

THE NEW SETTLEMENT ON LAKE ERIE.

In preparing this paper some time ago, I had intended using the title "Three Pioneers of South Essex", but while collecting information I found that at the time of which I write, Essex county was not in existence. The whole area, now included in the counties of Essex, Kent and Lambton, and as far as Long Point on Lake Erie, was called the District of Hesse.

There were no settlements in the district, with the exception of those in the neighborhood of Detroit.

In the year 1784 Capt. William Caldwell, of Butler's Rangers, secured a grant from the Indians for, "a tract of land on the north shore of Lake Erie, from a creek four miles from the mouth of the Detroit River, to a small creek about a mile and a half beyond Cedar Creek". This he called "The New Settlement," which was to be settled by the Rangers, who had been disbanded after the peace of 1783.

The settlement measured about 15 miles and was divided into 97 lots of about 200 acres each. In 1790, twelve more lots were added, making a total of 109 lots and the name was changed to "2 Connected Townships" in the New Settlement, Lake Erie.

Lots 68, 69 and 70 were reserved by the Crown for a town plot, a plan of which I enclose. This was the first town to be laid out in Upper Canada west of Niagara, and when the townships were divided was named Colchester.

A few years later the townships were divided, the one to the west be-

ing named Colchester, and the other Gosfield.

P. McNiffy in his survey of the lake front, made in 1790, describes it as follows: "From the east side of Point Pelee to commencement of the New Settlement, 16 miles, good land. Here also the general plan of survey may be complied with, but the only place in that space, where a town can be laid out is on very high land, where no access can be had to the lake nor any harbor for water craft, but on this high land are plenty of springs. From the east end of the present New Settlement, to the entrance of the Detroit River, 20 miles, 15 miles of this space is settled. Here it is impossible to comply with the general plan or survey, without injuring many of the inhabitants in their improvements; nearly in the centre of this settlement is a space left for a town, but not quite of the extent specified in the general plan. This is by no means so proper a place for a village, as many others that might have been pointed out in the settlement, but those situations are not the property of individuals, and under improvements.

From the west end of the New Settlement to the entrance of Detroit River, 5 miles, is either a marsh, or what is not, is claimed by individuals. The marsh is the property of W. and J. Caldwell, by an order-of-Council passed in their favor on 29th December, 1788." (Ont. Arch. 1905, p 71.)

The following is an extract from Bureau of Archives, 1905, p. 13, relative to the New Settlement, on Lake Erie:—