

The homes of the vast majority of settlers who came to open up farms in Ontario progressed through three stages - the shanty, the log house, and the mud, frame or brick dwelling. The shanty days were generally few although they might last for two or three years at least until the men had erected the log house. While the family was merely existing in the shanty, generally the rudest kind of shelter, the men were chopping out a site for the next building and preparing material to erect it. Most of them did not contemplate, in their plans, anything elaborate. Joseph Pickering, who was Colonel Talbot's farm overseer at Port Talbot, made a journey along Talbot Street in 1825 and described the log houses which he saw along that road as "merely a loft above a single room below, entered by one door and lighted by a window or two." Nor did the small size in which most of them were constructed, - about twenty feet by sixteen feet-, allow the lower floor to be divided into many rooms. Settlement duties required the house to be at least the above mentioned dimensions.

Many of the pioneer undertakings were performed by means of a "bee" and this applied to the erection of a log house. The heavy labor done for nothing spared the settler a great deal of expense. Although the house constructed by most settlers, described by writers and pictured by visiting artists was typically a one or two roomed cabin, there were some exceptional ones as well. The efforts that Colonel Talbot made in building his log house was indeed great. His was a long wooden building, sheltered by a porch on the south. Inside were several living rooms, and a very large kitchen with a big fire-place and chimney. His cellar was huge; at one time he had sixty barrels of cider in it and this included "perry" (fermented pear-juice). Scattered round about the house were various outbuildings belonging to the main building.

As illustrative of the trials of the men of those early times, and the toil which must be endured to procure the commonest necessaries of life, I copy a paragraph from the quaint and vivid "Pioneer Sketches" of one of the earliest pioneers Garret Oakes, who had settled on Talbot Street. "In the year 1810, when in the nineteenth year of my age, I took up a lot of land in the Township of Yarmouth, at which time my two hands constituted my sole stock in trade. In the year 1813 Colonel Talbot sent word to the few settlers that he had wool to let to be made into cloth on halves. I hired a horse and went and got fifty pounds. Here was forty miles travelled. I then hired a horse and took the wool to Port Dover and had it carded for which I paid \$6.25 and returned home, which made one hundred miles more. My wife spun the rolls, and I had made a loam for weaving, but we had no red for flannel. I then went sixty miles on foot to a reemaker's but he had none that was suitable, and would not leave his work on the farm until I agreed to give him the price of two reeds \$6.50, and work a day in his place; this I did, and returned home with the reed.

My wife wove the cloth and I took my half to Dover to the fulling mill. When I finished I had 18 yards, for which I paid \$34.75 and travelled 140 miles on horseback and 260 miles on foot making 400 miles, requiring in all about fifteen days labor". Many incidents might be recorded in the days of trial, but this may be taken as a specimen. One fact in common with the nature of those early times, is the feeling of genuine good will and friendship with which every man regarded his neighbor. The artless simplicity of the people gave a peace of mind because every man had his neighbor's interest interwoven with his own, so that it was a co-operative community. In the primeval forests of Canada for years, every settler within five miles was a neighbor in reality. We enjoyed true contentment, and this is a blessing in which the votary of wealth often seeks for in vain.

The history of the settlement of Yarmouth comprises three periods and three portions,-the centre, the south and the north; that is the Talbot Street settlement of which we have spoken, the settlement by the Quakers or Friends in the south, and much later, the location of the Scotch Highlanders in the North.

The north of Yarmouth contains many beautiful productive farms, but was not settled until about the year 1830. In that year and soon after, came the Campbells, McIntyres, McKellars, McKays, Blacks and others chiefly from Argyle and Inverness. The Gilbert Brothers and Lockes have also helped to reclaim the wilderness, and are the proprietors of those white brick two story cottages which speak to the passers-by of wealth and comfort.

The geography of Yarmouth is favorable to its prosperity. It is free from swamps, gullies and waste lands, and its soil is of such quality that it is no wonder that Colonel Talbot selected it as the choice of the lakeshore townships.

Address by Daniel McIntyre  
Given at Old Boys Reunion  
Celebration, at Yarmouth Centre  
June 21, 1910.

On the 21st of May, 1803, the late Col. Talbot felled the first tree in what has always been known as the Talbot settlement. Yarmouth, although a part of the Talbot settlement at that time, was not then surveyed. It is a source of pride to us to know that the Colonel in making application to the Home Government for a grant of land amounting to 5,000 acres (the very first grant), asked that the location be made in the Township of Yarmouth. He failed to secure the grant, the Canada Company, and Baby family, having received grants already.

There was scarcely any settlement in Yarmouth until 1810, one hundred years ago. The first two families reported in the records are Daniel Rapelje and David Mandeville. That was in 1809.

Yarmouth was surveyed in 1809 by M. Burwell. It is one of the best surveyed townships in the County. We have in the township 71,000 acres. Yarmouth was called after a seaport town in the county of Norfolk, near the boundary of Suffolk, and also as a compliment to Francis Seymour (Lord Cornway), who in 1703 was made Earl of Yarmouth.

Up to 1840 municipal government was by the quarter-sessions. In 1840 an act was passed dividing the Province into districts. On the 10th of February 1842, the first district council met in London. The late Thomas Hutchinson and the late John Oill represented Yarmouth. This system continued till 1850. Municipal government since that day, has been practically what we enjoy at the present time.

The Reeve of Yarmouth, the late E.S. Ganson, was the first warden of the County of Elgin.

The first meeting of the first Yarmouth Council was held at the Mansion House, St. Thomas, on Monday, the 21st day of January, 1850, at twelve o'clock noon. The following gentlemen comprised the council: David Parish, ~~Marshall T. Towers~~, (mistake), Marshall T. Moore, Randolph Johnson, Daniel Black, and Alexander Love. Alexander Love was appointed reeve, John McKay municipal clerk and treasurer, G.T. Claris, auditor, Asa Fordyce, John McDermid and John Thomson, assessors; Joseph Lang collector.

The tax levied in 1850 was as follows: School, pound 150, at  $\frac{3}{8}$  of a penny to the pound; roads and bridges, pound 250, at  $\frac{5}{8}$  of a penny to the pound, making a total of 400 pounds, equal to 1-10 mills on the dollar.

The amount of money raised last year (1909) for township purposes alone was \$21,020, at a rate of six mills on the dollar.

The assessed value of the township at the present time is \$3,503,333.

The total estimated value of land, buildings, implements, field crops and live stock, is \$7,025,023.

The estimated amount of money coming into the pockets of the people in one year from all sources in the township of Yarmouth is \$1,060,663.

Some of the best thoroughbred stock in the world is to be found in Yarmouth. At the world's fair held in Chicago 1893, the chairman, Mr. W.G. Sanders, had some of his herd on exhibition. He was awarded the fifth prize.

The first public school, so far as I can learn, was organized in 1818, and conducted in one room of a house built in 1810 by the late Capt. Secord. This house was built of logs, and the location was on Talbot street in the vicinity of the present time the brick school that stands a little west of Yarmouth Centre. Many are the changes that have taken place since then. At that time all was one dense wilderness. As farm after farm was cleared the township began to put on a better appearance so that at the present time Yarmouth is one of the wealthiest townships in the province. In the old days all kinds of field labor was done by hand; today we have machinery for doing all kinds of work.

Those of us who are left to enjoy the rich heritage bequeathed to us by the first settlers of this townships, the men of iron will, the men who knew no defeat-while we have no desire to boast feel that we have'nt done our best, yet feel that we compare as a whole favorably with any other township. Our farming interests are well guarded. The universities have not been left untried. We are represented on the bench, at the Bar, in the banks, in the mercantile trades, in medicine, in all honorable walks of life; and when they try, some of our boys ready and call to arms journeyed to distant Africa in defence of the British flag-a flag that knows no defeat Unfortunately, too, many have been cut down; they have been gathered in by the grim reaper long before manhood's morning reached the hour of noon. These were not permitted to reach that stone on life's great highway, that marks the highest goal. Those of us who are left to guard the gates are doing the best we can.

Nature has been most bountiful and the sun of prosperity shines on this fair township as it never did before. Neither blood nor earthquake, neither storm nor plague, neither disaster from within or without, hath laid a blot upon our fair name. From the most humble cottage to the most beautiful mansion there is but one story to tell-freedom and plenty has been man's greatest ambition, mankind's greatest hope of joy and sadness. We have had our portion of thanksgiving and regret. These come to all people and all individuals, but no township has had a greater measure of happiness and prosperity than this great township.

So we are reminded of the writer who said, the rustic family

were more happy and contented than the beautiful lady who set her foot upon a triple throne.

Some little time ago a discussion was conducted in one of the American magazines. The publisher asked the young woman to state what was their idea of the right kind of a man. The general verdict was: a good character and spirituality. Wealth and position were given a second place. If this principle were acted upon oftener there would be fewer scandals, fewer lawsuits, more happy families, and altogether a better outlook for humanity's sake.

What has caused the downfall of the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome? No lack of wealth, no lack of renown, for they had the world under tribute. It was a lack in the character of the people, a lack of righteousness. The same defect would rend the mighty British Empire into fragments; while right going will make this glorious Dominion the best country the world has ever known.

It is the simple truth to say that of the men who were cradled in Yarmouth the great West has many; and as we trace back the sources of American history to the homes of the English Puritans, so in the years to come, when the Canadian west is filled with millions of prosperous subjects of an Imperial Britian, when it's thriving towns of today have become mighty cities, and peaceful homes cover all its wide extending plains, the historian will trace the record of many of its pioneers back to the township of Yarmouth. May we hope that these old boys' re-unions will keep green the memory of the firstpioneers of this townships whose monuments are about us, and whose achievements we all inherit. We are waiting for the writer who will feel the story in his heart and tell it so that the world will listen. South America has quarries of the whitest marble, but she produces none too white on which to carve the names of the first settlers of Yarmouth.

To the cherished haunts of the old timer,  
Our eyes are backward cast.  
A sweet voice calls thro' memories halls,  
But however dear the vision  
To woo us into the past.  
We do not dare to stay  
For out of the game we must on  
To the duties that call today

We've the now in which to labour,  
We've the now in which to die,  
And the now alone we can call our own,  
Through all eternity.  
The past and the future are shadows  
But the present is ours for aye  
To us it is given to build our heaven  
In the kingdom of today.

## THE PIONEER

Memorial poem, dedicated to the memory of the Scotch pioneers, who took up farms in Elgin County, written by Mr. Edward D. McGregor, "The Glen", North Yarmouth, - died in Calgary, January 1912.

Leaving behind their native strand,  
Where blooms the purple heather,  
Seeking with hope a distant land,  
Casting aside the plaid and feather -  
Brave of heart, they sailed to the west,  
Scorning the ocean's angry crest.

Eagerly scanning the distant shore,  
Where the maple's kindly shade  
Welcomes them in at the open door  
Of the land their choice had made -  
Wearied by travel, at last they reach  
"The Port" on old Lake Erie's beach.

Cut off from the land of their birth,  
They braved the forest alone,  
Hewing the mighty oak to earth  
For the sake of winning a home -  
Poor, but proud, were the pioneers  
Of Elgin in the bygone years.

A cabin of logs, chinked up with clay,  
Soon graces the "fallow" field;  
The crane is hung, and the "warming day",  
When the neighbors danced and reeled,  
Marked the start in a stranger land  
Of this hardy, toil-worn Scottish band.

But the killing pace of the fleeting years  
Has gathered them one by one;  
Though they lived to smile at their early fears,  
When the fight had just begun -  
These were the folks who paved the way,  
Who conquered the oak, "the mash" and the clay.

So here's to the Highland men  
And their bonnie red cheeked wives,  
Who left for ever their native glen,  
With its bounding burns and misty skies -  
We silently drink a toast to-day  
To the Elgin heroes who blazed the way.