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Canada. However, the public park as a concept was generally accepted earlier in Canada than in many American cities. It seems the British influence continued to play a stronger role in the Canadian colony than in the independent United States of America, despite the much greater population of the States and its much larger and more congested cities. However, America was not blessed with the great urban open spaces of European nobility nor the grand rural estates of the landed gentry. "American cities are, by comparison, park poor since few such large, centrally located private estates ever existed."<sup>10</sup>

## NOTES

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1. Paul Zucker, **Town and Square**, Columbia University Press, New York, 1959, p. 238.
  2. *Ibid.*, p. 242.
  3. *Ibid.*
  4. Norman T. Newton, **Design on the Land**, Belknap Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971, p. 268.
  5. Michael Hugo-Brunt, **The History of City Planning**, Harvest House, Montreal, 1972, p. 184.
  6. George F. Chadwick, **The Park and the Town**, Architectural Press, London, England, 1966, p. 163.
  7. R.J. Favretti and J.P. Favretti, **Landscape Gardens for Historic Buildings**, American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, Kentucky, 1978, p. 84.
  8. F.L. Olmsted Jr. and T. Kimball, **Forty Years of Landscape Architecture: Central Park**, p. 22.
  9. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
  10. Jere Stuart French, **Urban Green**, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, Dubuque, Iowa, 1973, p. 7.

# 6. ONTARIO'S FIRST PUBLIC PARKS

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The earliest “public” garden in Canada is linked to the settlement of St. John’s, Newfoundland, the first overseas colonial government of Britain. A small tract of land called The Garden at the west end of the harbour was used as a public space by 1583. It was full of wild roses, strawberries and other fruits, and could be reached by a path that is now Water Street. This garden would be considered an overgrown vacant lot by today’s standards, but in the early settlement days such a public open space was unique.<sup>1</sup> Later settlements in the Atlantic provinces boasted their own commons and gardens. The Halifax Common was dedicated to the town’s trustees by Provincial Act in 1763.<sup>2</sup> French Canadian villages of the same period usually had a market square and always a church plaza, although these were clearly more utilitarian than recreational.<sup>3</sup>

In 1837, the Nova Scotia Horticultural Society obtained land from the City of Halifax on Spring Garden Road and established a “garden” for the production, sale and viewing of plant materials. While the Society hoped to establish a “public” garden, “the public-at-large could come in free only one day each week,”<sup>4</sup> since the Society were a group of private shareholders and subscribers who were permitted free admission to the grounds. It was not until 1861 that the site was opened to the public with no charge and renamed the Public Gardens. The Garden was eventually sold to the city in 1874 because of financial difficulties, and maintained as a public park.<sup>5</sup>

There are several contenders for the distinction of Ontario’s first public park, devoted specifically to recreation, among them Niagara-on-the-Lake, Toronto, Kingston and Hamilton. Establishing the place and time of the first public park may not in itself be of great significance, but it

Parks are better preachers of temperance than any temperance societies, better refiners of national manners than any dancing schools, and better promoters of general good feeling than any lectures on the philosophy of happiness ever delivered in the lecture room.

Andrew Jackson Downing (1850)

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does provide a benchmark in the evolution of public open space from utilitarian purposes to social benefits, and reveals the shift in values towards a concern for the health and well-being of the general public and the needs of all citizens of the community.



*Fig. 6.1 Bandshell in Halifax Gardens — typical of the Victorian parks of the period 1860-1900.*

### Niagara-on-the Lake

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One of the earliest town sites in Upper Canada to be designated as a park was a four-acre parcel of land in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, shown on an 1844 map drawn up by the Royal Engineers.<sup>6</sup> This site was originally reserved as a militia hospital lot, but on the removal of the Royal Engineers in the late 1840s, the park was turned over to the town under an agreement “that it was not to be sold or built upon except as required for park purposes only.”<sup>7</sup> Early records show the municipality first expended funds for fencing and other improvements in 1855. However, no document appears to exist to register this transfer; “at any rate, the Town has been unable to find any trace of one.”<sup>8</sup> However, there exist certain entries in Town records strongly supporting the contention that this land was turned over to the Town in the mid 1850s.<sup>9</sup> The legal transfer was not finalized until 1935.

One of the few references to the site in the minutes of the town council in 1856 records a motion authorizing the receipt of tenders from parties willing to rent it for one crop, again suggesting that this “park” was more utilitarian than recreational, unlike the public parks in Kingston, Hamilton and Toronto that were being established in the same period.<sup>10</sup> To further complicate the question of ownership and use of the land by the citizens as a public park, the lot was leased to the town by the militia for 21 years from April 7, 1917 to April 1939.<sup>11</sup> One can only conclude that despite the question of legal ownership, the land functioned as a public park since funds were first expended by the town council towards its upkeep in 1855. The records clearly show improvements to the site through “tree planting, grass and work in 1871 and every year to the present time (1913).”<sup>12</sup> The park had come under the control of a committee of Council known as the Park and Shade Tree Committee since 1833.

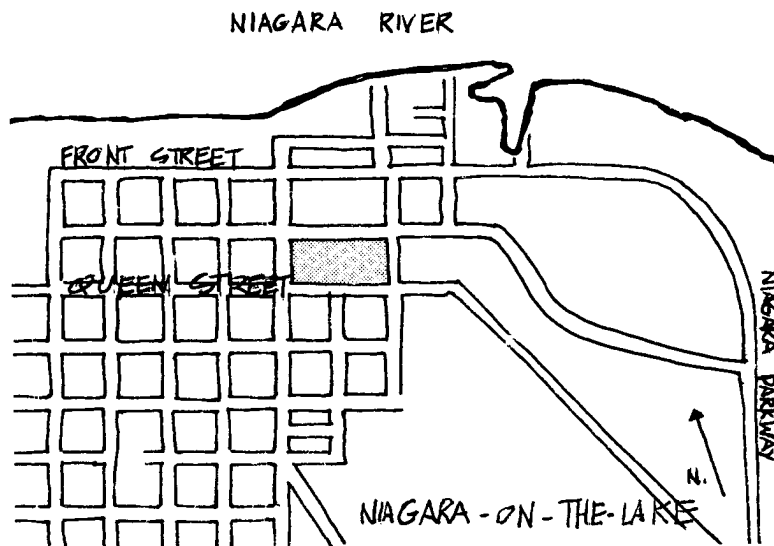


Fig. 6.2 Early "Town Park" site (1840s) in Niagara-on-the-Lake, in same location today.

This four-acre site exists today as a public park bounded by Byron, Picton and Wellington Streets.

While Kingston replaced Toronto as the capital of Upper Canada in 1841, there was a feeling that Toronto had "an inevitable metropolitan future."<sup>13</sup> The courts remained in Toronto as did the Anglican and Catholic bishops, the Law Society, the Bank of Upper Canada, Upper Canada College and King's College, amongst other institutions. Toronto's "early social, economic and political elite were either government officials or became government officers or received government patronage."<sup>14</sup>

**Toronto**

The British tradition of a landed gentry was carried over in the new settlement, as “the safeguard of good order and good manners.”<sup>15</sup> In effect, the image of high society was sustained through a system of patronage. The system included so-called park lots, plots of land of 100 acres that were surveyed after the Simcoe plan and were made available for the building of suburban villas at the outskirts of the young capital. These

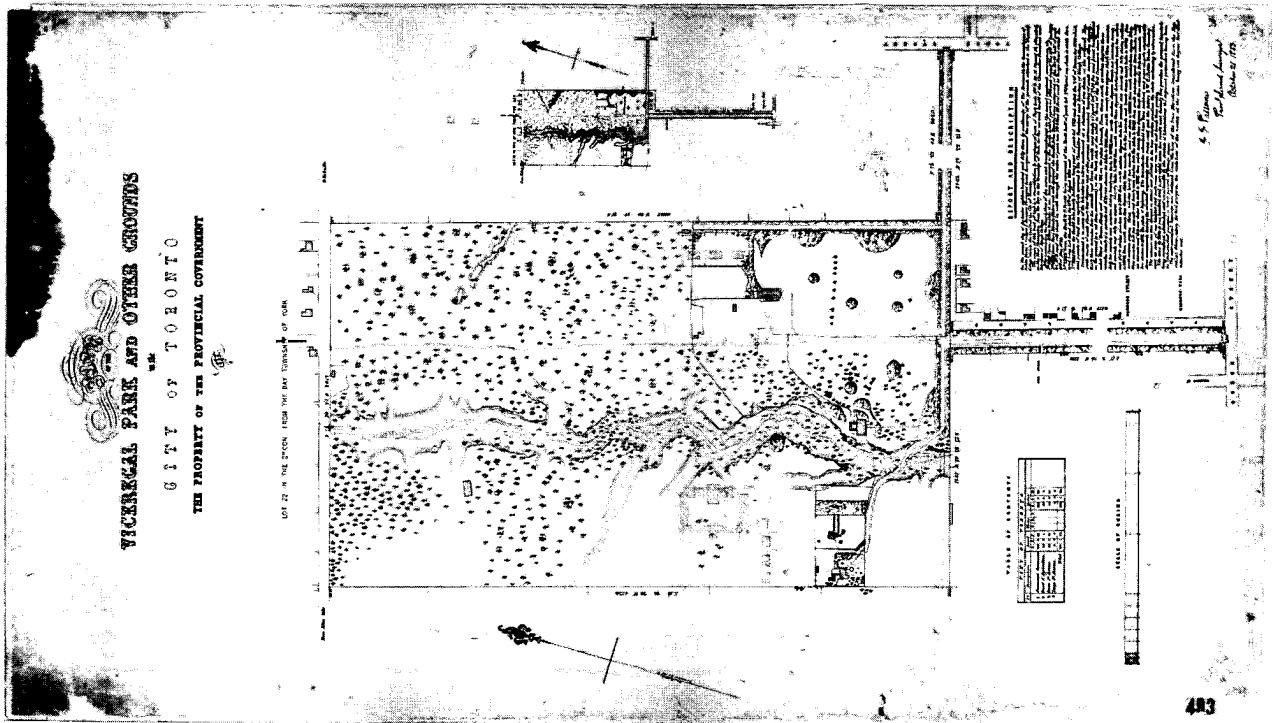


Fig. 6.3 Viceregal Park, Toronto 1854.

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lands are not to be confused with a large tract of several hundreds of acres in a natural state, including massive pine trees on its northern portion, located westward along present day Queen Street and running to the north and known as the Viceregal Park, and originally intended as the future site of government buildings.<sup>16</sup> However, the site was never used for this purpose and was sold for private use. By the 1830s, there were several public squares including McDonell and Victoria squares.

The idea of the Toronto waterfront being dedicated for public use as a promenade or walk arose very early in Toronto's history. An editorial in the Upper Canada **Gazette** in 1826 stated that

*We would take the opportunity of suggesting that a Public Walk, somewhere in the front of the town, on the Bank, would be a very desirable object. We are aware, however, that the necessary funds, when so much is doing on the streets, could not, perhaps, be well spaced for such a thing, but the comfort and convenience of it, we think, would be so highly appreciated that few would refuse to contribute their aid towards carrying it into effect.*<sup>17</sup>

No action was taken at this time but about a decade later public pressure for recreational open space in Toronto came from a group of citizens. A controversy arose over the future of the Lake Ontario waterfront, as to whether the military holdings should be subdivided for commercial-residential use or retained as a public park. This land was bounded by Front, Niagara, Queen and Peter Streets, and bisected by Bathurst Street. Such a controversy arose over the early recognition of the waterfront as a potential promenade. At that time Front St. was located at the water's edge on a bank just above



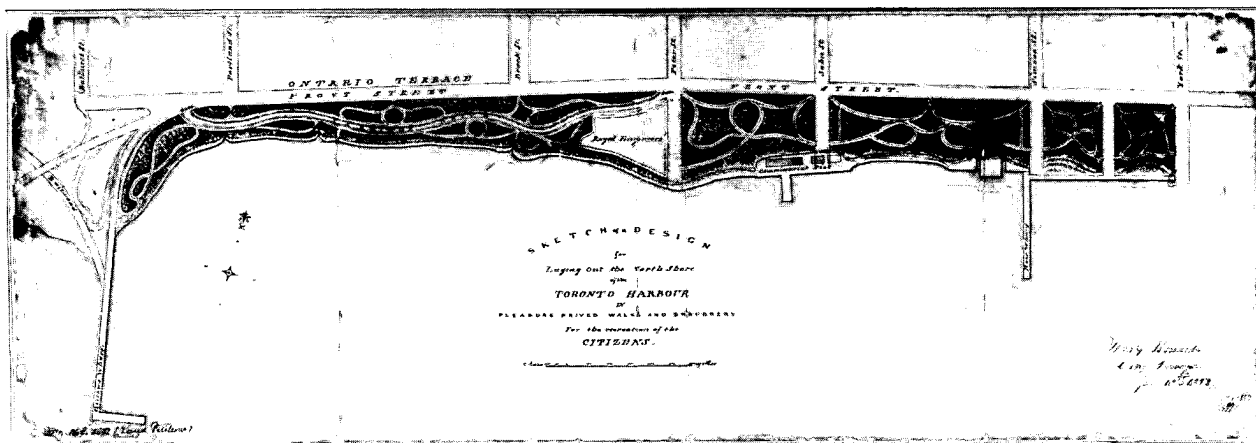


Fig. 6.4 Sketch & design for the proposed esplanade as a pleasure drive and walkway — Toronto waterfront 1852.

the beach. Front St. was one chain wide (66') as was the practice of the day. A number of enlightened citizens could see the value of this frontage as a future broad esplanade to be formed by filling in the water frontage along Front St. However, as these were Crown lands, authority for such development, let alone any type of structure such as a wharf, was not forthcoming.

In 1840, the waterfront lots were transferred to the City from the Crown, opening the door to the possibility of an esplanade, with walks and gardens as shown on fig. 6.4, a proposed site design for public walkways.

Unfortunately, "public anxiety for the new means of transportation (railroads) was given rights over the esplanade."<sup>18</sup> By the early 1850s a network of on-grade tracks

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was built, virtually eliminating the possibility of an esplanade or park in this period. In fact, such public space was not designated on this site for almost 125 years with the acquisition of waterfront land by the federal government in 1972 as a national park. This parcel of land was incorporated into a larger complex known as Harbourfront, which includes a mixture of public and private development for commercial and residential use, along with public open space.

The esplanade concept in Toronto in the 1840s had a direct relationship to the public walk legislation in Britain in the previous decade, which was considered the best means to promote the well-being and health of citizens. As a follow-up to the idea of an esplanade, a Committee on Public Walks and Gardens was set up by the City Council in 1851. In 1860 all the city's public squares and parks were turned over to this committee, with the condition that no games were to be played on these sites without permission.

Negotiations to convert the large military holdings on the western edge of the city to public park grounds began in 1847, and in 1848, the 287-acre Garrison Reserve was leased to the municipal authorities on the condition that the city have "the land plowed, sowed with grass, enclosed with a fence, planted with trees, and laid out in pleasure grounds and an ornamental park" for the recreational needs of the general public.<sup>19</sup> The Reserve was located on the land where Old Fort York is located (see fig. 6.5). There is little evidence in the early records of the degree to which the terms of the lease were carried out, and the park appears to have lived a short life. The usurping of the waterfront lands and the development of the frontage for commerce, wharves, and the railroad "destroyed old patterns and altered dramatically the social valuation of this part of the city. The residual prestige still attached to this

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district in 1860 was to be short lived. The death of the waterfront as an amenity was part of the gradual reorientation of the city away from the lake.<sup>20</sup> The waterfront was destroyed by the railways and their attendant industry.<sup>21</sup> By 1870, the only remaining parts of the formerly prestigious waterfront were the Parliament Buildings on Front Street, the Bishop's Palace and Upper Canada College.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, the death blow was served to Upper Canada's first public park within a decade of its birth. The present Exhibition Park, the site of the Canadian National Exhibition, came to the city in a series of Crown grants in the period between 1848 and 1920. These lands were referred to as the Garrison Common and Exhibition Grounds until 1909 when the Commons and Fort York were sold to the city.

Several additional open spaces were dedicated as public parks in this same period. Ketchum Park (about two acres) was donated to the Village of Yorkville in 1856. Riverdale Park was originally part of the jail farm and was purchased by the city in 1856. The Riverdale Zoo was established on this site, which with further land purchases in 1883 covered over 108 acres.<sup>23</sup> Additional Crown military reserves along the waterfront were granted to the City for park purposes in 1858, and were known as Stanley Park. This site was converted to wartime housing in 1944, leaving only seven acres of the original 22 acres. On January 1, 1859, the University of Toronto granted a lease to the City of Toronto for 999 years on a piece of land known as Queen's Park with the understanding that this property was to be maintained as a public park.<sup>24</sup> The university retained the right to develop a botanical garden to be open to the public and maintained by the university. In 1894, the provincial legislature was constructed on this site.

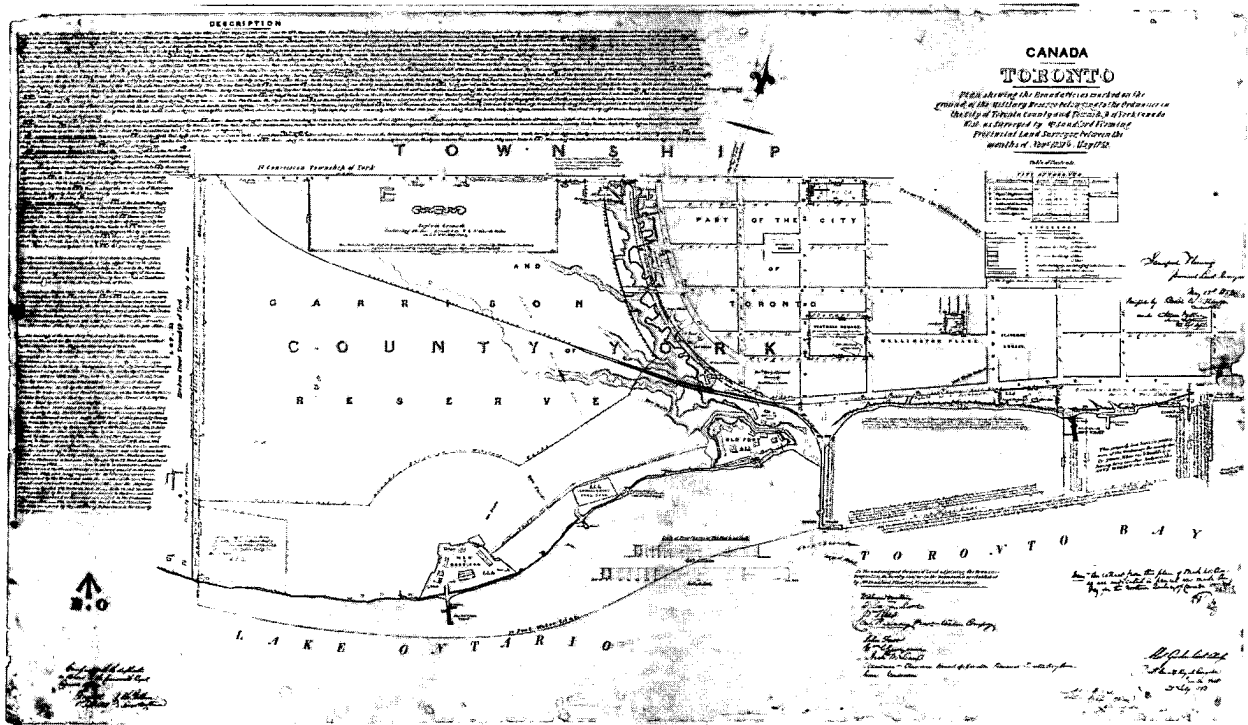


Fig. 6.5 The Garrison Reserve, Toronto 1852.

One of Ontario's earliest public parks, perhaps the earliest in Canada, was established at Kingston in the mid-1800s. Why and how this public park was conceived sheds light on some of the underlying factors leading to the public park movement in Ontario and in Canada.

**Kingston**

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As was discussed in chapter 3, Kingston was originally established as a military garrison and by the early 1840s had a population of almost 10,000. While the town remained primarily a military base, there was a well established business and professional group in the town, and while Kingston was beginning to lag behind York and Hamilton in economic activity, it did not lag behind in its pretensions to an elite social climate.

Between 1838 and 1860, “there occurred an exodus of merchants and professionals and their families, from residences in the original city core to spacious country villas, or to town houses surrounded by extensive grounds.”<sup>25</sup> More than 40 country residences were established in this period with the owners moving from their original residences in town.<sup>26</sup> This movement seemed to be an attempt by the wealthier people of Kingston to “emulate the trappings of a gentry class,”<sup>27</sup> by establishing a “country seat” similar to those of their English counterparts. They claimed a right to a higher social status, by proving their ability to afford the life of ladies and gentlemen of leisure. The villa movement was not a result of high density conditions, as the new country houses were built to the west of the old town (now the area adjacent to Queen’s University) where taxes were low. But this advantage was offset by travel distance to work and lack of services. The villa development flew in the face of economic stagnation, and “testifies to the strength with which the (traditional) conservative values were held.”<sup>28</sup> It is also remarkable that Kingston’s business community was relatively small and did not have the strong economic base of other cities in the province. Furthermore it occurred in a time of great political turmoil, with the Rebellion of 1837, Lord Durham’s Report, the Union of the Canadas and Lord Sydenham’s extraordinary administrative reforms.<sup>29</sup> All

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this in a period in which pigs were running loose in the streets and cows were maintained by many centretown dwellers!

It was during the same period (the late 1830s) that Lord Sydenham assembled on secret orders the land known as the Artillery Parade Ground, now known as City or Macdonald Park, for the purpose of locating Parliament at Kingston. Charles Poulett Thompson (Lord Sydenham) was an extremely capable English businessman and politician who had been appointed Governor General of the British North American colonies in 1839. In Canada he became, in effect, his own prime minister. He was "greatly assisted by a large imperial loan which permitted him to sponsor a fresh round of public works."<sup>30</sup> It was from this source of funds that the land for the present day City Park in Kingston was purchased.

When five years later it was decided to move Parliament to Montreal instead, a petition was sent from the City of Kingston to the Governor General, pointing out that considerable funds had been expended in anticipation of government functions in Kingston, and further, that 25 acres of land had been acquired for the same purpose on the western edge of the town by the Imperial Government. The petitioners respectfully requested that, as a concession, this 25 acres of land be returned to the City "that it may be laid out as a Public Square in all time to come, for the health and convenience of the inhabitants."<sup>31</sup> No immediate action was taken because of the impending threat of war with the United States over the rights to the Oregon Territory. Eight years later, in 1851, the Commissioner of Crown Lands informed the City that it could use an adjacent property as a park while the transfer of the land in question was being considered, on the condition that "the Military Exercise Ground, which was to be laid out as an ornamental park, was to be well fenced and open to the public."<sup>32</sup>

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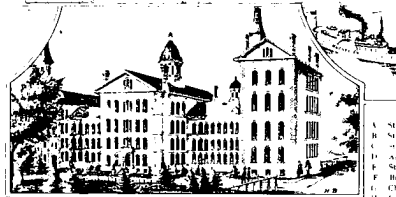
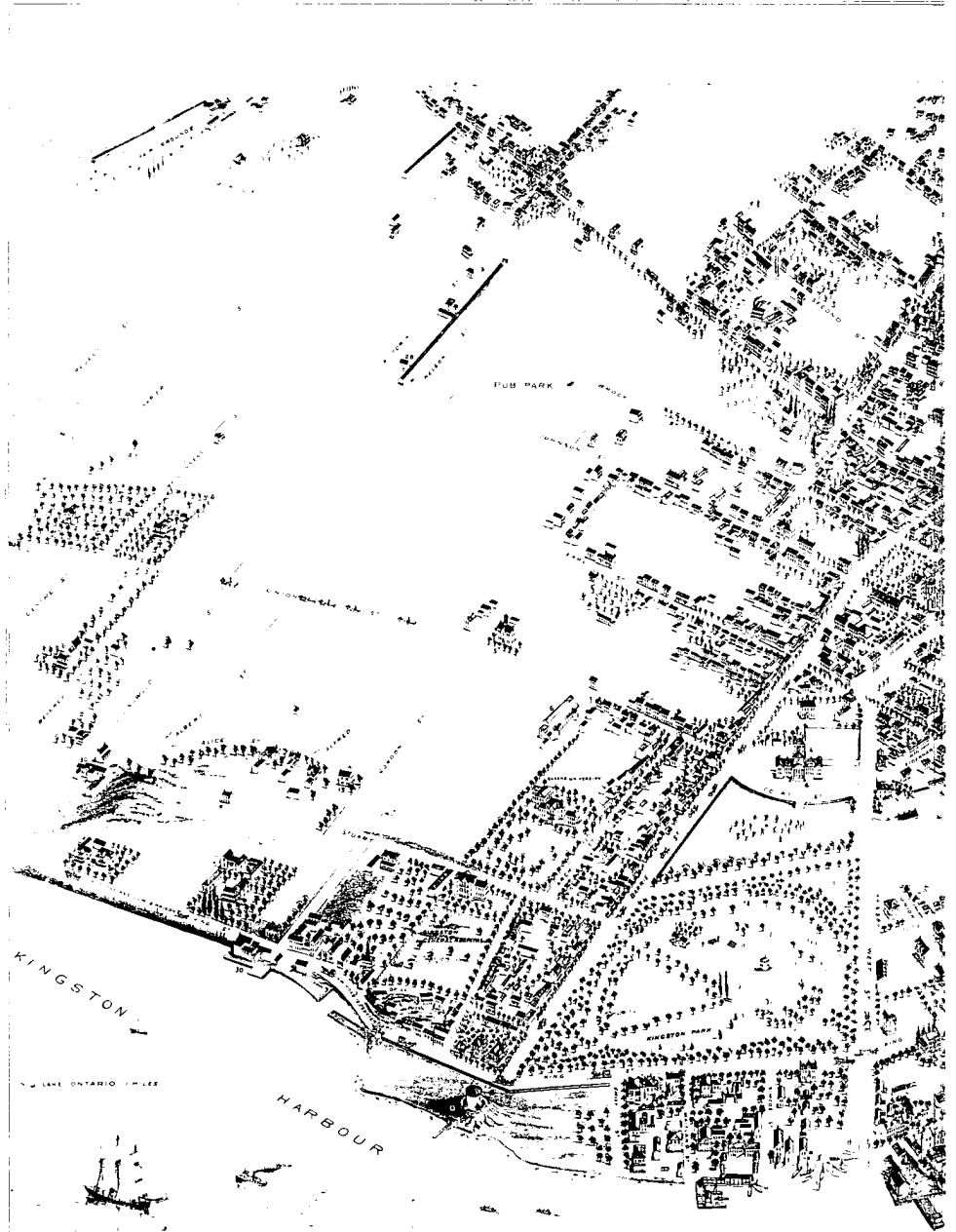
Although the park had been officially established, its development was viewed as excessive by the city council, and “so it was for years to come; money, or rather the lack of it, was to prevent the orderly development of the first public park in Canada West.”<sup>33</sup> However, improvements to the site appear to have begun in 1854.

The Subscribers' Committee made an eloquent plea for the Park in 1853, in a report to City Council:

*The Park, that great and almost indispensable appendage to the City, was planned to be a haven of rest where man, escaping from the turmoil, dust and strife of the city can relax his energies, and for a season forget the cares and sins of the world while reclining in the shade of fragrant and beautiful trees . . . and for youth, it is the season of enjoyment, and were we blessed with pleasure grounds, our youth would there resort for enjoyment and activity to both body and mind, instead of possibly being tempted to places which to say the least, are of doubtful propriety . . . and in a pecuniary view, the committee have no doubt that the city would be greatly benefitted . . . by the greater number of strangers who would visit us.<sup>34</sup>*

A noble cause indeed! One is tempted to arrive at the conclusion that the new park would be a panacea for the sins and moral laxity of its decadent citizenry, and serve as a great rallying ground for a proper way of life, as exemplified by the “better classes” of the town. Shades of Victorian Britain!

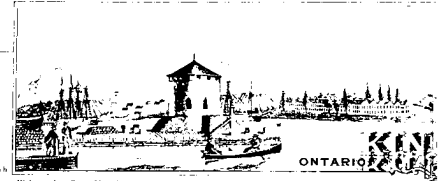
The original design for the park was laid out by a landscape gardener from Rochester whose name is not included in the early town records. By 1855 trees and shrubs were planted and carriage drives gravelled. One of the major endeavours of the



- PLANS AND LOCATIONS IN KINGSTON**
- 1. City Hall
  - 2. Custom House
  - 3. Post Office
  - 4. Court House and Jail
  - 5. Orphan Asylum
  - 6. Drill shed
  - 7. City Works
  - 8. Royal College of Surgeons and Physicians
  - 9. Wesleyan Village, Catholic
  - 10. Christian Brothers' Separate School, Catholic
  - 11. Sisters' Female Academy, Catholic
  - 12. Police School
  - 13. City Hotel
  - 14. Anglo-Native Hotel
  - 15. Hotels

**CHURCHES.**

- A. St. George's, Church of England
- B. St. Paul's
- C. St. James
- D. St. John's
- E. St. Andrew's, Presbyterian Church
- F. Brock Street
- G. Christian Canada Presbyterian Church
- H. Congregational Church
- I. Baptist Church
- J. St. John's Street Wesleyan Methodist Church
- K. Queen Street
- L. Toronto Methodist Church
- M. Cathedral of the Holy Conception, Catholic
- N. Apostolic Church, Catholic
- O. Gun Towers and Belfry



- 16. Walker & Co., Piano Manufacturers
- 17. Owen & Cunningham, Antiques, Jewellers
- 18. J. M. Linn & Sons, Machine and Sewing
- 19. Ford & Son, Lumber
- 20. Jas. Chown, Foundry and Agricultural Works
- 21. Eastfield & Co., Wholesale Irons, Shoe Factory
- 22. Canada Sawmills, Engine and Mill Iron Works
- 23. Robinson Bros., Soap Works and Wharf
- 24. W. Powers & Co., Shipyard and Marine Works
- 25. J. A. Lamb, Coffin and Spice Mill



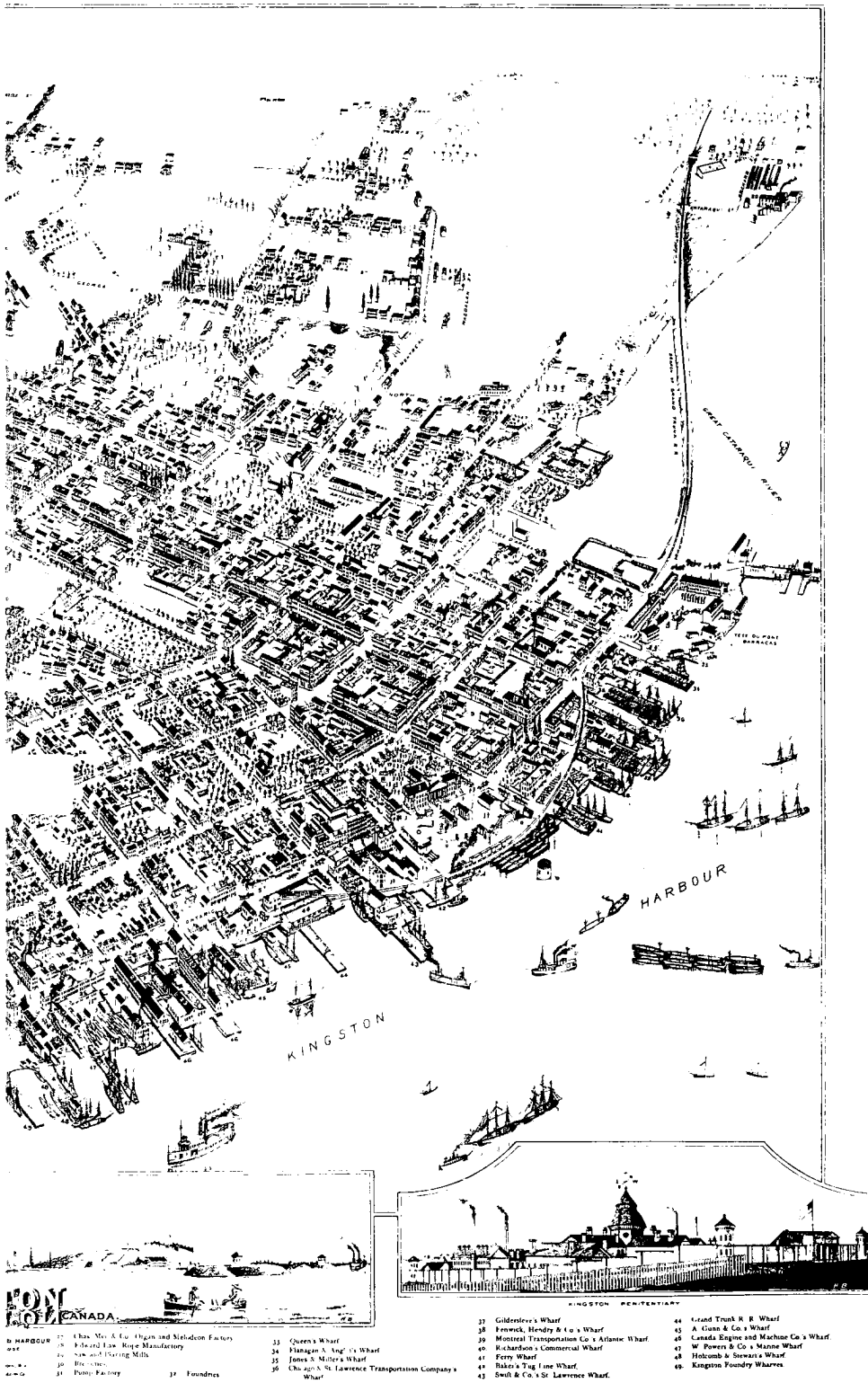


Fig. 6.6 Kingston City Park 1875.

PORT CANADA

HARBOUR  
 17  
 18  
 19  
 20  
 21

17. Chas. Mc. A. Egan and Nielson Factors  
 18. Richard Law Rope Manufactory  
 19. Saw and Lumber Mills  
 20. Rice Mill  
 21. Paper Mill

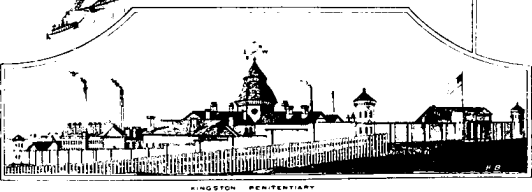
22. Queen's Wharf  
 23. Flanagan & Angell's Wharf  
 24. Jones & Miller's Wharf  
 25. Chicago & St. Lawrence Transportation Company's Wharf

26. Queen's Wharf  
 27. Flanagan & Angell's Wharf  
 28. Jones & Miller's Wharf  
 29. Chicago & St. Lawrence Transportation Company's Wharf

30. Golden's Wharf  
 31. Ewen's, Hendry & Co's Wharf  
 32. Montreal Transportation Co's Atlantic Wharf  
 33. Richardson's Commercial Wharf  
 34. Ferry Wharf  
 35. Baker & Tug Line Wharf  
 36. Smith & Co's St. Lawrence Wharf

37. Golden's Wharf  
 38. Ewen's, Hendry & Co's Wharf  
 39. Montreal Transportation Co's Atlantic Wharf  
 40. Richardson's Commercial Wharf  
 41. Ferry Wharf  
 42. Baker & Tug Line Wharf  
 43. Smith & Co's St. Lawrence Wharf

44. Grand Trunk R. R. Wharf  
 45. A. Gunn & Co's Wharf  
 46. Canada Engine and Machine Co's Wharf  
 47. W. Powers & Co's Marine Wharf  
 48. Holcomb & Stewart's Wharf  
 49. Kingston Foundry Wharves



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period was the construction of a small wooden observatory, which was located in the centre of the park.

Thus was conceived and developed one of Upper Canada's first public parks, available free to all the inhabitants of the town, and financially supported by local government. The park remains on its original site, along with the landscape design barely altered from the original layout.

Hamilton began in 1816 as a port village at the head of Lake Ontario and achieved city status by 1846. By 1851 the population had increased to more than 14,000 persons comprised primarily of immigrants from the British Isles and the U.S. By 1850, Hamilton boasted a Board of Trade, a Horticultural Society, a Mercantile Library, and a Board of Health. The population was three-tiered, entrepreneurial, artisan and labour. To a large degree there was inequality in the community, characteristic of the commercial cities of this period, and promoted by a transient population of newly arriving immigrants. About one-tenth of the adult men, at the most, controlled virtually all the resources necessary to the wealth, well-being and prosperity of the rest.<sup>35</sup> In this period two-thirds of the employed women were household servants, and almost one-quarter of the men unskilled or semi-skilled labour.

Hamilton was controlled by an influential entrepreneurial class, whose status depended on achievement rather than on birth, dominated by Canadian-born Protestants.<sup>36</sup> The manner in which Gore Park was established in the central downtown business area exemplifies the wealth and dominance of the town's business community. Two gentlemen, Mr. George Hamilton and Mr. Nathaniel Hughson, agreed to contribute an equal amount of land to the City to form a public square on

## Hamilton

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James Street. Hughson reneged on his promise, however, and as a result Gore Square became a triangle, half the planned size. For many years the area was used as a gathering point, especially by visitors who used Hamilton as a stopover at the end of Lake Ontario on the journey from Montreal and Toronto to Detroit. The square boasted a source of water of excellent quality that was an attraction both to visitors and the local population. Gore Square was renamed Gore Park in 1852 and set aside for public use under provincial statute. It has continued to serve as a social gathering point and “speakers’ corner” up to the present. By 1860 the park was partially landscaped, two ornamental fountains and a drinking fountain having been built complete with a brass drinking cup attached by a chain to avoid theft.<sup>37</sup>

Victoria Park, another of Hamilton’s early parks, was the site of the Crystal Palace, built in 1859-60 to house the Provincial Exhibition, which was held annually in rotation with four cities in Upper Canada. These exhibition grounds were called the Great Central Fair and were the forerunner of the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto.<sup>38</sup>

### **Leading Park Proponents**

A basic question surrounding the origins of public parks in Ontario focuses on the individuals and personalities who are considered the instigators and leaders in the establishment of the first public parks. Such personalities are difficult to identify. History does not reveal a knight in shining armour who led the forces in the battle to provide public parks and recreation grounds in Canada as was the case in the United States, where Frederick Law Olmsted, William Cullen Bryant and Andrew Jackson Downing were leaders in the fight for public parks. The emergence of public parks in the towns of Upper Canada seems to have been based on local attitudes and actions of



*Fig. 6.7 Kingston City Park (1982) — former carriage-way.*

civic committees rather than on the proselytizing of a single dominant personality, with one or two exceptions, supporting the notion that “Canadian statesmen have succeeded in shrouding themselves in obscurity.”<sup>39</sup>

However, there is strong evidence to show that the members of the various civic committees who led the way in the establishment of public parks were personalities holding

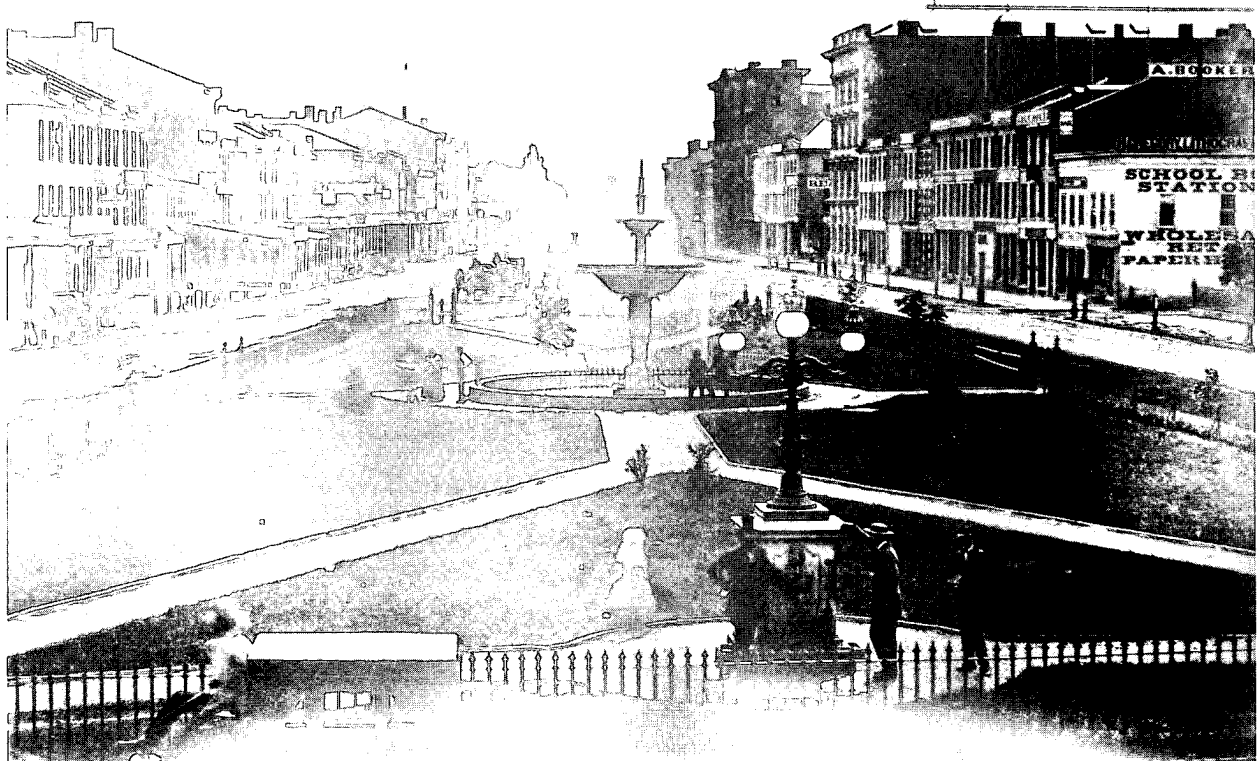


*Fig. 6.8 Kingston City Park — Sir John A. Macdonald statue (1982).*

both power and influence at the local level, and in some cases at the provincial level. While the land that was set aside by Lord Sydenham in Kingston eventually became one of Ontario's (if not Canada's) first functioning public parks, it was the members of the City Council in Kingston and not Lord Sydenham who petitioned and received permission to establish this land as a public park.

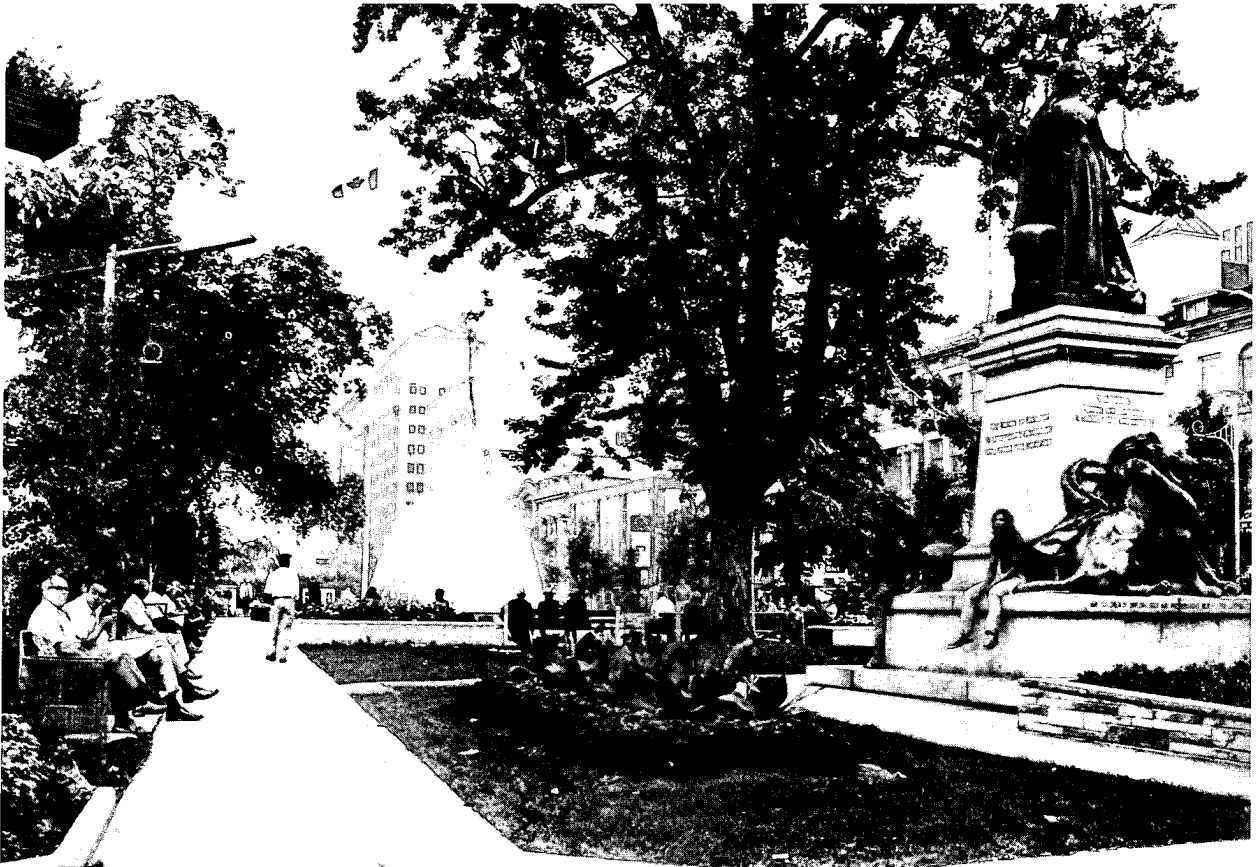
One of the few personalities that emerges from the historic past for his contribution to the establishment of the first public parks is Mr. George Hamilton, the prosperous businessman of the mid-1800s, who donated the land for Gore Park in Hamilton. A decade or so later, however, a number of individuals began to emerge as key actors in the founding of Ontario's early public parks.

*Fig. 6.9 Gore Park, Hamilton 1861.*





*Fig. 6.10 Gore Park, Hamilton — air photo 1975.*



*Fig. 6.11 Gore Park, Hamilton (1982).*

Which town or city in early Ontario should be recognized as establishing the first public park, set aside primarily for recreation and supported by local funding? A first glance would suggest Niagara-on-the-Lake. However, despite the fact that the term “park” was used to designate a specific area, the town did

## Summary



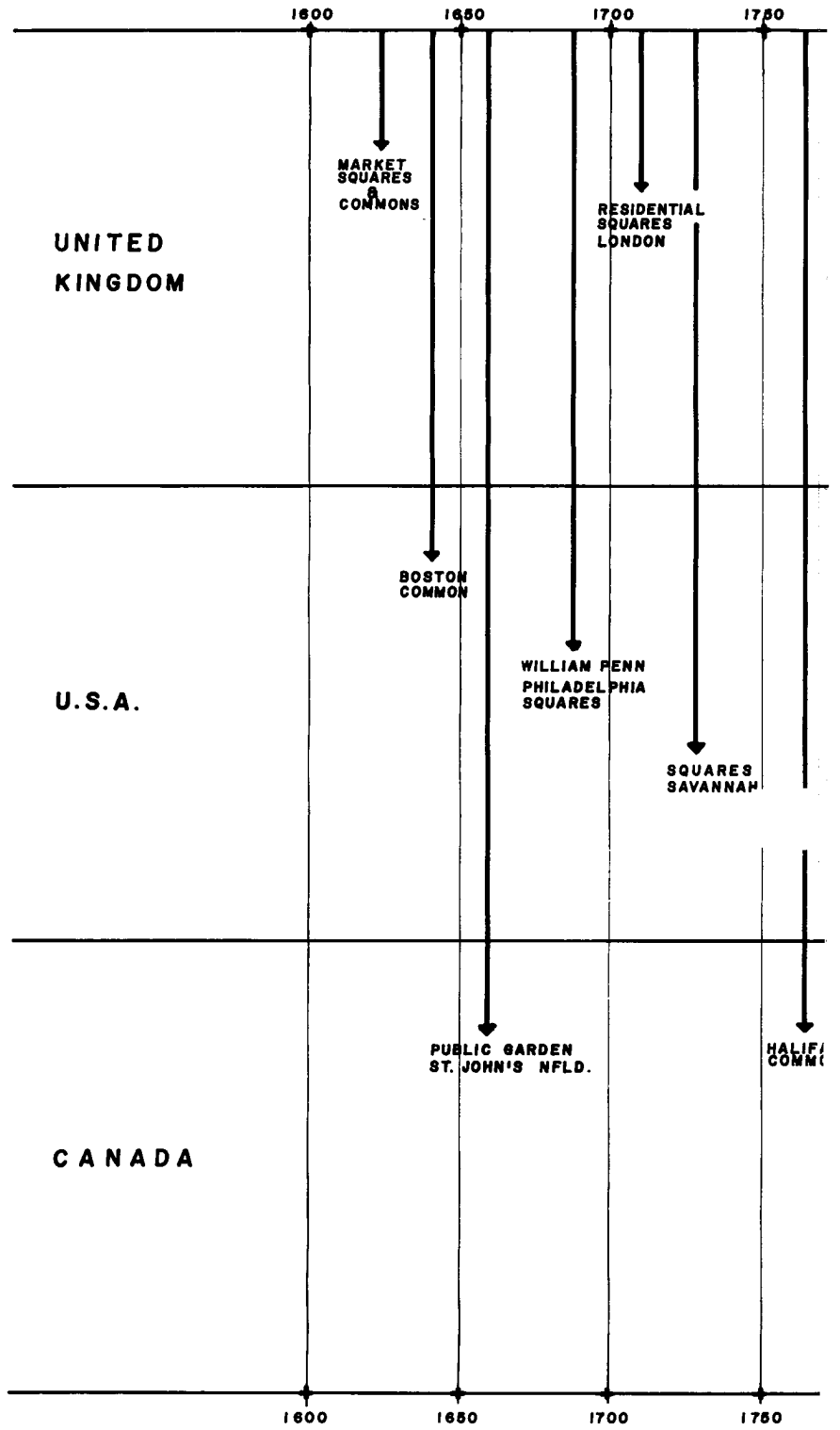
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not attempt to improve the site until 1855, and indeed the land appears to have been leased for crop purposes until at least 1916.

The leasing of the 287-acre Garrison Reserve to the City of Toronto in 1848 from the federal military holdings on condition the land be laid out as pleasuring grounds and an ornamental park, ranks as one of the first urban areas dedicated as a public park, despite the lack of development for public use for a number of years. However, the land remained under lease for many years before the City of Toronto acquired ownership and it appears the land was never developed to provide a broad range of recreational opportunities as a single purpose public park.

Gore Square had served as a public meeting and gathering place by local citizens and visitors to Hamilton for at least six years before this space was dedicated by provincial statute in 1852 as a public park, but it remained in a rough and unimproved condition until about 1859. Because of its location in the city core and its relatively small size (about one acre), its form and function cannot be compared to the other early public parks of the same period. Gore Park was conceived as a public square and it continues to serve that function in downtown Hamilton today.

The dedication of the 25-acre City Park in Kingston in 1851 (often referred to as Macdonald Park) on land known as The Artillery Parade Ground also ranks as one of the first public parks in Ontario. By 1855 certain improvements had been carried out and the public began to use and enjoy the park, owned and managed by the City of Kingston. It is apparent that if one placed certain constraints on the term "public park" in terms of ownership, development and use, City Park in Kingston must be recognized as the first locally owned, **developed**, and managed urban park in Ontario.



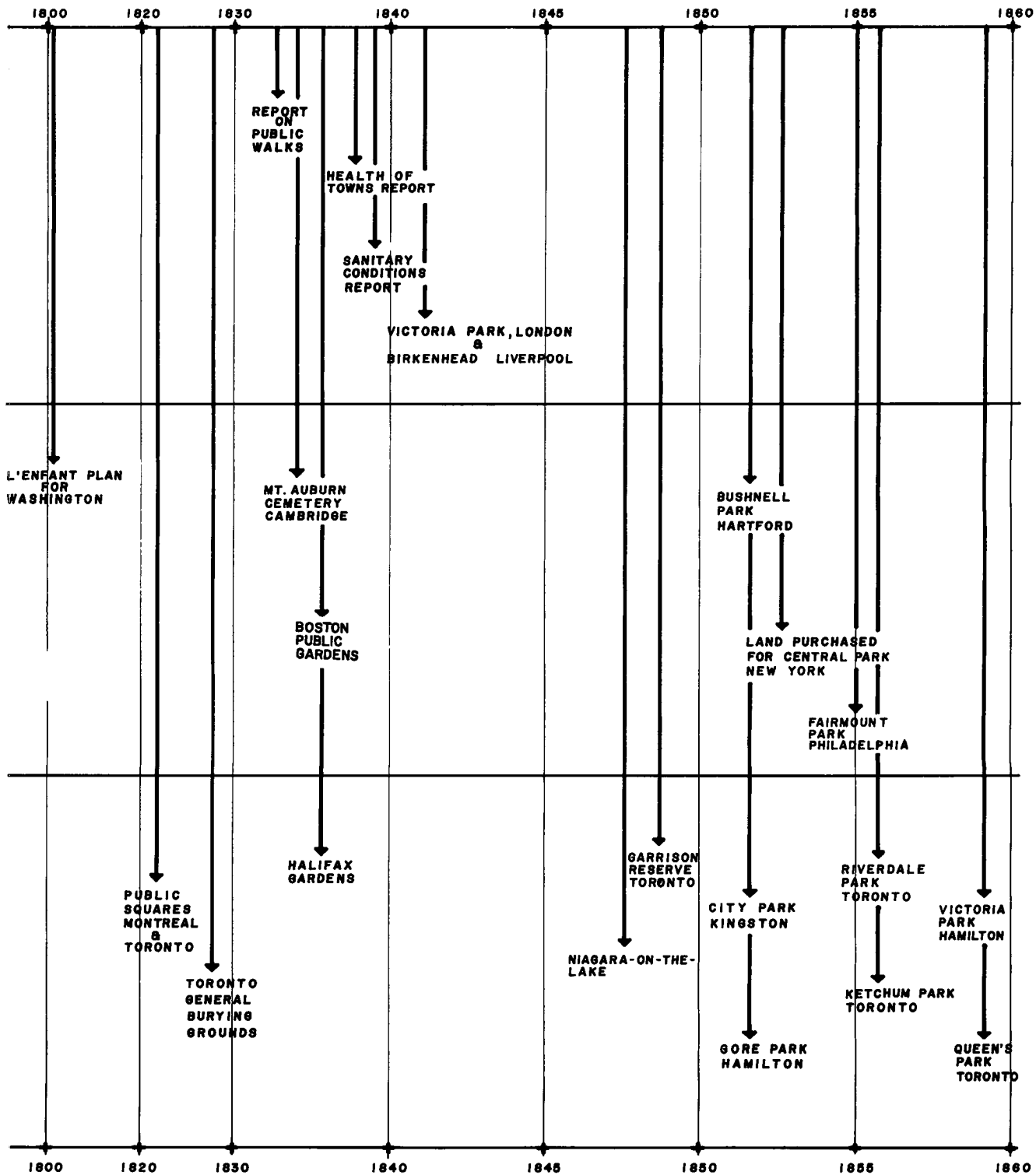


Fig. 6.12 An Overview of origins of public parks - U.K., U.S.A. and Canada 1600-1860 (J.R.Wright /'83)

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An overview of the origins of public parks in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Canada is shown on the preceding pages (fig.6.9), showing that the first public parks in Ontario were developed a few years earlier than those in the United States, within a dozen or so years of the first public parks in Britain.

## NOTES

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1. E.F. England, **Historic Newfoundland**. The Newfoundland Department of Tourism, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1975, p.11.
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# 7. THE RATIONALE FOR PUBLIC PARKS

The park became, and still is, a glimpse of nature — idealized, romanticized after the eighteenth century English naturalist movement.

J. S. French

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It is important to try to uncover the reasons behind the establishment of the first public parks in Ontario to be supported by public funds, and open to every citizen for recreation.

By 1851, Toronto was the largest city in Upper Canada with nearly 30,000 people. The next largest city was Hamilton with 14,000 persons. The social conditions in Toronto or in any other Ontario city or town were strikingly different from those in Birmingham or New York. The living conditions in Ontario were relatively good compared to more densely populated and more industrialized centres in Europe and the United States. Although by 1850 early settlement conditions were largely overcome, political unrest was under control and economic conditions were improving, the population still lived primarily in rural or village conditions, and the towns and cities were still small enough to allow relatively easy access to the countryside. The working day, and week, were long, and a large proportion of the urban population worked at labouring jobs.

When we look at this picture, it is remarkable that Canada's first truly public parks came about at all. The first public parks in England had only been established in 1843, while there were virtually no public parks established in the United States before 1852. Canada's first public parks can be attributed to the beliefs and actions of a few enlightened and powerful personalities acting through public committees, who attempted to duplicate in the New World the conditions in Britain from which they had so recently come. Both Kingston and York, for instance, had "their physical lay-out and social structure . . . determined by the imperial government's concern to build copies of British society in the Upper Canadian wilderness."<sup>1</sup>

In Upper Canada, the holders of wealth and power, primarily British in origin, had the capacity for **noblesse oblige**

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and to share some of the benefits of their class with the less fortunate, based on the British model. There was no profound social malaise or urgent urban crisis that precipitated the original public parks as in Britain. It was very simply an existing concept that was brought to the new country and applied under vastly different social conditions. The public park emerged in Ontario to satisfy a newly perceived need that was not satisfied by the existing public open spaces such as the square and marketplace, which remained as places for intense social interaction and commercial activity. The original public parks of Ontario satisfied a concept, rather than a reality, motivated by the altruism of the elite.

Canada's first public parks in Kingston, Hamilton and Toronto came about as the result of elite leadership, by relatively few persons. There was no common ideology or attempt to pressure the body politic by the general public, and these first parks in Ontario did not originate as the result of a popular social movement. Such a popular movement was to come at least 30 years later, with the passing of the Public Parks Act of 1883 by the Ontario provincial government, the first such Act in Canada. By the advent of the First World War, public parks were an accepted fact in town and city growth in Ontario.

The military bureaucracies that were in place in Kingston and Toronto may have played a significant role in the early establishment of public parks in both centres. In Kingston, this may have come about partly as the result of the lessened concerns for defence against the Americans, and perhaps partly in order to compensate the people of Kingston for the fact that the new capital for Upper Canada was to be located elsewhere. In the case of Toronto, the motive to lease land for parks may well have been an expeditious way for the British to



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divest itself of excess lands no longer necessary for defence, with little regard for local needs.

Many of the areas set aside for public parks in Ontario were military lands no longer required for military purposes, as opposed to Britain where the original park lands were primarily private gardens and 'parks' of nobility.

The chairman of the Committee of Public Walks and Gardens for Toronto defended the preservation of public park areas before Council in 1859, claiming that parks were of benefit to every social class in the community.

- *In the first place they furnish to the wealthy places of agreeable resort, either for driving or walking, and free from exposure to the heat and dust of an ordinary road . . . thus enabling them to enjoy the promotion of health and morality.*
- *In the second place, for the mechanic and working classes generally, public grounds are of incalculable advantage: How much better it is for these families to have these places of healthful recreation and exercise, than to have them exposed to the crowded streets of the city.*
- *What more pleasing sight to the philanthropic mind than to witness the wholesome rivalry of the mothers of families, on the Sabbath or the weekday 'Simmer Eve' as to whose children shall appear the cleanliest and neatest clad. How are such, and kindred inspirations calculated to elevate and refine the mind, and improve the condition of all.<sup>2</sup>*

The first public parks in Ontario were generally located at the edge of the residential areas and as a result were not always readily accessible to many of the citizens. As an indication that

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the park was intended to serve the entire population of the city, many parks became known as "City Park."

It seems that the early parks in Upper Canada were created to serve the dual purpose of beauty and nature appreciation, with public health and morals of equal importance. The first public parks in Britain had also originated from concern for health, fresh air and relaxation and a deep Victorian concern for public morals, with the conviction that nature could provide a counter attraction to the sinful influences of the city. As in Britain, the Upper Canadian public parks were seen as a relief, or escape and retreat from urban conditions, and for relaxation of mind and body. By contrast, the public square was the centre of social interaction and was part of the action and chaos of the city.

Recreation in the parks was limited to strolling, picnicking, family outings, relaxing and appreciating natural beauty, band concerts, informal games (i.e., cricket, not active), and carriage drives for the "better" classes. Very active games and sports were considered inappropriate in the parks, and this restriction led to the playground movement towards the end of the nineteenth century. Eventually it resulted, in the post World War II period, in a schism between resource-oriented park proponents and user-oriented recreationists, a rift which has slowly healed in the combining of most local park and recreation departments.<sup>3</sup>

Although the first public parks in Ontario were established by the middle of the nineteenth century, it would be another thirty years before a public parks movement developed, after the passage of the Public Parks Act of 1883 by the Province of Ontario.

## NOTES

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1. Barrie Drummon Dyster, **Toronto 1840 - 1860: Making It In A British Protestant Town**, University of Toronto History Department, 1970, p. 12.
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## APPENDIX A

### Date of incorporation of Ontario Villages, Towns and Cities \*

Urban Centre	Country or Census Division	Date of Incorporation		
		As a Village	As a Town	As a City
Belleville	Hastings		1834	1877
Brantford	Brant	1830	1847	1877
Brockville	Leeds	No record	1832	
Chippawa	Welland	1849		
Cobourg	Northumberland	1804	1837	
Cornwall	Stormont		1834	
Dundas	Wentworth	1801	1847	
Galt	Waterloo	1850	1856	1915
Goderich	Huron	No record	1850	
Guelph	Wellington		1850	1879
Hamilton	Wentworth	1816	1833	1846
Ingersoll	Oxford	1852	1860	
Kingston	Frontenac	1783	1838	1846
London	Middlesex		1840	1855
Niagara	Lincoln		1845	
Oshawa	Ontario	1850	1879	1924
Ottawa	Carleton	1827	1847	1854
Paris	Brant	1850	1855	
Perth	Lanark		1851	
Peterborough	Peterborough		1850	1905
Picton	Prince Edward		1837	
Port Hope	Durham	1834	1850	
Prescott	Grenville	1834	1860	
Preston	Waterloo	1852	1900	
Richmond	Carleton	1850		
St. Catharines	Lincoln		1845	
St. Thomas	Elgin	1852	1860	1881
Simcoe	Norfolk	1851	1878	
Thorold	Welland	1850	1874	
Toronto	York	1793	1817	1834
Woodstock	Oxford	1851	1856	1901

*\*Under the terms of the Baldwin Act of 1849, a village was a district having a population exceeding 750 persons on an area not exceeding 500 acres; a town was a settlement of 2,000 persons or more; and a city had more than 15,000 persons.*

## APPENDIX B

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### Definitions of selected terms used for open space — 1785 to the present.

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#### COMMON

**Year**

**Definition and Interpretation**

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- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>1785</b> | An open ground equally used by many persons. egs. "Then take we down his load, and turn him off, Like to the empty ass, to shake his ears, And graze in <i>commons</i> . (Shakespeare's <i>Julius Caesar</i> .) <sup>1</sup>   |
| <b>1851</b> | A tract of ground, the use of which is not appropriated to an individual, but belongs to the public or to a number. Thus, we apply the word to an open ground or space in a highway, reserved for public use. <sup>2</sup>   |
| <b>1875</b> | An open ground, the use of which is not appropriated to any individual, but belongs to the public, or to many persons; a public unenclosed space: - a term sometimes applied to an enclosed public ground, or park, in a city. "Does anyone respect a <i>common</i> as much as he does his garden?" South. <sup>3</sup>  |
| <b>1899</b> | <p>1. A tract of ground, the use of which is not appropriated to an individual, but belongs to the public, or to a number. Thus we apply the word to an open ground or space in a highway, reserved for public use.</p> <p>2. In <i>law</i>, an open ground, or that soil the use of which belongs equally to the inhabitants of a town, or lordship, or to a certain number of proprietors.<sup>4</sup></p> |

<b>COMMON</b>	
<b>Definition and Interpretation</b>	<b>Year</b>
<p>1. Of or pertaining to all that is, to all the human race, or to all in a given country, region or locality; being a general possession or right; of a public nature or character. "Then there was the <i>common</i> land held as separate property, not by single owners, but by communities, something like the lands of colleges and other corporations at the present day, and as land is still held by village communities in India and the eastern Slavonic countries of Europe.</p> <p>2. Common land, loosely, land owned in severalty but used in common; more strictly, land owned by the community, and not being appropriated for the time to cultivation by any individual, used as waste or open land for common pasturage.<sup>5</sup></p>	<b>1904</b>
<p>A tract of ground, the use of which is not appropriated to an individual, but belongs to the public or to a number.<sup>6</sup></p>	<b>1924</b>
<p>Land belonging to a community.<sup>7</sup></p>	<b>1931</b>
<p>Land generally, or a tract of land owned by a town; land open to the use of all.<sup>8</sup></p>	<b>1958</b>
<p>A tract of land considered as the property of the community, open to the use of all.<sup>9</sup></p>	<b>1978</b>

## ESPLANADE

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	In fortification, the same with the glacis of the counterscarp originally: but now it is taken for the empty space between the <i>glacis</i> of a citadel (a sloping bank) and the first houses of the town. <sup>1</sup>
1851	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In <i>fortification</i>, the glacis of the counterscarp, or the sloping of the parapet of the covered way toward the country; or the void space between the glacis of a citadel and the first houses of a town.</li> <li>2. In <i>gardening</i>, a grass-plot.<sup>2</sup></li> </ol>
1875	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A level ground within a fortified place, used for exercise, a walk, etc; properly, the space between the fortifications of the town and those of the citadel.</li> <li>2. A grassy plot in a garden. (Simmonds)</li> <li>3. Any open level public walk or drive near the sea.<sup>3</sup> (Simmonds)</li> </ol>
1899	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fortification (definition as in previous texts).</li> <li>2. In gardening, a grass-plot.<sup>4</sup></li> </ol>

## ESPLANADE

Definition and Interpretation	Year
Any open level space or course near a town, especially a kind of terrace along the seaside, for public walks or drives. "All the world was gathered on the terrace of the Kursaal and the <i>esplanade</i> below it to listen to the excellent orchestra". (H. James) <sup>5</sup>	1904
<i>Fort.</i> A wide open space between the glacis of a citadel and the first houses of the town; any open level space near a town, especially a kind of terrace along the sea-side for public walks or drives. <sup>6</sup>	1924
Level piece of ground, esp. one used for public promenade; level space separating citadel of fortress from town. <sup>7</sup>	1931
A level open space, as before a fortress or along a waterside, for promenading, driving, etc. <sup>8</sup>	1958
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A level, open stretch of land, as along a shore, used especially as a public walk.</li> <li>2. An open embankment or level area before a fortress, designed to expose attackers.<sup>9</sup></li> </ol>	1978



## GARDEN

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	A piece of ground inclosed, and cultivated with extraordinary care, planted with herbs or fruits for food, or laid out for pleasure, e.g. "In every <i>garden</i> should be provided flowers, fruit, shade and water." (Temple) <sup>1</sup>
1851	A piece of ground appropriated to the cultivation of herbs or plants, fruits and flowers; usually near a mansion-house. <sup>2</sup>
1875	A piece of ground enclosed and planted for the production of fruits, flowers or esculent plants. "God the first <i>garden</i> made, the first city Cain." (Cowley) <sup>3</sup>
1899	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A piece of ground appropriated to the cultivation of herbs or plants, fruits and flowers, usually near a mansion house.</li> <li>2. A rich, well cultivated spot or tract in the country, a delightful spot.<sup>4</sup></li> </ol>

## GARDEN

Definition and Interpretation	Year
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A plot of ground devoted to the cultivation of culinary vegetables, fruits, or flowering and ornamental plants.</li> <li>2. A rich, well-cultivated spot or tract of country; a delightful spot.<sup>5</sup></li> </ol>	<b>1904</b>
<p>A piece of ground appropriated to the cultivation of plants, fruits, flowers, or vegetables; a rich well-cultivated spot or tract of country.<sup>6</sup></p>	<b>1924</b>
<p>Piece of ground devoted to growing flowers, fruits, or vegetables; ornamental grounds for public resort.<sup>7</sup></p>	<b>1931</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A place for the cultivation of flowers, vegetables or small plants.</li> <li>2. Hence, any fertile or highly cultivated territory.</li> <li>3. A piece of ground, commonly with ornamental plants or trees, used as a place of public resort: a botanical garden.<sup>8</sup></li> </ol>	<b>1958</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A place for the cultivation of flowers or small plants.</li> <li>2. Any fertile, highly cultivated territory remarkable for the beauty of its vegetation.</li> <li>3. (often pl.) A piece of ground, commonly with ornamental plants or trees, used as a place of public resort.<sup>9</sup></li> </ol>	<b>1978</b>

## OVAL

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	None <sup>1</sup>
1851	None <sup>2</sup>
1875	A popular name for any curved figure resembling an ellipse, or the traverse section of an egg. <sup>3</sup>
1899	(Definitions pertaining to the oval shape but not necessarily to any type of “square”). <sup>4</sup>
1904	Something which has such a shape, as a plot of ground or an open space in a city: as Berkley oval; “The Oval” at Kensington, London. <sup>5</sup>
1924	None <sup>6</sup>
1931	None <sup>7</sup>
1958	None <sup>8</sup>
1978	None <sup>9</sup>

## PARK

Definition and Interpretation	Year
<p>A piece of ground inclosed and stored with wild beasts of chase, which a man may have by prescription or the King's grant. Manwood in his forest law defines it thus: a park is a place for privilege for wild beasts that are beasts of the forest and of the chase; and those wild beasts are to have a firm peace and protection there, so that no man may hurt or chase them within the park, without licence from the owner; a park is of another nature than a chase or a warren; for a park must be inclosed, and may not lie open; if it does, it is a good cause of seizure into the King's hands: and the owner cannot have action against such as hunt in his park if it lies open. (Cowell)<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>1785</b></p>
<p>An inclosed place in cities for public exercise or amusement, as <i>Hyde Park, St. James Park</i>, London.<sup>2</sup> (New use)</p>	<p><b>1851</b></p>
<p>1. An enclosure of pasture and woodland connected with a country residence, and used for purposes of recreation, but chiefly for the support of a herd of deer, though sometimes of cattle or of sheep. (Brande)</p> <p>2. A piece of ground enclosed for public recreation or amusement; as, "<i>Hyde Park, Regents' Park, Victoria Park</i>, in London."</p>	<p><b>1875</b></p>
<p>SYN. - see <i>Forest</i>:  <i>Forest</i> is a term applied to an extensive tract in its natural state covered with trees; a <i>woodland</i> or <i>woods</i>, a tract or piece of land covered with trees, commonly of less extent than a <i>forest</i>. A <i>grove</i> is a small <i>woodland</i>. <i>Forest</i>, <i>chase</i>, and <i>park</i> are all used technically to denote habitations for beasts to be hunted. <i>Forests</i> and <i>chases</i> lie open; <i>parks</i> are enclosed.<sup>3</sup></p>	

## PARK

Year	Definition and Interpretation
<b>1899</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A large piece of ground inclosed for chase or other purposes of pleasure. Parks, in England, were originally grants out of forest lands with privileges which lasted only while they were kept inclosed. (Smart)</li> <li>2. An inclosed place in cities for exercise or amusement.<sup>4</sup></li> </ol>
<b>1904</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In English law, a tract of land inclosed and privileged for wild beasts or of chase, by the monarch's grant or by prescription.</li> <li>2. A considerable extent of pasture and woodlands surrounding or adjoining a country house and devoted primarily to purposes of recreation or enjoyment, and often serving to support a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep, or in Europe, stocked with deer.</li> <li>3. A piece of ground, usually of considerable extent, set apart and maintained for public use, and laid for public use, and laid out in such a way as to afford pleasure to the eye as well as opportunity for open-air recreation; as, <i>Central Park</i> in New York, or <i>Hyde Park</i> in London. "Frequent in park with lady at his side, Ambling and prattling scandal as he goes; But rare at home. (Cowper, <i>Task</i>, ii, 381)<sup>5</sup></li> </ol>
<b>1924</b>	<p>A large piece of ground inclosed and set apart for beasts of chase; a considerable extent of pasture and woodland surrounding or adjoining a mansion-house; a piece of public ground in or near a large town, laid out and kept for the sole purpose of pleasure and recreation.<sup>6</sup></p>

## PARK

Definition and Interpretation	Year
<p>Large enclosed piece of ground, usually with woodland and pasture, attached to a country house; enclosure in town ornamentally laid out for public recreation; <i>The Park</i>, (now) Hyde Park, (formerly St. James Park); large tract of land kept in a natural state for public benefit.<sup>7</sup></p>	<b>1931</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In English law, a tract of enclosed land stocked with wild beasts of the chase, and held through royal grant or by immemorial prescription.</li> <li>2. A tract of land for public use in or near a city, usually laid out with walks, drives and recreation grounds.</li> <li>3. An open square or plaza in a city usually containing shade trees and seats.<sup>8</sup></li> </ol>	<b>1958</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A tract of land for public use in or near a city, usually laid out with walks, drives, playgrounds, athletic fields, etc.</li> <li>2. An open square in a city, usually containing shade trees, benches etc.</li> <li>3. A national park.</li> <li>4. An amusement park.</li> <li>5. A large tract of land containing woods and fields, surrounding a country estate.<sup>9</sup></li> </ol>	<b>1978</b>

## PICNIC

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	None. <sup>1</sup>
1851	This term is now applied to refreshments which a pleasure - party carry along with them on an excursion to the country, and also to the party itself. (New use) <sup>2</sup>
1875	An assembly or entertainment, in which the table is supplied from the contributions of those who attend; commonly held in the open air. " <i>Picnic</i> , an assembly of young people of both sexes at a tavern, where everyone pays his club." (Widegren, 1788) <sup>3</sup>
1899	Originally, an entertainment at which each person contributed some dish or article for the general table. The term is now applied to an entertainment carried with them by a party or an excursion of pleasure into the country, and also to the party itself. <sup>4</sup>
1904	Formerly, an entertainment in which every partaker contributed his share to the general table; now, an entertainment or pleasure-party the members of which carry provisions with them on an excursion, as from a city to some place in the country. <sup>5</sup>
1924	A pleasure-party the members of which carry provisions along with them on an excursion to some place in country. <sup>6</sup>
1931	No definition provided.
1958	An outdoor party, usually held in the countryside, during which a meal is eaten. <sup>8</sup>
1978	An outdoor social outing for which food is usually provided by the people participating. <sup>9</sup>

## PLAYGROUND

Definition and Interpretation	Year
None. <sup>1</sup>	1785
None. <sup>2</sup>	1851
None. <sup>3</sup>	1875
None. <sup>4</sup>	1899
A piece of ground set apart for open-air recreation; especially such a piece of ground connected with a school, etc. <sup>5</sup>	1904
A piece of ground set apart for open-air recreation, especially connected with a school, etc. and for pupils. <sup>6</sup>	1924
Piece of ground used for play, especially at school. <sup>7</sup>	1931
None. <sup>8</sup>	1958
An area, usually adjoining a school, used for playing games and for recreation. <sup>9</sup>	1978



**PLAZA**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Definition and Interpretation</b>
<b>1785</b>	None. <sup>1</sup>
<b>1851</b>	None. <sup>2</sup>
<b>1875</b>	None. <sup>3</sup>
<b>1899</b>	None. <sup>4</sup>
<b>1904</b>	A public square or open space surrounded by houses in a Spanish or Spanish-American city; a market place in such a town; as the <i>Plaza</i> of San Francisco. <sup>5</sup>
<b>1924</b>	None. <sup>6</sup>
<b>1931</b>	None. <sup>7</sup>
<b>1958</b>	An open square or market place, especially in a Spanish or Spanish-American town. <sup>8</sup>
<b>1978</b>	An open square or market place in a town or city. <sup>9</sup>

## PLEASURE GARDEN/PLEASURE GROUND

Definition and Interpretation	Year
None. <sup>1</sup>	1785
Ground adjoining a dwelling in the country, laid out in an ornamental manner and appropriated to pleasure or amusement. It is generally laid out in winding walks, and in forms borrowed direct from nature. A portion of lawn or grassy surface may be considered as essential to pleasure-ground. <sup>2</sup>	1851
An ornamental piece of ground devoted to pleasure or recreation. "Any very pleasing place or pleasure-grounds." (Holdsworth) <sup>3</sup>	1875
Ground laid out in an ornamental manner, and appropriated to pleasure or amusement. <sup>4</sup>	1899
Ground ornamental and appropriated to pleasure and amusement. <sup>5</sup>	1904
A piece of ground laid out in an ornamental manner and appropriated to pleasure or amusement. <sup>6</sup>	1924
Ground laid out for pleasure. <sup>7</sup>	1931
None. <sup>8</sup>	1958
None. <sup>9</sup>	1978

## PROMENADE

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	None <sup>1</sup>
1851	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A walk for pleasure and show, or exercise.</li> <li>2. A place for walking.<sup>2</sup></li> </ol>
1875	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A walk for pleasure or for exercise. (Burke)</li> <li>2. A place for walking for pleasure or for exercise. (Montagu)<sup>3</sup></li> </ol>
1899	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A walk for amusement or exercise.</li> <li>2. A place for walking.<sup>4</sup></li> </ol>
1904	A walk for pleasure, or display, or for exercise. A place for walking; v. to promenade - recently, to take exercise in carriage saddle or boat. <sup>5</sup>
1924	A walk for pleasure and show or exercise; a place for walking in public. <sup>6</sup>
1931	Place, especially paved public walk, for this, i.e. walk, ride, drive taken for exercise, amusement, or display, or as a social ceremony. <sup>7</sup>
1958	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A walk for amusement or exercise, or as part of a formal or social entertainment.</li> <li>2. A ceremonial parade on horseback or in a vehicle.</li> <li>3. A place for promenading.<sup>8</sup></li> </ol>
1978	A place for promenading (i.e., a walk for amusement or exercise, or as part of a formal or social entertainment). <sup>9</sup>

## RECREATION

Definition and Interpretation	Year
<p>1. Relief after toil or pain; amusement in sorrow or distress. "I'll visit The chapel where they lie, and tears, shed there, Shall be my <i>recreation</i>" (Shakespeare's <i>Winter's Tale</i>)</p> <p>2. Refreshment, amusement, diversion. "Nor is that man less deceived, that thinks to maintain a constant tenure of pleasure, by a continual pursuit of sports and recreations: for all these things, as they refresh a man when weary, so they weary him when refreshed." (South)<sup>1</sup></p>	<b>1785</b>
<p>1. Refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil; amusement; diversion.</p> <p>2. Relief from toil or pain; amusement in sorrow or distress.<sup>2</sup></p>	<b>1851</b>
<p>1. Relief or refreshment after toil or pain.</p> <p>2. Amusement; diversion; pastime; sport. "Let the world have their may-games, wakes . . . and whatever sports and recreation please them, provided they be followed with discretion." (Buton)<sup>3</sup></p>	<b>1875</b>
<p>1. Refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil: amusement; diversion. (South)</p> <p>2. Relief from toil or pain; amusement in sorrow or distress. (Sidney)<sup>4</sup></p>	<b>1899</b>

## RECREATION

Year	Definition and Interpretation
<b>1904</b>	<p>The act of recreating, or the state of being recreated; refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil; amusement; diversion; also some occupation which serves to recreate or amuse.</p> <p>Recreation ground: a place set apart for sports and other recreation.<sup>5</sup></p>
<b>1924</b>	<p>The act of recreating or the state of being recreated; refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil; amusement; entertainment.<sup>6</sup></p>
<b>1931</b>	<p>(Refer to word recreate.) Of pastime, relaxation, holiday, employment, etc; refresh, entertain agreeably occupy. Amuse oneself, indulge in recreation.<sup>7</sup></p>
<b>1958</b>	<p>1: Refreshment of body or mind, but generally of both; diversion; amusement. 2. Any pleasurable exercise or occupation.<sup>8</sup></p>
<b>1978</b>	<p>Refreshment of body or mind; diversion; amusement.<sup>9</sup></p>

## SQUARE

Definition and Interpretation	Year
n. (among other definitions) An area of four sides, with houses on each side, e.g. "The statue of Alexander VII stands in the large square of the town." ( <i>Addison on Italy</i> ) <sup>1</sup>	1785
In <i>arch.</i> , a mass of buildings in the form of a square, or the area enclosed by them. <sup>2</sup>	1851
An open area in a town or city formed by the junction or crossing of two or more streets. <sup>3</sup>	1875
(among other definitions) An area of four sides, with houses on each side. "The statue of Alexander VII stands in the large square of the town." ( <i>Addison</i> ) <sup>4</sup>	1899
A quadrilateral area, rectangular or nearly so, with buildings, or sites for buildings, on every side; also, an open space formed by the intersections of streets; hence, such an area planted with trees, shrubs, or grass, and open to the public for recreation or diversion, a public park among buildings; a common; a green; as, <i>Union Square</i> in Washington; <i>Trafalgar Square</i> in London. <sup>5</sup>	1904
An area of four sides with houses on each side or on at least three. <sup>6</sup>	1924
Quadrilateral area planted with trees, etc., or ornamentally laid out and surrounded with buildings, especially dwelling houses, as <i>Trafalgar Square</i> , <i>Russell Square</i> , <i>lives in the next square</i> . <sup>7</sup>	1931
An open area in a city or village, left between streets at their intersection or formed by their expansion. <sup>8</sup>	1958
An open area in a city or town formed by the intersection of four or more streets, often planted with trees and flowers, etc. and used as a park. <sup>9</sup>	1978

## WALK

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	n. (among others) An avenue set with trees. "He hath left you all his <i>walks</i> , His private arbours, and new planted orchards, on that side of the Tiber". (Shakespeare, Julius Caesar). "Goodliest trees planted with <i>walks</i> and bow'rs." (Milton)
	Way; road; range; place of wandering. "The mountains are his <i>walks</i> , who wand'ring feeds on slowly-springing herbs." ( <i>Sandy's Paraphrase</i> ) <sup>1</sup>
1851	An avenue set with trees. <sup>2</sup>
1875	A place for walking, or the space or circuit through which one walks. An avenue set with trees or laid out in a grove or wood. "The forest walks are wide and spacious." (Shakespeare) <sup>3</sup>
1899	Length of way or circuit through which one walks; or a place for walking; as, a long <i>walk</i> ; a short walk. The garden of the Tuileries and of the Luxembourg are very pleasant <i>walks</i> . <i>An avenue set with trees.</i> <sup>4</sup>

## WALK

Definition and Interpretation	Year
A place laid out or set apart for walking; an avenue; a promenade. Specifically, (a) an avenue set with trees or laid out in a grove or wood; (b) grounds; a park; (c) a path in or as in a garden or street; (d) in public parks and the like, a place or way for retirement: as gentlemen's <i>walk</i> . <sup>5</sup>	<b>1904</b>
A place in which one is accustomed to walk; an avenue, promenade, or the like. <sup>6</sup>	<b>1924</b>
Person's favorite walking ground, round of hawker, etc., place or track intended or suitable for strollers or foot passengers, promenade, colonnade, footpath. <sup>7</sup>	<b>1931</b>
A place laid out or set apart for walking or resorted to by those who walk; a path, avenue, promenade or sidewalk for pedestrians. <sup>8</sup>	<b>1958</b>
A place set apart for walking; a path, promenade or sidewalk for pedestrians. <sup>9</sup>	<b>1978</b>



## REFERENCES

The definition of many of the terms used to describe urban open space have changed over the years, especially since much of the terminology has its roots in the Renaissance in Europe and in Pre-Victorian Britain. On the other hand, some terms have changed only slightly in meaning. These terms are traced back to the original British **Dictionary of the English Language**, by Samuel Johnson (1785).

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