

Shortly after this a most distressing accident occurred in the Irish settlement. One of the settlers, Nathanael Barber, had allowed to remain standing in dangerous proximity to his dwelling, a large tree, which yielded one night to a storm of unusual violence and falling across the house crushed it to the earth. One of the old man's daughters was killed, he himself had one of his legs broken, and other members of the family were badly injured. It was a source of wonder to all who witnessed the scene of the wreck that any of the inmates escaped with their lives. So terrible an affliction could not fail to arouse the sympathy of the entire community, which in many instances was manifested in a tangible form.

We seldom (saw) a newspaper, consequently we were not distracted by what was transpiring in the outside world, as we knew very little about it and cared as little. But there was a universal feeling of dissatisfaction with government for the course pursued in the management of our settlement, and this dissatisfaction rose to fever heat when the information was circulated that instructions had been received by the agents at Arthur and Owen Sound to demand from each settler payment in full for his reserve, and in the case of refusal or neglect on the part of any to comply with these regulations the agents were to grant or sell the lands of such to others. In order that my readers may understand the position in which these people found themselves placed it will be necessary to narrate the circumstances under which they became settlers:—

In the year 1840 the government issued a notice promising to open a road a full chain wide from the north-west corner of the township of Garafraxa to the head of the Owen Sound Bay, to grub sixteen feet wide in the centre, bridge the streams and crossway the swamps. On each side of this road lots were to be staked off. A free gift of fifty acres was

to be given to each actual settler, and fifty acres adjoining reserved for them to purchase at eight shillings per acre, the fifty acres thus costing eighty dollars. On the faith of those promises, settlers came in and took up lots,—how the promises were fulfilled is easily told:—During the year 1841, 15 miles at the south end of the Garafraxa road, and 12 at the north were opened according to agreement, leaving 33 miles in the centre. Through this part a snake-road was brushed, and the rivers such as the main Saugeen and its tributaries, were bridged, but the lesser rivers were left without bridges and the swamps without crossways. While the road was in this condition cattle were brought over it, and sometimes oxen under yoke (though the latter was considered a dangerous business as many of the swamps were practically without bottom,) but no one attempted to bring a team through. The money may have run short and the Government thereby been unable to complete the road, which would form an excuse for the nonfulfilment of this promise; but to deprive the original settlers of their reserves merely to hand them over to new comers was regarded as a flagrant act of spoliation. A mass-meeting was therefore held for the purpose of considering the situation and adopting means to bring our grievances under the notice of His Excellency in council. It was agreed to have a memorial prepared setting forth the circumstances in which we were placed, and appoint a delegate to proceed to Kingston and present it to His Excellency. Nathanael Herriman was chosen as delegate, and many subscribed to pay his expenses. A committee was also appointed to prepare a memorial of which I still have a copy, in the handwriting of Henry Cardwell, with a number of signatures attached thereto. A trip to Kingston in those days was somewhat different from what it would be at the present time. It involved a walk to Toronto, that being the