

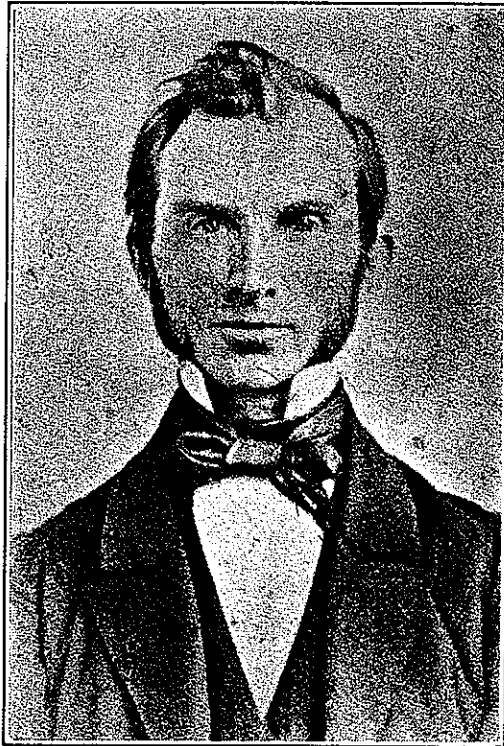
## WILLIAM WALLBRIDGE

The name Wallbridge is an outstanding one in Canadian history. Amid the peaceful hamlets of old Devonshire, and bound by the chalk cliffs of the Channel, the forbear of the Wallbridges lived the life of an English country gentleman until aroused by the dictates of conscience or imbued by the fever of war, he became engulfed in the unhappy issues of Monmouth's rebellion and, like his princely leader, had to fly the country.

The colonies of America were at that time the natural harbour of safety for such a refugee; and it was there that Henry Wallbridge and his wife, Anna Amos, sought their new home, secure in the friendly sympathies of their Connecticut neighbors, and encouraged for their future by an abundant promise of prosperity.

In their family was a son, William H., who was born in 1690, and in 1713 married Abigail Lawrence. An issue of this marriage was Zebulon Wallbridge, who was born in 1718. Zebulon married Sarah Fobes, and was the father of Asa and Elijah Wallbridge, the Canadian pioneers.

Previous to the Revolutionary War, Zebulon Wallbridge lived with his family near Saratoga, N.Y.; but seemingly his son Elijah migrated into Vermont, which was of a later settlement, for he has been described as a United Empire Loyalist from Bennington. It is difficult to determine what part the Wallbridges took in the war. But whatever parts they played, there were members of the family on both sides; for the war was the cause of dissension among them.



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Elijah attacked a military prison and succeeded in liberating a number of imprisoned fellow sympathizers. The guardianship of his old musket, which was carefully retained in the possession of the family, passed into the keeping of the Hon. Lewis Wallbridge.

At the conclusion of the war, for reasons which, if not possible to state definitely, can easily be inferred, Asa Wallbridge left the States. An ardent sportsman and innured to hardships, he was not to be awed by the uncertainties of pioneering. Migrating to New Brunswick, he settled on the Jim Sack River, where, at what is now known as Wallbridge's Creek, he worked a farm and ran a saw mill until, in 1790, he moved westward.

The shores of the Bay of Quinte in those days were rich preserves for the sportsman. Marvellous accounts of the game to be shot and the fish to be caught, were told in Lower Canada, and as is the way, were magnified in telling. Such a prospect appealed to the sporting instincts of Asa Wallbridge, and induced him, with four friends, to come to Upper Canada, intent on hunting and fishing.

The hunters made their headquarters at Singleton's Creek, which was the mouth of the Moira River; and in all the districts round about, shot and fished and trapped to their hearts' content. Their prospect of the country quickly led them to perceive its great value; and with the intention of buying a large area, and in order to subscribe the purchase money, the five men joined in partnership. Asa Wallbridge returned to the States to procure the money from his brother Elijah; but, as some accounts narrate, he was arrested as a spy.

Elijah Wallbridge, who was accompanied by his son, William H., first came to Canada in 1800, and, two years later, bought from a surveyor named Smith two thousand acres of land in Ameliasburg township. The land stretched westward from the Anderson place, including Long Point, and extended from the Bay front to the marsh in the rear. Elijah divided it up into five farms of about three hundred acres each, one of which he gave to each of his children, who were all, with the exception of one daughter, comfortably settled there by the year 1812. A further lot of five hundred acres he reserved for a common pasturage, as was the custom in the American Colonies. These farms were the first proper homes of the

Wallbridges in Upper Canada. They are for the most part still possessed by descendants of Wallbridges, and the district is called the Wallbridge tract.

Asa eventually returned to Canada. He never married, but lived on Massassaga Point where, on the farm of his nephew, William H. Wallbridge, he died in 1827. He is said to have built the first house in Belleville. It was a log structure, such as he could live in and store his furs in, and stood on the vacant lot on the corner of Front and Dundas Streets, north of Clark's blacksmith shop. The home, with some additions, was afterwards used as a hotel by a man named Simpson.

Possessed of considerable means before coming to Canada, and being men of high mental calibre, and sound business insight, the Wallbridges have always been prominent and prosperous. From their first incoming they were noted for their sporting prowess and daring feats, for their wealth and for their lands, for their ability and enterprise. Elijah Wallbridge, who married Margaret Halloway, with his family, made a short settlement at Myer's Creek and was one of the principal citizens to petition Governor Gore to give a name of greater distinction to the growing village. It was in response to their petition that the Governor conveyed the name of Belleville, in honor of his wife, Lady Bella Gore.

The Hon. Lewis Wallbridge was a distinguished member of the family and citizen of the colony. Born in 1816, the year Belleville was surveyed into lots. Educated in Montreal and Upper Canada College, he choose Law as a profession, was in 1855 elected member of Law Society of Upper Canada. Quickly coming to be regarded as one of the most brilliant lawyers of Central Ontario, and in 1863 received his patent as Solicitor General of Upper Canada. A few months later in the same year, he was elected speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and was the first Speaker when Parliament first met in the new Parliament Buildings at Ottawa, presiding over the debates on the Confederation of the Provinces, and many other distinctions, among them, in 1882, had the honour to be appointed Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench for Manitoba, adding lustre to all.

Francis S. Wallbridge, a great-grandson of the pioneer, Elijah, distinguished himself in the legal profession in Belleville. Many other Wallbridges have lent lustre to prominent positions.

The pioneer, Elijah Wallbridge, died at Trenton in 1842, and was buried in the St. Thomas churchyard, Belleville. His wife, Margaret Halloway, died at Milton, Saratoga County, N.Y., in 1792.

Six children were born to this couple, the third being Asa Wallbridge, who married Hannah Every, and settled in Clark Township. Five children were born to them. Asa died in 1860, aged seventy-eight years. Hannah died in 1863, aged seventy-three years.

The fifth child of Asa and Hannah, was William Wallbridge, who was born the thirtieth of July, 1825. He became a Land Surveyor on the 8th January, 1853, and died on February 3rd, in 1863, and remained unmarried, under sad circumstances.

He had a very quick temper, was very self-willed, and insisted on calling on a young lady who had black-throat scarlet fever. He paid dearly for the visit, as he contracted the disease and died himself, according to Rev. Robert Wallbridge Allen, Rector of Brampton, Ont., who calls William his great uncle.

Miss Sarah Thompson, of Newcastle, is a niece, residing on the Wallbridge homestead, and has the surveying instruments of William, consisting of theodolite, sextant and a powerful field glass. All in good condition.

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