



NINE MILE PORTAGE HERITAGE TRAIL

The Nine Mile Portage – Historical Timeline

- 3,000BC – 1600AD** ----- Portage Trail developed over time by the Proto-Hurons and Hurons.
- 1615 – 1616** ----- Samuel de Champlain may have used the Portage en route to Iroquois country or similar journey.
- 1616 – 1649** ----- Portage probably used by French Recollet and Jesuit Missionaries and Huron First Nations.
- 1680 -1681** ----- Rene-Robert Cavelier de la Salle in Lake Simcoe area.
- 1688** ----- First record of Portage identified on Map of Western Part of Canada by P Coronelli, Paris, 1688.
- 1700s** ----- Portage used by Ojibways who migrated to the area following the departure of the Huron survivors.
- 1763** ----- French control of the area transfers to the British following the Battle of the Plains of Abraham.
- 1791** ----- Canada Act establishes Upper Canada.
- 1793** ----- Although Governor Simcoe does not use the portage, Lt Pilkington, Royal Engineers, a member of his party, records the Portage at the end of Kempenfeldt Bay on his map. Simcoe names Lake Simcoe after his father and Kempenfeldt Bay after his father's friend.
- 1796** ----- Yonge Street opened from York (Toronto) to Pine Fort (Holland Landing) on Lake Simcoe.
- Late1700s / early 1800s** --- Local Fur Trade uses the Portage.
- 1812** ----- On 18th of June, the War of 1812 is declared by United States. A British Officer is transported, via the Nine Mile Portage, from Fort York to St Josephs Island, by a voyageur express canoe, arriving in time to precipitate the capture of Michilmackinac by the British before the American Commander is aware of the declaration of War. A landmark event.
- 1813** ----- In October, a North West Company party, carry 2 bateaux and supplies destined for the relief of Michilmackinac, up Yonge Street, across Lake Simcoe, and along the Portage to Fort Willow, where the onset of winter prevents further progress.
- 1814** ----- In January, the advance party of shipwrights leaves Kingston, for Fort Willow. They are followed by the Relief expedition to Michilmackinac, commanded by Lt Col McDouall, comprising members of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, the Royal Navy, and the Royal Artillery. They depart in April in 29 locally built bateaux, arriving at Michilmackinac in May. Again the Portage plays a crucial role. In June, further vital supplies and equipment arrive for onward shipment to Michilmackinac. In August, the survivors of Lt Worsley's gallant crew of the sunken HMS Nancy, retreat to Fort Willow, pick up canoes, and head west with them.
- 1815** ----- A map prepared by E Owen, Royal Navy shows a North West Post at Fort Willow. Assistant Commissary General Crookshank's records show that literally tons of supplies and equipment are passing westward, via the portage.
- 1820** ----- Deputy Surveyor Chewett and his crew survey Vespra Township. He records the location of Fort Willow and the intersections of the Portage with the Concession Lines.
- 1821** ----- Royal Navy personnel head west via the Portage, to start work on the Hydrographic Survey of the Great Lakes.
- 1823** ----- David Thompson, explorer, mapmaker, and now Boundary Commissioner, passes through with his American counterpart, accompanied by their voyageur escorts with two large canoes.
- 1824** ----- 14 year old Thomas Williams works with a man called Ben, for Alexander Walker, on one of four ox team carts hauling supplies on the Portage.
- 1825** ----- Captain John Franklin passes north on the Portage, with some of his party, en route for the Arctic.
- Early 1830s** ----- Pioneer Settlers pass westwards on the Portage.
- 1833** ----- The Sunnidale Road and the improved Penetanguishene Road, spell the end use of the Portage.