

## IV.

## MUNICIPAL LIFE IN THE EARLY YEARS OF ORO.

It may interest some of your readers if I give some of my recollections of municipal life in the early days in Oro. Mr. Richard Drury, the father of Mr. Charles Drury, was Reeve, and our place of meeting was John Galbraith's tavern, as it was called. Old John Galbraith was well-known to travellers on the road from Orillia to Barrie; he also was a Councillor for the township. I was generally the first to arrive at our place of meeting, and as the landlady had forgotten the day of the meeting, my arrival put her in mind that it was Council day, and immediately there was a commotion among the fowls; boys were set to run them down, and they (the fowls) were made to contribute towards our dinner. Mr. Drury, having the longest road to travel, was generally the last to arrive. About one o'clock we would adjourn for dinner, the fowls having been caught, without looking to their age, and they were generally a pretty tough lot. On one occasion (Mr. Drury, as Reeve, being the carver) the hens being tough and the knives being blunt, he could make no impression upon them, and he looked around with blank despair on his countenance, when old John Galbraith came to his aid with an exclamation of "Hold on, Mr. Drury, and I will soon tore them in pieces." He immediately took hold of one of the aged hens by the legs and pulled them apart, and with "Ahem, that's the way to do it," he seized on the other and served it in the same way. On another occasion a man by the name of McGregor had the house rented, and Mr. Duncan Clarke, who was the township clerk, generally had a large, brown dog with him. And one day we were wondering we had no announcement of dinner made, and after waiting an hour later than usual, dinner was announced, and on entering the dining room the landlady met us with, "Gentlemen, you will have to pay fifty cents each for the dinner, for Mr. Clarke's dog has eaten the first dinner prepared." Our Reeve, Mr. Drury, turned to the Clerk and said, "Mr. Clarke, charge the extra twenty-five cents to the township," and so it was done.