

## THE TOWNSHIP OF WILLOUGHBY.

This municipality is bounded on the east by the Niagara river, on the south by the township of Bertie, on the west by the township of Crowland, and on the north by the river Welland, separating it from the township of Stamford. It is the smallest township in the county, containing only 18,738 acres, of which 3,575 are still in woodland. The original settlement began in 1784, when about ten families of "United Empire Loyalists" took up their residence on lands granted to them by the Crown, under the supervision of the officer commanding the garrison at Niagara. The township was subsequently surveyed in the year 1787, when wild land could be purchased for a shilling an acre. The early settlers invariably made their homes near the Niagara river, along the bank of which a road wound following the curves of the stream, from Chippawa to Fort Erie. During the war of 1812, these settlements were repeatedly ravaged by the invaders, many houses destroyed, and the inhabitants impoverished. The large and impenetrable tamarack swamp which traversed the township longitudinally in a northeasterly direction near the centre, and divided it into two long, narrow halves, rendered the settlement of the country in the interior slow and difficult, and, in 1817, we find that Willoughby, including the principal part of the present village of Chippawa, contained only sixty-three inhabited houses with a probable permanent population of a little more than three hundred persons, and there was no church and but one school. A small settlement was soon afterwards formed in the northwest angle of the township, from which a narrow road followed the windings of Lyons' creek to the village of Chippawa, and for many years, formed the only means of communication between the river-front and the interior of the township. About 1830, a number of German families emigrated into the township, and being thrifty and industrious, soon acquired small farms and created comfortable homes. During McKenzie's rebellion, the township was threatened by invasion, and marauding parties from Navy and Grand Island frequently landed and plundered houses near the river. Travellers were fired at, and as the road along the river formed the only highway in the township, leading from north to south, traffic of all kinds almost ceased. Several persons were injured and a few killed, and many houses damaged by the bombardment from Navy Island. The progress of the country was seriously retarded by these unfortunate events. In 1850, the population of the township,