

settlers going in anywhere pending surveys ; a liberal land policy, the making of roads and improvement of navigation were promised. Upon my part I agreed to place a good substantial passenger and freight boat upon the Muskoka waters.

I now resolved to formally sever all business connections with the lumber interests of my relatives, and devote my entire attention to the navigation and mercantile interests of the lake district. I opened the first general store in Gravenhurst, and made preparations for the building of the staunch paddle steamer "Wenonah." Not wishing to take any funds from the business of my lumbering friends, I borrowed a considerable sum of money for an indefinite period from my father-in-law, Mr. Proctor, of Beaverton, who expended in steamboat construction.

"Wenonah" made her *debut* in a very sparsely settled community in June of 1866, and entered upon her perilous career over the *churlless* Muskoka waters, which, though deep in most places, still abounded in unlocated sunken rocks and shoals : besides, the very great difference—of nine feet—in the spring and autumn levels of the lakes added to the perplexity and dangers of navigation.

The consequence was that this pioneer craft was somewhat frequently "piled up" and none of the usual appliances for floating and pulling off stranded vessels were at hand. It was well, therefore, that the "Wenonah" was so strongly built as to stand much rude handling. It is needless to add that the boat was run at a loss during the first and second seasons.

Meanwhile the first general elections for both the Dominion and Provincial parliaments were approaching, thereby causing a demand for more than double the former number of candidates. I was invited by both political parties in the North Riding of Victoria to become a candidate, and was returned to the Provincial Legislature, and thus had the advantage of assisting in the shaping of a progressive policy for the development of the unsettled portions of the Province.