

April, 1837, to form a Mutual Fire Insurance Company under the provisions of the Act of William IV., passed on the 20th April, 1836." The notice was signed by ten freeholders—Messrs. John W. Downs, Francis G. Stanton, Hugh B. Willson, Samuel Mills, Alex. Carpenter, Edward Jackson, James L. Wilson, Plumer Burley, Geo. S. Tiffany and Michael Aikman. These gentlemen have all passed away, some of them long years ago, but they were among the most enterprising and successful citizens of Hamilton and the Gore District at the time under consideration.

The meeting thus convened was entirely successful. The freeholders assembled in goodly numbers, and were enthusiastic for the establishment of the new Company, the want of which was universally felt. Michael Aikman, Esq., was elected chairman, and Francis G. Stanton, Esq., Secretary, and it was decided that the names should be taken forthwith, of all those present who were willing to become first insurers. The list of names is duly recorded in the minutes, and is sufficiently large and influential to indicate that the meeting must have separated in perfect confidence that "The Gore District Mutual Fire Insurance Company, Hamilton," would soon be in operation.

As a matter of fact, however, not another public step was taken to carry out the project for over two years thereafter! This at first sight may seem inexplicable, but the explanation is simple when we remember that during this year

#### AN UNEXPECTED AND EXTRAORDINARY EVENT

occurred in Canadian history—the Mackenzie rebellion. During the summer of 1837 the Province was in a constant whirl of political excitement, and the following December occurred the famous march on Toronto and the so-called battle of Gallow's Hill. The "Men of Gore," which included a Company from Galt and Dumfries, were promptly called out under Sir Allan McNab, and marched to the Niagara frontier to invest Navy Island, on which the rebels had taken refuge. Amidst the disorder and excitement the proposed Insurance Company seems to have been completely forgotten.

Another curious circumstance in connection with the Company's inception is this, that when the project was revived, it was in Brantford and not in Hamilton. I fancy "thereby hangs a tale," but avoiding idle speculations and following the official records, the first meeting of the Gore District Mutual Fire Insurance Company was announced to be held in the School House,

#### IN THE TOWN OF BRANTFORD, ON THE 18TH JUNE, 1839.

The meeting was well attended and the following gentlemen were elected the first Board of Directors:—Messrs. William Richardson, Richard Wilkins, Henry Moyle, John A. Wilkes, Allan Good, Arunah Huntington, and Abraham Cook. These gentlemen elected