

PLANS FOR THE TOWN OF NEWCASTLE

As time passed, more communities were established near Lake Ontario. Water was the most efficient way to move people and supplies. Halfway between the two biggest towns of Kingston and York (Toronto) was the sheltered harbour of Presqu'île. There were big plans to build a town here.

Ship's Log: 1802

As the population of Upper Canada continued to grow, the distances between people grew smaller. The large Home District, originally covering the counties of York, Peel, Simcoe, Durham, and Northumberland was divided in half. It had already been decided to form a new district when 1,000 people lived in Durham and Northumberland. In July, 1802 the Newcastle District was formed.

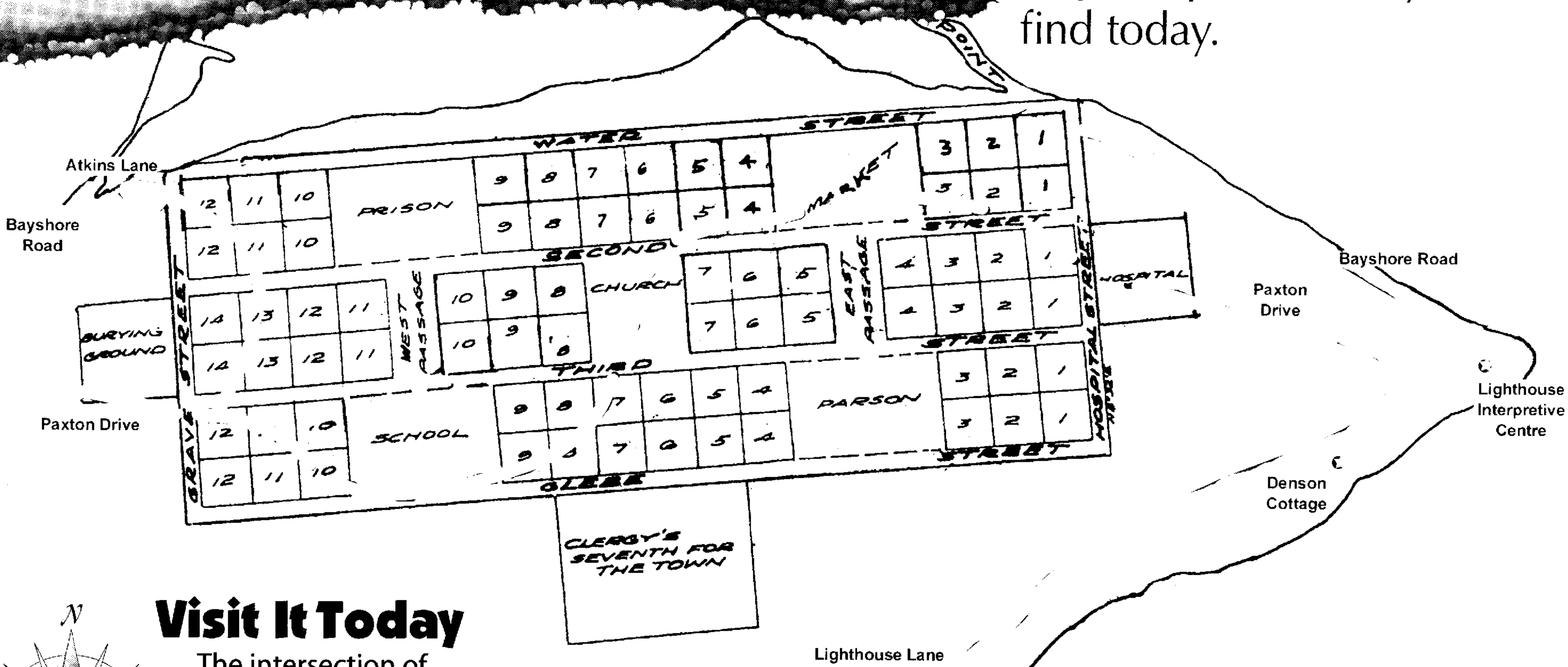
The Newcastle District capital was to be located on the Presqu'île Peninsula. A sheltered harbour and the location between York and Kingston seemed to make this an ideal setting. The capital would be called the Town of Newcastle.

The town was laid out in one-acre lots, with extra space for a church, school and courthouse. The three-storey courthouse was one of the first buildings constructed. Newcastle was off to a good start, but all plans fell apart on one fateful night in October, 1804 . . .

Here is a plan for the Town of Newcastle. A town that was never built! A town plan is like a map.

This town plan shows the location of the church, the prison and places where homes could be built. What other buildings and landmarks can you find?

The brown spots on this map are places that you can find today.



Visit It Today

The intersection of Paxton Drive and Atkins Lane in Presqu'île Provincial Park is close to where the Town of Newcastle was to be built.

If the Town of Newcastle had been built, what do you think it would look like today? On a separate sheet of paper list the stores and buildings you would find.

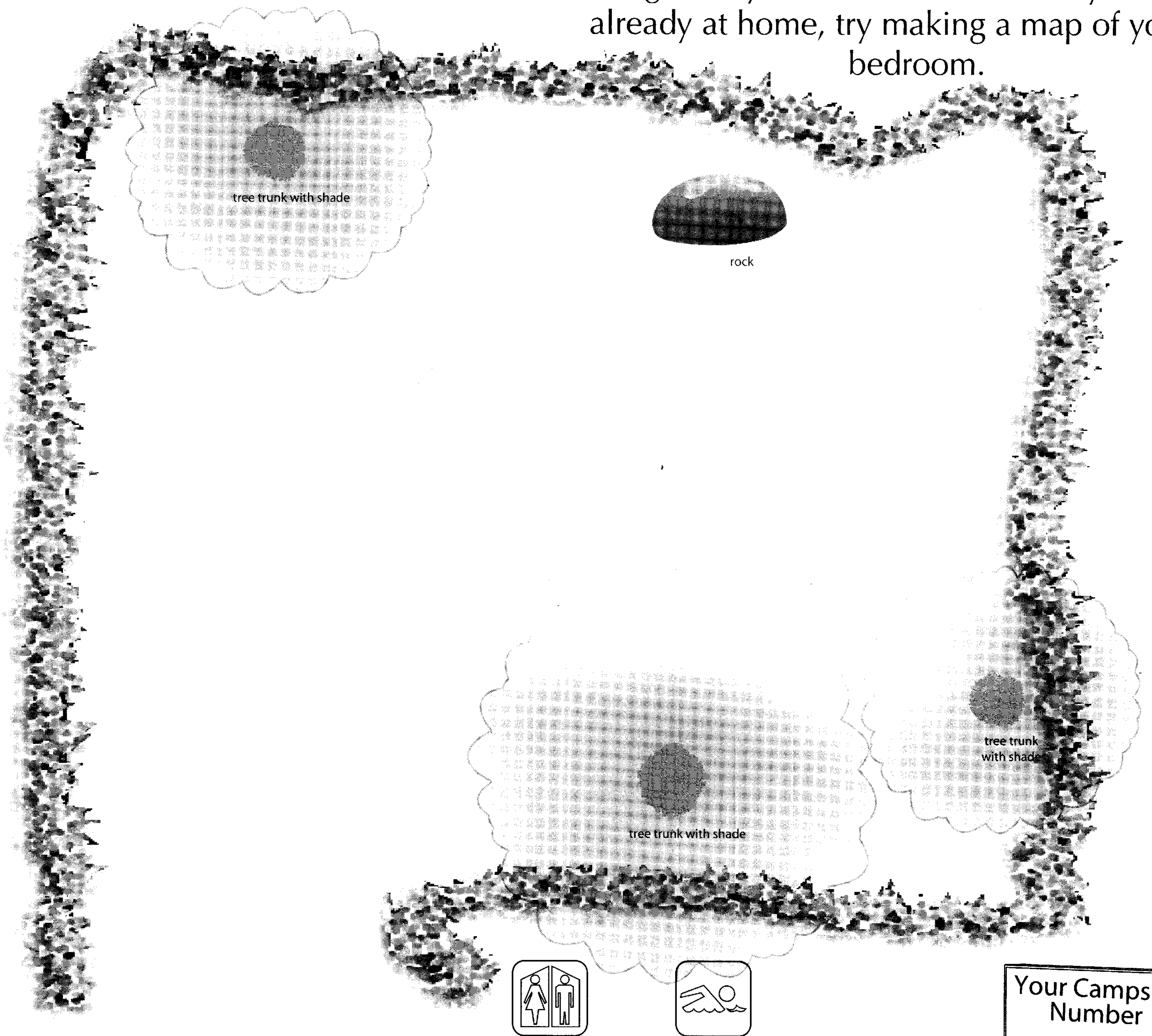
Make a Map of Your Campsite

Activity



Have you ever wondered why farms and city blocks have such straight boundaries? When Canada was first being divided into towns and farms, the easiest way to do it was by using straight lines.

Imagine planning an entire town. In 1802, this was the job of Alexander Aitkin. Now it's your turn to make a plan! Let's start with your campsite. Include all of the important things that you would find there. If you are already at home, try making a map of your bedroom.



Here are some ideas to get you started.

- Sleepy? Where will you place the tent?
- Who wants toasted marshmallows? You will need a place to build your campfire.
- Where will your family park the car?
- Dinner time! Don't forget to draw a picnic table.
- Which way to the toilet? Draw an arrow to show the way.
- Which way to the beach? Draw an arrow to show the way.
- What else do you need at your campsite?