his home and one sleigh carried "a little printing press kept warm by a furnace beneath it", and a crimson banner inscribed "The Liberty of the Press". Printers pulled the sheets and distributed them to the crowds along the way.

The building originally consisted of the central section only with the wings added later. It was constructed of clapboard and painted white though it was later stuccoed. The ballroom on the second floor had fireplaces at each end and boasted a barrel vaulted ceiling eighteen feet high with hooks for sconces. Many people travelled from York (especially in the winter when sleighs made the journey easier) to the popular dances. The *Landmarks* further relates that many officers from the Garrison or half-pay officers settled nearby, lending to these gatherings "something like an air of aristocracy".



Tecumseh Wigwam, 1870

North-west corner Avenue Road and Bloor Street
Stood 1820-1874

Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

This log cabin built about 1820, with its hitching posts in front and its inviting verandah, was at one time a notorious drinking spot. According to the *Landmarks*, in the 1850's George King, the son of the keeper, was a member of the Townsend Gang and was hung at Cayuga for the murder of a stage driver.⁹ This, however, has not been verified.

The three-acre glebe lot was later owned by Mr. W. B. Heward who kept a stable for his horse and cow behind the cottage. California Medcalf, who laid out Prince Arthur Avenue, pulled down this cottage and built a large house which became a private boarding house. Albert Nordheimer in turn built on the corner; his house making way for the present day Park Plaza.



Joseph Bloor, 1789-1862

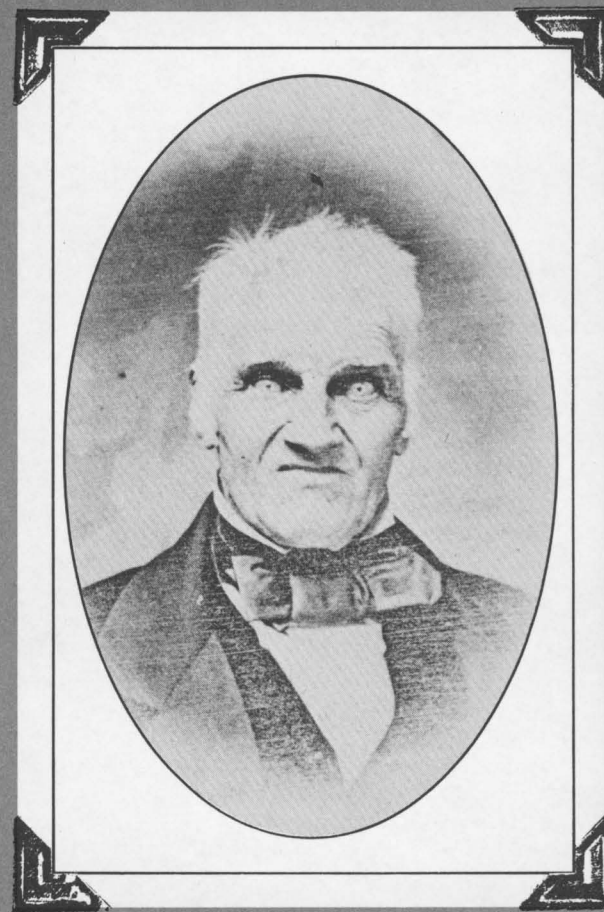
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

Joseph Bloor born in Staffordshire, England and came to York in 1818 or 1819 where he established himself as the proprietor of the Farmers' Arms Inn on King Street near the Market. Around 1830 he gave this up and acquired the south-west part of Captain George Playter's farm where he built a brewery in the ravine. (Walton's *York Commercial Directory* of 1834 lists Bloor for both locations: Bloor's Brewery, Yonge-street-road and the Farmers' Arms Inn.) About this time he also entered land speculation with Sheriff Jarvis and laid out part of the village of Yorkville. The First Concession Road — which was at times also called St. Paul's Road, Sydenham Road and Toll-Gate Road — finally (and fittingly) came to be called Bloor Street. (This name was in use at least as early as 1855 as noted on a map of the Homewood Estate in the Ontario Archives.)

Bloor was a strong Conservative and Methodist although he originally adhered to the Church of England. He gave the land at 10 Asquith Avenue to the British Wesleyan Methodists who built a brick chapel there in 1841. (This building was later enlarged and used by Dr. John Rolph for the first medical school in Upper Canada and then the Medical Faculty of Victoria University occupied it from 1856 to 1870; it was demolished in 1975.) When the congregation outgrew this building,

Bloor gave generously to Bloor Street Methodist Church, know as the Central Methodist Church after 1890. The land for this church had belonged to James Dobson and was on the north-west corner of Bloor and Gwynne (Park Road) Streets. The church bell was rung three times a day, at 6:00 a.m., 12:00 noon, and 6:00 p.m. to mark the hours for the Yorkville day labourers. The Yorkville Council paid the sexton for this service until the end of 1877 after which the Fire Hall bell was used instead. Today the Methodist bell hangs in St. Andrew's United Church, Bloor Street East.

Bloor lived on the south side of Bloor Street, west of Church Street, in a square, two-storied brick house which was the oldest building on the street. When he died on 31 August 1862 a commemorative tablet was erected to "Joseph Bloore, Esq., an exemplary and useful Christian, and a liberal contributor to the erection of this sanctuary." This plaque, which may be seen in St. Andrew's Church, spells Bloor's name with an "e" which is also found in some of the other material of the time. Since Methodism and brewing were generally considered incompatible, it is interesting to speculate whether Bloor gave up Anglicanism and brewing simultaneously to become a Methodist land speculator. Refusing brandy on his death-bed so that his death would not be postponed, "He calmly fell asleep in Jesus on Sabbath evening August 31st, 1862, aged 74 years", according to the memorial in St. Andrew's.



Bloor's Brewery

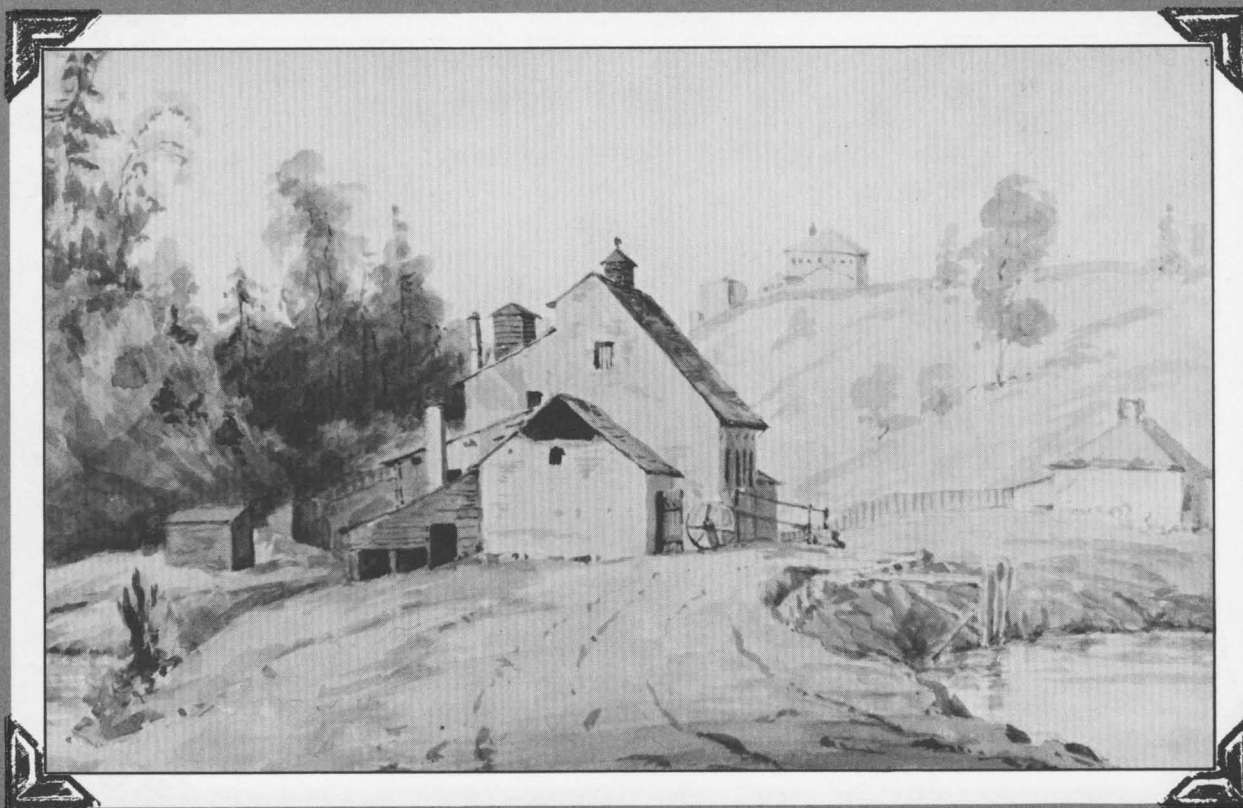
Rosedale Ravine, north of Bloor Street, between the
Huntley and Sherbourne Street bridges

Stood 1830-1875

Courtesy Royal Ontario Museum

Bloor's Brewery was located north of the First Concession Road (Bloor Street), east of Yonge Street, midway between the Huntley and Sherbourne Street bridges, on the south side of Severn's Creek. The building was constructed of red brick and was approximately 100 feet long and 50 or 60 feet wide. The creek ran from St. Clair, crossed Yonge Street at Tannery Hollow and finally emptied into the Don near Winchester Street. It was dammed for water power and in the spring the pond so created stretched almost to Yonge Street. This pond was much enjoyed in the summer for swimming and rafting and in the winter for skating. The road down to the brewery was also an excellent sledding track. In 1843 the brewery was bought by Mr. John Rose and renamed the Castle Frank Brewery. It was in operation until 1864 and demolished in 1875.

This photograph represents a watercolour by the noted artist Paul Kane; in the background, on the brow of the hill, one can clearly see the blockhouse at Bloor and Sherbourne Streets.



"Rosedale"

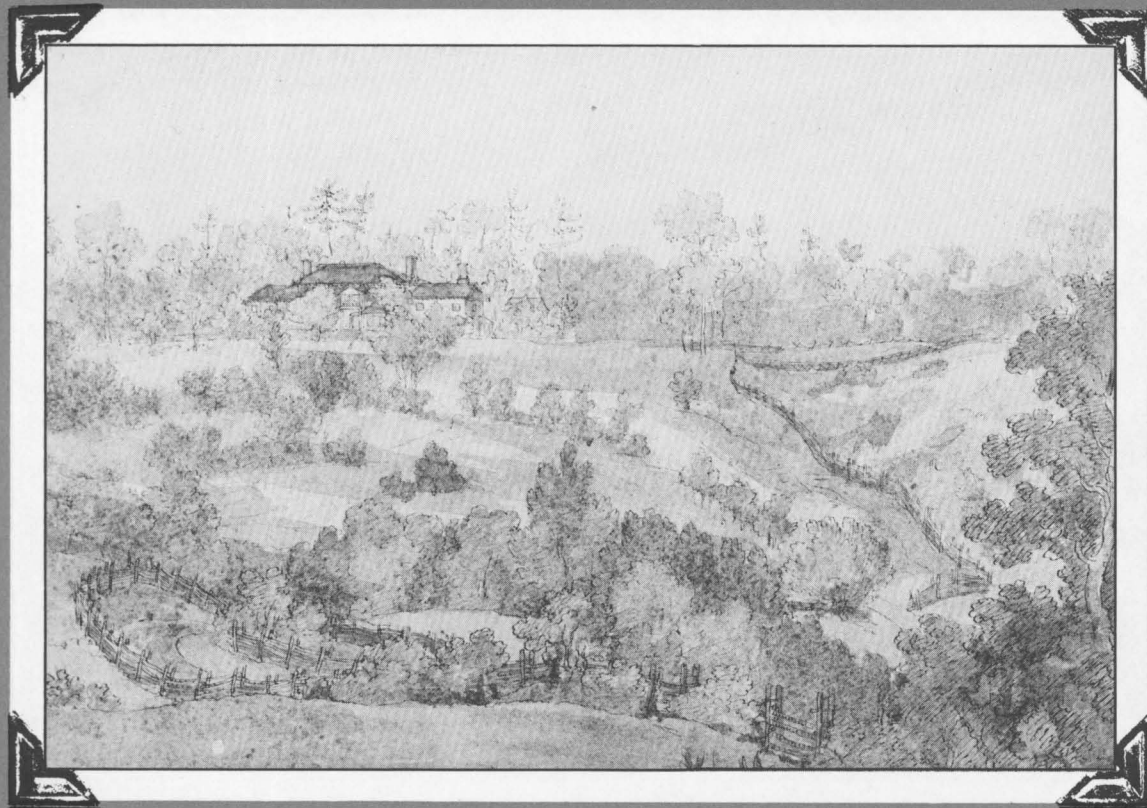
Rosedale Road (near present number 30)

Stood 1821-1905

Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

"Rosedale" was built by the Honourable J. E. Small in 1821 and purchased by Sheriff William Botsford Jarvis three years later. His wife, Mary, the granddaughter of Chief Justice Powell, named the house after the wild roses which grew over the hillsides. The house was finely situated at the crest of a steep hill and faced west towards Yonge Street. A wing was added with "a cheery morning room", along with a large verandah and a grape house, peach house and conservatory on the sunny side. Orchards surrounded the house and the grounds were further beautified by formal walks and rose gardens.

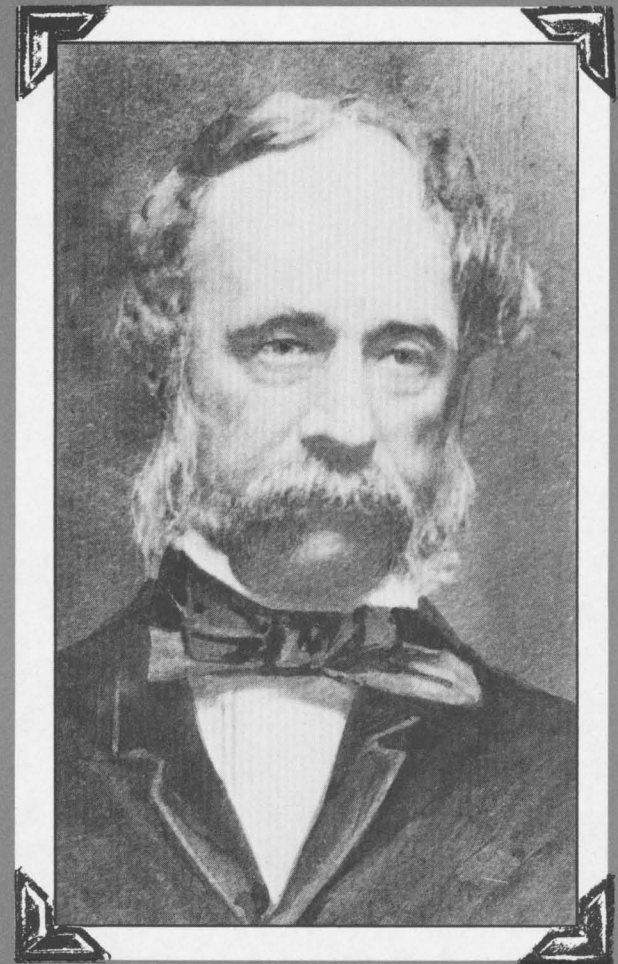
The original of this picture is a watercolour by James Hamilton.



Sheriff William Botsford Jarvis, 1799-1864

Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

William Botsford Jarvis was appointed Sheriff of the Home District in 1827, a commission he held until 1856. During the 1837 Rebellion he commanded a regiment of militia but fortunately, "Rosedale" was spared destruction through the intervention of Colonel Lount.



Severn's Brewery

Rosedale Ravine, east of Yonge Street,
north of Davenport Road

Stood ca. 1835 — in ruins in 1920s

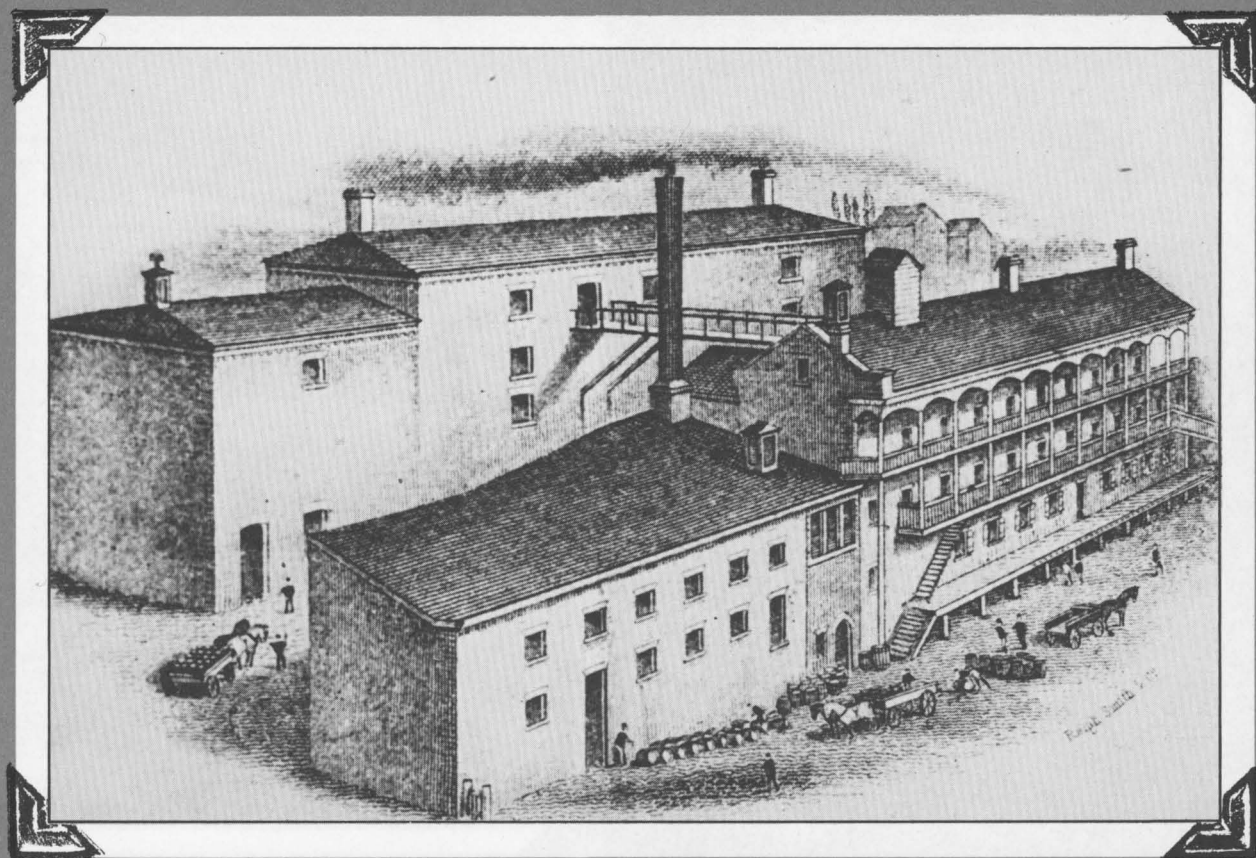
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

John Severn was born in Washington, Derbyshire in 1807 and emigrated to Canada in 1830. He worked as a blacksmith on Hospital (Richmond) Street, before setting up as a brewer in Yorkville. The stone and brick building had been built by the father of John Baxter and stood on Severn's Creek in a nine-acre property in the ravine. The brewery building was two hundred feet long, forty feet wide, rose four stories high including stock cellars and vaults, while the smaller malt house stood three stories. Scadding notes that "the projecting galleries round the domestic portion of the building pleasantly indicate that the adjacent scenery is not unappreciated."¹⁰ The malt was transferred from the malt house to the brewery by rail carriage — "a great saving of labor and expense". In 1867 a fifteen horse-power steam engine was in use and twelve hands were employed in manufacturing ale and porter. Some 6,000 to 7,000 gallons a week were produced and 20,000 bushels of malt had been turned out in the previous season. Severn was not satisfied with the local water for brewing so piped it in from Summerhill further up Yonge Street, through wooden pipes.

Severn had an interesting career. In 1854 he left his business in the hands of his eldest son, George, and went to California where he set up a brewery with another son, John, and Mr. Jonathan Peel, a nephew of the celebrated Sir Robert Peel. When this son died, he visited England for a short time, returned to Canada in 1859, and sold his business to his sons George and Henry. He then went off to Davenport, Iowa, to open yet another brewery, only to return in 1863 and buy back his business, which he ran until his death in 1880.

Severn served as both Reeve and Councillor on the Yorkville Council — the beer barrel on the coat of arms commemorates his service to the community. He was a Reformer at the beginning of his career but later became a Conservative.

Severn's monument, located near the centre of Mount Pleasant Cemetery between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road is a remarkable structure itself, of grey and red polished granite. Six smooth and slender columns carry a single massive domed piece of rather curious shape. According to hearsay, the columns stand for the number of Severn's wives but only three are mentioned on the monument, although he appears to have outlived one more.



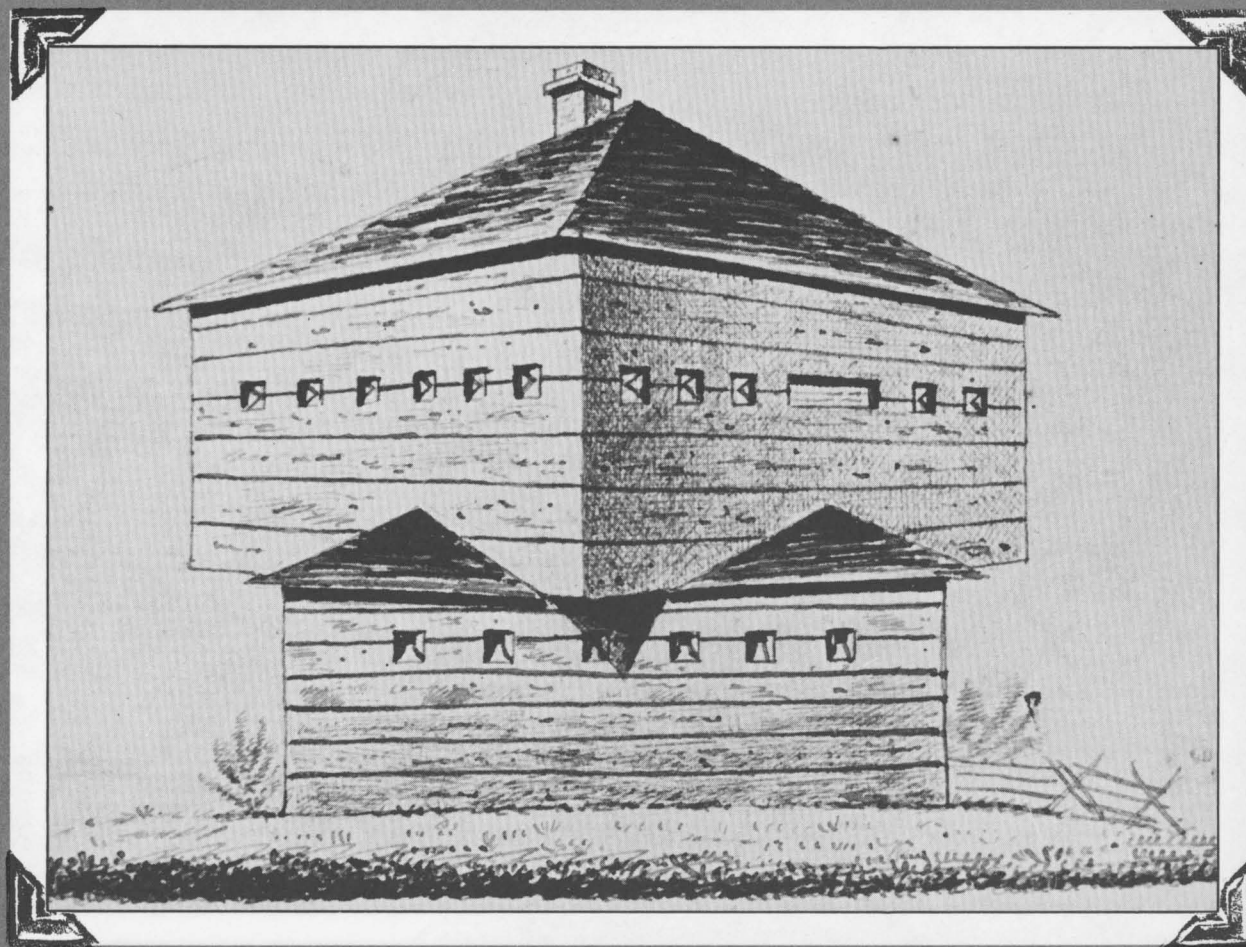
The Blockhouse

Yonge Street, east side, opposite Belmont Street
Stood 1838-1865

Courtesy Provincial Archives of Ontario

After the 1837 Rebellion Sir George Arthur had the Fort enlarged and a ring of blockhouses built to guard the chief roads leading into Toronto. By 1838 there were seven such structures standing in the Toronto region: No. 1 was the New Barracks, No. 2 was at College and Spadina, No. 3 on Bloor near today's University Avenue, No. 4 at Yonge Street and Belmont, No. 5 at Bloor and Sherbourne, No. 6 on the Don River between College and Bloor, and No. 7 at the junction of Lot (Queen Street) and King Streets. The Bloor and Sherbourne Blockhouse stood until 1875 and may be glimpsed in the background of the picture of Bloor's Brewery.

Thomas Glegg, a Royal Engineer and Captain of the 17th Light Horse, drew this picture as representative of three blockhouses in his "Notebook and Sketchbook" in 1841-2. He described the structure as follows: "The object of these Blockhouses is to watch and defend some of the approaches to the Town — they are of 2 stories and made of square logs about 12" thick. A Guard bed is provided for 24 men in the lower story — trestle bedsteads for 20 men on the upper — & the usual Barrack fitments. Stoves on the lower floor answer the purposes of warmth and cooking. They are lighted and aired by 3 windows on each story, and loop-holed blocks are ready to fill in the openings when required for defence."¹¹



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From: *The Toronto City Directory, 1883*

Yorkville Brick Yards, 188-?

Yonge Street, west side, north of Belmont Street
 Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

Some of the contours of present day Ramsden Park are the legacy of brick and tile manufacturing which flourished there from the 1840s to the 1890s. The clay and sand deposits left by glacial Lake Iroquois were utilized to make a yellowish-white brick which was used for many prominent buildings in the village and the city including the Yorkville Town Hall, the Asylum at 999 Queen Street West, St. Michael's Cathedral, most of St. Lawrence Hall, St. James Cathedral and much of University College, to name only a few examples.

Among the brickmakers were three families — the Pears, the Townsleys and the Nightingales — who intermarried and carried out brickmaking through several generations. Leonard Pears and his brother George came to Yorkville from England in 1851. George established the first coffee and spice mills in the area while Leonard engaged in brickmaking with John Townsley. The latter (who died in 1860) had two brothers — James and William — also brickmakers in Yorkville. In 1880 Leonard Pears and his partner Booth took over the Yorkville and Carlton Brick Manufacturing Company, some thirty years after it had been established. In 1885 they employed about sixty men and during this period produced from four to six million bricks a year.

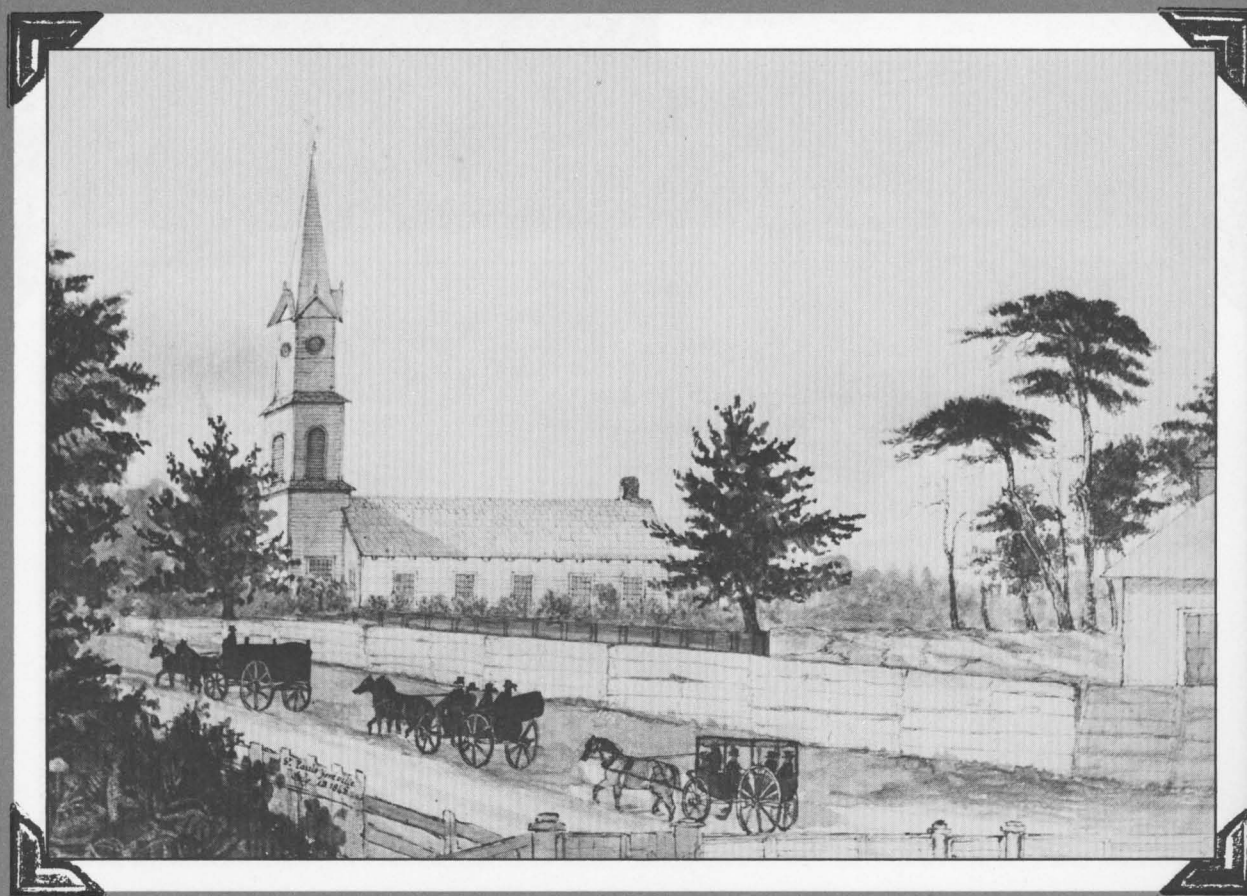
The City purchased the land, which was known as Tannery Hollow, in 1904 partly from a tax sale and partly from the owners. The park was named after Alderman J. George Ramsden who lived on Yorkville Avenue until 1924 and was active in city politics from 1903 until 1936. "No artistic touches have as yet been given to the park" states the *Landmarks*, "but the work of grading, sodding and tree planting will be commenced this year, 1907."¹²

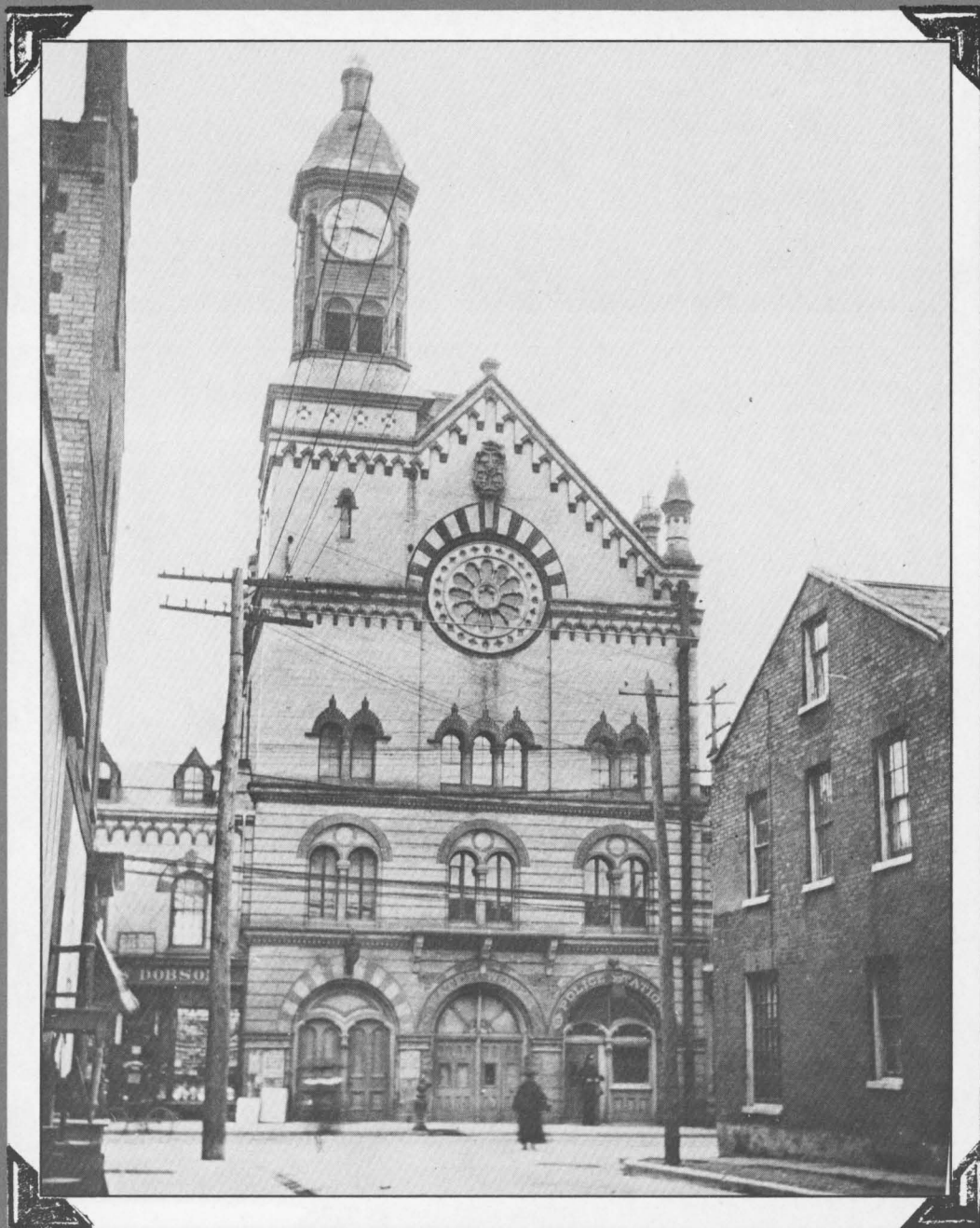
St. Paul's Church (first building), 1848
 Bloor Street, south side between Church and
 Jarvis Streets
 Stood at that site, 1842-1860
 Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

St. Paul's Church, consecrated in 1842, was built on land donated by Samuel Peters Jarvis and his wife. The church was built from the wood of the surrounding forest and the spire and west aisle were designed by John G. Howard, one of Toronto's greatest architects and town planners. The raising of the spire in one day was quite an engineering feat in that it was 85 feet high and composed of four tree-length pieces of timber.

Owing to the rapid growth of the congregation a new church was soon needed and the second St. Paul's was opened in 1860. This twice-enlarged building, today known as Maurice Cody Memorial Hall, had as its architects, two brothers, Edward and George Radford. Eric Arthur calls it "a charming little Gothic church that would be a matter of pride in any English village."¹³ The contrast between this building — a very advanced piece of design for the period — and the original wooden church was extreme. The third St. Paul's, standing to the east of the second church, was designed by E. J. Lennox and was consecrated in 1913.

The original of this picture is a watercolour by the Reverend William A. Johnson who was the rector in 1855. This gentleman, so the *Landmarks* states, upset the congregation in that "his sermons by a portion of his flock were declared to savour more of Rome than of the Reformed Church of England."¹⁴ He resigned and went to St. Philip's in Weston where he presumably did not distress his parishioners and continued with his watercolours.





Yorkville Town Hall (after 1883 called St. Paul's Hall), 1910

Yonge Street, west side, opposite Collier Street
Stood 1860-1942

Architect: William Hay

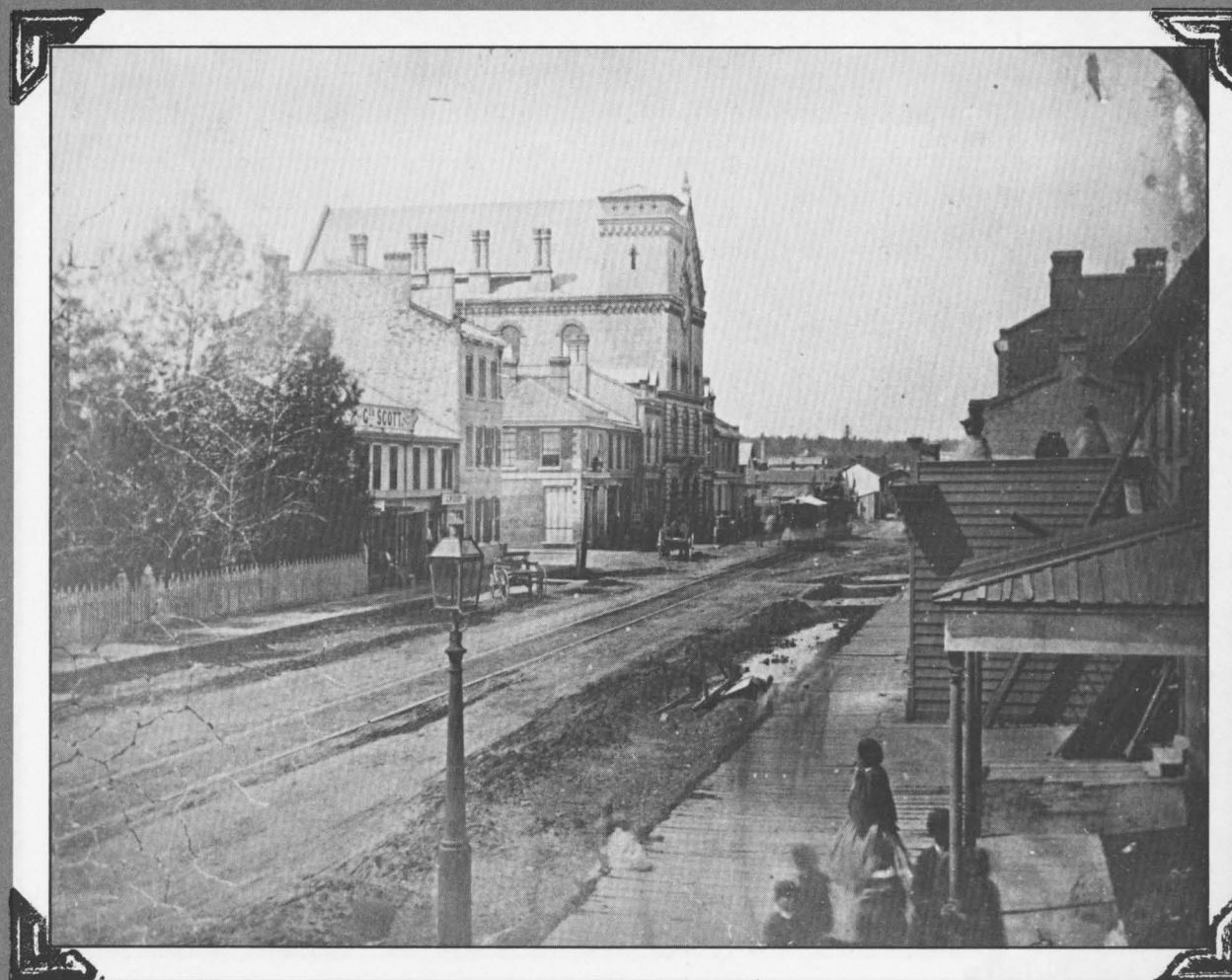
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

In 1856 after much discussion, the Yorkville Council chose Joseph Sheard's plan for their town hall rather than the one submitted by William Hay. Not until 1859, however, were tenders called for excavating the foundation and for some reason unexplained in the Council *Minutes*, the Board of Works was instructed "to see Mr. Hay Architect and get a plan of the proposed Town Hall"¹⁵ and it was completed in 1860 to his design. Hay worked in Newfoundland as clerk of works on the Anglican Cathedral (by G. G. Scott) in St. John's, then moved to Toronto and designed St. Basil's Church and St. Michael's College in 1856 (both much altered in execution), as well as a number of public buildings before returning to his native Scotland.

Scadding thought that "the singular *Hôtel de Ville* which in modern times distinguishes Yorkville has a Flemish look. It might have strayed hither from Ghent."¹⁶ Though Scadding employed Hay as the architect for his own conservatively styled house near the Church of the Holy Trinity, he evidently had little sympathy for this work that demonstrated the eclecticism typical of the 1850s. It was High Victorian work in the North Italian vein popularized by G. E. Street. Fire destroyed the building on November 12, 1941 and it was demolished the following May. The clock which had been installed in the tower in 1889 was removed to the Yorkville Fire Hall and the coat of arms which was given to the Queen's York Rangers is now also part of the Fire Hall.

Yorkville Town Hall, 1861 or 1865
Courtesy Provincial Archives of Ontario

This early picture has many fascinating details. The clock tower has not yet been built on the Town Hall; horse and buggies share Yonge Street with the Street Railway cars. The land with the trees behind the picket fence may possibly be part of the Potter's Field and in the distance one can see the heavily wooded escarpment.





Yorkville Coat of Arms

Originally on the Town Hall; since 1975 on the Fire Hall

Courtesy Toronto Public Library

In 1856 the Council authorized expenditure for a woodcut impression of the Corporation Seal and a small press for it. The shield was surmounted by a beaver and contained in its four quarters a brick mould with an "A" for Thomas Atkinson, brickmaker; a plane with a "D" for James Dobson, builder; an anvil with a "W" for James Wallis, blacksmith, and a beer barrel with an "S" for John Severn, brewer. In the middle, another shield with a cow's head and the letter "H" stood for Peter Hutty, butcher. These men were Yorkville's first five councillors and Dobson was elected Reeve at their first meeting in 1853.

The coat of arms was built into the Town Hall. Before fine building stone was quarried in quantities at the Forks of the Credit, sandstone — including this block — was imported from the United States. Originally placed over the rose window of the Hall, the arms were salvaged when the building was demolished 35 years ago. After the Yorkville Fire Hall was renovated they were placed over the door in the tower, in 1975.

The Yorkville arms were also incorporated in a distinctive flag in 1867. To celebrate Confederation the "Royal York" flag was flown from the Town Hall. It was white with the Union Jack in the upper left corner and the Yorkville shield in the lower

right one. Celebrations went on throughout the first Dominion Day; there was a huge bonfire at Bloor and Yonge and an "anvil chorus" was provided by Wallis' blacksmith shop.

One can see the name Dobson on the sign over the store in the south wing of the Town Hall, as seen on page 15. James Dobson (1810-1894) was one of Yorkville's leading citizens: the letter "D" and the carpenter's plane on the Yorkville coat of arms refer to this builder. He came to Canada from Ireland in 1835, fought in the 1837 Rebellion on the Loyalist side, though he later admitted that "something in the cause of the Rebels was not un-mixed with justice". Dobson became a Liberal and was a strong Methodist, giving his house over to church and school uses before suitable buildings were erected. By 1851 he had acquired a considerable amount of property, retired from the building trade, opened a general store, and was appointed Yorkville's first postmaster.

The Town Hall was the visual focus of the old village even after Yorkville had become St. Paul's Ward on annexation in 1883 when the building was renamed St. Paul's Hall. It was a multi-use building with the council room (later the library) and large public room on the second floor and the police office, magistrate's room and shops on the ground floor. Many activities took place in the Hall — penny readings, debates, political meetings and concerts. People also met outside at the Town Pump and the weighing scales.

"Chestnut Park", 189-? south view
East side of Yonge Street between Roxborough
Street and Rowanwood Avenue
Stood 185-? — ca. 1905
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

Scadding tells us that the house known as "Chestnut Park" was "put up by Mr. Mathers, an early merchant of York, who, before building here, lived on Queen Street."¹⁷ A William Mather, carpenter, who may have been the builder, is listed at Lot Street West in early directories. The house derived its name from a handsome row of horse chestnut trees fronting on Yonge Street and today's Macpherson Avenue was formerly called Chestnut Avenue.

Sir David Macpherson (1818-1896) the subsequent owner, was a railway contractor and politician. A Conservative, he was called to the Senate in 1867 but retired from politics in 1885 due to ill health and criticism of his handling of the Northwest Rebellion. In 1891 Sir David subdivided part of his property to the south and east of his estate with the intent to "preserve the character of this charming suburb as a park-like residence quarter." New streets, sewers and sidewalks were built and the opening of the new Sherbourne Street Bridge meant that the resident had the choice of the 3-minute street car service on Yonge Street or two alternative routes, on Sherbourne or Church Streets. Objectionable buildings and occupations were pro-

hibited and the houses had to be set back from the street by at least 20 feet.

"Chestnut Park" was used by St. Andrew's College from 1899 until 1905 when the school moved to a new location in North Rosedale and the twelve-acre site was subdivided into building lots. This estate is reminiscent of other grand homes which were located on or near the escarpment just outside Yorkville's boundaries: "Spadina", "Glen Edythe", "Russell Hill", "Rathnelly", "Summerhill", "Oaklands", and "Woodlawn". Today only "Oaklands", part of the original "Woodlawn" and "Spadina" in its third transformation still stand.





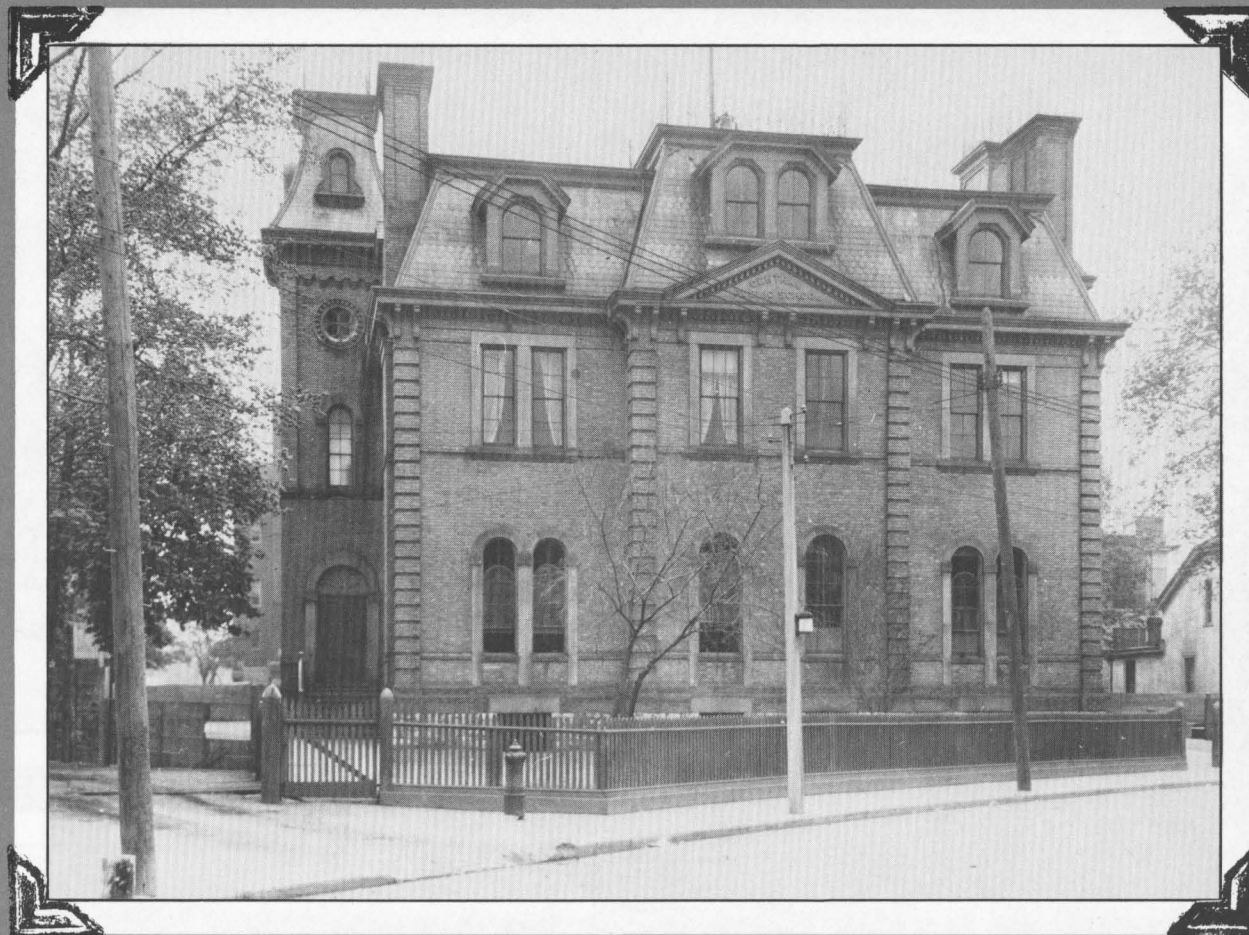
Jesse Ketchum, 1782-1867

Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

Ketchum was born in Spencertown, New York, and came to Upper Canada in 1799 to join his brother Seneca. In 1812 he took over a tannery on the south-west corner of Newgate (Adelaide) and Yonge Streets, prospered in business, and became one of the city's leading benefactors. His particular interests were in secular education and religious instruction.

He was also a strong advocate of the temperance movement and in 1853 gave a hall on the south side of Davenport, opposite McMurrich Street, to that cause. Over the years the building was used by the Good Templars, the Debating Society, the Brass Band and other groups. In 1888 the trustees changed the name of the Temperance Hall to Ketchum Hall and it still stands today (39 Davenport Road) though much changed in appearance.

This kindly "Children's Friend" established a number of trust funds to distribute Bibles and prize books throughout the city's public schools and Sunday-schools. He continued with his philanthropic work in Toronto after he moved to Buffalo in 1845.



Jesse Ketchum School (formerly Yorkville School),
ca. 1919

Davenport Road

Stood 1857-1919

Courtesy Jesse Ketchum Old Boys' Association

Before Jessie Ketchum School was built, the children went to a school on the east corner of McMurrich Street and Davenport Road. This at one time became so overcrowded that the girls went across the street to the Temperance Hall for classes. However, in 1856 Jesse Ketchum gave two pieces of land to the Yorkville Council. The first parcel was to be the site of a "free and common school" on condition that the Council erect a suitable building and the second was to be a public park. In November

1857 the Council held a soirée for Ketchum to celebrate the opening of the school and the park was later extended to cover four acres. The original four-room school received additions in 1881, 1887 and 1904; finally there were eighteen rooms. It was built in the fashionable Second Empire style — then only recently introduced in University College (1856-9) — with stone trim, coloured slate and a mansard roof. The school became York County Model School (for training teachers) and was demolished about the time that Bay Street was extended to Davenport Road. In the background of the photograph one can glimpse the new school building. Jessie Ketchum's most noted principal was Alexander Muir, the composer of the "Maple Leaf Forever".

Toll Gate, 186-?

Yonge Street, north of Price Street and
Marlborough Avenue
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

A toll gate at the north-east corner of Bloor and Yonge Streets, generally known as the "First" was erected in the early 1830s. The small keeper's house was moved to Davenport Road in 1850 when a covered way was added along with two further rooms. The move was made in order to catch the farmers who were turning off early to avoid the toll on their way to market. By 1865 the toll was north of Marlborough Avenue as depicted here. The structure was small but a nicely finished piece of board and batten construction with an elegantly arched effect provided by the little arched pieces under the eaves in the gable ends.

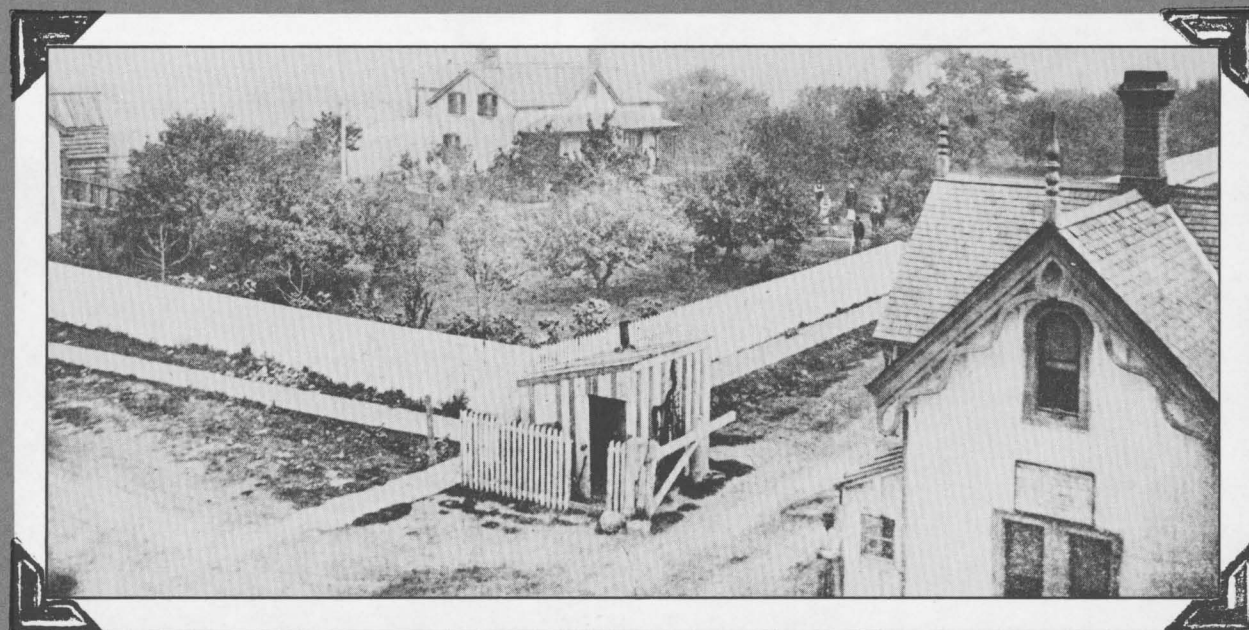
The Yorkville Council in 1868 passed a motion requesting the County to move the toll gate to the northern limit of the village in that "its present position in the heart of this village is an eyesore to the inhabitants and a great injury to them in a pecuniary point of view."¹⁸ It ended up at Farnham Avenue until in 1895 all toll gates were abolished. The tolls in effect in 1875 ranged from 1 cent for each pig, sheep or goat to 10 cents for every vehicle with a load drawn by a horse.



Toll Gate, 1876

Davenport Road and Avenue Road
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

In the background one can see the six-acre estate of Leonard Pears, one of the brickmakers in Tannery Hollow. The unpretentious house with its long verandah overlooking the orchard and a log barn off to the side show how rural Yorkville still was in the 1870s. In the foreground is a close-up glimpse of a house with lacy fretted bargeboards under the eaves, spool-turned finials on the gable ends, and a carefully moulded brick chimney on the ridge of the roof.



Toronto Street Railway, 187-?

Horse car in front of the

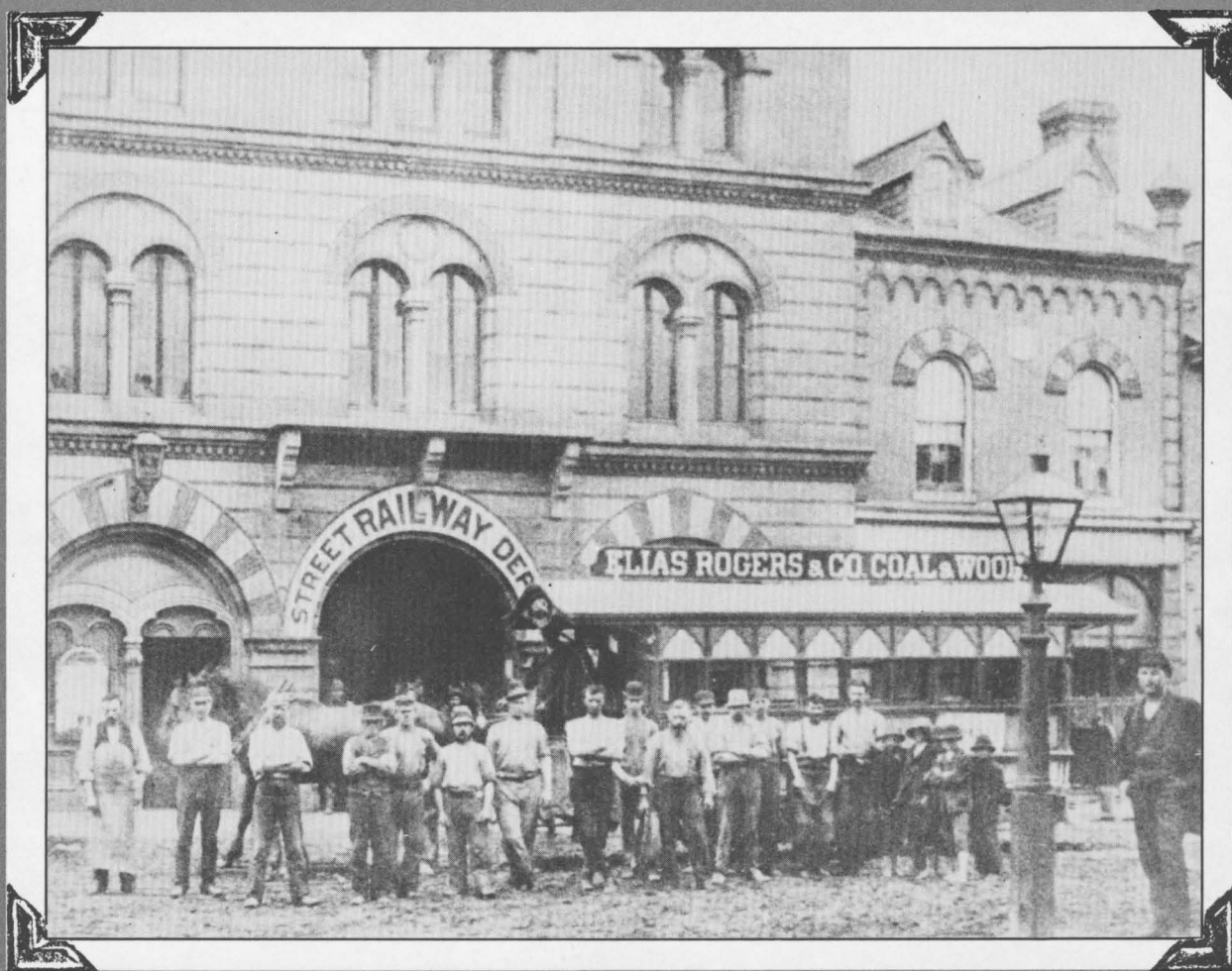
Yorkville Town Hall, Yonge Street
Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

The first transportation system along Yonge Street was inaugurated in 1849 by Mr. H. B. Williams, a cabinet maker. Four buses holding six passengers each ran from the St. Lawrence Market along King and up Yonge to the Red Lion Inn. In 1861 Mr. Alexander Easton, an American railway builder, formed the Toronto Street Railway Company and received a thirty year franchise from the City of Toronto and Yorkville. The first line was built along Yonge Street and opened with great ceremony. After two derailments, cars carrying the company and civic officials managed to reach the Market and in the evening a grand ball and concert were held in the Yorkville Town Hall.

The Company's offices were in the Town Hall until 1879 with the entrance to the horse barns (in the rear) through the main arch down the centre hallway of the recently completed civic building! In 1862 the Company bought out William's Omnibus Line and expanded through the years until in 1891 they owned 262 street cars, 99 buses, 100 sleighs and over 1,000 horses. Sometime between 1879-1883 the Yorkville barns were no longer used for storing cars though there were still over 200 horses there in 1891.¹⁹

In 1885 the line was extended north to the C.P.R. tracks and in later years one could cross over and take the Metropolitan Railway on up Yonge Street. In 1891 the city gave the franchise to the Toronto Railway Company and the following year the Yorkville stables were demolished and brick car barns built in their place. The T.R.C. retired the last of its horses when the electrification of the cars was completed in 1894.

Toronto Street
Railway Timetable
Courtesy Toronto
Transit Commission



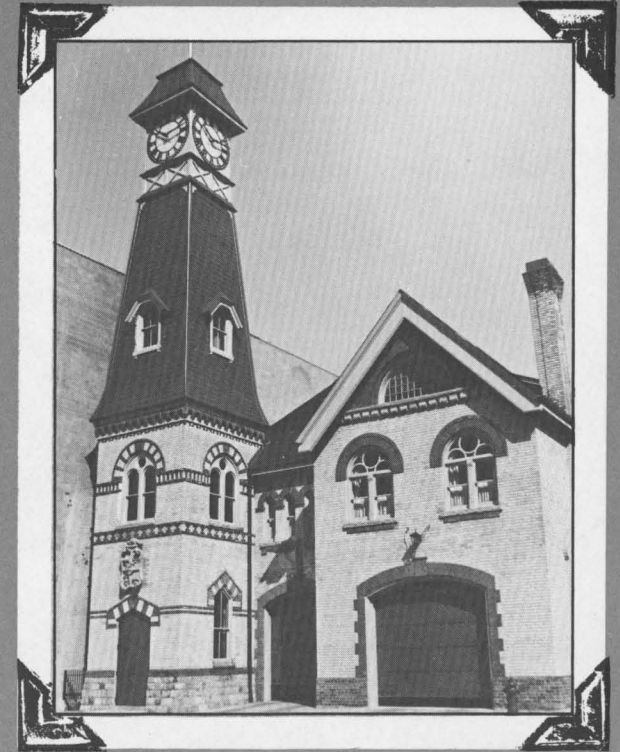
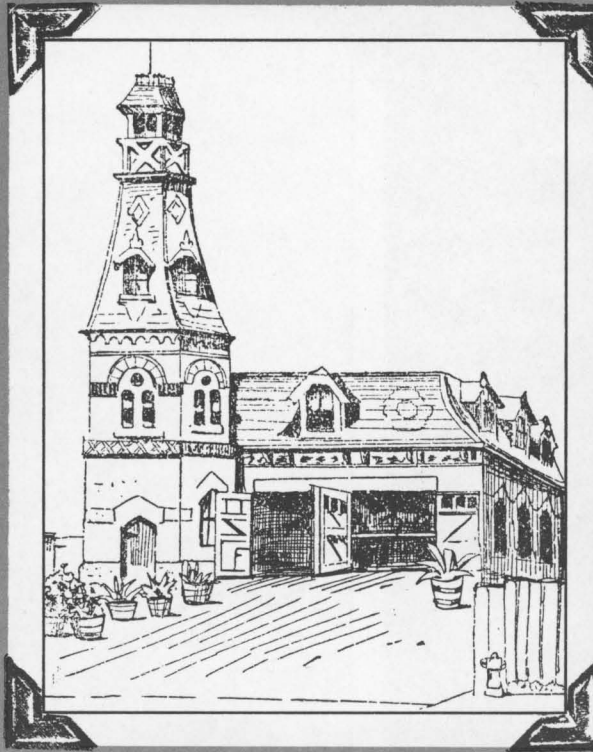
Yorkville Waterworks, ca. 1880
Outside Yorkville's western boundary near
Poplar Plains Road
Built 1875
Courtesy Royal Ontario Museum

The 1876 *Directory of the Village of Yorkville* is quite lyrical about the then newly constructed waterworks which cost between \$65,000 and \$75,000. "A constant supply of pure water for domestic purposes and due protection against fire" was obtained from the same branch of the Don on which the two breweries were situated. The water was pumped from the waterworks up to the Yorkville Reservoir (on the site of the present-day Brown School) and then conducted to all parts of the village by iron pipes. Water hydrants were constructed on all the streets and a fire alarm telegraph system introduced. The waterworks equipment was meant to be as efficient and as economical as any in the province but when this failed to be the case, a good water supply became a strong reason for annexation. The site of the waterworks is presently occupied by the Metropolitan Toronto High Level Pumping Station.

The original of this picture is a watercolour over pencil by William Sims who was active from 1880 to 1926.



Yorkville Fire Hall (original building)
From: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1896, II



Yorkville Fire Hall

34 Yorkville Avenue

Built 1876

Architects: S. H. Townsend (1876) and

Mancel Willmot (1889)

Courtesy A. J. Horne

In 1876 the Committee for Fire, Light and Water of the Yorkville Council decided it was time to reorganize the fire service thoroughly. Land was leased from Miss Price on the north side of William Street (Yorkville Avenue) and a hose tower and hose house constructed. S. H. Townsend, who mainly designed residential buildings, was the architect, and William Booth, the builder. A complete fire alarm system was also inaugurated. The Fire

Warden lived in the station and one Fireman lived rent-free in a cottage behind the Hall on the understanding that he be available from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. daily. In 1877 a horse, harness and "stable requisites" were provided: this improved the service but the Warden was to later complain about bad odours. The full Brigade seems to have been paid per fire.

In 1883 the Station was taken over by the City Fire Department, but by 1889 it was in such a bad state of repair and so infested with vermin that the City Commissioner recommended it be pulled down except for the tower. Mancel Willmot, the architect for the rebuilding, was born in Yorkville in 1855. He designed numerous churches, schools (including Cottingham) and public buildings before his death in 1936.

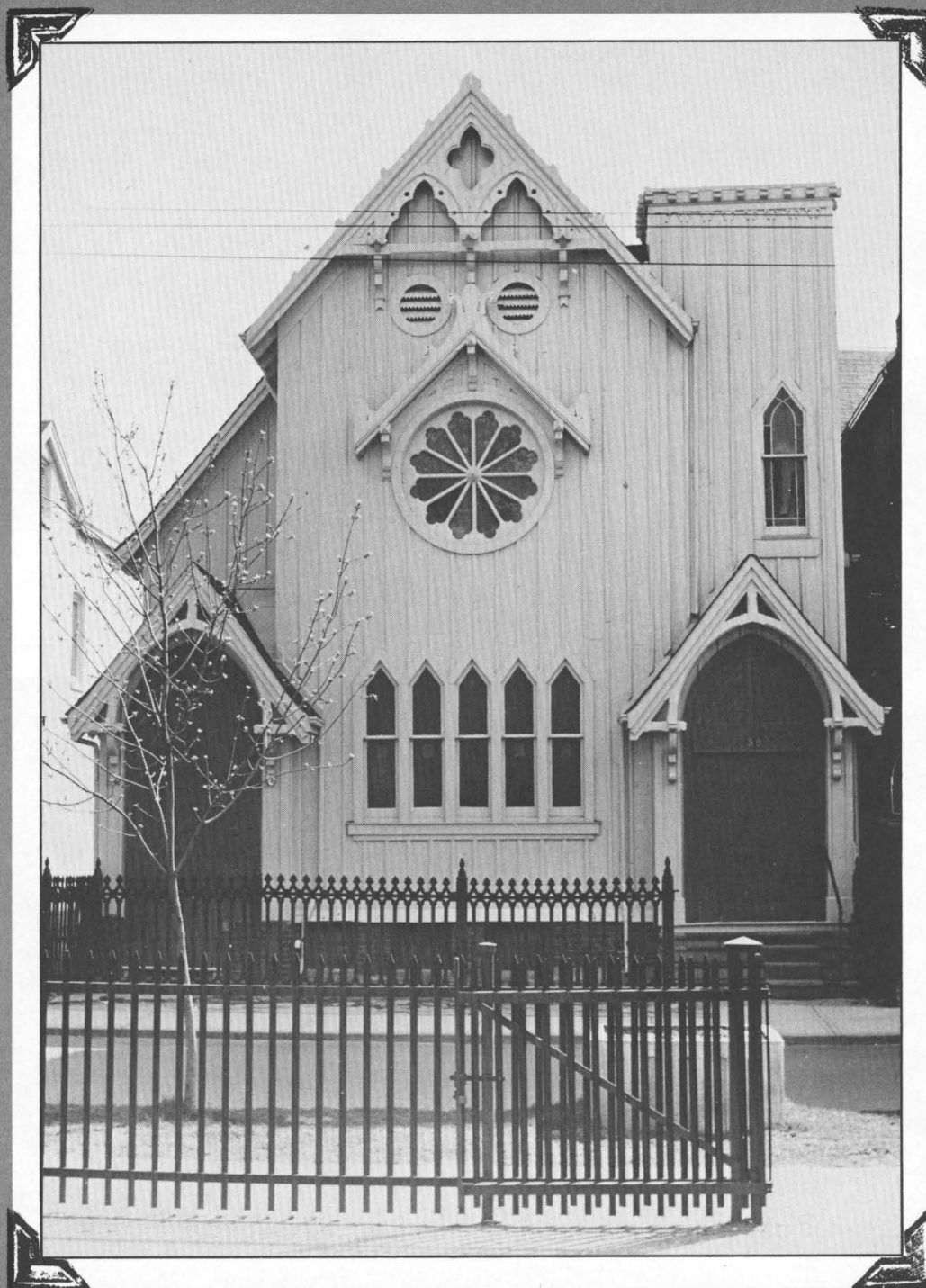
One writer speaks of the delight young boys took in the nineties in watching the horses at both the Fire Hall and the car barns.²⁰ At the sound of the fire alarm the doors were opened and the horses dashed from their stalls to a position in front of the reels. The harnesses were lowered from the ceiling, strapped around the horses and off they went to the fire.

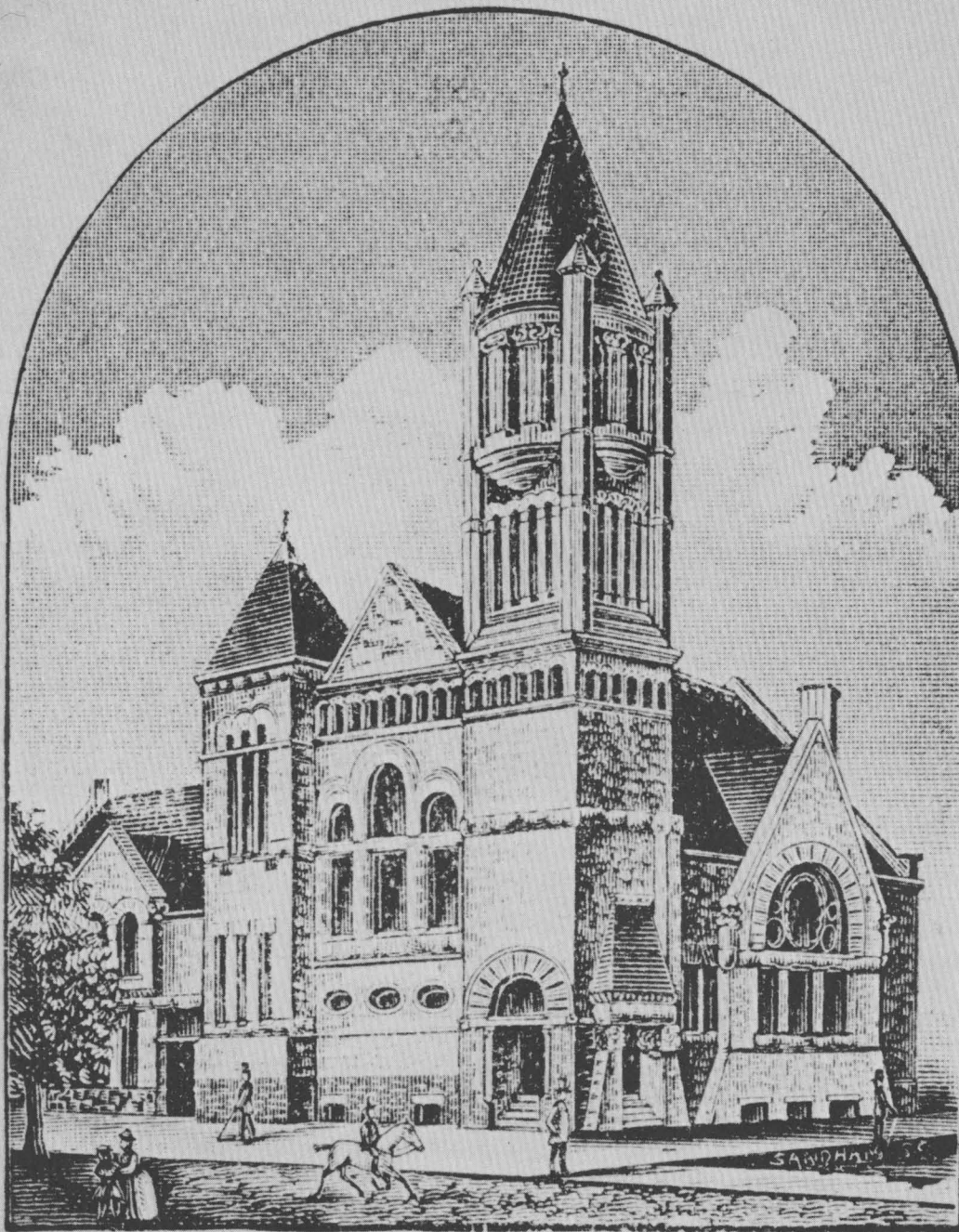
In 1974-5 the Fire Hall was completely restored and a new bay in a purposely different style was added. The bay was set back in order not to hide the intricate brick work of the chimney. The Yorkville coat of arms was positioned above the door in the tower to remind the passerby of the area's early history.

Heliconian Club (formerly the Olivet
Congregational Church)
35 Hazelton Avenue
Built 1876
Courtesy A. J. Horne

The Congregational Church established itself in Yorkville in 1868, taking over the frame structure which the Primitive Methodists had used on William Street (Yorkville Avenue). In 1875 they acquired property on the corner of Hazelton and Scollard and opened their "neat wooden structure" the next year. When the 1890 brick church was built to the south, this board and batten "parlour-church", complete with tower, rose window and pointed gothic arches, was meant to be demolished. A brick schoolhouse was planned for the site but fortunately was never built. Board and batten construction was once common enough for village and country churches but now in Toronto only St. Andrew's-on-the-Island and this beautiful example survive.

The frame church was used as a schoolhouse and for other purposes until 1923, when it was bought by the Toronto Heliconian Club. This club, named by Professor Goldwin Smith, was formed in 1909 through the efforts of Miss Mary Hewitt Smart (Mrs. J. N. Shenstone). She was a teacher of singing at the Toronto Conservatory of Music who felt that women engaged in painting, music and writing would benefit from meeting together. That the Heliconian Club is still an active organization today, is testimony to her idea.





Olivet Congregational Church

(now Hazelton House)

33 Hazelton Avenue

Built 1890

Architects: Norman Bethune Dick and

A. Frank Wickson

Courtesy United Church Archives

Messrs. Dick and Wickson designed the Congregationalists' new church in the current Romanesque revival style recalling the work of the recently deceased dean of American architects, H. H. Richardson, (City Hall, actually modelled on one of Richardson's buildings, had only recently been begun in the same vein). Olivet Church was of red brick relieved by Credit Valley and Ohio sandstone and measured eighty-two feet by eighty-five feet, with a ceiling about forty feet high. The tower on the south-west corner was to have risen ninety feet but was never completed. The interior was octagonal with the pulpit and organ chamber in the north-east angle. The floor was of concert pitch and the pews radiated around the pulpit — "every sitting being under the preacher's eye". Eight splendid gasoliers were hung from the ornately carved corners of the ceiling, shedding light into the large vaulted ceiling. Olivet Church was most imaginately renovated and put to commercial and office use in 1973.

Cottingham School

East of Cottingham Square, between Birch Avenue
and the C.P.R. tracks

Stood 1877-1955

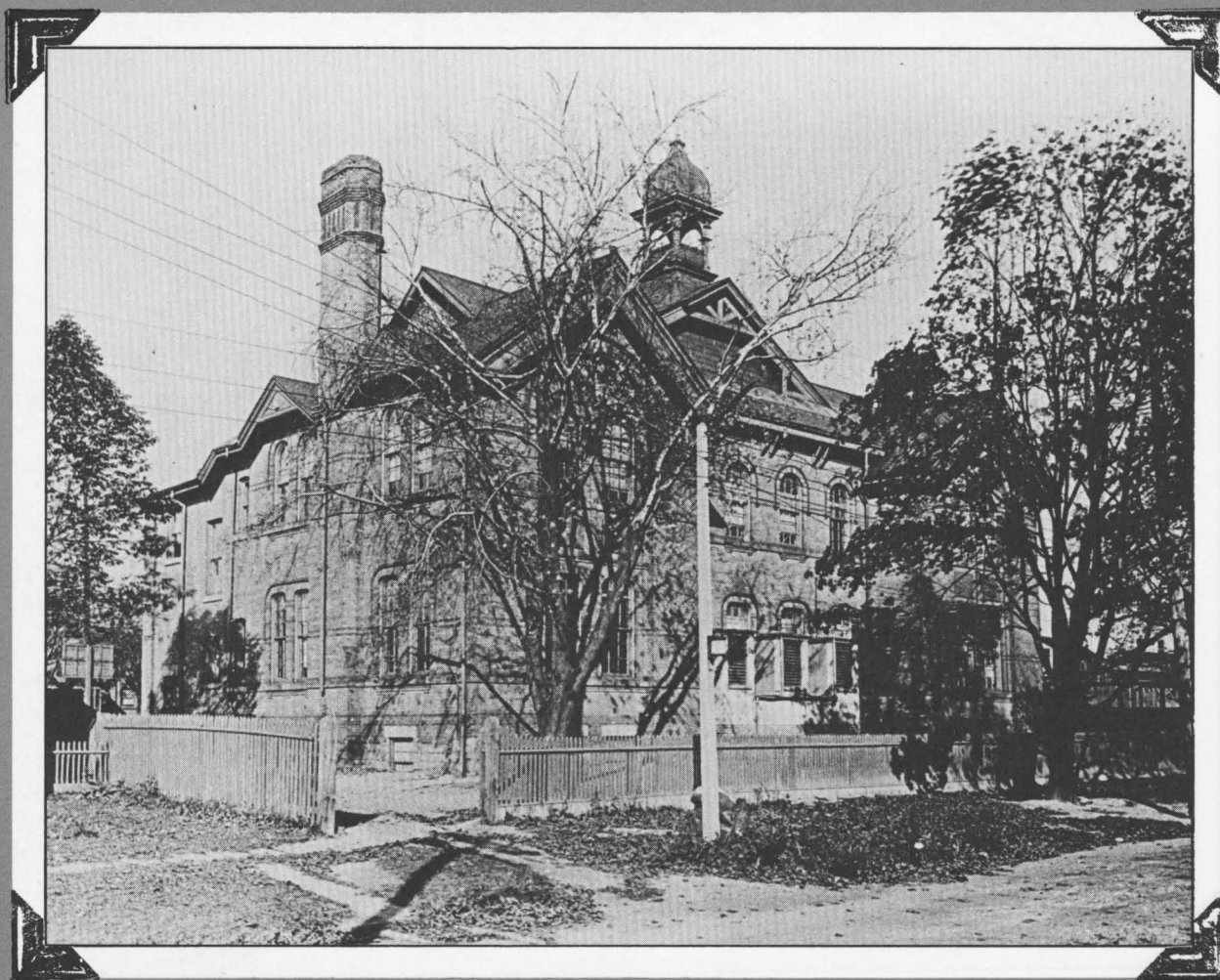
Architect: M. Willmot

Courtesy Historical Collection, Toronto Board of
Education

Before Cottingham School was built in 1877-8, the children from the northern part of Yorkville had either to walk down the Blue Hill, past the brickyards, the tannery and the blockhouse, to Jesse Ketchum School, or up the hill to Davisville Public School. A petition was presented to the Yorkville Council for a school and accordingly in April 1877 a majority of the electors approved a by-law for the issue of debenture to the amount of \$7280 for the site and the erection of the building. The architect was Mr. M. Willmot, presumably Mancel Willmot who rebuilt the Yorkville Fire Hall in 1889. Only the central portion of his plan appears to have been built and the school soon became so overcrowded that additions had to be made in 1888-9 and again in 1905. It stood until the summer of 1955 when the present school was opened at the west end of Cottingham Square.

The name Cottingham derived from the birthplace of Peter Hutty (1819-1882) who was born in the English village near Hull. The residence on the corner of Yonge and Cottingham where he lived for about twenty years after his marriage in 1838, was called "Cottingham" and the name was applied to the school, street and park. Hutty served on the Yorkville Council for thirteen years and advocated the building of the York Township Town Hall and Jesse Ketchum School. On the coat of arms the bull with the "H" below represents Hutty, who was a butcher. He had a large business at the St. Lawrence Market where he handled many government contracts. At one time he owned all the property on both sides of Cottingham and on Davenport Road west of Avenue Road.

The land for the park near the school was sold to the city by the executors of Senator John Macdonald in 1904. This wealthy merchant owned much land in the area, and "Oaklands", his magnificent Victorian home, built in 1860, still stands today on the crest of the Avenue Road hill.

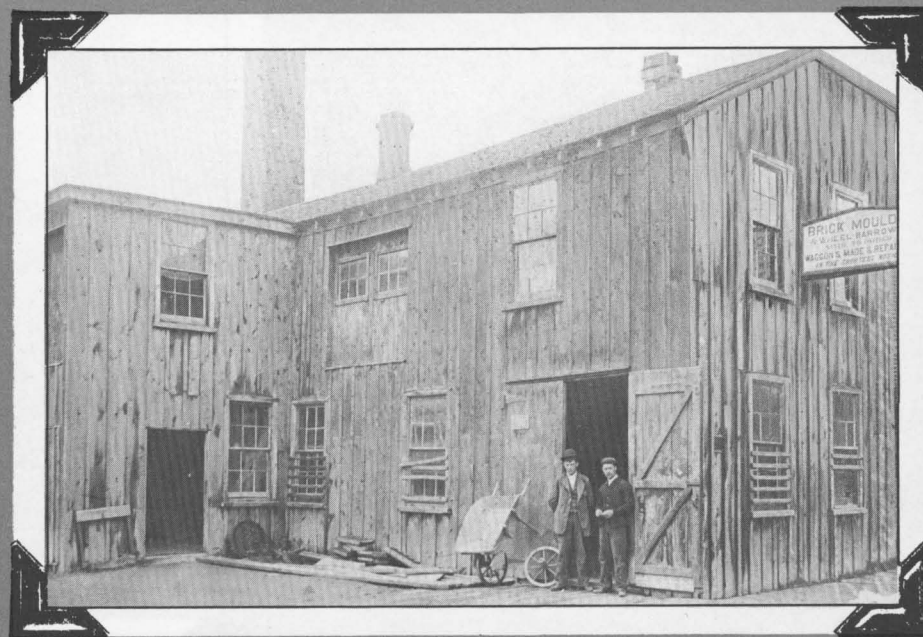
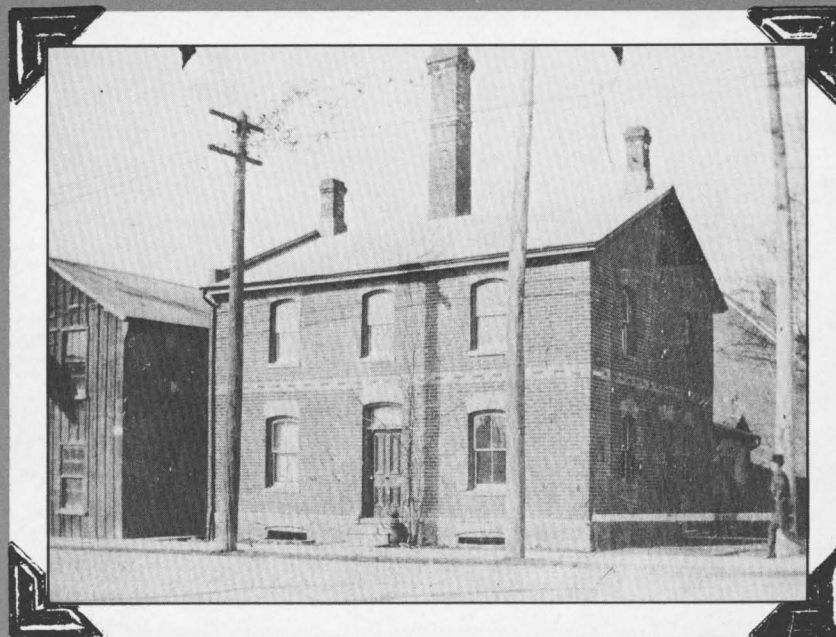


Walker Factory and Houses

Yonge Street, west side at Walker Avenue
Courtesy Mr. Norman Walker

The south side of Walker Avenue was the northern limit of Yorkville, the street being named after the Walker family who owned property and a factory there. Walter Walker, cooper, is listed as early as 1856 in a directory and it was he who first owned land on either side of Walker Avenue. John Walker (1840-1887), one of Walker's sons was a wheelright by trade and a manufacturer of brickmakers' supplies.

The sign on the old wooden factory, a straightforward piece of board and batten construction mentions brick moulds which would have had a ready market in the brickyards down the hill in the Tannery Hollow yards. Large wooden tanks were also manufactured and sold to store water in attics as a fire precaution. The factory stood until the 1920s. The simply patterned brick house is interesting in that it was built as two separate dwellings: one with an entrance on Yonge Street; the other on Walker. Interestingly, the end wall of the house nearest the (combustible) wooden building was carried beyond the eave as a fire-break, while the other end was finished conventionally as a gable. The house is still standing though much altered.



Church of the Redeemer, 189-?

North-east corner of Bloor Street and Avenue Road
Built 1879

Architects: Smith & Gemmell

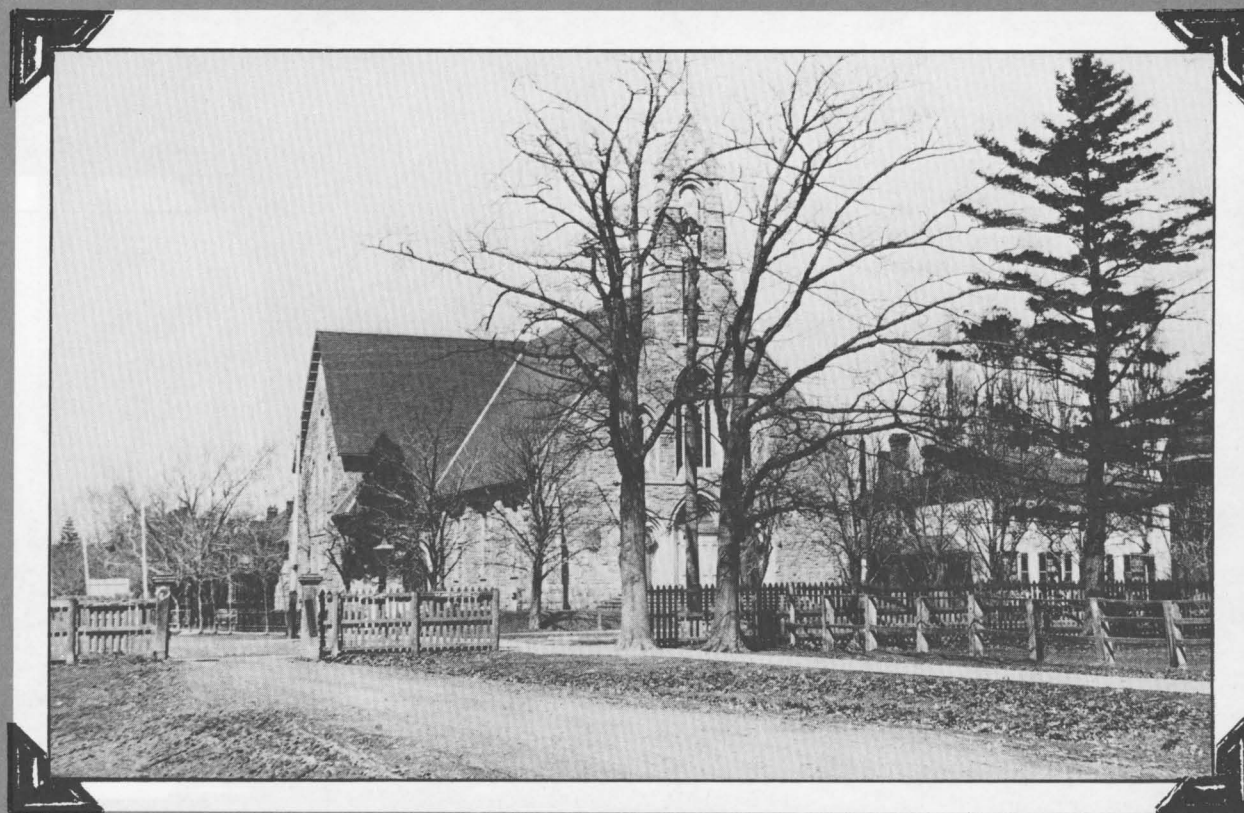
Courtesy Church of the Redeemer

When St. Paul's Bloor Street built its stone church in 1860, the old wooden structure, minus its steeple, was moved on rollers to a position in the Potter's Field on the north side of Bloor Street at the head of North (Bay) Street, where it became a Chapel-of-Ease and Sunday-school. It was known as Old St. Paul's but some wit suggested it be called St. Sepulchre. (St. Sepulchre is the name of an historic London church near St. Paul's Cathedral — one that recalls the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem — but obviously a pun on the burying ground was intended in Yorkville). In 1871 the people who attended this church formed a separate congregation with Canon Septimus Jones as their first rector. He had previously served at the Church of the Redeemer in Philadelphia and chose that name for his new parish which stretched west of Yonge Street. The 1842 wooden church was moved once again to the north-east corner of Bloor and Avenue Road where it was in use until the present structure opened in 1879.

The architects were Smith & Gemmell who also designed a number of other church buildings, including the former Knox College (1875) on Spadina Crescent and St. Paul's Avenue Road United Church (1887) on the south-east corner of Avenue Road and Webster Avenue. (The latter is another Yorkville landmark, noted for its art nouveau ceiling of 1890 by Gustav Hahn.) The exterior of the Church of the Redeemer is built of stone with the interior of coloured bands of brick — an important local example of High Victorian Gothic style.

A stone schoolhouse was built at the rear of the church in 1881; these "convenient parlours and classrooms" are in use today as church offices.

This picture of the church must predate 1901 when the Queen Alexandra Gates (now at the head of Philosopher's Walk behind the Royal Ontario Museum) were erected by the I.O.D.E. to commemorate the royal visit of that year.



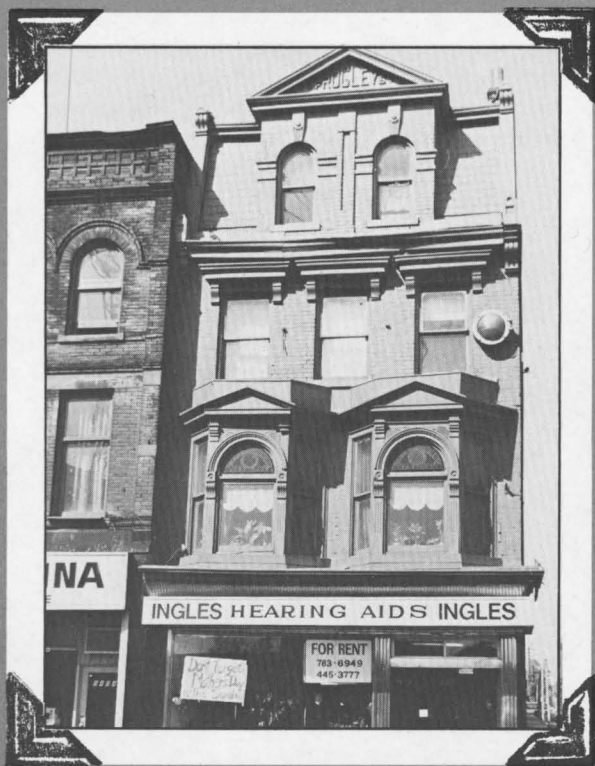
Frogley's Bakery

Built ca. 1885

South-west corner of Yonge Street and
Yorkville Avenue

Courtesy A. J. Horne

Charles J. Frogley learned the trade of baker in London, England before emigrating to Canada in 1872. In 1874 he and Thomas Frogley were operating at 497 Yonge Street and about five years later the business moved up the street to Yorkville to a location north of the Town Hall. By 1885 Charles was established in his own handsome building, with ovens in the basement, where he carried on both a retail and wholesale trade. Five men were employed at the shop, which also had rooms for ice cream and confectionery. Three wagons delivered the goods throughout the village and the horses were kept in stables at the rear of the store.



J. E. Varnell's Meat Market, 189-?

North-east corner of Davenport Road and
Hillsboro Avenue

Courtesy William C. H. Dowson

Here one can see two different kinds of carts used by the shopkeepers for delivery purposes: the high two-wheeled "York" cart (originating in Yorkshire) to get over stumps and ruts, and the four-wheeled spring wagon. Each morning the driver called on his customers and put the orders directly onto a counter check. The amounts were filled in by the clerk or butcher when making up the order and the deliveries made in the afternoon. Varnell's establishment was typical of the mixed commercial and residential buildings of the later nineteenth century — whether built in this fashion or altered to this form.





Dowson's Confectionery Store, ca. 1900

90 Davenport Road

Courtesy William C. H. Dowson

Walter James Dowson, the proprietor standing in the centre of the picture served his apprenticeship at Frogley's Bake Shop before opening his own premises at 90 Davenport Road. The great brick oven for this establishment was in the basement and was fired with coke from the Consumers' Gas Co. plant at the foot of Parliament Street. The experience of Mr. William Dowson's grandfather, Clifton Dowson is typical of many residents of Yorkville. He emigrated with his bride from Driffield, Yorkshire, in 1867 and settled on the north side of Berryman Street in Yorkville. Clifton was a bricklayer and along with Thomas Fussel, who practised the same trade, and Sam Young, a carpenter on Hazelton Avenue, he did many construction jobs in the growing community. Around 1871 Clifton built the large shop on Davenport Road (where his wife later opened the confectionery store), and an adjoining residence at number 92. He had two yards where he stored building materials: one on the south-west corner of Davenport Road and Bishop Street and another on the south side of Davenport between Hazelton Avenue and Avenue Road.

The smaller boy in this picture is Thomas William Dowson, father of the owner of the original photograph. Mr. William Dowson believes "that pictures should get around and converse about themselves as much as possible" and these certainly do.

Jesse Ketchum Market, ca. 1889
80 Davenport Road
Courtesy William C. H. Dowson



This market was a butcher's shop which sold fresh vegetables and fruit in season. Robert Rankin, the proprietor (with his elbow behind the horse's nose) began his business around 1876 and was well established by the 1880s.

Though the detailing of the shop fronts is interesting, the photo is particularly valuable for its record of "street furniture" and municipal improvements. The kind of wooden awning shown here, carried on fixed posts and with fretwork of very English character was once common in Ontario towns but only one example seems to survive in Toronto today (at Sackville and Amelia Streets). The gas lamp at the left of the picture may possibly date from 1853/4 when gas first came to Yorkville, while two men are leaning on the Royal Mail letter box which is affixed to the pine standard. The curbstone between the pine plank sidewalk and the macadam road is made of red Credit Valley sandstone. The macadam roads were surfaced with a mixture of gravel, sharp sand and stones. The iron rims on the wheels of the carriages and wagons were constantly wearing down the stones of the surface and these fine grindings and dust were sprinkled with water by a horse-drawn water cart to maintain the surface. About 1905 a thick, black oil replaced the water and a quite passable surface was achieved.



Row of Townhouses

Belmont Street, north side near Yonge

Built ca. 1890

Courtesy A. J. Horne

John Sheppard was a Yorkville brickmaker and Belmont Street was named after his birthplace in England. This attractive row of twelve townhouses was built by Sheppard and was one of the first in Toronto to be renovated as a whole (by the architect Joan Burt) in 1962-63. The houses were built at three different times — first, the four nearest Yonge Street, then the middle four, and finally the four furthest west — and possibly by different builders. Across the street the rough cast houses were known as Bugg's Row after their builder, Alderman John Bugg.



Bloor Street, 1897

North side, west of Yonge Street

Courtesy Metropolitan Toronto Library

Both Bloor and Avenue Road were stately residential streets with spacious lawns surrounded by iron fences stretching in front of substantial houses. Shade trees planted in the boulevards added to the attractiveness of these streets. Some of the houses on Bloor were still recognizable as recently as the late 1950s before the massive redevelopment of a decade and a half transformed the street. The gables of several houses may still be glimpsed above a few of the present-day store facades, while several gracious houses survive more or less intact on Avenue road.

Yorkville Branch, Toronto Public Library

22 Yorkville Avenue

Built 1907

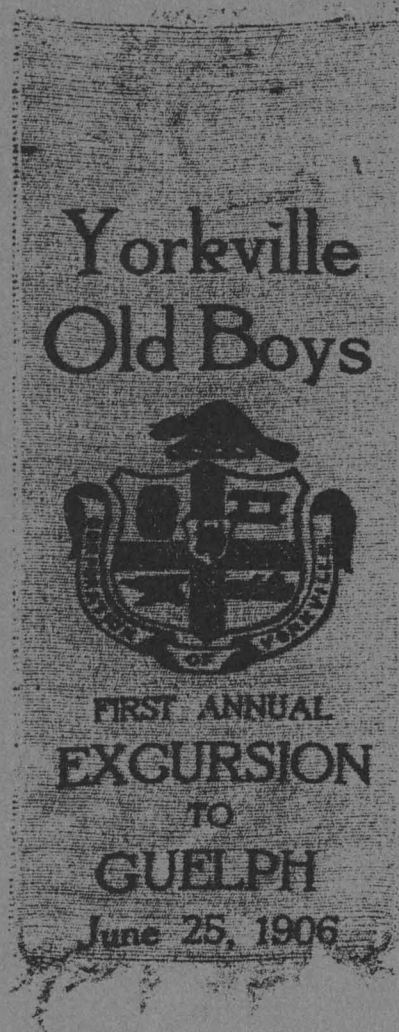
Architect: City Architect's Office

Courtesy Toronto Public Library (back cover)

In 1903 Andrew Carnegie, the American industrialist and philanthropist, offered \$350,000 to the City of Toronto for a new Reference Library and three branches. The City had to guarantee an annual income of \$35,000 for maintenance and provide suitable sites.

The Central Library did not open until 1909 but Yorkville was formally opened on 13 June 1907, "in the presence of a body of distinguished gentlemen, literary, legal and medical."²¹ (The other two Carnegie buildings were the former Queen and Lisgar Branch and Riverdale. The Annette Branch, another Carnegie endowment came to the Toronto Public Library when West Toronto was annexed by the City.)

The Northern Branch of the Toronto Public Library had been functioning in St. Paul's Hall since 1884 — the first year of free public library service in Toronto. Its stock was moved to the new building which was built according to the standard Carnegie Library plan in the United States, modified according to place and materials. A flight of broad steps led to the doorway between paired columns supporting a pediment. The building was constructed of Ohio stone and finished throughout with massive quarter-cut oak. This distinctive branch is being renovated and expanded during 1978.



Lapel ribbon
Courtesy Elizabeth A. Willmot

For further information:

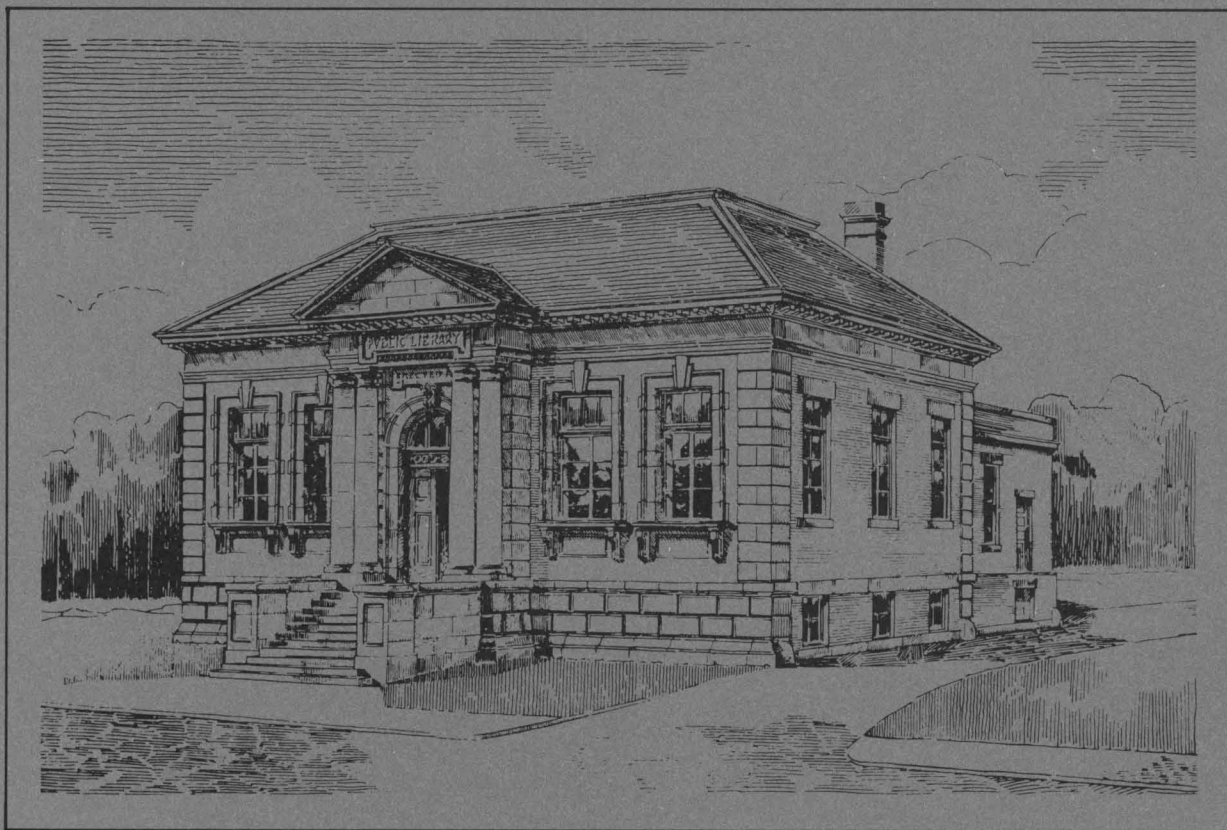
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- Robertson, John Ross. *Robertson's Landmarks of Toronto*. 6 vols. Toronto: J. Ross Robertson, 1894-1914. (Selections from the *Landmarks* appear in *Old Toronto*, edited by E. C. Kyte. Toronto: Macmillan, 1954.)
- Scadding, Henry. *Toronto of Old*. Toronto: Adam, Stevenson, 1873. (Abridged edition edited by F. H. Armstrong. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1966.)
- Sloane and Purves' Directory of the Village of Yorkville*. Toronto: Sloane and Purves, 1876.

In addition there is "Yorkville in Bibliography; the Early History of Yorkville, the Hippias in Yorkville", compiled by Stephanie Hutcheson for the Faculty of Library Science, University of Toronto, 1972. This is available at a number of libraries in Toronto, including the Metropolitan Toronto Library and the Yorkville Public Library, Toronto Public Libraries.

Copies of this booklet and *North Toronto in Pictures 1889-1912* (Local History Handbooks — Number 1) are available from the Business Office, Toronto Public Libraries, 40 Orchard View Blvd., Toronto M4R 1B9

Footnotes

- 1 *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894, I, 90.
- 2 *Yorkville Minutes*, Meetings of February 3, April 22, May 10, 1853, City of Toronto Municipal Archives.
- 3 "Yorkville Brass Band," n.d., broadside, Metropolitan Toronto Library.
- 4 *Census of Canada*, 1880-1881, p.72.
- 5 *Sloane and Purves' Directory of The Village of Yorkville* (Toronto: Sloane & Purves, 1876), p.14.
- 6 *Census of Canada*, 1870-1871, p.350.
- 7 Stephen Speisman, "The Development of the Annex to the mid-1920's" (typescript at Metropolitan Toronto Library), p.13.
- 8 *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894, I, 92.
- 9 *Ibid.*, I, 23.
- 10 Henry Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, ed. by F.H. Armstrong (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1966), p.301.
- 11 Thomas Glegg, Notebook and Sketchbook, 1841-2, Public Archives of Ontario.
- 12 *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1908, V, 361.
- 13 Eric Arthur, *Toronto No Mean City* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), p.146.
- 14 *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1904, IV, 15.
- 15 *Yorkville Minutes*, Meeting of September 12, 1859, City of Toronto Municipal Archives.
- 16 Henry Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, ed. by F.H. Armstrong (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1966), p.299.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 307.
- 18 *Yorkville Minutes*, Meeting of January 27, 1868, City of Toronto Municipal Archives.
- 19 Louis H. Pursley, *Street Railways of Toronto 1861-1921* (Los Angeles, Interurbans, 1958), p.13.
- 20 N. A. Keys, "Yorkville in the Nineties," *The York Pioneer and Historical Society*, 1964, 43.
- 21 "Northern Library Building," *Mail & Empire*, June 14, 1907.



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