

FOREWORD.

In April, 1893, I received from Alex. Fraser, M. A., of Toronto, a request that I would prepare, for the Gaelic Society of that city, a paper on the early Highland settlements of Middlesex county. Knowing the difficulties, I hesitated to comply. With constant pressing duties it was impossible to spend time in visiting all parts of the county, and the old pioneers have so nearly all passed away that it is much harder now than it would have been 20, or even 10 years ago, to get the desired information. Besides, I felt my own inadequacy and unworthiness. But nevertheless it was undertaken, and in doing the best I could, it has been a labor of love. I was obliged to depend mostly on correspondence, and while the result in some cases was disappointing, the response has been so general and cordial, that the work has been to a great extent the arrangement and compilation of the material gathered from all sources. If these sketches have any value the credit belongs largely to those without whose assistance their preparation would have been impossible.

The subject itself, and the limits of time and space made it necessary to keep strictly within the indicated field. Hence very little reference is made to the pioneers of other nationalities, though no less worthy of honorable mention: the sketches are confined almost entirely to the pioneer period, including roughly the first half of the last century: and the county of Middlesex is taken with its present boundaries, and not as in the pioneer days, when it covered a much wider area. The plan adopted is to give first a general sketch of facts and conditions, more or less entirely applicable to all the Highland settlements, and next, a separate and more detailed and personal record for each township. It has extended to considerable length, even though I have aimed at the utmost brevity consistent with some satisfactory de-

gree of clearness and completeness.

On the other hand, all the more important facts and names have been given as far as I have been able to ascertain them, but from my limited opportunities I fear it may be found that some of the worthy old pioneers, as well as many interesting events, have been passed over in silence. The whole is now submitted with the hope that, imperfect as it is, it may in some measure subserve the intended purpose.

All who have assisted in this work merit their full share of credit, and my grateful acknowledgments are due to D. J. Campbell, of Toronto, for articles, reminiscences and stories published in "The Age," the fruit of his indefatigable researches, to Andrew J. Ross, of East Williams, for a series of excellent articles on the pioneers of his township in the Parkhill Gazette-Review, as well as information by letter, to Rowland Shields, Alvinston, Miss Flora McColl, Hubrey, Donald McMillan, Hyde Park and D. Galbraith, Sable, for papers prepared and sent in, on the pioneers of Mosa, Westminster, London and West Williams townships respectively, to H. D. Johnson, of Strathroy, for frequent help and useful suggestions, to D. B. McColl, Appin, P. J. Thomson, Sheriff D. M. Cameron, and Rev. Arch. Stewart, London, Donald, M. M. and D. M. Campbell, Caradoc, Colin and Thomas Johnson and Archie Sinclair, Lobo, John S. McColl and Donald Campbell, Westminster, Alex. L. Leitch, S. A. Eakins, R. R. McDonald and Henry Main, Strathroy, John McDonald and John Love, West Williams, Mrs. H. Robbins, Adelaide, and Wm. Harker, Delaware, all of whom gave valuable and much appreciated help. I am also indebted to Malcolm Campbell, Ekfrid, for much valuable information obtained during a recent interview.

H. McCOLL.

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