

CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORY OF THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF NEW CANAAN.

Somewhere about the year 1795 there came to what is now known as New Canaan a number of Loyalists who had left the United States at the close of the war which resulted in the independence of those States.

These Loyalists at first settled at Belleisle. They were attracted by the reports of some moose hunters who had gone up the Washademoak Lake, and had followed up the river now known as the Canaan River, and had come upon a large stretch of alluvial meadow. This seemed to give promise of being a fine farming country. The whole country for many miles around was then an unbroken forest.

Moose roamed at will for the most part undisturbed. They were then the undisputed lords of the forest. The trees resounded to the crash of their horns, and the stillness of the night was broken by their long-drawn blasts as calls were given and answered. Cariboo roamed the forest in vast bands, and lived at ease upon the marshy barrens that everywhere abounded. Herds of deer pass quietly to and fro, and bears might everywhere be seen upon their predatory excursions; while the numerous beaver dams yet to be seen, scattered through this region, attest to the fact that these animals were then most plentiful. Wild fowl were plentiful, and the river and its tributaries abounded in different kinds of fish. A hunter's paradise indeed was all this vast region.

Into this promising region came the pioneers of New Canaan. They brought with them what household effects they had been able to transfer from their United States homes. They brought moreover stout hearts and sinewy limbs inured to incessant toil in a new country. They brought an undying patrio-