



Celebrating 200 Years in Georgina 1818 - 2018

GEORGINA

Petition for Land

In 1817, with the Naval Disarmament of the Great Lakes, Commander William Bouchier of the Royal Navy, who had been commander at the Naval Establishment at Lake Huron, was set to retire on half-pay, now that Britain's wars were over with Napoleon, and the United States.

The waterways Bouchier had been in command of, included Lake Simcoe to the mouth of the Holland River. It is possible, that Bouchier was familiar with these lands, and may even have seen them during his time in Upper Canada during the war.

Knowing that he was eligible for a free grant of land, he petitioned the government. Bouchier's petition was not successful, he did not have the necessary accompanying documents such as a certificate stating that he had sworn the various oaths required by law. His petition was not even read in council. Rather than go to York and swear the oaths of Allegiance - he travelled to London and acquired special permission from Lord Sherbrooke (the Governor-in-Chief of British North America) to enter Upper Canada as a settler and receive a grant of land *proportioned to his Rank in His Majesty's Service*. Meanwhile, in November 1817, Duncan MacDonell was ordered by Thomas Ridout to survey what was being referred to as the "township back of Scott", referencing Scott Township. The survey required for settlement was completed in January and the Lieutenant Governor's secretary was notified by the Surveyor General on February 6.

When Bouchier returned to Upper Canada, armed with support from London, his petition was successful. This is that petition....

*To His Excellency
Francis Gore Esquire,
Lieutenant Governor*

*Of the Province of Upper Canada
In Council*

The Memorial of William Bouchier Esquire Commander and Commanding the Royal Navy on Lake Huron;

Most Respectfully Sheweth, that your Memorialist served on Lake Ontario during the late War and afterwards in Command on Lake Erie; that your Memorialist being removed to the Command on Lake Huron where there are no settlers, that your Excellency will be pleased to order him a grant of a portion of the waste lands of the Crown, and your Memorialist as in duty bound will ever pray.

Notawasaga River

March 2nd 1817

W. Bouchier, Commander