

**Colonel Joseph Bouchette - First Surveyor
Of York (Toronto) Harbour – Surveyor General of Lower
Canada 1774-1841**

BY
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In May, 1793, Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe, first Governor of Upper Canada, resident, at the time, at Navy Hall, Niagara, despatched a young man of great promise to make for him and for the Governor in Chief, Lord Dorchester, a survey of Toronto¹ Harbor, where it had been decided to found a new city, as a permanent capital for the recently erected province of Upper Canada. That young man was Joseph Bouchette, a youth of only 19 summers. He was to take measurements, make soundings of the bay, and report to Simcoe.

There were several competent surveyors of wide experience in Upper Canada, above all in the Toronto and Niagara districts, about that time. We have their names: Augustus Jones, Gother Mann, John Collins, Robert Pilkington, Alexander Aitkin, Smith, Chewett, etc. We know what they did; and it is rather a remarkable thing that Simcoe should have passed them all over and chosen so young a man for such an important mission. The entry to Toronto harbor, today known as the “western gap”, was apparently, in Simcoe’s time, difficult to navigate. Before Bouchette’s survey, no boat of any size entered the harbor, which was neither marked nor buoyed, unless Jean Baptiste Rousseau, who had operated, with his father, for 25 years, a counter for the trade of peltries at the mouth of the Humber River,² and who knew every foot of the channel, was at the helm.³ Bouchette, by his labours, was to open the channel and the bay to future navigators and lake captains. His work at Toronto⁴ was well done, and many

¹ There is no certainty as to the origin and meaning of the Indian word “Toronto” with its various spellings. Some say it means “a place of meeting”, others again “trees in the water” (Iroquois). On early maps Lake Simcoe is called “Lac Tarento” or “Lac Taranthe”. See discussion in “Toronto During the French Regime” p. 221 etc., by Percy J. Robinson, M.A.

² The Humber River was originally called the “Toronto” River, but in Rousseau’s day it had come to be called St. John’s River.

³ “Toronto During the French Regime”, p. 210 by Percy J. Robinson, M.A.

⁴ A land survey of Toronto and its environs had been made by Alexander Aitkin, Deputy Provincial Surveyor in 1788. Aitken also made the first plan of the original town of York (Toronto), in 1793. Gother Mann, captain commanding the Royal Engineers, made a plan of Toronto Harbor, proposed town and settlement. It is dated, Quebec, December 6th, 1788. This was four

important missions were later confided to him. His accomplishments made his family famous and they have given him a permanent place in Canadian annals.

Who was Joseph Bouchette? Where did his family come from? What is his life story? These are questions which I shall try to answer briefly in this memoir.

Canadian historical records show that the family of Joseph Bouchette came originally from St. Malo in Brittany⁵ the same town which, in 1534, sent Jacques Cartier westward, on the voyage which ended in the discovery of Canada. The founder of the Bouchet, or Bouchette, family in Canada was Marc Bouchet, son of Alain Bouchet and Servienne Alary, who came to this country in the early years of the 18th century. On September 2, 1724, he married, in Quebec, Marie Thérèse Grenet.⁶ Of the marriage five children were born. Through the youngest son, Jean Baptiste, who was born in Quebec, July 5, 1736, the family line was carried down to us. On September 27, 1773, Jean Baptiste, mentioned above, married Angélique Duhamel in Quebec City. They had nine children,⁷ two sons and seven daughters.⁸ Joseph, the subject of this sketch was the eldest child. The heads of the family through the first three Canadian generations, were therefore Marc Bouchette, J. B. Bouchette and Joseph Bouchette.

Joseph Bouchette of whom we write was born in Quebec City, May 14, 1774. When he was but one year old, his father Jean Baptiste, by a brave strategy, a feat of daring worthy of the annals of Knighthood, saved the life of Governor Carleton and brought him safely down the St. Lawrence, on a chill November night, through the American lines from Montreal to Quebec, and thus saved the latter city, besieged at the time, by the combined American forces of General Richard Montgomery and Benedict Arnold. The fall of Quebec would have meant again the fall of Canada as in 1759. Benjamin Sulte speaking of the achievement of Jean Baptiste Bouchette, says: "I am going to speak to you of a simple sailor who served as the pivot, or, if you wish, the turning point in the history of Canada. His

years before Simcoe arrived in Upper Canada.

⁵ The people of Brittany or Bretagne, a province of North West France, are Celts, akin to the Irish, Scotch, Welsh and the inhabitants of Devon in England. They have preserved to this day the Breton language (Celtic) and the Catholic faith. In the days of Caesar their Province was called Armorican Gaul.

⁶ A. Grenet died with Adam Daulac at the Long Sault in 1660. Blood will tell!

⁷ The Bouchette Family by Hon. E. Fabre Surveyer.

⁸ Strangely enough five members of this family, four girls and the second son, formed marriage alliances with English-speaking life partners.

case is a rare one. Single-handed, he decided the destiny of a nation. To have had such an hour in one's lifetime is enough to make one live forever."⁹

The services of J. B. Bouchette on this occasion were not forgotten by Carleton. His loyalty was rewarded. We soon find him Commodore in command of all the boats on Lake Ontario. It was he who established the naval docks at Kingston in which city he died in 1804. Between 1791 and 1796, on the recommendation of Lieutenant Governor Simcoe, 5,000 acres of land were allotted to him and his seven daughters on the very site of the present city of Toronto. Under date of the Surveyor General's Office in Quebec, June 10, 1791, Mr. Collins, deputy surveyor general, writes to Augustus Jones, an eminent Deputy Provincial Surveyor, that "His Excellency, Lord Dorchester, has been pleased to order one thousand acres of land to be laid out in Toronto for Mr. Rocheblave; and for Captain Lajorée and for Captain Bouchette, seven hundred acres each at the same place, which please lay out accordingly and report the same to this office with all convenient speed."¹⁰ These grants, however, were never secured.

Joseph Bouchette inherited from his father Jean Baptiste, the tradition of loyalty and devoted service which characterized his whole career. He was, says Scadding, "one of the many French Canadians of eminence who, in early days, were distinguished for their chivalrous attachment to the cause and service of England."¹¹

Bouchette's early education was meagre, but nature had richly endowed him and the world of men was to give him much not found in the schools. In 1790, at the age of 16 years, he entered at Quebec the office of his uncle, Samuel Holland,¹² Surveyor General of Canada. In 1791, he was, with his father, Jean Baptiste Bouchette, on Lake Ontario, where his ability and efficiency attracted the eye of Governor Simcoe. In 1793, he made the first survey of Toronto harbor. Writing of that survey he says: "It fell to my lot to make the first survey of York (Toronto) Harbor. Lieutenant Governor Simcoe, who then resided at Navy Hall, Niagara, having formed extensive plans for the improvement of the colony, had resolved upon laying the foundations of a provincial capital. I was, at that period, in the Naval service of the Lakes and the survey of Toronto (York) Harbor was intrusted by His Excellency to my performance."

⁹ "J'ai avous parler d'un simple marin, qui a servi de pivot, ou si vous voulez, de point tournant, à l'histoire du Canada. Son cas est rare. Il était seul et décidait du sort d'un pays. Avoir en une heure semblable dans son existence, c'est assez pour vivre toujours." Mémoires de la Société Royale du Canada, 3^{ème} série p. 79

¹⁰ "Toronto of Old" by Scadding, p. 17.

¹¹ "Toronto of Old" p. 358.

¹² Samuel Holland had married Marie Josephe Rolette, his father's half sister. (Samuel Holland by Frances Audet, "Bulletin des Recherches Historiques" XXXI, p. 438).

“ I still distinctly recollect the untamed aspect which the country exhibited when first I entered the beautiful basin, which thus became the scene of my early hydrographical operations. Dense and trackless forests lined the margin of the lake and reflected their inverted images in its glassy surface. The wandering savage had constructed his ephemeral habitation beneath their luxuriant foliage (the group then consisting of two families of Mississagas) and the bay and neighboring marshes were the hitherto uninvaded haunts of immense coveys of wild fowl. Indeed, they were so abundant as in some measure to annoy us during the night.”¹³

Lieutenant Governor Simcoe was with Bouchette when the latter began his work on the survey of York (Toronto) Harbour, in the Spring of 1793; we know that “ On Thursday, May 3rd, (that year) His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor, accompanied by several military gentlemen, set out in boats for Toronto, round the head of Lake Ontario by Burlington Bay.” In the evening of the same day, His Majesty’s vessels the “ Caldwell” and “ Buffalo” sailed for the same place. The Governor and his suite arrived, most probably, on Saturday. The inspection of the harbor and its surroundings occupied less than a week and on Monday, May 13th, they were back in Niagara.¹⁴ Bouchette and the men of the “ Caldwell” and “ Buffalo”, remained behind to prosecute the work of the survey.

The survey of York (Toronto) harbor, in the Spring of 1793, was of great moment, but the outstanding event of that year was the foundation, in midsummer, of the town of York. Joseph Bouchette, who was close to Governor Simcoe throughout these eventful days, gives us interesting details in his “ British Dominions in North America”, of the Governor’s movements, in preparation for the ceremony. “ In the spring of 1793” he says, “ The Lieutenant Governor moved to the site of the new capital, (York) attended by the regiment of the Queen’s Rangers and commenced the realization of his favorite project. His Excellency inhabited, during the summer and through the following winter a canvas house which he imported expressly for the occasion.” This canvas house (tent), of which Bouchette speaks, had been the property of the celebrated Captain Cook who circumnavigated the globe. Simcoe had bought the tent at a sale in London.

In August 1793, the “ Rangers” were brought across the lake from Niagara on the “ Onondaga” for the solemn foundation of York. We see that Governor Simcoe had arrived from Niagara only a few days before and the famous canvas tent above mentioned was erected for him just east of where the Old Fort stands today. It was now the end of July 1793. The Upper Canada Gazette of that week says: “ On Monday evening, His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor left Navy Hall and embarked on board His Majesty’s schooner, the “ Mississaga”, which sailed immediately with a favorable gale for York (Toronto) with the remainder of the Queen’s Rangers.”

¹³ “ Toronto of Old” p. 508 by Scadding and “ British Dominions in North America” p. 89 by Joseph Bouchette.

¹⁴ “ Upper Canada Gazette” May 18, 1793.

Mrs. Simcoe adds to our information as to the preparations for the founding of the new capital. A note in her diary,¹⁵ dated Niagara, July 29, 1793, says: "We were prepared to sail for Toronto this morning but the wind changed suddenly. We dined with the Chief Justice (Dummer Powell) and were recalled from a walk at nine o'clock this evening, as the wind had become fair. We embarked on board the "Mississaga," the band playing in the ship. It was dark and so I went to bed and slept till eight o'clock the next morning and I found myself in the harbor of Toronto. We had gone under an easy sail all night, for as no person¹⁶ on board had ever been at Toronto, Mr. Bouchette was afraid to enter the harbor till daylight when St. John Rousseau,¹⁷ an Indian trader, who was near, came in a boat to pilot us." Mrs. Simcoe did not bring her little son Frank with her. He was unwell and he was left at Niagara with a Mrs. Hamilton. The child was brought over a little later when he had recovered.

On arrival in Toronto, the Rangers landed immediately and encamped on the grounds where at present stand the "Old Fort"¹⁸ and the buildings of the Canadian National Exhibition. On the rising ground, across the then Garrison Creek to the eastward, the tents for the Governor, Mrs. Simcoe and her party were pitched. These details settled, the Governor, Mrs. Simcoe and friends went two miles down the bay, almost to the mouth of the Don¹⁹ where the new town of York

¹⁵ Diary of Mrs. Simcoe, p. 179.

¹⁶ This statement would lead us to believe that Governor Simcoe was not with Mrs. Simcoe on her eventful voyage of Monday, July 29, 1793, from Niagara to the foundation of Toronto. Percy J. Robinson assumes that he was. John Ross Robertson, however, in a note in the Diary of Mrs. Simcoe says: "The Governor was not one of the passengers on this occasion, for although Mrs. Simcoe uses the word 'we' she continues by saying that 'no person on board had ever been at Toronto'. The Governor had visited Toronto on Thursday, 3rd May, his first visit and was there until the 11th when he returned to Navy Hall. He was in York (Toronto) again on the 6th of August."

¹⁷ Jean Baptiste Rousseau, (1758-1812) lived, in 1793, at the mouth of St. John's Creek, called to-day the Humber River. In second nuptials he was married to a non-Catholic, Margaret Clyne, by Rev. Robert Allison, Anglican parson of Niagara in 1795. His first wife, Marie Martineau, whom he had espoused years before in Kingston, was still alive. He moved to Ancaster where he built a saw mill and a grist mill. He joined the Masonic Lodge #10, Township of Barton, he was a Lieutenant Colonel in the 2nd Regiment, York Militia, in the war of 1812. Died Nov. 18, 1812, at Niagara. (Percy J. Robinson in "Toronto Under the French Regime.")

¹⁸ The old French Fort, erected in 1749, and called Fort Rouille.

¹⁹ The Don was so named by Simcoe in 1793. Its Indian name was "Wonscoteonach" which means "back burnt grounds". Simcoe also named the Humber, Scarborough Bluffs and Gibraltar Point (Hanlan's Point).

was to be built. The locality was covered with a beautiful grove of oak trees through which they wandered. This was the spot chosen for the location of the first buildings, just at the foot of our Berkeley and Parliament Streets. The square first cleared was that part of the Toronto of to-day bounded by George Street on the West, Parliament Street on the East, Queen Street on the North and Toronto Bay²⁰ on the South. Mrs. Simcoe does not fail to note that “the water of the Bay was wonderfully clear and transparent.”

The Rangers²¹ immediately set to work; the forest was soon cleared and building operations were begun under the direction of the Governor himself. “For the Simcoes” says Robinson, “the summer of 1793 was full of the beating of drums, and the crash of trees, of rides on the peninsula (Toronto Island to-day) and rows up the Don, of excursions to the ‘Old French Fort’ and visits from the Indians”. It was as the great year of Toronto’s birth.

For Friday August 9th, 1793, we find the following note in Mrs. Simcoe’s Diary, – “Some Indians from the Ojibway tribe came from near Lake Huron. They are extremely handsome and have a superior air to any I have seen. They have been living among Europeans therefore less accustomed to drink rum. Some wore black silk handkerchiefs covered with silver brooches, tied right round the neck, others silver bands, silver armbands, and their shirts ornamented with brooches; scarlet leggings or pantaloons, and black, blue, or scarlet broadcloth blankets. These Indians brought the Governor ‘a beaver blanket to make his bed’, as they expressed themselves, apologized for not having done it sooner, and invited him to visit their country.”

Joseph Bouchette was present with Simcoe when on that memorable day, in August, probably Saturday the 24th, 1793, “with all the ceremony possible in the wilderness” the Governor inaugurated and proclaimed the founding of the new capital. Mrs. Simcoe was present also with her young son Frank. The Ojibway Chief “Great Sail” from Lake Huron, held the little boy in his arms as the Rangers fired a salute while the roar of the cannon, 12-pounders, brought up from Carleton Island, near Kingston, or from Fort Oswegatchie (Ogdensburg), startled the stillness of the neighboring forests and re-echoed from the Bluffs of Scarborough

²⁰ By an order of Governor Simcoe, the name Toronto was changed to York on August 26, 1793. On February 16, 1804, Angus Macdonell (York) asked leave in the House of Assembly to bring in a bill to change the name York back to Toronto. (Records of Assembly of Upper Canada).

²¹ Queen’s Rangers, a regiment raised in England by Simcoe when he was appointed Lieutenant Governor of the newly-formed Province of Upper Canada. It bore the same name as the corps which Simcoe commanded in the American Revolutionary War, which was disbanded in 1783. The Rangers cleared the forests at York (Toronto) and erected the first buildings in the town. They built Yonge Street, Dundas Street, etc., they were disbanded in 1796 when Simcoe left Upper Canada.

on the east to the Humber River on the West. Mississauga and Ojibway Indians looked on in wonder at the doings of their white brothers. It was a day of great joy and satisfaction for Governor Simcoe. Mrs. Simcoe speaking of the occasion says in her diary: "There was a party of Ojibway Indians here who appeared much pleased with the firing. One of them named "Great Sail" took Francis²² in his arms and was much pleased to find that the child was not afraid but delighted with the sound." Little Francis appears to have interested all the Redskins. All this firing and the visits of the Indians marked the day of the foundation of Toronto, August 24, 1793. On the following Tuesday, Aug. 27, the change of the name of Toronto to York went into effect. "The two-cross flag was raised and a salute of 21 guns was fired to commemorate this event." On this occasion the Indian Chief from Lake Simcoe, held little Francis on his arms during the firing.

Several authorities state that Bouchette²³ was engaged for some time with Augustus Jones in the survey of the new town of York and in the survey and projection of Yonge Street. At all events, he was often in York (Toronto). He ever showed a great interest in the town. We know that he pleaded in vain with the authorities in Quebec for its fortification and after its capture in 1813 by the United States forces he wrote: "The defenceless situation of York (Toronto), the mode of its capture and the destruction of the large ship then on the stocks were but too prophetically demonstrated in my report to headquarters in Lower Canada, on my return from a responsible mission to the capital of the Upper Province in the early part of April."

Joseph Bouchette resided in Toronto for some time for Scadding writes: "On Adelaide Street immediately south of this house (the home of President Smith) and also a little to the west of the Macdonell Block²⁴ was a residence of mark, erected at an early period by Mr. Hugh Heward, (a clerk in the Lieutenant Governor's Office), and memorable as having been the abode for a time of the Naval Commissioner or Commodore, Joseph Bouchette, who first took the soundings and constructed a map of the harbor of York."²⁵ The old maps of Toronto show that Colonel Bouchette owned property, "park lots", west of Bathurst Street, in what is now the Givens Street section of Toronto.

In the Autumn of 1793, the "Onondaga" was left under the care of a young lieutenant and ran aground. The vessel was an armed schooner of 14 guns and 80

²² When Francis grew up, he joined the British army. He was killed in Spain, at the storming of Badajos at the age of 21 years.

²³ In 1793 the work of cutting out streets and roads for the new town was undertaken by the Queen's Rangers, under the direction of Colonel Bouchette, Augustus Jones and Governor Simcoe himself—Robertson's "Landmarks of Toronto", Vol. I. p. 387.

²⁴ The residence of Hon. Alexander Macdonell, grandfather of the late Senator Claude Macdonell and Miss Pauline Marie Macdonell.

²⁵ "Toronto of Old", p. 332.

tons burden and was the flag ship of Commodore Jean Baptiste Bouchette. She was stranded on a wide-spread shoal at the entrance to Toronto harbor. It was feared that she could not be gotten off until the Spring. "On Monday, December 9th²⁶, the Governor went to the west shore of the Peninsula at Gibraltar Point (Hanlan's Point) to view the Onondaga in such rough weather that the waves came into the boat and made everybody wet." The Commodore's son Joseph, the first surveyor of York harbor, distinguished himself by managing to get the "Onondaga" off after she had been abandoned, and we are told of his assuming command and sailing with her to Niagara, where he was received amidst the cheers of the garrison and others assembled on the shore to greet the rescued vessel. For this exploit Joseph Bouchette was, on the 12th of May, 1794, promoted to the rank of second lieutenant. He was then 20 years of age.

It was on July 4th, 1797, that Joseph Bouchette was married in Notre Dame Church, Montreal, to Adelaide Chaboillez, the second daughter of Charles Chaboillez²⁷ and Marguerite L'Archevêque. Colonel de Longueuil²⁸ represented the groom's father at the marriage. The latter, at the time, was living in Kingston. From the marriage, five children were born:²⁹ Marguerite Adelaide, died in Quebec 1803; Joseph who, like his father, became a surveyor and died at Pont Rouge in 1881; Samuel Louis, lawyer and solicitor, died in Montreal in 1873; Jean François, infantry officer, died in Europe; and Robert Shore Milnes,³⁰ lawyer, who for his part in the Rebellion of 1837, was exiled to the Bermudas in 1838, died in Quebec, 1879. From this last son the Bouchettes of Ottawa to-day are descended.

In 1799 Bouchette was in Halifax studying military tactics under orders from the Duke of Kent. In 1801 he was again in Quebec City in the office of his uncle, Samuel Holland, Surveyor General. He found the office in a state of disorder, for, at the time, Robert Shore Milnes, the Lieutenant Governor wrote: "There is needed a man of much skill and unimpeachable integrity to establish, in the service, a system which will assure equally the rights of the crown and those of

²⁶ "Diary of Mrs. Simcoe", p. 210.

²⁷ Chaboillez Square, Montreal, is named after this family. Charles Chaboillez was a member of the North West Company. He had four daughters. The eldest, Marguerite, married Simon McTavish, the head of the North West Company; the second, Adelaide, married Joseph Bouchette; the third, Rachel, became the wife of Hon. Roderick Mackenzie, Lord of Terrebonne and member of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada; the fourth, Charlotte, became a Hotel-Dieu nun in Montreal.

²⁸ Colonel J. de Longueuil was the commanding officer of the 1st Battalion of the "Royal Canadian Volunteer Regiment of Foot". Joseph Bouchette was a lieutenant in that battalion. "Sketches of Glengarry in Canada" by J. A. Macdonell.

²⁹ "The Bouchette Family" by Surveyer.

³⁰ Named after the Lieutenant Governor of Lower Canada.

individuals.³¹ Bouchette succeeded so well that the Lieutenant Governor in 1802 could say: "Mr. Bouchette has responded perfectly to the opinion which we had formed of him." Samuel Holland died December 9, 1801. In August, 1803, Bouchette was appointed his successor.

Bouchette's sojourn in Upper Canada, where the western boundary line of the province was always in dispute, had impressed on him the necessity of determining exactly the boundary line between Lower Canada and the United States. In 1807 it appears that he went to London to call the attention of the home authorities to that question. He met but little encouragement.

In the War of 1812-13, Bouchette was very active. On May 26, 1813, he was gazetted a Lieutenant Colonel on the Governor General's staff. He³² was employed in carrying confidential despatches from headquarters in Quebec to Major General Hale Sheaffe, commanding in Upper Canada. His efforts, later in 1813, served successfully to check the advance on Montreal of the Americans under Generals Hampton and Wilkinson.³³

The war over, Bouchette returned to his maps, his charts, and his surveys. The Legislature of Quebec voted him for his work the sum of 1500 louis of which, however, only 500 louis were ever paid. Despite this neglect he worked on industriously. As said above, the idea of correcting the indefinite and undetermined boundary line between the province of Quebec and the states of Vermont, New York, and Maine ever pursued him, so in August 1814, he sailed again for England with his maps, charts, etc. In London, he was named Surveyor General in preparation for a treaty with the United States which should determine exactly the line of demarcation of the British possessions in America. On the demand of Colonel Barclay, one of the commissioners appointed by the British Government to study the question of boundary lines, he was called to Boston where he submitted a detailed report with plans and explanations.³⁴ "In the spring of 1817 he began his field operations on the dividing line between New Brunswick and the State of Maine. He erected a monument at the source of the river Ste Croix from whence the boundary departs. He established a line due north from this point to the highland and continued the exploring line one hundred miles in the wilderness. At the imminent peril of his life he made numerous exploring surveys and sketched the face of the country."³⁵

³¹ Joseph Bouchette, p. 105 etc. by Surveyer.

³² Morgan's Famous Canadians.

³³ On November 12, 1813, he was on the "River aux Raisin", near Cornwall looking for "all possible information respecting the enemy." Letter of Colonel Joseph Bouchette to Noah Freer found in "Michigan Pioneer Collections", Volume XV, p. 442.

³⁴ Joseph Bouchette, p. 108 by Surveyer.

³⁵ Morgan's Famous Canadians.

The Ashburton Treaty of 1842, which finally settled the boundary line, did not, however, accept the line laid down by Bouchette. Hundreds of thousands of acres of valuable timber land were thus lost to Canada.

In London, in 1815, he was presented to the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV, and later to the Queen. To the former, who accepted, he dedicated his topographical works. The Duke of Kent asked the British Government to confer on him a title. The honor, however, was never received.

Having sailed for Canada from Portsmouth on the “Royal Charlotte”, on August 24, 1816, he arrived in Halifax on September 27th. For the publication of his work “British Dominions in North America”, etc. he had indebted himself to the amount of 1700 louis. His claim against the government for indemnity was adjourned year after year, from 1818 to 1823, and was finally dropped by an ungrateful legislature. Neglect did not, however, discourage or dampen his ardour for achievement. Important missions were confided to him and his name had gone abroad. In 1821 “La Biographie Nouvelle des Contemporains” has this to say: “Lieut. Colonel Bouchette of the English Service and Director General of Land Surveys in Lower Canada – his maps and charts are highly esteemed for their perfect exactitude.”

Although busy at his geographical work and not much interested in the politics of his day, Bouchette expressed himself in favour of the Union of the two Canadas which took place in 1840. He was one of the few French Canadians to do so. Judge E. Fabre Surveyer attributes Bouchette’s attitude on the question to the good treatment which in his business difficulties, he had received from wealthy Englishmen and to the ingratitude of his own people towards him.

Joseph Bouchette’s whole life seems to have been beset by financial worries. He was so absorbed by his great enterprises that the material side of life was forgotten. He risked his all for the success of his plans. Then too, lack of appreciation, from those who should have protected and assisted him, dogged his steps. In 1807 he was forced to sell his house on St. Louis Street, Quebec, to satisfy a creditor. He was several times obliged to change residences and sell his properties to liquidate his debts. In 1820, when he was most in need of funds, his salary was reduced from £600 to £400. Despite his appeal, and the promises of Sir John Sherbrooke and the Duke of Richmond, this injustice was never remedied.³⁶

Bouchette was greatly encouraged, however, when on November 22nd, 1817, Alexander Fraser, the seigneur of La Rivière-du-Loup and the fiefs of Madawaska and Témiscouata, donated to him, as a free gift, one quarter of the territory comprised by the two last-named domains amounting to some 20,000 acres. In 1829 Bouchette, because of debts contracted in the publication of his different geographical and topographical works, was obliged to sell part of the Témiscouata

³⁶ In 1875, thirty-four years after Bouchette’s death, the Legislature of Quebec finally paid his heirs the 1,000 louis still due on the 1,500 louis voted sixty years before.

property. In 1835 the seigneurie of Madawaska passed also out of his hands into those of the Témiscouata Pine Land Company of Portland, Maine.

With money now in hand, Bouchette set out again on September 29, 1829, for London, on the "General Wolfe". In the meantime his volumes were published and he had the honor of being received by Queen Victoria.

Bouchette's youngest son, Robert Shore Milnes,³⁷ had taken part in the Rebellion of 1837 and in July, 1838, he was transported into exile with other "patriots" to the Bermudas. It was a great sorrow to his father. This Robert realized. Writing of the event he said: "Oh, my poor father! Absolute in his conception of duty and loyalty, absolutely devoted for over forty years, to the cause of service, to his country and his king, he understood but little regarding my conduct; and embracing me, he wept over my sins and my misfortune."

The last years of Joseph Bouchette were shrouded in sorrow. Lord Sydenham, who arrived as Governor in 1839, gave him but little consideration, deprived him of his offices and forced his retirement. It was a withering blow, the darkest ingratitude he had yet known. He was obliged to withdraw from Quebec City to Montreal, where he died April 8th, 1841. His funeral took place at Notre Dame. He was buried with solemn ceremony in the crypt of the great church.³⁸ The extract of the Register of Burials at Notre Dame Church regarding the burial is as follows:

"Le treize avril, mil huit cent quarante un, par moi prêtre soussigné, a été inhumé dans l'église paroissiale de Montréal, Joseph Bouchette, Ecuyer, Arpenteur Général, décédé le huit du courant, âgé de soixante six ans, Colonel des Milices du Bas-Canada, de la Ville de Québec. Les témoins ont été Robert Le Morragh et Henry Des Rivières, Ecuyer soussignés

R. Le Morragh

Henri Des Rivières

Austin Cuvillier Lung

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George Etienne Cartier (quoted by Surveyer) speaking of Bouchette said: "Joseph Bouchette, a man immensely distinguished, did great things for the topography and geography of the country. He gave to the public volumes of information which have remained the basis of our geographical knowledge of Canada." An obituary notice said of him: "For sentiments of loyalty to his Sovereign, for his veneration and attachment to Constitutional government and for the perpetuation of the connection of his native Canada with Great Britain the late Surveyor General was conspicuously distinguished. His public labors reflect honor on his native country."

³⁷ R. S. M. Bouchette, the "rebel", was Commissioner of Customs of the Dominion of Canada, from 1868 to his death in November 1874.

³⁸ Le juge E. Fabre Surveyer says: "Il eut d'imposantes funérailles à Notre-Dame, et fut même enterré dans la crypte de l'église, ainsi que sa femme qui mourut le 10 février 1847 et fut inhumée deux jours après."