

Intelligent administration on the part of the local authorities and a convenient supply of good materials have made this locality famous in another very desirable way, the construction and maintenance of good roads.

Crushed crystalline limestone is the chief road material used but there is an abundance of gravel in the glacial kames and eskers which are one of the most interesting features in this locality.

THE MADAWASKA RIVER.

The Madawaska river is the largest tributary of the Ottawa within this region. The greater part of the Algonquin Provincial Park with its innumerable lakes, and large portions of Haliburton, Hastings, and Renfrew counties are drained by this river and its branches. The Madawaska river, therefore, lies almost wholly in the rugged Laurentian upland and only emerges from it when within about 10 miles from the Ottawa. In this part of its course it flows across a plain covered with stoneless marine clay.

Notwithstanding the length and volume of this stream and the extent of territory which it drains there is only one town on its course, viz. Arnprior, situated at its mouth and one village, Bancroft, in Haliburton county on the York branch. Calabogie, Combermere, and Barrys Bay are small trading points situated on its course but none of these ever attained the size of incorporated villages.

Traditions concerning lumbering operations attach more frequently to the history of the Madawaska river than to any other stream in the region on account of the large area of its drainage basin, the vast groves of red and white pine it contained and the turbulence of its waters.

As long as the pine lasted lumbering was the business of the river from its headwaters to its junction with the Ottawa and everything else was subsidiary to it.

The origin of Arnprior is part of the story of the last Laird of McNab, a picturesque character who conceived the bold if ill-fated design of repairing his broken fortunes and re-establishing the once powerful clan of which he was chief, by a settlement on the shores of the Ottawa. Following an agreement with the Government of Upper Canada, the meaning of which was later to become a subject of fierce dispute, McNab arrived in 1825 with the first of the settlers to be located by him as tenants in the township which perpetuates his name. He proceeded to erect a dwelling on the high shore of the Ottawa river just west of the mouth of the Madawaska, a site of much dignity and natural beauty now embellished by the fine grounds and residence long occupied by the late H. F. McLaughlin.

The chief's house was according to Bouchette in his *British Dominions*, "exceedingly comfortable,"

and he extolls "the well furnished board and the cordiality of a Highland welcome" as mitigating for a period the hardship of a canoe trip down the Ottawa in the course of which he became a guest of the "Noble Gaël."

The circumstances of McNab as landlord to a few scattered settlers were not such as to entail the growth of a village about his residence which was moreover subsequently removed to White lake, 10 miles west of Arnprior. He had induced, however, three brothers named Buchanan, kinsmen of his, to join his little colony and create a sawmill at the falls of the Madawaska. A hamlet thus came into being and was by the Buchanans named Arnprior after their family seat in Scotland.

At that time and for many years after the business of sawing lumber at this region was of no great importance, except as regards local needs. Pine timber for export was hewn in the bush and floated down the rivers to tide water in rafts. The business done at the Arnprior sawmills gave little promise of the volume it was afterwards to assume and an English firm to whose hands it passed from the Buchanans, closed down the mill. We must suppose the village, therefore, to have been almost deserted when in 1852 the property was purchased by Daniel McLaughlin, who became also the owner, then or subsequently, of much adjacent land formerly owned by McNab.

With this event the permanent growth of the place may be considered to have commenced. Two mills were built at the falls and supplied from the vast quantity of pine logs which for many years were floated down the Madawaska. With the expansion of the business which has continuously been owned by the same family, large steam driven mills were erected on the Ottawa and with the sources of supply made available by that great river and its tributaries the firm's operations reached dimensions which classed it as one of the most important producers of pine lumber in the world. Lately the water mills were removed as the Madawaska has ceased to be an important factor in the log supply and the water power has temporarily gone into disuse. For some years the mills have been supplied largely from the firm's lumber holdings in the Petawawa, Black river and Kippawa districts.

From this brief outline it will appear that although Arnprior is situated in a fertile highly cultivated district its origin, growth, and the occupation of its people have a closer relation to the forest than to the farm.

The natural resources of the district surrounding Arnprior consist of an extensive area of flat clay lands, which have great agricultural possibilities.