

Such being the unsatisfactory termination of my long-continued, and sometimes expensive, disinterested exertions, it will not be thought surprising that I should have felt so chagrined and disappointed that I had ever since refrained from further agitation of the subject. But more propitious times appearing to have at length arrived, I now venture to add to the foregoing narrative even the following rather lengthy particulars on the subject of *Drainage*, extracted chiefly from a Topographical Sketch of the Township of Colchester, drawn up by myself, as of sufficient public interest to repay the perusal.

"The surface of this Township, though partaking of the general flat character of the District, is far from being a dead level, being in many quarters enlivened by large tracts of undulating or rolling land, and in others checkered by detached stony rises, besides being traversed by a rather continuous ridge running irregularly in a west and east direction, two or three miles retired from the lake, which, forming a barrier to the drainage of the interior lakeward, forces a portion of the surface waters westward into the River Canard, and the rest south-eastward by several channels into Cedar Creek.\*

"The existence of similar ridges is a distinguishing feature in nearly all the other lake-shore Townships; in some of which, as in Raleigh, they approach to within half a mile of the beach, and not only arrest the drainage of the back lands towards the lake, but produce a succession of open marshy tracts, which become nearly dry in summer, but are annually flooded until they attain a certain height, when their waters find a partial vent by various outlets, from pools or ponds, which appear to have at one time been of a lower level, and (in this Township at least) to have owed their present elevation to artificial dams, formed by that sagacious amphibious animal, the beaver, once very common, but now rarely met with in this part of the country.† The ridges alluded to are also remarkable for being in some instances composed of beds of small gravel and sand, mixed with isolated masses of rock; and in others of a congeries of large imbedded boulders of granite, limestone, and other rocks, some of which measure from ten to fifteen feet in surface.

"The marshes in Colchester, explored by myself, are four in number, and known by different names, such as Hog Marsh, Roach's Marsh, Long Marsh, and Round Marsh. Of these Hog Marsh, which is partly in Gosfield, occupies about 1,200 acres, and is generally about three miles and a half long, and one and a half broad, and is remarkable as at the same time draining westerly, and giving birth to the little River Canard, which falls into the Detroit above Amherstburg, and also S. S. Eastwardly into Cedar Creek, which empties itself into Lake

Erie. Roach's marsh, which lies further west, and also feeds the Canard on one hand and Cedar Creek on the other, contains about 2,000 acres, and is generally about three miles and a half long. Long Marsh, still further west, contains about 1,600 acres, and varies in length from three to four miles, and in breadth from a quarter to three-quarters of a mile. And Round Marsh, connected with the southern extremity of Long Marsh, consists of about 600 acres: making 5,400, or say 6,000 acres in all—a rather large proportion of one Township; exhibiting in the wet and winter months extensive sheets of solitary water or ice; but, as they gradually dry up during summer, assuming the more cheerful aspect of broad verdant prairies, hemmed in by dark forests, resorted to alike by roving wild deer and domestic cattle from the neighbouring farms, and in autumn furnishing an abundant supply of coarse hay to whoever may be disposed to cut and stack it. Though thus not altogether worthless, it would, of course, be far more desirable to have these rich flats subjected to the plough; and there seems to be no great difficulty in the way; for it is believed, from a rather careful, though *not* scientific examination of their levels, that being in general shallow, and the intervening ridges only a few feet in height, they might all be drained and converted into productive farms at little expense, by simply cutting a rather broad ditch due north from Lake Erie, past the village of Colchester to the ninth Concession, until it approaches the River Canard, that would at once serve the purpose of a small Canoe Canal, and, by throwing the excavated materials all on one side, furnish a good elevated road through a part of the country in which, in wet seasons, such a communication is much wanted. Add to which the same cut might perhaps be made to supply a considerable water power, for the benefit of the village."

In further proof that the proposed drainage of the lake-shore Townships in general, and of Colchester in particular, was not altogether a visionary scheme, it may be here added, commencing with my own Township, that after estimating as well as I could the difference of the level inland, I became persuaded that a depth of three or four feet, and a width of six past the village, would be sufficient, and that the greater additional cutting required through the first ridge, about one mile and a half inland, need not in any part be more than six feet, and that the expense, therefore, would not be very great, while the benefits arising from such a measure would be incalculable.

Impressed with this conviction, and all the other Townships partaking more or less of the same physical character, I had, in 1841, been encouraged to open the subject to Lord Sydenham, during a personal interview at Kingston, in the course of which I remarked that as in Colchester the great bulk of the lands to be drained belonged to the Clergy Reserves and the Canada Company's block, the principal part of the expense would have to be borne by them, but that an equitable assessment per acre might also be levied on the lands of private individuals who benefited by the drainage: an arrangement in which his Lordship acquiesced, in addition to evincing his general approbation of the project, by particularly requesting me to mention the matter to the then Surveyor General and Commissioner of Crown Lands. I had, however, only an opportunity of seeing the former, when he also seemed to take much interest in the proposal, though he confessed that he saw little prospect of being then able to bring it forward with success. I was, therefore, induced to postpone all further agitation of the subject till I should have an interview with the Commissioner of the Canada Company; and this I had at Toronto on my way homewards, when Mr. Widder assured me that he approved much of the scheme, and that if I could only get Governmen

ing to have attempted any detailed estimate, I had pointedly avowed having refrained from so doing, and had merely hinted that, *in the absence of all such, one might hazard a supposition* (from a cursory comparison of several American estimates, from which I quoted a few figured details) that the expense of the proposed Cut between Lakes St. Clair and Erie, would not much exceed £40,000, and that, being no professed Engineer, any misunderstanding on my part was excusable; and that I, therefore, trusted that Government would still be disposed to authorise the trifling expense required to carry out even the most elaborate preliminary survey, from the results of which the Board would then be enabled to ground an authoritative opinion. Nothing further, however, was ever heard on the subject.

\* See the Township of Colchester in the annexed map, in which the marshy tracts are pretty correctly delineated.

† It was proposed that wherever these elevated ponds or basins occurred the dams should be cut through, so as to allow the water to flow off into the main drain or other outlet