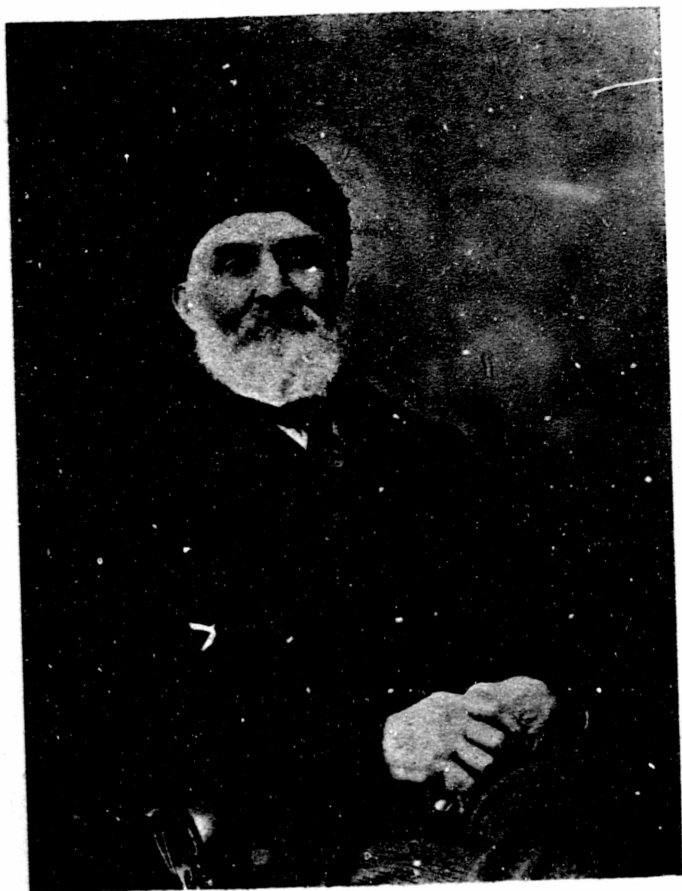


PIONEER  
DAYS

KENNEDY



**DAVID KENNEDY, SR.**



**PIONEER DAYS**

INCIDENTS  
OF  
PIONEER DAYS  
AT  
GUELPH  
AND THE COUNTY OF BRUCE

BY  
DAVID KENNEDY, SR.

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TORONTO:  
1903

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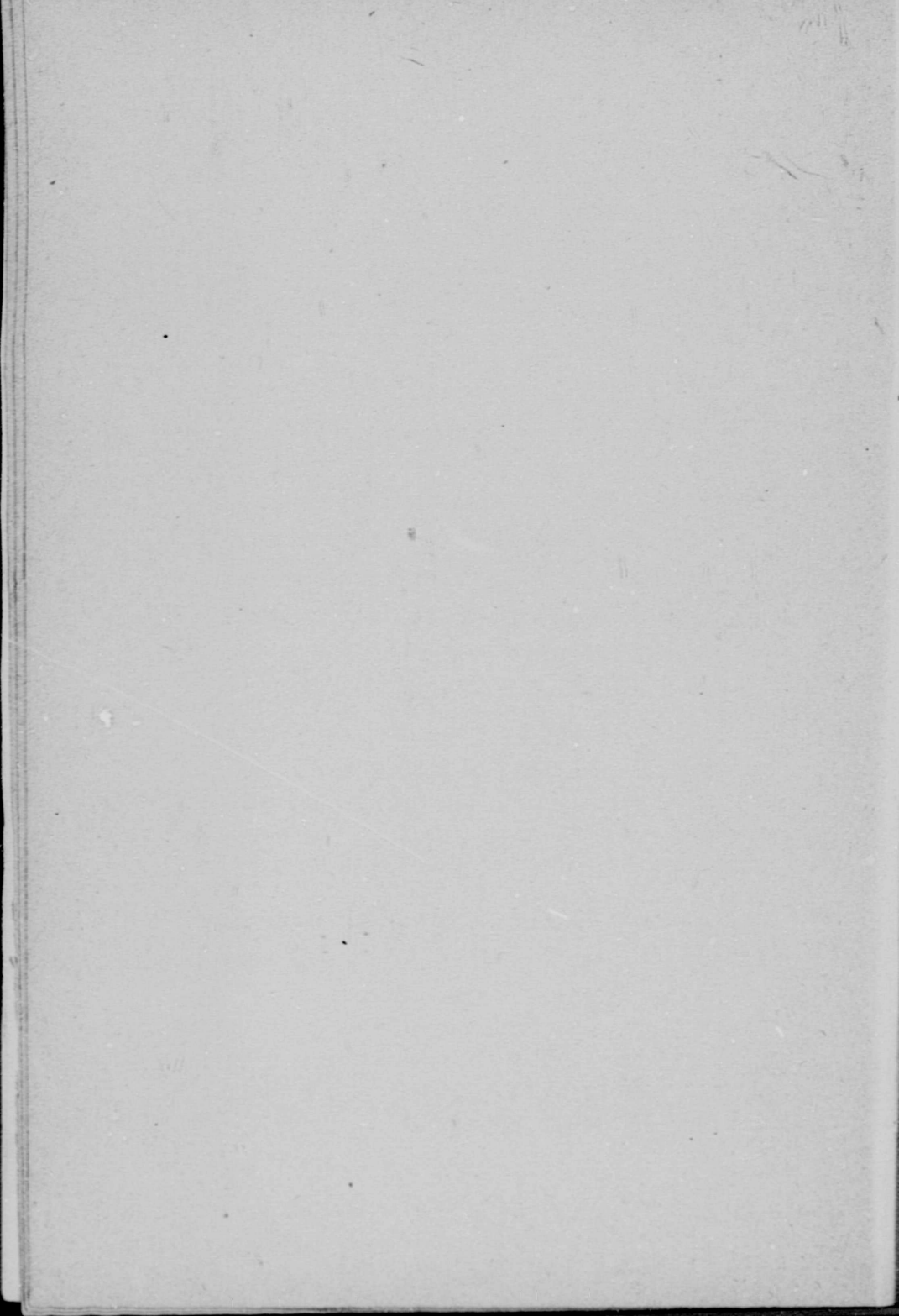
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## TO THE READER

The writer of this book would call your attention to three things: first, the contents are actual experiences and conditions which are in no way colored or embellished; second that there is no pretense to literary excellence, and third, that it is written that the reader may see the great strides of progress made in one generation and not forget the pioneer days of our great country.





**I** WAS born in the Mansion House of Craig, in the Parish of Colomonell, Ayrshire, Scotland, upon the 20th day of April, in the year 1828. My father, John Kennedy, was the youngest son of David Kennedy, Laird of Craig, which estate is entail.

My mother, Sarah Caldwell, was the youngest daughter of a large farmer, and was born on the Farm of Morrision, in the Parish of Kirkswald, Ayrshire. They were married upon the 27th day of December, in the year 1825.

My father and mother united the names of their birth places, and called our homestead in the Paisley Block, Guelph, Craigmorrison, in which place I resided for about fifty-five years.

#### **Emigration and Ultimate Settlement at Guelph**

My father and mother, with my oldest brother, William, and myself, emigrated to Canada when I was one year old, leaving Scotland in the month of April and in the year 1829, and after a long and tedious voyage in a small vessel, arrived in Montreal during the summer. My



father did not like the appearance of the country and thought of returning to Scotland at once, and going as far down the St. Lawrence River as the town of Berthier, remained there during the winter, and while staying there heard very favorable accounts of the Canada Company lands around Guelph. This caused him to change his mind, and in the spring of 1830 he again turned his face westward, and after a slow journey, arrived at Guelph during the summer. Guelph at that time was nearly all forest, and had only a few log houses, for it had only been surveyed in the spring of 1827.

My father, after a short residence at Guelph, selected a lot in what was afterwards known as the Paisley Block, in Guelph Township, near what is now the City of Guelph. My father never had much experience in the way of labor, and especially in clearing up of land, so that very little progress was made for many years, and not until we boys began to grow up, and many and great were the hardships endured at that time by my mother and her little boys, for my brother, John Caldwell, was born during our stay in Guelph, in Nov., 1830. As time passed on, the number of the family increased to nine, the five oldest being boys and the four youngest girls. All grew up to manhood and womanhood but one little girl. In the course of a few years, when we grew up towards manhood, we soon put a different face upon things, and instead of poverty and want there was a comfortable home and plenty. But we could see that in

a short time this home would be much too small for us to remain much longer upon.

### **William and I Journey to Owen Sound and then to Southampton**

In the beginning of the year 1851, and some time after having prepared a comfortable home for our parents and the younger children of the family, my oldest brother, William, and I thought it to be our duty to start out and try to make new homes for ourselves in some part of the country, and just about this time there were wonderfully glowing accounts in circulation regarding the suitability of the Saugeen River valley as a farming district.

After seriously considering the matter William and I concluded that we would try and get there and see for ourselves.

So about the beginning of January, in the year 1851, we drove a horse and light sleigh up to Owen Sound, and, after reaching there and resting a few days with an old friend, Mr. Wm. Corbet, and obtaining fuller information concerning the remaining part of our journey, we proceeded, and our friend, Mr. Corbet, and a friend of his, Mr. Sparling, accompanied us to the mouth of the Saugeen River.

So, after making all needful preparations for the journey, and securing an Indian as guide, we started one afternoon, and went as far as Mr. Jimby's for the night, whose was the last and only house on the way, and is about five miles from Owen Sound village. This we did in order



to shorten the distance and make it possible for us to get through on the following day, a distance then supposed to be about thirty miles, through a dense forest covered with deep snow. But we made an early start the following morning, and with constant and steady perseverance we all managed to reach Southampton before it was quite dark. Some of us were very tired and nearly used up. But we got a very kind reception from the few inhabitants that were in that place. I do not think that there were more than one or two families there.

### **Our Stay at, and Departure from Southampton**

While in Southampton we stayed with an old acquaintance, Mr. George Butchart, formerly of Pilkington Township, who, with his brother-in-law, Mr. Orr, were at that time engaged in fishing. They had erected a log house during the preceding fall and although it was by no means completed as yet, still, Mrs. Butchart, a very active lady of very superior appearance, and who, I think, was the only white woman in the place at that time, did all she could to make us all feel as comfortable as possible after our long walk through the deep snow. So the next morning, William and I, after being advised and instructed as to what direction and course we should take, travelled along the lake shore four or five miles, until we came to what is now Port Elgin, and there we went back from the lake a mile or two, and were so delighted and satisfied with the appearance of the timber and lay of the

land that we then and there decided to try if possible to make future homes for ourselves out in this beautiful forest.

After another hard day's travel we returned to our kind hostess, Mrs. Butchart, who soon prepared for us a supply of deliciously cooked fresh white fish, which we all greatly relished after a long fast, and, remaining another night there, and getting an early breakfast, we started on our return journey to Owen Sound, leaving our Indian guide behind, as he preferred to remain at the Indian village where he had left us on the way over.

We then bid our present friend a parting adieu, hoping all to return some day in the near future, for we were all so well satisfied with what we had already seen of the country that we wished to get back to it. So, in due time, we all reached the Sound in safety, only feeling a little tired from the long journey. But we found the return journey much easier, owing to the path being broken by our tracks across a few days before.

### **Our Return to Guelph and Preparations to Return to Saugeen**

So, after remaining a day in Owen Sound, we again set off on our return journey to Guelph, which place we also reached in safety.

Arrived there, we gave an account of our travels, and a description of what we had seen of the country to those who were anxious to know, and felt an interest in our future welfare, and, after fuller deliberation and consultation with inter-

ested friends, we decided to make an early start to an almost inaccessible and uninhabited part of the country, which at that time was an unbroken forest for many miles, and in a great measure entirely cut off from outside communication. The country was not yet surveyed, and the few that were at the mouth of the Saugeen River had gone there by boat on the lake for the purpose of carrying on the fishing, which at that time and for many years was and still continues an important industry. But as there was no reasonable way of reaching this place but by water, it looked more like foolishness than common sense to attempt such an undertaking. Nevertheless we had resolved to make the attempt, and were joined in and encouraged by two of our near neighbors, young men, like ourselves. We had been raised alongside of each other, upon adjoining farms, and our intimacy was of the most friendly kind, so, when we decided to try our fortunes in these new quarters, they resolved to accompany us, and began making immediate preparations for doing so, as they did not care to remain behind after we had gone. After completing further arrangements, we engaged a colored man, a Mr. John Taylor, who at that time had a good yoke of oxen and new wagon, and I also had a yoke of cattle, which I wished to take up with us. So we hitched them to the wagon, and then put the other yoke in front, as they were better broken to work, and so Mr. Taylor drove the tandem team, and amongst us we managed to fill the wagon up pretty full with boxes, bedding, bundles, cook-stove, and other

odds and ends that we thought would come useful in the settlement of a new home in the woods. Besides we took with us a limited supply of provisions and groceries, and such tools as were indispensable in a new country. Upon the whole the load was not of much value, but very useful for us to possess.

### Our Start for the New Country

So, upon the 25th day of March, in the year 1851, one fine morning, for this was an extremely mild and early spring, for the snow was nearly all gone, although the frost was still in the ground and wheeling was fairly good, upon this eventful morning, my brother William and I, with our neighbor, Samuel Strowger, and our colored Jehu, started on our journey of migration, Philip Strowger having been detained on business one day behind the others. The roads being fairly good, we reached Fergus the first night, and while staying there we met with a young man called Thomas Burgess, who said that he came from Peel County, and was on his way to Owen Sound or some other part of the country in search of his fortune, and as soon as he heard that we were going to the mouth of the Saugeen River he at once decided to cast in his lot and accompany us, and so afterwards stuck closely to us and became a partaker in all our hardships and sufferings for the time being, and I understand that he afterwards became a settled resident of the place, and, being by trade a cooper, he found plenty of employment in the making of fish barrels.

On the morning of the second day we left Fergus in good time, and succeeded in getting as far as the Township of Arthur that night, and putting up at a wayside inn. We made an early start the next morning, and after driving a mile or two we halted to cook some breakfast by the roadside, where there was some wood.

### Our Journey Continued, Whiskey Incident

While here we were nearly having a tragedy of a very serious kind enacted, for during our stay in Fergus our colored teamster had purchased for his own use a jug of whiskey, and sometime during the previous afternoon he was refreshing himself from this jug, and then asked our friend Sam to take a little also. This offer was willingly accepted. This really was Sam's weakest spot, for all the rest of our present party were strictly temperate in their habits.

And as Mr. Taylor had brought a small chest along with him in the wagon to hold his provisions during the journey, he also put this whiskey jug into it and then securely locked it up for the night, and how great was his surprise and indignation, when he got up upon the wagon for his provisions, to find the lock broken and his whiskey jug empty. He at once accused Sam of being the guilty party and of having broken the lock and drunk all his whiskey. Sam as vigorously denied the charge, at the same time using uncomplimentary language to the colored man, which caused him to get himself into a most uncontrollable passion. His eyes shone like two



balls of fire, he foamed at the mouth, and he had a voice like a lion, and as he was a powerfully strong man he would soon have made an end of Sam had he got hold of him.

But my brother and I got between them and used all our persuasive powers to prevent what might have ended very seriously if we had not managed to keep Sam out of his reach until we got him taken away out of his sight. While speaking of our friend, Mr. Sam, here, I may say that he belonged to a fine, large English family, comprising eleven in number, and they were supposed to be rather aristocratic in their tendencies, and consisted of six very handsome young ladies, who all grew up and afterwards were all comfortably married. The other five were boys, of which Philip was the eldest, and our hero, Sam, the second. He was always a great lover of horses, and was much in the public, and there learned to indulge too freely in the use of that which afterwards became his master.

#### **Our Journey Up Continued and Terminated on the 6th Day**

So, upon the third day of our travels we reached before evening Mr. Thos. Smith's hotel, in Egermont, which is a short distance past what is now Mount Forest town, but which at that time was all forest, as there was not a house in sight, and while remaining at this hotel we were overtaken by Mr. Philip Strowger, which made our party up to five in number, exclusive of Mr. Taylor, who by this time had returned to his usual mode of temper.

And upon the fourth day, evening, we arrived safely at Mr. Hunter's hotel, in the village of Durham, remaining there for the night, and while there received a great deal of kindness, and also useful information from Mr. Hunter regarding the remaining portion of our journey and the best way to take in order to accomplish our object. He advised us to go down the new line of road towards Walkerton, instead of going by way of Owen Sound. This new road from Durham had been cut during the preceding fall, and two new bridges were built over the Saugeen River. We were advised to stop at the first bridge and there make a raft or a scow and from there go down the river to its mouth.

After getting so much useful information from Mr. Hunter, we concluded to take his advice and carry out his instructions as far as possible. I also made suitable arrangements with Mr. Hunter to keep my oxen when they returned after delivering the load at the bridge. So, upon the fifth day of our travelling we started to go down the Durham line, which we found to be a hard road to travel. Night overtook us and we had to make a fire of logs by the way-side, and there we spent the first night, a taste of what we had for several weeks following to pass through. The night was cold and chilly. However, about noon on the sixth day we reached the bridge and there we unloaded the wagon and allowed our colored Jehu to return with oxen and wagon, with orders to leave my oxen in charge of Mr. Hunter at Durham until the

woods would supply sufficient to sustain them with food.

### Our Decision to Make a Scow

So, having at last reached our present destination, we hastened to erect some temporary tent or cover as a shelter until we had devised the way of our further transportation, and after some deliberation, we all came to the conclusion that a good scow would be safer and easier to manage than a raft upon such a great, rushing river. But the question arose, where are we to get the lumber to make a scow? There is none nearer than Durham, and that cannot be thought of; it is quite out of the question. Some one suggested that if we could get a saw we could find a pine tree and cut the lumber ourselves, and, fortunately for us, just at that time we received a visit from a Mr. Schuke, who had helped to build the bridges the preceding season, and he possessed a saw and other tools requisite for the making of a scow, so we engaged him to assist us in the undertaking, which he very readily consented to do.

He had removed with his family into the Township of Bentik the preceding season and settled a short distance from where we had unloaded our wagon, and which is now near or in the village of Hanover.

So, we selected a large pine some distance from the bridge and in a thick swamp covered several feet deep with water and snow slush, making it very difficult of access, and hard to



reach. But for all that we got at it and had the tree skilfully cut down upon supports high enough to enable the sawyers to do their work more perfectly, and it did not take very long time for us to get all the material cut and ready for the making of a scow.

But the next, and greatest difficulty of all, was to get this lumber to where it could be made up, and then conveniently launched into the river. The planks were green and heavy, they were more than thirty feet in length, two inches thick and eighteen inches wide.

### **Our Continuation and Workshop at the Bridge**

You may imagine that it was no small job to carry these heavy, long timbers such a distance, and through such a thicket, covered with slush and water. However, by persistent toil and constant perseverance, it was accomplished in time and without accident, and in a short time the scow was set up and completed, after causing us to make several trips to Durham for nails and other needed supplies. And to add to our trials and disappointments, by the time we got our scow completed the river, from the effects of heavy rains and melting snow, had risen to such height that we found ourselves shut in upon a small piece of high land at the end of the bridge, where our stuff was placed, and we were surrounded by water from three to five feet deep, so that our condition was anything but an enviable one, and still worse than all, we were informed that the water was so high that we could

not pass under the bridge at Walkerton, although it had been built twenty feet above low water, so you may imagine how greatly swollen the river had become.

And I can assure you that we had all become heartily sick and tired of this place and its surroundings. We had no shelter from wet or cold, day or night, nothing but a continuance of wet clothes and wet feet all the time for over two weeks. That we were compelled to remain in this miserable, comfortless abode, where we were exposed to the inclemency of the weather at this changeable season of the year, and when I tell you that we had neither bed, table nor chair, cup, saucer nor plate, knife nor fork, and we never had our clothes off during all this time, and for several weeks afterwards. And you will not be surprised when I tell you that we often wished that we had never left our homes of comfort and plenty to endure such inexpressible hardships. Our food consisted of fried pork, boiled potatoes, scones made from flour, mixed with cold water, and a little saleratus and salt, baked in a frying pan over coals, and sometimes a drink of hemlock tea, and we had always to use our jack-knives to cut our pork with and a scone for a plate, so I can assure you that in a few weeks we did not look a very spicy looking crowd, but quite the opposite. Nevertheless our numbers continued to increase. There were many from all parts coming in looking for land, and stopping at Durham on their way up, heard of our making a scow, and they were advised to come down to us and try if we would not take

them down the river with us on our scow. We had five in our own company, and were joined by three, Messrs Martindale from New Brunswick, a father and two sons, and there were also two brothers, John and Jake Atkinson, from somewhere near Toronto, and a Mr. Boyle and another whose name I have forgotten. Altogether there were twelve of us awaiting the lowering of the waters in the river. Some of these parties had gone back to Durham and some went down to Mr. Walker's, all to be in readiness to start so soon as the water got low enough to allow of us passing under the bridge at Walkerton, which we hoped we would be able to accomplish in a few days' time.

### Our Departure Down the River

And upon the first Monday we got our scow loaded up and ready to start upon the Tuesday morning. Leaving this comfortless and inhospitable place early in the morning, we started down the roaring river, and we had not gone very far when it commenced to rain, and we soon got well soaked. However, we were becoming well accustomed to such things and did not mind it much, so anxious were we to proceed forward on our journey, and before starting we had set up the cook-stove in the scow and put a length or two of pipe on and made our fire in imitation of a steamboat, and we had rowlocks and paddles for oars, besides a long sweep behind to steer the scow. This sweep or helm was twelve feet long, and had great power in the steering of

the scow, and we were greatly assisted by the Messrs. Martindale, who were accustomed to river navigation where they came from, in the lower province, so, while passing down the crooked and swift flowing river, about noon we saw the first little clearing, and having brought with us the long tin dinner horn or trumpet, we commenced blowing in imitation of a steamboat whistle, when Mr. Joseph Walker, the founder of the now pretty town of Walkerton, and the other male inhabitants of the place, came running to the river's edge, cheering and waving their hats in the air, and so great was the tumult and noise of cheering and blowing the horn that those pulling at the oars did not hear the instructions given by the man at the helm to pull hard on their oars, but thought that he wanted them to desist rowing, and the scow at that time was headed in for the shore. The swift current soon got a side sweep upon her and sent her round about at great speed, just missing one of the piers of the bridge by a few inches. We had a very narrow escape from utter destruction, for if we had struck the pier our scow and all upon her would have suddenly been dashed to pieces and lost, the current was so very swift and the water so deep that escape would have been almost impossible, and those on shore who saw the occurrence became pale with fear, and we all got a great fright. But fortunately we all escaped being swept off by the sudden sweep, and after receiving on board the remaining passengers and getting a small supply of potatoes and flour we were soon again

on our rapid course down the river. But we had not passed far from under the bridge when we again were nearly having another narrow escape. So high was the water and swift the current at that time, and as there was a small island near the bridge, and upon it there was a large bent cedar tree, leaning over the deep water only a few feet from its surface, and under this tree the swift current seemed to draw us, so that it required all our skill and efforts to be put forth to prevent ourselves and everything upon the scow being completely swept off into the water. It was another hairbreadth escape.

The weather by this time had changed from the warm, wet morning, for it had cleared up now, and had become cold and windy, which caused our wet garments to make us feel rather uncomfortable, and we suffered more or less from the cold. But we continued to proceed down the river without meeting with any serious mishaps, and towards evening we ran our scow in to the shore and tied her up fast to a tree for the night.

And then looking for the best place to spend the night, we took shelter under a large tree. We soon made a fire and prepared wood for the night and some hemlock branches to lay down upon, and as I was appointed to be chief cook and butler for the time being I had a very busy time in preparing food for so many. I had three frying pans in use, some frying pork and two baking scones, which I made by filling a large pan with flour and then putting in a little salt and a small quantity of saleratus, and after this



mixing with cold water until it became a stiff dough, and then pressing it into a frying pan, and if the pan had been lately used for frying pork that made the scone taste all the better. But whether they tasted good or not they were in great demand, and it seems astonishing the quantity it required to supply the wants of a dozen very hungry men, and I could not provide the victuals fast enough to keep them all engaged at one time in eating, and it took a long time before all were satisfied.

### **Our First Night Out on the Voyage**

So, after the appetites of all had been satisfied with eating, the next important business with the majority of those present was to fill their pipes, when smoking became the order of the evening, and afterwards the telling of anecdotes and stories occupied the greater part of their time. I would say just here that although many of our company were almost entire strangers to each other, yet our intercourse and treatment of each other was of the kindest and most considerate nature. Perhaps our fellowship in suffering may have had something to do in the matter, and we are brought to feel our greater dependence upon each other. Such has generally been the case in newly-settled communities. To return to our story, as the evening passed on, drowsiness took possession of the speakers, when wearied nature had to give in, and sleep gained the ascendancy and silence prevailed. Yet the fire required frequent attention, owing to the night

being so cold and windy, and some little time before daylight we had a thick fall of snow, which soon covered the unprotected sleepers to some depth, but the sleepers continued to enjoy their peaceful repose, seemingly quite unconscious of their unpleasant condition. But such are some of the varieties of life, and I felt tempted to say, great is the power of endurance. Then I got up and made on a good fire and prepared a good pot of potatoes, to be ready for breakfast, and I got some hemlock to make hot tea, baked more cakes or scones, and fried pork. So I soon had breakfast ready, and we all took a good drink of hot hemlock tea, as it was considered a good preventive of colds, and we no doubt stood in need of something of that kind, after such severe exposure.

### **Our Second Day on the Water, Past Paisley**

So upon this Wednesday morning we again untied our scow and all got aboard, and we made an early start down the river, and we had not gone very far before we saw the first appearance of civilization; there were some lately cut trees near the river banks and a newly-built shanty, and we found the occupant to be Mr. Simeon Orchard, the very first settler and founder of what is now the busy town of Paisley, and just where the Mud or Tay River enters the Saugeen. After a short stay with Mr. Orchard we again pursued our journey down what was, to all of us, quite unknown regions, and not knowing what lay before us on our way down this

great, crooked, rapid running river, which it was in those days, and the thought frequently occurred to us that we were the first party of white men that ever were known to pass safely down this river.

And so, about noon we came to a beautiful level beach, very heavily timbered with fine large maples like an extensive sugar bush. Here we went ashore to get some dinner ready, and also for the purpose of exploration, and so greatly were we pleased with the appearance of the land that we would have liked to locate there had we known anything of our whereabouts. So, after getting some dinner, we again got aboard and continued our passage down till about the middle of the afternoon when we again observed some newly cut trees, the first since leaving Paisley. We immediately made preparations to salute and got our long horn and commenced sounding it, and no sooner had we done so than we saw two men coming running towards us, waving their hats and arms in the air and cheering and beckoning us to run our scow into shore.

### Our Arrival Down Near the Lake

And when we did go ashore, how great was our surprise and delight to meet with an old acquaintance from the Township of Pilkington, Mr. Alexander Wallace, with his friend, Mr. James Cathay, the teacher or missionary to the Indians at their village near the mouth of the Saugeen River. He was one of the two first



white men in this part of the country in 1848. The other one was the Rev. Mr. Williston, Indian missionary. Mr. Wallace had arrived and located himself here a few days previously, and had Mr. Cathay assisting him to get a house built; after introductory explanations we received some desirable and useful information regarding the locality, and were told that we were only about three miles distant from the lake, and about twelve from the mouth of the river, as the river and lake run nearly parallel with each other for some distance. So, after obtaining this information we secured our scow to a newly cut stump, and started in the way that we were directed to have a look at the great Lake Huron. So we passed down through a fine timbered farming land and what is now the pretty village of Port Elgin, and there for the first time most of us took a look at the great lake. Returning by the same track, we all greatly admired the appearance of the forest that we had passed through.

So, returning to our scow, we made preparations for supper and a place to lodge in during the night, as it was again turning rather cold, and our newly-found friends had only a shed made of logs on three sides and open at the front, where they had a fire made of logs, with some brush to lay upon, but the wind was blowing strongly from the fire into the shed, filling the place with smoke and ashes, which made the place most unendurable and we could not stay there any longer, and we had to get out and make some other kind of shelter for ourselves,

and gathering some boughs we tried to erect a kind of break-wind, but for all that we put in a miserable, disagreeable night, suffering much from the cold wind.

### **Second Night and Philip Selects His Home With Mr. Wallace on River Bank**

This caused some of us to deplore our condition and grieve over the folly of our coming to such a place. But in due time morning came and with it a bright sun and warmer day, and after replenishing ourselves again with breakfast and taking further counsel with those of our party who were desirous of selecting homesteads, we acted upon the advice of our new friends, who advised us to cross over the river to the other side, as the land was reported to be even better than on this side. And immediately acting upon such advice we again boarded our scow and pulled for the other side, and soon landed again upon a beautiful, large river flat, where we again tied up the scow and at once started upon a tour of inspection, and going down the river quite a distance viewing the land. Those that were not so anxious to secure farming lands proceeded down towards the Indian village, and thus to the mouth of the river, while the remainder of our party returned to our scow and at once commenced to erect some temporary shelter for the night and prepare food, for we were all very hungry. Travelling over the virgin soil seemed to be a great appetizer for we were always hungry.

The following morning Philip Strowger selected for a home a fine site upon the large flats, near where we now were and opposite the large island in the river, and we all immediately joined in to assist him in the erection of a small house, which he said would be a home for us all until we had provided one for ourselves. So, in a short time we had one up and covered with slabs of basswood, and we soon had it habitable, and it was even a vast improvement upon what we had been lately enjoying, and we were invited to consider this place as our present home.

#### **Assisted Philip to Build His House**

Philip was a very expert hand at using an axe and a strong young man, measuring near six feet four inches in height, and he soon managed to put things into shape, and then he went with us to assist and advise in the selection of farms. We generally took long tramps, as we had so much to choose from, and were always looking for something better. When we returned in the evening we were nearly dead from hunger. So we thought it would be better that one of us stay at home and have some food prepared upon our return. So our friend, Mr. Sam, did not seem to be as anxious as some of the others about choosing a farm for himself, and he willingly volunteered to remain and do the cooking for that day. As we started out that morning Philip as usual was carrying his gun. When we were a few yards from the house a partridge flew up, and Philip shot it and carried it back to the

house and gave it to Sam with orders to have it nicely cleaned and made into soup by the time we returned, as soup would be such a nice change after using so much salt pork. So we departed, leaving Sam to have a nicely prepared dinner ready for us upon our return. After a long walk we returned about four o'clock as hungry as hawks, and great was our disappointment at finding nothing ready to eat, and there was Sam lying comfortably upon his back contentedly smoking his pipe, quite at his ease, and when Philip asked him why he had not cooked dinner he replied that he had, and on being asked where it was, said that he had eaten it. Then Philip said, and what have you done with the pheasant? He said that it was in the pot, and on Philip going to get it, asked where was the soup. Sam said that he had drank it all to that. Philip drank the remainder.

#### Experiences of some Cooking of Mr. Sam

So Philip, after drinking the remainder of the soup, took the bird out of the pot. It looked plump and very fat, but as soon as he put his fork into it an explosion of the contents was the consequence, which flew all over Philip's face, for Sam was quite inexperienced in the art of cooking and he had neglected to remove any of the inward parts from the pheasant, but had made and drank the soup from such ingredients as it contained. Philip having drank the dregs of it caused a little laugh at his expense, and the saying is that a hungry man is an angry

man. But this only caused good-natured Philip to go and catch Sam by the feet as he lay there laughing and pull him to the outside of the door without using any violence whatever. However, we all did the best we could under such disappointments and in a short time we had prepared food for ourselves, and were satisfied, for we had come to learn by experience that disappointments were of frequent occurrence and we had just to put up with such things.

### **William Goes Up the River and is Delighted with What He Saw**

The next day being Sunday, my brother and I had been brought up under good Presbyterian teaching and were taught to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, and yet William thought that it could not be of much harm for him to take a quiet stroll up the river bank a short distance, and after walking a little over a mile he came upon what he thought to be the loveliest spot that he had as yet seen, and after his return he told me all about it, and we resolved to go up on the morrow, that is, Monday morning and see it. So when morning came, my brother and I told the others that we were going up the river to have a look at a part of the country which William saw yesterday.

### **Our Selections of Farms**

Upon a Monday morning, about the middle of the month of April, in the year 1851, about a month after leaving Guelph, we resolved, after a



very general and close inspection of all the surroundings and conditions of the place, here to pitch our tent, and then try to hew out for ourselves future homes in this beautiful forest, and although the land was not yet surveyed, we commenced at once to cut logs to build a shanty near by a pure running spring creek, and not far from the edge of the river, which had a pretty island of green grass just opposite, and this had the effect of giving a very pleasing, cheerful aspect and appearance to the place. In a short time we got our household effects brought here with the assistance of our friends, and we also got the logs of the shanty put up, which was only thirteen feet square, and the next morning we went to assist Jake Atkinson to build his house on the opposite side of the river, for by this time a majority of those who had come down the river with us had departed, mostly to the mouth of the river or some other part of the country, only those that wanted farm land remaining. So, when we had nearly completed raising Jake's house about noon, a gentleman, Captain John Spence, came up from Southampton to get my brother or I to go with him, and take squatters' possession of some valuable pine land about seven miles down the river towards the Indian Reserves, for there were gentlemen from Toronto making enquiries after such land, and also our friend, Mr. McDonald, was anxious to secure the pine for the purpose of making fish barrels.

### Incident of the Bear, Wm. Lost

So William started immediately with Capt. Spence to our quarters across the river and at once prepared for themselves a hasty dinner, made from pork gravy and flour put into a pan and fried together. This, with a drink of water, completed their meal, and as it was a fine, bright, warm day they set off at once, William going in his shirt sleeves and carrying his axe upon his shoulder. They turned down by the banks of the river, which they found to be a long, rough, tedious road to travel, down the crooked river, which made the way double the length. But at last they reached the spot and William commenced to perform the duties required, while Capt. Spence continued his course down the river past the Indian village and then home. William, after finishing his work, thought that he could reach home in a much nearer way by taking a straight line through the woods, and as the day was drawing towards its close, he started off at a rapid pace and after travelling for a considerable distance was surprised to see what appeared to be a large clearing, and getting nearer saw, to his dismay, that it was a body of water, and as he was not aware of anything of the kind being in our near neighborhood, he became greatly alarmed and frightened. Soon he discovered that he was lost, and must have gone a long way in the wrong direction. This lake is now Arran, situated in the Township of Arran. So William, after a few moments of study and considering the best course

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to take, for it was just about dark, started to run back in the direction that he thought he had come, in hopes of finding the river, and in his excitement and haste he nearly ran over a large bear.

### William Lost and Found

So sudden and unexpected was the occurrence that the bear was frightened up a tree, and William lost no time in making the distance between them as great as possible, and while running in the dark through a thick underbrush his pants were nearly all torn to pieces. Not knowing where he was, and becoming tired and hot from the running and excitement, he came to a large fallen tree, and then crawled into the hollow for the night, and intended to try and defend himself with his axe against the bear or any other night prowlers, should they attempt to attack him. But he soon found his bed chamber to be a very cold and uncomfortable one, for being very warm from his previous exertion and being almost without clothing, he soon became very cold and chilled through. He lay with his teeth chattering all night, but as soon as daylight began to appear he crawled out of his den and began to take in his surroundings and began by examining upon which side of the tree the moss grew, and the direction in which the top of the pine leaned, and as it was a dark morning the sun could not be seen, he had to be guided by observation of these natural signs. He set off in what he knew to be a southerly direc-



tion, hoping soon to reach the river, and in the course of a few hours' travel heard the rushing sound of its waters, and continuing his way up its banks, reached our quarters about noon in a most pitiable-looking condition. But after giving full explanation as to the cause and getting some dinner, he soon became his former self again, quickly recovering from all its effects, being blessed with a good constitution. He was as hardy as a knot and felt no worse from this hard experience.

### My First Night in Our New Home

I will tell you a little about how I employed my time during William's absence. When I returned from assisting Jake I found some of the remains of Capt. Spence's and William's dinner in the frying pan, and after more fully supplying my own wants, I at once commenced operations and began to saw a doorway into our shanty, and before night I had completed the cutting, but as we had neither door nor roof, I got a forked stick and drove it into the ground and I put some more sticks across and then covered all over with a quilt, and then got some hemlock brush to put on the ground for a bed, and then I nailed another quilt on the doorway as a slight protection and made every other preparation that I could for remaining there during the night, as I expected William to return every moment, and thus I was kept quite busily employed until it became quite dark. William had not yet returned and I began to feel a good deal

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annoyed at his seeming thoughtlessness or indifference in thus leaving me to remain alone for the night, for I was under the impression that he had returned as far as Philip Strowger's and was remaining there when he knew that I was alone and would be expecting him, for we had only removed that morning and little did I think that he was even in a worse plight than I. But so anxious were we to have a home and shelter that I was not willing to lose any more time by going back to Philip's, and yet this place was in no condition to remain in over night. This was also my first night of separation from the others and my first in our new quarters, and I felt, anything but comfortable. I slept very little, the night was so cold, and I heard the lynx roaming about outside the shanty. I would greatly have preferred some other and more desirable companionship, but at length morning came and all nature put on a brighter appearance.

### Mrs. Wallace's Entrance

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And while I am speaking of the events I think that it would not be right for me to omit giving an account of an incident that happened about this time, just to give some idea of the kind of material many of the early pioneers were composed of. Our neighbor, Mr. Wallace, on the other side of the river, had just erected a small house of logs, but at this time it had neither roof, floor nor door, when his plucky young wife, who had a short time before walked all the way from Owen Sound through the Indian trail, ac-

accompanied by her husband, who drew a toboggan all the way over on the snow, laden with their household effects, and she also carried some bundles in her hands all the way. Since their arrival she had been staying at the Indian village with their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Cathay, but becoming very anxious to see her new home and assist her husband in his work, one morning she left her comfortable abode with Mrs. Cathay and started off to see her new home. Carrying some bundles containing a few requisites, and walking all the way she reached her intended home before evening, and as there was no doorway cut or any way of entering, she climbed over the top of the logs and got inside in that way, and ever afterwards remained to assist her husband in all his undertakings, putting up cheerfully with every hardship and inconvenience incidental to pioneer settlement, and I am pleased to add that this lady still remains and is yet an active, vigorous woman, and able to enjoy the fruits of her labors of earlier days, although many of those who took a part with her in those days have passed away.

### Home Incidents

In returning to our former subject I may say that we put off no time in trying to put our shanty into a more habitable condition. William was a good hand with an axe and with it made many little things that were very useful. We managed to roof our shanty with elm bark and we chinked the cracks up with pieces of split

basswood and moss, and we made a fireplace with stones from the river, and a chimney, place of bent sticks plastered with mud, and a floor of basswood, slabs, split and hewn with an adze. But we were also very anxious to get some of the land cleared in order to put in some crops and persevered hard to attain that object. There were a good many people coming into the country about that time looking for land, and very frequently we had to ferry them over the river with our little raft, and seldom a day or night passed without having some to entertain. There was no other place within reach for many miles, and we never made any charge but welcomed all who came. Sometimes it troubled us a little to keep up a supply of provisions. We did not know where nor how to get them, but we generally managed to have something both for ourselves and others to eat. So we persevered every day enlarging our clearing, until we had got quite an opening made in the woods, and as we could see with pleasure each day the results of the labor of our hands we were the more encouraged to persevere in the attainment of this, the object of our ambition, and then to look forward with hope to the speedy betterment of our condition, and we often used to say that the bitter cometh before the sweet, which will make the sweet taste all the sweeter when it comes.

### **A Thrilling Incident of a Wrecked Scow**

One Saturday evening early in May we noticed a large quantity of wreckage floating down the river in the shape of boxes, barrels and bundles

of bedding, also a coop full of drowned chickens were found stuck in a tree top at the edge of the river. We felt sure that something serious had occurred up the river, so about ten o'clock on Sunday morning we got word that a scow was wrecked in a rapids some miles up the river, and that there were men, women and children aboard of her, and that they were in great danger of perishing if they did not get immediate assistance, for they had been in the water since Saturday at noon. This information was given us by a party of surveyors coming down the river in a small scow, but they dared not venture near for fear of knocking them all off into the water, so strong and rapid was the current at that place. I may here say that the report of our safe passage down the river had become generally known, and scows became popular. Some one suggested that we take up our large scow and try to rescue them, but that was almost impossible in such a swift running river. It would have taken a long time and the people were in imminent danger, and every moment was precious, as we did not know how far up the river they might be. So we abandoned the idea of taking up the scow, but instead we concluded to take an axe, auger and ropes, and hurry up and make a raft up above them and when down at the proper place anchor it and endeavor by that means to rescue those that were in such peril. So Jake Atkinson, William and I each put a small piece of scone in our pockets and then started up the river bank on a run. But we found travelling very disagreeable that morning for there had



fallen during the night about an inch of soft snow, which made the branches wet and unpleasant and the way was very uneven and hard to travel with much speed. But nevertheless we soon came to our new neighbor's, Mr. Gowinlock's, who, with his son and Mr. James Rowan, who had been there only a few days, had just put some poles up against a tree and covered them with boughs to make a temporary shelter.

I might say here that the occupants of this place were Mr. Gowinlock, a substantial Scotch farmer from the Township of Chinguacousy, and Mr. James Rowan, who afterwards became member for the county, so when we reached this spot we called out. Why are you not up yet? Do you not know that there are people wrecked up the river? And receiving no answer we looked into the tent and saw a man lying asleep on some rugs, and again repeating our question and asking, Why are you lying there? when he replied in a sleepy, unintelligible way, Did you see anything of my double-barrelled gun? We said no, and then asked him if he was one of the party that was wrecked up the river. He said yes. We then asked him where Mr. Gowinlock was. He said that they had all gone up the river to help those that were on the water. We asked him no more questions, but at once hurried forward as fast as we could go. I might as well say here, as I was told soon afterwards, that this poor young fellow from which we had just parted, was a young Englishman lately from London, and an expert swimmer. When the scow struck

the rock and went down the hinder part sunk first, as it was laden with heavy material that would not float, but slid down to that end and anchored her to the bottom in a sloping position, the forepart being a few feet under the water, but all the lighter articles that would swim were carried away by the current, and it was some of these that were seen by us as they were being carried past on the Saturday evening. For the scow had been heavily laden with household goods and provisions, besides heavy tool chests and nails; and also had on board four men, two women and five children, and as they were in a very perilous condition they made every effort to save their lives. This young man was the only good swimmer and he was induced to divest himself of his clothing, and tying some bed cords around his middle jumped into the water, hoping to reach the shore and then make one end fast there and the other to the scow, that by that means they might find a way of escape. After swimming over a distance the current caught the rope in such a way that he could not endure the effort and had to be drawn back into the scow. But after resting a little he said that he would try again, but this time he would take the end of the rope in his mouth, as he thought it would be easier to manage in that way. So he made a second effort in this way, but had not gone very far from the scow when he found that the water was having as great an effect upon the rope as it had at the first trial, and opening his mouth let the end of the rope go, and made for the shore, which he safely reached and then com-

menced his long walk down the river edge in a perfectly nude condition, in hopes of finding some place of shelter, and getting assistance to help him in trying to rescue those that were still upon the water. Continuing his way down the river's edge for a long distance without finding any help, darkness came on and he could not see his way, so he had to content himself by standing up against a tree all night, and to add still further to his discomfort there fell about an inch of snow during the night, and from the effects of the cold and chill he got into a kind of stupid slumber just about daylight, and did not awake for some time, but when he did he at once commenced to proceed on his journey down the river, but had only gone a short distance when he saw a smoke and made straight for it, quite unobserved, and he gave a great surprise to Mr. Gowinlock, who was standing at that moment with his back towards him, busily engaged making his oatmeal porridge for breakfast, and turning around suddenly he saw the naked man standing close beside him, which caused him to start back, and holding up his hands he exclaimed, "The Loord be here, whar cam ye fra'?" So after giving some little explanation of his circumstances and the disaster, they at once furnished the poor fellow with a flannel shirt, and after giving him something to eat, put him into the bed they had just lately risen from themselves. After taking a hurried breakfast and securing the tools and material that they would require in making a raft, they started off up the river in search of the wrecked

scow, and as they had a good start of us they had succeeded in making a raft and had safely rescued all on board, and were just landing them on the river's edge as we reached the spot.

Messrs. Gowinlock and Rowan used great caution and judgment in the successful accomplishment of such a ticklish job. But the rescued ones having no more relish for water conveyance declined to proceed any further by the raft, and so the rescuers proceeded down the swift running stream and reached their abode, leaving the poor, pitiable, starving creatures to our care. They were only partly clothed and looked half starved, for they had been in the cold water for more than twenty-four hours without any food and hanging on to the scow for dear life. No wonder their first request was for bread. We had only the small piece that we put into our pockets at starting and had not yet taken time to eat, but we freely delivered up all that we had, which was not much amongst so many. It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon and we each took a shivering child upon our backs, with their teeth chattering from the cold and long exposure in the water, and some had no shoes nor coats to wear, for all had been taken down the stream. One poor lady had the misfortune of getting her foot cut with an adze on the scow, which made travelling very painful, especially on such a rough gravelly road. The names of these unfortunate persons, so far as I can now remember, for it is over fifty years ago, are: Mr. Silas Fuller, Mrs. Fuller and four children; Mr. Gilbert and his man, who swam to



the shore; Mrs. Philips and another lady and child, whose names I forget.

Thus we continued our slow journey down the river's edge, each with our load upon our back, and we soon began to feel the need of some dinner, for we had all travelled a long way over a rough road without taking any refreshments, and it by this time was getting quite dark, and glad were we indeed to see at a little distance the light from Mr. Gowinlock's fire, where he in his kind, hospitable way was busy preparing what he had, and was making oatmeal porridge, for oatmeal was the only thing in the way of food diet that he possessed at that time. But the children kept crying for bread, and said that they did not like porridge or gruel. Mr. Gowinlock said that he had no bread to give them, nor anything to make bread of, and if they could not take that they were "nane hungert." But we were feeling both tired and hungry and were anxious to reach our shanty, and suggested that we would take the raft that had rescued them from the scow and go the remainder of the way on the river. As Mr. Gowinlock had only been a very short time there he had no accommodation to offer, but kindly consented to keep as many of the men and boys as would stay with him, and if we could take the women and girls with us, for we had the best accommodation to give them. So we agreed to do so, when the women offered a very determined opposition to venturing upon the water again, and it required all our powers of persuasion to induce them to do so, and to convince



them that there was really very little danger, as we were acquainted with the course of the river, and that it would be quite impossible to travel by land on such a dark night. They at last consented and one man also accompanied us, so while we were proceeding safely down the river and had gotten about half way, when we heard a loud halloo from the opposite bank of the river. Two or three men had come up the river from that side in search of the wrecked ones, as the news had spread all around by this time and getting benighted they had made preparations to remain where they were during the night, and hearing us coming down on the raft they commenced to shout and halloo to us, making many enquiries, and when we told them that all the party had been safely taken off the water they then asked us to put across to them. But we told them that we were too tired and hungry and did not want to put off any more time than we could help. They then said that we could never get down that river on such a dark night, and that we would all get drowned. This set the women to screaming and badly frightening them. We told them to keep quiet and not to be afraid, for we knew the river better than those who wished to alarm them did, and in a few minutes more we would land them safely on the shore at our landing place near our shanty, which we very soon reached, where we tied up our raft and quickly marched up to the shanty. The first thing we did was to light the candle and then make on a great fire and put the kettle on, and get some food ready

as fast as possible, for we were all very hungry, especially those poor women and children. We soon got some ham and bread and a good cup of tea, and after our urgent cravings of hunger were satisfied we men all went outside for a time in order to allow the women to retire to the only bed that we possessed, and our next concern was to find suitable corners or space in which to obtain a little repose after our hard day's travel, and just as we were getting things into condition and were ready to retire we heard the sound of voices outside, and upon opening the door to our astonishment a number of men entered—enough to fill the house and occupy all our standing room, for we had not chairs nor seats to offer them, and if we had there was no room to set them. The news of the disaster had reached the mouth of the river, and as this was Sunday some of the inhabitants and also a few strangers that were up here looking for land, started with the others up the river, in order to render what assistance they could. But as they did not know the distance and were entirely ignorant of the way, they lost themselves and in the darkness had been wandering about for some time until they saw the light from our shanty. It was now getting to be a late hour. They had a loaf of bread which they had brought with them and some of them also carried whiskey, both externally and internally, and were a little inclined sometimes to use improper language by swearing, but we told them at once that we would not allow any language of that kind in this shanty. Afterwards there was no more trouble,

but the night was spent mostly in conversation and telling stories and a song or two was also sung. Thus the night passed away and when daylight began to appear those who had come up from Southampton wanted to get the raft to carry them down the river. I said no, that I wanted to go to Durham for my oxen in a day or two and wanted to use it then to go down the river. They pleaded with me to go now and take them all along with me. I consented, after consulting with William and' arranging with him to come to Owen Sound and assist me in driving the oxen over from there, for William was going that day with some others to try to save some of the stuff that was still on the wrecked scow. So I and a number more started a little after sunrise to go down the river upon the raft, but we did not reach the mouth of the river till it was nearly noon, and then I went direct to the house of my friend, Capt. Spence and had a good wash and tidy up, and enjoyed a nice hot dinner, which was rather a luxury to me in those times. Then I started immediately to cross the river on my way to Owen Sound, a distance of 28 miles through the woods. It was now one o'clock. I was told by everyone that met me that I could not get through that night, and as I passed through the Indian village I met the chief and I asked him what he thought of my chance of getting through to-night. He shook his head and said "Sun too much round that way." pointing to the west. Notwithstanding this, I pushed on as fast as I could go and carried my

coat on my arm, and in one of its pockets I had a very valuable knife which had been given to me by a young friend of mine lately from Scotland, a younger brother of the late Charles Davidson, Esq., Guelph. When I was running, this knife accidentally dropped out of my coat pocket amongst the leaves of the path, and when I got nearly half way through I met the two young Messrs. Martindale, who came down the river with us on our scow. They were on their return from Owen Sound, which place they had left at eight o'clock in the morning, and they were under the impression that they were nearly all the way across. so they were both surprised and alarmed when I told them that they were very little more than half way. This information set them off at a run and I continued my journey in the opposite direction as fast as I could go, and I got into the Sound about eight o'clock, having made a very quick passage across. But then I discovered that in my haste by running I had lost my good knife that I had so much prized. As usual I put up at Mr. Corbet's hotel and enjoyed a good hot supper, and very shortly afterwards I retired to bed. I had gotten no sleep on the previous night and after the long walk of the day I was very tired and needed rest. So after having a good sleep I felt refreshed and in the morning, after taking breakfast, I again set off on my way down to Durham, a distance of twenty-eight miles, and reaching that place early in the afternoon I remained there all night. But I made all suitable preparations for returning to Owen Sound

with the oxen in the morning, and as it would not be possible to drive them through the woods yoked together I thought it better to leave the yoke and fasten the bows upon their necks and drive them separately. But I had not got very far before I found out that I had made a great mistake, for when I came to a cross road or an open gate the one ox would turn and run in one direction and the other one the opposite way. This all caused me a good deal of extra running and I made very slow progress all the way, and to add still more to my trouble it commenced snowing heavily just before night, and the ground was soon covered quite a depth. This made travelling very disagreeable and difficult, and when it became quite dark I could not see the highway. Especially was this the case when I reached the commons near Owen Sound where there were no fences nor houses to be seen. All was white with snow and as the oxen were also white in color I had a hard job to keep them both in sight, and I did not know whereabouts I had got to, and could only follow the cattle, which ultimately brought me to a house, where I made enquiries and got some assistance to drive the oxen to Mr. Corbet's hotel, finally reaching my destination, tired and discouraged.

But I was glad to see my brother William, who had arrived from Southampton a short time before I came, so that after getting supper I was again ready to go to bed, for I had put in a most unpleasant day's work. There was at the hotel that night a Mr. Broadfoot staying,



who had come up to look for land and was anxious to accompany us to Southampton on the morrow, and assist us in driving the cattle over, which proved to be no easy task, for we had rivers to cross and swamps to pass through. But by persistent patience and perseverance we managed to reach the Indian village before dark, and after several vain attempts we at last succeeded in forcing them to swim the Saugeen River over to an island where we left them for the night, as there was plenty of grass for them to eat upon the island.

After accomplishing this task we all went down the banks of the river to its mouth and then crossed by canoe over to Southampton, and then to the residence of our friend, Capt. Spence, for the night, where we always received generous kindness, and after putting in a good night there we again set out in the morning to look for the oxen, and found them where they had been left, and after some little trouble we got them to pass over the remainder of the river, and in course of time we at length reached our little home in safety, after several days of hard toil and suffering. But truly the back seems to be made for the burden, for the more we had to do the better able we were to do it, and the more athletic we became. So great was our power of endurance that we would no more feel any effects from running twenty miles than we would formerly do from walking ten, and when I now look back for more than fifty years and think of the fatigues and hardships we then endured, and the many dangers we came safely through, I am

filled with wonder and amazement, and the only way that I can explain these things is that we were both blessed with good healthy constitutions and had always been of temperate habits, and had also been very strictly taught and trained to continue in such habits by a noble, godly mother, whose great influence over us was a power for good in our lives in those days.

### Recovery of Knife

So in a day or two William got a yoke made and we got the oxen yoked up and ready to start logging, but we found them not very tractable and a good deal of trouble to manage. They did not like to work and every chance they got would clear away into the woods, going for miles, and although we had a good bell on one of them, yet they would go far away beyond its hearing, and after all we could not blame the poor brutes, for no doubt they were lonely. There were no cattle but themselves within many miles and they would wander away trying to find the road back to where they came from for long distances, and the only way we had of finding them was by following their tracks, and sometimes we ran great risks of losing ourselves in the woods. We had always to carry a small compass in our pocket as it would sometimes take us a whole day to find them, and we would often have to leave the yoke upon them all night to prevent them going away again before morning.

About this time there were several people coming into this place looking for land, and amongst them was Mr. Peter Smith, who stayed a day or two with us and ably assisted us to do

our logging and clearing up of some land, and he afterwards became one of our neighbors, settling on the opposite side of the river from us. I am told that Mr. Alexander Smith, the Liberal organizer, is one of his sons. I got another surprise about this time. I was told that one of the Martindales had found a very valuable knife on his way over from the Soand a short time ago. While he was running he tripped and fell with his face almost directly upon the top of this knife. And so the first time that I went to Southampton I made enquiries, and being perfectly able to describe what it was like, he said that it was mine, and at once returned it to me. This certainly was a very singular incident, that he should trip at the very spot where my knife lay amongst the thick leaves.

#### Home Incidents, We Journey to Guelph

There were very many events, almost of daily occurrence, which would be interesting to relate, but I will confine myself principally to those which did most personally affect ourselves, as they seem to be the most firmly impressed upon my memory, and I am anxious to make nothing but truthful statements so far as my memory will allow or carry me back to those days of our early pioneer life. I will again refer to our clearing of the land, which we accomplished in a short time, and had it all planted with potatoes and corn, and besides these we had a nice garden of vegetables. As we had not much more use for oxen at the present, and they were always a charge to look after, I got a chance to sell them

to Mr. McDonald, who wanted them and offered me eighty-five dollars for them. They were a very large, heavy pair of cattle, but never had done much work and were scarcely what might be called properly broken in to work. I shall perhaps refer to them again further on in this story. My brother and I had promised our father before leaving home that if we were all well we would return and assist him with the haying and harvest, and therefore we had to hasten our planting and other work in order to keep our promise, and by constant work we managed to get things into good shape by the time we wanted to leave for Guelph, which was about the first of July.

During the months of May and June a good many people had come into Southampton, for it was then being surveyed, and amongst some of those that I will mention are Mr. McNab, the agent; Mr. Peter Brown (I believe a cousin of the late Hon. George Brown) and several others whose names I do not now remember, and about this time also, Mr. Vidal (now Senator Vidal), had commenced the survey of the Township of Saugeen, and was then prospecting up the river near Paisley and working his way down towards the mouth of the river. However, William and I had to leave before the land was surveyed, and began to make preparations for leaving by carefully stowing away all destructible household effects, such as bedding and every other thing that mice could injure or destroy, for they had become very numerous and destructive. So we made everything up into bundles and suspended



them from the rafters of the shanty by cords, and when we thought that we had completed the work satisfactorily we started on our way over to Owen Sound, reaching there in the evening and remaining for the night.

### **Conclusion of First Trip and Return to Guelph**

The next day we walked as far as Egermont and stayed at Smith's hotel for the night, and from there we made an early start in the morning for we were anxious to get home that evening. But we found that travelling that day was very fatiguing and painful, as our feet had become very sore and tender from the long walk of the previous days in such hot weather, and over a hard, dusty road. But when we did at length reach the old home of our youth we received such a kind and cordial welcome that we were inclined to forget all our pains and toils, so great was our delight at meeting with loved ones once more.

### **Beginning of Our Second Migration**

After enjoying a day or two of rest we felt able to take part again in the work of the hay and harvest fields, and when we had any days to spare from home we always found some of our neighbors very anxious to secure our assistance and in that way we earned over forty dollars in a few weeks. This proved to be of great help to us in the way of purchasing a supply of provisions and groceries and other needful things, such as wheat for seed, besides a quantity of



miscellaneous articles too numerous to mention. Altogether there was a large wagon load, for besides the stuff that we had, our cousin, John Caldwell, from Pilkington, who was waiting to go along with us to take up land near where we had settled, had also some baggage to take along. And so we engaged a span of horses and wagon from our old neighbor, Mr. Youngson, to take us to Walkerton and he sent his man along to take care of the horses and bring them home.

### Second Journey

After we got everything in readiness we made our second start for our new home, but we made very poor progress on our way up, meeting with many mishaps. Our first serious accident was the breaking of the hind axle of the wagon. This occurred as we were passing along by the Townships of Egermont and Normandy, and it caused us to unload our wagon by the roadside, and as there was no wagonmaker's shop in these parts my brother found an elm tree near by that was suitable for the purpose of making a new one, and he soon had it hewed out with his axe into the proper shape. But the skeans or irons were also broken, and we had some trouble to find a blacksmith and when we did succeed in finding one he said that he had no coal to do the work, but as our case was an urgent one he said that if we got him some hemlock bark that he would try and do the best he could for us with it under the circumstances. And so he mended them in a way that they stood the test for years, as

I was afterwards told by the owner. After this delay we got as far as Smith's Hotel, staying there for the night, as this hotel was at that time a favorite stopping place, and then leaving early in the morning we reached Mr. Hunter's hotel at Durham early in the afternoon and we stayed there until morning, when we turned down the Durham line towards Walkerton. We found this still a very bad road, and we had scarcely gone half way down when we had another breakdown. This time it was the wagon reach or coupling pole. We had again to unload and then William soon found a small tree that would make a new one, and he cut it into shape. But we had no auger large enough to bore the hole for the king bolt to pass through, and one of us had to go back several miles to Durham to borrow a large auger, and by this delay we lost much time, so that we did not get to Walkerton until some time after it was quite dark, as we were all quite ignorant of the road, which we found to be a very rough and uneven one. Those on foot had to feel their way first, then stand and give me instructions where to drive, in order to escape being upset, for there were many dangerous places, and it was so dark that I could not see the horses. Our teamster refused to risk his life upon the wagon, so that I had to take charge and drive as I was directed by those who were picking the way on foot. Fortunately we soon reached the river bank and descending crossed over the bridge, and soon after reached Mr. Walker's inn, and when we unloaded the wagon in the morning our teamster actually

wept for joy, and was so glad that this tedious and harassing journey was now at an end, so far as he was concerned, and that he was permitted again to return to civilization. I don't know that he was a very stout-hearted gentleman at the best.

As we had lost so much time and had so many delays on the way up this far we did not want to lose but as little time as we could help in preparing a scow to take us down the river. Walkerton had made quite a little advance since we had passed down in the spring. I think Mr. Walker had erected a saw mill, and there were other buildings put up and several people had come into the township during the spring and summer.

As we could get the lumber from Mr. Walker to build the scow we did not require to wait, for he could supply us with what we wanted in that line, so that in a few days we were ready to proceed down the river, which at this time was a very different stream from what it was in the spring, when we first passed down it. So we got the scow ready and loaded our stuff upon her, and about noon we got aboard and set off, and had to keep a sharp lookout some places to avoid the shallows. But we were very cautious and succeeded in passing down without any interruption, and before it got dark we ran into the shore and there tied up for the night, just a few miles before we reached what is now Paisley town. On the next morning we made an early start and arrived safely down at our own, hum-

ble looking home in the evening, feeling thankful for our safe return to its shelter, but at the same time a little depressed by its lonely condition. On our way down the river we noticed here and there a few trees chopped, but no actual settlement in sight. But there had quite an advancement been made about Southampton and along the lake shore.

### Our Arrival Home and Delight in the Fortune of Our Location, Mice Plague

You may conceive of our surprise when we looked around the next morning to find a stake a little in front of our shanty door, with our names marked by the surveyor on both sides, and that our little thirteen feet square shanty stood upon two lots, about equal parts on each, and we also had our names written upon the two rear lot stakes in the same way, and a road or highway running between them, so that we could not have been better suited, nor desired more nor better treatment than we had received from Senator Vidal, who surveyed the township during our absence. But we knew that although we were away we had some true friends left behind us, and although there was some trouble in some quarters regarding first claim upon lots, we never had the least degree of trouble.

Although we found everything so satisfactory outside of our shanty the inside was quite the reverse, for although we had used the precaution to make up into bundles and suspend from the rafters all our bedding and destructible stuff be-



fore leaving, yet upon our return we found that the mice had taken advantage of our absence and had made a nursery for hatching amongst our bedding, and cut everything that came in their way. So innumerable were the swarms of wood or white bellied mice (sometimes known as deer mice), that we found it to be impossible for us to keep our eatables in any place that they would not get them, except in our round iron bake kettle with close-fitting lids. Close wooden boxes were of no use, for they would gnaw through them in quick time, and now that we had returned with plenty of fresh supplies in the way of provisions and seed wheat their numbers seemed to increase tenfold, and so great did the plague of mice become that we were put to our wits' end, and it became a problem whether they would not drive us out and get full possession. We used every conceivable means of destroying them by every kind of trap that we could invent, and sometimes we would be able to get the lend of a cat for a few days, but nothing seemed to have any effect in lessening their numbers. They seemed to increase all the more rapidly, and so daring were they that if we left the table a moment to fetch the tea or coffee pot from the hearth, whenever our backs were turned, they would come and snatch our ham or bread from our plate and ran away with it in a moment. My brother often caught them with his hands and killed them by the dozen while sitting at the table, for he had made a candlestick out of a piece of basswood, and I have often seen the mice run up and bite the candle



while we would be sitting reading by its light in the evening, and we found as fall and winter approached that their numbers kept increasing, and the more tenacious they became; so much so that when we were in bed and asleep at night, we would often be awakened by mice pulling at our hair and cutting our bed covers in order to get the cotton wadding, or our hair to make themselves nests. I assure you we were not the only ones that were pestered with the plague of mice, for all of our neighbors had their share of trouble to bear with the same nuisance. Yet, notwithstanding these pests, we kept constantly employed in clearing up the land, and making other needed improvements. So anxious were we in this undertaking that we often neglected to make any preparations for our next meal, and when at work we became so thoroughly tired and hungry that we could suffer no longer, we would go into the shanty, make a fire, and then patiently wait until we got something cooked and ready to appease our hunger, and we often used to declare that this would be the last time that we would be so foolish as to go to work without having some food prepared that we could eat upon our return without having to wait so long. But these resolutions were like piecrust, only made to be broken, for as soon as we got a good meal, and were satisfied, off to work we would go, and never think about the next meal, and thus we put in rather a dreary time. But hope carried us on, for we looked forward to the time, in the very near future, when we would

be blessed with a comfortable home and the happy influences of sweet domestic association. But during this time we made frequent visits to Southampton, where we would meet with old friends, such as Mr. McDonald, who had bought a small vessel called the Saucy Jack, and was sailing her between Goderich and Southampton, and would bring passengers and goods, which was of very great service to the place. So, sometimes after a very short visit at the home of our friend, Capt. Spence, and tasting of the comforts enjoyed under such social surroundings, it had the effect of making us more dissatisfied with our own present condition in our poor shanty life, and of the misery attendant upon the keeping of bachelor's hall.

#### Incident of the Bear

I must not forget to relate an incident that occurred about this time, in which I was intimately connected. There was word sent up from Southampton urgently requesting one of us to go down to the pine lands and remain there in possession of it for a short time, for there were parties at present in search of such land, and were making every enquiry where to obtain such. So I volunteered to go down and remain for a time in possession, or until the danger was past. I made a small raft for the purpose of taking me down the river, and I put up a small supply of provisions, and providing myself with a blanket, and putting some matches in my pocket, and taking my axe and a double-barrelled gun that

I had borrowed from Mr. Brown. After getting myself so thoroughly equipped, I and the dog got aboard the little raft to descend the river. I may say here that this dog was a very poor, miserable, half-starved animal that took up with us, and followed us when we were coming down the Durham line with the wagon. The poor thing was very hungry and we took compassion upon him and fed him, and now he had become much changed in appearance, and was growing quite fierce and daring. Early in the afternoon I reached the spot and landed, and looked over the ground and cut down a tree here and there, in order to secure possession, and as I had not seen nor heard anyone around, nor the appearance of anyone having been there, early in the evening I cut some wood and made a fire in the woods, back some distance from the river, and when it began to get dark I spread my mat on the ground, eat my lunch and put on a good fire, and then laid down to rest upon my blanket, my axe and gun close by my side, and the dog lay close up to my back. In this way I had gone into a very sound sleep, for a long time, as the fire had all burned up and nothing remained but ashes. All at once I was awakened in a great hurry. The dog had jumped up and was barking fiercely close by my side. I immediately sprang to my feet and commenced to stir up the fire, at the same time urging on the dog, who would not leave my side, but kept barking furiously, with the hair upon his back standing on end. I knew that there was something nearby

that he was afraid of, and as I stirred the fire I found a piece of stick that had some fire on one end, and this I kept shaking in the air until it became bright. With this in one hand and the gun in the other, and the dog a foot or two in advance, I kept swinging the stick, urging on the dog, and following in the direction indicated by him. I had not gone many yards in that way before I heard, close by me, the trampling of some heavy animal, and by the breaking of the brush I knew that it was a large bear, so I swung my stick around in the air and threw it in the direction of the sound that I heard, and then retreated in haste to make on a good fire, the dog following close at my heels. I put off no time before making a good fire, so as to give light, for I knew that my safety depended much upon keeping up a good bright light. However, I heard nothing more of the intruder that night, as I kept on a blazing good fire. I have no doubt but it was Mr. Bruin, thinking to make an early breakfast by catching me sleeping, which no doubt he could have done if it had not been for the dog, that awoke me in time, and I may mention that this dog was afterwards presented to Mr. Peter Brown at his request. After taking some breakfast, I sauntered about the greater part of the day, and in the afternoon I started to return back home, as I did not care to run the risk for another night of becoming food for the bear, and as I had brought the pocket compass along with me, I took what I believed would be a straight course to our home, and succeeded in reaching there before it was

dark, and was gladly welcomed safe home once more. But as the days became shorter and the evenings longer, we had no way of amusing ourselves but by reading. We had no newspapers and very few books, but we would sit and read turn about, by the light of a tallow candle, and of the Bible chapter after chapter. We were also greatly interested in reading the writings of the Rev. Dr. F. W. Krummacher on the prophets Elijah and Elisha. These, along with Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," comprised nearly all the stock of our reading matter, for no sooner had we settled into a home of our own than we set up and established family worship in our poor shanty, and although we were only three young men, we seldom neglected the duty, for Cousin John was still with us at that time, and whether we had strangers remaining over night with us, or we were alone, it made no difference to us in that respect, and we would have all kinds of people staying over for a night, for there were many coming from different parts of the country looking for land. We had a small cedar raft that we used in crossing the river. This raft would carry the three of us and the dog nicely across the river, and we used to ferry a great many across both ways, and amongst the number we had a quiet, pious, middle-aged man, from Nova Scotia, who remained with us during the night. The next morning, after breakfast, this gentleman wanted to cross over, for he wanted to go and see the new Township of Bruce. So I said that I would take him over, but when we came



to the edge of the river he said that he was afraid to trust himself upon that raft to cross that large river. I told him that there was not the slightest danger, that we crossed and recrossed it, several times, almost every day, with two or three upon that raft, and that if he wanted to get over not to be afraid but get on, and I brought the raft up to the edge and he got upon it, and got down upon his knees on the raft and commenced to pray. I pushed the raft off into the stream and I noticed that it was sinking very much deeper in the water than usual, and I told him that I thought he would be better standing up, for he was getting wet, but he answered me by saying that he preferred to remain upon his knees, and he continued in this position, with his eyes closed, earnestly engaged in prayer, although his end of the raft was sunk about a foot under the water, and when we reached dry land, although wet nearly up to his waist from kneeling, he thanked me, and said that he would never run the risk of crossing that river again, for rather than do so he would travel by land all the way to Goderich and get back home by that way. Such an effect had that man's mind over his body, caused by fear, that he was like a lump of lead, more than a man.

### Home Events Continued, Callers and Indians

I must say that we rather enjoyed having strangers calling and conversing with us, for we received a good deal of outside information in

that way that we would not otherwise have heard, and some of them were greatly pleased and delighted with the situation and surroundings of our place, and declared that it was a perfect paradise. We said that no doubt but the place was all right if we only had a few more of the comforts of civilization, but we hoped that before many years the conditions would be changed for the better. Amongst other visitors, and in the way of variety, we would receive calls from the Indians, who were often passing up and down the river in their canoes, spearing fish and shooting ducks, and it was most surprising to see how expert they were in the managing of their canoes, for they would dart about after the sturgeon at great speed, and the squaws were just as quick and skilful in managing the canoes as the men, for they would stand with a foot on each side, on the top of the canoe, and dart it about after the fish like a shot, while the men would use the spear, and often they would get a number of fish which they would exchange for bread with the settlers when they could do so. They used to come up to our shanty and stand outside, by the door, and halloo loudly, and when we would leave our work to see what was wanted, they would say "tobacco," and when we told them that we had none, as we did not use it, they would then pat on their stomachs, and say "buckity." That meant that they were hungry and if we had any bread we would give them something to eat. They were always peaceable and quietly disposed, and would not attempt to enter if there were no one

around, but would soon go away, although the door was not locked. But they were very suspicious of being cheated in their dealings with white men, and no doubt but they frequently suffered from having been taken advantage of in their dealings, and to give an idea of how callous an Indian can become, I will give an instance that occurred at that time at the mouth of the Saugeen River. A few young men had gone out in a boat, and while crossing the river near the lake the boat got upset and, while they were all struggling in the water and calling for help, an Indian stood with his canoe on the shore near by, and answered back to their piteous cries for help, "How much zo give, then me go?" For, no doubt, he saw a good opportunity at that moment to drive a hard bargain with those who were desperately struggling in the water for life. They were rescued by others, but little thanks to the Indian, who stood by coolly looking on.

During the fall months the surveying of Saugeen Township was completed, and there were large numbers of people coming in looking for land, and the agent, Mr. McNab, was very anxious to secure the better class of settlers, and he gave every encouragement to such as wished to locate upon land. We had also quite a number call upon us in their travels, and this caused us to make frequent trips to Southampton, in order to keep up the supply of provisions, and while there, at the home of Capt. Spence, we would have the pleasure of meeting with such old acquaintances as John McLean, Esq., an

old merchant from Guelph, and his nephew, Mr. A. McDonald, also Mr. McNab, the agent, and his son, John, a lad of about fourteen, who came up from Toronto during the August of 1851. (And I had the pleasure of meeting him again at his own home in Southampton, in August, 1902, and conversed freely with him about old times and the great change that has been wrought in the country since we first met, fifty-one years ago, and just about as great a change has taken place in his appearance and mine since we were boys then, but now old, white-haired men.) At one of these social meetings at the home of Capt. Spence we all spoke of our intention to return to our old home before Christmas, and then we agreed also to meet at Mr. Spence's house and all travel together in company from there over to Owen Sound. But as Mr. McDonald was going to make some trips to Goderich with his vessel, we promised to await his return to Southampton at the end of the sailing season. But he deferred his return long beyond the usual time for sailing on the lake.

### Incidents of New Settlers, Mr. Gowinlock and the Tracks

I will relate an incident that occurred shortly after our return from Guelph, about this time, just to give a little idea of the wonderful amount of confidence and genial kindness and hospitality that existed amongst the early settlers of the country.



One fine afternoon we noticed a large, heavily-laden raft coming down the river, and to our surprise we saw that it was being pushed right across to our landing place, and there they commenced to unload, and as we did not know who the parties were, we went to see and asked him what he was doing, when he said that he had lately selected a lot of land and that he was going to leave his wife and family with us until he could get a house put up for themselves, and of course we could not say no. This gave us the pleasure of entertaining Mrs. McLean and her twin babies and nurse girl for about a week in our small shanty, and strange as it may seem, we felt no real inconvenience, nor were we greatly inconvenienced during their stay with us. This Mr. McLean settled on a fine farm a little east of Burgoine, on the road to Tara, but I am told that he and most all of the early settlers of those days have passed away, and those who were brought in with their parents over fifty years ago are now old men and women.

I will take the liberty of here relating a rather laughable incident that occurred this fall, just shortly after a very heavy fall of snow. I had occasion to go up the river one morning to see our neighbor, Mr. Gowinlock, about something, and I found that he was just then making preparations to go down the river to Southampton, and we were walking back in company and had got about half way to our shanty, when we came across the tracks of some one who was out shooting and walking upon snow shoes. Our friend, Mr. Gowinlock, had never seen anything



of the kind before, and when he came to the tracks he was struck with amazement and alarm at seeing them, and standing still, held up his hands with this exclamation, "O the the Lord preserve us and what kind of great muckle beast can that be? O I hope that it'll no devour us. See the marks of its great big feet." And when he saw that I was smiling, he said, "Do ye ken what kind o' beast it is?" I said yes, that it was not a beast, but the track of a man walking upon snow shoes. He said, "Dear me. Well, I was wondering that a great beast, having feet of that size did not sink much deeper in the snow."

Some time about the beginning of November, in the year 1851, or near the time when this last related event took place with Mr. Gowinlock and the snow shoes, I had been invited to attend a local temperance meeting, which was going to be held in Southampton on a certain evening about that time, and although our numbers were not large, yet it was a very social gathering. Besides some of the Indians would take an interest in the proceedings and give us a specimen of their native oratory, and sing some of their temperance songs. In their speeches they would tell us of some of the awful effects that "squitee wabboo," or fire water, had wrought amongst their people in the past.

And just while in the midst of the entertainment, our worthy president, Alexander McNab, Esq., land agent, said that he desired to call the attention of those present to a most important and pleasing event, and it gave him very

great pleasure to be able to introduce to those present, no less a personage than Mr. Simon Orchard, the pioneer of Paisley, who has just arrived amongst us, having driven his oxen and sled, or jumper, through the woods, and as his was the first vehicle drawn by animals that was ever known to arrive in this place it created quite a little sensation. Mr. Orchard stated that it had taken him two days to accomplish this journey, as he had to slash his way through the woods with his axe. The snow was not yet much over a foot deep. This seemingly small event had nearly the same effect upon the inhabitants of that time as the arrival of a first railway train would have at the present day, and neither are these old events soon forgotten. As an instance, I had the pleasure of spending a short time with my old friends, Captain and Mrs. Spence, in the autumn of 1902, and while talking over old events I was reminded by Mrs. Spence that Mrs. McNab and herself enjoyed their first sleigh ride with me in the early winter of 1853, a circumstance I had never thought of. But she said that Mrs. McNab and herself often spoke with great delight of how greatly they had enjoyed it.

### Local Events and Regrets

So we continued at our new home and took up the potatoes and disposed of some of them to Capt. Spence and Mr. Brown, who came up and made a raft, and went down the river with the potatoes. Mr. Peter Brown had removed to

Southampton with his family during the summer, and at his house we always found a kind home and warm welcome. I may also say that our cousin, John Caldwell, who had come up with us and remained for a time, had selected a lot or two and then returned to Pilkington with the intention of coming back in the spring, but he, having afterwards taken up land in the new Township of Minto, did not return, but disposed of his claims afterwards to Messrs. William and Joseph Stirtin. These gentlemen, along with their brother, John, who also settled near by the others, all became prominent men and leading farmers in that community. They all came from near Guelph and were brothers of our venerable old member for South Wellington, David Stirtin, who still lives and holds the position of postmaster for the city of Guelph. He is now a very aged gentleman, and was one of the first settlers around Guelph.

My brother and I were mostly left alone during these short, dark days of fall, and as winter approached the weather grew more disagreeable. Still we continued to underbrush and chop down the trees, until the snow became too deep to do much outside. That season the snow came very early and we found ourselves almost entirely cut off from communication on all sides, for the river was nearly frozen over and it was impassable, owing to the floating ice, and nothing could be seen but snow everywhere and upon everything, deep snow. This had a very depressing and saddening effect upon William and I, and we both keenly felt our lonely and isolated condition,

and often regretted our folly by ever coming to such a place. We would long for a change, and greatly did we desire the associations of more cheerful companionship, for we felt our condition to be a very monotonous one.

### Local Events, Preparations for Return, etc.

However, time passed on, and the day at last had come when we were to leave and go to Southampton to meet with those that we had made an appointment with, to meet at the home of Capt. Spence, and after we had made all necessary preparations for our journey, as we did not intend returning before spring, we started to walk down the banks of the river through the deep snow, until we reached a place in the river where we knew the water to be deep and it had very little current. This part we knew to be frozen over, and so risked crossing there, and after using all precaution and carefully picking our way, we succeeded in reaching the opposite side in safety, and close to the residence of Mr. Peter Smith. There we heard from Mrs. Smith the sad rumor of the loss of the "Saucy Jack," and that Capt. McDonald and all on board of her were drowned. This intelligence had the effect of casting a gloom of sadness over our already depressed spirits, and it required some effort to enable us to make our way through the deep and little trodden snow, through the woods to the beach, and when we reached the lake shore we found the wind intensely cold and piercing. There we saw the marks of a hand-sleigh, which



had lately passed along towards Southampton, and which we soon discovered was taking the remains of young Martindale, who was found drowned in the hold of the vessel. All the others seemed to have been washed overboard, and their bodies were not found until the ice melted away in the spring. The crew consisted (so far as was then known), of the captain and owner, Mr. A. McDonald, and the two brothers Martindale, who came down the river in our scow with us in the spring, and they each, I understood, left young widows and small families. The circumstances were so exceedingly sad that it had a serious effect upon the small community in every way, for the vessel was returning from Goderich very late in the season, and was laden with flour and all other supplies that were required for the inhabitants of Southampton during the winter. The vessel, it appears, had been completely overturned by the storm, as her sails were found to be wound all around her, and everything aboard of her was washed away, and at this time all their provisions in Southampton had been consumed, and they were all patiently awaiting the arrival of this long-delayed boat for fresh supplies. You may imagine the consternation and alarm caused by this sad catastrophe. I was told that our friend, Mr. McDonald, had remained much longer in Goderich than was prudent at this season of the year. But there was an election in the County of Huron going on at the time and so anxious was he to assist his friend, the Hon. Malcolm Cameron, in his election that he had neglected to return in



proper season, and thus it ended with such serious results to so many, for all were concerned, for there was no way of getting any more supplies during the winter but by packing it across by the trail through the woods from Owen Sound, and this, at that time, would have been a hopeless job, for, owing to the deep fall of snow, there had been no communication with Owen Sound for some weeks.

When we reached Southampton it was not surprising to see that everyone was wearing a very melancholy countenance, and had a sad look, and we also met quite a number of young men awaiting our arrival and wanting to proceed at once across to the Sound, and although they knew that there had been no travel, nor any path to guide their way through this great forest covered with deep, untrodden snow, yet, owing to the sad misfortune that had just happened in the loss of the vessel containing all the supplies, it made it expedient that we should depart at once. So, upon the following morning, six brave, stout-hearted young men, supplied only with a biscuit or two each, started to cross the river in a large canoe owned by Alex. Butchart, and after several very close shaves from being upset by the large quantity of floating ice that was then at the mouth of the river, they ultimately succeeded in reaching the other side, when they then commenced their perilous, long journey through the woods, and as nearly as I can remember the party consisted of six young men, Messrs. George Gray, William Kennedy, Thos. Burgess, Clement Ceifect, and a Mr. Mill-

wood and Silverthorne. These poor fellows found a hard road to travel. Mr. McNab, who was not quite ready to start with the others in the morning, prevailed upon me to remain with him until the afternoon, when we would all cross the river and go as far up as the Indian village, and remain at the house of Mr. Cathay for the night.

So, early in the afternoon, we, that is to say, Mr. McNab and his son, John, Mr. Chisholm Millar, the surveyor, who had been surveying the Township of Bruce, and myself, were accompanied to the river's edge by many friends who were solicitous about our getting safely across owing to the amount of floating ice, which made the passage over very dangerous, and the boat that was being used was a very small one and could not carry us all over in one trip. So Captain Spence and Mr. Reid, who had charge of the boat, asked Mr. McNab and John to get in and they would take them over first, and then return for Mr. Millar and me. After cautiously pushing their way through the ice and using some exertion in their efforts, they reached the other side, where Mr. McNab and John remained, and also Capt. Spence, who had been rather unwell for some days, felt the exertion required in the managing of the boat rather hard upon him, and so Mr. Reid volunteered to bring back the boat for Mr. Millar and me. But when he got back into the swift current amongst the ice he seemed to have lost all control of the boat, and kept going around and around with the ice and was being carried right into the

lake, while Capt. Spence, who saw the eminently dangerous condition of affairs, kept pace with the boat down the river's edge, and at the entrance into the lake there had formed a jam of ice, where fortunately Mr. Reid managed to get in and Capt. Spence, walking out upon the ice, reached the boat and succeeded in getting into her, when he soon brought her over to us again. But while all this was going on we were all standing on the opposite shore powerless and speechless, with our hearts in our mouths, and I confess that I was trembling with fear from head to foot, for when I entered that little boat I scarcely expected ever to reach the other side. So when Mr. Millar and I got seated in the boat it was with much misgiving on my part, and when we had gotten out into the middle of the river and amongst the flow of ice, one of the rowlocks gave way and the boat became unmanageable, and I then felt sure that our end had come and that was just what I expected would happen, for we were being carried rapidly down into the lake.

So near were we that when the surf of the lake struck our little boat the water would dash all over us and would soon have filled the boat, when Mr. Millar with great presence of mind got down and lay in the bottom of the boat and secured the bolt that had dropped out, put it back into its place, and lay there and held it in place. This enabled Capt. Spence to guide and control the boat to the opposite shore, which we at length reached and landed upon the quickly forming ice, when Capt. Spence, taking the lead,

safely guided us to the edge, where we were joined by Mr. McNab and John, who had closely watched us through the distressing circumstances by which we were surrounded. So, after bidding each other a parting farewell, Capt. Spence and Mr. Reid returned to Southampton, and we four pursued our way up the river banks to the Indian village, and to the house of Mr. Cathay, where we were kindly received and entertained for the night.

As Mr. McNab had previously engaged two men to carry over his packs to Owen Sound this made our number up to six also, the same as had passed along in the morning.

After spending a pleasant evening with Mr. and Mrs. Cathay, upon the next morning, after partaking of an early breakfast, we six started on our journey, following closely in the footsteps of the six who had passed along the morning before us. Notwithstanding that we had the advantage of a partly broken path, we made but slow progress and found the travelling very fatiguing and our young friend, John, had the misfortune of getting his feet wet very frequently, for in crossing over creeks or other wet places he would be sure to slip into them and get wet. Although his father had a good supply of dry stockings along in the packs, yet it was no pleasant undertaking to sit down in the deep snow and put on dry ones, which he very frequently had to do. This young gentleman was scarcely fifteen years of age and had been tenderly brought up in the city of Toronto, and was quite unaccustomed to endure hardships of



any kind, so before noon, and after we had travelled several miles through the snow, John got so tired that he became almost powerless, and seemed to lose all control over his legs, and would slip into every conceivable place of danger. We tried to render all possible assistance, but we found it very difficult to do much, owing to the great depth of snow and the narrowness of the path, and this stopping so often to change stockings caused some delay and hindered us much in our journey. But his father displayed so much real patience and kindness with John that Mr. Millar and I felt heartily sorry for them, and more especially when John would plead with his father and all of us to go on and leave him there, for he never would get through and it was useless for us to sacrifice our lives in order to try and save him. Of course we did not listen to such talk and only put forth the greater efforts to help him, and about two o'clock, just a short time after we crossed the Sobble River, we came upon a spot where there had been a fire very lately, and I said to Mr. McNab and the others that I was sure from the appearance of the place and from the way that the snow was stamped and tracked about that the six poor fellows who started a day before us were here last night, when Mr. McNab replied, "O, for God's sake, do not say so." I said that I hoped that I might be mistaken, but I was very much afraid that it would only prove to be too true.

So we continued our slow march, Mr. Millar and I rendering every possible assistance to Mr.



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John, for he had by this time become nearly quite helpless, and we tried every way to help him along. I tried to carry him upon my back, but the snow was so deep and the path so very narrow, and John had no power or control over his legs to keep them turned up out of the snow, but allowed them to hang down on each side of me, and make two deep ruts in the snow like two sticks, so I had to give up this method of conveyance and try some easier mode of accomplishing my purpose. Having around me a long sash or cravat I tied it across my shoulders and gave him the ends to hold on by and his father would walk behind him and steady him up. We managed by that way to make a little progress, but at short intervals he would let himself drop down into the snow and almost draw me upon the top of him, and after about two hours of this process I became exceedingly tired and said that we might just as well give up all hopes of getting through to-night as we were very little more than half way, and if Mr. Millar would take my place and assist Mr. McNab that I would hasten forward and prepare some place where we could remain for the night, and shortly after we made this arrangement, I started forward at a more rapid pace and had not gone very far before I overtook Mr. McNab's two men, who carried his packs, whom I soon passed. I told them what I was going to do, and shortly afterwards I came upon a place where the track of those who had preceded us branched off into different directions. I could see that they had lost their way and that they had become

confused, but pursuing what I thought to be the most direct line I soon came to a place where the tracks had all united again into one path, and I could see also that the tracks were very fresh and that I was getting very close upon the first party, so I did not stop as I intended doing, to erect a place of shelter, but pressed on, for it was now getting dark and I soon saw at a little distance ahead a gleam of light, and in a few minutes more I came upon the first party of six. They had reached a deserted shanty that had been put up during the summer. This they had taken possession of and they were trying to put themselves into the best position available under such circumstances, but I cannot say that any of them looked happy or contented, nor were they in the most agreeable state of disposition or temper, for, after two days' tramping in the deep snow without food, their suffering may be conceived.

After giving and receiving some explanations regarding our several conditions, I asked for some one of them to go back with me and try to assist forward those still behind us up to this place, but no one felt able or willing to do so, they were all so tired out and hungry that they could not stir. But after a good deal of pleading with them, Thos. Burgess at length consented to accompany me back. After walking some distance and hallooing frequently we at last got a reply, and then threw ourselves down in the snow and awaited their slow arrival. These turned out to be Mr. McNab's two men with his packs. They said that as they did not see anything more of me after I had passed them, al-

though they had travelled until it got dark, they had thrown themselves down in the snow and intended to remain there for the night. But when they heard us shouting they got up and came forward, although they had neither heard nor seen anything of the remainder of our party since I had passed them. So then Mr. Burgess and I went back with them to the shanty, and after remaining there for about an hour I again prevailed upon Mr. Burgess to accompany me back once more to see and bring in the missing ones of our party, and so we travelled slowly back again over the same path. We kept giving an occasional shout as we travelled in hope of receiving an answer, but we had to go back some distance before we got any reply. But when we did get one we again threw ourselves down in the snow, intending to remain where we were until they came up to us, but they kept up such a continuous halloo and shouting that we were forced to get up and go and meet them, and I must say that they were needing some help, for both their strength and patience were nearly exhausted, so I relieved Mr. Millar of any further duties for the present, so that he and Mr. Burgess then at once started for the shanty, leaving me to assist John. I tied my comforter around my shoulder again, and by this means, with the assistance of his father, we reached the shanty before midnight, where we found the others already all huddled up in a mixed heap, each one trying to make the best thing possible out of it, under all the circumstances. So Mr. McNab opened out his pack and took out a rug and

a buffalo robe, which he shared with some of us. Thus we passed the night, and when daylight began to appear we all made ready for an early start, and as we did not wait for breakfast we soon got ready for the tramp, where Mr. Millar and I were expected to take the lead in doing the first breaking up of a path, as many of the others had already had two days of the experience and were used up and unable to take any more, an active part in the performance. So as soon as it was light enough to see the way we set off, taking each our turn, in opening a path through the deep trackless snow, and the others following us in single file, and when the leader became exhausted he would drop to one side amongst the snow, and the next would take the lead, but by this time there were not more than one or two that had strength enough left to force their way through the deep snow, and so they always stayed in the rear. I remember on one occasion I was taking the lead and we were passing through a long swamp and everything was so deeply covered with snow that no sign of any path was to be seen, when all at once I sank down to the neck amongst brush. I had got upon the top of some fallen tree. Mr. Millar, who was close behind me, turned a little to one side and by that means escaped falling into the same trap upon top of me.

However I soon managed to extricate myself and regain the proper path, and thus we journeyed on in comparative silence. You may imagine our joy and delight when about one o'clock we saw a clearing and called out to each other to



take courage for here is a clearing, and this news put new energy into the hearts of the poor, despairing ones, for the most of them had begun to despair of ever getting out of the woods. In a short time we reached the home of Mr. Jimby, but found only Mrs. Jimby and children at the house. We soon made our condition known and she hastened at once to prepare food. The Messrs. Jimby had gone down with two yoke of oxen and a sleigh that morning to Owen Sound, in order to break a track through the deep snow, for there had been no travel since the heavy snow storm. We felt a little disappointed at this information, as we had fully intended when we reached Mr. Jimby's to engage him to take us all to Owen Sound with his oxen and sleigh. But the benefit of having the road broken with the cattle and sleigh would be of great help to us in the latter part of our journey. Mrs. Jimby soon had a quantity of pork fried and bread and tea prepared, but we made up a rather large company to be waited upon all at once, and Mr. McNab in his magnanimous way suggested that those of the first party be attended to first, as they had been the longest without food. You may be assured that Mrs. Jimby had no time to lose for it kept her very busy for some time cutting bread, frying meat and pouring tea into cups, and after we had all gotten our immediate wants supplied Mr. McNab asked to be permitted to remunerate in a slight measure Mrs. Jimby for the bountiful supper she had so quickly prepared for us in our extremity. As it was wearing towards evening



and we had yet five miles more of a journey to make before we reached the Sound, we all set off upon the last stage of our travel and we found it very much easier to walk after getting some dinner and also from the track of the oxen and sleigh in the morning, and when we had gone about half way we met Messrs. Jimby on their return from Owen Sound, which had the effect of still further improving our path, so, after our hard experience, we all reached the Sound at last, and thankful were we to find ourselves once more within the comfortable hostelry of our old friend, Mr. Corbet. After a short rest we all made preparations for pursuing the remaining part of our journey to our several homes, some by stage or other modes of conveyance, and thus we parted, all hoping to meet again in the near future under more pleasant circumstances. In a few days more we reached our old home near Guelph, the day before Christmas, and were gladly welcomed back by our friends and acquaintances, and thus ended our first year, with much of the experience of what a pioneer life means in the early settlement of the new country, in the County of Bruce, in the year 1851.

### **Making Preparations for Returning**

For the winter and early spring of 1852 we remained at our old home and greatly did we relish and appreciate the change of conditions. All this made us feel that there was no place like home. It was so very different from what we had so lately experienced in every way, for

here we were again invited to taste of the comforts of life and to take a part in many of the pleasures and enjoyments of the happy social gatherings so fascinating to our youthful minds. There is no doubt at all but we had our future plans already formed about all these things, but the time for their fruition had not yet come, but we hoped soon to be able to erect comfortable houses at our new homes, and then we would be prepared to carry out our much cherished desires to their fullest completion, and no doubt but we sometimes also built castles in the air which never matured, for we had, like others, to contend with many of the disappointments to which flesh is heir in this life.

In this way we passed the months of winter, but at the same time we were always looking forward to and were making full preparations for our return in the spring. I had secured a very good yoke of oxen and a cow by exchanging a good, young horse and some harness for them. These were things that I did not at present require, so I had to delay my return until the beginning of the month of May, for we hoped that by that time the woods would provide pasture for the cattle in the shape of leaks and cow-cabbage, which grow in abundance everywhere in spring.

William had returned some weeks before, and when he arrived at Saugeen and told our neighbor, Mr. Wallace, that I was waiting to bring up some cattle, Mr. Wallace said that he was needing some also, and that he would go to

Guelph and meet me there and we could drive them together, and so we could assist each other on the way. In good time Mr. Wallace came to Guelph and met me there and soon afterwards purchased what cattle he required. I think that he bought a yoke of steers and two cows. and just about this time Mr. James Scott, from near the Waterloo line, came to see me, and said that he wanted to go up with me and take up land at the Saugeen, and that he wished to accompany us and assist in driving the cattle. So, in a short time, we had made all necessary preparations for our journey. Our herd comprised eight head in all, two yoke of oxen and four cows. Mr. Wallace and I each had the same number. It was in the beginning of May when we again set off on our long journey up to a new country, but we made very slow progress in our march, for the cows that Mr. Wallace had got were in a very poor, lean condition and quite unfit to travel such a long distance, for we had not gone more than a day or two when one of them showed signs of great fatigue from the continuous toiling, and she would lay down on the roadside frequently to take a rest, so we had just patiently to wait with her until she felt disposed to rise up and walk, and this was always trying to our patience, as we were all exceedingly anxious to move on, for we found the wayside inn accommodation to be of a most undesirable kind. I will just describe a few instances as a sample of many. I do not know whether there were any licenses granted to sell liquor in those

days or not, but the places where such was sold were very plentiful all along the road. I remember just on the top of the bank before crossing the river at what is now Mount Forest there was a small log house which had a sign of a bottle and a glass, made by a coal upon a piece of board, which was nailed up just over the door, and many of those places had no conveniences or accomodation for travellers, yet Mr. Scott, so as to pass off the time during our frequent delays, would go into some of them and patronize their establishments by indulging to a limited extent, when Mr. Wallace would use his powers of persuasion to dissuade him from such a practice. But Mr. Scott got a good joke upon him, for as we were moving slowly along the road one evening near by the Township of Sullivan and just close by the side of the road there stood a very small shanty, which had a sign upon it with this inscription written, "Whiskey sold here by the wholesale," and just at this place Mr. Wallace's poor cow laid down and refused to go any further. As it was getting towards night Mr. Scott and I had to push on with the remainder of the cattle until we could reach some more commodious quarters, so after going about a mile further we came to another inn, and there we enquired if they had any hay for our cattle, and also if they could accomodate us with supper and beds. We received answers in the affirmative, and when we got the cattle put up for the night and went into the house for supper, I assure you it was a very primitive looking place, for as yet there were no



partitions in the house, and around the chimney corners of the large fire place there was what we used to call a grist, that is to say, several bags of flour and bran which had been lately brought from the mill, and these bags of flour were being used for seats near the fire place. As we entered the house we saw two women; one was quite busy preparing supper for us, and the other was sitting upon one of the bags of flour, apparently soundly sleeping. But presently she awoke and began to chatter away to herself, and this made the other woman feel ashamed, and she came and took her away outside for a while. But I noticed when she got up that the bag of flour upon which she had been sitting and also upon the floor it was quite wet. This sight had the effect of spoiling my supper that night, but it is quite possible that she had spilt either tea or toddy upon herself. We spent a short time afterwards in common conversation and were then shown up the ladder to the loft, and there we found a very poor, hard bed, but such incidents were nothing unusual in those days, so next morning we took breakfast and awaited Mr. Wallace's arrival with his lean cow. Then Mr. Scott told Mr. Wallace that he need never say anything more to him about going into taverns to drink, for he had shown that nothing would satisfy him but staying at a place where whiskey could be bought wholesale, but he, Mr. Scott, only occasionally bought it by the glass at retail prices. And then we soon got started off again at a slow pace and continued until we



reached within a few miles of Owen Sound, when we turned in through the Township of Derby by the new line of road, near a place that was called Ingles Mills, and through places that are now called Tara and Burgoyne, and from there through to the Saugeen River, which we reached after several long, weary days of travel, which we found very often to be very trying to our patience when compelled to endure so many enforced delays.

### Changes in the Country

Upon our return from Guelph we found that since the completion of the survey of the township that there were numbers of new settlers coming into the place, and amongst some of those that I remember were Messrs. John and Thomas Smith, brothers of Mr. Peter Smith, and also the Messrs. Bell, McGillivray, Pilgrim, Goble, Parish and McLean and some others whose names I have forgotten at the present, and some of those who had gone back to their old homes in the fall did not return in the spring, and their places had been taken possession of by new comers, and some had left their farms and gone down to the village during the winter, and then had settled there, for by this time many of the most desirable lots had been taken up and, in a few cases, there arose some disputes regarding prior claims. But they were mostly always quickly settled without causing much trouble.

Mr. Scott, who came up with me, worked for

a month or two with us, helping to log and clear up the land for spring crops, and then he selected a lot for himself down the river a few miles, and after he got a house erected in due time he got his family moved up and became a resident of that new country. I must not omit to relate an event that occurred during Mr. Scott's stay with us. About this time we had religious services held in a few of the houses by the Methodist minister, Mr. Hutchinson, and a student from Knox Presbyterian College, Toronto, and I was appointed the collector and treasurer, and Mr. Scott, who had rather too much conceit regarding his ability as a singer or leader of psalmody, was appointed precentor in the Presbyterian meetings, and these meetings were generally pretty well attended by all the settlers that were near, or that could by any means attend such services, for the greatest of harmony prevailed amongst the different sects. But according to the denomination of the preacher, the singing was usually led by one of the same persuasion, and it so happened upon one occasion when Mr. Hutchinson was officiating that his leader, Mr. William Cunningham, was disabled from the effects of a cold, and as Mr. Scott was present he was asked to lead in the singing during the service. Mr. Scott, without much hesitation, consented, when Mr. Hutchinson very considerately, and in order to make it easier for Mr. Scott, gave out the 23rd psalm, instead of a hymn, and so Mr. Scott, feeling the responsibility and importance of the position, began with his favorite old tune of Belerma, and

he had not gone very far before he was assisted by Mr. Cunningham, who was sitting beside him, and started off in the new quick style, while Mr. Scott continued in the old, slow fashion, so that when Mr. C. was at the end of the verse Mr. S. was only about half way. This made a great discord of sounds and so they stopped and made a new start from the beginning, and this time it was even worse than the first attempt, for by this time Mr. Scott was getting quite nervous and tremulous of voice. When he made the third attempt he got as far as "The Loord is my shepherd," when he fairly broke down, with the exclamation, "I cannot manage it. I am fairly beat," when the minister said, "Never mind. Let us pray," and as soon as the meeting was closed for that day Mr. Scott was out and off like a reindeer, and never stopped to say good day to any one. I never heard him mention his singing after that day. I may also say that my Sabbath collections during the season only amounted to something like four dollars, for it was not usual to donate more than a copper at each collection, and these preachings were conducted, both in village and country, wherever there was a house large enough to accommodate a few people, and everyone was anxious to do all in their power to assist in making the services both pleasant and profitable, and besides this there was a very strong temperance sentiment in the community amongst the leading class of the people. The agent, Mr. Alexander McNab, was decidedly a strong leader of temperance, and he gave every possible encourage-

ment to all good settlers of that class, and although all were not strict teetotallers, yet he secured a very desirable class of settlers for Saugeen and the surrounding townships, and the fruits of their industry and perseverance are very visible to this day, as seen in their fine, well-cleared up farms and substantial houses and barns. In the way of advancement and intelligence the County of Bruce has not many equals. A number of the inhabitants are of German and Scotch descent, and I am told that many who came into the county forty or fifty years ago and were then not worth more than forty or fifty dollars, are now worth as many thousands. So there was a continuous, steady progress made in the way of settlement and especially along the three leading roads, such as the Goderich road, which runs through the Townships of Saugeen and Bruce a little distance from the lake shore, and right through the centre of the village of Port Elgin. All this part was quickly settled and comprised a fine section of country. The next and most important line that was quickly settled was what was known as the Elora and Saugeen road. This runs through a splendid large section of farming country, besides it passes through many important towns, such as Walkerton, Paisley, and some others of a little smaller dimension. I well remember the anxiety that was displayed by many to secure lots upon this line. Our old friend, the Rev. Dr. R. Torrance of Guelph, had asked us to secure him some lots and we selected a fine tract of land upon this road for him. I believe that



shortly afterwards these same lots became the property of Messrs. Craig, who still retain possession of them.

The third important line of road was that running through the Townships of Arran and Derby to the Owen Sound road. This was opened early in 1852 and several settled that season upon it all along by Invermay and Tara, but especially near by the corners, that is called Burgoyne, there is a splendid settlement of well-to-do farmers, who have been settled there for many years. There is a Presbyterian church at Burgoyne of considerable dimensions, and in which the Rev. Mr. Tolmie officiated for a great many years, for this is indeed a fine section of country for several miles around, and is settled by a superior class of farmers. I think that there is also a good large Methodist church in this place, but I have been a great many years absent from these parts and, therefore, will not attempt to further describe them, but will confine my remarks to events that occurred in the days of the early settlement of the country, and with which I was more immediately concerned. I will here relate an incident that very closely concerned myself. It was some time about the middle of June, in the year 1852. There came an exceedingly great rain, causing the river to overflow its banks many feet, and it was coming down a rushing, mighty stream, so William and I thought the ground a little too wet to work upon pleasantly, and as we were needing some supplies of provisions, we would embrace the opportunity of going down to Southampton



to get some. We, as usual, took our little raft and crossed the river, and after making it fast, we walked down the river's edge until we came to our neighbor, Mr. Wallace's, place, where we found him very busily engaged in cutting down and getting rid of all the timber that was within reach of the water's edge, for as soon as it fell into the river it was carried away, body and branches, and by that means he was getting a piece of land cleared up without much trouble, and as he was very anxious to get a piece of ground ready to sow with turnips, he asked as a favor if one of us could not remain and assist him that day, as he wished to take advantage of the rise in the river. I consented to remain and help him with this work and William went on to the village alone. And it so happened that there was a very large basswood tree which we felled into the river, but it was too far from the water to be carried right away. So Mr. Wallace and I tried to get it pushed off, but we were not able to do so, when Mr. W. said that he would yoke up his steers and perhaps they could move it, which would be much easier for us than lifting so heavily, and also that the cattle might be required much oftener now that the trees were further from the river. So in course of a little time Mr. Wallace came along with his oxen, which I must say were very untractable and unaccustomed to the yoke, and hard to manage. But in time we succeeded in getting the chain hitched around the butt end of this big basswood tree, and, no sooner were the oxen attached to it, than they made a rush for

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the river, and in spite of all our efforts to stop them, the tree was soon all afloat and with the oxen still attached to it, was rushing rapidly down the river, the oxen making every effort to swim across to an island that was in the middle of the river. This had the effect of causing the top of the tree to be suddenly driven in towards the shore, when we caught it by the branches and drew it towards the side for all that we were worth, and the oxen, which were getting pretty well exhausted by this time, were doing their best pulling against us, trying to reach the island. There was nothing of them to be seen but the tips of their horns, and the ends of their noses out of the water; the chain had got over their backs and held them down in the water, which caused them to moan piteously. But no sooner had the tops turned in towards us than we saw our opportunity, when we ran and caught hold of the branches and pulled it in such a way that Mr. W. got into the large limbs and crawled upon his hands and knees until he at last reached the chain, when he managed to get it unhooked, and then crawled very cautiously, but speedily back to the branches, which I was holding on to with all my might, although I was drawn into the water nearly up to the waist, and in another moment or two would have been off my feet. I called to him to make all possible speed, and just as he got near enough to jump I felt myself being carried away, and called upon him to jump, which he did, and I caught him not a moment too soon, or he most certainly would have been taken away down with the tree,

or been drowned, for he could not swim more than a stone. The tree was soon carried away down the river towards the lake, and the poor oxen, after they had been released from the tree, managed to reach the island, and there they stood very fatigued looking. After resting ourselves for a short time and considering what would be the best way to get the oxen off the island, for we could not get along very well without them now, I proposed that we make a light raft out of a couple of cedar rails, that were lying near at hand. So we got a hammer and some nails, and two short pieces of board. We nailed them together, and after furnishing myself also with a paddle, I got upon the slim raft and pushed out into the stream, but no sooner had I reached the swift current, than by my having to use more force to urge the raft to cross the stream, it parted in two, and I fell backwards into the water, and my frail craft floated down the river, but I succeeded in gaining the shore, and after resting a few minutes, I said to Mr. Wallace, now that I was as wet as I could possibly be, I would go up the river a short way and swim in a slanting direction across to the island, before the swift current could carry me past. So I foolishly attempted to swim over with a pair of heavy cowhide long boots upon my feet, and a pair of worsted pants, with a leather belt around my waist. In I went and before I knew where I was, I was down within a few feet of the lower end of the island, just where the two currents meet, and I put forth all my strength in trying to reach the is-

land, but all to no purpose, for I could not gain an inch against such a current. At last my arms refused to move, and I went down feet first, until I touched the bottom, which was about twelve feet down at that place, and then gave myself a hard push upwards with my feet. This sent me up to the surface again, where I renewed all my efforts to reach the island, which was so very near. Mr. Wallace was going up and down the river's edge in great distress, being quite unable to render me any assistance. My strength again failing me I went down to the bottom a second time, and in the same way, as I did at the first, I again gave myself a violent push upwards, which sent me to the top a second time, and most fortunately at this moment Mr. James Orr, who had just come up from Southampton, saw my perilous condition at once, and came running and calling to me to swim down the stream, and then ran up and got a cedar rail and pushed it into the water as far as he could, and no sooner did I turn to go down with the stream than it gave me quite a rest, and I found it to be easy work besides trying to go up against it. So, by the time the rail came down, I was within reach, and caught it, and pulling it under my arms, I paddled myself towards the shore, and it happened that there had been a tree stuck fast at some distance further down the river, and to that spot Mr. Wallace ran and climbed in amongst the branches with a fishing pole. One end of it he reached out to me, and I caught it by the end, and by that means got pulled ashore.



But I was so exhausted that I could not stand for quite a while, but had to be laid upon the ground for some time to rest. But I quickly recovered sufficiently to go to the house and put on a dry shirt, and get some food, and while I was doing this, Mr. Orr, who was a good swimmer, divested himself of his clothes and swam over to the island and drove the oxen back again. By this incident I was taught a serious lesson. I may say that I never knew until that day how great and many had been the dangers and risks that we had passed through in crossing and recrossing that river so often and sometimes even carelessly and thoughtless of danger, for although we were fairly good swimmers, yet if by any mishap we fell into the middle of the river in our clothing and heavy boots, our chances of escape from drowning would be very few indeed.

And upon the afternoon of this very day an incident occurred that I think is well worth relating. About four o'clock, a party of five men, belonging to a surveying company, had come up from Southampton, to where Mr. Wallace and I were at work, and they anxiously desired that I should take them across the river. But I did not care to run many more risks, for I had got about enough of the water for one day. I told them where they would find our raft, and that they were quite welcome to use it, but that they would require to make two trips, for the raft would only carry three safely over at once, and if three crossed over one could return with the raft and get the two that had



been left. In that way they could all pass over, and then tie up the raft on that side, and my brother and I would find some other means of passing over when we returned in the evening. But they insisted upon my going up to where the raft was tied up. So I accompanied them up the river to where the raft was, and when they saw it they were very much afraid, and would not venture upon it, but urged that I should take them over. I said that I had never been afraid of the river until to-day, and besides I did not feel able to undertake such hard work after what I had already passed through, and it would cause me to pass over three times at least, for the raft would not carry more than two besides myself. But I told them that there was the raft and if they wanted to cross over that they were very welcome to use it. At length three of the most daring got upon it and shoved out into the river, but no sooner did they reach the current than they were swiftly turned about, and the raft began to sink deep down in the water. Fortunately they drifted into an eddy, and we again got them safe ashore. They had all got wet up to their knees, besides receiving a bad fright, and they all turned sharply upon me and certainly they gave me anything but a blessing, and told me that that raft never carried three across that river, and that I was only trying to play a trick upon them, and deceive them, and that I did not care if they all got drowned. Upon this being said, I got upon the raft and called upon any two of them to get on and I would take them across,

just to prove to them what I had told them was true. In a little time two stepped on with me and I ferried them to the other side in safety, and returned with the raft. "Now you three have seen what I have done. Take the raft and ferry yourselves over." They said no, that they were afraid, but would give me a dollar to take them across. I said no, that I had taken a good many over at different times and never yet took a copper, and I did not feel like beginning to-day, but if they wished they could take the raft and use it, and leave it on the other side, but I would do no more for them. So then one of the men declared that he would sooner walk all the way up by the banks of the river until he reached the bridge at Walkerton, than cross the river on that raft. I told him to please himself about that, and leaving three upon one side and two upon the other, I bade them good afternoon, and then returned down the river's edge to Mr. Wallace. When I told him what I had done, he said that I was not to be blamed, taking my experience of the former part of the day into consideration, and from what I had already passed through in crossing over with some that were in mortal fear of being drowned. The mind seems to have such a wonderful effect upon the body, that one would almost think that they had suddenly changed into a lump of lead, and in case of an accident such a one would be sure to grab hold of some one and prevent them from swimming, and the consequence would be that both would perish together. I will here relate another event that occurred to me some time in

the month of June, which I will never forget. It happened that along about this time we would have very frequent callers from people looking for land, and as a natural consequence the demands upon our store of provisions were much heavier than they would otherwise have been. This caused us to make more frequent visits to Southampton for flour and other needful supplies, so I volunteered upon this occasion to go to the village, for I rather liked to go to Southampton to see my friends, and hear the news, for at this time there was neither any established post nor paper, and reading matter was scarce in these quarters in those days. So I started one evening, for the days were long, although as yet there were no roads, but over or under fallen trees, and across creeks upon a tree cut for the purpose of crossing over upon, instead of a bridge, and along by the lake shore on stepping stones, and by portage, to Southampton, which would be fully eight miles by these short cuts, yet I reached there when it was early in the evening. I got a bag of 100 pounds of flour and all in readiness for an early start home in the morning. After having tea and spending the night at the home of our good friend, Capt. Spence, I awoke about daylight and put the bag of flour upon my back, hoping to reach home in good time for breakfast. I managed to get along very nicely for a time, until I had gotten about half way, when my load of flour became very heavy and I had to take frequent rests, and I was so hungry and weak that when I put it down to rest I could scarce-

ly get it upon my back again, and as it got hotter towards noon the weaker I became and the heavier the load grew. About noon I reached home perfectly tired out, and so I proved the old adage to be true in my case also. It was only a lamb when I started off with it, but it became a very heavy sheep before I got it home, and I never wanted to try another such experience, as carrying a bag of flour eight miles before breakfast.

Along during the early part of this summer our old friend, Mr. George Butchart, commenced the erection of a saw mill upon what is known as Mill Creek, near to Port Elgin, a very much needed construction at that time, as so many people were moving into the country and requiring lumber for building purposes, and as there was some good pine and other timber in this section the enterprise was a desirable one. In due time the preparations for the dam were made, and the timber framed and ready to put up. For by this time there were some framers and other mechanics in and around Southampton, where several houses were in course of being erected, and so the day came when all was in readiness for raising the saw mill, and although the timbers were very heavy there was an abundance of help. But the majority of those present had never seen a frame building put up in their lives, and they were as green and ignorant of what to do as it would be possible to conceive. Although they were composed of a number of exceedingly strong men, yet the framer or contractor could do nothing with them.



They would stand in groups and talk, paying no heed to what the framer said, for they did not know by name the one piece of timber from the other or where it should be placed. So the framer had to give up in despair, after talking himself nearly hoarse. Just at this very moment there arrived a small party of men that had newly reached Southampton, and was told of a saw mill that was being raised that day, and they hastened out to the spot. Amongst the number was an active young man, a framer, from Orillia, and he said that he never yet had much trouble in managing the hands at a raising of a building, and that he would not be afraid to take the men in charge and put up the building. Consent to let him try was willingly given by the contractor, so this young man mounted upon the top of a half-raised bent, there to harangue the people. After he had called them all to order and attention, he said that he wanted them all to keep silent and attend to what he said. He knew that they were perfectly able to raise this building in short time, and he asked them all to lift together when he gave them the command to "Ye O, heave. Now are you all ready. Ye O, heave," and away the bent went up without a stop, as if it had been made of so many laths, for so sudden and unexpected was the move that the bent was taken clear away from under the poor fellow's feet in a moment, and he fell backwards astride of a man's shoulders, and down about sixteen feet into the mill race, striking his head against a beam at the bottom. He



never spoke, but only gave a quiver, but was soon carried up to the edge of the bank and every available appliance was used in order to bring him around. It was some time before he gave much symptoms of life, and it took several weeks' nursing before he was able to return to his home again. This accident had the effect of casting a damper and depression over all present for a time, and when we did get to work again it was worse than it was before the accident, for none seemed to care to do anything. So then it was suggested that we try again by calling sides and see what effect that would have. I was asked to be one of the captains. I said that there were many older men here, I thought, who would do better than I, but was told they were without experience. I then said if desired I would try and do the best I could to get the building up, and then the people were all called together, and told what we were going to do. My opponent had a slight advantage over me, in being a carpenter himself. However, the choosing of sides turn about commenced, and, of course, I had to begin with my neighbors, Mr. Peter Smith and Mr. Pilgrim, and others, but I did not know the names of all present and I was assisted and directed in many cases at the instigation of Mr. Smith, who knew them all, and when we got our sides completed I had as sturdy a lot of Highlanders as any one could wish, and the only trouble now was to keep them back. Two of them would take hold of a heavy piece of timber and run away with it, while before this six or eight men could scarcely man-

age to get it along, and when it came to raising the tents, we would have our side up and pinned before the others had theirs entered. This no doubt caused trouble and delay, for we often had to drive our pins out again before the other side could enter theirs. Notwithstanding all this, I could not keep them back, and the next bent would just be the same, and if they had been commanded to capture a fort or engage in a tug of war they could not have gone to work with greater will and determination to win. I may say that this saw mill served the purpose for which it was intended, and when timber became scarce it was converted into a grist mill, and the site has been occupied for several years doing good service in that way.

I have already stated in a former part of our experience as early settlers, what we had to endure and suffer from the plague of mice, and how we found things upon our return from Guelph in the spring of 1852. During Mr. James Scott's stay with us a rather laughable event occurred, which I think is worth relating here. Mr. Scott was rather what might be called a staid Scotchman, who had no bad opinion of himself, and he felt much annoyed at the depredations of the mice, and so plentiful were they that every effort to overcome them seemed to be of little avail. This gave Mr. Scott full scope to exercise all the ingenuity of his inventive powers to subdue them, and keep them within reasonable bounds, and it was almost impossible to keep anything eatable that they would not find and destroy. The only places of

safety were our two round bake kettles or ovens, with close-fitting lids, and in these we had to store away our provisions, but these places of safety were not always available for that purpose, for we generally made our own bread from salt raisings or yeast of that material, and Mr. Scott was quite an expert in the making of bread of that description, which was very palatable, and, of course, had always, to be very carefully kept from the ravages of the mice in the bake oven. So we had to make a strong, heavy box, and suspend it from the wall, with close-fitting door and shelves, and in this we put our eatables and groceries, such as bread, butter, sugar, tea, coffee, mustard, pepper, salt, etc. Conceive of our consternation when we opened this cupboard door in the morning to see about a dozen of mice jump out of it, and then find, instead of our provisions, a large mouse nest, made of cedar bark, and all the paper torn from our grocery parcels, constructed into a large nest, and our tea, sugar, coffee, pepper, mustard, all mixed into a dirty confused heap on top of our butter plate. We all felt like giving up in despair, but Mr. Scott said, that by all means, let us try to get a cat, for we cannot live with these destructive vermin over-running everything in this way. So it happened that my brother, William, was down at Southampton a short time after the above occurrence, and was telling some of our friends about the great annoyance that we suffered from swarms of mice, and said that he wished that they could direct him to where he could get a cat, when

some one said that they thought that they could find one for him. After some enquiries he got the offer of an ugly old tom cat, which they would lend him for a while, but they also said that he was rather treacherous and a notoriously bad thief. However, William was glad to get anything in the shape of a cat, and brought him along, as he was told that he need not trouble himself greatly about returning the cat.

We all received this ugly old cat as a welcome visitor, for we hoped that he would be able to deliver us from the awful tyranny to which we had been subjected by the plague of mice. But we were rather doomed to disappointment, for this old cat had not been many days in our possession before James Scott took a very strong dislike and hatred towards him, and I suppose that he had plenty of cause and reason for this dislike, for I do not think that this cat possessed one attractive or redeeming quality in its nature, for it did not seem to care to try and catch mice, but depended entirely upon sponging and stealing for a living.. So Mr. Scott's hatred became so intense towards that cat that he could not see it without having something bad to say about it, and wished to be allowed to drown him in the river. We would ask him: to have a little patience, for the cat was a stranger in the place yet, but when he became acquainted with his surroundings that then he would take to his instincts and kill mice. But one day when we came to the shanty to get our dinner, the cat was left inside as usual to watch the mice when we went out to work in the morning,



so when we opened the shanty door out ran the cat, for he had knocked down a flat-iron that hung upon a nail on the wall, and it fell on the top of our largest bake kettle and broke the cover in pieces, and as what we had intended for our dinner had been stowed away in the kettle, the cat had eaten and destroyed it. The bake kettle had unfortunately been left sitting directly under where the iron was hanging, and this proved a severe loss to us under the circumstances, as we had no means of replacing it. All this gave James a double plea in his object of drowning the cat, and James said "Surely after seeing what he had done you will allow me to drown him, for such a nasty, ugly, thievish brute should not be permitted to live another hour." We said, "Well, James, if you can catch him, after dinner, while you are resting yourself, you may take him down to the river and drown him." James received this permission with evident pleasure, and just as soon as he had finished eating his dinner, he went out in search of the cat, putting on a very soft, persuasive, pleasant tone of voice to induce the cat to allow itself to be caught by him. At last he succeeded in capturing it, and taking the cat up in his arms, he said, "I have got you now, you old thief, and I'll soon put an end to you, you ugly brute." He carried him down to the river's edge. The cat, true to his instincts, became alarmed at the sight of the water, and struggled to get away, but when it found that it could not escape, as Mr. Scott had already gone into the water some distance, the



cat only clung the closer to him, and began to crawl up to his shoulders, and as Mr. Scott was a man over six feet in height, the cat attained to some little distance above the surface of the water. When Mr. Scott had reached the deep, swift running current, and attempted to remove the cat from its perch, to complete his purpose, the cat seemed to be aware of his intention and only clung the more tenaciously to his shoulders, sinking its claws deeply into his flesh through his thin cotton shirt. This had the effect of causing James to turn and quickly retrace his steps to the shore, wearing a very wry face, and with the cat still upon his shoulder. I said to him, "What is the matter, James, have you relented?" He said no, but that he was not able to take the brute off his shoulder. It had stuck its claws all so deep into him, and the more he tried to remove it the deeper it sunk them into him and the tighter it clung to him. But as soon as he had gained the dry land the cat began to relax his hold and wanted to get down. James caught hold of him and held him tight, and then asked to be given a piece of cord or string, when he fastened one end around the cat's neck, and to the other end he tied a stone, and taking it down to the river, said, "I will fix you this time, you ugly old sinner," and when he thought that he had reached a suitable spot for the purpose, he threw the cat and stone with all force into the river. But, lo! to his disappointment, the stone went about twice as far into the water as the cat. It had slipped out of the string. The cat only went a

little way into the water and swam ashore, and escaped in spite of Mr. Scott's efforts to prevent it, and then made off to the woods, and we never saw any more of that cat. I have sometimes heard it said that cats were witches, or witches were cats. Whichever way it is I do not know, but one thing seemed certain, that this cat took the hint, and knew enough to keep away and never show his face around these quarters while Mr. Scott remained near at hand. To many this story of the cat and mice may appear to be very trivial, but to us at that time it was a very significant and an important business for us to know how we could overcome such a great nuisance as these mice had become, for it must be remembered that in those days and in that place we had no means of replacing those things that were destroyed, for the country was very different then from what it is at present. I will only add that there were other vermin besides mice and much smaller than them, that were very plentiful in many houses in those days, which also were a great plague to many. I do not mean mosquitoes nor flies, although there were plenty of both of these pests.

### Story of Our Cattle

I will give a little of our experience with the cattle that I took up with me. The oxen we found to be very useful and helpful during the time of logging and clearing up the land in the spring and early summer, but we found it sometimes very hard to keep track of them, for they



paying me for the oxen, which he no doubt would have done had he been spared to return from Goderich in safety. However, as Mr. McDonald was so unexpectedly taken away, his business affairs were not well understood by any and so I was deprived of the money. But along about the first of July I was informed that there was to be a meeting of the creditors held in Goderich about the middle of July, so before that time I went to Southampton to meet Captain Spence, who was also going to Goderich on the same business, and was taking his little niece with him. So we all started in the morning in a small sail boat for Goderich, and when we got opposite to what is now Kincardine it was just about sunset. Then suddenly came up a thunderstorm, with a considerable squall of wind. Capt. Spence at once lowered down the sails and said we must take to the oars and pull for the shore with all our might. This had the effect of frightening me considerably, for we were about ten miles out from shore. I immediately applied all my might and strength to the oar, in hopes of soon reaching land, but as darkness set in I could not see the shore, although I often asked the question, How far do you think are we from the shore, now? The answer I got was, Oh, pull away, we will soon be out of danger, you are doing very well. I said that I hoped that it was not much further, that I was getting so very tired. But no shore did we reach until it was just getting daylight, when we drew in towards land. I asked Capt. Spence what place it was, and to my surprise he said



that it was Goderich harbor. Then I felt quite angry with Capt. Spence for keeping me rowing so hard all night, in order, as I thought, to avoid danger, when, in reality, there was very little to avoid. But his object was to reach Goderich harbor without losing time. My hands were blistered and my arms sore and tired from such continuous hard pulling, for I was under the impression that our safety depended upon our exertions.

After landing I told him that I had gotten all I wanted of sailing in a small boat on the lake, and that rather than return with him I would walk all the way home, sooner than put in another such night on the water. But Captain Spence only made light of my troubles and said that as soon as I got a sleep that I would be all right. However, as it was now daylight, we parted, leaving Capt. S. in conversation with some acquaintance that he met at the wharf, and although I had never been in Goderich before, I started to walk up town, looking for an open hotel door. Soon I came to where there was a clean-looking place, where a maid was engaged in sweeping the steps at the front door. I asked her if she thought that I could be accommodated with a bed, for I had been on the lake all night. She said, Oh, certainly. Then she showed me into a room and asked if I wished to be called for breakfast. I said no, that I would rather sleep until dinner was ready. So I got a good rest, and was quite refreshed, and afterwards got up and enjoyed a good dinner, which made me feel, as Capt. Spence had said,



that I would be all right. I then started off down the street in search of my friend, Spence, from whom I had rather uncivilly parted in the morning, thinking that I had been a little imposed upon through my ignorance of sailing, for I had never had much practice in that line on the lake.

But I had scarcely reached the street corner when, to my surprise and I must say pleasure also, I was accosted by a young lady, Miss Gooding, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making on the preceding summer, while she was a visitor at the home of Capt. Spence in Southampton. I asked her then if she had seen anything of the Captain, and she said that he was at their house when she left home, and then she kindly invited me to accompany her home and spend the afternoon with them, and remain for tea. I willingly accepted this kind invitation, and was richly rewarded, for I do not think that I ever put in a more pleasant and happy afternoon, and, afterwards I spent a most genial and happy week in Goderich, for during our stay there we were all invited to make the comfortable house of Mrs. Gooding our home, and I found it to be a delightful change from what I had lately experienced in our shanty life on the Saugeen River.

I do not think that our creditors' meeting came to much. I know that all I got for my share was a bag of flour, which I took home with me. There was a quantity of damaged store goods sold by auction, but I don't think that they all amounted to much, as they were

badly damaged by fire, for the whole of Mr. McDonald's stock was supposed to have been accidentally burned at Southampton the preceding winter. After spending a very delightful time in Goderich, which I thought to be a very pretty place, and after receiving a promise from Capt. Spence that he would not ask me to row again, and that he would not start out without having the prospect of a fair wind, notwithstanding my former protestations, I was persuaded to venture again in that boat. One fine morning with a favorable wind we set off, but by noon the wind had ceased and there was a calm, and we then made very slow progress, and as we were near to what is now Kincardine, we made for the shore, and ran a little way up into the mouth of a creek or river, for the night remaining in the boat, and covering ourselves with the sails. I do not think that there were more than one or two small fishing shanties at Kincardine at that time. It was a very new looking place, and I could not see anything of it, but by daylight there had sprung up a brisk favorable wind and we again set off full sail up the lake in good speed, and when we got opposite to what is now Port Elgin, which we soon reached, Captain S. put me and the 100-pound bag of flour ashore, and then ran up to Southampton in short time. I put the bag upon my back and started through the woods for home, but when I reached the creek where the saw mill was being erected there were several men at work at the new dam, so when I arrived where they were they took possession of my bag of

flour and would not allow me to carry it any further, but said that they would bring it home to me after they quit work at night, which they kindly did. Thus ended my first trip upon the waters of Lake Huron, and how very greatly everything has changed since those pioneer days, I will not even attempt to describe.

Some time after my return from this trip to Goderich and during our usual monotonous life in clearing up the land, we unexpectedly received an urgent letter from our father, a short time after harvest, requesting that either William or I would at once return back to the old home and take charge of the farm, for he was getting well up in years and he found that the care of managing the farm was too much for him, and that he was not able now properly nor profitably to conduct the work, especially as he had now to depend almost entirely upon hired help. So now William and I consulted earnestly and very seriously over this matter and finally came to the conclusion that it would be, all things considered, the proper thing for one of us to do, and after deciding upon this course, we each agreed to give up our present claim to the two lots of land to the one that remained for the sum of one hundred pounds, to be paid out of the portion of the old homestead when divided, and which we would be entitled to receive as our portion of the same when a settlement was finally made. After settling all these matters between ourselves satisfactorily, the next and most important business was to decide who was to go, and which of us was to remain, and as

we were both seemingly willing to be guided by the wishes of the other we could not decide, and to settle the matter we agreed to cast lots. After a fair trial it came to my lot to go back to the old home of our youth, and where I had already spent twenty years of my early life. I was glad indeed to return to it, where I could enjoy more of the social comforts of life, yet I felt very sorry to go away and leave all alone in this place my elder brother, from whom I had never been long parted for over twenty-four years. Our lives had been very closely bound together, and we had been as one in all our joys and sorrows hitherto, and I felt very sad indeed at the thought of parting from him, for I never knew until that time how greatly we were attached to each other, and I felt like backing out of the arrangement, for I felt that it was an act of cruelty for me to go away and leave him by himself like a hermit in the wilderness. But he seemed not to mind it, but looked upon the matter in a brighter way, and was quite reconciled to his circumstances. Of course hope is a great encourager and gives strength to endure great and hard trials, and causes us to see the bright instead of the dark side of things, and I will here add that our separation from this time became nearly final, for in the spring of 1854 I entered into arrangements with my father and the other members of the family to buy out all their shares and interest in the old homestead, and which agreement I carried out to completion and became sole proprietor of the old home in Paisley Block, Guelph.



I just wish to say before closing that my brother, William, who took such a conspicuous and active part in all the adventures and vicissitudes incidental to early settlement in a new country, is still alive and although in his 77th year, continues to enjoy fairly good health, and is now retired from active farming and living in a comfortable home in the village of Tara, and is surrounded by many comforts. His family are nearly all married and comfortably situated and doing well for themselves.

In a short time after concluding those very important arrangements with my dear brother, William, I began to make preparations for my return to the old home at Guelph. But at the same time I must confess that it was not without some feelings of regret that I had been called upon to leave my new home on the banks of the Saugeen River, where I had purposed making my home in the future, and where I had hoped to spend many years of my life in comfort and peace, notwithstanding that much of my past experience during my short residence in this place had so very much more of the bitter than the sweet in its composition. Such is life everywhere; and when we have youth and hope on our side many of these seeming difficulties can be overcome, for I had already formed many plans and purposes, which I hoped to see completed in the near future. I have no doubt now but many, if not all of them, would have turned out to be only castles built in the air, which never would have matured. So one morning after I had got all in readiness for my return to



Guelph, I made a start for the Owen Sound road, bringing nothing back with me but the yoke of oxen and one cow, leaving all else with William, for our experience with the cattle was that without proper conveniences for their care and management that the trouble with them was more than they were worth, for when we wanted them we never knew where they were to be found, and we lost a good deal of time in seeking them for they would wander away many miles through the woods, apparently very desirous to return to where they came from. So on my return to Guelph with them I found that they were very little trouble to drive, but seemed to know where they were going, and travelled right along at a good pace, so that I reached what was then called the California Inn, on the Owen Sound road, the first evening. I believe that the place is now called Chatsworth. I remained there for the night, and the next morning before leaving I was induced to purchase one or two more animals at a cheap figure, for cattle seemed to be plentiful and money very scarce, for by the time I had reached the old home I had added still a few more to my number. I was convinced that there was money to be made in this line of business, so after my return to Guelph, and with the assistance of some friends, was enabled to spend most of my spare time engaged in buying cattle and sheep during the fall and winter of 1853.

It happened that in about a month or six weeks after I had left the Saugeen and my brother William by himself, word was sent to his

mother that he had met with a serious accident while chopping, by cutting one of his feet badly with his axe, and that he would be completely disabled for some time and quite helpless and dependent upon others. However, in the meantime, his good neighbor, Mrs. Peter Smith, was attending to his wants, and had him removed to her own home and there she was nursing him. All this made my mother feel extremely anxious and as it was not possible for her to go to him herself she thought the next best thing to do was to send our eldest sister, a girl of about fourteen years of age, so that she might wait upon him and attend to his wants until he would be able to get around again. So I was asked by my mother to take Hannah up the Saugeen to look after William, and I at once agreed to the proposition, and got a horse and buggy and we immediately started off and by the evening of the second day we had reached the new line of road by which I had a few weeks previously driven out the cattle. This road, as yet, was in many parts only a blazed line, although in places it was chopped but not logged up, and was quite impassable with a horse and buggy. So we were compelled to leave these behind, and travel the remainder of the way by foot. We had to pass through the new Townships of Derby and Arran, and then through a portion of Saugeen, a very long walk for a young girl, besides it was over a very rough road. Poor thing, she became very tired before we got through, and I had to persuade and encourage her to persevere. She would of-

ten ask me if it was much further. I would say that it was only a little distance now, and it was always growing less, and she would then cheerfully struggle on, for she was really a noble girl in every sense of that word, and had inherited many of her mother's excellent qualities, both in temper and disposition. While thus speaking of my sister, Hannah, here, I can add that she continued to manifest very greatly that self-sacrificing disposition during her short life, for at the request of her father and mother she sacrificed all her personal prospects and ambitions here, and went to Scotland to take care of an old widowed aunt, where she faithfully waited upon the old lady for several years. But she took ill and died at the home of her aunt, Balbeg Cottage, Ayrshire.

However, in returning to the original story, I may say that Hannah and I finally reached the shanty just before it got quite dark. She was very tired. I do not think that she could have gone another mile. We found William as well as we could have expected under the circumstances, and very pleased to see us both, and we all enjoyed our meeting together again very much. I was sorry to have to go away from them so soon, but could not help it, for I had left the horse and buggy on the way, and had to return to them at once. So, after spending a short time with William, I had to return, leaving his sister with him to look after and take care of him for a short time. I have often thought since of what a miserable, lonely time she must have had, cut off from all companion-

ship and social society. At her age it must have been very trying, indeed, but I never heard that she made any complaint, but accepted it as a natural consequence and just what she expected to find in such a place.

After leaving the Saugeen I soon reached the Owen Sound road and got my horse and buggy and returned in safety to Guelph. I do not remember of anything of importance to relate during my return journey. I was soon engaged again in my usual occupation, and in buying cattle and sheep, which I found sometimes to be quite a profitable occupation, but it required both capital and experience to make it a success.

And again in the first month of winter I drove to Owen Sound with a pair of horses and a sleigh for the purpose of bringing home my sister and William, and I took up with me as far as Owen Sound, a Mr. Riddle, a school teacher, who was also a son-in-law of the late Thomas Landlanks, Esq., manager of the Gore Bank in Guelph. This gentleman was going up to settle in this new district, and I was told that he afterwards settled in or near to Invermay. I afterwards brought back my sister, Hannah, and William, for he wanted to come down and spend the winter amongst his old friends and acquaintances around Guelph. And this ended what was my sixth trip up to that new country in less than two years' time, so I had become well acquainted with the road, and with many of the people on the way.



Very shortly after I left the Saugeen valley, during the fall of 1852 and spring of 1853, there were very many changes taking place in the settlement of the country, for there were quite a number of new settlers taking up land and others were buying out some of the original occupants. These changes were very visible, not only throughout the Township of Saugeen, but all over the new country. I will only mention a few among the many desirable settlers that came in, mostly from Waterloo County, and settled in and around what is now Port Elgin. There were the Messrs. Stafford, Schantz, Bricker, Hover, Hilker and Rhuby, besides many others, and very quickly did they convert the vast forests into fruitful fields, for these people brought both experience and capital with them. And to-day much of the fruits of their early labors can be seen in the fine cleared-up farms, with large barns and comfortable dwellings, and nowhere is this thrift more observable than in the pretty, clean, well-kept village of Port Elgin, which is now greatly in advance in many ways of places that are very much older, for it was only in the summer of 1853 that my younger brother, A. H. R., came up to Port Elgin and bought out a new house that was then being erected for a store by Mr. Samuel Bricker, and there he afterwards commenced business, and kept the first general store and post office in that place until several years afterwards when he sold out the business to Messrs. Rhuby and Lehennan, and again returned to Guelph for a time, and started business there. But once more he sold out and



removed to Minnesota, and has carried on farming in that state for several years, and still continues there in that occupation. In the month of September, 1855, my next brother, John C., came up to Port Elgin and bought four lots from Mr. Hilker, and then put up a house. Then he established the first wagon maker's shop in the country, where he made the two first wagons that were made in the County of Bruce, and where, after a residence of over forty-seven years, he still continues to reside. Although he may be said to have practically given up business he still employs his leisure hours in his old shop doing little repairings when his health will permit him to do so, and which I am glad to say that in general is very good for a man of over 72 years. He is also the possessor of a very comfortable, desirable home, surrounded with many pleasant, social comforts, and a competency sufficient to enable him to spend his remaining days in ease.

I remember that I came up with my brother, A. H. R., who had started store-keeping in Port Elgin, and we brought up two sleighs loaded with store goods from Hamilton, which, at that time, was the chief emporium for goods, and I had the honor also of being asked by Mrs. Peter Brown to bring up with me her sister, a young lady also from Hamilton, whose society I greatly enjoyed, for the more pitchy and rough the road was and the harder it stormed and snowed, the louder she would laugh, although at times the wind and cold was almost unendurable. She would only laugh and say, Is not that a great

breeze? And the snow was so deep and the roads so heavy that it took us a day longer than we expected, and instead of getting to Port Elgin on Saturday, it was Sunday evening before we reached that place, for we had also the experience of an occasional upset as we passed through the new road from the Owen Sound line. After unloading the goods at Port Elgin the next day I drove over to Southampton and left Miss B. with her sister, Mrs. Brown, and it was at that time that I had the pleasure of giving the Southampton ladies that much spoken of and appreciated sleigh ride.

Another event which I yet remember in reference to this trip was that I had put into Mr. Stafford's hotel stable two span of horses for two nights, and that he charged me eight dollars for hay and stabling of the horses. Hay was very dear and scarce at that time.

I have made frequent visits since that time to this part of the country and have always been greatly impressed and pleased with the steady and continuous progress that has been made since those pioneer days.

Copy of a letter received from Captain John Spence of Southampton, this 24th day of October, 1902, in reply to questions asked by me, and to which he gives the following answers: That he started from Kingston in the summer of 1848, in company with Captain William Kennedy, and they came to Toronto in the steamer Magret, Capt. Sutherland. Then they took stage to Holland Landing, Lake Simcoe, took the steamer Beaver to Orillia, stage from

there to Sturgeon Bay, bought a canoe and came down the Severn River, took the steamer at Penetanguishene, thence for Owen Sound, and took our canoes round to Colpoys Bay, which is near Wiarton, carried our canoes to the Sobble River and thence to this place. "My intention was to find a place convenient for fishing and Indian trading, and this place suited me. The only white men I found here were the Rev. Mr. Williston, Indian missionary, and Mr. James Cathay, teacher.

"I started and built the first house that ever went up in this place. I became acquainted with the late John McLean, Esq., about the year 1840. I knew him when we were in the Hudson Bay service. I first met his nephew, Alexander McDonald, in Goderich in 1849. George Butchart and James Orr came up shortly after I came here, and with them I made arrangements to go into the fishing. But when Captain Kennedy left to go in search of Sir John Franklin these arrangements were broken up. Mrs. Butchart was the only white woman in this place in 1850. Mr. Chisholm Millar surveyed part of the Township of Bruce. Mr. Brough took a cold and died, leaving his work unfinished, which was completed by Mr. Millar.

"Mr. and Mrs. Peter Brown came here in the summer of 1851, and some years afterwards removed up to the Sault Ste. Marie, and they both died there."

In conclusion, I will just say that possibly I have omitted to mention some incidents that might have been much more interesting than

many here related, but I have trusted altogether to my memory, for my desire is to give a truthful statement of events as they occurred, and I have also tried to avoid all semblance of fiction.

I will here relate a few of the incidents that occurred in connection with our settlement in the Paisley Block, in the fall of 1830. My father, soon after arriving in Guelph, selected a lot of the Canada Company's lands in the Township of Guelph, and then contracted with a Mr. MacDonald, who had some little experience in the art of building log houses in those days of early settlement, and for such service he and his assistants were to receive four shillings or one dollar and a bottle of whiskey each, per day. Such were the usual wages paid, and the custom of the country in those times. So one day my father went to see what progress was being made in the erection of the house, and after arriving there he soon became very much interested on seeing the men chopping down the trees, for he had never seen anything of the kind done before, and was quite ignorant of the danger attendant upon the cutting down of timber, so he, instead of keeping well out of the way of danger, got right into it, and was struck and knocked down by a falling tree, which broke one of his legs a little below the knee. The men had to make a kind of handbarrow and carry him home to Guelph, and then send all the way to Hamilton for a doctor, and in a day or two Dr. MacKelcan arrived and set the broken limb, but it was crooked always afterwards, being so long

before the bone was set. This unfortunate accident confined father to the house for several weeks, and also prevented him from assisting or taking an active part in hastening forward to completion the new house, which was intended so soon to become our future home in the woods, and it was quite late in the fall when we could remove, and not having any experience of what a Canadian winter meant, insisted upon removing his family at that late season of the year out to a half-finished house in the woods, for my father, owing to the accident, was forced to depend entirely upon hired help in the erection of the house, and the work was not always done in a proper or substantial way. For example, a log house required to have a part or two or three of the bottom logs cut out at one end of the building and the space built up with stone and mortar to form a back wall for a fire place, and this new house had one of very large dimensions built up with this material, which had become frozen. But when there was a large fire built up against it in order to warm the cold house the very first night, just as soon as the frost thawed out of the mud plaster the whole of the back wall fell down, which made an open space large enough to admit the prowling wolves which were prowling all around the house, as if just looking for some place to get in. My mother would sometimes speak of the first night spent in her new home in the woods, when she lay all night quaking with fear and shivering with cold, expecting every moment to hear the wolves enter and devour her little children. So



terrified were all present that they dared not attempt to get up and make any repairs, but remained in bed until daylight, for they were in such mortal dread of the wolves that they were afraid to speak, or even stir, for fear of attracting them. But when morning came some assistance was procured, and the breach in the wall repaired. But before many weeks had passed the snow became nearly four feet deep, which made travelling difficult, and although surrounded by woods it was no easy matter always to procure a sufficient supply, owing to the great depth of snow, for when a tree was cut down it would sink out of sight in the soft snow, which had first to be shovelled away before it could be cut, and so awkward and inexperienced were they at using an axe that a good chopper would cut more wood in one hour than they could in ten, and so great was the ignorance and prejudice possessed at first by many of the old country immigrants, that they would only use their old style of a broad axe that they had brought from the old country with them, and very few knew how to use an axe of any kind, but would hack all around a tree, just like as if it had been gnawed down by a beaver. I can yet remember seeing my father and mother carrying in the wood upon a handbarrow, after they had shovelled a narrow path through the snow to where the wood had been cut, and often my brother William and I would follow them out by the narrow way, that stood up like two high walls on either side, so that we could not see over the top, and when we would meet them returning

with the loaded barrow, we had to turn back and run to the house, for there was no way of passing, and it would keep my father and mother pretty well employed to furnish a sufficient supply of wood to keep up anything like a comfortable heat, for the house was in a very unfinished condition during the first winter. I will try to describe it in part, just as I can remember it. Its size was 20x26 feet, built of round logs, one storey and garret in height, but without flooring above, with a large round hole dug in the centre for a cellar, with about one-half of the ground floor covered by boards, the other part open over this hold of a cellar. A heavy carpet was hung across from side to side just at the edge of the floor, to form a partition; and also a slight protection from this cellar. But I remember that it frequently happened that when some of us small boys got a little out of temper that we would often run to this carpet to sulk or pout, and forgetting ourselves we would lean too heavily against this carpet, which would cause it to slack back a little, when down we would go plump into the cellar, out of sight in a moment, so that this hole soon became a great dread to us boys. Now, this house that I am describing may be considered a very fair average sample of the homes enjoyed by many of the early settlers in those days, but I have often thought since of the sad change it must have been to my father and mother, and many others also, who had so lately left homes of comfort and even luxury, and who were now compelled to suffer in a new land such unexpected privations and discom-

forts as they were then enduring. Sometimes we were for weeks without bread and had to subsist upon potatoes and turnips, and these were very often frozen during winter. I can remember well seeing my mother putting the potatoes into cold water to draw the frost out of them before being cooked, and then we had neither meat, milk nor butter to eat with them. The labor of clearing the first acres of unbroken land was all performed by the settlers when they subsisted entirely upon potatoes as a diet, baked and boiled time about, by way of change or variety, with sometimes a dish of greens made from cow cabbage or the tops of young turnips, were added when in season. All this may seem strange when I tell you that the forests abounded with various kinds of game, and the creeks were full of speckled trout, yet it rarely happened that the settlers succeeded in capturing any deer. But the Indians that came up from the Credit in the fall of the year would kill deer by the dozen, and it was at such times that the settlers, if they had any money at all, could get a cheap supply of venison from the Indians, for I can yet remember, although my father was a sportsman in the old country, yet he would never venture into the woods to shoot deer for fear of getting lost or of being attacked by the wolves or bears, and so timid were the people that they would not venture outside of the house after dark, for in the evening the deer would come around the house in droves to get away from the wolves, which could be heard howling in every direction, and my father, who

had a good rifle, would quietly open a window sufficiently to get the point of his rifle out, and then shoot at a deer, and if it was wounded it would only run a short distance, when it would be caught and devoured by the wolves in a few minutes, so that nothing of it could be seen but the blood-stained snow, so that my father's efforts to obtain a supply of venison were worse than useless, yet the deer were very plentiful. I can remember when I was a very small boy of sometimes coming across herds of more than twenty in a flock, when the old bucks would shake their heads, stamp their feet, and snort at me, and I would have to stand still and clap my hands together and make all sorts of noises to frighten them so that I might pass them safely, and I have seen packs of wolves in the woods and even in the clearing during the day, for they would often kill sheep for us and even attack young cattle.

### Bears

I have also got into unpleasantly close quarters with bears when it was too dark to see them, for they will not run from you like a wolf, but they will very seldom attack a person if left alone and not interfered with, except when they are hungry or in defence of their young. They are very fond of pork and will catch and kill pigs when they find them in the woods seeking beechnuts. The bear is also destructive on grain, especially oats, just before they get ripe. I can remember when very young that my father

had sown a small field of oats near to the house, and just after they had come out into ear, that a large bear would come almost every day and feed upon them. He would sit and gather the grain all around him with his paws and then eat the tops off, and sometimes he would lie down and roll the oats flat to the ground and then eat his fill. When we little boys would try to frighten him away by making a great racket by knocking upon old pans and making other sounds, he would sit and look at us quite unconcerned for a time, apparently eyeing us with utter contempt, for we always had to remain at a very respectful distance from him, but as we kept up our noise he at length would move off leisurely to the woods, and go a short distance, and then climb up a tree and remain there until we had made a hurried retreat to the house, when he would slowly come down and return again to the oats, for we were strictly cautioned by our father and mother to keep away and not go near him. We then considered discretion to be the better part of valor, and left him to enjoy his feed of oats in peace, but the result was that the oats were all completely destroyed in a short time.

But seventy years or more have wrought very great changes, both upon the appearance of the country and its inhabitants, for it was in the year 1832 and the few following seasons that a great many immigrants arrived and settled in and around Guelph and the neighboring townships, and some of them brought a considerable amount of money with them, while many were



tradesmen and laborers, who mostly all proved to be a very desirable class of settlers, although at first many of them were exceedingly green regarding the requirements of a new wooded country. Many laughable and funny stories are told concerning some of their doings.

I will just mention one case as a sample of the many, to give some idea of the annoying stupidity and want of experience displayed by many of the new comers. About the year 1836 there arrived an immigrant with a young family, from the north of Ireland, who had been a linen weaver in the old country, and as he had a friend here who had been settled upon a farm of his own (near by ours) for several years, he came to him upon his arrival, and got permission to build a shanty upon his land and move his family into it, until he found a lot for himself, for by this time most of the land had been taken up in the immediate neighborhood. His friend agreed to give him employment during his stay at chopping and clearing up land. So, after he had got everything settled and in order, he was then provided with a new axe and handle, and he started out one frosty morning to commence his work at chopping down the forest trees, but it so happened that his friend had to go to Guelph that morning with his oxen and sleigh, and on his way passed near by where this greenhorn was cutting down a beech tree, and after being gone several hours, on his return, saw him still pounding away at the same tree, when he called to him, "What, have you not got that tree down yet, Hugh?" "No, and

troth I've been working till I am all wet with sweat, but the wood has got so hard froze that the axe won't cut it at all." "Let me see the axe, Hugh. Man dear, the whole of the steel has broke out of it. Did you not see that?" "Troth, an' I never looked at the axe, for I thought it was the frost that was making the tree so hard to cut, and I was thinking that chopping was very slow work here in the winter." Such were the beginnings.

Yet, notwithstanding these drawbacks, in a few years some of the most thrifty of the settlers possessed a yoke of oxen and a sled, also a cow or two, and a few hogs, which fed mostly upon beechnuts. These, with a quantity of fowls, kept the larder better supplied with such varieties as beechnut-fed pork, eggs, very leaky milk and butter, maple sugar and molasses. These, with potatoes, constituted the principal food of the settlers in those days. Money was very scarce, and when we could sell eggs at three pence per dozen we thought it a good price. But these days and these pioneers have all passed from the changing scenes of this world, having served their day and generation. But to them and their successors, all honor and credit is due, for having changed a dense forest into a fruitful garden, and the haunts of the wolf and the bear into homes of peace and plenty, occupied by a refined, intelligent and educated people, both in city and country, who are also in the enjoyment of many of the modern improvements of an advanced civilization.