

PREFACE

At a meeting of the South Renfrew Farmers' Institute on the eve of the birth of the twentieth century, Mr. A. A. Wright, who had then been for thirty years one of the town's most active and public-spirited citizens, and who was destined within a year to be the Riding's representative in the Parliament of Canada, suggested the commencement of an historical record of Renfrew, with a yearly synopsis of the chief events in its affairs. The suggestion took root in the mind of the writer, at that time the publisher of *The Renfrew Mercury*; and in the first issue of that paper in 1900 appeared a synopsis of the events of 1899 and also the announcement that the editor had in view the preparation of a history of Renfrew in its early days; and had asked for the assistance of Mr. Henry Airth, Sr., in its compilation.

The work of collecting historical data was diligently pursued during the year, and in *The Mercury* of October 26th there was further announcement that the historical record would be begun in that paper's columns early in 1901, and that the editor was having the help of Messrs. Henry and David Airth, Robert McLaren, John Smith, W. N. Faichney, Joseph Gravelle, Mrs. Eady, Sr., and other of the older residents.

The first instalment of the promised Story appeared in the issue of *The Mercury* of February 8, 1901, with this introductory note:

"In this story of the early settlement and growth of Renfrew, it has as a matter of course been found difficult to fix actual dates for some of the events long past. Indeed it has been a matter of surprise to the writer to find how accurate is the memory of the Messrs. Airth—from whom most of the story of the earliest days has been obtained—and how well they have been able to trace back events and locate them with considerable exactness from concurrent happenings. A chief concern with them has been to get everything of moment as correct as possible, a commendable feature in historians; and if it so be that any reader finds inaccuracy in date or happening which can be proven, both the historians and the writer will be glad to have the matter brought to their attention, that due correction may be made."

The Story was continued in *The Mercury* by instalments for a couple of years. Then, as the writer became absorbed in muni-