

here at the beginning had it much harder than those who came later. The first settlers had to pack all their supplies on their backs from Hawkestone to cabins ten, twelve or fifteen miles back in the bush—arduous labor under any circumstances, but especially arduous where families were as large as they were then. Sometimes there were no supplies to pack. I have heard the late Messrs. Drury and Sissons say that at times they were actually obliged to depend upon wild fruits for their sustenance. Just before closing Dr. Gray made a statement which, coming from one of his years, is especially important. "My experience of fifty years tells me," said he, "that ninety out of every hundred in business fail, while not more than ten of every hundred farmers go under; and, where farmers fail, the cause of failure in the great majority of cases, is either laziness or drink. It is amazing why so many young men quit the farm and venture upon the risks and dangers inseparable from other lines of enterprise."

#### THE CAREER OF PETER YORK, INDIAN.

#### WELL KNOWN TO THE PEOPLE OF COLLINGWOOD — A SHORT SKETCH QUOTED FROM THE SATURDAY NIGHT

A few years ago there died in the Simcoe county jail at Barrie, an aged Indian named Peter York. York had been placed behind the bars for a serious offence, and had never borne an altogether enviable reputation, but he was one of the most intelligent red men in the Georgian Bay country, and had lived a remarkable life.

He belonged originally to the band of Indians who make their home on the Christian Island—a few miles from Collingwood—so called because it was there that the Jesuit fathers carried on one of their missions prior to the great massacre of the Hurons by the Iroquois in 1648. For crimes committed in early life, Peter York was driven into exile by his tribesmen, and he never dared return to the Christian Islands, where he would have been killed. Nor yet might he set foot in the home of the spirits, the Grand Manitoulin, which is sacred ground to the Ojibwa's and where

the apparently hopeless formality of shooting the devil is repeated year after year to this day.

Peter York lived for many and many moons at Thornbury, on the south shore of the Georgian Bay. He remembered the first white man who appeared in that region after the settlement of Upper Canada proper began in earnest under U. E. Loyalist auspices. He remembered not only the first white man, but the first sailing vessel, the first steamer and sawmill, and in fact the first everything in the march of civilization into the vast forest wilderness that formerly surrounded the Great Bay. He used to sit and talk about these things, when one could find him in a communicative mood, and as he always told a story consistent with historical fact, and never spoke like a toaster, his reminiscences were generally believed to be genuine.

I saw Peter York but once, but retain a vivid impression of the man. Tall, broad of shoulder, and straight of limb was this old aborigine; features full of dignity and strength; eyes, restless, intelligent and though dimmed by years flashing pleasantly at times from behind gold rimmed spectacles, that no judge, professor, or pulpiteer could have worn with a greater air of savoir faire. He wore a high fur cap, blue pilot cloth pea-jacket, and Wellington boots and trousers tucked inside. Old Peter had come to see my brother about the publication of an Indian English dictionary, which he had been preparing and the manuscript of which is still extant in fragmentary form. For Peter York had picked up in arts of civilization with as much ease as though he had gradually breathed in their spirit with the atmosphere. He could not only speak English fluently but he read it with ease—in fact spent much of his time over books and newspapers; he wrote a neat, clear, round hand that would do credit to any man of his age, white, black, red, yellow or any other color. Few men in that part of Canada were better posted on the events of the day than old Peter York.

It is regrettable that his reminiscences have not been preserved. "Bad Injun" though he was, he recollections of the early days in the Georgian Bay country were intensely interesting, and of undoubted value from a historic point of view. But