

## CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER HAGERMAN, KC

Inducted 2004

It seems hard to imagine now but in 1792, when Upper Canada was created, Adolphustown shared district administrative duties with Kingston. In that year, the first Court of Quarter Sessions for Midland District was held on land where Adolphustown Hall now sits. 1792 was also the year that a future Attorney General of Upper Canada was born on land now encompassed by the U.E.L. Heritage Centre & Park.



Christopher Alexander Hagerman was born on March 28, 1792, the son of loyalist Nicholas Hagerman and Anne Fisher, and baptized by Rev. John Langhorn. Over the years different Kingston historians have been confounded on how someone they describe as the offspring as a "simple country lawyer" could rise to prominence in Kingston and the province. Christopher's father, Nicholas, was one of the first lawyers appointed in Upper Canada, and his uncle, Judge Alexander Fisher, served as a man of considerable influence in the Midland District. Christopher set up his first law office in Kingston in 1807, and earned the nickname "Handsome Kit". When the war of 1812 broke out, he was appointed as an Ensign and then Lieutenant in the Lennox Militia. Hagerman was serving at Fort Wellington when the army of Lt. Col. Joseph Morrison passed by. Whether fate or raw talent, Hagerman acted as Morrison's Aide-de-Camp during the Battle of Crysler's Farm. He served well enough to be mentioned in Morrison's victory despatch to headquarters in Montreal. Later he served as a member of General Gordon Drummond's staff. Hagerman was present for the assault on Oswego, as well as the Battle of Lundy's Lane.

Hagerman's military service set the stage for his political involvement in Kingston and Upper Canada. In 1815 he was appointed King's Counsel and became one of the most prominent lawyers in early Kingston. In fact, he and his father were often on opposing sides in the courtroom. He became Kingston's first member of the Assembly in 1820 and represented the city for 15 of the next 20 years. In 1829 he was appointed as Solicitor General for the Province of Upper Canada, and became Attorney General in 1837, being the first Canadian born individual to hold this office. In 1840 he resigned his political office and accepted a judgeship.

Hagerman was married three times. His first marriage was in 1817 to Elizabeth MacAuley. His second marriage was in 1834 to Elizabeth Emily Merry. His third marriage was in 1846 to Caroline Tysen. He had a son and three daughters from his first marriage and a daughter from his second marriage. Hagerman died in Toronto on May 14, 1847 and was buried at St. James Cemetery, Toronto.