

REMINISCENCES  
OF THE EARLY

HISTORY



OF GALT

AND

THE

SETTLEMENT OF DUMFRIES.

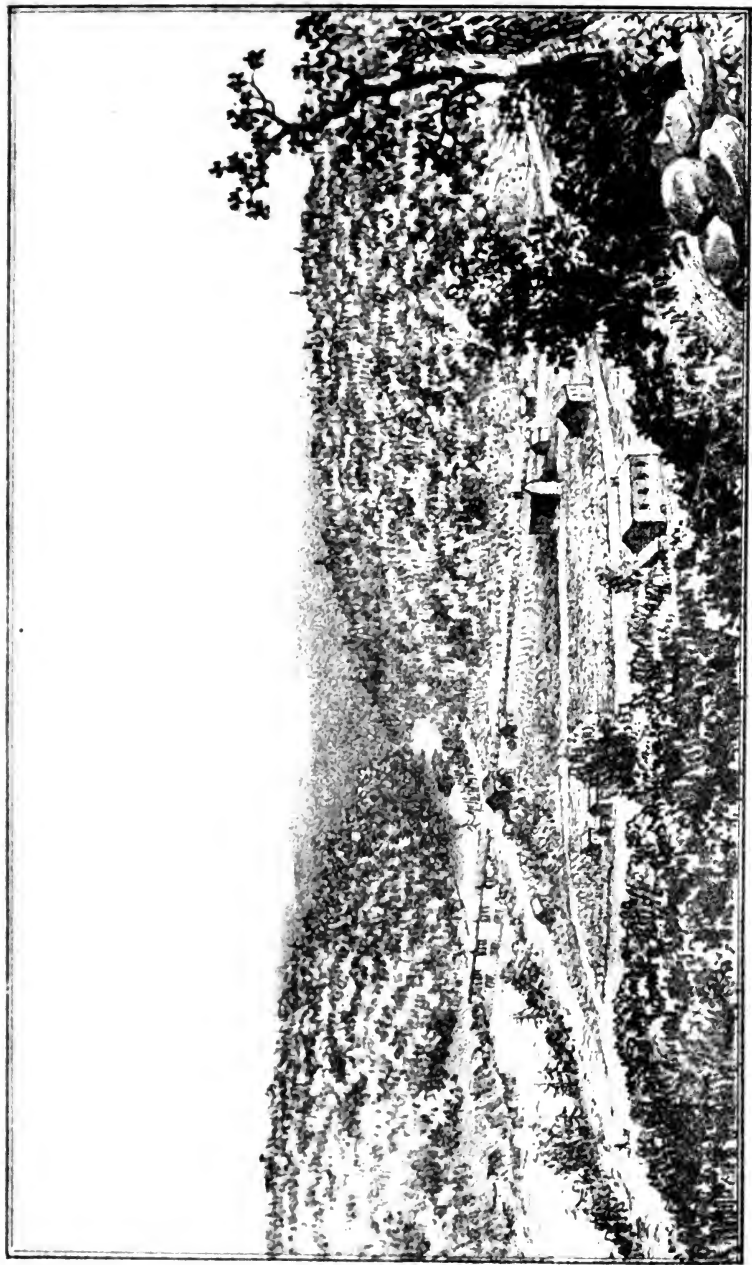
BERKELEY

LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA

2

49552



Rough Sketch of SHADE'S MILLS [GALT] In the year 1820.

REMINISCENCES

OF THE

EARLY HISTORY OF GALT

AND THE

SETTLEMENT OF DUMFRIES,

IN THE

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO.

BY

JAMES YOUNG,

*Late M.P. for South Waterloo, M.P.P., author of Prize Essays on "Canada as a Field for Emigration," "The Reciprocity Treaty," etc,*



TORONTO :

HUNTER, ROSE AND COMPANY.

MDCCCLXXX.

## ERRATA.

On page 48 for " Mr. Campbell " read " Mr. McDonald."

On page 218, eleventh line, for " 18 " read " 8."

---

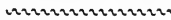


Entered according to the Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty, by HUNTER, ROSE & Co., in the office of the Minister of Agriculture.



F1059  
15  
G1647

## PREFACE.



It has frequently been suggested to the writer to collect in some permanent form the fast-fading Reminiscences of the early history of Galt and the settlement of Dumfries, in whose atmosphere he has lived from childhood. A few months leisure during the past summer and fall, was devoted to this purpose, the result of which is the present volume, which, with some misgivings, is now laid before the public.

It is not claimed that the settlement of Dumfries and Galt has varied much from that of other parts of Canada, or that their history has been marked by many events of historical interest. But it is hoped it will be found not uninteresting, even to persons unassociated with the locality, as picturing some phases of Backwoods Life in Canada half a century ago, and as illustrating what communities and individuals may accomplish by honest industry and thrift, to better their fortunes in a new land.

These Reminiscences, however, will be chiefly interesting to the remnant—alas! constantly growing less—of the early Pioneers of the settlement, and their descendants. Imbued with profound respect for the time-scarred Veterans who transformed Galt and Dumfries from a wilderness into what they appear to-day, the writer has aimed, however feebly, to exalt their arduous life-work, and preserve the names and memories of many of these good

men and true, who, with the other early Pioneers of Canada, are believed to be its true heroes.

In proceeding with the work, more difficulties were encountered than had been at first foreseen. Very little in the way of reliable records was available. The facts and dates of the earlier circumstances had necessarily to be obtained from some of the oldest Pioneers, and the memory, after the lapse of fifty or sixty years, is not always reliable, particularly in regard to dates. Reference to some persons and circumstances may have been overlooked which ought to have appeared—indeed, one of the difficulties in dealing with the sober circumstances of every-day life in a new settlement, is to decide between what is too interesting to omit, and too trifling to appear. Care has been taken, however, to verify all material statements, as far as data could be found, and to present them as accurately as possible.

As the names of my Mentors are mentioned in one way or another in several places, it is unnecessary to do more here than to thank them, which I do most heartily, for much information and assistance zealously rendered.

The little volume has been hastily written, makes no pretensions to literary excellence, and no one is more conscious than the writer of its deficiencies, both in matter and form. It is hoped, however, it will be welcome as a humble tribute to his native place, that it may help to preserve the memory of the men and the circumstances, however unpretending, connected with the early history of Galt and the settlement of Dumfries, and, it may be, brighten a leisure hour or two in its perusal.

“THORNHILL,” Galt,  
Christmas, 1879.

THE AUTHOR.





## CONTENTS.



### CHAPTER I.

Dumfries originally Indian Lands—The Iroquois or Six Nation Indians—The brave Thayendanega (Col. Joseph Brant) their Chief—Dumfries purchased by Philip Stedman, in 1798—Ninety-four thousand acres for £8,841—Stedman dies Intestate—The Hon. William Dickson—A glimpse of his Character and History—Duel with Mr. Weeks—How Dumfries was obtained by him..... 9

### CHAPTER II.

Absalom Shade—A man on whom Nature had left an imprint—Meeting with Mr. Dickson at Niagara in 1816—Shade fails to get a contract, but finds a home in the Wilderness—Earliest settlers in Waterloo Township—Dickson and Shade visit Dumfries—They follow the Indian trail—The valley in which Galt stands selected for a Village—Its Natural Beauty—A Coliseum in Leaves—Shade returns to the Wilderness.. 19

### CHAPTER III.

Difficulties of the new Settlement—The first building erected—Mr. Dickson actively engages in inducing Settlers to take up lands—The old Ruin with a History—A rough and ready Grist Mill—Population in 1817—The Branchton settlement—The Village of "Shade's Mills" in 1820—Hoisting the Stars and Stripes on the new Grist Mill—Nearly a serious affray—The price of land sixty years ago..... 30

### CHAPTER IV.

The progress of Settlement slow—Physical features and soil of Dumfries—Remarkable Geological character of the rocks underlying Galt—Energetic efforts to attract Scottish settlers—The Ettrick Shepherd offered a farm in Dumfries—John Telfer visits Scotland as agent—Poverty of the first settlers—Log Houses chinked with clay—New buildings—Visit of John Galt, Esq., in 1827—Its object—How Galt obtained its name—Mr. Dickson removes from Niagara—A Highland acquaintance .... 38

### CHAPTER V.

The Trading period of Bush life—Money scarcely ever seen—Marriage under difficulties—The want of roads oppressively felt—The terrors of Beverly Swamp—Early stories of the Benighted Region—Mr. Shade determines

to float the produce of the Settlement down the Grand River—Galt's first and only Fleet—The "Arks" as a freight line..... 54

#### CHAPTER VI.

Canadian Backwood's life—Its merry-makings and jolly character—Bears and Wolves—Mr. Bruin, a slandered animal—Singular Bear Hunt in Galt, in 1834—Winter the liveliest season of the year—Christmas shooting matches for Turkeys and Geese—Early Drinking customs—"In Devitt's fall, we sinned all"—Temperance Reform ..... 60

#### CHAPTER VII.

Character of the first Settlers of Dumfries—Education and Love of Knowledge—A Debating Society forty-five years ago—The names of its members—Subjects discussed—Would an Iron Ship Sink or Swim?—The Society's Annual Dinner—Making a Haggis with Dundas oatmeal—The courage and energy of the early Pioneers—A tribute to their memory..... 70

#### CHAPTER VIII.

Early Churches and Schools—Rev. William Stewart arrives about the Fall of 1831—First Presbyterian Church in Galt—Early Missionary Visits—Rev. James Strang—St. Andrew's Church begun in 1833—The old-fashioned Camp Meetings—Divine Service in West Dumfries—What fashionable Church-goers will be surprised to learn—"O why will ye die, O House of Israel"—The early Schools of Galt—Mr. John Gowinlock—Glimpses of School Life forty years ago ..... 74

#### CHAPTER IX.

Galt in the Spring of 1834—Its principal Citizens—New arrivals—Dr. Miller—Improving prospects of the Settlement—A travelling Menagerie visits the Village—A fearful calamity comes swiftly and fatally down—Terrible ravages of the Cholera—Graphic description by Mr. Alex. Burnett, written at the time—Painful incidents of the fearful ordeal—The Village left a pitiful scene of mourning and woe ..... 93

#### CHAPTER X.

From the time of the Cholera to the Rebellion—The population—Business of Galt improving—Break-up of the old-fashioned Mercantile monopoly—Early prices—The Dutchman's one per cent—Richard Irwin—Names of prominent Galtonians who arrived during this period—Rev. John Bayne—A great man who prefers the backwoods of Canada to the intellectual centres of Europe—Erection of the King's Arms Hotel and other ancient land-marks—Early Musicians—Construction of the Macadamized Road—Galt dam—Unrealized projects ..... 108

#### CHAPTER XI.

Material Progress begets new ideas—Public Meeting—Formation of Galt Subscription and Circulating Library in 1836—Full list of its members—Sweet and sad Recollections of by-gone days—A valuable institution—Curling on Altrieve Lake with Maple Blocks—Galt Club Established in 1838—The Drama in Galt's early days—Rob Roy and Bailie Nicol

Jarvie as done by leading villagers — Comical incident not in the play ..... 123

## CHAPTER XII.

Early Municipal Government—The old annual Town Meetings—A baker's dozen of settlers meet in 1819—First Officers elected for Dumfries—Amusing Enactments—Early efforts at public speaking—The perplexed Chairman and how he opened the Meeting—Three Township Commissioners elected in 1836—Their names—Polling for District Councillors in 1842—The greatest day Galt had ever witnessed—First School Commissioners—Introduction of our present Municipal System—First Councils of North and South Dumfries ... 133

## CHAPTER XIII.

First Parliamentary Elections—Political Issues of the day—Richard Beasley and William Scollick elected for Halton, 1825—Growing opposition to the Family Compact—William Lyon Mackenzie—The Members elected for Halton in 1828 and 1830—Mr. Shade returned in place of the Hon. James Crooks in 1831—Mackenzie speaks in Galt in 1833—Burned in effigy by Conservative opponents—Arrival of Sir Francis Bond Head at Toronto—The Halton Elections of 1834 and 1836—Mr. Alexander Burnett—"Liberty Cottage"—Upper Canada on the brink of Revolution..... 147

## CHAPTER XIV.

The Rebellion breaks out—News of the Battle of Gallows Hill received in Galt with surprise—Public feeling in Dumfries—The Union Jack taken off Mr. Dickson's house at night—The men of Dumfries called upon to muster—The bridge guarded by Galt Volunteers under Captain Rich—Men drilling for Duncombe's Army near Ayr—Arrests made by Galt and Fergus Volunteers near the Blenheim line—A Wife worth having—Samuel Lount said to have been hidden near Galt—The Galt Volunteers at Navy Island—Restoration of peace and order..... 154

## CHAPTER XV.

Visit of Sir George Arthur to Galt in 1839—Rather a cool reception—First Durham Meeting said to have been held in Galt—Memorable Meeting in Dundas—Procession from Dumfries and Galt—Speeches by Messrs. Burnett and Benn—The struggle ends in the triumph of Responsible Government—Dinner to the Hon. Wm. Dickson in Galt—Full report of his speech—The other guests present—First Agricultural Society—Its Officers—1840—The Rev. Dean Boomer—Galt Society in a flutter over a dashing young Englishman—The *Western Advertiser* that never appeared—The Knights of the Round Table—A most heartless swindle..... 166

## CHAPTER XVI.

Disruption of the Church of Scotland—First Fire Company formed—Its officers—Erection and burning of the Dickson Mills—Galt Thespian Amateurs—A Monk who was not solemn—The Elections of 1841 and '44—Local leaders of the two Parties—Mr. Francis McElroy—How Burns was quoted for the Bible—Webster beats Durand by eight votes—The *Dumfries Courier* started in 1844—Origin of the *Galt Reporter*—Dis-

cussion, in 1845, between Dr. Bayne and Dr. Liddell—Erection of Old Knox Church—Dr. Bayne's death—His successor—Other Ministers of Galt—New Schools and Teachers. . . . . 188

#### CHAPTER XVII.

Galt becomes an Incorporated Village—Population in 1850—Other villages of Dumfries—Early reminiscences of Paris, St. George and Ayr—Visit of Lord Elgin to Galt in 1849—First Councillors of Galt—Reeves and Municipal Officers—The *Dumfries Reformer*—The County Town struggle—Berlin carries off the prize—Public meeting—Reform dinner to the Hon. George Brown—The Ferrie and Tiffany election—First great Fire in Galt—The Collegiate Institute—Dr. Tassie—The Railway era opens—Turning the first sod of the Galt branch—Municipal rejoicings . . . . 207

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

Great prosperity of Galt from 1850 till it became a Town—Principal Manufactures and Business firms—It is called the "Manchester of Canada"—Effects of the Crimean war—Reminiscences of the old Militia muster—Amusing incidents—Formation of the Mechanics' Institute—Some familiar faces now nearly forgotten—First officers elected—Early lectures by Galtonians in "Noah's Ark"—Splendid lecture course in 1855-'56, and afterwards—Crowded meetings—Excitement and fun now preferred to lectures—What does it portend? . . . . . 230

#### CHAPTER XIX.

Opening of the Great Western Railway to Galt—The Galt and Guelph line—The McCracken affair—Warm municipal struggle, in 1855, over the erection of the Central School—Mr. Peter Cook—William Lyon Mackenzie's last visit to Galt—His Homestead Fund—Enterprising spirit of Galt at this period—Proposed Galt and Saugeen Railway—£15,000 voted to aid the enterprise—Bears seen in Dumfries as late as 1856—Meeting in 1856, to authorize the erection of a Town Hall and Market—Second great Fire in Galt . . . . . 244

#### CHAPTER XX.

Galt becomes a Town in 1857—The election of the first Mayor and Corporation—Names of those elected—The first School Trustees—Municipal Celebration in May—Description of the procession—Galt Rifles, Artillery Company, Firemen, Oddfellows, and Sons of St. George—Mayor Lutz lays the foundation stone of the Town Hall and Market—The official document read by Mr. Ker—The Mayor's speech—Their testimony to the great prosperity and enterprise of Galt at this period—Lunch at the Queen's Arms—The celebration closes amidst much enthusiasm. . . 252

#### CHAPTER XXI.

Concluding remarks—Contrast between the past and present—Young Galtonians who have won something of success or distinction—The Hon. Wm. Dickson lives in Niagara till his 77th year—How the early Pioneers regarded him—Mr. Shade's closing years—He survives with all his natural characteristics until 1862—His life-work—What may justly be said of its effects upon Galt's prosperity—Mr. William Dickson—The wealth and prosperity to which Dumfries has attained—Galt at the present day—The true heroes of Canada . . . . . 263



REMINISCENCES  
OF THE  
EARLY HISTORY OF GALT  
AND THE  
SETTLEMENT OF DUMFRIES.



CHAPTER I.

Dumfries originally Indian Lands—The Iroquois or Six Nation Indians—The brave Thayendanega (Col. Joseph Brant) their Chief—Dumfries purchased by Philip Stedman, in 1798—Ninety-four thousand acres for £8,841—Stedman dies Intestate—The Hon. William Dickson—A glimpse of his Character and History—Duel with Mr. Weeks—How Dumfries was obtained by him.

THE Township of Dumfries, in which the Town of Galt is situated, was originally part of the lands granted by the British Crown to the Iroquois or Six Nation Indians, at the close of the American Revolutionary War. They were composed of the Mohawk, Seneca, Cayuga, Oneida, Tuscarora, and Onondaga tribes, and for at least two centuries previously, under the name of the Iroquois Confederacy, they had been united and acted together for mutual protection and advantage. Their shrewdness,

bravery, and, it must be confessed, cruelty, made them the terror of the Hurons, Algonquins and other tribes, and the dreaded foes of the early French colonists. But from an early period in the history of the American colonies they became the warm friends and allies of the British settlers.

Under the leadership of the brave and good Chief, Joseph Brant,\* (Thayendanega), they clung to the fortunes of Great Britain all through the Revolutionary War. Brant was born on the banks of the Ohio River, in 1742, and was of pure Mohawk blood. He was educated in the State of Connecticut, and was possessed of abilities far above those of the generality of his race. At the close of the struggle, when the independence of the Colonies was recognised, the Six Nations crossed over into Upper Canada, and Governor Haldimand, representing the British Government, awarded them valuable tracts of the lands of the Province as a recompence for their services and fidelity.

These grants to the Six Nations comprised some of the most fertile and beautiful lands of the Province. They were situated on the Bay of Quinté, the River Thames, and the Grand River. The latter was the principal reservation, and the chief mustering place of the tribes was at a beautiful spot on the river, about two miles below what is now the City of Brantford, where the

---

\* The heroism and virtues of Col. Brant are about to be honoured by the erection of a monument to his memory in the City of Brantford, the derivation of whose name was Brant's ford, or crossing-place. The estimated cost is about \$20,000, most of which is already subscribed, and it has been decided to place it in Victoria Square, a very pretty place for the purpose.

quaint little church which Brant erected in 1786, as well as the unpretending grave\* which covers his remains, can be seen to this day. This grant gave to the Indians six miles on each side of the Grand River from its source to its mouth—a noble expression of the good faith and gratitude of the British Crown to the weakest of its subjects—and embraced within its limits what ultimately became known as the Township of Dumfries and the Town of Galt, the early settlement and history of which form the subject of the present sketch.

For several decades after its cession, the Grand River and its tributaries continued to be the principal hunting-ground of the Six Nations, and during their expeditions, which were numerous and constant in earlier times, the place where Galt now stands was one of their favourite camping-grounds. The locality abounded in fish, game, and fresh water. These were the chief objects of Indian pursuit, and they lingered long in places where they were plenty. The forest primeval, the scores of wigwams lining the river's banks, the hundreds of painted red men, with the other surroundings of semi-savage life, which then frequently filled up the beautiful valley in which Galt is situated, must have made a wonderfully picturesque scene, and one strikingly in contrast with the peaceful and prosaic character of modern, every-day life.

Through course of time the expeditions of the Indians

---

\* Col. Brant died at Wellington Square, November 24, 1807, in his 65th year.

assumed a more regular character, and were chiefly confined to upward trips in the fall in pursuit of fur-bearing animals, and the return downwards in the spring with their furs and other products of the chase. They continued to be made in very considerable bands, however, till long after settlement had commenced, and the axe of the backwoodsman began to denude the country at once of its forests and its game. There are those still surviving who remember their later encampments in Galt, which were chiefly on an unwooded piece of ground on the west side of the river, near where the Soap factory now stands. Their visits were not regarded as absolutely dangerous, but their absence was generally preferred to their company.

The title of the Six Nations to the upper portions of the Grand river was not long retained by them. The fertility of its banks soon attracted the attention of speculators, and the Government offered no opposition, if they did not encourage, the extinguishment of the Indian title.

On the 5th February, 1798, Colonel Brant, on behalf of the Six Nations, and acting as their legal attorney, sold to one Philip Stedman of the Niagara district, that portion of their lands known as Block number one, comprising 94,305 acres, and which, by an Act of the Legislature of the Province, became known as the Township of Dumfries. The stipulated price was £8,841.

Several other tracts of Indian land were sold by Colonel Brant at the same time as the Township of Dumfries.



From Smith's "Canada; Past, Present and Future," we learn that on the 5th February, 1798, a formal deed was made in the name of the Six Nations, surrendering all their interest in the lands mentioned below:—

“ Block No. 1, now forming the Township of Dumfries, containing about 94,305 acres, was sold to P. Stedman for.....	£ 8,841
Block No. 2, sold to Richard Beasley, James Wilson and John B. Rosseau, 94,012 acres, for.....	8,887
Block No. 3, sold to William Wallace, 86,078 acres.....	16,364
Block No. 4, no purchaser or price named, 28,512 acres.....	
Block No. 5, William Jarvis, 30,800 acres	5,775
Block No. 5, given originally to John Dockstader, by him sold for the benefit of his Indian children, to Benjamin Canby, 19,000 acres.....	5,000
	<hr/>
Total, 352,700 acres.....	£44,867

The making of these contracts with the individual purchasers, and the fixing of the consideration money, were, as it appears, the acts of the Indians themselves, either concluded upon in their Councils or negotiated by their agent, Brant, who was fully authorized for the purpose.”

As the fee simple of the Indian lands remained in the Crown, some time elapsed before the transaction with

Stedman could be completed. The Indians surrendered their rights, and petitioned His Majesty George III. to issue Letters Patent conveying to Stedman the block of lands which he had purchased from them. This was finally assented to, and in the Crown Patent it was recited that the purchaser had given security to the Hon. David William Smith, Captain William Clause, and Alexander Stewart Esq., Trustees for the Indians, for the payment of the purchase money or the annual interest thereof.

It does not appear what efforts Stedman made to turn his purchase to account. Indeed, little could be done with it at that time. Upper Canada was then (1798) little better than a wilderness. When separated from Lower Canada in 1792, and given a separate government, the total population was estimated at 20,000 souls, most of whom were settled around Kingston, the Bay of Quinté, the Village of Newark (now Niagara) and at Amherstburg. Kingston and Newark were the only places of any size. Toronto was in its infancy, having just been founded by Governor Simcoe, and the progress of settlement was extremely slow. All the interior of the Province, now cleared and cultivated, dotted over with cities, towns, and villages, and the abode of nearly two millions of people enjoying all the blessings of civilization, was then an almost unbroken solitude. It is difficult to realize that eighty-seven years can have wrought such a wondrous transformation !

Stedman died within a few years after obtaining the

Patent from the Crown, and left neither direct heirs nor any devise of his estate. His property was, consequently, inherited by his sister, Mrs. John Sparkman, of the Niagara district, who subsequently, on the 26th July, 1811, in conjunction with her husband, sold and conveyed to the Hon. Thomas Clarke, of Stamford, in the County of Lincoln, the block of lands obtained from the Six Nation Indians. No part of the principal money agreed upon with Philip Stedman had at this time been paid, for Clarke, on taking possession, executed a mortgage on the lands to the Indian Trustees for the payment of the £8,841 and interest.

There was at this time living in Niagara a gentleman, whose name was destined to become permanently associated with this block of valuable lands, and who found in them an ample fortune for himself and family. This gentleman was the Hon. William Dickson.

Mr. Dickson was born in Dumfries, Scotland, in the year 1769. He came to Canada in 1792, and, having settled in Niagara, began the practice of the profession of the law. He took an active part during the war of 1812; was taken prisoner, and sent to Greenbush, New York State but was subsequently released on parole. An effort, it is said, was made to retain him a prisoner in consequence of a duel fought with a gentleman named Weeks, also a barrister in Niagara, which took place on American territory. The judge before whom the case came, however, would not allow Mr. Dickson to be detained, on the ground that he was a military prisoner, and had not come

voluntarily upon United States territory. As they serve to throw some light upon the "good old times," as some consider them, when duelling was the recognized mode of settling disputes between gentlemen, the circumstances of the duel, as obtained from the most trustworthy authority, may be briefly narrated, as follows:—

"Mr. Weeks, an Irish gentleman, and Mr. Dickson, were barristers practising law in Niagara, in 1808 (I think), and at the Assizes held at Niagara in that year they were acting as Counsel in the same cause. In the course of the trial, the conduct of Governor Simcoe (then dead) came into question, and was very coarsely and profanely commented upon by Mr. Weeks in his address to the jury.

"At the conclusion of his address, Mr. Dickson rose, and addressing himself to the Court said: 'As he was engaged in the suit on the same side as his learned friend, it might be supposed that he concurred in all he had said to the jury, whereas he disapproved and condemned the manner in which his learned friend had spoken of Governor Simcoe, and considered the remarks as unjustifiable, and he wished it to be distinctly understood that they did not meet with his approval.

"Mr. Weeks and Mr. Dickson met the same evening, and there was no apparent interruption to the good understanding between them. During the night, however, some friends of Mr. Weeks impressed upon his mind that Mr. Dickson had insulted him in open court, and that he must challenge him, which he did. Mr. Dickson accept-

ed it, and the duel was fought opposite the Town of Niagara, behind the American fort. At the first exchange of shots, Mr. Weeks fell mortally wounded, only living three hours."

Possessed of much force of character and well educated, Mr. Dickson during his period of active life, was a prominent and influential public man. He was called to the Legislative Council of Upper Canada about the year 1816, and was widely known and respected. As an evidence of his energetic character, it may be mentioned that on the outbreak of the Rebellion in 1837, although then in his 68th year, he rallied what men he could at Niagara, went by steamer to Toronto, took an active part throughout the battle of Gallows Hill, and, afterwards, in restoring public order.

Shortly after the close of the war of 1812, Mr. Dickson, having full confidence in the future progress and prosperity of Upper Canada, determined to become possessed of some of the large tracts of agricultural lands which were in the market, and open them up for settlement. With this object in view, he placed himself in communication with the Hon. Thomas Clark, who had five years previously, as we have already seen, become possessed of the Stedman Indian lands. The final result of the negotiation was, that on the 3rd July, 1816, Mr. Dickson purchased the entire block comprising the Township of Dumfries. The consideration money was £15,000, and the assumption of the mortgage of £8,841, making altogether about £24,000, or a little over one dollar per acre.

Mr. Dickson shortly afterwards paid off the mortgage, to the Hon. William Clause, Trustee for the Indians, entered into possession of the township, and, as the next chapter will disclose, promptly began arrangements to open it up for settlement.





## CHAPTER II.

Absalom Shade—A man on whom Nature had left an imprint—Meeting with Mr. Dickson at Niagara in 1816—Shade fails to get a Contract, but finds a home in the Wilderness—Earliest settlers in Waterloo Township—Dickson and Shade visit Dumfries—They follow the Indian trail—The valley in which Galt stands selected for a Village—Its Natural Beauty—A Coliseum in Leaves—Shade returns to the Wilderness.

“THERE’S a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will.” So at least it is said, and so it appeared, at all events, in connection with Mr. Dickson’s new enterprise. He occupied at that time the position of chairman of the Quarter Sessions of the Niagara district, and, in conjunction with two other Commissioners, was empowered to take steps to secure the erection of a court-house and gaol in the village of Niagara. They advertised for tenders, and among those who applied for the contract was a young carpenter named Absalom Shade. His residence at this time was the town of Buffalo, where he was engaged in following his calling as a builder, but he was a Pennsylvanian by birth, having been born in Wyoming county in that State, in the year 1793. His father was a farmer, and Absalom was the youngest son of a numerous family.

There are some men upon whom nature has left such an imprint that once seen they are seldom forgotten. Sometimes we are attracted, at other times repelled, but

a man of unusual energy and force of character generally carries some of their insignia about him, and seldom escapes the notice, and even memory, of close observers.

Absalom Shade was a man of this description. His appearance was striking. He was tall and wiry, straight as an arrow, with regular and sharp features—more particularly the nose—the whole face being lit up with the sharpest of bluish-grey eyes; in short, he possessed a temperament and formation of body and head rarely disassociated with mental and physical strength and acuteness. He was then in the full flush of early manhood, and looked every inch of him the typical “live” Yankee, minus the dyspepsia, slang, and tobacco.

Young Shade failed to get the court-house contract, but it proved a fortunate failure. The chief Commissioner, Mr. Dickson, whose mind was then full of schemes for the opening up of his Indian lands, was so attracted by the appearance and enterprising spirit of the young contractor, that he determined to make an effort to induce him to expatriate himself to the wilderness of Dumfries, in the hope of carving out a fortune as settlement advanced.

The only settlement in the neighbourhood of Dumfries at that early period, was in the adjoining Township of Waterloo. Some years previously a few families had come in from the State of Pennsylvania. Amongst the earliest of these were, Messrs. Samuel Betzner, Joseph Sherk, the Bechtels, John Bear, Benjamin Rosenberger,



the Reicharts, and George Clemens, the two first-named of whom arrived in the summer of 1800.\*

The foregoing families, with the Shontzs, Bowmans, Erbs, Sararas, Cressmans, and other early Pennsylvanian settlers, must forever remain associated with Waterloo and Wilmot, for they were the Pioneers of these fine townships, and their names have ever been synonymous, except in rare cases, with all that is industrious, honest, and law-abiding. Not a few of these early Pioneers came all the way from Pennsylvania in their own waggons. The trials and difficulties of such an undertaking can only be fully understood by those who were acquainted with the wilds of Upper Canada at that early period. Their first clearances were on the Grand River, opposite where the village of Doon now stands, and in the neighbourhood of the old toll-bridge.

With the exception of the lands settled upon by these Pennsylvania settlers, the entire surrounding country, including the Township of Dumfries, was unbroken forest. A few persons had, indeed, squatted here and there along

---

\* A correspondent writes us that, "In 1799 Samuel Betzner and Joseph Sherk came from Pennsylvania to Ancaster. In the spring (1800), they came up to Waterloo Township, and settled on the Grand River, opposite Doon. The farm is still in possession of the family. The same year (1800), Christian and John Reichart, and their families, settled near the old toll-bridge. In 1801, seven families were added to the number, George Bechtel, wife and seven children, Abram Bechtel and wife, Jacob Bechtel, wife and four children, Dilman Kinsey, wife and one child, Ben. Rosenberger, wife and four children, John Bear and family, and George Clemens, unmarried. These families settled in the neighbourhood of Blair and Preston. In 1802, there came in Jacob Bechtel, first Mennonite preacher, the Sararas, Livergoods, Salyerds, Cornells, Ruylers, &c., &c.

the banks of the Grand River, but their attention was chiefly given to hunting and trapping. The work of settlement had, consequently, to be begun *ab initio*. The plan resolved upon by Mr. Dickson was, to found a village at some suitable and convenient point, by the erection of grist and saw-mills, and make this the centre of operations for populating and utilizing his lands. And it was this difficult task, as well as the duty of acting as his general agent, which Mr. Dickson asked young Shade, after a few days acquaintance, to undertake.

Ready for any enterprise which promised success, Shade promptly offered to visit the township and "prospect," in other words to judge for himself. It was consequently arranged that they should make a joint visit of inspection, Mr. Dickson himself knowing very little of the quality of his lands, except what had been learned from published reports, or from the statements of other persons. Shortly afterwards, during the month of July, they set out together upon what proved to be an important journey for both of them.

They proceeded westwards by way of the Governor's road, which was the only leading thoroughfare to the western part of the Province in those days. They reached the Grand River, near where the pleasantly situated Town of Paris now stands. Here an Indian guide became necessary. Under this escort they proceeded up the east side of the river by the regular Indian trail, which in many places a single pony and rider had difficulty in making their way along. As they proceeded leisurely

northwards, they examined the country from various elevations, and especially the points where streams intersected the river, and which promised to be suitable for commencing operations.

Where Galt now stands was then a forest solitude. Huge pines, cedars, and elms, intermingled freely with oaks, and occasionally with beeches and maples, studded the valley and surrounding hills. Close to the river's banks, cedar predominated. This was particularly the case where the waters of Mill-creek join the river, the cedar being very dense and the ground swampy for a considerable distance up the former stream.

When the travellers reached this point they dismounted, tied their horses, and Mr. Shade proceeded to examine the creek, sufficient water-power for a grist mill being always borne in mind as a necessity to the embryo village. Near where Mr. James Scott's planing mill now stands, he encountered a small, dilapidated frame building, the only semblance of civilization to be found. This ruin has sometimes been spoken of mysteriously, and apochryphal stories of an old grey-haired trapper, his mysterious disappearance, and the aversion of the Indians to visit the ruin, especially at the full of the moon, have at times had a fitful and misty currency. Careful investigation, however, has taken the romance out of this promising legend. There is no longer reason to doubt that, years before, one Alexander Miller, of the Niagara district, had bargained with the Indians for several hundred acres of their land, composed of the site of Galt and

its immediate neighbourhood. He erected the little frame building, the remains of which were found by Mr. Shade, with a view to do rough gristing, and part of a shaft which remained adjoining the structure, indicated that a rude saw mill was either in operation a short time, or had been contemplated.\* The weight of evidence favours the idea that neither of them were ever completed, and that Miller, finding out that his Indian title was worthless, abandoned the enterprise shortly after it was begun.

Passing on from this point, Mr. Shade followed up the stream as far as the present stone bridge at the head of Main Street, and no doubt was tempted to ascend the adjoining eastern bluff, the better to observe the surrounding landscape.

The natural beauty of Galt and its surroundings, has been much admired, and seldom fails to arrest the attention of strangers. It can boast little, perhaps, of the grand or sublime in Nature, but its scenery may be described, nevertheless, as strikingly picturesque and pleasing. As Mr. Shade surveyed the scene stretched out before him during that July afternoon in 1816, it must have appeared infinitely grander than at the present time. The gently-sloping, oval-shaped valley at his feet, the waters

---

\* It was currently rumoured when the first settlers came in, that the Indians had, whilst fishing with torch lights on the river, either wilfully or negligently set fire to the woods near the mouth of Mill-creek, and that the proposed or actual saw-mill, and some timber, were in consequence destroyed. There is no reason to doubt that a fire occurred, and in all probability it originated in the manner stated.

of the Grand River\* passing—like a broad band of silver—straight through its centre, the graceful hills encircling around, and the luxuriant profusion of summer foliage

\* The Grand river, spanned as it now is by three handsome bridges, with massive stone piers, is one of the most attractive features of the Galt landscape, the stream itself, as it flows over its rocky bottom, being one of the prettiest in Canada. The beauties of the river have excited the muse of local Poets on various occasions. The following verses from the pen of "Jeanie Bell," a well-known native of Galt but now resident in Scotland, are deemed worth preserving :—

"O come sweet Muse, and try to sing  
The praises of my native river,  
It does not boast a classic name,  
And yet it will be 'Grand' forever.

We cannot vaunt of battles fought  
Upon its banks ; nor tell the story  
Of brave deeds done—of martyred dead  
Who've rested near for ages hoary.

But we can tell of happy days,  
When we have seen its waters gleaming  
Beneath a summer's sun— and we  
Had spent the hours in idle dreaming.

O happy days ! when free from care,  
We played beside my native river ;  
In memory of those joyous hours,  
We'll love thy sparkling waters ever.

We know thee well in all thy moods,  
When smooth and calm, when swiftly flowing,  
When lashed by storm, when clear and bright,  
Beneath an Autumn's sunset glowing.

We've seen thee in the sweet Spring time,  
When Summer winds were softly sighing,  
When Autumn leaves, grown sere and brown,  
So thickly on thy banks were lying.

We've seen thee under sullen skies,  
When moonlight's softest beams were shining,  
On rock and bank and streamlet fair ;  
All kinds of beauty there combining.

rising from the centre, tier above tier, until the highest peaks of the sombre pines upon the bluffs were reached—these peculiarities of the landscape, so suggestive of a vast natural amphitheatre, must have made up a striking and beautiful picture. It must have looked like an immense Coliseum in leaves!

Shade evidently lingered over the scene, for, before he returned to Mr. Dickson and the guide, they began to wonder, and even to express some concern, at his prolonged absence. The emphasis with which he declared, however, that this was the place suitable above all others he had yet seen for a village, soon put his companion in good humour, but the practical difficulties in the way of their enterprise were too many to induce fanciful pictures of the future, even if the gentlemen had been more poetic and less matter of fact than they were.

They were soon mounted and on their way again, following the Indian trail up the same side of the river. As sunset drew near, they sighted a clearing about three miles

We love thee best for sake of friends  
 Who played beside us at the river ;  
 Some voices loved are silent now ;  
 They're lost awhile but not forever.

A fleeting day, a few short years,  
 Then parted friends shall meet together  
 Where friendship's broken bands reknit ;  
 Nor death, nor ought shall part them ever.

\* . . . \*

Farewell ! farewell to childhood's days ;  
 Farewell to thee—my native river ;  
 Though far in distant lands we roam,  
 We e'er will love—forget thee, never."

up the stream, the curling smoke arising from which gave them a thrill of pleasure. It indicated the existence of some human habitation, however humble, and helped to solve what was fast becoming a perplexing question—how they were going to find shelter for the night.

After some difficulty they succeeded in fording the river, when they found the clearance belonged to an adventurous settler named Nathaniel Dodge, a Pennsylvanian by birth, who had located on the flats forming part of what is now known as Cruickston Park. He heartily welcomed them, and "old Dodge," as he was long afterwards called, found in future years that he had lost nothing by keeping the tired travellers, and treating them to the best of the humble fare which he possessed.

The next day they returned to the junction of Mill-creek with the river, and re-examined the location. Their first impressions were strengthened, more especially after ascertaining the water-power which could be obtained from the river, with a moderate outlay of capital and skill. Both felt satisfied that the selection would be a good one, but Shade desired to prospect further, and so they parted for a few days at this point, Mr. Dickson to make his way as best he could to Flamboro' by what was known as the Dutch trail, and his companion to visit the more eastern and western parts of the township.

Shade first struck out in the direction of what is now the pretty Village of St. George, and from thence southwest until he reached the Grand River again. This he followed until a small tavern and ferry were sighted in

the neighbourhood of what is now the City of Brantford. Assisted still by a guide, he next proceeded through the woods to Smith's creek, in the neighbourhood of Ayr—which was the westerly limit of Mr. Dickson's lands—examining the country as much as possible as he went along. After satisfying himself as to its character, he determined, aided by his compass, to take a straight course eastwards to the river, hoping to come out opposite Mill-creek, more than ever satisfied with his first impressions of this particular locality.

At sundown the river was sighted, but three miles farther down than was expected. Shelter was obtained for the night in a solitary little log shanty, on the east-side of the stream, traces of which could be seen on the Campbell farm, near the road-side, until a few years ago. The occupants were one Ephraim Munson and his wife. They had sailed down the river from Waterloo in a boat some time before, and, attracted by the fine spring entering the river at this point, determined to erect a shanty and locate. They had very little to offer their unexpected visitors for supper but some suckers which Munson had caught during the afternoon. These fish were, however, fresh and abundant, and Mr. Shade frequently declared afterwards that he had seldom relished anything better in his life.

Taking a last look at the site of the proposed village, Shade rejoined Mr. Dickson at Flamboro', fully prepared to make the venture pressed upon him. Satisfactory terms were soon agreed upon between them, and



after visiting Niagara and Buffaio, and making as complete arrangements as were possible under the circumstances, Absalom Shade returned to make his home in the wilderness,\* and begin what was destined to become an important town, in the centre of one of the richest agricultural districts of Ontario. And thus Galt was founded!

---

\* When Mr. Shade made this venture, he possessed only \$100 and a chest of carpenter's tools. At least, such was the common report throughout the settlement for many years afterwards.





### CHAPTER III.

Difficulties of the new Settlement—The first building erected—Mr. Dickson actively engages in inducing Settlers to take up lands—An old Ruin with a History—A rough and ready Grist Mill—Population in 1817—The Branchton settlement—The Village of “Shade’s Mills” in 1820—Hoisting the Stars and Stripes on the new Grist Mill—Nearly a serious affray—The price of land sixty years ago.

THE difficulties and discouragements, not unmixed with adventure and jollity, connected with the first efforts to plant a new settlement in Upper Canada, are so familiar that it would be superfluous to fill in every detail. The founders of Galt had of every phase of bush life their full share. With scarcely a tree felled, no roads, no mills nor stores nearer than Dundas or Ancaster—twenty miles distant—and with the almost impassible Beverly swamp between, and only a solitary settler here and there, and these poor in everything but their brave hearts and willing hands, the initial difficulties encountered by Mr. Shade in 1816, and afterwards, were of no ordinary kind. He tackled them, however, with a determination and vigour which seldom fail of success.

One of the most pressing necessities before the township could be brought into occupancy, was to have it properly surveyed. Mr. Adrian Marlett, of Ancaster, Provincial Deputy Surveyor, was promptly engaged by Mr.

Dickson for the purpose, and surveyed a considerable portion of the lands in the neighbourhood of Galt during the fall of 1816. He commenced his work again early the following year, and continued it until it was completed.

The first building erected was near the corner of Main and Water-streets, where Mr. Alexander Buchanan's residence now is. It was constructed of logs, two stories high in front, with a one-storey kitchen attached. The front was enclosed by a log fence. This was deemed quite an ornament in those days, but would hardly be esteemed so highly at the present time. For many years afterwards one end of this building was used as a rude store by Mr. Shade, and the other as a dwelling for himself and wife.\*

Mr. Dickson, although still residing in Niagara, took an active part in encouraging, and in some cases assisting, settlers to come in and take up lands. With this object in view, and to plan improvements of various kinds, he frequently spent weeks with Mr. Shade, whose house—the quaint appearance of which is remembered by some persons still living—for many years continued to be the centre from which all operations were projected.

Nothing was more urgently needed at first than some means of grinding grain for food. This was temporarily supplied in an ingenious manner. We have already

---

\* Mr. Shade was married twice. First to Mrs. Andrews, of Canandaigua, New York State, who had two children (Mr. James K. Andrews and Mrs. John Miller) by a former husband. After her decease he married Isabella Jemima, sister of Mr. John Davidson, of Galt. Mr. Shade had no family by either of his marriages.

mentioned the existence of a dilapidated old building on Mill-creek, near the site of Scott's planing mill. Mr. Shade speedily converted the remains of this building, by the aid of the adjoining stream, into a rough and ready grist mill. Its product would hardly compare with the famous Princess Louise flour of the Stockwell mills; it boasted not of triple X or other fancy brands, and indulged not in packages with handsomely tinted labels; but the struggling settlers of those times greatly preferred it to the mixture which resulted from pounding wheat in a hole in a stump, or beating or rolling it by hand in some equally primitive manner. This mill without a name, in the absence of anything better, served the purpose until the project of erecting a proper flour mill was carried to completion about three years afterwards.

Shade acted as Mr. Dickson's agent and attorney, and as soon as it became known in the Niagara district and other settled parts of the Province, that lands could be had on easy terms, a few straggling settlers made their way to the locality, and some returned to take up their abode. Scarcely any persons came in during the fall of 1816, and for several years afterwards, the progress made was not very promising. Report puts down the number of families in the township in 1817 as thirty-eight, comprising in all one hundred and sixty-three souls, and the whole of the farm stock as less than the number of animals now to be found on a single place. From a Government source, we find that in 1818 the estimate was only thirty-eight settlers, and sixty-three persons in all.

These statements are doubtless not far astray, but the latter estimate is probably below rather than above the mark, for, besides a few settlers who early took up land in the St. George neighbourhood, a small colony, chiefly from Genesee County, New York State, had located in the bush between Galt and the present village of Branchton, as early as 1817. Among these were Messrs. Donald Fraser, Thomas McBean, William Mackenzie,\* John Buchanan, Robert Carrick, Alexander Harvie, Daniel McArthur and Dugald McColl, whose descendants, in several instances, still continue to hold and cultivate the lands then taken up.

The village was known as Shade's Mills in its early days, and, like the Province generally, advanced very slowly at this period. By examining the illustration to be found on another page, the work of Mr. Homer Watson of Doon, some ideas of the modern Galtonian, not a little proud, perhaps, of the "Manchester of Canada," may be roughly dispelled, but some conception may be obtained of the village of Shade's Mills in the spring of 1820.

Ten buildings, all told, made up the village just sixty

---

\* Donald Fraser, Thomas McBean and William Mackenzie walked all the way from Genesee Co., New York State, to Dumfries, during May, 1817. Mackenzie had assisted Mr. Marlett in surveying near Galt during the previous fall, and piloted the way. While on the road near Hamilton, the elder Dickson and his son William passed them on horseback. They knew Mackenzie, and informed the travellers that they could get Articles of Agreement immediately for any lands they might select, as they were then taking up these necessary documents. After arrival, Fraser, McBean and Mackenzie soon selected farms, and received the Articles therefor, which are said to have been the first three ever given by Mr. Dickson for any part of his Dumfries lands.

years ago. There was (1) Shade's house and store, already described; (2) the saw-mill, whose site is now occupied by the Great Western Railway bridge, and which was running in the spring of 1817; (3) the Dumfries' mills, built in 1818, which commenced running the following year; (4, 5 and 6) two or three log houses and a shanty, between the mills and the dam, the latter building occupied by an easy-going adventurous half-breed, whose name has faded from the memory of the oldest inhabitant; (7) the distillery, which began operations in 1820; (8) a log blacksmith shop carried on by one Charles Kitchen, a little south of the site of Mr. William Robinson's residence; (9) a small building near Mr. James Scott's house, which had been originally built on cedar posts, but had afterwards been filled in with dry stones; and (10) the remains, at this time chiefly foundation and débris, of the old temporary mill, which, it is needless to say, was despised and cast aside as soon as the new, and, for that early period, superior Dumfries mills had been put into operation.

There are, alas! only two solitary witnesses now left in Galt,—Mrs. John Miller,\* and Mr. Alexander Buchanan,—who resided in it at this remote period, and the fingers on one hand would probably suffice to count all the survivors who then saw it. Despite the disadvantages, not to speak of the trials of "bush life," the time-scarred Veterans of those early times, look back with pleasure to the

---

\* Since these lines were written, Mrs. Miller has passed away. She died in Galt on 7th February, 1880, aged 70 years.

town's early history, and many and curious are the incidents they relate in regard to it.

During the construction of the mills and distillery, the prospects of the village and settlement manifested some scanty signs of improvement. A few more settlers began to come in, and the workmen from a distance employed on the new buildings made everything more lively. All the millrights employed were Americans, and the machinery had to be brought all the way from New York—a task of the greatest difficulty.

Three of the workmen, named Robert Gillespie, Ira White, and John McCleary, were conspicuous for their strong American sympathies. At this period, in fact, there were very few citizens of the United States who did not regard the speedy union of Upper Canada with the Republic, as a foregone conclusion. Among those also employed on the mills, were a few French Canadians, who, with others in the little village or around it, were just as loud in expressing their British sympathies. When the work was nearly completed in 1819, the memorable Fourth of July came round, and for a lark, more than anything else, the Americans hoisted the stars and stripes from the gable of the mills! This so excited the ire of the French Canadians and others, that after considerable expression of loyal feeling—which was of double-distilled strength on the part of some in those days—an attempt was made to take the flag down. This was forcibly resisted by the Americans, and for a time a desperate fight was imminent, when more serious effects than a few scarred faces might have

resulted. Mr. Shade, on hearing of the *melee*, hurried to the scene, and having gone on top of the mills and taken down the obnoxious flag, the breeze fortunately blew over.

To complete the description of the village in 1820, it should be mentioned that the Grand River had been bridged the previous year. The first structure was at the same point as the present Main-street Bridge. It was erected chiefly at the expense of Mr. Dickson, and was for many years the only place, during high water, at which the settlers could cross from one bank to the other. It was, consequently, a great convenience to the whole settlement for many miles up and down the river, and as it brought many people to the village more frequently than they otherwise would have come, the bridge proved a useful adjunct to the place.

The price of land at this early period was about \$3 per acre. There is lying before us as we write, in a perfect state of preservation, an agreement entered into for a farm between Mr. Dickson and Mr. John Leece. This gentleman was a native of Lancashire, England, but had been for some time in Albany, New York, before coming to Dumfries. The agreement was for the sale of the south half of lot number eight, in the tenth concession—being the farm now owned by Mr. William Smith, situated on Mill-creek, about one mile from Galt. The document was signed on the 30th of July, 1817, the signatures upon it being those of William Dickson, by his Attorney; Absalom Shade, and the purchaser, John Leece. The witnesses were William Dickson, jr., and Charles Irwin.



The consideration money was £75, and it was payable in five years with interest.

Some anxiety was at one time felt among the early settlers of Dumfries, as to the title of the lands they had purchased, one Daniel Penfield or his heirs, laying claim to the whole township. Penfield's name appears in the Registry Office records, as having bought the township from one Elisha Wells, on the 11th of February, 1805, and Wells is also registered as having bought it from Peter Hogoboom on the 4th of December, 1802. A suit was instituted, contesting Mr. Dickson's title. This caused much talk at the time, and some anxiety. The case was tried both at Niagara and Toronto, Henry John Boulton being counsel for Penfield, and John Beverly Robinson (afterwards Chief Justice), for Mr. Dickson. The result was favourable to Mr. Dickson's title, as obtained from Philip Stedman and his heirs. Years afterwards, it was reported that a son of Penfield's intended to revive his father's claims to the township, but nothing ever came of it.





## CHAPTER IV.

The progress of Settlement slow—Physical features and soil of Dumfries—Remarkable Geological character of the rocks underlying Galt—Energetic efforts to attract Scottish settlers—The Ettrick Shepherd offered a farm in Dumfries—John Telfer visits Scotland as agent—Poverty of the first settlers—Log Houses chinked with clay—New buildings—Visit of John Galt, Esq., in 1827—Its object—How Galt obtained its name—Mr. Dickson removes from Niagara—A Highland acquaintance.

DURING the first half of the next decade (from 1820 to 1825), the settlement of Dumfries proceeded very gradually. The physical features of the country for many miles around Shade's Mills were not very attractive in their uncleared state. The land was thickly timbered, hilly and rugged, in some places stoney, and with not a few small lakes and swamps scattered throughout. It was not the place for a man afraid of hard work, and consequently lost many a settler it might otherwise have had.

The soil, however, was excellent for the growth of wheat and other cereals, and when once cleared, was not easily surpassed for farming purposes generally. It varies in different localities, from a clay to a sandy loam, the depth of which is generally from one to three feet, although seven feet have been met with in exceptional cases. This rests upon a sub-soil of gravel and sand.

Although it is not generally known, the geological char-

acter of Galt and vicinity is somewhat remarkable. Its site was well chosen so far as economic minerals for building purposes are concerned. Besides having on the east side of the river boulders of granite and other chrysaline rocks of every variety and in great profusion, there are also exhaustless quarries of limestone; this rocky formation, whilst forming a basis for the town within the valley, extends for miles up the river, forming bluffs of considerable elevation and beauty.

The limestone rocks underlying the town, and partially cropping out on the river's banks, very early attracted the attention of scientific men. Before any Geological Commission was established for Canada, Professor Hall, one of the geologists of New York State, paid the locality a visit, and on the occasion gave names to several of the fossils which freely abound in the rocks. A large bivalve shell (or rather the fossil of it) received the name of *Megalomus Canadensis*, which has been retained by our Canadian Geologists. Some eighteen or twenty varieties or species of fossils were early discovered, and as these corresponded in a considerable degree with those found in the Niagara group of limestone, the formation was regarded for some years as one with the Niagara. The late Rev. Andrew Bell, of Dundas, who was well-informed on this subject, so regarded this formation. Later on, investigations were made by our Canadian Geologists, Messrs. Murray, Billings and Bell,\*

---

\* Robert Bell, C.E., F.G.S.; Elkanah Billings, F.G.S. The latter ranked high as a Paleontologist. Mr. Bell is still connected with the Geological Survey. Mr. Billings died in 1876.

who visited Galt and examined the locality on several occasions, many years ago, and their researches resulted in assigning this peculiar class of rock to a higher and later development than that of the Niagara. It is now known as the Guelph group, and is understood to have received this name from Guelph being about the centre of the formation. It extends as far north as Elora and Fergus, and eastwards from Guelph some distance down the Grand Trunk line. It is a Magnesium Limestone or dolomite. What is its depth, or what it rests upon, are facts which remain undiscovered, for no complete outcrop of the rock has yet been found, nor have the borings in the town been of sufficient depth to determine these points.

: Numberless ages—who can count them?—must have elapsed since the Grand River began to flow. In no other way can the cutting of its channel through these limestone rocks, and the formation of the valley in which Galt stands, be intelligently accounted for. Immediately northward of the town, the rock has been cut down at least forty or fifty feet, and it is within the probabilities, that at some remote period of the past, a miniature Niagara was in existence a short distance above Galt. The continuous line of bluffs, and the unequal bottom of the channel of the river, favour this opinion.

From about the year 1825, settlers began to arrive more frequently, and before the close of the decade most of the farms in the immediate neighbourhood of Shade's Mills were taken up, and not a little land cleared and cultivated. The settlers were almost exclusively Scotch, and

were very largely from Roxboroughshire and Selkirkshire. This arose chiefly from the exertions made in Scotland by Mr. Dickson, to direct the attention of emigrants to his Dumfries lands.

Besides articles about the township and the village, published in *Chambers' Journal* and the regular press, he wrote freely to leading Scotchmen on the subject, with many of whom he was acquainted. Among others he communicated with James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, who took great interest in the matter, and was the means of securing many of the best settlers which the township obtained, not a few of whom brought letters of introduction from the poet to Mr. Dickson. A nephew and niece of his own were among the number,\* and it would appear as if, at one time, some hope was entertained that Hogg himself might be tempted to cross the water. However this may be, it is a well-attested fact that, during a trip of Mr. William Dickson, jr., to Scotland, he visited the poet, and offered him a farm in Dumfries, if he would come out and accept of it. Hogg laughingly replied, "The Yarrow couldna want him!" and that was the last heard of the matter.

About 1820, Mr. John Telfer was specially sent to Scotland to induce intending Canadian emigrants to settle in Dumfries. This gentleman, in conjunction with Michael Knox,† for at least thirty years one of the "characters"

---

\* Mr. Samuel Hogg, at one time clerk in Mr. Shade's store, and his sister, Mrs. James Dalgleish.

† Having no friends to take care of him, old Knox was removed to the Waterloo County Poor House, in 1869. His iron constitution enabled him

of Galt, had entered the Hudson Bay Company's service some years before. They soon tired of the hunting, trapping, and Indians of the North-west—which no one at that time dreamed would ever become part of Canada—but to escape from the Company's service was at once difficult and dangerous. In company with two others, however, they ultimately took French leave, starting together from the Selkirk settlement, and were vigorously pursued by officers of the Company, with dogs and sleds, on the snow and ice. Through the assistance of friendly Indians, who concealed them for three months, they succeeded in making their way out of the country, and ultimately reached Shade's Mills in safety. Mr. Telfer, who was an intelligent, energetic man, soon after his arrival in the village, bargained with Mr. Dickson, in exchange for part of the plains, about a mile south of Galt, to visit Selkirkshire, Scotland, and bring out a number of new settlers. This duty was, we believe, performed in a very satisfactory manner.

It was through these circumstances that Dumfries, especially the northern part thereof, became so largely settled by Scotchmen and Presbyterians. Rough and

---

to survive till the 11th September, 1878. He was in his 87th year. Many amusing stories of Michael were long current, and the following one has the merit of being well authenticated:—His wife kept house for Dr. Miller, before the latter was married. One day Michael, who was much given to drinking, told the Doctor there was something in his throat, and asked him to look into it. He accordingly opened his mouth, and the Doctor, after examining it, said, "I don't see anything, Michael." "Well, it is very odd you see nothing," replied the old wag, "*for a hundred acres of land and a yoke of oxen went down there!*"

rugged though the township was, their energy and industry, stimulated by poverty, it must be confessed, soon found witness in the disappearing forests, The axe of the woodman, the falling timber, the merry "Yo-heave" of the Raising Bee, could, at certain seasons, be heard on every side—just as now, during the gladsome harvest time, the "whirr" of the mowers and reapers salutes the ear wherever you go.

Many of the early settlers, when they took up farms, owned little but a trusty axe. Their first endeavours were, generally, to get in a few acres of wheat, and erect a house or shanty. The houses were invariably of unhewn logs, chinked with clay. The earliest of them were very rude. They seldom had any divisions except the loft above; this was ascended by means of a ladder, and it was rare when the daylight could not be seen streaming through numerous apertures in the roof. There was no want of ventilation in those days! Whatever else it lacked, the house invariably possessed a large open fireplace. Its huge blazing back-logs often served to distract attention from the earthen floor, and threw a ruddy glare of heat and comfort around the primitive apartment and its occupants. These early log houses, it is true, speedily improved, and were made more warm and comfortable. But many persons can remember dwellings in Dumfries of which this description is not overdrawn.

Being all alike poor, and more or less dependent on each other, the early Pioneers were always open-handed, and ready to assist their neighbours. Though hard was

the toil, and many the privations of bush life, there are few of the old men who remain, whose eyes do not light up with pleasure at the remembrance of those early days, and more especially at mention of the generous assistance and warm-hearted sympathy which so largely characterized the entire settlement.

The village of Shade's Mills was the most important place within a radius of twenty miles, but its growth, continued to be very tardy. In the year 1827, however a circumstance occurred, which will be noticed presently, and which somewhat improved its fortunes.

About the year 1821, what is apt to be one of the earliest "institutions" of a new settlement was erected, namely, a tavern. It was a small one-and-a-half story frame building, situated near the corner of Main and Water Streets, a little north of where Woods and Taylor's store now stands. It was first opened by one Morgan L. Hermonts; two years afterwards one John Clark\* became the landlord, and subsequently it fell into the hands of a man named James Taylor. Some idea of the value of property over half a century ago, may be obtained from the fact, that Taylor offered the hotel, stables and lot, to a gentleman still living in Galt, for \$300, and failed to

---

\* Clarke long went by the name of "Old Johnny Clarke," and is well remembered for his loquaciousness and other peculiarities. He owned the farm of Rosehill, adjoining Galt, at one time, but sold it, and took up Lot No. 7 in the 5th Coucession of South Dumfries. Becoming old, he subsequently went to reside with some friends at Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he survived until a few years ago.



find a purchaser. Ten years afterwards, however, we find their value had greatly increased.

This acre of ground, situated in the very heart of Galt, was one of the first parts of Dumfries deeded away by Mr. Dickson, and ultimately gave rise to most vexatious legal proceedings. Taylor was related to, and ultimately disposed of the property to Mr. Thomas Lepard, of Woolwich (afterwards of Dundas), who, at his death, willed it to his daughter, Mary Ann Lepard, who was his only child. Mr. Thomas G. Chapman was appointed executor. Finding the personal estate inadequate to liquidate the debts, he advertised the lot to be sold by public auction, when it was knocked down to Mr. Thomas Mackenzie, who was a mill-wright by trade, and had recently arrived in Galt from Nova Scotia. This was about the time of the rebellion, and the price obtained was \$1,600—a very considerable rise above the modest sum at which Taylor had offered to sell it some years previously. Mr. Mackenzie sub-divided the acre into lots, and erected a small frame house on one of them for his own use.

Some time after this, Mary Ann Lepard married a shiftless fellow named Benjamin Tribe, who resided near Elora. Matters had proceeded thus far, when the question arose as to whether the executor, Mr. Chapman, had the right to sell the lot, although it was for the payment of the debts of the estate. A case was submitted to Mr. W. H. Draper, of Toronto, for his opinion. He decided adversely, which was a most unpleasant discovery for Mr. Chapman, and still more so for Mr. Mackenzie, who,

with buying and building, had sunk all his hard-earned money. There was a general consultation held by Messrs. Mackenzie, Chapman, Shade and Adam Ainslie (the latter is now a resident of Leith), and it was arranged that the three gentlemen last mentioned should go on an expedition, combining pleasure with business, namely, to drive to Elora, see Tribe and wife, endeavour to get a confirmation of Mackenzie's title, and then fish down the Grand River home again.

To make a long story short, Tribe agreed to confirm the title for \$150, and came down to Mr. Ainslie's office the following week for the purpose. Mr. Ainslie appointed 3 o'clock that afternoon for him and his wife to come and execute the necessary papers. The hour arrived, but they did not. The next day it was ascertained that Tribe had sold out all his own and his wife's interest to Mr. John Miller, Barrister, had executed a deed for the acre lot, and left the village! This was sad news for Mackenzie, and made the difficulties far greater than ever.

Two legal suits immediately ensued. Miller began a Chancery suit to dispossess Mackenzie, and Mr. Ainslie retorted by commencing an action against Mr. Miller for *ChamPERTY*, or buying a disputed title. We need not follow the legal proceedings further than to say, that they occasioned much interest in the courts of the Province, and quite excited the little village whilst the result was pending. Unlike many lawsuits, however, all came out right in the end. Mr. Mackenzie was confirmed in his title, and Mr. Miller, whom the jury amerced in the sum of £500, had the

verdict set aside at the next term, as being contrary to law.

After the Dumfries Mills had been running for some time, Mr. Dickson, who found that his lands required all his attention, endeavoured to sell them to Mr. Shade. The latter was unwilling to purchase unless a guarantee was given for a specified number of years, that no lands would be sold in the village by Mr. Dickson for mills, stores, or other businesses which would enter into competition with his (Mr. Shade's) occupations. It is understood this condition was ultimately agreed to; at any rate, Mr. Shade purchased the mills, two hundred acres of land, covering what is now the most valuable part of the town on the west side of the river, and an additional hundred acres in the township. The deed was not obtained for these properties by Mr. Shade, until the 11th August, 1838, and in that document, the consideration money is stated to have been £2,500.

In deeding the 200 acres to Mr. Shade, Mr. Dickson made the following reservations: (1) One lot to Dr. Robert Miller, corner west of Water and north of Main Street. (2) One acre to James Taylor, north of Main and east of Water Street. (3) One lot to Adam Ainslie, north of Main and east of Ainslie Street. (4) One lot to Isaac Sours, adjoining Ainslie's lot. (5) The school-house lot, corner of Church and Main Street. (6) The market-house lot on Dickson Street.

How much is the same property, with all its mills, machinery, stores, and residences, worth at the present day?

The old Red store, for many years one of the landmarks of Galt, was put up by Mr. Shade in 1824. It was situated at the east end of Main Street bridge, where the Commercial buildings now are, and jutting out into the river between it and the bridge, was a high wooden pier, with a strong, upright post on the westerly corner. This was used as a wharf during the period that barges were employed on the river, and in after times, and for many years after it fell into decay, it was the daily resort of village urchins, who drew many a fine bass from beneath its rotting timbers.

Mr. Thomas Rich, who had come to Canada from Gibraltar, during the previous year, found his first employment in Galt on the Red store.\* He was at first somewhat disappointed in the country, and returned to Gibraltar in 1825, where his father was employed by the British Government in the Engineer's department. Two years afterwards, however, Mr. Rich returned to Galt, and has continued, with the exception of a few years, to reside in it ever since—a period of over half a century.

The community was thrown into a pleasurable excitement, in 1827, by the arrival in its midst of John Galt, Esq., and party, the latter comprising Dr. Dunlop, a Mr. Campbell and a Mr. Pryor. Mr. Galt was the father of Sir A. T. Galt, of Montreal, and Judge Galt, of Toronto, and was not unknown to fame, being the author of

---

\* The original frame-work of the old store-house, which occupied the site of the present Commercial buildings, still exists, and now forms the frame-work of the buildings connected with Turnbull's Knitting Factory.

“Laurie Todd,” “The Annals of our Parish,” and other works of fiction. He acted as Commissioner of the Canada Company from 1826 to 1829, and his visit had been bruited for some time, and its object discussed with hopeful interest—which was to open up a road from Galt to the lands of the Company in the neighbourhood of the now royal City of Guelph, but which had remained a *terra incognita* up to this time.

Mr. Galt had been a school companion of Mr. Dickson’s in Edinburgh, and such had been their attachment, that when the village obtained a Post Office, Mr. Dickson christened it “Galt,” after his early friend and schoolmate. It is scarcely necessary to say that Mr. Galt and party met with a warm reception from Mr. Dickson, and all with whom they came in contact.

Mr. Shade, with his usual shrewdness, was anxious to secure the work of constructing the proposed road, and the furnishing of supplies—indeed, he almost regarded this as a turning point in his fortunes. He remarked to a friend at the time: “If I succeed in getting this contract, I will be all right; but its just like tossing up a copper!” He did succeed in securing a large share of the contract from the hands of Mr. Galt, and it is scarcely necessary to add, entered upon the work of cutting out and constructing the road with characteristic push and success. The oversight of the work was left in the hands of Messrs. Campbell and Pryor, the latter of whom continued his connection with the Canada Company, in Goderich, for a long period afterwards.

The Guelph road gave employment to many of the settlers, and enabled them to earn a little ready money, which was a very scarce commodity in those days. Not a few ox teams from Dumfries found employment in opening the road to, and clearing the site of the proposed village of Guelph, and among those who helped to "slash" out the timber along the line of road—which extended about sixteen miles through the bush—were Stephen Moffat, George Telfer and John Lockie, well-known Dumfries names.\* By this enterprise, and others equally worthy of commendation, Mr. Galt became the founder of Guelph, and gave a much needed impetus to the settlement and development of the country.

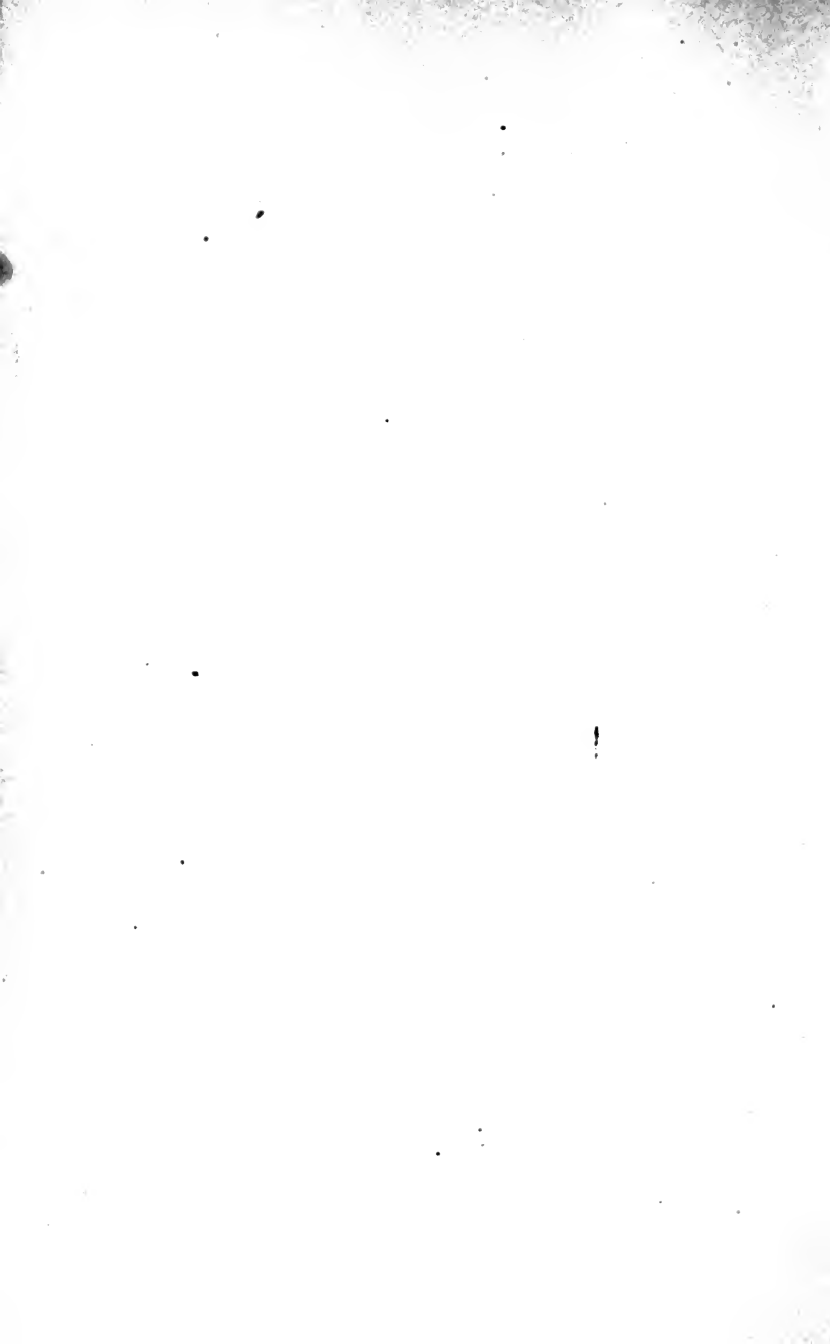
This visit of Mr. Galt settled for ever the question of the name of the village. Prior to this time it continued to be known as Shade's Mills, and notwithstanding the selection of Galt as the name of the Post Office, the people appeared bent on adhering to the old and early name. The pleasing manners of Mr. Galt, however, made him quite popular with all the villagers with whom he came into contact, and thereafter the name of Galt met with cordial acceptance.

---

\* How immeasurably the circumstances and comforts of the community have improved since the days when this road was constructed, may be known from the fact, that Mr. Moffat and other workmen employed upon it, sometimes had to eat the fattest of pork, raw; their bread was baked in the hot ashes of their camp fires—the quality of which, therefore, needs no remark—and they drank, at their meals, hemlock tea! To make up for such fare—we suppose—a barrel of whiskey, with a tin cup attached, always stood at the roadside, and each workman or passer by was allowed to partake *ad libitum*,



MR WILLIAM DICKSON.





During the same year (1827), Mr. Dickson temporarily removed from Niagara, and took up his residence in Galt. He first occupied a quaint little rough-cast cottage on the south side of the west end of the bridge. It was situated on a pretty sloping knoll, and was partly surrounded by a well-trimmed Scotch thorn hedge, which extended down to the river's brink. He subsequently removed to a new house\* which he erected on the beautiful western hills overlooking the village.

The residence of the Hon. William Dickson, in Galt, only continued till 1836—a period of nine years. He was then in his sixty-seventh year, and the labours of an unusually active life had begun to make inroads on his once vigorous constitution. He determined, therefore, to return to Niagara, and leave the charge of his affairs in Dumfries and Galt in the hands of his son, Mr. William Dickson, jun., who subsequently inherited the greater portion of the estate.

The latter gentleman, with his tall, spare, but commanding figure, and reserved manner, is so well remembered, that a minute description of him is unnecessary. He was born in Niagara, in 1799, and was the second of three sons, the Hon. Robert Dickson being the eldest, and the Hon. Walter H. Dickson the youngest.† William spent

---

\* This building stood almost directly west of the Queen's Arms Hotel. The writer of this sketch was born in it on the 24th May, 1835. It was removed about twenty years ago.

† The Hon. Robert Dickson died at Leghorn, Italy, on the 27th November, 1846, in his 51st year. A tablet to his memory was erected in Trinity Church, Galt, shortly after his death. The Hon. Walter H. Dickson, of

several years at College in Edinburgh, Scotland, and on his return took up his residence permanently in Galt. For a brief space he had a joint interest in one of Mr. Shade's stores. He had no taste, however, for general business, and soon confined his attention to his father's affairs, or spent his time in travel.

From the time the old gentleman removed to Niagara, the management of the property of the family in Dumfries and Galt—already largely increased, and steadily augmenting in value—devolved chiefly upon Mr. William Dickson, although Robert and Walter generally spent some portion of each year in the village. During these visits the brothers occupied the two cottages on the Queen's Square owned by the family—one of which is yet standing behind Mr. Gavin Hume's hardware store, and the other was situated opposite thereto, on the north-east corner of the square. Mr. William Dickson soon became closely associated with the Township, and as well known to the settlers as ever his father had been.

His office was at the west end of the bridge, and often presented a busy scene about the beginning of the New Year, at which time the settlers were expected to pay the instalments due upon their lands. Ever to be asso-

---

Woodlawn, Niagara, was born in 1805. He has been married twice, first to Miss Augusta Maria Geale, and secondly to Mrs. Armstrong. He was called to the Bar of Upper Canada, Hilary Term, 1830. He was Member for Niagara in the Canadian House of Assembly from 1844 to 1851. Was a life member of the Legislative Council from February, 1855, until Confederation, when he was called to the Senate of Canada by Royal Proclamation, in May, 1867.

ciated with this office must be the name of Mr. Kenneth Robertson \* who, from a very early period, acted as Mr. Dickson's clerk and agent. This gentleman was of Highland birth, but unlike most sons of the Gael, possessed an unusually cold and calculating manner. The annual interview with him, therefore, was not an occasion which called up feelings of pleasure in the settlers' minds, particularly if, through unfavourable weather or other causes, they were unable to meet their engagements.

---

\* It was probably Mr. Robertson's misfortune that he had often to perform the ungracious duty of insisting upon payments. However this may be, he was extremely unpopular, and always went by a nick-name so familiar as not to require repetition. He did not marry till well advanced in years, which was the occasion of a *charivari*, which produced the wildest excitement in the village for several nights, and which the magistrates were quite unable to quell.





## CHAPTER V.

The Trading period of Bush life—Money scarcely ever seen—Marriage under difficulties—The want of roads oppressively felt—The terrors of Beverly Swamp—Early stories of the Benighted Region—Mr. Shade determines to float the produce of the Settlement down the Grand River—Galt's first and only Fleet—The "Arks" as a freight line.

MUCH of the business of the settlement, during the first ten years, was carried on by barter. It might be called the "trading period." It was so many yards of cloth for so much pork, so much calico and cotton for so many pounds of butter, and so much tea for so many dozens of eggs. The farmer could not get cash for wheat or wool at every cross-road as at present. The miller took his toll from the wheat, and returned the balance in flour; when the old-fashioned carding mills came in, he got so much rough grey cloth—and rough it was—or so much yarn, in return for his wool. And it was pretty much the same in all transactions. Even the minister and the doctor were sometimes paid in trade!

Money was rarely seen. At certain seasons there was literally none in circulation. An English shilling was almost a curiosity. Battered brass buttons passed readily as coppers, and it is said that, in a hard pinch, they were occasionally cut off the coat for the purpose! Although money

was so scarce, the farmers, fortunately, soon had abundance to eat, and not a little to barter in exchange for their other wants.

An amusing illustration of the scarcity of money may be mentioned here. People were so infatuated as to get married in those days, just as they do now; but the operation was by no means so easy as at present. The clergy of the Church of England were the only ministers at one time who could marry; magistrates could do so, however, when there was no Episcopal clergyman within a radius of eighteen miles, and Squire Ellis, of Waterloo, and Squire Murray, who resided near St. George, for many years did a thriving business in the matrimonial line.

But to our story. It was customary then, as now, for the bridegroom to hand the officiating clergyman or magistrate a small fee on the completion of the ceremony. However difficult it was to procure, at least one dollar was generally scraped together for this purpose. But even this could not always be obtained. Indeed, on one occasion, one of the clergymen of Galt (Rev. Dr. Boomer), after tying the marriage knot, was surprised when the bride stepped briskly up to his side, and whispered in his ear that they had no money, but would, on the morrow, send him the marriage fee in sausages! He accepted the offer with the best grace possible, but could scarcely suppress his merriment at the unexpected and unusual character of the *douceur*.

Few can realize in this age of railroads and easy com-

munication, what satisfaction the completion of the road to Guelph created, or the acclamations with which the subsequent proposal to construct the Dundas and Waterloo macadamized road was greeted. The want of roads had become oppressively felt. The production of farm produce was annually increasing, but it was nearly impossible to get it to market. Galt was almost hemmed in—a place without an outlet. The natural route was eastwards to the head of Lake Ontario at Dundas, but between the two points was a literal *slough of despond* in the shape of the far-famed Beverly swamp, whose bottomless mud-holes and almost impassible “corduroys,” were the terror of travellers for many a year thereafter.

This benighted region had a most unenviable reputation. It blocked the way between the head of navigation at Dundas and Hamilton, and the fertile lands of Dumfries and Waterloo. It could not be avoided, therefore, and the blazed\* road through its long desolate morasses, was seldom passed without accidents and delays innumerable. A dozen teams all “stuck” (to use the expressive term of the period) within a few miles of each other, was no uncommon occurrence, and only the marines could believe the stories of the size and depth of the mud-holes which have been handed down to us.

Once upon a time a reckless rider attempted, contrary to advice, to pass through on horseback in the middle of the spring floods. A few hours afterwards a pedestrian

---

\*A term in common use, indicating chips chopped off the sides of trees in early settlements to show travellers the road.

found what at first glance he took to be a blue Scotch bonnet floating in the middle of a treacherous-looking pool. On attempting to recover the bonnet, he was horrified to find it covered the head of the reckless rider, who had plunged into the fatal morass, and, astride of his horse, had gradually sunk down, until arms, neck, mouth, and eyes, had been engulfed in the oozy, treacherous, almost fathomless abyss. Before assistance could be obtained, horse and rider had entirely disappeared!

How far this and similar stories can be relied upon, the reader can judge for himself, but certain it is, that the passage through Beverly swamp was greatly and justly dreaded. These feelings were increased by current rumours of an old peddler and even of other benighted travellers who had undertaken to pass through the swamp after dark, having mysteriously disappeared. These rumours became crimes of blood to the active imaginations of those days, and so widespread and strong had they become, that when Mr. Alexander Buchanan, a man certainly not deficient in courage, came in from New York State in 1819, he started through the wild and trackless woods after dark to his father's clearance near Branchton, rather than linger in Beverly swamp, with its dismal surroundings and evil reputation.

Pressed by increasing supplies of farm produce, which were mostly obtained in exchange for goods out of the Red store, Mr. Shade determined about 1831 to endeavour to find an outlet to Lake Ontario by means of the Grand River. Through the enterprise chiefly of the late Hon.

William Hamilton Merritt, the spirited project of connecting the waters of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario by means of the Welland Canal, had been accomplished four years previously. Mr. Shade conceived the idea of taking his produce down the river to Dunnville, towing it through the canal to Lake Ontario, and then shipping it from Port Dalhousie to its destination.

When this project was announced, it became the event of the season. The farmers, not less than the villagers, were all agog, and a good many doubting Thomases shook their heads wisely. But Mr. Shade quietly proceeded with his plans. He built several flat-bottomed boats which were called "Arks." These were each of sufficient capacity, being eighty feet long and sixteen wide, to carry about four hundred barrels of flour. They could only be used during the spring floods, and it was an exciting time at the little wharf at the end of the bridge when they were being loaded.

The cargo consisted chiefly of wheat, coarse grains, flour, highwines, pork, and furs, and was of considerable value, embracing a large portion of the results of the year's business. Each Ark was in charge of several men, one of whom had special control, when Mr. Shade, who always accompanied them, was not on board himself. The boats were difficult to manage, and in consequence of the rapid current, numerous islands, and occasional shoals especially between Galt and Brantford, they required as skilful navigation as their great prototype to which the whole human race is so greatly indebted.



The Arks, as a freight line, could hardly be called a success, though it must be admitted they served to tide over a pressing difficulty. They were only used for three years, and as evidence at once of the difficulties of the navigation and the energy of Mr. Shade, the mishap which befell the last expedition may be mentioned.

Seven Arks started from the Galt wharf, all well laden. Everything went smoothly until a short distance below the village of Glemorris. At this point the boat on which Mr. Shade himself was, ran upon a rock, and narrowly escaped becoming a total wreck. By great efforts, however, the flour with which it was laden was removed to an adjacent island, as quickly and with as little injury as possible. Mr. Shade immediately returned to Galt, worked almost night and day till a new Ark was made, started down to the scene of the accident, took on board the flour, and caught up to the first and only fleet which Galt ever possessed, at Port Robinson, about the middle of the Welland Canal.

Whatever the reasons may have been, this was the last occasion on which the Arks were used. Possibly a dove had returned with a sprig from Beverly swamp!





## CHAPTER VI.

Canadian Backwood's life—Its merry-makings and jolly character—Bears and Wolves—Mr. Bruin, a slandered animal—Singular Bear Hunt in Galt, in 1834—Winter the liveliest season of the year—Christmas shooting matches for Turkies and Geese—Early Drinking customs—"In Devitt's fall, we sinned all"—Temperance Reform.

THE circumstances of the people began visibly to improve about 1830,\* but there was ample room for improvement,

---

\* Many of the principal settlers of Dumfries came in about 1830. We learn from Mr. William Cowan, River Road, that the following well-known Dumfries families all sailed in the "Argus" of Workington, England, on the 3rd June, 1829: those of Francis Hogg, Walter Cowan, James Cowan, George Barrie and Hector Rennelson. The voyage was *only* nine weeks and two days!

The families of the following persons also came out together by the "Sarah Mary Ann," of Maryport, England, in April, 1831: George Landreth, James Bunyan, Thomas Adams, John Kerr, David Brown, Adam Kersell, Robert Cranston, James and Walter Deans, John, Thomas and William Henderson, John and William Veitch, Robert Laidlaw (father of James Laidlaw M.P.P.), Paisley Block; James Little and Robert Aitkin, Blue Lake, and James Davidson, Keg Lane, near Paris. With possibly one exception, all these families were from Roxburghshire, Scotland. Voyage—five weeks and four days.

A friend has handed in the following as the dates when the families mentioned arrived in Dumfries: 1820—David Thornton; 1823—John Lockie, Henry Aussam and George Stoddard; 1824—John Mackenzie, the Moffats and Andrew Lake; 1825—John D. Campbell, long familiarly known as "Duke" Campbell; 1826—Duncan Ferguson and the Scrimgers; 1827—John Milroy and David Potter; 1829—James McPhail; 1831—Thomas Chisholm and Arthur Burnett; 1832—William S. Elliott, the Lees and George Bruce; 1833—George Moore, John and William Dickie; 1834—

and many hard struggles were still before them. The whole settlement was, however, hopeful and cheerful. There had been no lack of good humour, and even of jollity, from its earliest days. And this, it may be added, is one of the peculiar characteristics of Canadian backwoods' life. It makes Mark Tapleys of men who would never have been "jolly" under any other circumstances.

The hard work of chopping, logging and bush-burning\* seemed to add zest to social gatherings. They were frequent throughout Dumfries, and always lively. Almost every raising "Bee" terminated in mirth-making of some description. The long winter evenings were often beguiled with dancing, in which all classes and ages united after the Scottish fashion, undisturbed by the "latest cut" of Beau Brummel, the correct attitudes

---

James Cowan, Clochmohr, Hugh Wallace, John Thompson, Cruickston Park, Robert L. Wilson and Hugh Rutherford. The Goodalls came in 1833 and '35.

It would have been gratifying if our friend had been able to extend his list, and taken in other well-known, early settlers, but it is difficult to get correct dates, after the lapse of half a century, and, besides, a volume like these Reminiscences, does not admit of too much matter of a technical character.

\* The Scotch are credited with being very canny, and able to look a long way ahead. It is possible, however, to overdo it. This, a highly respectable settler named Goodfellow, illustrated in a very amusing way. About 1834, when the woods in every part of the township were being chopped down at a very rapid rate, Goodfellow took it into his head that in a few years the entire forests would disappear, and that no wood would be left for winter use. Anxious to take time by the forelock, he determined to secure a substitute in the shape of a good peat moss. He ultimately purchased, much to Mr. Dickson's surprise, the mucky edge of a swamp some distance this side of Ayr, but the peat, we need hardly say, remains unneeded and untested to this day.

of Professor Fanning, or other restraints of the modern votaries of fashion. The quilting "Bee"—another venerable institution of the past—also contributed its share to the amusements of the period.

Towards the fall of the year a fruitful source of amusement was shooting. Water-fowl and partridges were abundant. So were foxes, mink, and other fur-bearing animals. Ten or twelve deer in a single herd, quietly browsing at the edge of the clearance, was not an uncommon occurrence, and occasionally the bear and the wolf were bagged. Many persons took part in the sport, and a few, like old John Garrison—who might justly be called the Leather-Stockings of the settlement—did little else all the year round.

The Grand River and the Speed, not to speak of the smaller streams, were then abundantly supplied with trout and other fishes, and amusing fishing adventures frequently happened. Mention has already been made of an expedition of Messrs. Shade, Chapman, and Ainslie, to Elora, "combining pleasure and business," and Mr. Ainslie has related to us in his own inimitable way, how the party "fished down the Grand River, home again." He says:

"We constructed a raft about four miles below Elora. A large stone tied to a rope served as an anchor, and we used it at the foot of the rapids. We were most successful in fishing. The dry cedar logs of the raft having become water-logged, and the raft inconveniently low, Mr. Shade determined to replenish it with an additional supply of logs from a large collection of drift stuff at the

head of a rapid we were nearing. When we arrived at it, he called to me to jump off, which I at once did with my coat over my left arm, a bottle of whiskey in my left hand, and my fishing-rod in my right. At the same instant Chapman threw the stone on the bank, but the current being very strong, pulled it off, and before I had time to turn round, Shade in a loud voice ordered me to jump on again—

“Time and tide for no man bide.”

I fully realized on this occasion the truth of this adage. Suddenly wheeling to the right about face, I saw the raft rapidly receding from the shore. I made a desperate spring to regain it, but alas! merely touched it with my foot, and was then and there bodily immersed in the rapidly flowing fluid!

“When I regained my feet, my fellow voyagers were a long way down the rapid. On arriving at still water they came to anchor, and had their risible faculties intensely excited by seeing me wading to my middle down the rapids to rejoin them. I still, however, held on to the coat, the rod, and the bottle of whiskey, and I found the latter most acceptable when I regained the raft. I thought I had been ill-used, and had a right to complain of somebody, but the more I complained, the more they laughed, and replied to my remonstrances by recommending me *to take another pull at the bottle!* We took up our quarters that night at old William Davidson’s in Woolwich, where I got my clothes dried at the kitchen fire. The next afternoon we reached home.”

“This brings to my recollection another aquatic occurrence. Many years ago, New Hope (now Hespeler) was a favourite place of resort to fish for trout. One day I was one of a party to go there. My companions were the three Messrs. Dickson. After fishing some time, the Hon. Robert Dickson, in crossing the stream, slipped off a plank into the pond of Oberholtzer’s saw-mill. After scrambling out to the bank, he deliberately divested himself of his clothing, which he hung up on stumps to dry. He then improvised a sort of Zulu costume, and with the utmost *sang froid*, continued to pull the trout from the stream until his clothing was fit to put on again! Those were jolly days, and they seem now to have passed all too quickly.”

For a few years bears and wolves were numerous. Most of the settlers brought with them from Europe great fears of these beasts, the result, chiefly, of reading thrilling narratives of their ferocity, to be found in books of travel and newspapers. They found them, however, not the fierce creatures they expected, more especially Mr. Bruin, who was a much slandered animal. With the exception of stealing a pig or sheep occasionally—not a very serious offence for a bear—he was generally very docile, and his rapid disappearance in the forest, when he chanced to meet human beings, showed that he had as little desire to make their acquaintance as they had to make his. The howling of the wolves, and occasionally the sight, through the chinks, of a pack of them examining your log shanty in the moonlight—as if

they expected to dine before leaving—was not a very sleep-producing or pleasant midnight exercise. But the history of the township, so far as the writer is aware, does not furnish a single instance of a human being having been attacked by them.\*

Many of the most cherished stories of our youth, even those supposed for ages to have a sound historical basis, are being roughly dispelled under the light of the present day. The narratives of John Smith and Pochahontas, and of William Tell shooting the apple from his son's head, have now little left of them but romance. The thrilling stories of the ferocity of Canadian bears and wolves must, we fear, also take their place among illusions dispelled. The truth is, unless when wounded, as every hunter knows, they not only do not attack, but flee from the presence of human beings with all the speed at their command.

Speaking of bears, Galt enjoyed a genuine bear hunt in the fall of 1834; and it arose in a rather singular way. About four o'clock in the afternoon, a full-grown black bear came down the then muddy, cross-wayed road, which is now the main street of Galt. It is alleged the animal

---

\* The wolves were, for a few years, very destructive to sheep, if not enclosed at night. One night, during 1831, the wolves drove the sheep of Mr. Thos. Moffatt, immediately south of Galt, up the side of the creek, and killed no less than twenty of them. Many other farmers also lost sheep. Wolves have been known to run deer down. One afternoon a deer and a wolf ran right through the barn yard of Mr. James Cowan, Clochmohr, although persons were working in the barn at the time. The next morning the deer was found dead at the edge of the little swamp south of Mr. Cowan's house, where it had evidently been worried to death by its merciless pursuer.

laid down in a shed—that it glared through a cottage window, and played other startling pranks; but what is certain is, that the creature leisurely passed across the corner of Main and Water Streets, where the little tavern stood, and ultimately made its way up the latter street.

Such an unusual circumstance soon created a lively excitement in the little village. Several dogs starting after the daring intruder, an exciting chase took place up Water Street, in which villagers, armed with rifles, shot guns and even clubs, followed after the bear and the dogs as best they could. At that time the island in the dam, as well as the banks of the river, were densely covered with large pines, and bruin, being pressed, took to the river and swam to the island.

How this adventure ended is, unfortunately, shrouded in some uncertainty, as is frequently the case with thrilling events. Our authorities differ radically in regard to it. One declares that after searching all the trees on the island the bear could not be found. Another feels certain that bruin was discovered high up in the crotch of a huge pine, whence a bullet brought him down with a thundering crash, and that it was quite dark before the carcass was borne down in triumph to the scared little village. A third does not remember whether the bear was captured or not. They are fortunately all agreed, however, that they each took part in the chase, and that this singular circumstance\* actually occurred, which is, after all, the most material point.

---

\* Bears were unusually plentiful during the year of the cholera. In the spring of the same year (1834) one of these animals attacked a pig one Sun-



The winter was—as it continues to be in Canada—the liveliest season of the year. The snow-fall was abundant, the sleighing steady and good. Farmers could not get out their crops till the Frost King had paved the roads. This rendered business in winter lively. It also brought its special amusements. On Christmas and New Year's, and sometimes both, Galt seldom failed to have its shooting matches for turkeys and geese. The sportsmen sometimes shot through between the stumps in rear of the little tavern on Water Street, but more frequently west of the Queen's Arms, the birds or the target being placed at the foot of Dickson's hill. It was not uncommon, then, to shoot at the turkeys and geese themselves. On some occasions the birds were entirely exposed to the marksman, at a long range; at other times their bodies were placed behind a stump or log, or in such a way that only their necks and heads were exposed above the snow, and it required a skilful marksman with the rifle to hit them. These matches excited the liveliest interest.\* Then, winter had

---

day morning at the north end of the village. The intelligence spread like wildfire, and Messrs. Chapman, Shade, Burnett and quite a number of other villagers, started in pursuit, many of them carrying nothing but sticks, guns being by no means so plentiful as at the present time. Bruin was ultimately overhauled in the woods back of Moscrip's Farm, where Mr. Chapman shot him. He was borne by the party down to the village on two poles, and, according to our informant, himself among the number—it quite disturbed the services in Mr. Strang's church, as the dead animal was borne past; but it would, at that time, have been difficult to get their load into the village by any other way. Bruin was soon cut up and divided among his principal captors, and his skin for some time adorned Mr. Chapman's house, which still stands, near the Baptist Church.

\* Among the best rifle shots at these matches were, John Garrison, Andrew Mercer, Absalom Shade, Thomas G. Chapman, James Fergus, Adam Hood, and James Kay.

its visiting and sleighing parties, in short, whatever its drawbacks, and it doubtless had many, the settlers found it to be the liveliest season of the year.

The baneful custom of drinking was all but universal. The distillery was a profitable investment, even when whiskey was only 20 cents per gallon. On special occasions, such as the Galt Spring and Fall Fair days, the quantity of spirits consumed, it must be confessed, would be considered enormous nowadays. It was regarded as a want of hospitality not to offer visitors something to drink. At marriages, christenings, and, sometimes, even at funerals, the black bottle regularly made its appearance, and whilst engaged in most kinds of work, more particularly during harvest-time—which then lasted four or five weeks—workmen regarded their employer as a very mean man if a “horn” (as it was suggestively called) was not forthcoming every few hours.

Whilst the Dumfries Mills were being erected, the workmen demanded, and received, a daily supply of rum, which liquor was much in use before the distillery and “white-eye” made their appearance. Mr. Shade, who only wanted a good opportunity to refuse to conform to this custom, adroitly turned an accident which occurred, into a ground of refusal. One day one of the masons, named Devitt, partook rather too freely, and, falling from a considerable height, was taken up insensible. It was at first feared that the vital spark had fled. Devitt fortunately recovered, however, but his fall put an abrupt termination to the supply of rum. On the ground that some one might be

killed, Mr. Shade point blank refused to supply any more ; this resolve the workmen sharply criticised and murmured against, but finding Shade inexorable, their feelings found vent in a couplet, which was kept up for many weeks thereafter—

“ In Devitt’s fall,  
We sinned all.”

The opinion is frequently expressed by superficial observers, that Temperance has made little progress, and that drinking, with all the evils of its train, continues to be as rife as ever. There could hardly be a greater mistake. The locality, whose history we are now narrating, may be regarded as a not unfair criterion of the whole Province, and the change in the drinking usages of society in and around Galt, within the memory of the present generation, amounts almost to a revolution. The baneful effects of drunkenness are, alas ! lamentable enough yet, but it is believed to be no exaggeration to say, that more liquor was consumed in Galt during a Fall or Spring Fair day thirty years ago, than is sold in all the present hotels in a week.\* There is, doubtless, ample room for further improvement, but it is undoubted that habits of sobriety have greatly increased, and the social reformer has reason to thank God and take courage.

---

\* It is only fair to the settlers of Dumfries to say, that they had very active assistance on these occasions from the settlers of Puslinch and Beverly, some of whom were noted, above all others, for their drouthiness.



## CHAPTER VII.

Character of the first Settlers of Dumfries—Education and Love of Knowledge—A Debating Society forty-five years ago—The names of its members—Subjects discussed—Would an Iron Ship Sink or Swim?—The Society's Annual Dinner—Making a Haggis with Dundas oatmeal—The courage and energy of the early Pioneers—A tribute to their memory.

THE first settlers of Dumfries were generally of a superior class. With few exceptions, they had received a good education at the Parochial Schools of their native land, and many of them brought with them to Canada a thirst for knowledge which even the necessities of bush life could not eradicate. This led to very early endeavours to combine instruction with amusement during their leisure hours.

It will surprise many to learn, however, that as early as 1834, when clearings were but few and far between, and when the wolf and bear were not unfrequent visitors, that a Debating society was in full blast during the winter evenings. Such was the fact, however, and long and exciting were the discussions which took place.

The scene of these intellectual combats was the house of Mr. John Reid, after whom the *clachan* of Reidsville has been called, and who only passed away to his rest a few months ago. The members of the society were Messrs.

John Black, John Reid, Thomas and James Dalgliesh, William Veitch, Alex. Turnbull, Thomas Ritchie, William Hastie, Andrew Mathieson, James Cunningham, Andrew Elliott, John Currie, John Johnston, George Cunningham, Alex. Beckett, James Oliver, Thomas Cleg-horn, and occasionally a few others. A majority of these gentlemen still survive, and the mere recital of their names will awaken in the minds of those acquainted with them, many pleasing, and possibly some sad, reminiscences of the past.

It is needless to say that this Society was an exceedingly vigorous one, and that the questions discussed were characteristic of the time. Among them were the following: (1) Which is most benefit to mankind, Agriculture or Commerce? (2) Whether is the profane man or the hypocrite most injury to society? (3) Which is the most destructive element, fire or water? (4) Whether does wood or iron most benefit mankind? and (5) Would a ship made of iron sink or swim? The debates upon these and similar subjects, which, in the absence of candles, sometimes took place by the light of burning pine knots, were characterised by deep interest and not a little talent, and, to use the language of one of the participants: "Nothing could exceed the enjoyment of these gatherings."

The annual dinner of the Debaters was an occasion never to be forgotten. It was also held at Mr. Reid's house, but the viands were provided by the members of the Society generally. It could not boast of the *cuisine* of Del-

monico, nor of bills of fare in French and perfume. It was considered, however, a veritable feast at that time. The Society unitedly purchased a sheep. That was the first step. From this was made soup, a haggis—the oat-meal for which had to be brought from a drug store in Dundas—and roast and boiled joints. Add to this description, a few “cakes of the period,” and you have the dinner, gastronomically considered, in all its glory!

It was, however, “the feast of reason and flow of soul” which followed, that gave the occasion its principal attraction. The speeches—the songs—the hilarity—can be better imagined than described. As an illustration of the mirthful spirit which prevailed, it may be mentioned that, on one occasion, whilst ladling out huge platefuls of the steaming haggis, John Black, the chairman, vigorously recited Burns’ address to that famous dish:—

“Fair, fa your honest, sonsie face,  
Great chieftain o’ the puddin’ race;  
Aboon them a’ ye tak your place,  
Painch, tripe or thairm,  
Weel are ye wordy of a grace  
As lang’s my arm.”

Nothing could better illustrate the character of the early settlers of Dumfries than efforts at intellectual improvement under such formidable difficulties. It is not too much to say of them, that no part of Canada has been settled by a class of men of greater physical and mental energy. “None but Lowland Scotchmen would ever have cleared North Dumfries,” is a remark which

has frequently been made. This may be an exaggeration. But those who remember how heavily timbered, how stony and how swampy its rugged hills and valleys were forty years ago, will readily admit, that only the highest courage, and most indomitable energy and perseverance, could have made the township what it is to-day in the same space of time. Had their work to be done over again, could a magician's wand once more make Dumfries the tangled forest it was when this history began, we venture to say their descendants would never undertake to perform it!

The old Pioneers who came into Canada forty or fifty years ago, are our true Canadian heroes. They found the country a wilderness, and by their toil and sweat have made it blossom like the rose. They are as true heroes as those who have won a nation's gratitude on the battle field or on the deep, and should ever be held in grateful remembrance. They are, alas! rapidly passing away to "that bourne whence no traveller returns," and in a few short years more, our Dominion will be as bare of them as our forests are of their beautiful foliage during the winter's snow and ice.





## CHAPTER VIII.

Early Churches and Schools—Rev. William Stewart arrives about the Fall of 1831—First Presbyterian Church in Galt—Early Missionary Visits—Rev. James Strang—St. Andrew's Church begun in 1833—The old-fashioned Camp Meetings—Divine Service in West Dumfries—What fashionable Church-goers will be surprised to learn—"O why will ye die, O House of Israel"—The early Schools of Galt—Mr. John Gowinlock—Glimpses of School Life forty years ago.

THE want of suitable churches and schools was much felt for many years. At the present time, the minister and teacher follow closely upon the heels of settlement. Sixty years ago the case was different. It was fifteen years after Galt was founded before the services of a regularly-placed clergyman were obtained. The name of the first minister of Galt was the Rev. William Stewart, and he was sent out by the Church of Scotland as a missionary. He was lame, and delicate in health, but, to use the language of a contemporary, he possessed "a fine mind and deep piety." It was in the fall of 1831 or spring of 1832 when he arrived.

An incident which occurred shortly after Mr. Stewart's arrival in Galt well illustrates his pious character, as well as the loose notions regarding the observance of the Sabbath which had crept in among a few in the absence of religious services. Finding workmen busily engaged in



loading the Arks at the wharf one Sunday morning, Mr. Stewart sent down a short note, courteously expressing the hope that they would desist from labour on the Lord's day. The reply sent back was : "Tell Mr. Stewart if he'll mind his business, we'll mind ours!" And the loading of the Arks went on.

Churches were then unknown luxuries, and Mr. Stewart, as well as the missionaries who had previously visited the locality, found difficulty in securing suitable places in which to gather the people together for divine service. The principal places used were the old Red store, in which Mr. Stewart held the first communion of his congregation ; the storehouse of the Dumfries' Mills ; the old rough-cast school-house at the head of Main Street ; and the chair factory carried on by one Alonzo Bliss. The latter building stood on the present site of Scott's Planing mill, and it may be mentioned, *en passant*, to the credit of the handicraft of Bliss—and as possibly not altogether without relevancy to practical religion—that some of the chairs made by him are still in possession of Mr. Thomas Rich, and are as strong as ever after fifty years' wear and tear ! Mr. Stewart soon succeeded in building up a strong congregation, saw St. Andrew's Church begun and finished, but at the expiry of several years' faithful service, performed often whilst suffering under much physical weakness, he accepted a call to Demarara, in the West Indies. He was attracted to these Islands by their genial climate, but his constitution was too much shattered for recovery, and he shortly afterwards died.

Although Mr. Stewart was the first regular minister in the village, it must not be supposed that the people were entirely destitute of ministerial instruction previously. Thanks to the United Presbyterian Church of North America, missionaries were sent to the settlement as early as 1822, and divine service was conducted by these devoted men for at least a portion of almost every year.

The first clergyman who ever preached in Dumfries is believed to have been the Rev. Alex. De Noon, of Calcutta, New York, to whose congregation several of the first settlers near Branchton had belonged. A member of his church named William Forbes, had removed about 1818 to the head of Lake Ontario, where his family was attacked by what was then called lake fever—a species of fever and ague—and, sad to relate, himself, wife and nephew, all died. Mr. De Noon, accompanied by one of his elders, Mr. Donald Mackenzie, father of the late Simon Mackenzie, of Branchton, came over to Upper Canada in 1819, to look after Mr. Forbes' property, and being within thirty miles of his former parishioners, he determined to make his way through the bush to Dumfries, and see them and their new home. He remained over one Sunday, and preached in the house of Mr. Alex. Harvie, which the handful of settlers in the neighbourhood greatly enjoyed and appreciated.

At the meeting of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church, held at Pittsburg, in May, 1822, the Synod appointed the Rev. Thomas Beveridge, the Rev. Mr. Hanna, and the Rev. Alex. Bullions, "to itinerate in

Canada three months or thereabout, the expenses incurred by said Mission to be defrayed by the Synod." This Mission was a somewhat memorable one. Thirty-seven years afterwards (in 1859) Mr. Beveridge gave an interesting account in the *Evangelical Repository*, of the journeyings of Dr. Hanna and himself through the wilds of Upper Canada, all of which was done on horseback, except in such places as they had to dismount in order to get themselves and their horses through. After describing their travels on horseback from Philadelphia, their visit to Stamford, near Niagara Falls, and the difficulty of finding settlements in Upper Canada with sufficient people to preach to, Mr. Beveridge describes at some length his experience in Dumfries, and the narrative throws such a flood of light on the condition of the settlement in 1822, that the following extract therefrom will be appreciated:

"So it was at last arranged that Mr. Hanna would remain at Stamford, where he occupied the pulpit on the ensuing Sabbath, while I would endeavour to hunt up the people at Dumfries. This was a settlement consisting chiefly of Scotch Highlanders, and about eighty miles from Stamford. My route lay through Ancaster and Dundas. So far I had no difficulty in finding my way. After this I had to depend on what information I could get along the road, both about the road and the people. As I drew near to the settlement, I found that there was among them an aged Scotch gentleman by the name of Harvie, who had removed from Caledonia, New York, and was regarded as rather the leading man in the settle-

ment. I accordingly obtained directions to his house. On my arrival I knocked at the door, and heard some one in a somewhat gruff voice invite me to come in. As I entered, the old gentleman was engaged either in making or mending shoes with his back towards the door. He never looked round to see who was there, but continued busy at his work. After I had stood in silence for a few moments, he called out to me without getting up, 'What's your wull, sir?' As he appeared somewhat blunt in his manner, I replied in somewhat of the same style, by asking, 'Do you want any preaching here?' He immediately dropped both shoes and tools, and springing to his feet, exclaimed in accents which I shall never forget—'Oh, yes!'

"He and his neighbours had commenced a settlement in the forest about five years before, and had never had a sermon preached among them all that time. The nearest approach to it had been by a Unitarian, or Christian, who had once preached in their neighbourhood; but that was a kind of preaching on which they felt no disposition to attend. Here, then, was an opportunity never before enjoyed by me, to build where no other had laid a foundation since the beginning of time. Another singularity in my situation was, to be upon the very verge of the inhabited world. One of the families in which I spent a night, told me that they knew of no inhabitant between them and the North Pole.

"Mr. Harvie had been an elder in the Associate Reformed Church of Caledonia. Some of the High-

landers, if I recollect rightly, were members of the church of which Mr. De Noon, of Caledonia County, was pastor. But neither he nor they were disposed to be very fastidious about my ecclesiastical connexion. It is undoubtedly wrong to disregard any principle or usage which pertains to true religion; but long destitution of the Gospel by those who love it, tends to lessen very much the alienation which too often exists between different evangelical denominations. Mr. Harvie did not wait to ask me if I were a minister of the Associate Reformed Church, nor did the Highlanders first enquire whether I belonged to the same church with Mr. De Noon or the Establishment of Scotland, to which they had formerly belonged, but they were all ready to take me into their arms as a minister of Jesus Christ.

“ My time here was chiefly spent at the house of Mr. Harvie. An incident occurred the first night of my sojourn with him, which, though not of importance, afforded me some amusement. His cabin consisted of two apartments: the larger one for general purposes, the smaller one affording barely room for a bed on the one side, and a loom on the other, with a very narrow passage between them. This was my sleeping apartment. It was hardly to be expected that in such a new country feather beds would be very plenty. I think it not improbable that I slept on the only one in the settlement. It was not, however, as copiously filled as a straw bed beneath it. This latter was so completely stuffed that it had fairly assumed a round figure, and the feathers very

naturally divided themselves in the centre, and lay over the straw like a pair of saddlebags upon a horse. When I went to bed I poised myself as well as I could upon the centre, but with a good deal of doubt about my ability to retain my position. My fears were not groundless, for no sooner had I closed my eyes in sleep, than down I rolled upon the floor. There I lay for a little, reflecting upon my whereabouts. After going over the history of my life for some time past, and pursuing it up to the time when I had gone to bed, I came to the conclusion that I must have landed somewhere between the bed and Mrs. Harvie's loom. So I picked myself up, fixed the bed in a flatter form, and slept very comfortably for the rest of the night. This little affair afforded some amusement to the family and me in the morning.

“The people in the settlement consisted of about twelve families. With the exception of Mr. Harvie and an aged Highlander, they were young, married persons, having generally families of two or three small children. Several things respecting them were very encouraging. Although without any access to public ordinances, they had formed themselves into a society for prayer and conference, which met regularly on the Sabbath, and was well attended. Whether they had any meetings on the common days of the week, I am not now able to say. Worship was also observed in their families; and their general character, so far as I could learn, was unexceptionable.

“They were exceedingly grateful to the Associate

Synod for having sent them a missionary ; and though none of them had belonged to this branch of the Church, they were anxious to be connected with it. This, with them, was one of the most powerful arguments, that this church alone had sought them out, and taken compassion on their destitute condition. As it was doubtful whether the synod would prosecute a mission for which there seemed so little encouragement, I dissuaded them from forming a connexion with us. But the more I urged them against it the more intent they became. Accordingly, after preaching to them on the Sabbath, I appointed a day on which I would meet with them for conference and for sermon. At this meeting I explained to them, as fully as I could, the principles of the Associate Church, the testimony of which they had not seen. The aged Highlander above mentioned, after listening to me a while, would address himself to the younger members of the society in their native Gaelic, giving his views of what had been said. The result was that they gave their assent to the standards of the Associate Church, so far as they were acquainted with them, and were received into communion. After sermon, somewhere about twenty children were baptized, most of the families having two or three to present for that ordinance. This was the beginning of the large and flourishing congregation of Galt, as it is now called, for many years under the ministry of the late Rev. James Strang and now of the Rev. Robert Acheson. Dr. Hanna having arrived from Stamford, we set out together from Dumfries for Esquering, where we had heard there

was another settlement of Scotch people who might be desirous of preaching.

Two years after the visit of Mr. Beveridge, his colleague, the Rev. Alex. Bullions, visited the settlement, having previously been prevented from doing his share of the mission work in Upper Canada. Before starting out, he said to Mr. Beveridge, "You have planted the seed and I want to see how it grows!" This gentleman, afterwards well known throughout the United States as Dr. Bullions, preached for some time with great acceptance, although the services had frequently to be held in barns—and these not the warm, handsome, frame structures of the present day, but the genuine, old-fashioned article, between whose logs the day-light streamed on all sides. Two missionaries named Goodwillie—who were brothers—also one named Campbell,\* were subsequently sent to Dumfries by the

---

\* Two incidents are well recollected in connection with Mr. Campbell's missionary labours in Galt, which are so redolent of those early days, that they deserve to be recorded. Among the first settlers on the west side of the river were a good many Americans, or Yankees, as they were then invariably called. One Sabbath, when Mr. Campbell was conducting Communion service in the Dumfries' Mills, a tall Yankee from the west side entered the mill, walked through the congregation to where a number of bags of flour were standing, searched out one with his own mark on it, hoisted it on his shoulder and walked through the congregation out again without saying a word! On asking our informant if the congregation were not indignant at the intrusion, he replied, "Well, no—probably his family had nothing to eat until he took the flour home!"

On another occasion, Mr. Campbell, who was a man quick to speak and just as quick to act, was very much annoyed by a farmer's dog which had entered the mill and would persist in barking. Finding no one moved to put it out, Mr. Campbell seized the dog by the nape of the neck and the back, threw him about ten feet out of the door, and after shutting it, quietly went on with his sermon. This circumstance recalls the story of the Scottish



United Presbyterian Church, who preached in Galt in the Dumfries' Mills and other places already mentioned.

The result of the labours of these missionaries was the erection of the first church\* in Galt, the credit of which belongs to the United Presbyterian body, although others of the villagers contributed something to the expense incurred in its construction. The building was begun in 1830, on the site of the existing church belonging to that body.

The first regular pastor was the Rev. James Strang, who came to Galt within a year after the Rev. Mr. Stewart began his labours. Mr. Strang was born in Stirlingshire, Scotland, in 1793, and emigrated to the United States in the month of May, 1832. He was shortly afterwards sent over as supply to Galt by the Presbytery of Albany, and was called and ordained Minister of the church in July, 1833. The first regular precentor of the church was Mr. Duncan Shepherd, who officiated in that capacity for ten years—gratuitously. The practice of sacred song must surely be productive of longevity, for Mr. Archibald

---

minister, whose stentorian voice aroused a dog in the gallery, which, placing its feet on the book-board, barked every time the minister gave his loudest and thirillest shouts. The minister paused and ordered the beadle to remove the dog. The beadle, however, had no little fear of dogs, and was loathe to interfere. The minister had scarcely again reached his loudest notes when the dog briskly answered from the gallery, and a second time the minister peremptorily ordered the beadle to put out the troublesome animal. The beadle, rising in no amiable mood, replied: "I'll dae it, sir, but I maun say ye be-good it first yersel!"

\* The contractors for the erection of this church were Messrs. Thomas G. Chapman and Thomas Rich.

Hunter\* and Mr. Stephen Moffatt, who officiated to oblige the congregation before Mr. Shepherd's selection, continue to enjoy, in company with the latter gentleman, a green old age.

Mr. Strang was a man rather under the medium height, dark-complexioned, with a well-formed head and face. He was quiet in speech and manner, but possessed great earnestness of purpose, and strong opinions on political as well as religious subjects. He soon became a warm sympathizer with the movements going on throughout the Province in favour of Responsible Government and Religious equality, and though too zealous as a minister of Christ to allow anything to interfere with his usefulness, the impress of his opinions on affairs of State was marked among his congregation, and may be traced even to the present day.

After nearly a quarter of a century's faithful service, Mr. Strang died in Galt on the 22nd October, 1857, highly respected and much regretted by the whole community.†

---

\* Since this paragraph was written, Mr. Hunter has been called away. He died suddenly on the 7th January, 1880, in his 85th year.

† The writer said of Mr. Strang (see *Dumfries Reformer*, Oct. 28th, 1857) at the time of his death:—"Zealous, earnest and a living example of the truths of Christianity, Mr. Strang's ministrations were productive of much good. He never shone as an orator, and made no pretensions to the ostentatious display of modern pulpit eloquence. His sermons were delivered more in the style of a loving father instructing a happy family circle, but were carefully written expositions of the Word of God. Few excelled Mr. Strang in expounding the Scriptures, which he seems to have made a particular subject of study, and which he spoke with earnest simplicity and truth. The meekness with which he submitted to the Divine Will in all his bereavements, and the confidence and happiness he experienced while

He was married three times, and left behind him several sons and daughters, one of whom—now Colonel John Strang—served with distinction as an officer during the Civil War in the United States, and now holds a responsible official legal position in Genesee County, New York State.\*

St. Andrew's Church, which was deemed an architectural model in early times, was begun in 1833.† It made very slow progress, however. It stood with only the frame up during the whole of the succeeding winter, and the prosecution of the work was again arrested by the fearful visitation of cholera during the succeeding summer. Not until 1835 was it seated and

---

passing through 'the dark valley of the shadow of death,' afford strong hopes that while earth and all its vanities were passing from view, he could justly appropriate to himself the words of Pope :—

“ The World recedes ; it disappears,  
 Heaven opens on my eyes ;  
 My ears with sounds seraphic ring ;  
 Lend, lend your wings ; I mount ! I fly !  
 O Grave ! where is thy victory ?  
 O Death ! where is thy sting.”

\* Mr. Strang's successor as Minister of the United Presbyterian Church in Galt, was the Rev. Robert Acheson, of Galena, Illinois. He was inducted on the 17th June, 1858, and continued pastor of the Church until the year 1873—a period of 15 years. On his leaving his charge in Galt, Mr. Acheson was presented with a purse containing \$500 and a most flattering address. His family also received presents. He is now pastor of the United Presbyterian Church at Stamford, near Niagara Falls.

† Messrs. Angus Stewart and Abraham Walker were the contractors for St. Andrew's Church. The former was killed, one summer evening in 1848, by falling from a limb of a tree on the hill south of Craigie Lea. Walker afterwards returned to New York State, where he formerly resided, and survived until the year 1877.

finally completed. The first bell\* which ever awoke the echoes of the surrounding hills, was placed upon the tower the following year, and Sunday after Sunday, for nearly half a century since, it has seldom failed to send forth its joyous announcement that the worship of God was about to begin :—

“ Oh ring, glad bells, ring glad and sweet,  
The song the ages shall repeat ;  
Which angels sing on Sabbath still,  
Of ‘ Peace on earth, to men good will.’ ”

The attendance upon religious ordinances, after proper places of worship were obtained, was large and regular. The locality has always been conspicuous for this, particularly on the Sabbath, which was in earlier times, with very few exceptions, observed with a Scottish strictness quite in contrast with modern ideas.

Occasionally, during the summer, when the woods had donned their mantle of green, the monotony was broken by a camp meeting. These gatherings were conducted in very primitive style. Sometimes no preparations were made except drawing in a waggon to an open part of the bush, standing in which the minister or lay brother preached, the people standing or sitting around on the ground as best they could ; on more important occasions, an enclosure was made with evergreen boughs around the sides, a small platform erected for the speakers, and a few temporary seats furnished. These meet-

---

\* St. Andrew's Church bell was placed in position by Messrs. John Manson and Duncan Shepherd, in 1836.

ings generally originated with some zealous Methodist preacher from a neighbouring station, for the settlement was too intensely Calvinist in those days to make a settled Arminian charge a hopeful enterprise.

The camp meetings were generally held in the woods, a little east of Knox Church manse. That part of the town was then covered with heavy pines, and except a large mound-shaped stone structure, erected by one familiarly known as "Wattie" Jackson—who hoped to make a fortune by burning charcoal—it contained neither buildings nor clearance. There was little underbrush, and, taken altogether, these woods were attractive as a ground for camp meetings. They brought together many people of all classes from the surrounding districts, some attracted by the impressiveness of divine worship amidst the grand, old, winding avenues of towering, sombre pines, others by the novelty of the scene or desire for amusement.

In parts of the township too remote for the people to come conveniently to Galt, religious services on Sunday were generally observed.

The settlement between Cedar Creek and what is now the Village of Ayr, as we saw in the last chapter, was an unusually intelligent and active one. They frequently held service in Mr. William Currie's log barn, and during the winter of 1834, the first congregation formed in the locality was begun in this very place by the late Rev. George Murray,\* and sixteen members. This was the

---

\* The Rev. George Murray afterwards became minister of one of the Presbyterian churches in Blenheim. Long after being superannuated, he

beginning of what is now Stanley Street Church in Ayr. The fashionable churchgoers of to-day will probably be surprised to learn, that these services were held not only in barns, but without fires, and this, too, as we have seen, during the rigours of winter!

The succeeding year (1835), the zeal of this small but devoted congregation was manifested by the erection of a log church, the site of which was adjoining the graveyard which still remains to be seen on the Ayr road. This locality had then very few clearings. An eye witness of the scene describes the raising of this building as having been "a great time." As the church was regarded as a public benefit, the raising "Bee" was an unusually large one, and it may justly be remarked that, though Solomon's temple was doubtless grander, it was not erected by more zealous hearts or willing hands.

An incident occurred before the raising was completed, which was characteristic and worthy of being narrated. The shades of evening were beginning to gather before the last plate or log was hoisted into its place, and the workmen were becoming tired after so much heavy lifting. Twice they tried to lift this plate to its place and failed. Greatly discouraged, some hesitated about a third attempt, when the only Irishman present, in rough and ready style, sang out, "Oh, why will ye die, O! House of Israel?" After a hearty laugh at this truly Hibernian

---

occasionally preached in Union Church, Galt, and elsewhere. His discourses were marked by much ability, and were listened to with great acceptance until his latest years.

sally, the third attempt was made, and the last plate shoved clean on top of the building. This achievement, after so many failures, was hailed with three rousing cheers, which resounded through the darkening forest until lost in plaintive echoes.

The establishment of schools throughout the settlement proceeded slowly at first. After much time and trouble spent over the matter, it is impossible to say with absolute certainty who was the first teacher in Galt, or in what building the first teaching took place.

The first school erected by the villagers was the result of a "Bee," and was a diminutive log building, situated where the Merchants' Bank now is. A Miss Dobbyn, of Garafraxa, is said to have been the first teacher in it. Some time after this, the late Mr. James Dixon, sr., commenced a school in a little log building at the west end of the bridge. Mr. Dixon had been a teacher in Scotland, at a place called "The Crag," up the Yarrow river. Those acquainted with Selkirkshire will remember it as being just across the stream from the Ettrick Shepherd's residence. Not finding bush farming altogether to his liking, Mr. Dixon naturally took to the ferule.

The old rough-cast school-house at the head of Main Street was erected in 1832. Its first teacher was Mr. James Milroy, who removed to Iowa in 1856, and the second, Mr. William McColl, who taught until Rebellion times. With this school, however, must ever be associated the name of Mr. John Gowinlock, who was its sole teacher for many years. He was an excellent specimen

of the old-fashioned dominie, before the days of County Boards and periodical examinations. His teaching was eminently practical. He knew what the birch was for, and he applied it. He frittered away no time on physiology, botany, or philosophical abstractions. He professed to teach the three R's, and he did it, and did it well.

It is not a little singular, notwithstanding the immense superiority claimed for our schools of to-day, that many of Mr. Gowinlock's scholars compare in point of education very favourably with those turned out under our much-vaunted modern system? May the secret of this not lie in the fact, that whilst the attention of scholars in those days was strictly centered upon the essential requisites of education, their studies are now so numerous and diffuse, as to prevent that mastery of each subject, without which instruction is of little practical use, and readily passes from the memory?

Many of the present farmers\* of Dumfries residing near Galt, were educated at this school. They attended chiefly in the winter, their assistance during the summer months being required on the farm. During December, January,

---

\* Among those remembered as attending Mr. Gowinlock's school, are Messrs. David, John and James Potter, Andrew Taylor, George and Walter Ford, James and Alexander Wilson, Gideon and John Scott, William and Thomas Wallace, Thomas and James Lake, the Barries, Walter and William Scott (Sandy Knowe), Richard Common, George Cowan, Samuel Huber, Adam and James Warnock, Alexander and James Young, James and George Hogg, the McPhersons, George Graham, the Grohs, now residing near Waterloo Village, Peter and Ralph Marshall, William and Gavin Goodall, John Henry Watts, George Graham, James and John Lee, the McElroys, Peter Sproat, John George Reid, the Meikles, the Richs, Thomas Cowan, James McFeiggan, John Allan, James Ker, Robert and John Longan, John



February and March, the school was filled to overflowing. Mr. Gowinlock was then in his glory, and everything manifested fresh life and vigour.

It must not be supposed, however, that this school did not suffer from some drawbacks, as compared with those of the present day. A few of these may be mentioned. There were no caretakers then to heat and sweep the room. The boy who first got to school was expected to put on the fire! The first girl to arrive had to water the floor and sweep out! These attractions—the reader may be surprised to learn—hardly contributed to promote early attendance. Mr. Gowinlock lived on his farm between Galt and Blair, and when there was a snow

---

Turnbull, Hugh Cant, Walter S. and William Burnett, the Johnsons, Duncan Shepherd, William and Robert Veitch, Charles McCarty, and David Morrison, who lived with the Potter family.

“ Some are in the church-yard laid,  
Some sleep beneath the sea ;  
But few are left of our old class,  
Excepting you and me.  
And when our time shall come, Tom,  
And we are called to go ;  
I hope we'll meet with those we loved,  
Just twenty years ago.”

This notice of Mr. Gowinlock's scholars, would be defective did we fail to mention the name of the once noted *vaurien*—Nick Walton! For truant-playing, fighting and mischief-making of every description, it is doubtful if any boy ever excelled Nick, and constant whipping only seemed to whet his seemingly irresistible tendency to play mischievous tricks on his teachers and companions. His pranks would take up a whole chapter to narrate. He was a regular Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn rolled into one, but with a stronger spice of wickedness. It was once reported that Nick had turned a preacher, and it is possible that his ending is, or was, better than his beginning. Who knows!

storm over night—which was more frequent then than now—his walk of two miles through the snow was apt to put him late, and sometimes a little out of humour. On rare occasions, too, during the hot summer afternoons, he was known to take a little nap—but then, the occasions were rare, and the nap a little one !

Many other glimpses of early school life in Galt might be added, but they would extend our narrative too much. The foregoing reminiscences bring out a few of the drawbacks of the first Public School, and serve as a background to throw into bolder relief Mr. Gowinlock's undoubted success in imparting a sound, practical education to numerous scholars under somewhat difficult circumstances.





## CHAPTER IX.

Galt in the Spring of 1834—Its principal Citizens—New arrivals—Dr. Miller—Improving prospects of the Settlement—A travelling Menagerie visits the Village—A fearful calamity comes swiftly and fatally down—Terrible ravages of the Cholera—Graphic description by Mr. Alex. Burnett, written at the time—Painful incidents of the fearful ordeal—The Village left a pitiful scene of mourning and woe.

THE spring of 1834 found Galt an active village of about two hundred and fifty inhabitants, with a gradually developing country around it, and improving prospects. Besides Messrs. Dickson and Shade, the following are remembered among the citizens of that day:—

Messrs. William Stewart, minister; James Strang, minister; Thomas Rich, builder; Thos. G. Chapman, builder; Andrew Malcom, cabinet-maker; Joseph Purvis, blacksmith; John Legge, shoemaker; Alonzo Bliss, chair-maker; Paul G. Huffman, chair maker; James Welch, farmer; Samuel Hogg, clerk; John Hall (afterwards of Ayr); Thomas Turley, (with Shade); William Shepherd, carpenter; Henry McCrum, clerk; William Kay, waggon maker; John Cheeseman, carpenter; H. G. Barlow, inn-keeper; Jarvis Barraclough, miller; Robert Cranston, farmer; James K. Andrews, merchant; James Fergus, merchant; James Smith, saddler; Archibald Hunter, blacksmith; John Veitch, plasterer; James Harris, brewer;

Augustus Harris, brewer; David Shiel, farmer; John Warnock, miller; James C. Longan, tailor; Andrew Goodell, teamster; John Garrison, fiddler; Robert Turnbull, tailor; Joseph Simmonds, wool carder; Matthew Palmer, workman; William Wyllie Wilkinson, pail maker; John Davison, butcher\* and Andrew Scott, machinist.

Besides these gentlemen† there had been recently added to the population three others, who afterwards became closely associated with its history: these were, Dr. Robert Miller, Walter H. Benn, and Alex. Burnett.

Dr. Miller was born in the parish of Stewarton, in Ayrshire, Scotland. He was educated at Andrew's College and the University of Glasgow, where he took the degree

\* Davison was the only butcher in the place in 1834, and he and his sister (both old) lived in the log village, as that portion of the suburbs was called. His old log house is still standing. His system of business was to receive applications for meat, but not until the demand was equal to the carcass, would he take the hazard of buying and killing an animal. The time of killing was generally made known some time previously, so that those who made application for meat could attend and take it away. This primitive mode of doing business lasted for years.

† All these persons were residents of Galt during the cholera or immediately before it. Three or four of them may have taken up lands shortly before that event. For instance, John Hall and David Shiel were employed by Mr. Shade in the Distillery for a considerable time, but the latter, at least, had removed to his farm in West Dumfries, before the cholera broke out. Several old residents came to Galt in the fall of 1834. Their names have been placed in a subsequent list. Whilst absolute exactness cannot be expected when the memories of informants so frequently differ, it is believed, nevertheless, that few or none are incorrectly placed, although some may have been forgotten.

There are very few survivors at the present day amongst those mentioned in the above list. The following persons, still living in Galt, were in the village during the cholera, now over forty-five years ago: Mrs. James Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Malcom, Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Burnett, Thos. Rich, John Veitch, and Andrew Scott.

of Master in Surgery in 1832. He arrived in Quebec on the 10th June of the same year, and came gradually westward, looking for a suitable place to commence practice. At Toronto, he was detained nearly four weeks by an attack of fever, and hearing in the meantime that a physician was needed in Dumfries, he determined to have a look at the place. He came up by way of Ancaster, Brantford, and Paris. A letter, received from the Doctor, says:—

“Between the prairie and Galt, I think there were only two houses in sight of the road. I arrived at Galt about the 18th August, 1832. The appearance of the village was very discouraging. So far as I remember, there were only about twenty-six buildings in all, including the flour-mill, saw-mill, distillery, two stores, hotel, school-house, and two blacksmith shops. With regard to the number of houses, I am writing from recollection, and may not, therefore, be altogether correct. But I think I am pretty near the mark.”

The Doctor came, saw, and remained. In settling in Galt, he found he had a wide field all to himself. Dr. Stimson had practised in the village for a short time, but had gone to London, whence he afterwards removed to St. George. Except Dr. Cattermole, who settled in Guelph about the same time that Dr. Miller came to Galt, there was no medical man nearer than Dundas, Brantford, or Woodstock.

Through his skill and success, Dr. Miller became widely known as a physician, and for many years his two shaggy

French ponies—one white and the other black—were among the most noted “institutions” of the village. The white one, which was universally known as Sawbones, had an unusually rough and shaggy coat, but had the merit of being able to “rack” with astonishing speed. In 1850, Dr. Miller took the degree of M. D. at the University of New York, and in 1860 became a Member of the Royal College of Physicians, London. After making a competency, he retired and took up his residence permanently in London, England, but, until quite recently, retained property in Galt, and every few years has returned for a brief space to the scene of his early practice and success.

The easy-going, genial, oratorical Benn—with his “warmest side of the fire,” and the “biggest potato in the pot”—who does not remember him? He was a native of the County of Kerry, Ireland, and came to Galt in 1832, as foreman in Mr. James Smith’s (a brother of Sidney and Henry Smith) harness and shoe shop. Having walked from Dundas up through Beverly swamp, he put up at a little inn in the neighbourhood of what is now the village of Sheffield. Bright and early the next morning he set out for Galt. Reaching it shortly after sunrise, few of the villagers were astir, and Benn crossed the bridge and was making for Dickson’s hill, thinking the bulk of the village must be on the opposite side of the steep, and could not be seen.

Here he encountered Mr. Archibald Hunter, the village blacksmith, whose smithy stood at the east end of the bridge, a little north of Lutz’s drug store. Hunter

had sallied out without his cap, to take a breath of the morning air.

“The top of the morning to you,” said Benn, in that off-hand way for which he was remarkable, and without waiting for an answer to his salutation, followed it up with the question, “How far is it to Galt?”

Hunter eyed the new comer for a moment, and seeing he was in earnest, replied, “*Hoot, toot, man, there’s Galt ahint you.*” Benn’s surprise at this unexpected answer may be better imagined than described.

Mr. Burnett, who was destined to take an active and leading part in the growing political movements of the period, was born in Aberdeen, Scotland. He emigrated in 1832, spent about eighteen months in New York State, and then, crossing over to Niagara, determined to make his way to Guelph, which was beginning to attract much attention. On his way thither, he remained over night in Galt, and being offered employment in Smith’s shoe shop, already referred to, he determined to accept of it. He has ever since resided in Galt or its neighbourhood.

It was not until 1830 that the chief influx of settlers into Dumfries took place. During that and three or four succeeding years, the township filled up rapidly. These circumstances had their effect upon the village, whose prospects had never previously looked so promising as in the spring of 1834. As the summer came in, the buoyant feeling continued. Promising crops, new settlers, new buildings—these, and other circumstances, seemed to indicate a brighter era for Galt, when suddenly, like a bolt

out of a clear sky, the most terrible calamity which ever befell the locality came swiftly and fatally down upon its ill-fated inhabitants.

Amusements in the nature of travelling companies were then almost unknown in the new settlements of Upper Canada, and the announcement that a menagerie of wild beasts would exhibit in Galt on the 28th July, caused universal interest far and near. For nearly twenty miles around, the coming exhibition was talked about, until it became the topic of absorbing interest.

When the day arrived, there was—considering the circumstances—a large attendance, people coming from Waterloo, Beverly, Woolwich, Blenheim, and other places more distant than could have been attracted by anything less exciting than a menagerie was in those early times. The day proved intensely warm, in fact a regular “scorcher,” and from all accounts, the collection of wild animals was meagre, and the dens and their occupants extremely filthy. The odor was so marked as to detract seriously from the comfort of the audience, and the entertainment was hardly over, when rumours began to prevail, that the company had brought the much-dreaded disease of cholera with them to the village.

The report first arose from the illness of one of the showmen. He had been brought to the village a day or two before the menagerie arrived, and fears that his complaint was cholera induced some of the villagers to go to Mr. Shade, who was the only magistrate at the time, and ask him to consider whether the exhibition should not be





MR ALEXANDER BURNETT.



prevented. Mr. Shade, however, doubted whether he had the power to do so, and seemed, besides, rather disinclined to interfere with an exhibition which appeared to add importance to the village, and would certainly cause the circulation of a good deal of money. After examining the showman, Dr. Miller pronounced his complaint to be real Asiatic cholera. Shortly afterwards, the Doctor said to Mr. William Buchanan, of Branchton, who had been in at the show from the country: "Go home! You'll hear of this. That man's dying of Asiatic cholera!"

His fears, unfortunately, proved too true. That frightful plague, in its worst form, had been introduced by the menagerie, and already the seeds of death were developing in many of those who had attended the fatal entertainment.

The exhibition took place on Monday, and by Wednesday night and Thursday, the cholera was raging with almost unparalleled malignity and fatality. The harrowing scenes which occurred can never be erased from the memories of those who passed through them. The agony of the stricken, the swiftness of death, the rude board coffins and the hasty burials—in some cases within a few minutes after the last breath was drawn—turned the recently hopeful village into a very charnel-house, from which many fled in despair, whilst all but a few were paralysed with fear.

Chiefly before Friday night, but certainly within a week, *nearly one-fifth of all the villagers had fallen victims to the plague*, whilst not a few from the country,

who were present at the exhibition, had also succumbed to the ruthless destroyer. Dr. Miller, who had seen one hundred persons per day die of cholera in Montreal, declared that "he had never seen a place of the same population as Galt suffer so much, nor the disease appear so virulent." Such wide-spread mortality, in so small a community, and in so brief a space of time, recalled the ravages of the plague in London, and is almost unprecedented on this continent.

The whole circumstances connected with this dire event in the history of Galt were graphically described by Mr. Alex. Burnett, in a letter written at the time to a gentleman named Mitchell, in Hamilton, whose acquaintance he had made six months before, when on his way to take up his residence in the village. The following is Mr. Burnett's letter, which is doubly interesting in consequence of its being the production of an eye-witness, and written at the time :

"Were I able to give you any idea of the state of things in Galt during the cholera, I would, but do not find myself equal to the task. Yet having once begun, I shall make a feeble effort ; what is wanting you can fill up for yourself.

"On Monday, the 28th July, all was life, and each was on the tiptoe of expectation. There was to be, and was, exhibited such a collection of wild animals as never was in these parts before. Towards noon, the steady and honest Dutchmen of Waterloo, began to canter into the village, with their well-fed horses, and thrifty wives, attended by plainly-dressed, chubby-cheeked children. Dumfries, from its utmost verge, poured in its tribute of sturdy Scotch, studded here and there with a whiskey-loving wight, who was glad to

make the show his pretended errand, although he in truth only wanted something to wet his wizen. Beverly, Blenheim, and more distant townships, sent in their sight-seeing sons and daughters.

“ In the afternoon all was bustle and confusion, nothing doing, nothing saying, but—‘ Have you been in at the beasts !’ ‘ What a beast the Lion is !’ and ‘ how large that there Bear !’ and ‘ what creatures the monkeys are !’ So passed the afternoon, with now and then an enquiry about the showman who had come to Galt sick with the cholera ; but this was hushed down lest it might injure the Show, or hurt the stir of the tavern. Things went along until the gathering dispersed, the sun setting on many a son of intemperance, rolling homewards under the influence of the ‘ wee drap o’ barley bree.’ Those more regardless of their home, and equally regardless of themselves, hung about the tavern and the village, while by their joint efforts the loud voice of mirth had given way to the rude and boisterous roar of riot. Such was the state of things when I bade one and all of them ‘ good-night,’ went to bed and slept soundly.

“ Tuesday was just like other days, with various conjectures as to the value of the establishment of beasts, what cash they might have got, and so on.

“ Wednesday came, and with it a certain dubious expression might be seen on the countenances of some of the villagers. Others, thoughtless of the lurking foe, followed their usual avocations. Before noon there were to be seen clusters of three and four together, whispering their doubts and fears, even then afraid to speak the name of the horrid pest aloud. The Doctor of the village appeared to be more than usually busy, by his pony standing by hours at his door, saddled and girth unslackened. Soon after noon the secret was out ! The cholera, with all its horror and all its malignity, was upon us. Two persons had died, and several were sick. By sundown three more had fallen, and others were victims to the scourge. Fear now began to lay her timorous hand upon us, and each thought he felt symptoms that he never felt before. Our sleep

was unsound and unrefreshing. Long and dreary was the night, while with doubt and anxiety the morning came.

“That (Thursday) morning the sun rose upon nine of our neighbours and acquaintances who had settled all their worldly affairs and paid the debt of nature. These were unburied, and yet lay as death had met them. Now was the hour of trial. The arm of industry became powerless, and the hum of business ceased to meet the ear. Nought was heard but the sound and stroke of the coffin-maker’s hammer, as he nailed the rude and unsmoothed boards together, that the dead might be gathered to their fathers who had gone before them. Even the noise of the waggons to and from the burying-ground, struck you as having something ominous in the sound they made. Now and then your attention was arrested by the echo of the distant trampling of a coming horse, whose lathered sides and expanded nostrils showed his headlong haste, while the anxious features and sunken visage of the rider, told he was no messenger of fun, or heedless follower of a thoughtless frolic. He came for the assistance of the Doctor, but alas ! how vain ! The demon of Death, now triumphing in his strength, and glorying in the number of his victims, laughed to scorn the healing art, and bade defiance to the powers of drug or medicine. Yet still, glad to cling to hope, the Doctor was sought and sent for.

“So passed Thursday, and the sun of that day had not set when the last of thirty-five unceremonious burials had taken place in the neighbouring burying-ground—those from our village and suburbs in the short space of thirty-six hours ! Twilight came, when all who had a chance reluctantly prepared for bed—yes, reluctantly, for, believe me, each had a secret dread and heart-felt fear that ere to-morrow’s dawn, he or she should also be numbered with the dead. The night passed slow and restless.

“With the morning of Friday, those who were first stirring were afraid and yet anxious to know what had been the events of the last few hours. On enquiry, glad was the heart when it was heard that few comparatively had been attacked, and fewer dead. Hope,

the steady friend of man, again beamed in our eyes, while our hearts beat high with exultation. It seemed as if the monster Pestilence, had gorged itself with the number of its victims, and fatigued its energies with the work of destruction. Those who were under its power appeared to have greater strength to struggle for existence. It was less quick in its action and operation. Yet, steady to its purpose, and unrelenting in its grasp, some near and dear ones were suddenly attacked, and unexpectedly carried off, which cases, as they occurred, nearly extinguished the rising flame of hope. Nevertheless, it was abating.

“Saturday, Sunday and Monday it sought its prey and found them, although fewer in number. Two or three showed symptoms of recovery, and two actually recovered. From out among the little circle of villagers, thirty-three had gone to their long homes. Among these was the smiling infant, the man of grey hairs and experience, the stripling just budding into manhood, and the maiden blooming into woman’s state, just beginning to be conscious of her power and influence over the rougher part of creation ; the man of steady habits and sedate behaviour, with the intemperate and the profligate, fell easy victims to the dreadful and afflictive malady.

“Oh, my dear sir, this was the time to divest us of our high-flying notions of our consequence and importance. This was the time I felt the curse of being a bachelor. My fears and anxieties were centred in myself, and became a burden to me, bearing me almost to despondency and despair. I was alone and none to care for, and no one to care for me, or such as me. The husband and the father divided his cares and his fears amongst his family. He saw in his wife a sympathizing nurse in sickness, and an interested friend whispering hope in approaching death. His wife, in turn, looked to him as her protector and friend, while the children, who were conscious of their danger, looked to each and both for succour and support. Life’s cares are said to be comforts. I believe it. Happy he who has one who is sharer of his joys and partner of his sorrows !”

This graphic picture of the cholera in Galt, however sad and sombre, comes short of the dread reality. The mournful scenes which occurred, especially during Thursday and Friday, those who have survived can scarcely yet recall without a shudder. The violence of the disease was unprecedented. In some instances death occurred within two, and even in little over one hour after the first symptoms. An aged negro named Milo, who was hostler in the hotel, was among the first victims;\* but Mr. Andrew Simpson, who then occupied it, and his niece, were soon after stricken down. There were five or six persons all lying dead in this single building at one time.

This was the worst infected place in the village, and one Marshall, a cooper, undertook, for a consideration, to clean it out. Passing down the street some time afterwards, Mr. Burnett called to Marshall that he had not burned Simpson's clothes, which were lying on a wheelbarrow in the yard. Not much more than an hour afterwards, on returning, Mr. Burnett was saluted by Walter H. Benn, who was then standing on the bridge, spade in hand:

---

\* As the names of the victims of the cholera possess a melancholy interest, particularly to the older inhabitants, we insert such of the names as those persons still surviving are able to remember. They are as follows: Mrs. James K. Andrews, Harriet Rich, Joseph Aussam, James Maxwell, a clerk in Fergus & Andrew's store; Dorothy Marshall, Andrew Simpson and niece, Alonzo Bliss, Mrs. Archibald Hunter, Macgregor, Hunter's apprentice; the brothers Lamberton, Thomas Keachie, William Shepherd, wife and son, Daniel Forbes, one Vincent, a little daughter of H. G. Barlow, J. Willits, Milo, the coloured hostler, and Marshall the cooper. Many deaths from cholera also took place throughout Dumfries. Near Branchton, Alexander Simpson, three of his family, and his brother-in-law, were all buried from the same house.]



“Come on, come on!” said Benn. “Another of our fellow mortals gone! Death was written on your forehead and mine before we were born!”

Then, turning on his heel, he started for the graveyard to prepare a place for poor Marshall, who had been attacked and died during Mr. Burnett's absence of a little over an hour. It was not uncommon to meet persons before dinner and learn they were buried before night, and the cry of everyone became, “Who next?”

Mr. Strang's church was stripped of its temporary board seats, and turned into a hospital, where as many as possible of those attacked were taken. Dr. Miller was soon overdone with work, and at his solicitation, one Dr. McQuarrie came to Galt and rendered good service. Most valuable assistance was also given by Dr. John Scott, then a young man of about twenty-one years of age, who, with his father and other members of his family, had fortunately arrived from Roxboroughshire, Scotland, about ten days previously. He was a brother of Mr. Andrew Scott, of Galt, and afterwards became widely known in Berlin as a skilful practitioner and public-spirited citizen.

Dr. Scott was one of the most fearless of the little band who fought the cholera inch by inch, with their lives in their hands, until it finally disappeared. Besides those whose names have been already mentioned, Messrs. Thos. G. Chapman, Thomas Rich, Alonzo Bliss, Andrew Malcom, Robert Cranston, James Welch, Thomas Shannon and Joseph Simmons (a brother-in-law of Chapman's) rendered very active assistance. Mr. Chapman's team continued

all one night carting off the dead, and at times some of those who were not terrified by the cholera, were so worn out with fatigue and excitement in preparing graves, attending the sick, and removing the dead to their final resting-place, that they fell asleep at their posts.

An incident well illustrates the condition of terror into which the little community was thrown. The remedy which was generally used for the cholera was brandy, to which was added in most cases, certain drugs which increased its fiery, heating qualities. For some time almost every family kept a bottle of this mixture ready for use.

One day a well-known citizen ran hurriedly up to Mr. Rich's door, declared he had the cholera, and excitedly asked for the medicine. The applicant was in the habit of using stimulants, and Mr. Rich gave him, therefore, an unusually large dose, fearing that otherwise no effect would be produced. Before he could return across the lot, the sufferer fell down on the grass, roaring and groaning, not so much with the cholera, as with the intense burning sensation and feeling of intoxication stealing over him. The remedy was a severe one, but the gentleman, who still lives in a neighbouring county, highly respected and in comfortable circumstances, frequently declared that nothing but this immense dose of brandy mixture saved his life.

Some stories long current about the cholera cannot be traced to any reliable source. But the floating rumour that four men who died of the pest were buried in one grave, near the eastern end of the stone bridge on the

macadamised road, north of the town, is perfectly true. Two of those buried were named Lamberton and Vincent, and among those who took part in the burial was Alonzo Bliss, to whom reference has already been made. On returning home, Bliss said to his wife, "If cholera is catching, I will take it." This prediction, alas, proved too true. The next morning he was dead.

The particular locality of the quadruple grave is marked by the two tall pine trees which stand opposite to each other like sentinels, on the road side. Opinions differ as to which side of the road the grave is on, but the weight of testimony favours the view that it is near the foot of the tree on the south side.

Such were the ravages of the cholera in 1834 in Galt and vicinity. On that fatal morning the menagerie entered the village, its future had never previously looked more hopeful; within a few days it was nearly decimated, and a pitiful scene of mourning and woe. For several weeks the feelings of the villagers bordered on despair, but time—the healer of the deepest sorrow—came ultimately to their relief, and although nothing could ever obliterate from the minds of eye-witnesses, this dark and terrible chapter in the history of Galt, before hoary Christmas came round—such are the vicissitudes of human feeling—a stranger might have come into the village without finding anything to remind him of the fearful death-scathing through which it had passed.



## CHAPTER X.

From the time of the Cholera to the Rebellion—The population—Business of Galt improving—Break-up of the old-fashioned Mercantile monopoly—Early prices—The Dutchman's one per cent—Richard Irwin—Names of prominent Galtonians who arrived during this period—Rev. John Bayne—A great man who prefers the backwoods of Canada to the intellectual centres of Europe—Erection of the King's Arms Hotel and other ancient land-marks—Early Musicians—Construction of the Macadamized Road—Galt dam—Unrealized projects.

DURING the three years which succeeded the events narrated in the last chapter, from 1834 to 1837, Galt at last began to manifest signs of more rapid growth and prosperity. Not that there were no drawbacks;\* indeed, the cholera was not long over, when a fire mysteriously broke out in a little shop adjoining the hotel, erected by one Alderman as a store, and consumed them both. During this period, however, a great change was passing over the whole Province. It was beginning to awaken out of the torpor which had so long enthralled it, and Dumfries and Galt were among the first localities which experienced the change.

Even at the close of 1834, however, there were very few buildings upon Main Street, and the roadway was

---

\* It was suspected that fears of the cholera breaking out again with the return of hot weather, had something to do with this burning, but no evidence has been discovered to support this rumour.

rough, and generally very muddy, particularly in the vicinity of Johnson's pond (which stood beneath and in the rear of the shops now occupied by Messrs. Taylor, Smith and Robinson) and the "corduroy" at the south end of it. A description of the appearance of Main Street at this time, appears in the letter received from Mr. Adam Ainslie which has been already adverted to, and we make use of his apt phraseology:—

"When I came to Galt in November, 1834, Main Street was defined by a dry stone dyke, running down each side from the pond at the creek. On the north side there was H. G. Barlow's tavern (now the Galt Hotel), opposite to the entrance to J. K. Andrews' Grist Mill, now Gavin Hume's. Next to the tavern was a house occupied by Isaac Sours (no doubt Scrimger's Feed Store,) who acted then as a hatter. There was a gate in the wall where Ainslie Street connects with Main Street. On the south side of the street, whereabout Strong's and Fleming's stores stand, there was an enclosed yard, with a barn in it. Here Mr. Shade kept his working oxen, &c. At the corner was Mr. Shade's White store, which was called the Cash store, and on the opposite side, where the Commercial Buildings now are, there was the Red store, also his, which was a Credit one. About half way down from the tavern, there was a shocking mud-hole, which foot passengers had to cross on a plank since it extended across the street, and there was no getting around it. These were all the buildings on Main Street, except the old school-house at the edge of the pond, which was being plastered."

This is not a very flattering picture of what is now the principal street in Galt, but it is, no doubt, a faithful representation of what it was just after the calamity of the cholera, and before the subsequent revival took place. Until after 1834, indeed, it was not the principal thoroughfare. The road chiefly used prior to this time, took down past the Dumfries Mills to Chapman Street, some of the early buildings of which still remain, and which was the principal thoroughfare of the village for many years.

Until the beginning of the period we are now describing, mostly all the settlers had been largely dependent upon Mr. Dickson and Mr. Shade. The business of the place was almost exclusively controlled by these gentlemen. Almost everyone was indebted to them more or less. They owned all the lands except what they chose to sell. There existed, practically, a monopoly in the mercantile line. With the exception of the burned shop, whose business was but trifling, there were but two stores: the Red or Credit store near the bridge, and the White or Cash store, which was erected in 1832 immediately opposite, on the corner where the Wilkins' stone block now stands. Mr. Shade was for many years the sole merchant in the village. When his business became too extended for one person's attention, he admitted his nephew, Mr. James Fergus,† as a partner, and

---

† Mr. Fergus was an enthusiastic rifle shot, and several stories of his adventures were long current. One evening about the darkening, a bear seized one of Mr. Dickson's pigs and made off with it. The pig—as pigs always do when frightened—squealed its loudest and shrillest, and attention being attracted, Bruin was seen carrying him off into the pine woods

ultimately sold out to Fergus and Andrews his entire mercantile interest.

It was impossible to obtain building sites for stores for many years. Some persons from Hamilton tried and failed. It is said that the Hon. Adam Ferrie, who subsequently built up a large business in Preston—which for a time became a dangerous rival—was prevented from locating in Galt on this account. The ruling spirits evidently endeavoured to keep control as much, and as long as possible, in their own hands. This was certainly very natural, and possibly not altogether without excuse, considering the early sacrifices which they had made.

Forces were at work, however, destined to bring about rapid business as well as other changes. Population was increasing. Men of education and means began to appear. The farmers were becoming more prosperous. Wealth began to accumulate. New enterprises engaged attention. More independence was daily becoming manifest. In short, before the period of the Rebellion (the winter of 1837), Galt had passed beyond the chrysalis stage of its

---

near where Mr. Cavers' residence now is. An investigation next day showed that part of the pig remained there uneaten. Mr. Fergus and a companion determined to lie in wait for the bear's return the following evening. It proved to be a clear, cold winter night, and the snow fairly glistened in the bright moonlight. It was, in fact, almost as light as day. Getting behind trees, the hunters waited in almost breathless suspense. After a considerable time, the crackling of branches was heard, then a heavy tread; and, finally, Bruin walked quietly up to where the remains of the pig had been placed by his artful foes. No time was given him even for grace. Two sharp reports followed, and two bullets found their way to the region of his heart. Poor Bruin fell in his tracks.

existence, and assumed the more perfect form of an independent, self-governed community.

Prior to this time, Mr. Shade had firmly laid the foundations of the large fortune which he subsequently amassed. This he acquired largely by speculations in property and judicious investments on farms, but in no small degree also, by his various business enterprises, more particularly his stores.

A capital story was long current relative to the prices charged for goods in those early days. As Mr. Shade began to grow rich, and rumours prevailed that he made profits of at least forty or fifty per cent. upon his goods, he was one day visited by a well-known, honest Dutch storekeeper in the southern part of Waterloo Township, who could not understand, but was extremely anxious to learn, how that gentleman obtained such handsome prices.

“Mr. Shade,” said he, “I have come down to ask how it is you can get forty or fifty per cent. profit upon your goods, when I have hard work to get one per cent. for mine? Will you tell me the secret?”

“Only one per cent.,” replied Mr. Shade; “why you must charge more than that!”

“O no, I don’t,” returned his Waterloo friend, deeply in earnest, “When I pay \$1 for an article, I never charge more than \$2 for it, and I want to know how I can get forty or fifty per cent. like you?”

Mr. Shade explained as well as his risibility would permit, when his interlocutor departed a wiser if not a



happier man. The joke, however, was too good to keep, and there is fun to this day over the Dutchman's one per cent.\*

The first blow given to the early, old-fashioned business system of Galt, was by an Irishman named Richard Irwin, in 1835. Before this an experiment had been made by one McDonald, agent for a house in Hamilton, to carry on a small store in a building put up by Mr. Louis Lapierre (father of Mr. Louis W. Lapierre, Paris), near where the Galt Hotel now is; the effort had, however, formidable opposition, and was not at all successful.

Irwin had been a peddler, a class which was then largely patronized, and succeeded, to the surprise of everybody, in renting the White or Cash store as it was called. The general opinion was that he could not supply it with sufficient goods, and that it would soon be back in Mr. Andrews' hands again. Irwin found unexpected backing, however, which was understood to come from the Stinsons of Hamilton, filled the store with goods of every description, and quite revolutionized the trade in a single month by the reductions made in prices. In many instances articles were reduced one hundred per cent. below the previous prices. The effect of this venture is described as having been "startling" in many quarters. It was soon noised all over the sur-

---

\*The hero of this story survived, a useful and highly-respected citizen of the County of Waterloo, until about three years ago.

rounding country, and marked the beginning of a new era in the business of the district.

Mr. Irwin did not long continue lessee of the White store, but about two years afterwards erected the stone store now owned by Mr. Gavin Hume, where he continued, aided by Mr. Adam Reid, to do a large business. He subsequently married a daughter of Mr. John Gowinlock, teacher, and having given up his business, settled on the first farm beyond Gowinlock's, on the Blair road.

Shortly after this, poor Irwin commenced drinking very badly, and one morning his friends were horrified to find that he had committed suicide in one of the rooms of his house. He was a short, slender, active, quick-tempered man, and this sad end to his once promising career, created a most painful sensation when it became known.

What a rapid change took place in the circumstances of Galt during the period between the scourge of the cholera and rebellion times, may be understood from the number of new inhabitants which it then obtained. A list of the more prominent of these persons will be found in the next paragraph, many of whom continued for decades to be well-known and respected citizens, and their names are inseparably connected with the early history of the town. Not over one-third of them, however, have survived the forty-two or forty-five years which have since elapsed,\* and only four—Messrs. Adam Hood, Peter

---

\* The only known survivors among these early residents of Galt, other than the four already mentioned, are :—Messrs. Adam Ainslie, Leith ;

Dinahy, James Scott, and Alexander Sinclair—continue still to reside amongst us!

Among these early Galtonians were:—Messrs. John Young, innkeeper; Adam Ainslie, barrister; George Lee, watchmaker; William Trotter, contractor; James Johnson, grocer; William Ferguson, blacksmith; Adam Hood, carpenter; Æ. B. Gordon, merchant; Isaac Sours, woollen factory; John Miller, barrister; Alex. Addison, cabinet maker; Robert Wyllie (afterwards of Ayr); Adam Scott, carpenter; James Craig, painter; Andrew Elliott, grocer; Charles Badenock, innkeeper; Peter Dinahy, workman; Sidney Smith, saddler; H. G. Barnaby, tanner; William Chipman, bailiff; Sweden McDonald, road-maker; Alex. Sinclair, workman; Francis McElroy, blacksmith; Robt. Wallace, baker and grocer; Robert Henshelwood, workman; Thos. Blacklock, butcher; William Stirling, farmer; James Sproule, shoemaker; Richard Irwin, merchant; Theophilus Sampson, innkeeper; George Meikle, distiller; John Kennedy, lime burner; Francis Diggins, workman; Luther Bradish, workman; Robert Emond, tailor; Lionel Foster, shoemaker; William Robinson, maltster; James Scott, carpenter; John Batters, store-keeper; James Fraser, mason; Timothy S. Treadwell, merchant; James Kay, carriage-maker, and David McFeiggan, teamster.

---

Francis McElroy, Michigan; Robert Wallace, Hamilton; Wm. Stirling, near Glenmorris; Andrew Elliott, Almonte; Robert Henshelwood, Theophilus Sampson, Port Rowan; Lionel Foster, Iowa; and James Sproule, Stratford. Thomas Blacklock was last heard of in Iowa, and Æ. B. Gordon—supposed to be dead—was last seen in California.

A notable addition to the clergy of the village also took place in the person of the Rev. John Bayne. This gentleman was the son of the Rev. Kenneth Bayne, A.M., of Greenock, Scotland. He entered Glasgow University in 1819, where he studied six consecutive sessions, finishing a brilliant academical course at the University of Edinburgh. Having decided to come to Canada, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Dingwall, on the 3rd September, 1834, and on reaching Toronto was induced to supply the pulpit of the Rev. W. T. Leach\* whilst he went on a visit to Scotland. This he did until the following year, when he was called to the Presbyterian Congregation in connection with the Church of Scotland in Galt, to supply the place of the Rev. William Stewart. At a very early day, Mr. George Smith, shoemaker, acted as precentor for this congregation, and subsequently Mr. Walter Gowinlock, now of Paris, and Mr. Alex. Duncan—all well-remembered names.

Dr. Bayne, as he was afterwards familiarly called, was inducted into his first and only charge in the summer of 1835, and soon became *a power* in Galt and neighbourhood. He was a man of fine presence, possessed of a massive and logical mind, cultured to a high degree, and his preaching was characterized by a zeal and passionate eloquence rarely equalled. So impressed was he with the mighty import of the message of the Gospel, that he

---

\* Now the Ven. Archdeacon Leach, of Montreal, having been admitted to Deacon's and Priest's orders in the Episcopal Church in 1843, by the Bishop of Quebec. He was born at Berwick-upon-Tweed in 1805.

was known to preach for two hours and a half, and sometimes his Sabbath services continued without intermission from eleven till after three o'clock in the afternoon ! His style of preaching vividly recalled the pictures left us of John Knox preaching before Queen Mary, and, although possibly a shade too austere, was characterized by an earnestness, and at times religious vehemence, which exercised a powerful influence on the community among whom he had cast his lot.

The picture of Dr. Bayne to be found in so many homes in Dumfries and Galt, was engraved from a daguerreotype, and is very like him when his face was in repose. It hardly does justice, however, to the intellectual power, which, when excited by some inspiring theme, shot out from his usually calm but penetrating eyes ; or the mingled firmness and gentleness which played about his delicately chiselled mouth. Though in late years not robust in health, the appearance of Dr. Bayne was at once commanding and pleasing—a man whose glance, once seen, could seldom be forgotten.

Canada has enjoyed the presence of few men, probably none, of greater talents and nobler aims than Dr. Bayne,\* and the wonder always was, and is, how he preferred Galt

---

\* Whilst a remarkably abstemious man, and in late years a complete teetotaller, Dr. Bayne had a fondness for the pipe. In studying, he generally thought out his subject, writing little except the mere skeleton of his sermons, and during these periods he enjoyed a smoke. History is full of examples of men of genius and noble character who found satisfaction in this way during their hours of study. Milton, Dryden, Coleridge and Goethe were great smokers, and the same remark may be made of Carlisle and Tennyson, the former now in his 83rd, and the latter in his 70th year.

and the backwoods of Canada, to those intellectual centres of Europe in which nature and education had so well fitted him to shine.

With so many accessions to the population, increased energy and enterprise became manifest throughout the village. New buildings went up in all quarters, and Main and Water Streets assumed the appearance of regular thoroughfares. In 1835 Mr. Dickson erected the King's Arms hotel\* (it became the Queen's Arms when Victoria ascended the throne in 1837), and induced Mr John Young, who had come to Galt in the fall of the preceding year and entered his employment, to become the first landlord. The old Township Hall,† an ever memorable land-mark, was erected in 1838. The ground on which it stood was logged and sown with wheat by Mr. Donald Fraser as early as 1817, and is the same as that on which the present massive Town Hall of Galt stands.

Gordon's store on the Queen's Square, which was burned in the winter of 1844, and the old British Hotel, also went up during this period, as well as many other less conspicuous buildings.

Apropos of the erection of the Township Hall, it may be mentioned that the villagers were much elated over its completion, as it settled the question whether the Dumfries Township Meetings should thereafter be held at Galt

---

\* Mr. William Rankin, Mill-creek, did the mason work, and Mr. Thos. G. Chapman the carpenter work of the Queen's Arms. Mr. Shade was superintendent.

† Mr. Alex. Scringer was the framer of the Township Hall, and Mr. Duncan Shepherd did the inside work.

or St. George, and it was determined to hold a grand ball at its opening. The new hall was elaborately decorated with evergreens and gay artificial flowers for the occasion. The attendance was large from all the country round, and the nimbleness and grace with which some, who are now grey-haired Veterans, then tripped it on "the light, fantastic toe," would have astonished the languid devotees of Terpsichore of the present day.

Galt's first amateur band was in existence at this time, and some or all of them furnished the music at this village festivity. It consisted of only three members. There was first, Mr. James S. Glennie, who was Clerk of the Division Court, and whose silvery white locks will be remembered by many. He had been a stock-broker in the City of London, England, and was wont, on occasions, to be eloquent on Bulls and Bears, Consols for Account, and other Stock Exchange lore. His favourite instrument was the violincello.\* Another of the players was an old Highlander of the name of John Kennedy, who followed the occupation of a limeburner where Mrs. Ballantyne now carries on the same business. He was excellent at strathspeys and reels. The third was John Garrison, an American by birth. He lived in what was then called "The Log Village," and close to Kennedy's. Garrison made his

---

\* Mr. Glennie composed music as well as played it. Two pieces, entitled "Galt Frolick" and "Glennie's Requiem," he presented to Mr. Adam Ainslie, who has preserved them during all the years which have since elapsed, and has kindly sent us copies of them. The first piece, after being tested by a young lady musician of Galt, is found to be a very lively and pretty air.

living by hunting, trapping, and fiddling, but chiefly the latter. At all the dances around, Garrison was the man to supply the music. The three formed themselves into a band, and frequently met at Barlow's tavern in the afternoon, where an audience would soon collect, and they would discourse those sweet sounds which "sublime emotions kindle," until the close of the day, and often far into the night.

The macadamizing of the Dundas and Waterloo road, which was commenced during 1837, served also to increase the business of the place. This much-needed work was undertaken by the Provincial Government, the following gentlemen being appointed Commissioners to carry it out: Messrs. George Clemens and Adam Ferrie, Waterloo; Thomas Rich and James K. Andrews, Galt; Adam Ainslie and John Cornell, Beverly;\* and Andrew Todd Kerby and Peter Bamberger, Flamboro' and Dundas. Several persons in Galt obtained contracts for sections of the road. Messrs. John Young and William Trotter (father of Messrs. William and James Trotter), were joint con-

---

\* During the year 1877, the twenty oldest Pioneers of the township of Beverly, were photographed in Galt, making a most interesting and suggestive picture. The year they settled in Beverly, their names and ages were as follows: 1800—Jacob Cope, aged 77 years, he was born in the township; 1808—George Jones, age 69; 1808—B. Vansickle, age 79; 1810—James Shaver, age 68; 1813—William Thompson, age 65; 1813—Aaron Cornell, age 62; 1818—Adam Misner, age 80; 1820—James B. Keachie, age 65; 1823—Alexander Weir, age 75; 1826—Malachi Sager, age 81; 1828—W. T. Anderson, age 76; 1831—William Riddle, age 76; 1832—John Armstrong, age 66; 1833—James McQueen, age 70; 1833—Thomas McKnight, age 79; 1834—Daniel Martin, age 78; 1834—Gillis McBain, age 73; 1836—Thomas Nicol, age 83; 1836—James Wilson, age 70; 1836—John Valens, age 68 years.



tractors for three miles of the work immediately below Rockton, and the three-quarters of a mile nearest Preston; Robert Wyllie (afterwards of Ayr), James Wyllie and Norman Ramsay, had the intervening section between the latter and the tollgate, one mile east of Galt; and James Welch, now farming near Strasburg, and Robert Henshelwood, had the mile between the toll-gate and Galt. This undertaking afforded employment to a large number of men, and its completion gave the quietus forever to the terrors of Beverly swamp, and greatly advanced the prosperity of the entire district through which it passes.

Among the other improvements which went on at this time, should be mentioned the construction of Galt Dam and Canal, which were begun shortly before the Macadamized road. This enterprise was due to the Hon. Robert Dickson, who manifested a becoming public spirit. The superintendent of the work was Mr. John Cain, civil engineer, who was brought from Montreal for the purpose. He subsequently died in Galt, after which his family returned to their former home. It was intended to utilize the water-power of the dam immediately, by the erection of grist and saw-mills. The Hon. Robert Dickson did, indeed, commence the mills the same season. But the work stopped with the foundations, and was not proceeded with for several years afterwards.

The superior water power and picturesque situation of Galt have always been amongst its conspicuous features, and it is a matter of regret that two ideas, which would greatly have increased the attractions of both, were not

carried out. One was, that a boulevard or ornamental space should be preserved up both sides of the river, leaving the first row of buildings on the east and west sides to face the river and each other. This would, undoubtedly, have added to the already picturesque features of the place.

The second project was one of Mr. Shade's, and came very near becoming *un fait accompli*. It was to make a canal from the river above the dam, to the low ground known as Goose Hollow, and then to follow the course of the small creek and swampy ground which at one time lined the western side of what is now Ainslie Street, to Johnston's pond on Main Street—a place ever to be remembered for its stagnant green water, almost bottomless mud, and bull frogs innumerable—and thence across Main Street, southwards, by the outlet of the pond to the river. This canal might have increased the water-power of Galt, and certainly would have much altered its present appearance.

So near was this project being carried out, that we are assured Mr. Shade and the elder Dickson had settled upon the price of the lands and the water; but at the solicitation of his sons, Mr. Dickson requested Mr. Shade to release him from the bargain, which he ultimately consented to do with considerable reluctance.



## CHAPTER XI.

Material Progress begets new ideas—Public Meeting—Formation of Galt Subscription and Circulating Library in 1836—Full list of its members—Sweet and sad Recollections of by-gone days—A valuable institution—Curling on Altrieve Lake with Maple Blocks—Galt Club Established in 1838—The Drama in Galt's early days—Rob Roy and Bailie Nicol Jarvie as done by leading villagers—Comical incident not in the play.

So many public and private improvements in progress, it need scarcely be said, produced a scene of unusual bustle and activity in the village. The Queen's Arms, which naturally became the centre of village gatherings and gossip, was crowded to its utmost capacity. Tradesmen and storekeepers began to feel the benefit of the capital being expended, and certain very natural results soon followed. Pictures of the future of Galt began to be drawn in rather roseate colours, and schemes of social and intellectual progress and improvement in harmony with the future importance of the place, became the order of the day.

A public meeting was held in the School-house on the 25th December, 1835—Christmas day—to discuss the best means of establishing a public library. The Rev. John Bayne was called to the chair, and Mr. Wm. McColl, teacher, was appointed secretary. After passing some resolutions, the meeting adjourned till a future day.

On January 9th, 1836, another meeting took place, which was held at the Queen's Arms, Dr. Bayne in the chair, and Mr. Alex. Burnett acting as secretary. At this meeting an Association fairly started into life, under the formidable name of the Galt Subscription and Circulating Library. Who the business committee were, does not appear, but at a subsequent meeting—Mr. Daniel Armstrong in the chair—Messrs. Jas. Cowan, John Gowinlock and John Goodall, were appointed to “negotiate a loan with the Hon. Wm. Dickson on the joint security of all the committee.” The sum of £25 was afterwards obtained, and constituted the amount of the first purchase of books. Mr. Hugh Hunter was the first librarian, but he was soon succeeded by Mr. George Lee, and subsequently by Mrs. Johnson, in whose frame dwelling on the corner of Main and Ainslie Streets, the library continued until it closed its existence as a separate institution.

Although small at its inception, the Galt Subscription and Circulating Library became an efficient and useful institution, and all honour is justly due to those public-spirited citizens who originated it. Besides those already mentioned, the following are among those who took an active part in the management of the library during its early years:—Messrs. William Trotter, Paul G. Huffman James Fraser, Thomas Rich, H. G. Barlow, W. H. Benn James Wyllie, John McKenzie, James Harris, John D. Campbell, John Telfer, David Shiels, Francis Hogg, Andrew Elliott, James Wilson, Francis McElroy, Andrew Moscrip and James C. Longan.

Few things could throw more light on the names of those who may be justly called the brave-hearted Pioneers of the settlement, than a list of the members of this Library Association during the first years of its existence. The original list has, fortunately, fallen into our hands, and was scanned with intense interest, recalling as it did, and must do to every one familiar with the past, so many of the "characters" in Galt's early history, as well as so many sweet and sad recollections of bygone days.

As a tribute to, and in order to preserve the memories of these good men and true, we annex in a foot-note a complete list\* of all who appear as members of the Associa-

---

\* Nearly all the members of Galt Circulating Library joined in 1836. Those who joined during any subsequent year, have the year mentioned after their names. (A)—Thomas Adams, J. K. Andrews, Peter Anderson, Daniel Armstrong, John Angus, Alexander Addison, 1840; Alexander Adair, 1840; John Anderson, 1841. (B)—George Brydon, H. G. Barlow, George Barrie, Alexander Burnett, James Bunyan, Rev. John Bayne, Arthur Burnett, H. C. Barnaby, 1837; George Bruce, 1837; John Bell, 1839; John Brown, 1839; William Brown, 1839; Walter H. Benn, 1840; Walter Brydon, 1843. (C)—Walter Cowan, James Cowan, Waterloo; James Cowan, Plains; Thomas Cleghorn, Robert Cranston, John Campbell, Thos. Chisholm, T. G. Chapman, Richd. Common, George Colcleugh, 1839; Andrew Cavers, 1841; James Crozier, 1842. (D)—John Douglass, Thos. Dalgliesh, James Dowswell, James Dalgliesh, Walter Deans, 1837; Joseph De Murphy, 1839; John Davidson, 1842. (E)—Andrew Elliott, Robert Emond, 1841; Alexander Easton, 1842. (F)—James Fraser, William Ferguson, Alexander Fraser, 1837; John Fleming, 1839; Lionel Foster, 1840; Robert Forbes, 1840; David H. Forbes, 1840. (G)—John Gowinlock, John Goodall, Hugh Girvin, Robert Gowinlock, 1839; George Gowinlock, 1840; Robert Gillespie, 1841. (H)—William Henderson, Archibald Hunter, James Harris, Walter Hastie, John Henderson, John Hutson, P. G. Huffman, Francis Hogg, James Hogg, Hugh Hunter, James Henderson, 1838; Adam Hood, 1839; James Henderson, (Mill Creek), 1841; Walter Hope, 1840. (I)—Richd. Irwin, Wm. Irwin. (J)—Wm Jackson, Daniel Jamieson, Francis Jackson, 1837; James Jardine, 1840. (K)—James Kay, Jas. Kersell, Wil

tion up to 1843, when the ancient record from which we quote, abruptly closes. The first year the income of the Association, including the £25 borrowed, was £53 13s. 6d. of which the sum of £39 was spent, and a balance of £13 remained on hand. It continued a most useful existence until the year 1854, when it was merged into the Galt Mechanics' Institute, reference to which will be found further on.

One of the most valued institutions of Galt—the Gore District Mutual Fire Insurance Company—had its rise in 1837. The first meeting took place at Burley's Hotel, Hamilton, in the month of April. The company did not commence operations till June, 1839, however, when Brantford was selected as its head-quarters, with Mr. John A.

---

liam Kerr. (L)—William Laidlaw, John Laidlaw, George Landreth, John Lee, Andrew Lake, 1837; James C. Longan, 1838; James Little, William Little, 1840; George Lee, 1842. (M)—John Mitchell, John Miller, Andrew Mathieson, Dr. Robert Miller, John Moscrip, Andrew Moscrip, George Martin, George Moore, Robert Menzie, William Manson, 1837; Thomas Marshall, 1838; Andrew Malcom, Robert McDougall, Thomas McBean, Alexander R. McDonald, M. McNaught, Archibald McColl, John McKenzie, John McGregor, 1837; George McDonald, 1837; Alexander McKay, 1837; Peter McIntyre, 1838; Thomas McKenzie, 1839; Francis McElroy, 1839; William McKenzie. (N)—Henry North. (P)—Joseph Purvis (R)—Robert Rodgers, Thomas Rich, William Rankin, Adam Reid, Thomas Richardson, Hector Rennelson, John Robinson, 1837; Dr. Richardson, 1840. (S)—David Shiel, A. Shade, James Smith, Adam Scott, John Smith, Adam Shaw, George Scott, James Smith, John Scott, 1837; Margret Spiers, 1837; James Scott, 1839. (T)—John Telfer, James Tenant, Thomas Turnbull, Thomas Taylor, Robert Turnbull, James Thompson, William Trotter, Adam Turnbull. (V)—William Veitch. (W)—John Wright, James Wilson, James Wyllie, James White, George Wyllie, 1839; Robert Wilson, 1841; Robert Wallace, 1841. (Y)—Thomas Younger.

Wilkes as President, Mr. William Walker, Secretary, and Messrs. Allen Good, Richard Wilkins, A. Huntingdon, Henry Moyle, Wm. Richardson, and Abraham Cook, Directors Mr. Thomas Rich, of Galt, became connected with the company as Travelling Agent in 1846, and its business was always large in Galt and vicinity.

Some mismanagement having occurred in the affairs of the company, the annual meeting in June, 1863, was somewhat stormy, and resulted in a sweeping change in the Directorate, Messrs. John Fleming, James Crombie, John Davidson, Richard S. Strong, Morris C. Lutz, and Richard Blain, of Galt, being among those elected. The head office of the company was shortly afterwards removed to Galt, where it has ever since remained. The Gore District Mutual has been over forty years in existence, and it may be truly said, is now more prosperous and useful than during its earlier years.

It is not surprising that, being so largely settled by Scotchmen, Galt early practised the game of Curling, so much in vogue in the land of the "mountain and the flood." The first game of which we have been able to find any recollection, took place on Altrieve lake, as it is called, a pretty sheet of water near Mr. James S. Cowan's residence, about two miles west of the town. Among those who took part in it were Messrs. Robert Wallace, sr., who was on a visit from Brantford, Robert Wallace, jr., of Galt, John Warnock, of Beverly, and Hugh and John Wallace, of Dumfries. They made blocks out of the maple tree, putting in pieces of iron as handles, and al-

though labouring under some disadvantages, the survivors describe it as a jolly and long-to-be-remembered meeting. This game took place in the winter of 1836 or '37.

The origin of the Galt Curling Club dates from 1838, but it was not placed on a permanent footing until a meeting which took place at Mr. John Young's Union Hotel, in the fall of 1841. The occasion was celebrated by a dinner, at which Mr. John Davidson presided, and Mr. Thomas Blacklock acted as vice-chairman. There was a large attendance, and, as usual at that time, much jollity. One of the incidents of the dinner was a song entitled, "The Galt Curling Club O," composed and sung by Mr. James Ainslie, who had shortly before taken up his residence in the village. Before commencing dinner, the club was duly formed and placed under the management of the following officers:—

CHAPLAIN—Rev. James Roy.

PRESIDENT—Mr. William Dickson.

VICE-PRESIDENT—Mr. John Davidson.

SECRETARY—Mr. Thomas Blacklock.

SKIPS—Doctor Miller, James Kirkpatrick, Thomas Blacklock, and Robert Wallace.

From that day till this, Galt has never been without its Curling Club, and in 1879 the stones whirl up as merrily to the "Tee," as they did in 1841—but Oh, how changed the players! Messrs. James Allan and Robert Ovens have kept up their connection with the club most of the time throughout the entire period, but they are



the only members who have done so, Mr. Robert Wallace, now of Hamilton, having removed a few years ago. When some have dropped off, however, others have been ready to take their places, and, consequently, during the last thirty-eight years, Galt Curling Club has been one of the most noted "institutions" of the place. It has always been a tough club to tackle, and has well sustained the credit of the town in numerous friendly contests with other clubs.

The Canadian branch of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club was joined in 1866, since which time the curlers of Galt have competed for eight medals. Out of seven of these contests they came forth victorious, beating Guelph, Elora (twice), the New Dominion, Ayr, the Ontario and Burlington, and Hamilton City Clubs. Only on one occasion, when playing for the Royal Caledonian Medals, has the Galt Club suffered defeat.

The buoyancy of spirits which characterized the community at this period, overflowed in another direction, and resulted in a spirited and somewhat ambitious effort to cater for the public amusement. Recognizing the truth of the old adage about all work and no play, a number of the villagers formed themselves into a Dramatic Company, and soon created a pleasurable little ripple of excitement by the announcement that they would at an early day appear in public.

Their first appearance was in some part of the old Red store, which was fitted up with rising seats for the occasion, but as soon as the Township Hall was finished, it

became the place for holding entertainments, and how ill-fitted it was for the purpose, only those who recollect "Noah's Ark," as it was called, will understand. It was, however, made as presentable as possible. The scenery was painted by Mr. Glennie, whose musical abilities have already been referred to. This gentleman was also skilful in handling the brush, and a landscape by moonlight, which was among his scenes, would have done no discredit to the boards of Covent Garden or Drury Lane.

Among the plays presented were, the Gentle Shepherd, the Tragedy of Douglass, and Rob Roy, and the excited interest on the first night when the bell rang for the curtain to rise, could only be realized by those who actually saw it. The principal characters in Rob Roy were taken by the following gentlemen: Rob Roy—Thomas Rich; Bailie Nichol Jarvie—Thomas Blacklock; Mattie, Bailie Jarvie's maid—Archibald Cairns; Helen, Rob Roy's wife—Thomas Bain, who was then employed by Mr. Alexander Addison as a cabinet maker; Dugald Crater—James S. Glennie; Major Galbraith—Henry McCrum; Captain Thornton—Adam Hood. Among others who took part in this or other plays were: Messrs. William Brown, James Craig, Adam Scott, and John Batters.

Mr. Adam Ainslie acted as prompter, and wrote and delivered a clever prologue on the opening night. He also composed a chorus, "Hurrah for the village of Galt, boys," the tenor of which, as well as of the prologue, was prophetic of what a great place Galt was to become, and, to use the language of our informant, it has "all happened

since and a great deal more." The company played on several occasions, paid Beverly a visit, and created great fun and amusement.

Not a few comical incidents have been handed down as having transpired during these dramatic entertainments. One night during the run of Rob Roy, Mr. Craig, in consequence of a laughable blunder, received a wound which it was at first feared might prove no laughable matter. At a certain point in the play, he met Rob Roy (Mr. Rich), in mortal combat, and it was arranged that Craig was to fall at a certain thrust of Mr. Rich's sword, mortally wounded, into the arms of one of the other players. At the time agreed upon, Mr. Rich made his sword thrust, but in the excitement of the moment, Craig forgot to fall, and consequently received a severe cut in one of his arms, which bled quite freely! This unexpected *contretemp* rather threw things into disorder for a few moments, but when the audience took in the situation, caused great merriment. It always was a most difficult thing, according to Artemus Ward, to die on the stage to slow music!

Through means of these entertainments several deserving institutions in the village were assisted. The members of the company paid their own expenses, which in some instances were very considerable, and it is remembered that they gave over fifty dollars to assist the Circulating Library, which had then recently been commenced, and also paid off the balance of the debt which was due Mr. Shade upon the village School which stood at the head of Main Street.

The possibility of starting a newspaper to chronicle the doings, and particularly to sound the praises, of Galt, also began to be canvassed. But the experience of the aspiring villagers in the newspaper line did not begin till three or four years later, and an amusing experience it was.





## CHAPTER XII.

Early Municipal Government—The old annual Town Meetings—A baker's dozen of settlers meet in 1819—First Officers elected for Dumfries—Amusing Enactments—Early efforts at public speaking—The perplexed Chairman and how he opened the Meeting—Three Township Commissioners elected in 1836—Their names—Polling for District Councillors in 1842—The greatest day Galt had ever witnessed—First School Commissioners—Introduction of our present Municipal System—First Councils of North and South Dumfries.

NEW settlements, not less than old ones, soon experience the necessity of having a governing body. We have now enjoyed municipal institutions, which Sir Francis Bond Head sneered at as "Sucking Republics," for over a quarter of a century; but, in early times, the whole business of a township was done in a single day. It was called the annual Town meeting,\* and the proceedings were often very lively and entertaining.

---

\* "It may be of some interest," says a correspondent, "to the municipal gentlemen of the present time, to know how we transacted our local public business. Well, on the first Monday in January (and it was generally a very cold day) the settlers met at the Town Hall, Galt, not *inside*, but out of doors. The chairman, when elected, ascended to a platform on the top of the building, when the pound-keepers, fence-viewers, pathmasters, &c., for the different sections were appointed, and the clerk entered the names in a book. About one hour sufficed to do all the business. The people would then, being very cold, retire to the two taverns (the Queen's Arms was erected at an early day) and get warmed *outside* by a big fire, *inside* by the very indifferent and ill-rectified whiskey of the day, which, being taken in large quantities into

The first gathering of the kind which took place in Dumfries was in 1819, within three years after the first steps had been taken to open up the wilderness. It was called by the township constable, whoever that functionary was, to "choose Town and Parish officers," and was held at the house of one Gutlip Moss\* (a short distance south of Branchton), on Monday, the 4th January. There is no record as to the number of persons who attended, but, doubtless, it hardly reached the proverbial baker's dozen. The following were the Town and Parish officers selected :—

TOWNSHIP CLERK—Mr. John Scott.

ASSESSORS—Messrs. John Buchanan and Lawrence Schammerhorn.

COLLECTOR—Mr. Ephraim Munson.

WARDENS—Messrs. Alexander Harvie and Richard Phillips.

PATH-MASTERS—Messrs. Cornelius Conners, Enos Griffith, James McCarty and John Leece.

POUND-KEEPER—John Lawrason.

empty stomachs, the remainder of the day was often made lively by a series of pugilistic encounters. One Sandy Kay obtained quite an *éclat* for pugnacity on these occasions. The next day Mr. Shade would fine him, which fine was generally commuted to digging out a stump or stumps in the street ! So Sandy had the pleasure of fighting, and the public the benefit of his labour without costing anything." The penalty of digging out a stump, it appears, was at last generally applied by Mr. Shade, and, it has been significantly added, before many months not a stump could be seen on any of the streets !

\* This old gentleman was still living a few years ago with a relative on the shores of Lake Erie, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Long Point. He was then supposed to be about 100 years old.

Some of these gentlemen are now quite forgotten, but not a few of their descendants still remain in the township. How scanty the population and roads were, may be known from the fact that only four path-masters were appointed. The only other business transacted at the meeting was the adoption of two enactments, which, as this was the first municipal meeting in the history of the township, we shall give *verbatim et literatim* as they appear in an ancient record, which we have been privileged to secure :—

(1) “*Resolved*—That fences shall be deemed unlawful unless it has stakes and riders, is five feet high, and has no cracks exceeding six inches in width for the first two feet in height.”

(2) “The meeting Also Resolves that All Creatures shall be free commoners, excepting Stud horses and pigs under six months old.”

Great importance was evidently attached in those days to the marks upon sheep, as almost every settler had his own special mark, and after lodging a description of it with the township clerk, could claim any sheep having such a mark upon them. Many marks were recorded, and they must have become rather confusing at last, as will be seen by two recorded in the fall of 1819, which are given as examples. Mr. Nathan B. Allan recorded his as follows : “A cross off the left ear, and a slit in the under side of the right ear.” Mr. John Chambers followed on the 20th December with “A half-penny out of the under edge of each ear, *and a piece off the tail!*” It is

to be feared Mr. Chambers did not find the latter part of his mark a very reliable one.

That public functionary, the township constable, who was doubtless appointed at the District Sessions, but whose name and habitation do not appear, seems at first to have called the Town meetings at different houses throughout the township, pretty much on the same principle as the school teacher used to be boarded round. In 1820 it took place at the house of Absalom Shade on the 3rd January. The following year it was held at the house of Miller Lawrason on New Year's day, and in 1822 at the house of Morgan L. Hermonts, inn-keeper, Shade's Mills. The two following years it was held at the same place, but one John Clark had succeeded Hermonts as the keeper of the hotel, which, as stated in a previous chapter, was burned at the time of the cholera.

It is not until January, 1839, that the Township Hall in the village of Galt is mentioned as the place at which the Town meetings took place; but that building continued to be the place of meeting thereafter so long as these gatherings were held in the village.

At the earlier town meetings, Mr. Shade generally presided, and a correct list of the principal township officers, selected from 1820 to 1836—when a new system was introduced—will be found appended in a foot-note.\*

---

\* The Township Clerks were as follows:—1820, Robert Murray; 1821 and '22, John Chambers; 1823 and '24, Peter Failing; 1825, James Hills; 1826, H. V. Maus; 1827 to '30, Henry Moe; 1831 to 1833, Thomas G. Chapman; 1834 and '35, Thomas Rich.



These officers, with the usual complement of Town wardens, pathmasters, and poundkeepers, in conjunction with the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, managed the affairs of the township during the sixteen years mentioned, giving an account of their stewardship only at the following annual meeting. It must not be supposed, however, that their actions consequently escaped criticism. It was then considered quite an honor to be clerk, assessor or collector, and even when there were no serious grounds of complaint against these officials, the everlasting struggle between the ins and the outs often made the Town meetings exceedingly lively. Human nature is pretty much the same in certain respects, at all times, and in all circumstances. Very sharp criticisms, consequently, were often passed upon the way the township officers had discharged their duties, and not unfrequently, still sharper efforts were put forth by aspirants to secure the coveted positions for themselves.\*

---

The Assessors were :—1820, John Showers and James Corbet; 1821, Samuel Paine and A. Shade; 1822, John Chambers and William Holmes; 1823, David Ellis and Peter Failing; 1824, Peter Failing and William McKenzie; 1825, James Hills and Geo. Hughson; 1826, Geo. Hughson and H. V. Maus; 1827, Alexander Buchanan and James Hills; 1828, Henry Clemens and William Gardner; 1829, James Dixon and James Hills; 1830, H. V. Maus and William Gardner; 1831, James Hills and William Gardner; 1832, John Mackenzie and Thomas Rich; 1833, James Dixon and William Gardner; 1834, James Dixon and Jarvis Barraclough; 1835, James Dixon and William Veitch.

The Collectors were :—1820 and '21, Thomas McBean; 1822 and '23, Benjamin White; 1824, John Chambers; 1825, Robert Murray; 1826, H. V. Maus; 1827, James Hills; 1828 and '33, William Gardner; 1829, '34 and '35, James Dixon; 1831, Thomas Rich; 1832, Henry Moe.

\* The following persons were elected at the Town meetings in Dumfries, either as town wardens, pathmasters or pound-keepers, between 1819 and

Considerable speaking took place at the Town meetings, which was always certain to be pointed, and very apt to be personal. The early settlers seldom failed to call a spade a spade, and as a ratepayer with a grievance had to nurse it for months before he could get satisfaction, when he undertook to have it out with his opponent, he never wasted his time with honied words.

The remarks of those who spoke were almost invariably

the year 1830. Some of the gentlemen were frequently re-elected, but their names are not repeated. They are spelled as they appear in the official record. The Town Wardens were: David Harvie, Hugh Graham, John McKenzie, Joshua Gilham, Elisha Godfrey, Miller Lawrason, Thomas Moffatt, John Telfer, Stephen Pembleton, Joseph Latschaw, John Campbell, and Benjamin White.

The Pathmasters were in 1820: Doan Griffith, Reuben Dayton, Ebenezer Hall, Wm. McKenzie, N. R. Campbell, Daniel Fraser, Wilkes Lamberton, John Trueax and Moses Kimble; 1821—Joseph Halbert, John Bouslaugh, Thos. Rosebrugh, Ely Irwin, Daniel McArthur, Ahab Soles, Isaac Willet, Henry Lamberton, Silvester Dodge; 1822—John Thomas, Aaron Cornell, Hugh Graham, Enock Kingan, Jaduthan Bird; 1823—Lawton Case, Henry Crombeck, Abram Bechtel, John Stewart, John Steele, Charles Kitchen, John Howell and Jas. Keachie; 1824—Cornelius W. Lane, Henry Nelles, John Alger, John Wiseman, Hempson Stephens, Martin Kiler, Joseph Beemer, James Jamieson, John Buckberry, Thomas Armstrong, Charles Van Every; 1825—Jonathan Weight, Ira Curliss, Henry Clemens, Jacob Loun, Elisha Lake, John Clark, Murdoch McPherson, Andrew Lake and Thomas Gadd. In 1826: Daniel Armstrong, Wm. Webb, Enos Griffith, Elam Bonham, Hugh McColl, Daniel Templeton; 1827—Guy Putman, Zachariah Clump, William Burnham, Daniel Anderson, David Inglis, Henry Bechtel, Peter Smith, Christian Baker, Thomas Thornton, Dugald McColl, Samuel Howell; 1828—William Howley, John Dorson, James Walker, David Matthews, Adam Unger, Moses Kemball; 1829—Andrew Van Every, George Stoddard, John Reichart, Jesse Bray, Robert Keefer, Earl Martin, William Holme, Benjamin Hallman, Wendell Bowman and Benjamin White, jr.

The Pound-keepers were: John Laurason, Lent Munson, Samuel McLeod, William Sprague, David Ellis, Matthew Van Dusen, Absalom Shade, Eleazer Griffith and Henry Bechtel.

off-hand and brief, but occasionally some essayed something more ambitious. They did not always succeed, however. An amusing instance of this kind was furnished on one occasion by a well-known and highly respected citizen, whose name we shall not report, and whose speech we cannot, for the very simple reason that he never got beyond the first sentence.

When the impressive moment after his nomination had arrived, he arose with a grand air and said :

“Fellow ratepayers : Ten years ago this township was a wilderness ;” at this point he hesitated, cleared his throat and began again. “Ten years ago,” he repeated, “this township was a wilderness,” but again there was a dreadful pause. Provoked by the barely suppressed titter of the audience, the bashful orator tried the third time and failed, when his discomfiture loosened his tongue sufficiently to add, “and, friends, I wish it had continued a wilderness, and then I wouldn’t have made a blasted fool of myself in attempting to make a speech !”

The proceedings at meetings were often conducted after a very primitive fashion, and would hardly afford a suitable model for the House of Commons or other staid, precedent-loving assemblies. Not so very many decades back, great amusement was caused by a chairman elected to preside over an annual meeting to promote a religious object. This gentleman had acquired some property and was held in much esteem, and when requested to preside over the meeting, promptly consented to do so. He had enjoyed no experience as a chairman, however,

and when he found himself seated in front of the audience, he completely lost his head, and forgot almost everything connected with the usual order of procedure.

After the applause at his taking the chair had subsided, the chairman said or did nothing, and there was a long and painful silence, which kept growing more absurd every moment. A friend at last bent over and whispered, "open the meeting," at which the chairman rose abruptly, and called out in a stentorian voice: "Open the meeting! Open the meeting! Open the meeting!" The effect of this upon the audience can be readily imagined. As soon as order was restored, the mover and seconder of the first resolution properly performed their duties, when, to the surprise of the audience, the chairman again made no sign, and the same dreadful pause occurred. Being nudged once more by his friend on the platform to put the motion, to the overwhelming amusement of the audience—who could not suppress their merriment for several minutes—the chairman again jumped up abruptly, as if awakened out of a sound sleep, and in the same stentorian voice called out: "Put your motion! Put your motion! Put your motion!"

As the township increased in population and wealth, it outgrew the rather primitive Town meeting system. There were a few who regretted its abolition. Mr. Shade frequently declared that "the public business was better done at the Town meetings than under the modern system, and it was much less expense." \* But distance

---

\* Another gentleman, for many years resident in Galt, has a good word for the old Town meetings, as may be seen by the following tart extract from

often lends enchantment to the view, and whilst it may be admitted that the old Town meeting was probably well enough adapted for its day, the want of a governing municipal body, directly responsible to the people, which would have regular meetings, and whose decisions could be had on the many local questions constantly arising, soon began to be seriously felt. The Provincial Legislature, in course of time, dealt with these growing wants of the country, and in the year 1836, the ratepayers of Dumfries, in Town meeting assembled, were empowered to elect, in addition to former officers, three Township Commissioners, whose duty it would be to meet from time to time throughout the year. The first meet-

---

a letter sent to us :—" We had two officers, or hired men, in the township, the Assessor and Collector, whose salary was \$300, and the Clerk, who kept the books, for which he got \$16. Thus \$316 was all the money paid for services. The taxes were trifling. Some months ago, James Wilson, late of Galt, told me that he collected the taxes of Dumfries for three years, and that they amounted to about £450 or \$1,800 for the whole township of 94,305 acres. This money was expended by the order of the Magistrates, in Quarter Sessions assembled, where it was most required, in making roads, and building bridges, &c. There were no free schools then. It would be most interesting to compare the amount above raised, amounting, including salaries, to only \$1,800, with the amount raised in the municipalities of Galt, Paris, and North and South Dumfries, for the year 1879, for all purposes.

" The Earl of Durham, in his report, after the Rebellion, said our Parliaments were mostly engaged in *parish business*. To remedy this, his successor, Lord Sydenham, gave us what is called Municipal Institutions. What has been the result? Enormous taxation all over the country. Whereas, formerly, our taxes amounted to a few pence, now, for the same property, the burden amounts to a rent, \* \* \* \* \* Again, as to railway bonuses, what an unjust thing it is, that the votes of others, I care not how great the majority, should mortgage your property against your will! \* \* \*

\* \* \* It was a great curse, the establishment of so many Corporations."

ing in Dumfries under the new law excited much interest, and the election resulted as follows:—

MR. THOMAS RICH, *Township Clerk.*

MR. CARLTON C. SMITH, }  
MR. HENRY V. S. MAUS, } *Commissioners.*  
MR. WENDELL BOWMAN, }

MR. WILLIAM VEITCH, *Assessor.*

MR. JAMES WILSON, *Collector.*

Nothing further of unusual interest appears to have occurred at these meetings until 1842, when the now rapidly developing township enjoyed its first genuine municipal excitement. For the first time, the ratepayers were called upon in that year to elect two fit and proper persons to represent them as Councillors in the District Council. This event excited great interest in every part of the township, and Galt was a very thronged and excited village on the 3rd of January, when the meeting took place. What transpired is so well told in the ancient record already alluded to, that we adopt its exact phraseology.

“At the annual meeting of the inhabitants of the Township of Dumfries, held at the Township Hall, in the Village of Galt, on Monday, the 3rd of January 1842, James Harris, Town Clerk, presiding, the following named persons being severally duly nominated, and each nomination seconded, viz.:—

“Hiram Capron, proposed by Thomas Coleman, Esq., seconded by Dr. R. McCosh.

“Geo. Stanton, Esq., proposed by James Cassiday, seconded by John Smith.

“Thomas Rich, proposed by James K. Andrews, seconded by David Shiels.

“Alex. Buchanan, proposed by Wendell Bowman, seconded by Hugh Wallace.

“George Stanton, Esq., demanded a poll, which commenced at twelve o'clock, noon, and ended at three o'clock in the afternoon, at which time the votes recorded were for—

Alexander Buchanan, 356.

Hiram Capron, 288.

Geo. Stanton, Esq., 182.

Thomas Rich, 143.

“The subscriber (James Harris) then publicly declared Alexander Buchanan and Hiram Capron to have been duly elected District Councillors for the Township of Dumfries.”

This municipal struggle, into which the political tide rising throughout the whole Province, entered to some extent, was quickly over, but it was warm and exciting whilst it lasted. The best evidence of this is to be found in the fact that so many votes were polled in three hours. The persons remaining amongst us, whose memories extend so far back, declare it was the greatest day Galt had ever witnessed up to that time.

School Commissioners for the township appear in the records for the first time, as having been elected at this meeting. Their names were as follows:—Messrs. David

Christie, David Buchan, Robert Wylie, Rev. James Strang, George Lee, Rev. M. Boomer, and the Rev. John Bayne. Of the entire number, only Senator Christie and Dean Boomer have survived to the present time.

It was not until 1850 that the next important change occurred in municipal affairs. Great alterations were introduced by the new Municipal Act which took effect in that year. The "Sucking Republics" so dreaded by Sir Francis Bond Head, had been agreed to by the Provincial Legislature, and when the new year came round, the ratepayers of Dumfries were called upon to elect five Councillors to manage the affairs of the township during the year, with extensive powers to make laws, impose taxes, and do all things necessary for the welfare, security, and good government of the inhabitants.

Galt became incorporated as a village in 1850, and so its fortunes and those of Dumfries, as one municipality, sundered at this point. It being necessary to hold the election of Councillors within the municipality, the village of Middleton (now Glenmorris) was selected as the most central and suitable point. And thus the good old-fashioned Town meeting finally passed away, after having been held in Galt continuously from 1822 up to 1850—a period of no less than 28 years.

The first election of Councillors for Dumfries resulted in the return of Messrs. Elam Stimson, Daniel Anderson, Absalom Shade, David Shontz, and Wendell Bowman. Their first meeting was held at Glenmorris, on the 21st January, 1850, when Dr. Stimson was elected Reeve, and



Mr. Wendell Bowman, Deputy Reeve. The former gentleman declined to serve, however, whereupon Mr. Shade was elected in his stead.

Two years afterwards (1852) another change took place. The famous Territorial bill of the Hincks-Morin Government came into effect, dividing Dumfries into two townships, the North attached to the County of Waterloo, and the South to the County of Brant, and thus they have remained ever since.

The first Municipal Council elected in North Dumfries after the division, was composed as follows: Reeve, Dr. Charles McGeorge, Deputy Reeve, Mr. Duncan Ferguson; Councillors, Messrs. Alexander Buchanan, Robert Cranston and David Shontz. The officers elected by the Council, were: Messrs. John Duthie, Clerk; George Veitch, Collector; Thomas Ballingal, Assessor; John Johnston, Collector; and John Miller,\* Solicitor.

The Reeves and Deputies during the succeeding five years were as follows:

1853—Messrs. Alex. Buchanan and Robert Cranston.

1854—Messrs. Duncan Ferguson and Thomas Chisholm.

1855—Messrs. Duncan Ferguson and Thomas Chisholm.

---

\* Mr. John Miller, Barrister, was born at Stamford, in the Niagara district, and was a brother of Judge Miller. He was born on the 14th March, 1813, and died in Galt suddenly on the 24th November, 1868, in his 56th year. He studied under Judge Campbell, of Niagara, and was called to the Bar on the 2nd of February, 1835. During the fall of the same year, he removed to Galt, and commenced the practice of his profession. He was known far and wide, and for thirty-five years his well-known figure was seldom missed from Galt streets, either from absence or sickness.

1856—Messrs. Thomas Chisholm and Robt. L. Willson.

1857—Messrs. Thomas Chisholm and John Milroy, Jr.

In South Dumfries the first Council was composed of the following gentlemen: Messrs. Daniel Anderson, William Mullin, Robert Burt, William Roy and James Sharp. Messrs. Anderson and Mullin were elected Reeve and Deputy Reeve, respectively, which positions they occupied continuously for nearly twenty years afterwards. The first officers of the municipality were: Messrs. James Geddes, Clerk; John McNaught, Treasurer; Robert Ballingal, Assessor for the west side of the river; William Little for the east side; and Robert Shiel, Collector. Mr. Michael Charlton was one of the first auditors.





## CHAPTER XIII.

First Parliamentary Elections—Political Issues of the day—Richard Beasley and William Scollick elected for Halton, 1825—Growing opposition to the Family Compact—William Lyon Mackenzie—The Members elected for Halton in 1828 and 1830—Mr. Shade returned in place of the Hon. James Crooks in 1831—Mackenzie speaks in Galt in 1833—Burned in effigy by Conservative opponents—Arrival of Sir Francis Bond Head at Toronto—The Halton Elections of 1834 and 1836—Mr. Alexander Burnett—"Liberty Cottage"—Upper Canada on the brink of Revolution.

THE first Parliamentary election in which the settlement took a part, of which we have any reliable record, was in the year 1825. There was not so much interest taken in politics then as a few years later on, and as the votes in Dumfries and Galt were limited, and the polling place distant, being at some point near Wellington Square, there was little excitement over the result. The candidates returned were Messrs. Richard Beasley and William Scollick.\* They were Liberals, and the latter gentleman at one time owned and resided on Clochmohr farm, which was subsequently purchased by Mr. James Cowan, and has ever since remained his residence.

Three years afterwards, in 1828, when the general Election came on, public interest had considerably quickened in political affairs. William Lyon Mackenzie had started

---

\* Mr. Scollick died many years ago ; his remains were buried in Preston.

the *Colonial Advocate* at Niagara in 1825, and the Province had been gradually aroused to the tyrannical and selfish rule of the Family Compact party, then firmly entrenched in power. The rankest abuses then flourished. Liberty was more a name than a reality. Public meetings to discuss politics were not permitted. Conventions were held to be seditious. And besides ruling as an oligarchy, the Family Compact monopolized every position of profit, honour, or trust, for themselves, "their sisters, their cousins and their aunts."

When the elections of 1828 took place, Dumfries displayed that strong sympathy with Liberal principles which has ever since distinguished it. The electors warmly supported the Liberal candidates, Messrs. George Rolph and Caleb Hopkins, who were returned at the head of the polls.

It would lead too far from the subject in hand, to enter at length into the political issues which now began seriously to disturb the Province. Two Parliaments had been elected hostile to the Family Compact, nevertheless, backed up as they were, first by Sir Peregrine Maitland, and afterwards by Sir John Colborne, they continued to control the Government and defy the popular will. The demand as well for Responsible Government as for the reform of abuses, advocated by the Reform Party of that day, grew stronger daily.

The death of George IV. in 1830 dissolved the Legislative Assembly, and produced another election. On this occasion the County of Halton changed its political alle-

giance. The Liberal candidates were beaten, and Messrs. James Crooks and William Chisholm elected. The following year, 1831, Mr. Crooks vacated his seat, being called to the Legislative Council. Mr. Shade, of Galt, was brought forward for the vacancy, and duly elected in his place. There was much rejoicing in the village when the result became known. The crowd drew Mr. Shade round the streets in a carriage, pulling up finally at the village inn—a proceeding which he did not seem to relish very much, but could not very well avoid.

It was during this Parliament that William Lyon Mackenzie was expelled five times from the Legislative Assembly by the dominant party, and five times re-elected by his constituents of the County of York. Mr. Shade's name appears in all the divisions expelling Mr. Mackenzie. The political excitement continued rapidly to increase all over the Province, and few parts thereof were more deeply stirred than the Township of Dumfries. The setting aside of one-seventh of all the public lands as Clergy Reserves, and the establishment of fifty-seven rectories under Sir John Colborne's administration, were deemed undoubted evidence that the ruling oligarchy were firmly bent on inflicting a State Church upon the country, the danger of which served to render the people of Dumfries more strongly pronounced in their Liberalism than ever. So warmly did they sympathise with Mackenzie, that the locality was nick-named "the States," and continued to be known by that soubriquet for several years.

During the year 1833, William Lyon Mackenzie addressed political meetings in different parts of the Province. He was invited to Galt, and was greeted by two or three hundred electors, among whom the neighbouring townships were well represented. Mr. Mackenzie, although now generally admitted to have been patriotic and unpurchaseable, was, it must be confessed, somewhat of a political firebrand, and his presence in Galt excited not a little hostility on the part of the local leaders of the opposite party. He spoke, during the afternoon, from the south-end window of the only tavern the village possessed, and towards the middle of his speech, an unusual commotion appeared on Main Street, about where Fleming's store now is.

A person fantastically dressed, and with blackened face, appeared with a hideous-looking effigy of Mackenzie, which contained a small parcel of gun-powder, and which he proceeded to set fire to. The figure was well gotten up, and the extremities were fitted with a good pair of boots, which were recognised as belonging to a leading Galtonian, who usually wore a quality and style not commonly in use. Mr. William Mackenzie, of Dumfries, ran hurriedly up to the figure, which prematurely exploded, knocking him over, but inflicting no serious injury. The whole proceeding was in full view of the orator, who smiled grimly, but went on with his speech very little disconcerted.

As the darkening shades of evening came on, there was much noise and jeers and mirth among the assembled crowd, and quite a little scrimmage ultimately occurred over



MR ABSALOM SHADE.





the remains of the effigy. Boots were boots in those days ; and, evidently regretful to see such wastefulness, a farmer of West Dumfries named Marshall, rushed through the crowd, seized the boots of the half-scorched figure, and made off with them as fast as his legs could carry him ! The hero of this incident, who was a bit of a wag, declared afterwards they were the "brawest" Sunday boots he had ever had. But if his pursuers had caught him that night it would have fared badly with him.

In 1834, the Reformers throughout the Province once more carried the elections, and Halton again changed sides. On this occasion, Messrs. Caleb Hopkins and James Durand were returned. This Reform victory at the polls, a Canadian historian says, was "the knell of the Family Compact." But during the stormy session of 1835, they continued, nevertheless, to set at defiance the people's representatives, treating the demand for Responsible Government with obloquy and derision.

Becoming alarmed at the increasing excitement throughout the Colony, the British Government relieved Sir John Colborne, and sent out Sir Francis Bond Head late in the fall of 1835. He reached Toronto, *via* New York, near the end of January, 1836. This action appeared to indicate that the Imperial Government desired to redress the grievances of which the Province complained, the arrival of Sir Francis aroused the strongest hopes on the part of Reformers. We need not dwell upon what is a well-known matter of history. Sir Francis, after a slight dallying with Messrs. Baldwin, Rolph and Dunn, leading

Liberals, threw himself completely into the arms of the Family Compact, and entered upon a rash and needless struggle with the House of Assembly and all who opposed his individual wishes.

Finding the Assembly would not bend to his ideas, Sir Francis abruptly dissolved it on the 28th May, only four months after his arrival. The elections which followed were unusually bitter. The Governor himself, it is now generally admitted, acted in an unconstitutional and partizan manner, whilst the conduct of his advisers, under the influence of the political excitement, was characterised by a degree of violence and unscrupulousness which they doubtless regretted in calmer moments. Even in the usually peaceful districts of Dumfries, Waterloo, and Beverly, the contest was unusually turbulent.

Mr. Alexander Burnett was then in the prime of life, and his zealous advocacy of Responsible Government and other reforms sought by Mackenzie and the Reform Party, was at this time rapidly bringing him into notice. A few years later, he was regarded as the leading local advocate of the popular cause. His residence, on the banks of the river opposite where Goldie and McCulloch's foundry now is, was known far and wide as "Liberty Cottage," and for some time became the centre around which political magnates and movements revolved.

The style of Mr. Burnett as a speaker was well adapted to the times. It was characterized by sharp, vigorous home-thrusts, earnestly delivered, and clothed in language always impassioned, and frequently poetic. Despite a

rather strong tendency to imagery, he generally pleased, and often made a deep, and lasting impression upon his audience. His reputation spread to neighbouring districts, and his services on the political platform were often in request.

The tactics of Sir Francis Bond Head and the Family Compact carried all before them in the elections of 1836. The Conservative candidates for Halton, Messrs. Absalom Shade and William Chisholm were elected, and throughout the Province generally the Reformers were defeated. Messrs. Mackenzie, Bidwell, Perry, and other Reform leaders, lost their seats. The majority obtained by their party only two years before, was completely reversed. The Province, in consequence of this unfortunate blow to the popular cause, was thrown into a state of political despair bordering on revolution. How bitter were the feelings engendered, may be known by the following verses from "Rhymes for the People," published at the time :—

“ Up then ! for Liberty--for Right,  
Strike home ! The tyrants falter ;  
Be firm—be brave—let all unite,  
And despots' schemes must alter:  
Our King, our Government and Laws,  
While just, we aye shall love them ;  
But freedom's heaven-born, holier cause,  
We hold supreme above them.”



## CHAPTER XIV.

The Rebellion breaks out—News of the Battle of Gallows Hill received in Galt with surprise—Public feeling in Dumfries—The Union Jack taken off Mr. Dickson's house at night—The men of Dumfries called upon to muster—The bridge guarded by Galt Volunteers under Captain Rich—Men drilling for Duncombe's Army near Ayr—Arrests made by Galt and Fergus Volunteers near the Blenheim line—A Wife worth having—Samuel Lount said to have been hidden near Galt—The Galt Volunteers at Navy Island—Restoration of peace and order.

DESPAIRING of redress of the wrongs of the people of Upper Canada, either under the constitution or from the Imperial Government, Mackenzie, Bidwell, Rolph, and other members of their party, came to the conclusion that there was no other resort left but armed resistance to the Government. With this object in view, preparations were quietly made in different parts of the Province during the fall of 1837. In December the rising took place, when between seven and eight hundred men, under William Lyon Mackenzie, assembled at Montgomery's tavern, near Toronto. The battle of Montgomery's farm, or Gallows Hill, as it was called, speedily followed, with the dispersion of the Insurrectionists, and the temporary overthrow of their party and the reforms which they sought. These events, known to history as Mackenzie's Rebellion, threw the entire Province into the utmost excitement

News travelled slowly in those times, and the rebels had assembled before Toronto and been dispersed, before it was known in Galt. The intelligence was learned with surprise. Whilst many disapproved of the appeal to arms, much sympathy was felt for Mackenzie and the popular cause all through the settlement. This arose from no desire for separation from Great Britain, but because the redress of their political wrongs seemed impossible except by extreme measures. The redress of grievances, with Responsible Government under Great Britain, rather than Annexation to the United States, was undoubtedly the prevailing idea among the great majority of those disaffected.

How public feeling ran throughout Dumfries may be understood from a circumstance which occurred at the time. The authorities under Sir Francis Bond Head, at Toronto, wrote to Mr. Shade to ascertain the feelings of the people, having the idea that, if friendly, it might be well to call out the local Militia and put arms in their hands. Shade is reported to have replied, in effect, "that the inhabitants were mostly Scotch, mostly quiet and inoffensive, but it would be better not to put arms in their hands!"

On the other hand, Sir Francis Bond Head, and what had become the side of law and order, were actively and zealously supported. Not only did the Tory party of the district manifest much zeal in support of the Government, but the great body of Reformers considered Mackenzie had gone too far in taking up arms, and generally dis-

avowed the rising, although they sympathized with the man and the cause. Strong manifestations, and still stronger expressions, of loyalty to the Crown, were made by many in the township and village. Mr. William McColl, who was a teacher in Galt at the time, wrote a patriotic song\* on Mackenzie and "his rebel band," which was sung frequently afterwards by Mr. Walter Gowinlock and himself in different parts of the settlement.

---

\* Mr. Walter Gowinlock, Paris, has furnished us with this song in its entirety. It contains eight verses, the first and last of which will serve to show the feeling which pervaded the Loyalist Party of that time :

"O did ye hear the news of late  
Which thro' this Province flew, man,  
And warn'd our men to try the game  
They play'd at Waterloo, man ;  
All destitute of dread or fears,  
Militia men and volunteers,  
Like lightning flew, for to subdue  
The rebel loons, to crack their croons  
And pook their lugs an' a', man.

CHORUS :

Long life to Queen Victoria,  
Our Governor and a', man ;  
We'll rally round Britannia's flag,  
And fight like Britons a', man.

\* \* \* \* \*

"But where's the power Britannia's rights  
May tear or trample under ;  
Come if they dare, we'll make them reel,  
And feel Great Britain's thunder.  
She tam'd the power o' proudest France,  
And led Napoleon a dance,  
When she that Emperor did subdue :  
I wonder how'that rebel crew  
Dare clap their wings or crawl, man."

Chorus.

A little incident occurred during the fall of 1836, which, although really done for a lark, was long considered as possessing some political significance. For some little time before this, Mr. William Dickson, jr., had floated the Union jack from a flagstaff placed on his house on the hill-top, north of St. Andrew's Church. Two or three young men, with a view to some local excitement and fun, determined to take it down. Proceeding thither one dark night, one of them crawled to the roof of the house, and took down the flag; but, in the act of doing so, aroused Mr. Dickson, who gave vigorous chase.

Being a swift runner, Mr. Dickson was rapidly gaining upon the person with the flag, when the latter, by a clever ruse, managed to escape. Calling out, "Now, boys, we've got the long-legged ——," as if the whole thing was a plot to seize Mr. Dickson, that gentleman very naturally stopped, and retraced his steps to the house. The flag was mysteriously returned, so rumour says, but who took it down remains a secret locked in the bosoms of two or three persons to this day. Although merely a lark, it was set down for many a day as the result of disloyal tendencies on the part of some of Mackenzie's sympathizers.

Instructions speedily came from Toronto to the magistrates of the district, to put a guard on Galt bridge, in order to intercept Mackenzie, Lount, or other leaders in the insurrection, on whose heads £1,000 and £500 respectively had been set. It was thought the two ring-leaders mentioned had come in the direction of Galt. A

small military company was formed, which was called the Galt Volunteers, of which Mr. Thomas Rich was Captain; Æ. B. Gordon, Lieutenant; and Thomas G. Chapman, Ensign. They guarded Galt bridge night and day, and for several weeks the place assumed quite a martial appearance.

As Dr. Duncombe endeavoured to raise an insurgent force on Oakland Plains, near to Brantford, after the battle of Montgomery's Farm, the Government made efforts, for a time, to get as many of the provincial Militia under arms as possible. This was no easy job, as the great majority of the yeomanry had little affection for the Government, whilst military duty was not attractive even to the most extreme loyalists.

With this object in view, Messrs. Dickson and Shade publicly called upon the settlers of Dumfries to muster in Galt on a certain day. This order caused considerable consternation among their wives and families. An eye-witness relates how, in one house near Cedar Creek, on the muster day, he found the wives of nearly all the neighbours crying bitterly, under the fear that their husbands would be killed during the war, and themselves left desolate. The feeling of alarm and fear was wide-spread, but those settlers who came to the village were allowed to return to their homes the same night, much to their own gratification and that of their anxious families.

The only part of Dumfries in which companies were organized to assist the Rebellion, appears to have been in the neighbourhood of Smith's Creek, near Mudge's Mills,



as the village of Ayr was then called. The place of meeting was McBain's Mills (one mile beyond the village), and when the disaffected assembled, one morning in December, to proceed to join Dr. Duncombe's army at Oakland Plains, such a mustering of old rusty rifles and melting of bullets were never previously witnessed, at least in that quiet neighbourhood. On this particular occasion, about thirty persons assembled, but other squads were to follow.

Shortly before starting, two men appeared on the hill above the mills, who seemed to be cautiously surveying the gathering. One report says these were Capt. Rich and Lieut. Gordon, who had been sent with the Galt Volunteers to make certain arrests in the neighbourhood, and that the crowd, on learning who they were, disappeared on the double quick. Another statement is, that the men proved to be two of Mackenzie's comrades, who informed the incipient rebels of what had transpired since the defeat at Gallows Hill, and afterwards accompanied them to Oakland Plains. Which of these reports is most reliable, it is difficult at this late day to determine. But it is certain that in Dr. Duncombe's army, when it dispersed at Scotland, on Col. McNabb (afterwards Sir Allan), having decided to advance from Brantford and attack it, there were not a few men who had gone from the neighbourhood of Smith's Creek.

A company of volunteers was raised at Guelph and one at Fergus during the excitement, and the latter, under Capt. Wilson, was ordered to Galt to assist in taking away arms and making some arrests in the

neighbourhood of Mudge's Mills. Five men, whose names were Hill, Webb, Kenny, Foster, and Church, were supposed to be the ringleaders in that locality, and the magistrates issued warrants for their arrest, and placed them in the hands of Capt. Rich and Capt. Wilson. The Galt volunteers went the direct road to Mudge's Mills, and the Guelph company struck out towards the Blenheim line, as they were instructed to capture Hill, who lived in that township.

When arresting William Webb a funny incident occurred, which was often afterwards related at the expense of "Jamie" Fraser, of the British Hotel, one of the Galt volunteers. When they reached Webb's house, several neighbours' wives were assembled, talking over Rebellion matters, when private Henry McCrum was instructed to go to the barn and arrest Webb, whilst private Fraser was ordered to seize the wife of Kenny, one of the intended prisoners, lest she should manage to get to her husband's clearance and enable him to escape.

When Fraser went to take her, Mrs Kenny took to flight, and Fraser after her. Down the path from the house they both ran, but being a young, lithe, active woman, and not burdened with the fashionable skirts worn by the ladies of the present day, she bounded the fence like a deer, which Fraser essaying, failed to do, and came to grief very badly. Before he got over, the pursued had got a good start through the new and unlogged chopping. Knowing the best track, which Fraser occasionally lost, and floundered into a brush-heap or

marsh, she soon reached the bush and disappeared, and before Capt. Rich could reach Kenny's place, the bird and his brave wife had flown, and escaped capture. "Jamie" didn't hear the last of that chase for many a day!

When the volunteers returned to Galt they brought with them Horatio A. Hill, William Webb, and Alonzo Foster. They were examined in Galt before the Hon. Adam Ferguson, of Woodhill, and Absalom Shade, J. P., and sent to Hamilton for trial. At the March Assizes, 1838, no bill was found against Foster, and in October, Webb was found guilty, but was allowed his liberty on finding security to keep the peace for three years. Poor Hill was not so fortunate. He was sentenced to death, which was commuted to transportation for life, but his long confinement and hard sentence so told upon his health that he died in prison.\*

Several arrests were talked of in Galt but none were actually made. One of the most fearless, as he was the most out-spoken denouncer of the doings of the Family Compact and Sir Francis Bond Head, was Mr. Burnett, and one evening in the Queen's Arms, when strongly expressing his political opinions, it was proposed by one or two of the Loyalist party to arrest him, although he had done nothing but denounce wrongs which everyone now admits, and advocated nothing but what everyone now en-

---

\* Mr Sylvanus Wrigley, at present Collector of Dumfries, had sufficiently the courage of his opinions to join Mackenzie's Army. He was captured, and imprisoned for a considerable time.

joys and values. The strong political feelings of the locality being well known, the Tory party were generally anxious to avoid an extreme course, particularly as such conduct might, in the language of one still living, "explode a bomb-shell in their midst." They were dissuaded by Dr. Miller and Mr. John Young,\* the latter of whom strongly expressed his dissent, from interfering with Mr. Burnett, and confined themselves to bitter strictures upon that gentleman and other leading local lights of the opposite party.

It is maintained by a militia officer still living, that Samuel Lount, for many years member for Simcoe, and Mackenzie's chief lieutenant at Gallows Hill, was secreted for some days near Galt. It was suspected by the magistrates at the time, and the gentleman referred to always claims, that Lount could have been taken in or at least close to Galt, but that his arrest would have convicted others of high treason who had done nothing but harbour one who had been outlawed. A sharp look-out was kept, however.

---

\* Mr. John Young was born near Melrose, Scotland, in 1811, and emigrated to Canada in 1834. He first stopped at Dundas, but the same fall was induced to enter the employment of the Hon. William Dickson, at Galt. He died the 21st February, 1859, aged 48 years. In the obituary notice in the *Dumfries Reformer*, the writer of this volume said: "It becomes our melancholy duty to-day, to record the death of a kind and indulgent father . . . As a parent, he was kind, affectionate and indulgent. As a public servant, spirited, enterprising and independent. As a business man, honest and upright in all his dealings. As a neighbour, sociable, friendly and obliging— even to a fault. His frailties—which none of us are without—were of the head and not of the heart, whose generous impulses often involved him in trouble. He enjoyed an extended acquaintance, and his name will live green in the memories of numerous relatives and friends long after his remains have mingled with the clods of the valley."

Lount, who is said to have been part of the time in the then almost impenetrable swamp below the late Mr. Crombie's house, was, one Sunday morning, moved on to a farm house near Glenmorris. A local magistrate being notified, is said to have entered the front door of the house as Lount went out of the back door. He was conveyed by a member of a well-known South Dumfries family to Waterford, where he lay concealed in the hay-mow of Grover's Hotel, at the very time that Col. Wilson and men, of Simcoe, were on watch for him and others. It was amidst such hair-breadth escapes that Lount made his way to the Niagara frontier, where, within sight of the United States and safety, he was captured.

When Mackenzie established himself and the so-called Patriot Army on Navy Island, the Galt, Guelph, and Fergus volunteers went down to the Niagara frontier under command of Col. McNabb. Some of the Galt volunteers declined to go to the front, and the number which went was only about twenty men. They were conveyed down in farmers' waggons, which were impressed for the service. It was deemed a curious circumstance that the Guelph company was commanded by Capt. Poor, and the Galt one by Capt. Rich; on the road down, and when before Navy Island, this peculiarity in their captains' names afforded the men of the two companies a ground for puns and jokes innumerable.

One day the volunteers saw poor Samuel Lount brought through Chippewa as a prisoner, he having just previously been captured. The day being gusty, his cap blew off

into the river, when an old red nightcap was put upon his head to travel in ; whether intended or not, this was an indignity, but it was quite in harmony with the bitter state of feeling which prevailed at the time. On the 29th December was witnessed that terrific scene, the burning of the *Caroline*, and its wild plunge over Niagara Falls :—

“ On—wildly onward—sped the craft,  
As she swiftly neared the verge ;  
And the demon guards of the black gulf laughed,  
And chanted a hellish dirge ;  
And the booming waters roared anew,  
A wail for the dead and dying crew.”

On the 13th January, Gen. Van Rensellaer, who was in command of the rebels on Navy Island, determined to evacuate it. This he did immediately, and shortly afterwards the Canadian force under Col. McNabb, was released from duty at that point, and the Galt volunteers were permitted to return home. Capt. Rich and his force were heartily welcomed on their return.

Although some movements were afterwards made on the Detroit frontier, chiefly by American sympathizers, the evacuation of Navy Island, and the arrest of Mackenzie and Van Rensellaer for breach of the United States Neutrality Laws, practically terminated the Rebellion. Saving the trial of the insurgents, and the conviction of Lount and Matthews at Toronto, nothing further occurred to keep up the public excitement. Mr. Thomas Dalgliesh and others got up a largely signed petition in Dumfries, praying for the commutation of the death sentence on Lount and Matthews. It is believed that not

less than 30,000 persons throughout Upper Canada petitioned Sir George Arthur—who had succeeded Sir Francis Bond Head—to temper justice with mercy. But all efforts were unavailing. The unfortunate men were hung in Toronto on the 12th April, 1838.

Before the spring of 1838 closed, matters had assumed much of their old, orderly appearance, and the eyes of the people were turned to the expected arrival of Lord Durham, who had been appointed High Commissioner by the Imperial Government, with full power to grant Responsible Government, and redress all the grievances which had been the cause of the late outbreak.





## CHAPTER XV.

Visit of Sir George Arthur to Galt in 1839—Rather a cool reception—First Durham Meeting said to have been held in Galt—Memorable Meeting in Dundas—Procession from Dumfries and Galt—Speeches by Messrs. Burnett and Benn—The struggle ends in the triumph of Responsible Government—Dinner to the Hon. Wm. Dickson in Galt—Full report of his speech—The other guests present—First Agricultural Society—Its Officers—1840—The Rev. Dean Boomer—Galt Society in a flutter over a dashing young Englishman—The *Western Advertiser* that never appeared—The Knights of the Round Table—A most heartless swindle.

THE representatives of royalty who have visited Galt have been few and far between. During 1839, however, Sir George Arthur made a tour to certain parts of the Province. Among the places visited by him was Galt. Sir George and his suite came down from Guelph, and as the excitement of the Rebellion had not yet entirely passed away, it was desired by some of the leading villagers to make the reception of Her Majesty's representative as cordial as possible.

The vice-regal party put up at the Queen's Arms Hotel, then kept by Mr. Thomas G. Chapman. When the people from the surrounding country had assembled, which they did in large numbers, an address was presented to Sir George Arthur by Mr. Shade on behalf of the people of the locality, whilst an anvil and sundry pine logs, in the absence of cannon, were pressed into duty to fire an appro-



priate salute. His Excellency stood on the steps of the hotel, and Mr. Chapman held an umbrella over his head, during the reply to the address, which was of a gracious and conciliatory character. He expressed himself well pleased with the fertility of the country, and was very complimentary in his references to the village, the beauty of its situation having particularly attracted his attention.

It is said on reliable authority, that His Excellency was not received very cordially by the bulk of his auditors; so much, indeed, was this the case, that when the procession of farmers in their waggons accompanied him as far as the toll-gate on his way to Dundas, although some flags were flying, yet when Sir George stood up in his carriage, with head uncovered, whilst the teams turned down the road towards Preston, not a cheer was uttered, nor scarcely a hat lifted in reply! This was hardly good manners, but is said to have been intended to show, that whilst the people honoured Her Majesty's representative, they did not feel much respect for Sir George himself on account of his opposition to political reforms, and his unbending attitude towards Lount and Matthews, and others who had been concerned in the late rising

The farmers of Dumfries and Waterloo gained one advantage by this visit. Sir George Arthur was greatly pleased with the large and powerful horses he saw them driving, and there being a very considerable force of British troops in the Province at the time, horses were very much in request for military service. On the recommen-

dation of Sir George, army officers shortly afterwards arrived in Galt, and bought up quite a number of fine animals.

Lord Durham was appointed Her Majesty's Lord High Commissioner to Canada in May, 1838, to inquire into its political grievances. Immediately on his arrival, he took every opportunity to ascertain the opinions of the people, and an era of petitions and public meetings, chiefly asking for Responsible Government, speedily ensued. Dumfries was one of the first localities in the Province to move. Petitions were soon drawn up and numerous signed in favour of the introduction of Responsible Government, the disconnection of Church and State, and the long agitated reform of abuses.

When the contents of Lord Durham's famous report became known, it is claimed that the first Durham meeting (the name which all these meetings went by), was held in Galt. It is believed it took place on the April fair day, 1839, and was called, in the not unusual way for those times, by sending a bell-man round the streets to make the announcement. It took place in the Township Hall, Mr. David Thornton being chairman. The speech of the occasion was made by Mr. Burnett, and all the resolutions, which had been drafted in "Liberty Cottage," already referred to, were declared carried. Indeed, there was no open opposition, but political opponents were ready enough to declare that sufficient notice had not been given, and that it was, in fact, a hole-and-corner affair.

The greatest of all the Durham meetings held in this part of Upper Canada, came off during the summer at Dundas. There was an immense attendance, many persons being present from distant parts. Galt and Dumfries were largely represented, and the procession of teams which went down was over one mile long. The foremost waggon contained Messrs. David Potter, Thomas Dalglish, Alex. Burnett, Arthur Burnett, Thomas Veitch, James Oliver, Andrew Elliott and Duncan Shepherd. Paul Huffman painted the Galt flags, which were tastefully done. At Flamboro' they were met by the Reformers of Dundas, with a fine band and splendid blue silk banner, who accompanied them to the place selected for the meeting.

The Hon. James Crooks was chairman, and when the proceedings opened, the immense attendance, the numerous banners and devices, and the deep interest manifested in the proceedings, attested how much the people were in earnest in support of Lord Durham's propositions. Among the mottoes were the following: "Down with the Family Compact," "Lord Durham's Report, the whole Report, and nothing but the Report," and "The British Constitution and Responsible Government." Dr. Thomas (the late Sheriff) of Hamilton, Mr. William Notman, Dundas, and Mr. Caleb Hopkins, were among the principal speakers. Messrs. Burnett and Benn, of Galt, also spoke in support of the resolutions adopted by the meeting.

Mr. Burnett's speech at Dundas on this occasion, is described as one of his happiest efforts, and is remembered

to this day by some who were present, as at once forcible eloquent, and impressive. Our genial friend, Benn, was more than himself on the occasion; but at one point in his remarks caused much merriment by describing himself as a native of Galt born amidst the green hills of old Ireland! This bull was heartily enjoyed by his friends.

When the cavalcade reached Flamboro', on the way home, an impromptu meeting was held to decide whether they would not remain over night and attend the Durham meeting to be held in Hamilton next day. As it had been an excessively hot day, and every one was exceedingly tired, it was decided to continue their road homeward, which proved a wise decision, for the Hamilton meeting was the occasion of a riot, in which not a few heads were broken and eyes damaged.

The result of these long and bitter political struggles throughout the Province, in which Dumfries and Galt bore so honorable a part, was the triumph of Responsible Government, so long and earnestly advocated by the Reform party. Lord Durham's recommendations were greatly strengthened by the meetings held in their favor, and at the union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841, the old system of irresponsible rule passed away, and the blessings of Constitutional liberty so long struggled for, were at last obtained.

During the spring of 1839, it was rumoured that the Hon. William Dickson was about to come up from Niagara to visit Dumfries and Galt—possibly for the last time—and the settlers determined to avail themselves of

the opportunity to give public expression to the feelings of respect which were entertained for him throughout the district. A public meeting was held in Galt, on the 22nd June, at which Mr. Shade presided, to consider the matter. It was well attended, and it was decided that the demonstration should take the form of a public dinner, to be held on such a day as would suit Mr. Dickson's convenience. The feeling which pervaded the meeting is well exemplified in the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:—

“That the Township of Dumfries has experienced a career of prosperity which will challenge competition with any in the Province, whether as regards the amount of its population, or the happiness independence, and comfort which they enjoy : That the settlers of this Township, generally, are under a heavy debt of gratitude to its original proprietor, the Hon. Wm. Dickson, not only for that indulgence and considerate lenity for which he has been always distinguished, but for the parental and effective aid and assistance with which he strengthened the hands of very many of the earliest of his settlers, and enabled them to contend with, and overcome, the manifold difficulties encompassing those who, without means, take up land and locate themselves in the woods : That this meeting having learned, with lively satisfaction, that it is the intention of that highly respected gentleman of shortly visiting this place, they feel desirous of availing themselves of that opportunity of showing him a public mark of respect, by soliciting the honour of his company at a dinner, to be given by the inhabitants of Dumfries : That the chairman do convey to the Hon. Wm. Dickson, a copy of this resolution, requesting to know if he would be pleased to accede to their wishes ; and if so, what day would suit his convenience : That thirty-four gentlemen of the Township do compose a committee for the purpose of carrying the object of the meeting into effect.”

Mr. Shade having communicated\* with Mr. Dickson, that gentleman decided upon the 13th July, as the day on which the dinner should come off, that being the occasion of his seventieth birth-day.

---

\*The following is the correspondence which passed between Messrs. Shade and Dickson, in connection with this interesting event :—

DEAR SIR,—The inhabitants of the Township of Dumfries, feeling desirous of tendering you some mark of respect, and showing their approbation of the policy and principles you have pursued in settling the Township, as well as some mark of gratitude for the numerous kind acts and liberal support given to very many of the settlers—knowing of no more effectual and respectful manner of doing so, than offering you a public dinner, to be given by the inhabitants generally—a meeting for the purpose of taking the subject into consideration was convened at the Queen's Arms, on Saturday, the 22nd instant, when the enclosed resolutions were unanimously adopted, appointing a committee of thirty-four to carry the same into effect, a copy of which I, as chairman, was directed to transmit to you, and beg you would accept the invitation, and name the earliest day that would suit your convenience to favour us with your company—allowing a sufficient time, after receiving your answer, to make the necessary arrangements—say a fortnight from to-day or to-morrow.

Truly yours,

(Signed) ABSALOM SHADE.

To the Hon. Wm. Dickson, Niagara.

---

NIAGARA, 26th June, 1839.

MY DEAR SIR—I am made acquainted by your letter of the 24th instant, with the intention, on the part of a numerous and respect-

When the auspicious day arrived, there was a large attendance from Waterloo, Beverly, Puslinch, Guelph, as well as Galt and Dumfries, many persons coming from long distances to unite in this graceful compliment to the

---

able body of the inhabitants of the Township of Dumfries, to offer, for my acceptance, the spontaneous expression of their approbation of the policy and principles that I have pursued in the settlement of that Township, to be testified by a public dinner, politely proposed to be given upon some day soon—when it will suit my convenience to receive this very flattering mark of their respect.

I have, from age and from other considerations, withdrawn myself from all business or avocations for the last few years; but I entertain, and shall always continue to feel, a lively interest in all that relates to Dumfries; and I have especial pleasure in receiving the evidence of the satisfaction and prosperity which seems to prevail among its inhabitants.

I do not feel myself, perhaps, exactly prepared to undergo the excitement that usually ensues upon public occasions; but as I shall chiefly meet with old acquaintances and friends, I am disposed to look upon it as an easy and agreeable undertaking; and you will therefore be pleased to convey to the gentlemen of the committee, my cordial acceptance of their kind invitation.

As it has been politely left to me to determine the time most convenient to receive this compliment, I would respectfully propose that the dinner should take place on the 13th proximo—the accidental association of that day, in preference to another, having the peculiar advantage of being the day of my birth, and the day upon which I shall have arrived at the age usually allotted to man.

And am, my dear sir,

Your very humble servant,

(Signed) WILLIAM DICKSON.

To Absalom Shade, Esq.

founder of the settlement. "When the dinner hour arrived," said a writer at the time, "the assemblage was such as may be safely asserted never was surpassed in any of the rural districts of this province on any like occasion. It was truly gratifying to those whose hearts are susceptible to generous impulses, to see so many intelligent and worthy individuals meet together, all animated by one enthusiastic feeling of paying homage to the worth and virtues of their venerable and distinguished guest, on the seventieth anniversary of his natal day—a gentleman who may be truly designated as the father of this township, having, twenty-three years ago this month, first pitched his camp in a desolate and trackless wilderness, which, under his judicious management and fostering influence is now the abode of a large and industrious and a thriving population, and embracing within its limits the three prosperous villages of Galt, Paris, and St. George. Such a sincere and heartfelt demonstration of respect as was this day exhibited to this gentleman, will long be remembered by the inhabitants of this township, with feelings of the most lively satisfaction."

The dinner was held in a spacious and handsomely decorated booth, which was erected on the west side of the Queen's Square, the particular spot being now enclosed by a fence, in the form of a parallelogram, immediately west of the band stand. A tasteful marquee was also erected for the ladies, from the top of which the British ensign proudly waved.



The chair was appropriately filled by Mr. Shade. The guest of the day, the Hon. Wm. Dickson, sat on his right hand, and next to him were Mr. William and Mr. Walter Dickson; on the chairman's left sat the Hon. Adam Ferguson of Woodhill, and Mr. Robert Dickson. There were four vice-chairmen, Messrs. Hiram Capron, George Stanton, Robert McNaught and Thomas Rich. Dr. Hamilton of Flamboro', Mr. Wm. Notman, of Dundas, and other prominent gentlemen, were also among the guests. The dinner was served by Mr. Chapman, of the Queen's Arms, in an admirable manner.

After full justice had been done to the viands, and the Harmonic Society of Galt had favoured the company with music, the standard toasts were proceeded with. They were as follow:—The Queen; the Queen Dowager and the Royal Family; Sir George Arthur; Sir John Colborne, Commander of the Forces; Lord Hill and the Army; Lord Minto and the Navy; the Duke of Wellington and the British Ministry. We have been unable to discover who the members of the Harmonic Society were, but they added much to the success of the dinner, singing, as they did, appropriate songs or glees between each toast.

The toast of the day—the Hon. William Dickson—was received with rapturous and long-continued applause. The song of “The Old English Gentleman” followed, and after the applause had subsided, the stout-hearted old gentleman, still active mentally, made a vigorous speech

in reply to his health, the following report of which has been carefully preserved :

“ Mr. President, and Gentlemen,—When your chairman communicated to me at Niagara, and I perused the resolutions of the public meeting of the inhabitants of the Township of Dumfries, held at Galt, the 22nd of June last, my feelings may be easier imagined than described. It was a soothing and grateful consideration to receive such a mark of respect from a body of men with whom I have so long had intercourse in the various occupations incidental to the arduous and laborious undertaking of settling new lands. The Township of Dumfries, containing 94,305 acres of land, originally formed part of the Indian possessions on the Grand River. I made a purchase of the property as far back as the year 1811, and in the year 1816 I commenced the settlement.\* This tract, at the time, was actually a wilderness, as many now present may remember. Embarrassments and difficulties beset me—despondency sometimes showed her unwelcome visage. However, the interest on the debt due by me was regularly discharged, and the payments made by you enabled me to rub off all encumbrances and gradually to pursue a system of accommodation and benevolence. When a new comer presented himself with a family, I did not make the enquiry so much for money as I did to ascertain if the party was honest, industrious, and laborious. Assistance in cattle, provisions and other necessaries was given, and under a personal supervision the Township has become the residence and abode of a happy and wealthy population, seldom or never having recourse to the ruinous

---

\* If Mr. Dickson be correctly reported in this speech, it would appear that he purchased Dumfries as early as 1811. We have, in our first chapter, followed the official Registry Office records, which indicate that he purchased it from the Hon. Thomas Clarke, in 1816. Possibly he bargained for it in 1811, but only got the deed from Clarke in 1816. Another theory in reconciliation of the differing dates is, that Clarke's purchase, in 1811, was really made on Mr. Dickson's behalf. As we have stated in the first chapter, however, the official records indicate that the township was not acquired by Mr. Dickson till 1816.

and compulsory process of law, during a period of 25 years. In recurring to many incidents during so long a period, and to a strict self-examination, I am afraid you may have overrated my merits ; for, in rendering you assistance, and in advancing your views, I was not negligent or unmindful of my own, and now my most sanguine anticipations have been realized.

“ In all my difficulties, a moral principle and a religious sentiment sustained me. Many of you have had your days and nights of gloom—you have encountered privations, toil, trouble and up-hill exertions, but many of you have attained the summit of your wishes, and others are in a progressive advance. Have I not reason to be proud of such a class of men, of generous mind and intelligence, who can feel such gratitude and express such sentiments as are embodied in your resolutions ?

“ Your chairman has equally contributed to the advancement of the Township, and I owe him this public acknowledgment for his active and intelligent co-operation. As your Representative, also, in the Provincial Parliament, he has been of signal benefit to your local interests, and has, I think, in his politics, pursued a consistent and satisfactory course.

“ Perhaps it would be most advisable, in the present convivial meeting, to forbear the subject of politics, as you are all aware that Conservatism is my text—upon which, at another time, I could enlarge with advantage. However, I am of opinion that it would not be inappropriate upon the present occasion to inform you that in the year 1791, the Province of Quebec, conquered from the French, was divided into two provinces—Upper and Lower Canada—after which the English laws were introduced in Upper Canada, under our Constitutional Act. I was then at Niagara, when General Simcoe first addressed the assembled Legislature ; and well do I remember the joy and enthusiasm which pervaded all classes and ranks, on such a boon being granted.

“ The Constitution and form of Government that was at that time conferred on the Canadas has worked well in practice in Upper

Canada, and would have worked equally well in Lower Canada, had not the malignant, ambitious, and selfish French demagogues poisoned the minds of an illiterate peasantry—inducing them at length to throw off the mask of moderation, and factiously to resort to insurrection, treason and rebellion. For this has their Constitution been suspended for a time, to give the mother country the best means of judging what form of government will be most suitable under all existing circumstances. The Imperial Parliament are now deliberating on this important subject, and the remedy proposed is by the junction of the two provinces, which, I think, ought never to have been divided. It will require practical statesmen, of large and comprehensive minds, to meet the difficulties that present themselves, in the application of a new system for two Provinces that have hitherto been governed by separate Legislatures. If a union does take place it cannot be concealed from reflecting minds that, in the amalgamation of the two races, much vituperation and agitation will exist for a time, and produce collision in the Chambers of Legislation. Yet I can devise no other alternative, if we are to remain subjects, and transmit to our children the principles of British rule unimpaired and inviolate.

“ On the subject of the disposal of the waste lands of the Crown, I do not think that it would well comport with my place in society to throw reflections on any of the different ministers or officers who successively have had the control and direction of this department of the Government. It is enough that we know the system has been faulty. I am convinced the quantum of human happiness would have been enlarged had less exceptional measures been adopted. The lands acquired by conquest belong to the nation, and are not the *peculium* of the Sovereign, who is the gracious Trustee of her subjects, and through whom all honours and rewards flow in a benignant stream. Who, then, can be more properly objects of that bounty than the descendants of those men whose valour and prowess achieved the conquest of Quebec, and added another gem to the British diadem.

“ I could, at some more convenient time, enlarge on this subject, and I might, perhaps, to assist in directing the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the adoption of a system of emigration from home, on well-digested principles of local knowledge and benevolent views. In the meantime, I shall only offer a few observations. Many of you whom I now address are emigrants, who may remember the anxieties and privations you endured before you made a furrow in the soil you now cultivate. An emigrant should be forwarded on immediately to his location township, his little money carefully husbanded, and the lands sold to him at a much reduced rate to what has hitherto been exacted, and at such a price as the settlers may reasonably look forward to pay, and in many instances should be given as a gratuity, where a numerous family may warrant that measure.

“ In maturing any contemplated plan, a divided or general responsibility should be guarded against, and care taken not to employ too many of the expensive and unproductive classes, such as Commissioners, Agents, Secretaries, Clerks and Attorneys. I managed without the aid of any of these functionaries. It would be painful at this time to comment on the disaffection of some worthless men during the disturbances that we have been recently exposed to. I could give no information other than you already possess. All such are daily becoming victims of their own nefarious conduct and projects. As Upper Canadians, we looked upon the inhabitants of the United States as of the same Anglo-Saxon race, and most assuredly did not expect, in a time of any domestic difficulty or distress, to be attacked and worried by a people who claim Shakespeare, Milton and Newton as their ancestors, and who derive from the same source their literature, law, religion, language, and all manner of civilization, and I feel persuaded that if Washington, Hamilton, and the great men who acted with them in constructing the Constitution of the United States, could be permitted to revisit this earth during the present crisis of public affairs in that country, they would, in conformity with the great character they supported

for honour and sincerity throughout their lives, naturally and indignantly expostulate with the President and Congress for their apathy and protracted forbearance in the passage of their Neutrality Bill, which has till lately been inoperative, and the punishment inadequate to the heinous nature of the offence. That affected sympathy, constantly bruted in our ears, is sheer cant, to mask the ulterior objects of the brigands ; and their halls of Justice, and the form of Legislation, are not exempt from that mawkish and puling phraseology. It has been said that Mr. Clay, a distinguished member of the Senate of the United States, has presumed to prophecy that the Canadas would fall into the Union, in the common course of events, to use his own language, '*like the drop of a ripe pear.*' May it not be reasonably asked why the accomplishment of his vaticination should not be allowed naturally to fulfil itself, instead of thrusting upon us laws and institutions which we, as a people, are unwilling to receive, deeming our own worthy of far higher respect and veneration.

“ When history shall faithfully pourtray the atrocious crimes committed by banditti on unoffending colonists, no time will blot out the record of these barbarities. Reflecting on the change in the national character of the descendants of British subjects, I am almost warranted in adopting an opinion that the elective principle, carried on to an extreme stretch, has changed the pulse of men and inoculated the people of the United States with principles destructive of liberty and good government, and that the time may yet arrive, when, on the revolving wheels of their government, the clog of despotism may be found not to be far distant from that of democracy, and when civil broils and a servile war may madden to a contest, which, for the sake of humanity, may kind Providence in his mercy avert. I have heard much in my time of grievances, but I can conscientiously declare that I think we have as few in Upper Canada as in any country under the sun. A residence of fifty-five years in the Province, and a seat in the Legislative Council for twenty-three, authorize me to claim some knowledge of our institutions,

having in the course of my life in this Province both practised and administered the law, without at any time receiving any emolument from, or giving any pledge to His Majesty's Government, beyond the duties of a good subject. I may, therefore, I think, not improperly claim to be considered an approved authority on such a subject. If the people of Upper Canada are not happy and contented, it must mainly be their own fault. Our Courts of Justice are open to the humblest individual, and our Judges are conspicuous for the honourable and conscientious discharge of their duties. I know of nothing so important to liberty and the preservation of our rights, and I single this out to display the purity and uprightness of the Government under which we live.

“ I have now done with public and general subjects. I shall take leave to speak merely for a few moments shortly of myself. I was born at Dumfries, Scotland, in the year 1769, and this day is the anniversary of my birth. I have attained the advanced age of 70 years ; the future can only be a remnant, and should be devoted to high and solemn purposes. I trust when that remnant of time shall likewise be run out, that I may be found prepared for the great change that all men must sooner or later submit to. I have now only to announce to all my friends here assembled, the heartfelt expression of my gratitude to them for all their kindness, and my humble gratitude to God for permitting me, in the midst of my family, and at this late period of my life, to enjoy health and strength sufficient to receive and acknowledge the honour and approbation you have this day conferred upon me.”

This speech of Mr. Dickson, it need scarcely be said, was enthusiastically received—indeed, to use the language of one who was present on the occasion, it concluded amidst “thundering applause.” Speeches, in reply to the healths of the other guests present, were made by the Hon. Adam Ferguson, Messrs. Robert, William, and Wal-

ter Dickson, and Mr. Notman, who replied on behalf of the Hon. James Crooks, who had been unable to attend. Speeches were also made by Mr. Shade and other residents of the locality, during which many interesting and entertaining stories were related of the early days of settlement. These were listened to with rapt attention, and greatly added to the enjoyment of the occasion, the proceedings of which were prolonged to a late hour. The whole affair passed off most successfully, and was creditable alike to the settlers of Dumfries and Galt, and the honoured founder of the settlement to whom the compliment was paid.

Shortly after this dinner, steps were taken to form an Agricultural Society, which was successfully accomplished on the 24th August, 1839. It was called the Dumfries Agricultural Society, and on its organization, twenty-two rules were adopted. The ninth provided that "The Show shall be held the first year in Galt, the second in Paris, the third in Galt, and the fourth year in St. George, and so on, being held in Galt every alternate year, and in Paris and St. George successively in the intervening years." The last rule which was adopted, would be deemed rather a strange one at the present day. It was as follows:—"Politics shall be entirely excluded at any meeting of the Society, whether general or of committee, on pain of expulsion of the member who shall attempt to introduce the same." The first office-bearers of the Society were—



President.....	Mr. William Dickson.
Vice-Presidents.....	{ Mr. David Buchan, Mr. Absalom Shade.
Treasurer.....	Mr. Æneas B. Gordon.
Secretary.....	Mr. John Miller.

Directors—Messrs. John Thomson, Allan Henderson, John Telfer, Hiram Capron, Robert Kirkwood, Daniel McPherson, Robert Christie, George Stanton, David Ellis, John Gowinlock, John McKenzie, Thomas Rich, Robert Ballingal, H. V. S. Maus, John McNaught, William Brittain, James Geddes, and William Batters.

During the year 1840, a notable addition was made to the clergy of Galt in the person of the Rev. Michael Boomer, now Dean of Huron. He was born at Hill Hall, County Down, Ireland, and was educated at Belfast and Trinity College, Dublin. He first preached in Galt in the old Township Hall, which was then unplastered, and Mr. Glennie supplied, with his violincello, the place of an organ. The following year the present Episcopalian church was commenced, and on its completion, Dean Boomer was placed in charge of it. Bishop Strachan visited Galt on this occasion, and consecrated the church and cemetery. The new church\* was deemed quite an ornament to the village.

Dr. Boomer, who received the degree of LL.D. from Trinity College, Dublin, continued to labour in Galt until

---

\* The expense of this church was chiefly borne by the Dicksons and Mr. Shade. The mason-work of the building was done by Mr. James Fraser.

the close of 1872—a period of thirty-two years—and built up a large and influential congregation. He removed to London on becoming Dean of Huron in that year. As he happily survives, and is so widely known, it is not necessary to say more than that Dean Boomer is a gentleman of acknowledged talent and culture, and that his long and early connection with Galt is pleasantly remembered by many of other denominations besides his own.

The first Methodist Church in Galt was begun about this period, by the zeal and liberality of Mr. Isaac Sours. Having purchased from Mr. Chapman the woollen factory on South Water Street, he determined to put up a frame building on the opposite side of the street, but a little further south, the lower story to be used for his workmen, and the upper for a meeting house. Prior to this, meetings had been held in the old school at the head of Main Street, and it seems strange to learn at the present day, when the Methodist body has attained to such prominence in Canada, that at first the school-house was obtained with difficulty for these meetings. Mr. Sours\* frequently conducted the services himself in the meeting-house erected on Water Street,—which is still standing—and none who ever heard him on these occasions, especially

---

\* Many characteristic stories of Mr. Sours might be related. On one occasion, after an interesting sermon, he found a man asleep when taking up the collection. Gently shaking his shoulder, he presented the plate and said, in an audible whisper, "pay for your lodgings, sir." The man was greatly ashamed and humiliated; but the keen reproof was deserved, and it probably prevented ever after his indulgence of such a bad habit as sleeping in church.

in prayer, will ever forget the extraordinary energy and zeal which characterized his utterances. Several years after this, Mr. Sours (chiefly) put up the New Connexion Chapel, on Dickson Street, the Wesleyans the chapel now used as the Collegiate Girls' School, and the Primitive Methodists, the building now belonging to the Young Men's Christian Association. All these bodies are now happily united.

The following year (1841) more than the proverbial ripple, indeed it may be said a wave of excitement, was caused in Galt society, by the arrival in the village of one John Philip Hayman, a dashing young Englishman, evidently well educated, and well versed in the ways of the world. He claimed to be related to a celebrated English Professor, was in the prime of youthful vigour, handsome in appearance, faultlessly dressed, and exceedingly *suave* in his manner. He immediately became the lion of the village.

Hearing that a newspaper had been talked of, Mr. Hayman declared it was the very thing for him, and he would start one as soon as materials could be obtained. This rendered Hayman a bigger lion than ever. Correspondence for a press and types was promptly opened with Montreal. In the meantime, whilst getting ready to issue *The Western Advertiser*, Mr. Hayman gave a grand dinner on his birthday, and followed it up with a lecture on Elocution, in the Village Hall, which two circumstances tended still further to place him on the topmost wave of popularity.

Not wishing to wait till the winter was over, Mr. Hayman induced Mr. Chapman to undertake the long journey to Montreal, to bring up the press and types, giving him letters to certain persons in that city who were to supply them. Mr. Chapman's departure for Montreal on this errand was a red-letter day in the history of the village. Whilst waiting for his return with the materials for the coming newspaper, Mr. Hayman was not idle. He had to get endorsers for his drafts on his wealthy "grandfather's executor," he ran up bills at the Queen's Arms and elsewhere rapidly, and he borrowed freely until he could go to Hamilton and draw some of his funds. And, to make a long story short, one day he was suddenly called to Toronto by pressing business, took his departure abruptly, and that was the last ever seen in Galt of the talented, handsome, and *suave* John Philip Hayman.

There were a number of gentlemen in the village who were then known as "the Knights of the Round Table." Among them were Messrs. Adam Ainslie, Geo. Watson, Dr. Miller, Æ. B. Gordon, William Kidd, Adam Ferrie, and others. They received the above soubriquet, as is learned from an interesting letter written by the gentleman first-named, in consequence of meeting almost nightly around a large round table in the Queen's Arms sitting-room, where politics, local gossip, games and conviviality, were indulged in. These meetings, as described by Mr. Ainslie, were "indeed *Noctes Ambrosianæ*," but at no period were the "Knights of the Round Table" in higher

feather than when Mr. Hayman joined the happy circle. When, therefore, the mask was thrown off, and that worthy stood forth as a brazen swindler and forger, the Knights felt most keenly the imposition practised upon them and the villagers generally. This feeling was heightened, in some cases, by the recollection of endorsements given and money loaned. Those not among the sold, however, made much fun over the sudden exit of the gay and festive Hayman, and indulged in measureless banter about his dinners and lectures, and *The Western Advertiser* that never appeared!

To Mr. Chapman, unfortunately, as well as to some of the other victims, it was no laughing matter. When he got to Montreal, to which he drove all the way with his horses and sleigh, Mr. Chapman found that no presses and types could be obtained with the letters which he had. Not till then had a suspicion crossed his mind as to Hayman's *bona fides*, but he started on his long journey homewards full of disagreeable forebodings. His worst fears were confirmed. On reaching Galt, he found not only Hayman's large bills unpaid, but that the heartless swindler had sent him on a fool's errand of four hundred miles during the rigours of winter, and all at his own expense.



## CHAPTER XVI.

Disruption of the Church of Scotland—First Fire Company formed—Its officers—Erection and burning of the Dickson Mills—Galt Thespian Amateurs—A Monk who was not solemn—The Elections of 1841 and '44—Local leaders of the two Parties—Mr. Francis McElroy—How Burns was quoted for the Bible—Webster beats Durand by eight votes—The *Dumfries Courier* started in 1844—Origin of the *Galt Reporter*—Discussion, in 1845, between Dr. Bayne and Dr. Liddell—Erection of Old Knox Church—Dr. Bayne's death—His successor—Other Ministers of Galt—New Schools and Teachers.

THE summer of 1842 witnessed the departure of the Rev. Dr. Bayne on a visit to his native land. He went partly on account of his health, and partly to fulfil a commission from the Provincial Presbyterian Synod, to induce ministers to come out and occupy the many fields of usefulness opening up in Upper Canada. The agitation of the disruption of the Church of Scotland was then approaching a crisis. Dr. Bayne was present at the famous discussions in Edinburgh in the spring of 1843, and under his leadership, in 1844, the disruption of the Church in Canada also took place.

The first Fire Company was organized in Galt early in 1843. A small engine was procured from New York City, and proved a rather poor affair; but its arrival in the village was deemed an event of no slight importance, and

much interest was manifested in getting up the Company, nearly all the leading citizens enrolling their names as members. The first officers elected were as follows :—

Chief Engineer—Mr. James K. Andrews.\*

First Lieutenant—Mr. Timothy S. Treadwell.

Second Lieutenant—Mr. Sydney Smith.

Secretary—Mr. Henry McCrum.

From its organization onwards, Galt Fire Company rendered good service for many a year, costing the village little except the engine-house and apparatus, and a modest sum occasionally for the bright scarlet coats in which the members used to delight to appear. The first time the services of the company were required was not long after its formation, when the dwelling of Mr. Isaac Sours, on South Water Street, took fire, and was totally consumed. Hand-engines were used until 1873, when one of Ronald and Co's steamers was purchased at a cost of \$4,000, and the company placed on a new basis, the members being decreased in number and paid a small honorarium for their services.

The foundries of Galt, which have for thirty years been among its principal manufacturing establishments, took their rise about this period. The one on Water Street (now Cowan & Co's), was begun by Mr. Duncan Fisher, in

---

\* Mr. Andrews was at this time one of the principal business men in Galt, having carried on milling, mercantile, the foundry and other businesses. He was born in Canandaigua, New York and came to Galt with his mother, the first Mrs. Shade, when quite young. He died on the 12th November, 1861, in his 54th year, and was an exceedingly genial, kind-hearted man,

the fall of 1842, and Crombie's Foundry, which was first situated on the north side of Mill Creek, immediately south of the Dumfries Mills, commenced casting during 1844. This was the origin of the Dumfries Foundry, now owned by Goldie and McCulloch, the high reputation of which extends to every Province of the Dominion. The removal from the east to the west side of the river took place in 1847. The first steam-engine erected in Galt was placed in Elliott's Distillery in the winter of 1844, and it was also the first one constructed by Mr. John Gartshore, of Dundas. Since then the number of steam-engines turned out of the foundries of Galt has been legion.

By agreement with the Dicksons, Mr. James B. Ewart of Dundas, commenced to erect the well-known Dickson Mills during the year 1842. The work was promptly and efficiently done, and at the same time a woollen mill and saw-mill were put in operation adjoining them. Two gentlemen who have ever since been prominent citizens of the town came here as employees of Mr. Ewart, when the grist mills were completed. These were Mr. Adam Ker, who was manager of the business, and Mr. Richard Blain, who acted as chief miller.

These mills had not been many months in operation, when misfortune overtook them. During the month of November, 1843, a fire broke out in the woollen mill, which stood between the grist and saw mills. The fire bell promptly rang the alarm; the villagers were soon upon the spot. But the little engine then in use proved inefficient. In spite of the most energetic efforts, which



were successful for a time, the fire spread to the eaves of the grist mill, and by degrees the large and valuable buildings became a mass of flames. This was the most extensive fire which had ever occurred in Galt up to this time, and the reflection of the flames was seen for a long distance. Mr. Ewart had, under his agreement, to rebuild the mills again at his own expense.

This locality appears to have always had a weakness for theatricals, for an organization under the modest title of the "Galt Thespian Amateurs" was effected during the summer of 1843, and broke out into open performance towards the fall months. The chief Thespians were Messrs John Dodds, James Allen, John Scott, Dominick Ramore, Henry Smith, James Smith, Archibald Buchanan, Wm. Snow, Wm. Hearle, Jesse Thornton, Henry Aldous, and Washington Wood. These gentlemen took the different characters in the plays, Mr. John McAuslan acted as prompter, and the orchestra, and a capital one it was, was composed of Messrs. Glennie, Pembroke, and Wilsden, who will be remembered by those with good memories, as most excellent musicians.

The Thespians played in the old Firemen's Hall, and invariably to crowded houses. Among the plays they presented were: *The Castle Spectre*, with *Strap, the Cobbler*, as an after-piece; next came *The Mountaineers*, with the farce of *The Devil among the Crockery*, the very name of which threw the *garçons* of the village into a state of excited interest; and then followed *The Secret Panel*, *The*

*Illustrious Stranger, No Song, no Supper*, and several others of an amusing character.

The scenery was well painted. Mr. Glennie, who had accommodated the pioneer company six or seven years before, furnished a library, grove, and kitchen scene. The drop curtain was painted by one Telfer, and was an elaborate affair, consisting of a well executed picture of Edinburgh Castle, with a dragoon on a black charger in the foreground, below the towering castle walls.

Mr. Dodds was the leader and chief spirit of this amusing combination, and he and several others took their parts remarkably well. In the play of *The Castle Spectre*, the chief characters were taken as follows: Earl of Osmay, —John Dodds; the Monk—John Scott; Motley, the Jester—James Allen; Lord Percival—James Smith (then a clerk with John Davidson); Sabi Saib, the black slave—Dominick Ramore; Angelica—Archibald Buchanan; and the Cook—William Hearle, or, as he was generally known, Billy Hearle.

It is impossible at the present day, when so many entertainments of all kinds are open to the public, to realize the intense interest and amusement which these performances created. The villagers constantly turned out in full force, and the comedies which were presented, created a merriment which was as universal as it was unaffected.

Among not a few amusing characters presented by the Thespians, probably none was more successful than that of the Monk, in the play of the *Spectre*. As already stated, this part was taken by the late Mr. John Scott, and it was

an open secret that he had borrowed from a leading Barrister a pair of pantaloons of inordinate dimensions, in order to make a successful get-up. Mr. Scott stood considerably over six feet high, and was a man of splendid physique—when, therefore, he walked from behind the scenes, in all the disguise of the Monk, and with the unmentionables aforesaid stuffed out to their utmost capacity with three or four large pillows, the audience were almost convulsed with laughter, which burst out afresh for several minutes at every effort of the Monk at locomotion!

The Thespians continued to amuse the community for two or three years, and occasionally performed on the Fair day afternoons for the gratification of the country people.

“A little nonsense now and then  
Is relished by the wisest men.”

After the union of Upper and Lower Canada, which took place in 1841, the County of Halton was divided for electoral purposes into the East and West Ridings of Halton. Galt and Dumfries were attached to the latter, which returned Mr. James Durand as its first representative. When the elections for the second Parliament came on in 1844, the bitterness between the two political parties was still quite marked all over the Province. The Conservative leaders, prominent among whom were such eminent men as Messrs. Daly, Viger, and Draper, backed up by Sir Charles Metcalfe, were warmly opposed by Messrs. Baldwin and Lafontaine, and a severe struggle took place at the polls. Nerved into action by the improved

position and prospects of their opponents, the Tory party was unusually determined and energetic.

In the West Riding of Halton, Mr. James Webster, of Fergus, was brought out against Mr. Durand, the sitting member. Among the chief supporters of the former gentleman, were Messrs. Shade, Dickson, Rich, Chapman and Ainslie, and of the latter, Messrs. Burnett, Cowan, Elliott, Clemens and McElroy. This contest became exceedingly warm in Galt and neighbourhood, and it has always been alleged that, in the heat of the excitement, undue means were used in Waterloo and Wilmot, to prevent the Pennsylvanian electors of those townships from recording their votes. In those days polling places were few and far between, and it was difficult to get all the votes recorded in time. As these townships were strongly in favour of Mr. Durand, the Reform candidate, some of the agents of Mr. Webster were accused of using various stratagems to delay the voting, even going the length of swearing old, grey-headed men, that they were twenty-one years of age. How far these statements may be true, it is now difficult to determine, but certain it is that this election aroused indignant feelings among the peaceful settlers of those townships, who recount the circumstances to the present day.

This election had, however, its amusing incidents also. Mr. Francis McElroy, to whom reference has already been made, then kept a Temperance hotel at the head of Main Street (now the North American Hotel), and carried on blacksmithing on the opposite side of the road. Mr.

McElroy, who still enjoys a green old age in Michigan, was a good speaker, and besides his advocacy of Temperance, which he was the first to uphold in Galt—and under great discouragements—he took a lively interest in political reforms. He took the stump on behalf of Mr. Durand, and for many years afterwards an incident which occurred during a speech he made in Preston, was often rehearsed by Mac's companions when they wished to take "a rise" at his expense. Like not a few other orators, Mr. McElroy frequently wound up his speeches with a scrap or two of poetry. On this occasion, after entertaining the good people of Waterloo for about an hour, he entered upon a vigorous and carefully considered peroration in denunciation of the wrongs which he considered the electors had suffered at the hands of the Tory party, which eventually reached a climax by his exclaiming: "In the language of Holy Writ:

'Man's inhumanity to man,  
Makes countless thousands mourn.'

Mr. Burnett, who was sitting close to the flushed orator, pulled his coat tails and hastily whispered: "Man, Mac., that's not from the Bible—that's Burns!" "Whist—whist—whist," replied Mr. McElroy, with perfect self-possession and inimitable good humour, "Don't say a word, and no one will ever know the difference!"

When the polling came off it was found that there was a majority of eight in favour of Mr. Webster. He was declared duly elected by Mr. A. D. Fordyce, of Fergus,

the Returning Officer, and took his seat when the Legislative Assembly met in Montreal, on the 28th November following.

Mr. Durand entered a protest against Mr. Webster's return, and the House appointed a Committee of investigation. Messrs. John O. Hatt, Miles O'Reilly and S. B. Freeman, of Hamilton, were subsequently appointed Commissioners to visit the riding, and take evidence in regard to the charges alleged against the sitting member's right to the seat. Among Mr. Durand's charges was one that certain Deputy Returning Officers had allowed seven women to vote for his opponent, and much amusement was created at the time of the investigation by the examination of witnesses as to whether they were really women or not.

How they failed in their duty does not appear from the Journals of the House, but the Commissioners were subsequently called to the Bar of Parliament, and admonished by Mr. Speaker for their action as Commissioners. After a tedious delay, the petition was thrown out, and Mr. Webster confirmed in his seat.

During the summer of 1844 the first newspaper ever published in Galt saw the light. It was called the *Dumfries Courier*, and thirty-five years after its publication, as the copy before us witnesses, it presents a very faded and unattractive appearance. It was published by the easy-going, genial but shiftless "Ben" Hearle, who felt his bosom swell with pride when he was called the editor, but who performed little but spoke much of the onerous

duties of the chair editorial. Indeed, from "Ben's" easy-going habits, it is very doubtful if there would have been any editorials whatever on some occasions, or in fact any *Courier* at all, but for the fact that Mr. Peter Jaffray and sons had arrived in Galt from Shrewsbury, England, shortly after the office was opened, and were induced to take an active part in getting out the paper.

The advertisements\* are the most attractive reading in the *Courier* at the present day, telling as they do of many well-remembered persons then in business in the

---

\* In the *Courier* of the 4th Oct., 1845, the following advertisements appear, and will be of interest to many: (1) Nathan Coy offers a frame house fronting Main Street for sale. (2) E. Fauld informs the ladies of Galt she wishes their custom as a Dress-maker and Silk milliner. (3) Alex. Adair offers a Farm near Ayr for sale. (4) H. Girouard, Hamilton, advertises a daily Stage between Hamilton, Galt, Preston and Guelph. (5) Jas. Crombie & Co., wish to dispose of Threshing Machines, Stoves, &c., at the Foundry adjoining the Dumfries Mills. (6) Andrew Mercer offers to supply Mural Monuments, and Charles Glendinning and Thomas Hall to perform Tailoring in the most fashionable styles. (7) John Courtney and James H. Service, Merchants, dissolve partnership. (8) Lionel Foster, at the "sign of the big Boot," manufactures Lasts, Boot-trees and Crimps. (9) James Paris, never so happy as when singing Wattie and Meg, advertises the best Bread, Biscuits and Cakes. (10) Francis McElroy, Temperance Hotel, offers Meals at 7½d., being as "anxious," he says, "to provide his guests with eating as others are with drinking." (11) John Turnbull announces that he has bought out Paul Huffman's Chair Factory, in consequence of the latter's ill-health. (12) James Wagstaff and D. Ramore Tinsmiths, have dissolved, and wish the public to know it. (13) Peter Campbell professes his readiness on "reasonable terms," to practice the Veterinary Art, and Robert Kay to supply Hats and Caps to all and sundry, at his stand "opposite Young's Hotel." (14) John Hearle and Gavin Bell advertise Farms for sale, the latter on the macadamized road within half a mile of Galt. (15) Only two professional notices appear—Mr. Adam Ainslie, Attorney at Law, and Dr. John H. Wraith, of the Royal College of Surgeons, London. The simple reading of these names recalls many curious reminiscences of the days of "auld lang syne."

village, but now alas! scattered—some removed to other parts of Canada, some in distant lands, but by far the major portion of them gone to “the land o’ the leal.”

Poor “Ben” and the *Courier* came to grief in the fall of 1847, after which Mr. Jaffray began the publication of a small sheet in the building at one time owned by Dr. Miller, behind Mr. William Osborne’s present property on Main Street. This sheet was called the *Galt Reporter*, and on the succeeding January, the office was removed to the property of the late Mr. James Ainslie on the corner of Main and Ainslie Streets, where Messrs. Ainslie and Jaffray printed the paper during the two succeeding years.

One of the most interesting gatherings which ever took place in the history of Galt, was when, in 1845, Dr. Liddell, Principal of Queen’s College, Kingston, and Dr. Bayne, publicly discussed the disruption question. It came off in St. Andrew’s Church in the presence of an immense, deeply interested, and well-behaved audience. The discussion was exceedingly able upon both sides, but Dr. Bayne had the advantage of having the most popular side of the question, at least so far as this community was concerned.

The foundation of old Knox Church, near the market—removed in 1878—was laid during the same year. It was erected by Dr. Bayne and the major part of St. Andrew’s Church congregation, who gave up all connection with the Church of Scotland at the disruption. In the foundation stone were placed copies of the *Toronto Banner*,



containing a full account of the discussions of the Presbyterian Synod of Canada at the time of the disruption, the *Toronto Colonist* and other papers, together with the principal coins of the realm. The building was a large but exceedingly uncouth stone structure, which remained one of the landmarks of the town until its demolition.

From the time of the disruption until his death, Dr. Bayne was regarded as the Father of the Free Church of Canada. This sad event occurred on the 3rd November, 1859. He was suddenly taken ill when about to start away to preach a Thanksgiving Sermon for the Rev. Mr. McLean, of Puslinch. He had his overcoat upon his arm ready to depart, when he first complained of illness, and ultimately was compelled to retire to bed. Dr. Miller was then called in, but no fears were entertained that the reverend gentleman was in a dangerous state. After divine service in Knox's Church, the Rev. A. C. Geikie, his assistant-minister, asked him to partake of some refreshment. This he declined, and on Mr. Geikie going to repeat his request sometime afterwards, he found him apparently asleep, and considered it prudent not to disturb him. About five o'clock, Mr. Geikie, who was devotedly attached to Dr. Bayne, entered his apartment again, and was surprised to find him still lying in the same position. Becoming alarmed, he approached the bed, when to his surprise and sorrow, he found that his friend was sleeping the sleep of death. He had evidently died suddenly and without a struggle. His whole attitude was perfectly natural, and his features bore more the appearance of

sweet, refreshing slumber, than that his spirit had winged its flight to another world. He was never married and only in his 53rd year.

The death of Dr. Bayne\* caused a profound sensation far beyond Galt and neighbourhood, and the funeral was unusually large and solemn. "Such an occasion," said one of his co-presbyters, "as his funeral obsequies, Galt never witnessed. The number of his brethren in the ministry who attended—and it would have been greater had time allowed others to come from greater distances—showed the respect and attachment with which he was regarded by them, and many a sorrowful countenance betokened that a loved and lamented one was gone. The

---

(From the *Dumfries Reformer*, Nov. 9th, 1859.)

\* "As we propose next week to review the history and character of Dr. Bayne, our present remarks shall be brief. As a theologian, he has left few, if any, equals in Canada. His mind was comprehensive and powerful, and his preaching convinced by its consummate reasoning, and overpowered by its stirring appeals. In his manner there was an entire absence of that display which characterizes many modern pulpit orators. But this fact added to the force of those flights of burning, earnest eloquence, for which the deceased will ever be remembered. Dr. Bayne was of a very retiring disposition, and of late years seldom mingled in society. As a Christian, he was noted for his many Christian graces and his untiring zeal in the cause of Christ. His daily walk and conversation testified that he had drunk deeply at the wells of spiritual knowledge, and when closing his eyes forever upon the things of earth, well might he employ the words of St. Paul, his favourite apostle: 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.'

'Life's duty done, as sinks the clay,  
 Light from its load the spirit flies;  
 While Heaven and earth combine to say,  
 'How blessed the righteous when he dies.'"

suspension of all business, and the streets lined with crowds of females and children, and the vast procession—composed not only of the office-bearers of the congregation\* and his brethren in the ministry, and his own afflicted flock, but of persons of all denominations, showed that his death was regarded as not only a sad bereavement to his friends, his congregation, and his Church, but as a public loss of no ordinary nature.”

At the following annual meeting of Knox's Church, held on the 8th March, steps were taken to erect the fine monument to Dr. Bayne which now stands near the entrance of Galt Cemetery, and the following tribute to his memory was unanimously adopted by the meeting:—

“This congregation, now assembled in annual meeting, and for the first time since the death of the Rev. John Bayne, D. D., our late honoured, beloved, and lamented pastor, feel that we cannot allow this occasion to pass without in a special manner recording our estimate of him who so long went in and out among us, and for whom we mourn this day, because we shall see his face no more.

“It is not our part to speak of his influence and usefulness in the Church at large, great and acknowledged as these were; nor is this the time to dwell on our high estimate of his mental and moral excellencies as a man. To us rather belongs the duty of speaking of him as our pastor, and we feel how unable we are adequately to do so. For nearly a quarter of a century he dwelt among us, devoting

---

\* The following gentlemen composed the session of Dr. Bayne's congregation at the time of his death:—Messrs. James Cowan, James Nichol, Thos. Young, Charles McKilligan, Martin Nichol, Simon Mackenzie, Robert Jamieson, Thomas Rutherford, John Sudden, sr., Alexander Smith, John Gillespie, George Barrie, James Robson, Morris J. Lutz and Robert Reid. The latter gentleman (Dr. Reid, surgeon-dentist) died in July, 1873.

to our service his great and sanctified gifts while in the freshness of youth, and though urged to change his sphere of labour, continuing in maturer years to toil for those to whom he at first came.

“ Through all this prolonged ministry, we ever found him a kind friend, a wise counsellor, a faithful preacher of the everlasting Gospel, a consistent follower of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To us he was truly an ambassador for Christ, beseeching us in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God, and exerting an influence far and wide, which, blessed by the Holy Spirit, has, we believe, borne much fruit, and respecting which it is our prayer, that, ever more and more blessed, it may bear fruit many days hence to the good of souls and the glory of the Redeemer.

“ But a ministry so lengthened, powerful, and honoured, needs not our commendation. While living he cared little for human praise, and our part now is only to make a tearful record of his surpassing worth, and our exceeding loss. A wise God has removed him at a time when we fondly hoped he might long continue and break among us the Bread of Life, as in days gone by. That removal was sadly sudden ; the dispensation is surrounded by clouds and thick darkness ; but in the midst of sorrow, we desire to acknowledge the righteous sovereignty of God, to repose in his unerring wisdom for guidance, and to say, “ the will of the Lord be done.”

“ This congregation also desires, while thus recording our grief for our own loss, to convey our sincerest sympathy to the relations of our late pastor. A congregation deprived of such a pastor can estimate the grief of sisters deprived of such a brother. Our prayer is, that God will sustain them in their affliction, while we remind them of the consolation of mourners who know that ‘ those who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.’ ”

It was not until the spring of 1861 that Dr. Bayne’s successor was found. Knox’s Church congregation then gave a call to the Rev. John Thompson, D.D., of New York City. The Rev. Messrs. McRuer, of Ayr, and Gil

lespie, of Blenheim, with Mr. James Cowan, of Clochmohr, were appointed commissioners to press the acceptance of the call upon Dr. Thompson and the Presbytery of New York. They were successful, and Dr. Thompson and family shortly afterwards took up their residence in Galt. He continued pastor of Knox's Church for many years, but ultimately returned to the scene of his former labours in New York City, and is now filling a charge in Scotland in connection with the Established Church. He was a cultivated and exceedingly genial, kind-hearted man, who left many pleasant memories behind him. He was succeeded, in 1865, by the Rev. James K. Smith, of Brockville, who has ever since, with the exception of a short interval, continued to be the pastor of the congregation.

St. Andrew's Church continued to be well sustained after the disruption, and in September, 1846, decided to give a call to the Rev. Mr. Dyer, whom Mr. James Croil, in his history of the Presbyterian Church in connection with the Church of Scotland, describes as "the sailor, an orator of high degree—an enthusiast, a sensationalist—altogether a very extraordinary man." Mr. Dyer was, undoubtedly, a man of great natural gifts, and received a call from Fergus as well as Galt. It appears Dyer had come from the Maritime Provinces, and one day a person from that quarter met him in a store in Galt, and was surprised to hear people call him Mr. Dyer. The stranger, after making some inquiries, revealed that his real name was Weaver, and that he was living in Galt under an

assumed name. This unexpected *dénouement* led to Mr. Dyer's abrupt disappearance from the locality.

“Having written a farewell letter to the congregation of Galt,” says Mr. Croil, “he left precipitately. He is supposed to have resumed his avocation as a sailor, and to have been drowned at sea. . . . . In November, 1848, the Rev. John Malcolm Smith, an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland, was inducted into St. Andrew's Church. In 1850 he was appointed to the Chair of Classical Literature and Moral Philosophy in Queen's College. In his stead, the Rev. Hamilton Gibson, afterwards of Bayfield, came in November of that year. He remained nine years. Mr. Robert Campbell, now of St. Gabriel's, Montreal, was ordained and inducted to Galt, on the 10th April, 1862, and was translated to his present charge in December, 1866. Soon after this the congregation gave a call to the Rev. James B. Muir, of Lindsay, who was inducted in the March following.” Mr. Muir is now settled in Huntington, in the Province of Quebec.

Before leaving the subject of churches, it may be mentioned that a number of the members of the United Presbyterian Church of Canada erected a new church in Galt in 1857. It was called Melville Church, and the first pastor was the Rev. John James (now Dr. James, of Hamilton), who had just previously arrived from Glasgow, Scotland. He was succeeded in 1862 by the Rev. William T. Murdoch, whose sad death on the 21st of January, 1870, at the early age of thirty-four years, pro-

foundly touched the feelings of the community. The remembrance of his rare talents and many fine traits of character will long live green in the memories of those who best knew him.

In consequence of the resignation of Mr. John Gowinlock, the teacher of Galt public school, who was quite advanced in years, steps had to be taken by the trustees in the fall of 1845 to secure some person to fill his place. The board was then composed of the Rev. M. Boomer, Rev. James Strang, John Miller, Robert Gillespie, and David Potter. They advertised for a teacher, and as it was customary in those days for the trustees to examine the applicants, it was an important day at the old school-house when the various teachers presented themselves. A clever, but rather lively young Irishman named Kelley, was chosen by the trustees. He only held the school for a short time, when he was succeeded by Mr. Robert McLean. This was during the summer of 1846, and Mr. McLean continued to act as Principal of the school until the close of 1855—between nine and ten years—when he resigned, Mr. Alex. Young being appointed to fill the vacancy.

The services of Mr. McLean\* as a teacher in Galt, al-

---

\* On resigning the Galt school in December, 1855, Mr. McLean was presented with a gold watch by the citizens, accompanied by a very complimentary address. Among others, it contained the following paragraph :—  
“ During a period of upwards of nine years in which you have been connected with Galt school, the qualifications which you have brought to bear on the trust committed to you—the singular aptitude to teach, the ability and faithfulness which you have displayed, and the honest independence which uniformly marked your conduct, have secured to you our confidence and respect.”

though well remembered, are deserving of a passing tribute. He brought to the discharge of his duties much ability and enthusiasm. He introduced a new and better system; he elevated the standard of education, and increased the interest of both pupils and parents in their studies. His success was, therefore, marked, and many of his old pupils will ever hold him in grateful remembrance for the love of knowledge which his enthusiasm as a teacher imparted to them.

A new stone school-house was erected in 1849. This building, which still stands immediately east of the Town Hall, where it does duty as a poultry and vegetable market, was in turn discarded for the present Central School over twenty-two years ago—so swiftly does time fly! Nor has the old original rough-cast building, so long familiarly known as “Gowinlock’s School,” disappeared. It still stands at the head of Main Street, where it is now used as a blacksmith’s shop—

“ And the children coming home from school,  
Look in at the open door;  
They love to see the flaming forge,  
And hear the bellows roar,  
And catch the burning sparks that fly,  
Like chaff from the threshing floor.”







## CHAPTER XVII.

Galt becomes an Incorporated Village—Population in 1850—Other villages of Dumfries—Early reminiscences of Paris, St. George and Ayr—Visit of Lord Elgin to Galt in 1849—First Councillors of Galt—Reeves and Municipal Officers—The *Dumfries Reformer*—The County Town struggle—Berlin carries off the prize—Public meeting—Reform dinner to the Hon. George Brown—The Ferrie and Tiffany election—First great Fire in Galt—The Collegiate Institute—Dr. Tassie—The Railway era opens—Turning the first sod of the Galt branch—Municipal rejoicings.

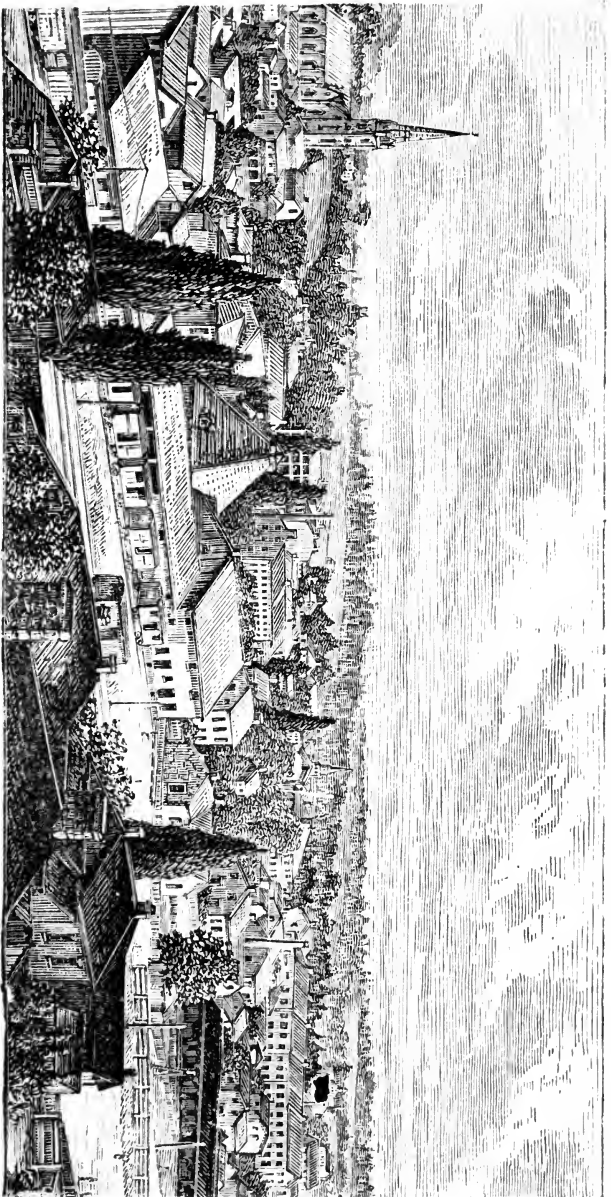
GALT became an incorporated village in 1850, and may be said to have then entered upon a new stage of existence. Over thirty years had come and gone since Mr. Dickson and Mr. Shade had followed the Indian trail to the site selected for the village, and those years had not been passed in vain. The wilderness had disappeared. Well cultivated farms and good roads extended in every direction. Not a few log houses remained, and too many pine stumps still disfigured the landscape; but new stone and frame houses were beginning to appear in every part of Dumfries, and other evidences of increasing wealth met the eye at every turn.

The population of the village had grown to a little over 2,000, and being in the centre of a rich agricultural district, its business was unsurpassed, at that time, by any of its rivals. As neither the Great Western nor Grand Trunk Railway was then in existence, the area

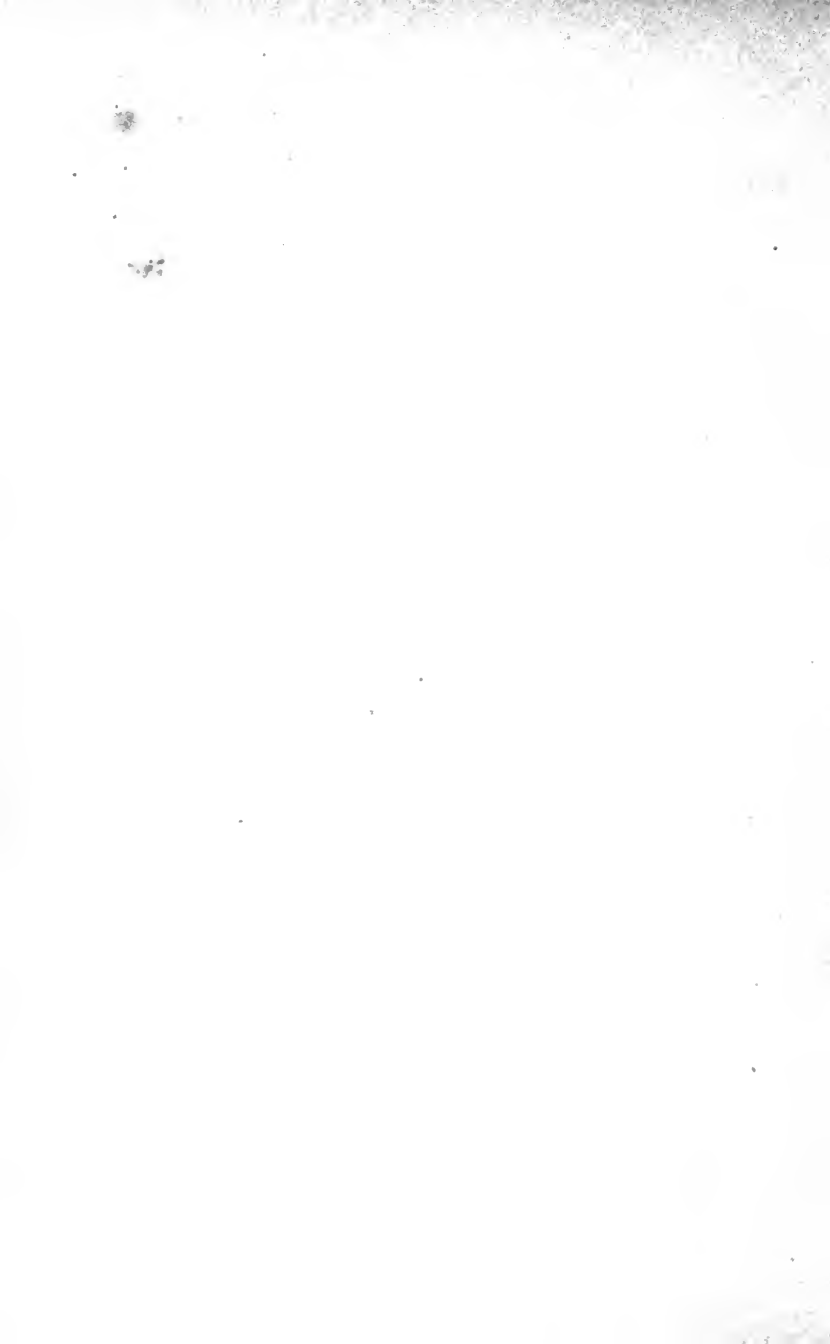
of its trade was much larger than after these roads brought a wheat market to almost every farmer's door. Much of the wheat grown as far west as Stratford was then either sold in Galt, or passed through the village as flour, on its way down the macadamized road to the head waters of Lake Ontario at Dundas.

Nor was Galt the only prosperous village which had arisen in the whilom wilderness. Thirteen miles further down the Grand River, there was the large and prosperous village of Paris; on the east side of the township, the village of St. George, on the west, the village of Ayr; and in the centre, the village of Glenmorris. The existence of so many thriving villages, at this comparatively early period, tells not only of the great natural resources of Dumfries, but how heroically and successfully the early settlers had battled with nature during the preceding thirty years. We are indebted to several kind correspondents for information in connection with the founding of these villages, which, though not so full as we could wish, is interesting, inasmuch as it brings into notice the names of some of those who were among the Pioneers of these places.

During its early days, Paris was known by the name of the "Forks of the Grand River," which was derived from the circumstance of the stream called the Nith, or Smith's Creek, joining the Grand River at that point. "About 1836," says our correspondent, "Mr. Hiram Capron called a public meeting. Some fifteen of the leading spirits attended. James Barker was one, and he remem-



A CLIMPFSE OF GALT, FROM THE HILL ABOVE THE G. W. R. STATION.



bers the King (Mr. Capron was known as King Capron) protesting against having to head all his correspondence with "Forks of the Grand River," and he also recommended the word "Paris," for shortness, and because there was so much gypsum in the neighbourhood." It was in this way Paris obtained its name, and the same correspondent gives us the following information in regard to some of those who were its earliest citizens:—

"In the year 1828, Hiram Capron, who was originally from Vermont, sold out his interest in the Long Point Blast Furnace, and came to the Forks of the Grand River. He bought 1,000 acres of land for \$10,000 from Squire Holmes, who resided within three miles of Brantford, and commenced clearing and cultivating the land. In 1829, a millwright named Josiah Cushman was brought by Mr. Capron from Buffalo, to build a mill, which, when completed, had two run of stones, one for gristing, the other for grinding plaster, of which there was plenty almost on the surface of the ground. Cushman recommended one Elias Conklin as a suitable person to manage the estate; Conklin was written to, but would not come at less than \$16 per month and board (!) This was accepted, but at the end of one year, Conklin leased the mill from Capron, and became a very active business man; he dug plaster and ground it, started a brick-yard, burnt lime, built a saw mill, and made considerable lumber. Saw-logs were floated down Smith's creek, but they wouldn't buy any in those days unless over 22 inches diameter, and from that size up to 3 feet 6 inches, the price was 50c. each! Conklin ulti-

mately sold out, and went on a farm in Dumfries. After Conklin leased the mill (1830), Horace Capron came in and took the former's position on his brother's farm. Robert Fisher (1830) started a shoe shop; Robert Stewart, a waggon shop; Maeklin and Ingles, a tannery, which ten years afterwards was sold to Hugh Finlayson & Co.; James Barker, a blacksmith shop, which he continued for 15 years; H. T. Judson began to make farm implements; and E. P. Forsyth started a tailor shop.

"A considerable number of farmers had in the meantime taken up land, and settlement was going steadily forward. Among those early settlers were the Curtis's, the Rykerts, the Sovereigns, the Maus's and others. Samuel Heath came from Mudge Hollow to the Forks in 1832, and started a blacksmith shop and trip hammer. Norman Hamilton, who had previously been employed by Norton and Bliss, of Mudge Hollow, started a distillery. He sold most of the whiskey at Toronto, at 1s. 6*d.* York, or 18 cents per gallon! The first woollen mill was begun by Daniel Totten, where he scoured, dyed, and made the wool into rolls for the farmers' wives. Asa Wolverton brought in several carpenters about this time, and found work in erecting buildings. One Van Every built a store in the Upper Town, but only lived about eighteen months afterwards, and is said to have been the first man buried in the cemetery. The father of Mr. P. O'Connor was killed by a falling tree, and is said to have been the second. John Smith (now Sheriff), came in and started a store in Van Every's place. Among the other early settlers in

Paris who are remembered, were Daniel Spears, a joiner by trade, and Joseph Andrews, a wheel-right, who came from Nova Scotia. Daniel O'Neil and James Davidson, came into the neighbourhood about 1833. Dr. McCosh, who came in 1834, was the first physician in the village.

“Many curious stories of the early settlement are extant, but it would lead us too far to recite them. Mr. Elias Conklin, who still survives in Paris, delights in telling them. One which illustrates the kind and sympathetic feelings which existed among the early settlers, may be mentioned. Once he had to go to Buffalo, to get some heavy machinery for the mill, the Long Point Furnace being out. He brought in from Buffalo with him three five-gallon kegs of oysters, which were then a rare luxury. Two he parted with at Brantford, the third was bought by Hiram Capron, who invited every man, woman, and child in the village to an oyster supper. Nearly every one attended, as was the custom in those early days, and such a jolly time was spent as few can understand in this more prim and fashionable age. Mr. Conklin first saw Robert Stewart cooking oatmeal bannocks in a frying-pan, near where the English Church now stands—then all bush, with many Indians around, and wolves frequently howling at night. The virgin soil of Dumfries was quite productive. In 1841, O. D. Bradford rented a farm from King Capron, from which he raised 1,000 bushels of oats, which he sold at 10 cents per bushel. He also raised forty bushels of wheat per acre where the Paris station now is.

“The first preachers who came to the locality were Methodists, and were named Cope and Pringle. Brantford was the circuit town, and had the Post Office. People had to go there for their groceries for a short time at first. The Roman Catholics built the first church. In 1833 and '34 the village prospered well, but in 1836, there was nearly a famine before the harvest was gathered in. Prices of produce had been good in 1835, and the farmers had over-sold, leaving themselves with too little for their wants during the ensuing season. Flour ran up to \$16 per barrel, and had to be teamed from the Niagara district or wherever it could be obtained. But as soon as the crops ripened, plenty soon again prevailed.”

It has already been mentioned that the neighbourhood of St. George was one of the very first parts of Dumfries in which settlers took up land. Some persons had, indeed, been attracted by the fine farming lands in that quarter, even before Mr. Dickson acquired the township. “Obed Wilson,” says a St. George correspondent, “built the first house on Lot number seven, on the third concession, near where the Methodist Church now stands, and was the first settler; this was about 1814. Connors and Dayton came in about 1815; Isaac Shaver and John Buckberry, in 1816; David Van Every and J. Fawkes, 1817; John Petit arrived in 1818, and erected a distillery; the Mumas (Christopher, Michael, and Henry) took up land in 1819. The first grist mill was erected in 1817, on Lot number four, on the third concession, by John Phillips. Mr. A. E. Mainwaring took up his land in 1821. Henry Gardner built the first saw mill, on Lot numbers six, on



the second concession, in 1823. The first store was kept in a log house, not far from the saw mill; it was carried on by Henry Moe. The first school was begun in 1823, in a log house—indeed, there was nothing else but log buildings in those days. The school was taught by one Mr. Lowe. Mr. Edward Kitchen, now very aged, settled in the township about 1823, and Messrs. Robert Snowball, and David Reid in 1833 and '34, respectively. Mr. D. Baptie, Township Clerk, did not arrive till 1847. Mr. Gavin Fleming, M. P., came from Falkirk, Scotland, in 1849." The writer states that it is difficult to obtain the dates with absolute correctness, but the foregoing statements are doubtless very near the mark.

Mr. Robert Christie, father of the Honourable David Christie, late Speaker of the Senate of Canada, arrived from Scotland in October, 1833. He was induced to do so by the favourable representations of the Honourable Adam Ferguson, who was an intimate friend. He settled in South Dumfries in 1834, where he lived until 1861. From that time, until his death in January, 1877, at the ripe old age of ninety-seven, he resided with the Honourable David Christie at "The Plains," between Paris and Brantford. Mr. Christie was very devotedly attached to the Presbyterian Church, of which he was a member for eighty-two, and an elder for thirty-five years. Until a short time before his death, he drove nine miles to church at St George, every Sabbath, so strong was his attachment to the congregation with which he had been connected since its beginning.

Among the first ministers who visited the neighbourhood of St. George were the Rev. Thomas Christie and the Rev. William Proudfoot. They were sent out as missionaries by the United Secession Church in Scotland, in 1832. They visited a number of families, and were gladly received. Arrangements were made for public worship, which was held for some time in a school-house, on the farm of Mr. Kitchen, west of St. George. At first, for nearly two years, the station was supplied by the Rev. Thomas Christie once a fortnight. He lived in West Flamboro', and supplied a congregation there on alternate Sabbaths. As the roads at that time were very rude, Mr. David Christie's habit was to go to Flamboro' for his uncle, leading one horse, and riding the other. At that period the greater part of the way along the Governor's road was merely a track through the woods. In 1834 a frame church was erected, the contractor being the late Mr. Asa Wolverton, of Paris. It is believed that this St. George congregation was the first which (outside of Galt) was formed in Dumfries. After Mr. Christie had ministered to it until it was in good working order, a call was given to the Rev. James Roy, who was ordained to the charge of the congregation, in December, 1838.

The Rev. Mr. Christie was a brother of Mr. Robert Christie, and lived until his eighty-sixth year, preaching till within two weeks of his death. His colleague as a missionary, the Rev. William Proudfoot, was the father of the Rev. Dr. Proudfoot, of London, and of His Honour Vice-Chancellor Proudfoot, of Toronto.

In a well-written article by Mr. Geo. D. Lewis, we find that "seventy years ago the beautiful agricultural country, in the midst of which Ayr is situated, was an unbroken wilderness, the only denizens being occasional wandering Indians, large and tolerably well-behaved bears, fierce and stealthy lynx, and wildcats, and innumerable roving wolves." About 1824, Abel Mudge, a member of the family who settled Mudge Hollow, now Canning, erected grist and saw mills, where the Ayr Agricultural Works now stand. A few settlers had taken up land, but had made little progress in clearing their farms; among these were the Dobkins, the Marlatts, Luces, and Kirkwalls. None of their descendants are now left in the neighbourhood. Mr. Mudge died in 1832, and his son Chapman disposed of the mills, which eventually fell into the hands of Mr. Daniel Manley. About the time of the Rebellion many new settlers arrived. Among these were Mr. Robert Wyllie, Messrs. Richmond and Manson, and Mr. B. O. Howell. Mr. Wyllie soon engaged in business in Ayr, and during a long life continued to be one of its most active and useful citizens. Early in the decade between 1840 and 1850, Messrs. Baker, Piper, and others, commenced business in the village. Quite an impulse was given to Ayr, in 1848, by the starting of the Ayr Agricultural Works by Mr. John Watson, who had previously been employed in Fisher's Foundry, in Galt. The energy and enterprise of Mr. Watson soon made the name of Ayr well known throughout Canada, and its fame has been extended to other lands by the success obtained by his products at

the American Centennial, the Paris Exposition of 1878, and in the far distant Australian colonies.

The year before its incorporation, Galt was honoured with a visit from His Excellency the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, then Governor-General of Canada, and the pleasing circumstances of the occasion are well remembered by many. Having been brought as far as the Swan Inn by the citizens of Paris and vicinity, His Excellency was met at that point by two large processions. One was from West Dumfries, headed by Mr. John Duthie, of Ayr, and the other from East Dumfries, by way of Glenmorris.

The late Mr. James Colquhoun read an address to Lord Elgin from the people of Dumfries, at the Swan Inn. It is not generally known, but it is the fact, that there were two Richmonds in the field from Ayr, each armed with an address, but Mr. Colquhoun managed in some way to get His Excellency's attention first, probably through Col. Bruce, with whom, it was said, he had enjoyed some previous acquaintance. However this may be, Mr. Colquhoun's address came off, and the other didn't, after which His Excellency and party, drawn by four beautiful grey horses, owned and driven by Mr. Francis Lowell, and followed by a procession about one mile and a half long, was conducted into Galt with every token of enthusiasm.

The village was suitably decorated with arches and evergreens for the occasion. Appended to the arch on Main Street bridge was a representation of a spider and its

web, suggestive of the well-known incident in the early history of the Earl's family. Salutes, addresses, lunch at the Queen's Arms,\* and speeches, made up the entertainment.

Lord Elgin was a most charming speaker, and his praise of the beautiful situation of Galt, and the excellence of the surrounding country, surpassed that of Sir George Arthur, and quite captivated his auditors. He was accompanied to the Wellington County line amidst much enthusiasm, where he was met by the representatives of Guelph, who conducted him to similar honours in that place.

The first election of Councillors to conduct the affairs of the new Municipality, resulted in the return of Messrs. Andrew Elliott, Morris C. Lutz, Sydney Smith, John Davidson, and William Ferguson. Mr. Isaac Sours acted as Returning Officer. They met for the first time on the 21st January, 1850, when Mr. Elliott was elected Reeve. The first Municipal officers were:—

*Clerk and Treasurer*, MR. ADAM KER.

*Assessors*.

{ MR. HENRY McCRUM,  
MR. NEILSON,  
MR. JOHN BATTERS.

---

\* The Reformers of Dumfries and Galt, who took the principal part in doing honour to Lord Elgin, were so much pleased with the lunch served at the Queen's Arms, that they made Mrs. Francis Lowell a presentation of Silver shortly afterwards. One of the pieces contained this inscription:—  
“Presented to Mrs. Lowell by the Reform Committee, for the excellent manner in which she enabled them to entertain Lord Elgin on his visit to Galt, September 29th, 1849.”

*Auditors.*            {    MR. PETER COOK,  
                                  {    MR. CHARLES BROWN.

Unlike the present time, when many leading citizens shun Municipal duties, the seats in the Council were then hotly contested, and for several years after Galt became incorporated, these village struggles were frequent and warm. In 1851, the Council was composed of Messrs. Andrew Elliott, Thomas Blacklock, James Crombie, M. C. Lutz, and David H. Forbes. All the Municipal officers were changed, except Mr. Ker, who continued to act as Clerk of the Municipality until 1858—a period of 18 years. After his return from Brantford, to which he removed for eight years, Mr. Ker was elected Mayor of Galt for six successive years, from 1868 to 1874, the duties of which office, as of those of Clerk and Treasurer, he discharged with much faithfulness and general acceptance.\*

The following gentlemen were elected the Reeves of Galt during the years which it remained a village:—

1850—Mr. Andrew Elliott,

1851— “ Andrew Elliott,

1852— “ Absalom Shade,

---

\* How rapidly the early residents of Galt and Dumfries are disappearing, is illustrated by Mr. Ker's death since these remarks were written. He was a native of Hawick, Roxboroughshire, Scotland, and came to Canada about 1832. He died on the 2nd September, 1879, in his 71st year. Mr. Ker had a great dislike to the parade now so prevalent at funerals, and left written instructions that none should take place at his obsequies, not even funeral cards being issued. The Town Council, nevertheless, attended in a body, as did a large assemblage of friends and acquaintances.

1853—Mr. Morris C. Lutz,

1854— " John Davidson,

1855— " John Davidson,

1856— " Adam Ainslie.

With its incorporation, the second of the two newspapers so long associated with Galt, came into existence. The partnership between Messrs. Ainslie and Jaffray\* having been terminated, the latter removed the publication of the *Reporter* to the third story of the Waterloo Buildings, where its politics became more Conservative in tone. Mr. Ainslie having secured the services of Mr. Walter Stewart, as editor, commenced the publication of the *Dumfries Reformer*, whose politics were pronounced in favour of the Reform party. In 1853 the latter paper was purchased by Mr. James Young, who conducted it for ten years. Both newspapers have been well sustained, and after thirty years' existence, manifest no signs of decrepitude.

---

\*Mr. Peter Jaffray was born in Stirling, Scotland, in 1800. He learned the printing business with Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, and afterwards obtained a responsible charge in connection with the *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, in England, with which he was associated for twenty-two years. After starting the *Shrewsbury News*, he emigrated to Canada, arriving in Galt in July, 1844, where he continued to reside until his death on the 15th November, 1864. His connection with the press of Galt, as well as his social and kind disposition, are too well remembered to require recital.

Mr. James Ainslie, after disposing of the *Reformer* newspaper, gave much of his attention to speculations and inventions, for which he had a decided bent and much ingenuity. The history of his power printing presses, pleasure boats, and self-acting gates, would, if space permitted, afford materials for a curious and instructive chapter. He was a native of Begbie, Haddingtonshire, Scotland, came to Galt about 1841, and died on the 31st December, 1873.

One of the most exciting and important struggles in which Galt ever took part, occurred at this time. It was over the new County of Waterloo and the selection of the county town. In the Session of 1850, the Hon. Francis Hincks, who was then Finance Minister, brought in a bill creating new counties throughout Ontario, one of which was the County of Waterloo, with Galt as the county seat. The appearance of this measure threw the whole of the district into a state of excited interest, which, as the Bill was not proceeded with that Session, attained to fever-heat during 1851, when an amended bill was submitted to the House and ultimately became law.

Those who took the principal part in advocating the claims of Galt were: Messrs. Absalom Shade, Andrew Elliott, James K. Andrews, and James Cowan, and they were actively seconded by Mr. Jacob Hespeler, the Erbs, and others, of Preston. It was thought at first that one or other of these two places would obtain the prize, more especially as Galt had been named in the original bill. On the side of Berlin, its most active friends were:— Messrs. George Davidson, Dr. John Scott, C. A. Ahrens, C. Enslin (then editor of the German paper in Berlin), Elias Snider, Jonathan B. Bowman, William Davidson, D. S. Shoemaker, Henry Snider, and Dr. McGeorge.

The foregoing gentlemen, aided by many others, made the contest very exciting on both sides, and such a time for deputations to the Government, to the Legislature at Toronto, and of public meetings in all parts of the proposed county, has never since been witnessed. Meetings



on the subject were held at Galt, Preston, the Toll-bridge, Berlin, Aberdeen, Bridgeport, Conestoga, St. Jacobs, Cross-hill, New Hamburg, and many other places. From 150 to 200 crowded sleigh-loads of people are said to have been present at the Toll-bridge meeting.

The struggle ended, as every one knows, in Berlin becoming the county town, and the chief causes which brought about that result are not difficult to discover. When it was decided that Dumfries should be divided, and the southern part attached to the County of Brant Galt was thus placed at one corner of the proposed new county, whilst Berlin was near its centre. This naturally weighed greatly with many of the people. Then, the majority of the Provisional Council favoured the selection of Berlin, and they found active friends in the Legislature in the persons of Dr. Rolph, Mr. Malcom Cameron, and Mr. David Christie, the latter of whom naturally became all the more zealous for Berlin in consequence of attacks made upon him in the press and on the platform for the course which he saw fit to pursue.

The loss of becoming the county seat was no doubt an unfortunate circumstance for the town, and caused much chagrin at the time. The citizens found consolation in the fact, however, that if Galt was not the county town, it was at least the town of the county! Exciting as this struggle was, it was generally characterized by good feeling, and its memory is already almost forgotten.

The bill creating the new county—as well as many others throughout Upper Canada—was passed during the

Session of 1851; the county buildings were erected at Berlin by the Provisional Council in 1852, and the county was set apart for judicial purposes on the 21st January, 1853. The first officers appointed by the Government were as follows :—

Judge—Mr. William Miller.

Sheriff—Mr. George Davidson.

Clerk of the Peace—Mr. Æmilius Irving.

Clerk of the County Court—Mr. James Colquhoun.

Registrar—Mr. D. S. Shoemaker.

Clerk Surrogate Court—Mr. Christian Enslin.

Jailor—Mr. William Walden.

When the first County Council met, much interest was taken in the election of Warden, as well as of the gentlemen who were to act as permanent officials. The honour of being first Warden fell upon Dr. John Scott, of Berlin; Mr. William Davidson was elected County Clerk, and Mr. C. A. Ahrens, Treasurer. The Judge and Sheriff are the only persons who still continue to hold the offices to which they were appointed when the county was first set apart.

The politics of the Province glided into smoother water immediately after the union of Upper and Lower Canada, but a quiet agitation for the settlement of the Clergy Reserves, an elective Legislative Council and other reforms, was gradually gaining strength. A great many meetings were held to protest against the Clergy Reserves and the then Constitution of King's College, prior to the rise of the Baldwin-Lafontaine Government

to power in 1848. One of the largest of these took place during 1846 in Knox's Church, Galt. The chair was occupied by Mr. Robert Christie, of South Dumfries, and the principal speakers were the Rev. Dr. Bayne and the Rev. James Strang, of Galt, the Rev. James Roy, of St. George, and Mr. David Christie, whose speech is remembered as one of the most effective delivered on the occasion. They were opposed by Mr. Shade and Mr. George Stanton, then of St. George, who submitted an amendment against what was alleged to be an interference with vested rights, which, they maintained, ought to be held sacred. Dr. Bayne's reply to Messrs. Shade and Stanton was a memorable effort. He compared the favoured churches to the sacred oxen of Egypt, and for once gave a free rein to the great powers of satire which he possessed.

West Halton continued to sustain the Reform cause. At the general election of 1848, Mr. John Wetenhall succeeded Mr. Durand, who had so long and faithfully, in conjunction with Mr. Caleb Hopkins, represented the county, and at the next contest in 1851, Mr. John White, of Milton, and a Reformer, was also successful. Between this period and the general election of 1854, as we have seen, Dumfries and Galt were attached to the new County of Waterloo. The political situation had also changed. Arrayed against the Hincks-Morin Ministry were (1), the Conservatives under Sir Allan McNab, who were bitterly opposed to the Secularization of the Clergy Reserves, and an elective Legislative Council, and (2), the Hon. George Brown and a large section of Reformers, who had been

alienated from the Ministry in consequence of their dilly-dallying with the Clergy Reserve question, and some financial transactions of a questionable character.

The Hon. George Brown at that time in his 35th year, and the very personification of intellectual and physical vigour, was rapidly becoming recognized as the champion of the rights of Upper Canada in the Provincial Parliament, and the Reformers of Waterloo determined to tender him a public dinner in recognition of his eminent ability and unwavering adherence to principle. An invitation signed by over two hundred and fifty of the leading Reformers was presented to Mr. Brown during the month of September, 1853, and he named the 10th of October as the day on which the dinner should take place. It was held in the Commercial buildings, Galt, and was largely attended and very enthusiastic. The chair was occupied by Mr. James Cowan, Clochmohr, and the vice chairs by Mr. Robert Ferrie, of Doon, and Dr. Richardson, of Galt. This was the first time that many of those present had seen Mr. Brown, and his youthful appearance, not less than his trenchant, powerful, and eloquent discussion of the public questions exciting the Province, is often recounted by them to this day.

It was during this visit that the great political combat between Mr. Brown and the Hon. David Christie took place at Glenmorris. The Reform party was much divided at the time. Mr. Christie adhered to the Hincks Ministry, Mr. Brown opposed them, and the announcement that they were to cross swords at Glenmorris attracted a large and

deeply interested assemblage of spectators. Both gentlemen were in the flush of early manhood, full of vigour and enthusiasm, and when the intellectual contest began, they seemed to experience—

“The stern joy which warriors feel,  
In foemen worthy of their steel.”

When the Hincks Ministry fell, the causes of difference between Reformers disappeared, and Mr. Brown and Mr. Christie became political friends, which relation has continued unbroken ever since—a period of a quarter of a century—and doubtless both gentlemen have since enjoyed many a quiet laugh over the battle of Glenmorris and its exciting incidents.

When the elections of 1854 came on, a rather unusual contest resulted in South Waterloo. Mr. Geo. S. Tiffany, of Hamilton, came forward as the candidate of the Government, and Mr. Robert Ferrie, of Doon, in opposition to them. Both gentlemen were members of the Reform party, and their respective requisitions were signed by Reformers who, never before nor since, took part in politics against each other. The Conservatives supported Mr. Ferrie, and were associated with Reformers who also never, before nor since, took part with them in any contest. The result of this somewhat mixed political struggle was the return of Mr. Ferrie by a majority \* of over two hundred.

---

\* The Poll at the close of the second day stood as follows :

	Tiffany.	Ferrie.	Total.
Waterloo.....	117	122	239

The first great fire in Galt took place in 1851. The buildings on Main Street were then chiefly wooden, more especially on the south side where the long and handsome Granite Block now stands. The fire broke out in the store carried on by one McKinnon, and soon all that portion of the street was in flames. The fire engines were worked with a will, but they were powerless against such a mass of flame as soon arose. Messrs Peter Cook, Alex. H. Mowat, R. McKinnon, Andrew Elliott, John McVenn, Robert Wallace—all well-remembered names—were among those burned out on the occasion. \*

One of the well-known institutions of Galt, the Collegiate Institute, took its rise at this period. In 1852, a Grammar School was started in the old Township Hall, the first trustees being the Rev. M. Boomer, Rev. James Strang, John Davidson, Robert Ferrie and the Rev.

---

Dumfries.....	42	170	212
Wilmot.....	140	172	312
Galt.....	1	106	107
Preston.....	69	4	73
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	369	574	943

\* The Granite Block which replaced these buildings was also destroyed by fire in 1862. The fire originated from a barrel of Naptha in Fleming & Robinson's grocery, and in consequence of having a lighted lamp brought too close to it. It occurred about seven o'clock on Saturday evening, the 31st May, 1862, and the fire spread with unprecedented rapidity. The following shops were destroyed: Fleming & Robinson, groceries; John Fleming, books and stationery; William Frier, dry goods; John Orchard, tailor and clothier; R. S. Strong, drugs and chemicals; William Kerr, boots and shoes. Besides these establishments, the buildings of Mr. Robert Wallace, and the stocks of Messrs. W. H. Job, Wm. Prest, Angus Polson, Taylor & Green, and George West, were injured by removal, or otherwise. The losses were very heavy.

Hamilton Gibson. Mr. Boomer was elected chairman, and took much interest in the school for a long period. It is but justice to mention, however, that the late Mr. John Davidson, for about twenty years, was the most active member of the Board, assisted during all the early struggles of the school, and ultimately saw it become one of the four Collegiate Institutes first selected for the Province.

The first teacher was Mr. Michael C. Howe, B.A., and subsequently an LL.D. of Dublin University. The second year, Mr. William Tassie, B.A., took over Mr. Howe's charge of twelve scholars, and the same fall removed to a small unpretending stone building which the trustees by great exertions were able to erect on the present site.

During the quarter of a century which has since elapsed, the school has gone steadily forward until it has become one of the principal Collegiate Institutes of the Province. It has a regular staff of six teachers, besides music, drawing, elocution and drill instructors, and an average attendance of 220 scholars; considerably over one-half of whom are from different parts of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the United States. Dr. Tassie—for the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him by Queen's College, Kingston, in 1871—has continued to act as Principal ever since his connection with the institution, and its well-earned celebrity as a seat of learning is largely due to his indefatigable exertions.

The great change which had been gradually taking place in the circumstances of the Province, as of this locality, was

evidenced by the strong railway "fever" which at this time began to manifest itself in all the older settled districts. The Great Western Railway was nearing completion, the construction of the Grand Trunk had commenced, and other railway projects were being mooted on every hand. From having little better to travel on than Indian trails, marked by blazed trees, thirty years' toil and sweat had worked such a transformation that railways were now deemed a necessity for business or travel.

The people of Galt were early on the alert in railway matters, and a shadowy hope was at one time entertained that the main line of the Great Western might pass through the village. This expectation was doomed to disappointment, but the directors of that Company were fully alive to the large business which the locality could throw on their line, and consequently arranged to make a branch to Galt, which was begun in 1852.

The Council of Galt determined to have a grand celebration on the occasion of the turning of the first sod of the branch line. Unusual preparations were made for the occasion. Several leading public men of the Province were invited, and it was arranged that the ceremony of turning the first sod should be performed by Sir Allan McNab, of Hamilton, and that the event should be signalized by a grand ball in the evening.

The first sod was turned in the presence of a large assemblage of people, near the spot where Cranston's malt-house now stands, which was then about the centre of a large and rather rocky field, extending eastwards over



the adjoining hills. Sir Allan used his silver spade amidst much cheering, the people being greatly delighted with the prospect of soon seeing, to use the language of the time, "the iron horse snorting through the village."

The ball in the evening was undoubtedly the grandest affair of the kind which ever took place in Galt or vicinity. The Commercial Buildings had not then been long completed, and the three front rooms on the second storey were granted by Mr. Shade for the occasion. Two of them were used for dancing, and one for a supper room. Sir Allan McNab and daughters, several of the chief officers of the Great Western Railway, and many other distinguished persons from a distance were present. Galt and the neighbouring villages were largely represented, and it is not too much to say, that such a scene of beauty, fashion, and gaiety, had never been witnessed in the village before.

"Soft eyes spake love to eyes, that spake again!  
And all went merry as a marriage bell."

Thus was the commencement of the first railway projected into Galt, duly honoured.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

Great prosperity of Galt from 1850 till it became a Town—Principal Manufactures and Business firms—It is called the “Manchester of Canada”—Effects of the Crimean war—Reminiscences of the old Militia muster—Amusing incidents—Formation of the Mechanics’ Institute—Some familiar faces now nearly forgotten—First officers elected—Early lectures by Galtonians in “Noah’s Ark”—Splendid lecture course in 1855–’56, and afterwards—Crowded meetings—Excitement and fun now preferred to lectures—What does it portend ?

FROM the year 1850 to 1857—when Galt became a town, and our narrative closes—was probably the most active and prosperous period in its history. Not only was the village the best grain market for twenty or thirty miles west, but in consequence of its flouring mills, foundries, woollen mills, axe and edge tool works, paper mill, and numerous mercantile establishments, it had already become sufficiently prominent, more particularly for the excellence of its manufactures, to be called the “Manchester of Canada.”

Among the principal manufacturing establishments carried on in Galt, before or shortly after 1857, the following may be mentioned :—

Messrs. James Crombie & Co.’s foundry ; McNaughton & Wilson, Dumfries flouring mills ; H. H. Date’s axe and edge tool factory—as early as 1851, this establishment obtained medals at the World’s Exhibition in London for

a case of edge tools exhibited ; Robinson & Howell's woollen factory ; Lutz, Cook & Co., foundry ; J. B. Attwood & Co., staves and shingles ; R. & J. Blain's flouring mills ; R. & D. H. Forbes' paper mill—in 1857, this had given place to a steam waggon factory, begun by Mr. Wm. A. Shearson ; Peck & Dykes' malt house ; Edward Whitney, brewery ; James W. Davis & Co.'s foundry ; Barbour, and Malcom's chair and furniture factories ; the carriage shops of James Kay, and Todd, Walker & Brydon ; and Andrew Elliott's distillery. Besides these establishments, there was a pail factory, at one time carried on by James Young, grain-buyer ; a last factory, commenced by Lioniel Foster, and afterwards carried on by Danforth & Young ; the planing mills of James Scott and of Roger and James Robson ; Galt woollen factory, carried on by Thomas Davidson ; Angus Ferguson's sash and door factory ; John Scott's marble works ; a haine factory, and the usual accompaniment of carpenters', smiths', and similar shops.

The number of first-class mercantile establishments in Galt in 1857, shows what an active business place it had already become. In the dry goods line alone, there were John Murphy, A. Polson & Co., Thomas S. Fisher, John Macmillan, W. H. Job, Alex. Campbell, and James & Charles Brown. The latter gentleman was killed at the Desjardins Canal accident, on the 12th of March, 1857, and McDonald & Ogilvie succeeded the firm in business. In both dry goods and groceries were: Adam Warnock & Co. ; in groceries alone, Fleming & Robinson, Osborne, Spiers & Co., William McBroom, Williamson & Struthers,

and P. Z. Romaine; hardware and groceries: Gavin Hume; hardware alone: James Warnock & Co., and R. Esterbrook & Co.

Of all these establishments, those of Gavin Hume, James Warnock & Co., and Fleming \* & Robinson are the only ones which have survived the twenty-three years which have since elapsed, the latter business now being carried on by Mr. John Fleming, jr.

Who first applied the name of "Manchester of Canada" to Galt, is not accurately known, but the name of the late Mr. William L. Distin, who lived the last twenty years of his life in Galt, has been associated with it. Whoever was its author, it had its rise before Galt became a town, and the cap seems to have fitted, as it was promptly put on and continues to be worn to this day. The following well-

---

\* On the morning of the 15th of January, 1877, Mr. John Fleming, who was then M. P. P. for South Waterloo, was struck down with paralysis as he was preparing to leave for Toronto to attend to his Parliamentary duties. He died the following Sunday, the 21st instant, at the comparatively early age of 57 years. He was a native of Dumfermline, Scotland, from which he emigrated about 1835 with his father—also well remembered. His educational and business habits soon raised him to the management of Mr. James Coleman's extensive mercantile business in Dundas, but he removed therefrom and entered into the grocery business in Galt with Mr. Andrew Elliott, now of Almonte, in 1846. Mr. William Robinson soon afterwards took Mr. Elliott's place, and during the existence of the firm of Fleming & Robinson, the distillery on south Water Street, the soap factory, and the Dumfries mills were carried on in addition to the grocery business. Mr. Fleming ultimately became sole partner in the mercantile line, and subsequently started Galt book and stationery store in company with Mr. Alexander Elmslie. Mr. Fleming took great interest in the Mechanics' Institute; was President for many years of the Gore Mutual Insurance Company, and Secretary of the Curling Club; filled the offices of School Trustee, Councillor and Reeve, Warden of the County, and at his death was a member of the Ontario Legislature.

deserved tribute to the manufactures of Galt, from the pen of an able writer, would indicate that the name is not altogether undeserved:—

“The manufactures of Galt have not been stimulated into false vitality by public aid, or puffed into transient notoriety by foolish rivalry. They rest upon a solid basis. Enterprise and capital combined, seizing hold of the inherent advantages which the town possesses, have brought them to the position they now occupy, and we doubt if another town could be found in which this branch of trade rests on a more secure foundation. The element of stability in any manufacturing business is of great value. Where it exists, there you are sure to find skilled workmen employed, the very best material used, the latest improvements adopted, regardless of expense, and vigilant care exercised in seeing that no imperfect work is sent out. In this position, stand the manufacturing establishments of Galt to-day, enjoying a reputation for the excellence of the work done, second to none in the Province.”

The Crimean War which broke out in 1854, raised the prices of produce in Canada to an unusually high figure. This gave a great impetus to the whole Province, but nowhere was it more visible than in Galt and vicinity. Farmers became wealthy; property went up in value; building lots, on back streets, sold at fabulous prices; new enterprises, both public and private, were freely entered into, and the people generally were seized with a spirit of enterprise, progress, and it must be added, of extravagance, which subsequent events did not justify.

It is impossible to follow the building operations of the place during this inflation; indeed, such a record would possess little interest except as regards a few of the principal public edifices erected. These will be duly noticed as we advance, accompanied with a brief reference to a few of the more prominent events which transpired before the whilom wilderness, whose history we have striven to follow, became the Town of Galt, with all the glory of a Mayor and Corporation.

Among the excitements of this period—now happily forgotten—was the annual muster of Militia on St. Andrew's Church hill. Under the old law, the whole male population of each county, between certain ages, was divided into companies, regularly officered, and required to muster on Her Majesty's birth-day. The first battalion Waterloo Militia was composed of ten companies, whose officers were the following well-known citizens:—

	Lieutenant-Colonel—Thomas Rich.	
	Major—James K. Andrews.	
	Adjutant—David Spiers.	
	Surgeon—Thomas Seagram.	
First Company ...	{ Capt. James Crombie. Lieut. E. L. Cutten. Ensign W. T. Shearson.	} Galt.
Second Company..	{ Capt. Peter Cook. Lieut. William Jaffray. Ensign Daniel Howell.	} Galt.
Third Company...	{ Capt. James McMillan. Lieut. Adam Warnock. Ensign Alexander Macgregor.	} Galt.

Fourth Company.	{ Capt. Robert Lundy Wilson. Lieut. William Cowan. Ensign James Potter.	{ Galt.
Fifth Company....	{ Capt. Andrew Landreth. Lieut. James Wallace. Ensign John Blain.	{ Galt.
Sixth Company...	{ Capt. Charles McGeorge. Lieut. Ralph Marshal. Ensign ——— (vacant).	{ Ayr.
Seventh Company	{ Capt. William Dolman. Lieut. Andrew Rochester. Ensign James Edgar, jr.	{ Ayr.
Eighth Company.	{ Capt. David Shiel. Lieut. John W. Shiel. Ensign Andrew Dickson.	{ Sprague's Road.
Ninth Company...	{ Capt. John Davidson. Lieut. Alexander McArthur. Ensign George A. Baker.	{ Galt.
Tenth Company...	{ Capt. James W. Davis. Lieut. Richard S. Strong. Ensign John Macmillan.	{ Galt.

At this time—1857—tolerable good feeling existed between the officers and men of the battalion, but a few years previously the formality of mustering on Her Majesty's birth-day, which was rather a useless one, had evoked a great deal of ill-feeling on the part of the people, who paid very little attention to these crude attempts at drill, but a good deal to any movement calculated to harass or turn the laugh upon the officers. Some of these gentlemen, on the other hand, felt the importance of their

spurs, and instituted a series of annual Courts-martial, at which all those persons who failed to muster were summoned and fined. This increased the ill-feeling, and led to systematic efforts to break up these annual musters. Some curious pranks were played.

On one occasion, as the superior officers rode into the field, one not of their number, also followed in full uniform—sword, epaulets, and all—though not of the orthodox colour and style. This was a youthful Darkey, on an old, lean, cadaverous-looking horse, the effect of whose singular and mirth-provoking appearance can readily be imagined upon the eight or ten companies of Militia-men, annoyed at being kept engaged on a public holiday, and ready for any fun at the expense of those in command.

On another occasion more serious results occurred. The men had just finished answering to their names, when some one from near Ayr\* tossed up a football about the middle of the field. This cunning device took like magic. First one stepped from the ranks and gave the ball a kick, then another followed suit, until, in less than five minutes, the annual muster assumed the appearance of a gigantic foot-ball match! This *bouleversement* was supremely ridiculous, and naturally caused great annoyance to the officers. In the midst of the excitement, one of those then in command, Dr. John Moffat, who had been

---

\* Strenuous efforts were made at the time to find out the person who brought this foot-ball on the ground. The secret, however, was well kept at the time. The name is now known to a select circle, and the identical football is now, or at least was until very recently, preserved in a house not a hundred miles from Ayr, as a sort of trophy of the occasion.



in the regular service, and was of a rather excitable temperament, put spurs to his horse, galloped after the football, and struck two or three times at it with his sword. One Dowswell, at one time a tinsmith in Galt, picked up the ball in his hands, when Moffatt, who was much excited, struck another blow at it, which, either accidentally or intentionally, struck Dowswell on the head, causing an ugly wound. Believing the blow had been aimed intentionally, very bitter threats were made against the Doctor, who shortly afterwards galloped from the ground amidst a rattling shower of stones.

Whilst the officers generally endeavoured to perform a disagreeable duty as agreeably as possible, the circumstances were such as to render this impossible. Besides being a disagreeable break in a public holiday, which in those days were not very frequent, the people could see no use in the annual muster, more particularly as scarcely any of the officers knew anything of drill themselves. A circumstance which strikingly exemplified this, became the standing joke of the battalion for many a day afterwards.

A worthy farmer of Dumfries was an officer of one of the companies. He had gone to the expense of a uniform, and took a great deal of interest in the annual drill. One Queen's Birthday he had exercised his company pretty freely in marching them across the field and back again, when he proceeded to give the command to halt. Whether it was the excitement of the occasion, or that his mind was on other thoughts' intent, was never, and will probably never now be discovered, but, instead

of crying "Halt!" to the astonishment of his men, he loudly cried out "Who-a! Who-a!" This unfortunate *lapsus lingua* was so suggestive of the oxen and the ox-goad, that his company became so limbered up with laughter as to be unequal to further duty, and were speedily dismissed.

Galt Mechanics' Institute was formed at a public meeting presided over by the Reeve, Mr. Morris C. Lutz, with Mr. David H. Forbes as Secretary, on the 31st May, 1853. Fifty names were handed in as members before the meeting separated, among whom were the following gentlemen, once well-known citizens, and not already mentioned in the course of this narrative: Messrs. Oliver P. Knox; William Robertson, William Boyce, Matthew Bell, Robert Mathieson, Isaac W. Whiting, Samuel Tongue, George Biggar, Peter Dawson, Sylvester Smith, Robert Williamson, William Grassie, James G. Fraser, and James Geddes.\* The first officers elected for the Institute were:—

MR. MORRIS C. LUTZ, President.

MR. JAMES CROMBIE,

DR. RICHARDSON,

MR. JAMES COWAN,

} Vice-Presidents.

---

\* In connection with these names, it may be mentioned that the name of Mr. John Sproat was accidentally omitted from the list of early Galtonians to be found on page 115, and that Messrs. William and James R. Scrimger, Edward Robinson, and Andrew Dryden were scholars at Mr. Gowinlock's school. Mr. Sproat came to Galt in the fall of 1834, and still continues a resident of the town. Mr. William Graham became a resident of Galt in 1838, and Mr. William Robinson in 1840.

† Mr. James Crombie, who made a large fortune in Galt, but subsequently lost it in grain speculations, was born in Scotland in 1818. He went to

MR. WILLIAM JAFFRAY, Secretary and Treasurer.

COMMITTEE—Dr. Kerr, Isaac W. Whiting, Alex. Addison, Sydney Smith, John Barbour, George Biggar, D. Ramore, William Boyce, Henry H. Date, Daniel Howell, Andrew Scott, and John Davidson.

Shortly after the Institute was begun, in consequence of the resignation of the Secretary, Mr. Robert McLean was appointed thereto, and Mr. Alex. Addison became Treasurer. The Galt Circulating Library was shortly afterwards merged into the Mechanics' Institute, the books of the former being purchased for £40, payable by membership in the new organization. The services of Mr. James G. Fraser were obtained as Librarian, at the modest sum of five pounds per annum, with the use of the Telegraph office for meetings thrown in.

It was not until the winter of 1858, and after the Association had been allotted a room in the new Town Hall, that the Reading Room was started, at which time Mr. Alex. Addison became Librarian as well as Treasurer. It was much due to this gentleman's exertions that the Library and Reading Room have long been a credit to

---

bathe in the mill race of his woollen mills, Preston, on the evening of Friday, the 30th June, 1876, and, either taking cramps or some sudden illness, disappeared under the water. When got out by a friend who was with him, he partially recovered, but died the following morning. "Mr. Crombie's name for many years was a tower of strength to any enterprise with which he was connected. For many years he was a director of the Royal Canadian Bank. . . . In 1867, Mr. Crombie contested South Waterloo in opposition to Mr. Isaac Clemens, but was then defeated. For many years he occupied a seat at the Council Board of Galt, and was honoured as one of its most pushing and enterprising citizens."

the town and vicinity; during the twenty years throughout which the Reading Room was under his control, very rare were the days which did not find him at his post, and his well-known face and figure will remain indissolubly linked with the Mechanics' Institute whilst the present generation lasts.

During the early days of the Institute there was quite a rage for public lectures, which it was thought could be made a source of revenue. They were rather unfortunate, however, at the start. Rev. Dr. Mair, of Fergus, agreed to lecture on "Sacred Music" on the 10th March, 1854, but after due notice had been given, he was unable to attend on account of sickness. Then the Rev. Hamilton Gibson was announced to lecture on "Astronomy," on the 16th March, but on that day both of Galt bridges were carried away by the spring flood,\* and so the

---

\* Since the country has been cleared, the Grand River has become subject to rapidly rising floods, unknown when the banks of the stream were wooded. On the occasion referred to above, the 16th March, 1854, the western end of Dickson Mills bridge, and the whole of Main Street bridge, were carried away by the ice and swollen waters. The loss was estimated at \$3,000, taking in private property. Four years afterwards, on the 18th March, 1858, another dangerous flood and ice jam occurred. The night was pitch dark, and the new lower bridge was carried away, and two men, named James Keidwell and William Hollier, carried with it. Several prominent citizens just managed to get off the bridge in time—one losing his hat! Everybody at first thought Keidwell and Hollier lost, but the flood was so high, that it floated the portion of the bridge they were on out of the main channel of the river, where by rare good fortune it struck a large tree at the mouth of Moffat's creek, into the branches of which they scrambled as well as they could in the darkness. They were ultimately rescued in a boat by Mr. William Cowan, River Road, and Mr. A. W. Ogilvie, merchant, who afterwards received a handsome presentation for the creditable part they took in the affair.

lecturer could not get across the river to delight his audience with a description of the heavenly bodies.

Among the earliest lectures, all of which took place in "Noah's Ark," of fragrant memory, were the following, which will doubtless recall to some minds reminiscences of these gatherings : Dr. Kerr, on "the best means of supplying towns with water, with special reference to the best means of increasing the water power of Galt ;", Rev. James Strang, on "Horticulture ;" Dr. Richardson on "Man," which we know from a high authority, is the proper study of mankind ; and Dr. Whiting on "Efficient Systems of Medical Practice." The record makes no reference to a lecture delivered by an old Galt acquaintance, Dr. Thomas Seagram. This gentleman was, however, not to be behind the other Medicos, but the subject he discussed cannot be recalled. The worthy Doctor had a habit of using the phrase, "as the saying is," and it is recollected that, after proceeding about fifteen or twenty minutes, the recurrence of "as the saying is" became so frequent, and the words were used in such curious connections, as to quite excite the risibilities of the audience.

These local lectures not having been successful pecuniarily, the Committee of the Institute turned their attention to gentlemen at a distance, doubtless persuaded that "distance often lends enchantment to the view." During the winter of 1855-6, a most admirable and successful course of no less than nine lectures was provided. The lecturers and their themes were as follow :

1. "The Poets and Poetry of Scotland,"—by Dr. Scott, Newark, New Jersey, on Dec. 10th.
2. "Modern Infidelity,"—by Rev. Robert F. Burns, Toronto, on Dec. 13th.
3. "The Reciprocal Obligations of Commerce and Christianity,"—by Rev. Robert Irvine, Hamilton, on Dec. 20th.
4. "The Nature and Advantages of the Study of Chemistry,"—by Rev. Wm. Ormiston, Hamilton, on Jan. 4th.
5. "The Sidereal Heavens,"—by the Rev. David Inglis, Hamilton, on Jan. 11th.
6. "The War in the East,"—by Rev. Dr. Blackwood, Philade'phia, on Jan. 25th.
7. "Our Own Age,"—by Mr. Thomas Henning, Toronto, on Feb. 8th.
8. "Success in Life,"—by Rev. W. F. Clarke, London, on February 19th.
9. "Marks of Design in the Animal Creation,"—by the Rev. Robert Burnett, Hamilton, on March 6th.

The people of Galt and neighbourhood must have had some taste for lectures in those days, for this long winter course was largely attended, the New Connexion Methodist Church, in which most of them were held, being frequently crowded to the doors. Nor was this season an exception. The succeeding winter some difficulty was found in procuring sufficient lecturers, but during 1857-8 another course\* of lectures was arranged, which would

---

\* The Lecture Course of 1857-8 was as follows:—1. "The Bards of Columbia"—the Rev. R. F. Burns. 2. "The Religion of Science"—Dr. Laycock, Woodstock. 3. "The Brotherhood of Nations"—Frederick Douglas, United States. 4. "The Properties of Light"—Rev. John James Galt. 5. "Canadian Tendencies"—Rev. A. C. Geikie. 6. "Life and Times of Robert Burns"—J. M. Dunn. 7. "The British in India"—A. G. A. Constable, who was a professional lecturer.

have reflected credit upon any city on the continent, and which was equally well patronized, the people greeting the lecturers with crowded houses week after week.

Some pertinent queries naturally suggest themselves in regard to this matter ?

How is it we have no such tempting courses of lectures now offered during the winter months ? Has our Province ceased to supply lecturers qualified for the purpose, or have the public ceased to take an interest in, or become too intelligent to require information upon the subjects usually taken up on the public platform ? One thing is certain : a great change has come over the people in this respect. Lectures are not attended as they formerly were. Mechanics' Institutes find they don't pay. Only such names as Gough, Tyndall and Beecher draw. But the tea-meetings, the tableaux, the skating rinks, the walking matches—everything embracing excitement and fun—are crowded during the winter months.

What do these symptoms portend ? Would the Rev. A. C. Geikie, if now in Galt instead of Australia, have placed them among "Canadian Tendencies" (upon which he lectured), worthy to be admired and encouraged ?





## CHAPTER XIX.

Opening of the Great Western Railway to Galt—The Galt and Guelph line —The McCracken affair—Warm municipal struggle, in 1855, over the erection of the Central School—Mr. Peter Cook—William Lyon Mackenzie's last visit to Galt—His Homestead Fund—Enterprising spirit of Galt at this period—Proposed Galt and Saugeen Railway—£15,000 voted to aid the enterprise—Bears seen in Dumfries as late as 1856—Meeting in 1856, to authorize the erection of a Town Hall and Market—Second great Fire in Galt.

THE Great Western Railway was opened for traffic at the beginning of 1854, but the Galt branch was not finished till the succeeding summer. It was opened about the 21st of August, 1855, amidst much rejoicing. About half-past eight o'clock a. m., an engine with a freight and two passenger coaches, filled with Galtonians, slowly glided out of Galt station on their way to Hamilton. The station platform was crowded, but not so much so as at 11 o'clock, when the train returned from Hamilton, having on board Messrs. R. W. Harris, President; Richard Juson, Director; Hugh C. Baker, Secretary, and other officials of the Great Western—with Mr. W. L. Distin, and a number of the leading citizens of Hamilton. They were received by Mr. John Davidson,\* then Reeve of the

---

\* Mr. John Davidson was Postmaster, and one of the most prominent citizens of Galt, for over thirty-five years. He came to the village about 1840, from his father's farm in Woolwich, to which place the family emi-



village, conveyed in carriages to the Queen's Arms Hotel, where about seventy persons sat down to lunch, and duly celebrated the opening of the Galt branch in toast and sentiment. A free ride in the afternoon was generally accepted by the citizens, and served to put everybody in the best of spirits and good humour.

The first station-master of Galt was Mr. James K. Andrews, associated with whom was Mr. R. W. Dunstan, as freight agent. They continued in office for twelve months, at the end of which time they retired, and were tendered a public dinner at the Queen's Arms Hotel, then kept by Mr. E. L. Cutten. Mr. W. L. Distin, Hamilton presided on the occasion, and about forty gentlemen took part in the compliment.

The Galt and Guelph Railway was at this time in rapid course of construction, the first sod having been turned at Preston amidst great rejoicing, in the month of May preceding. No good feeling existed between this company and the people of Galt—and thereby hangs a tale! The older residents of Galt will recollect the struggle which took place for the control of this road. When parties met at the Royal Hotel, Hamilton, to sign the stock books of the proposed company, it was found that

---

grated from Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1834. Mr. Davidson died on the 30th November, 1877, aged 72 years. He started a store on Main Street, where Ker's block now stands, as early as 1842. He was long Agent of the Gore Bank, the only one for many years in the village; filled the offices of Reeve, Mayor, President of the Gore Mutual Insurance Company, Chairman of the Collegiate Institute Board, and other honourable and useful positions. He took an active interest in the Masonic order, and left behind him considerable property and other wealth.

the representatives of Galt signed for a larger amount of stock than both Guelph and Preston combined. This would have given Galt the choice of directors. But their opponents were equal to the occasion. They induced the bar-keeper of the Royal hotel, one Henry McCracken, to sign the stock-book for \$25,000 worth of stock. This was done at the last moment, and secured to those hostile to the interests of Galt, the control of the directors and the location of the line.

Much ill feeling resulted from this occurrence. The Galt subscribers appealed to the courts against McCracken's subscription as being bogus, but the suit was afterwards withdrawn, on the directors allowing the Galt subscriptions of stock to be cancelled. For a considerable time this was a lively quarrel, but it has already almost passed out of memory.

The Galt and Guelph Railway was opened from Galt to Preston in November, 1855, and within a few months afterwards as far as Guelph. Since then it has been extended, under the name of the Wellington, Grey and Bruce Railway, all the way to Lake Huron, which it taps at Kincardine and Southampton, and is now one of the best paying portions of the Great Western system.

One of the warmest municipal struggles which ever took place in Galt, occurred over the construction of the Central School. The School Trustees in 1855 were, Messrs. Peter Cook, William McLaughlan, Andrew Malcom, John Barbour, and Andrew Ramsay. They determined that Galt should have a first-class Public School, and

with that end in view, purchased from Mr. James Harris, for £750, the present site. This action called forth strong opposition, and there can be no doubt that at first a large majority of the ratepayers were against the proposition.

The village was soon divided into two hostile camps upon the question, headed, of course, by the local newspapers. Indignation meetings were held. The Trustees were condemned. But the Trustees persisted. The Council refused to raise the money to pay for the Harris lot. The Trustees applied to the courts for a mandamus to compel them. And, to make a long story short, after a long and bitter struggle, the Central School went up, and public opinion so veered round, that in the end the action of the Board was completely sustained by the ratepayers. The name of Mr. Peter Cook, then Secretary of the Board, and whose tragic death\* in 1859 was so much lamented,

---

\* Mr. Cook was killed by a separator falling upon him on the 19th September, 1859. No accident ever happened in Galt which caused more profound sorrow. Two days afterwards, in the *Dumfries Reformer*, the writer of this sketch made the following among other references to Mr. Cook, from whom he received much friendly counsel in early life: "Mr. Cook was born in the year 1814, on the Island of Arran, off the west coast of Scotland, and was consequently in his 46th year. At an early age, he emigrated from there to the Province of New Brunswick, where he resided for a number of years. From New Brunswick the deceased came to Galt, and entered into the mercantile business. Disliking the drudgery of mercantile life, he ultimately became a partner in the Galt foundry. . . . Mr. Cook possessed natural abilities of a high order, which had been cultivated by a good education, and extensive acquaintance with literature. . . . His unbending integrity and uprightness made him universally respected, and the evidences of his zeal in the moral and intellectual elevation of the youth of Galt will long remain a fitting memento and a glowing tribute to his memory.

"High-minded, just and honourable, coupled with a most refined and

ought ever to be remembered in connection with the Central School, which remains to this day one of the finest public buildings of the kind in the Province.

The Central School was opened in February, 1857, Mr. James Baikie being the first Principal. He held the position for several years, after which he entered Knox's College, and ultimately became Minister of the West Presbyterian Church, Toronto, during the pastorate of which he died on the 9th December, 1866. He was widely respected.

The last speaking tour of William Lyon Mackenzie was made in 1855. He held a meeting in the old Town Hall Galt, on the 10th September, and was greeted by a large audience, many of whom had never before seen the "old man eloquent." Although over seventy years of age, from his smart appearance, great energy, and rapid and forcible speech, the listener would hardly have taken him to be over forty or fifty years of age. He had entered upon a crusade to secure a dissolution of the union between Upper and Lower Canada, but, although backed up as his views were by his paper, *Mackenzie's Message*, the agitation did not make much headway.

A few months afterwards a meeting was held in Galt,

---

delicate sensibility, Mr. Cook's character was a worthy model and example to those around him, and few there are fitted to fill the void which his death has caused in this community . . . His character abounded with Christian graces, and however painful may be the separation from those around whom the heart clings with the fondest affection, we should never forget—

"Death's but a path that must be trod,  
If man would ever pass to God."

Mr. Thomas Dalgliesh in the chair, and Mr. James Young, secretary, to assist in providing a homestead for Mr. Mackenzie. A considerable subscription was obtained and forwarded, but the old man did not live long to enjoy the home provided for him by his friends throughout the Province, death closing his stormy and eventful life on the 28th August, 1861.

The enterprising spirit which prevailed in Galt during this period was well exemplified by the agitation which took place for a railway from Galt to Saugeen. The Press of the town strongly favoured it. The Council took it up, and a motion to aid the line to the extent of £15,000 was unanimously carried. Steps were taken to procure a charter from the Provincial Legislature. Quite a struggle took place over the matter, representatives from Guelph and Preston opposing the charter being granted. The latter proved to be the best lobbyists, or had most influence with the Government of the day, for the Railway Committee threw out the charter, and the project was never afterwards revived.

The fall of 1856—so far as the writer is aware—is the last time bears have been seen wild in any part of Dumfries. Much to the surprise of the neighbourhood, a large black bear and its cub attacked the sheep on Mr. John Smith's farm, Sprague's road, three miles from Galt, about dusk on the 21st September. They were first discovered by Mr. Peter Brown, upon seeing whom they made off into the woods adjoining the Township Hall. Chase was soon given by Mr. Brown and others, when the cub took

up a tree, from which it was shot after dark. Thinking the old bear might also be among the branches, a number of the neighbours kindled a fire and sat up till day-break, keeping a sharp look-out, however, lest bruin should unexpectedly descend, or return through the darkness in search of her offspring. Daylight revealed that the bear was not upon the tree, but it was the general belief she could not be far away. Many turned out to take part in the hunt, but nothing more was ever seen or heard of the unexpected visitor.

The want of a Town Hall and Market began to be much felt as Galt increased in population, and Noah's Ark was soon doomed. This ancient structure was quite behind the times, both in appearance and accommodation, and at a public meeting held on the 17th October, 1856, resolutions were unanimously passed in favour of putting up a new building. The sum of £1000 received from the Clergy Reserve Fund, was devoted to the purpose, and the Council was authorized to issue debentures in payment of the balance.

The present Town Hall and Market were the result of this movement, but all did not go smoothly with the enterprise. On the 17th December an unusually stormy indignation meeting took place, and it is some vindication of the good taste of the municipality, that a majority of those present condemned the plan which had been adopted by the Building Committee. Tenders had, however, already been asked for, and the contract was advertised to be awarded the following day, so the committee pro-

ceeded, ignoring the action of the indignation meeting. Although a substantial building, it must be confessed that the objections to the plan of the Town Hall and Market were well taken.

On Sunday afternoon, the 23rd November, 1856, shortly after one o'clock, the second large fire from which Galt suffered, took place. It broke out in Arnold's Saloon, on the north side of Main Street, and as the buildings were all wooden, the whole of that side of the street, from what was known as Mrs. Johnson's corner (corner Main and Ainslie Streets) down to Mr. H. H. Date's hardware store, was soon one seething mass of flames. The following were the sufferers: Messrs. A. G. Lordly, grocer; Mr. Danziger, clothier; Elijah Arnold, saloon; Robert Walker, clothier; L. G. Robbins, barber; and Kerr & McTague, tinsmiths.





## CHAPTER XX.

Galt becomes a Town in 1857— The election of the first Mayor and Corporation—Names of those elected—The first School Trustees—Municipal Celebration in May—Description of the procession—Galt Rifles, Artillery Company, Firemen, Oddfellows, and Sons of St. George— Mayor Lutz lays the foundation stone of the Town Hall and Market—The official document read by Mr. Ker—The Mayor's speech—Their testimony to the great prosperity and enterprise of Galt at this period—Lunch at the Queen's Arms—The celebration closes amidst much enthusiasm.

ON the 1st January, 1857, forty years after its founders, Messrs. Dickson and Shade, visited the spot, Galt became a town.

During the previous spring steps had been taken to this end. A public meeting of the ratepayers instructed the Council to divide the village into five wards, each to have three representatives in the Council. The Act of Incorporation was procured in due course, and as the new year drew near, much interest began to be manifested in the first elections to the Town Council. In fact, when one remembers the caucusing, ward meetings, and other movements which took place on the occasion, in which almost every leading citizen took an active part, it is impossible not to be struck with the change which has since come over "the spirit of our dream" in regard to municipal affairs.



Before the time for the elections arrived, preliminary meetings were held in every ward to place candidates in the field, so great was the interest felt in the approaching contest. Although but twenty-three years have passed and gone since that time, the list\* of those brought forward as candidates at these ward meetings, possesses a melancholy interest, and too eloquently tells how brief a period of time serves to effect the most wonderful changes.

When the elections did occur, on Monday and Tuesday, the 5th and 6th January, they passed off much more quietly than was anticipated. The ward meetings had served greatly to cool off the excitement, and settled the minds of the ratepayers generally on those gentlemen they thought best qualified to represent them in the first Council of the new town. In three of the wards only were the seats contested.

The first Town Council of Galt was composed of the following gentlemen :

---

\*In First Ward the gentlemen proposed were : Messrs. James Kay, M. C. Lutz, Dr. Richardson, J. W. Davis, Thos. McKenzie, H. H. Date, Robert Wallace, and John Scanlan. In Second Ward the gentlemen were : John Young, William Robinson, John McNaughton, D. Ramore, William Osborne, W. H. Benn, T. I. G. Busby, and J. W. Davis. In Third Ward they were: James Dalgliesh, Thos. Armstrong, John McNaughton, Andrew Malcom, Roger Robson, William Osborne, and Jas. K. Andrews. In Fourth Ward only three—the requisite number—were proposed : John Davidson, Richard Blain, and E. L. Cutten. In Fifth Ward quite a number of candidates were proposed, but the majority of ratepayers present favoured the following gentlemen : Benjamin Hobson, William Ovens, and Thomas Rich.

First Ward,	{	Mr. Morris C. Lutz, Mr. James Kay, Dr. Richardson.
Second Ward	{	Mr. John Young, Mr. William Robinson, Mr. Dominick Ramore.
Third Ward	{	Mr. Thomas Armstrong, Mr. Thomas Sparrow, Mr. John McNaughton.
Fourth Ward	{	Mr. Francis Lowell, Mr. Richard Blain, Mr. E. L. Cutten.
Fifth Ward	{	Mr. William Osborne, Mr. Benjamin Hobson, Mr. Robert Scott.

The election of Mayor was at that time vested in the Council, and a good deal of speculation took place before the Councillors were elected, as to which citizen should have the honour of being the first Mayor. At one time there seemed some likelihood of the election of Councillors turning chiefly on this question, and there can be no doubt it did enter into the matter in some degree, although not to such an extent as to become the principal issue.

The new Council met for organization on the 19th January, Mr. Adam Ker, Municipal Clerk, in the chair. It having been ascertained that a majority were prepared to vote in favour of Mr. Morris C. Lutz for the first chief

magistrate, on motion of Dr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. McNaughton, he was unanimously elected. The Council then proceeded to elect the Reeve. Mr. William Robinson was nominated by Mr. Ramore, seconded by Mr. Young; Mr. William Osborne, by Mr. Kay,\* seconded by Mr. Hobson. On a vote being taken, Mr. Robinson had the majority, and was declared duly elected. And, thus equipped, the wheels of our first Town Council began to move.

The number of School Trustees under the new Charter was increased from five to ten, and the election was somewhat memorable this year, not only in consequence of the long struggle over the erection of the Central School, but also on account of the opposition to the introduction of the Free School system. To the credit of the citizens, the Free School party effected a complete triumph, the following gentlemen being selected, mostly all of whom were favourable to that enlightened system: First Ward, Messrs. John Barbour and James Young. Second—John Scott and William Wilkins. Third—Andrew Malcom and James Dalglish. Fourth—James Blain and John Cheeseman. And Fifth—George Biggar and Robert Malcom.

No public celebration took place on Galt becoming a town, but it was understood that at the laying of the

---

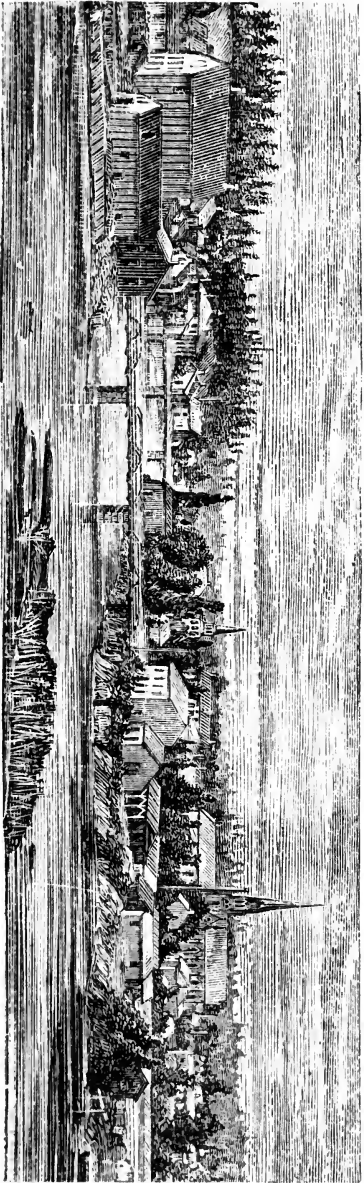
\* Mr. James Kay, Carriage Maker, was one of the early residents of Galt. He was many years in the Council, was Reeve after Galt became a town, and was much respected. He died on the 16th September, 1875, aged 55 years.

foundation stone of the new Town Hall and Market, which would come off in the spring, and when the weather would be more suitable for municipal festivities, suitable honour should be done to the occasion.

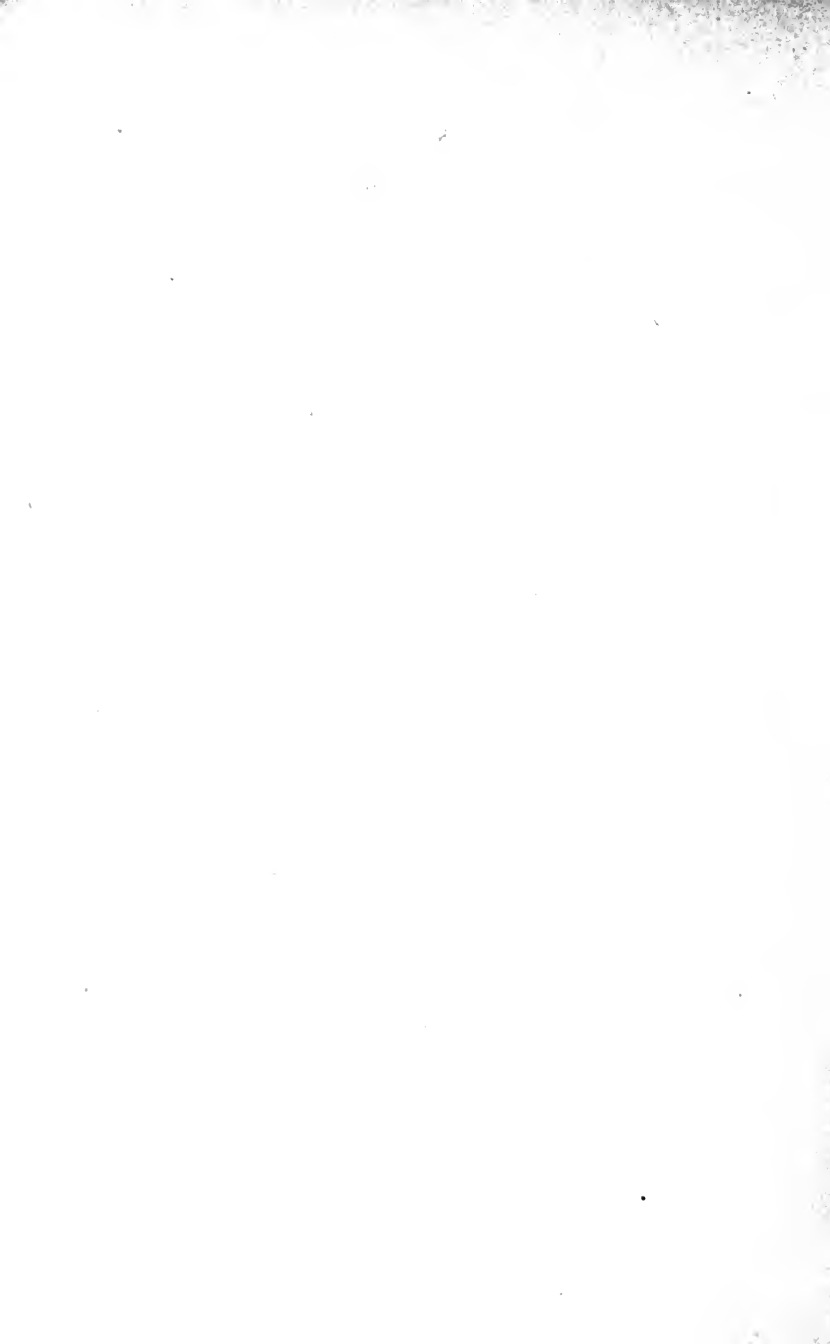
This celebration took place on the 13th of May, and fitly gave expression to the buoyant, enterprising, and ambitious feelings which pervaded the citizens of Galt at that period. It was the most successful municipal display ever made in the town. All the places of business closed at three o'clock. Half an hour later, a grand procession was formed on the Queen's Square, which presented a very fine appearance. "The marshal of the day, Mr. Adam Ker, mounted on a dashing charger," to use the language of the *Reformer* of that day, "appeared to much advantage. The Galt band, which took the lead in the procession, discoursed that 'sweet delicious music' for which they are noted, and were followed by the Galt Rifle Company, in full uniform, under the command of Lieutenant Busby. Behind the Rifles came the Oddfellows, and the looker-on had scarcely ceased viewing the rich uniform and discipline of the *corps*, when the splendid banner and glittering regalia of the Oddfellows arrested his attention, and claimed his admiration. The members of the St. George's Society came next, arrayed in regalia, bearing aloft—

'The flag that's braved a thousand years,  
The battle and the breeze,'

and the red coats of the Firemen, and the peculiar dress of the Hook and Ladder Company, added much to



A CLIMPE OF GALT, FROM THE CREDIT VALLEY BRIDGE,



the imposing appearance of the procession. The children of the Public Schools followed the societies, and the rear was filled up by the Mayor and Corporation of the Town, who were dressed in a becoming manner for the guardians of the public weal.

“When the procession reached the site of the Town Hall and Market, it was found that an unusually large number of spectators had gathered from all parts of the surrounding country. A large platform had been erected in the centre of the work, and, according to the chronicler of the time, there was seated upon it ‘a dazzling constellation of youth and beauty, composed of the ladies of Galt and vicinity.’”

The ceremony began by the band playing the National Anthem, and by a deafening volley from the Rifle Company, after which Mr. Ker, the Clerk of the municipality, rose and read the following document:—

“The growing importance of the town being much inconvenienced from the want of a Town Hall and Market House; the Town of Galt, desirous of providing a remedy for that evil, and at the same time consulting the convenience of trade in this important and now incorporated Town, under the sanction, and with the liberal grant of the Government, through the Clergy Reserves and aid of the rate-payers, resolved to erect this building of a character corresponding to the importance of the Town. Nor does it appear that any other time can be more suitable for such an undertaking, than when, in a period of general mercantile depression throughout the Province, the Town of Galt flourishes in affluence, population, industry, comfort, and domestic union—entirely free from debt to the Municipal Loan Fund—and the Province, at present, governed

by a Queen, the encourager of the Arts, and under whose auspices it has attained its present eminent position.

“The corner-stone of this building was laid by Morris C. Lutz, Esquire, first Mayor of the Town of Galt, on Wednesday, the 13th day of May, in the twentieth year of the reign of Queen Victoria, in the year of our Lord, 1857.

“William Graham, Superintendent ; H. B. Sinclair, Architect ; and H. B. Sinclair and R. Burrowes, Contractors.

“The following are our institutions at this date :—

“TOWN COUNCIL.—Morris C. Lutz, Wm. Robinson, Dr. Richardson, D. Ramore, James Kay, John McNaughton, John Young, E. L. Cutten, B. Hobson, William Osborne, T. Sparrow, F. Lowell, R. Scott, R. Blain, and T. Armstrong, Esquires, Councillors. Adam Ker, Esquire, Clerk and Treasurer.

“CLERGY.—Church of England, Rev. M. Boomer ; Established Church of Scotland, Rev. H. Gibson ; Free Church, Rev. John Bayne, D.D. ; United Secession, Rev. James Strang ; Primitive Methodist, Rev. Thomas Davidson ; Wesleyan, Rev. Isaac Barber ; New Connexion, Rev. James McAllister.

“GRAMMAR SCHOOL.—Wm. Tassie, Principal, and an assistant, —100 scholars.

“CENTRAL SCHOOL.—James Baikie, Principal, and six assistants, —700 scholars.

“FREE MASONS.—H. Fulford, Master ; N. Booth, Senior Warden ; Æ. Irving, Junior Warden ; R. Nellis, Senior Deacon ; J. Jaffray, Junior Deacon ; W. H. Job, Secretary ; W. Templeton, Tyler.

“ODDFELLOWS.—Wm. Jaffray, N. G. ; James McMillan, P. G. ; Wm. Robinson, V. G. ; Samuel Tongue, Secretary ; Dr. Richardson, Treasurer.

“FIRE COMPANY.—D. Ramore, Captain ; J. Barbour, 1st Chief ; S. Tongue, 2nd Chief ; Robt. Malcom, Secretary.



“ST. GEORGE’S SOCIETY.—Thomas Rich, President ; G. Mumford, Vice-President ; R. Esterbrook, Secretary.

“GORE BANK.—John Davidson, Esq., Cashier.

“COMMERCIAL BANK.—Wm. Cooke, Esq., Cashier.

“PROFESSIONS.—Three Barristers ; four Physicians.

“MILLERS.—John McNaughton, and R. and J. Blain.

“RIFLE COMPANY.—H. H. Date, Captain ; T. I. G. Busby, Lieutenant ; R. Esterbrook, Ensign.

“ARTILLERY COMPANY.—James Crombie, Captain ; Andrew Scott, Lieutenant.

“TRADES.—The population of the town is 3,500, and our manufactures consist of one axe factory, two woollen factories, two chair factories, four sash factories, one stave and shingle factory, four foundries, three machine shops, one distillery, one malt house, one brewery, three carriage factories, one haime factory, and two weekly papers.”

This document, with copies of the town and other newspapers, the town by-laws, and a number of gold, silver, and copper coins, was placed in the box, which was then properly cemented and placed in the corner stone. Mr. Councillor Ramore then presented the Mayor with a beautiful silver trowel in the following words : “ I have the honour to inform you that the Committee of Management has appointed you in your character of Mayor of Galt, to lay the corner-stone of the new Town Hall and Market House, and I am directed to present your Worship with this trowel, presenting it as a means of assistance to your Worship in accomplishing that object.” Mr. Mayor Lutz, having accepted the trowel, then made the following speech :—

“I am now about to lay the foundation-stone of the new Town Hall and Market, and before doing so, I shall take the liberty of making a few remarks.

“The laying of the foundation-stone of the public edifice which is about to be erected, is an epoch in the history of Galt. It tells of the general prosperity of the town, and the rapid progress which it has made. I believe no town in this section of Canada has advanced with more rapid strides, and it is gratifying to me, when there is so much financial depression as at the present period, to be able to say the onward course of Galt has never been arrested, and to congratulate you upon the flourishing condition of every branch of industry and trade within its limits. It is not my intention to make a long speech to you about Galt. Some ten or fifteen years ago, many of you remember that it then consisted of but a few houses, and a small number of inhabitants. But what do we now find? Why, the little village has grown into the bustling town, and in place of its once diminutive buildings, we have large manufactories, splendid stores, and some public buildings, one of which (I refer to the Central School) would be a credit, not only to any town, but almost, to any city on the continent; and we have now assembled to witness the laying of the foundation stone of another noble structure. You have much reason to feel proud of your town, and I only speak the sentiments of others when I say, that Galt will compare favourably with any town in Canada West, either as regards its progress, trade, and prospects, or the industry, intelligence, and enterprise of its inhabitants.”

The foundation-stone was then adjusted into its place, which ceremony was followed upon the lowering of the signal flag, by the thundering of the cannon of the Artillery company, which was stationed on Dickson's hill, the firing of the Rifle company, the music of the band, and the cheers of the different societies and citizens who had

assembled on the auspicious occasion. The enthusiasm displayed on all sides was exuberant. As the proceedings drew to a close, the cheering was taken up by the Odd-fellows, the St. George's Society, and other bodies separately, then the entire assemblage cheered together, and loudly did the surrounding hills resound with their joyous acclamations.

After the playing of the National Anthem, the procession reformed, and again passed through some of the principal streets on its way to the Queen's Square. Those who had taken part in the proceedings were here entertained by the Mayor and Corporation, after which the gathering dispersed, those who felt so disposed, to meet again at supper at the Queen's Arms in the evening.

The supper was largely attended. Mayor Lutz\* occupied the chair, having on his right Mr. William Osborne, and on his left Mr. John McNaughton. Mr. William Robinson acted as croupier. The proceedings, like those of the afternoon, were unusually enthusiastic. Galt was then, like many other parts of the Province, on the topmost wave of the commercial expansion caused by the Crimean War. The dark shadow of the coming crisis had hardly

---

\* Mr. Morris C. Lutz was a native of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, where he was born in 1806. He settled in West Flamboro' in 1829, and came to Galt in 1844. He shortly afterwards became the partner of Mr. Duncan Fisher, of the Galt Foundry, on North Water Street, with which he continued his connection till within a short time before his death, which occurred on the 30th of August, 1876. In 1853 he was elected Reeve of Galt; from 1857 to 1860 he was Mayor, and he also filled the same position from 1865 till 1869. He also occupied many other positions of honour and trust.

become visible. The future of individuals, of municipalities, and of the Province, looked roseate in the extreme. The close of this celebration was, therefore, more exuberant even than its beginning—indeed, such a night\* as that was with speeches, songs, and predictions of the future greatness and importance of the new Town of Galt, was never before, and has never since, been witnessed in its midst.

It was thus that Galt started on its career as one of the towns of Canada, and here we must close these Reminiscences of its history, at least for the present. The succeeding events are too recent to require narration in order to preserve the recollection of them, and have not yet attained that interest which attaches to circumstances, even those comparatively trifling, when they are hoary with age.

---

\* It is somewhat startling to think that of twenty-two persons who either spoke or sang at this supper, only five continue to this day residents of Galt—all the rest are scattered or dead! The names of the latter are—Messrs. Capt. Munro, P. Z. Romaine, Wm. Osborne, H. B. Sinclair, Lieut. Busby, David Byrns, Wm. Cooke, R. F. Nelles, Wm. Jaffray, Wm. March, Morris C. Lutz, John McNaughton, E. L. Cutten, Adam Ker, Walter H. Benn, James Wilson, and Private Mackenzie. Those still in Galt are—Thomas Rich, Wm. Robinson, Thos. Peck, John G. Dykes, and James Young. Such are the changes which the comparatively short period of twenty-two years brings about!





## CHAPTER XXI.

Concluding remarks—Contrast between the past and present—Young Galt-  
onians who have won something of success or distinction—The Hon.  
Wm. Dickson lives in Niagara till his 77th year—How the early Pi-  
oneers regarded him—Mr. Shade's closing years—He survives with all  
his natural characteristics until 1862—His life-work—What may justly  
be said of its effects upon Galt's prosperity—Mr. William Dickson—The  
wealth and prosperity to which Dumfries has attained—Galt at the  
present day—The true heroes of Canada.

A FEW remarks naturally suggest themselves in closing these Reminiscences, more especially in regard to the two names—Dickson and Shade—so closely interwoven with the early settlement of Dumfries and Galt, as well as their subsequent history.

The transformation which has taken place since 1816, how wondrous it has been! What a contrast between to-day and even thirty years ago? How immeasurably the intellectual advantages and social comforts of the people have advanced during that time? Look at their extensive farms, in many cases cultivated like gardens, their high-bred stock, their massive stone houses, the superior education of their families, the more intellectual character of their amusements—all these furnish a remarkable contrast to the settlement's early days. Ah! it was a different thing being a farmer then

to what it is at the present time! It is quite within the writer's memory, when there was little or no labour-saving machinery, and the farmer had to perform all the hard work of the farm by the slow and wearying process of hand labour. He sowed his seed and raked his grass by hand, he mowed his meadow with the scythe, he cut his grain with the cradle, and he threshed it with the flail; to-day—how different? The farmer now rides out to his fields like some Roman conqueror in his chariot car, and sows, mows, rakes, cradles, and threshes, by means of agricultural machines, upon which he sits on a cushioned seat, quietly smoking his pipe!

When we thus contrast the present with the past, and consider the immense progress which has taken place, how our farming may be done a quarter of a century hence, goodness only knows. At the rate at which the world is advancing, and inventions multiplying on every hand, it is not impossible that the farmer of the future may sit in his house and direct the workmen in his fields by means of the telephone, and if the sun does not rise early enough to suit him, he may illuminate his fields with the electric light!

Nor has intellectual and social progress been less marked in Galt and other towns, than in the country. No better evidence of this could be adduced than the many promising young Galtonians who have gone out into the broad battle-field of life, and won something of success or distinction in different parts of the world. Many of those born or brought up in Galt or its neigh-

bourhood, we shall pass over, as they still reside in the town or adjacent places, and their merits are well known; but there are quite a number of Galtonians in distant parts, whose careers reflect credit upon their native place.

Mr. William Piggot, who left Galt at an early date, became publisher of the *Chicago Daily Post*, and held an influential position in that city; Mr. James Johnson went to the city of St. Louis, where he was a prominent merchant for many years; Mr. Crocket McElroy, of St. Clair City, Michigan, has been a Senator of that State for several terms, and is the head of a very extensive manufacturing company; Rev. John Scrimger is a Professor in the Presbyterian College, Montreal, and pastor of the St. Joseph Street Church; Mr. John Beattie Crozier has risen by his talents to be an M. B., L. R. C. P., practising in London, England, where two pamphlets written by him, entitled "God or Force," and "Considerations on the Constitution of the World," have attracted considerable attention in philosophic circles; Mr. James Lee, now president of the Lee Arms Manufacturing Company, Bridgeport, Connecticut, has manifested a genius for invention which has resulted in numerous breech-loading rifles and magazine guns; Mr. George Boomer, son of the Rev. Dean Boomer, is now a Tea merchant, in Shanghai, China; Rev. W. H. Rennelson, a fine scholar and promising minister of Christ, died in Hamilton whilst pastor of Knox's Church; Colonel John Strang, of Genesee County, New York, passed through the American Civil War with distinction; Mr. Thomas Wright,

formerly teacher in the Collegiate Institute, now holds a highly responsible position in Detroit, in the United States Lake Survey; Mr. James Jackson went from Galt to British Columbia many years ago, and is now connected with a commission house in London, England, engaged in the British Columbian trade; Mr. William Tunis (nephew of Mr. Lemuel Shannon), always a remarkably singular boy, developed much business talent as a book and news dealer, and died in Detroit a few years ago, leaving a fortune behind him; Rev. John Dixon, son of Mr. James Dixon, is now a minister in Yonkers, New York State; the late Mr. John Gibson, son of the Rev. Hamilton Gibson, became a professor in Albert College, Belleville, and his writings on the flora and salt wells of Canada, are of high merit; Mr. Charles Shearson has succeeded his uncle as a cotton merchant in Savannah, Georgia; Mr. Walter Scott, formerly of Sandy Knowe, has been in Mexico for many years, where he is said to have been successful; Mr. Andrew Cant has, by his business talent, won for himself the position of a member of the firm of Smith, Cant and Co., of Cleveland, Ohio, extensively engaged in the coal trade; Mr. John McLaughlan, son of Mr. William McLaughlan, is travelling agent for the Rolling and Steel Works of the same city; Mr. Gugsy Irving, son of Mr. Æmilius Irving, is a member of the firm of Willet and Irving, Tea brokers, New York City, and goes out to China in April, on the business of the firm; Mr. James L. Blain is now practising Law in Detroit, Michigan; Dr. W. A. Keefer, son of Mr. Peter Keefer, is with



the British Indian Army in Afghanistan; Mr. Achmuty Richardson holds a responsible position in connection with the Western Union Telegraph Company, at San Francisco; Mr. John Scott, formerly of Fleming's store, has been a merchant at Phoenix, Lake Superior, for many years; Mr. John Havill, at last accounts, was an officer in the United States Excise Service in South Carolina; Dr. Robert Miller is on duty as Surgeon with the Northwest Mounted Police; and Mr. John McKay, jr., is now the manager of a large wholesale and retail jewellery establishment in the city of Indianapolis.

This reference to the young men of Galt who have attained something of success or distinction abroad, might no doubt be extended, but it is sufficient to show that, whilst growing in wealth and prosperity, Galt has not been deficient in educated and enterprising young men.\*

---

\* The following facts about other well-remembered young men of Galt, will be read with interest: Mr. James Andrews, son of Mr. James K. Andrews, went to Australia about 1851, when the gold discoveries were first made, and died there a few years ago; Charles Andrews is said to reside in Chicago; Thomas Rich is now in Australia; William Rich went overland to California, and died there; Edmund Rich was last heard of in South America; Dr. William Miller, son of Mr. John Miller, Barrister, is now resident in San Francisco, California; John H. and Richard Miller are also in the United States; John Lee resides in Wallaceburg, Ontario; Andrew McElroy in St. Clair City, Michigan; William Mitchell and John Mitchell, both fine scholars, met sad deaths, William whilst descending the shaft of a gold mine in British Columbia, John whilst yachting on Lake Ontario; Mr. James Veitch is mining in Utah Territory; Mr. Elijah Burroughs is at Placerville, California; Mr. Wm. Goodall, after doing well in Cuba, fell overboard from a steamship whilst on a trip to Scotland, in 1865; Mr. Wm. Scott, of Sandy Knowe, was last heard of in Indiana; Mr. Robert Longan, after several years connection with the Daily Press of Detroit, died in that city about three years ago; Mr. John Geddes now

The Hon. William Dickson, after his return from Galt to Niagara, in 1836, survived for ten years. He died on the 19th February, 1846, in his seventy-seventh year, having lived to see the wilderness of Upper Canada become one of the finest agricultural countries in the world. Mr. Dickson contributed his full share to this result. As the circumstances narrated in these pages in connection with his purchase and settlement of Dumfries prove, he was a man of much foresight, energy, and force of character. These qualities were conspicuous, whether as a legislative councillor, a magistrate, or private citizen. He was generally well liked throughout Dumfries, and it is remembered to his credit, that he assisted many of the poorer settlers to make a start, who might never otherwise have been able to do so.

Mr. Shade survived until the 15th of March, 1862, being then in his sixty-ninth year. After acting as Reeve of Galt in 1852, his long and active connection with public affairs may be said to have ceased. He seriously contemplated standing as a candidate for the Gore Division of the Legislative Council in 1858, when the Hon. George Alexander was returned, but after Mr. James Cowan was fairly in the field, he withdrew. From this time onward he confined his attention almost entirely to the management of his large property and fortune, and, until within a few days of his death, continued to have the same erect form

---

resides in West Bangor, New York State ; Mr. John Johnson is a citizen of Detroit ; Mr. John Sinclair, of Chicago ; and Mr. Wm. Gunn, of Nashville, Tennessee.

and elastic step, the same eagle glance and incisive speech, continued, in short—except for the tell-tale presence of grey hairs—the same shrewd, far-sighted, energetic, industrious man he was when, in 1816, he took his first view of the wilderness valley which Galt now adorns.

Mr. Shade's obsequies were largely attended from all sections of the surrounding country. As a mark of respect, all the places of business in Galt were closed. The body was placed in a new hearse, drawn by four horses covered with mourning robes, and an immense concourse of people followed the remains to the Church of England, and thence to the cemetery.

The life-work of a man like Absalom Shade will naturally be viewed in different lights by his contemporaries. It is only but justice to say, however, that in its earlier days Galt owed much of its prosperity to his indomitable energy and perseverance. For many years he took an active interest in all projects for the advancement of the town, with whose rise and progress his own fortunes were indissolubly interwoven. He was, like other men, not without his faults and foibles, and like others also, he did not escape criticism. But his career furnishes a striking illustration of what an intelligent, enterprising, industrious man can achieve in Canada, both in building up a fortune,\* and in securing the confidence and respect of his fellow-men.

---

\* Mr. Shade was married twice, but left no direct heirs. His estate at the time of his death was worth between \$250,000 and \$300,000. The destination of the greater portion of his wealth is believed to have been

Mr. William Dickson was nearly as long associated with Dumfries and Galt, as either his father or Mr. Shade. In earlier times he took some interest in politics on the Conservative side. But he never had any taste, as already intimated, for general business or public affairs. He never married, and resided for nearly half a century on what is known as Dickson's hill, overlooking the town, except when visiting Toronto and other parts of Canada, or travelling abroad. He often spoke with much pride of Galt, and in 1871 bestowed upon the town fourteen acres of land for a public park, which has been called after his name. He died on New Year's Day, 1877, aged 78 years, and left an ample fortune behind him.

The early settlement of Dumfries and Galt has not materially differed from that of other sections of the Province. It has not been marked by striking events or dire calamities, with the exception of the visitation of cholera in 1834. But the history thereof, with the hardships and struggles of its early settlers, is deeply interesting, as illustrating Back woods Life in Canada fifty or sixty years ago, and the slow and rugged road by which the town and

---

changed by a singular *lapsus calami*, which occurred in one of the concluding clauses of his will. After paying numerous bequests to relations, the Church of England, and other objects, the remainder of the estate was apparently bequeathed to Mrs. Shade and her brother, Mr. John Davidson, both since deceased. This view of the will was acted upon for several years. In the clause thereof conveying them the property, however, the words "in trust" appeared, and a friendly suit having been brought before the Court of Queen's Bench, to test the meaning of the clause, it was held by the Court that it was not an absolute conveyance of the estate, but only a conveyance "in trust," for the benefit of the heirs. No less than sixty heirs subsequently turned up in the United States as claimants for a share of the estate, and much litigation resulted.

township have reached a place among the most wealthy and intelligent districts of Canada.

The township, especially the northern portion of it, although blessed with a fertile soil, was naturally rugged and difficult to clear. But nothing could withstand the untiring energy and industry of its early settlers, the superior of whom, in these respects, never left the old world. How nobly they did their duty can be seen, not only in the fine appearance of the township to-day, but in the wealth and prosperity of the large and handsome towns of Galt and Paris, as well as the thriving villages of Ayr and St. George, which have arisen in its midst. Few places in Canada, of the same size, equal these in the variety and excellence of their manufacturing industries, and it may be said without exaggeration of the whole township, that there are few, if any, throughout the broad domain of Canada, the masses of whose people are richer, better educated, or more happily situated than they are.

The lapse of time has served to moderate somewhat the ambition which animated Galt when flushed with its new-found honours as a town. The location of our two principal lines of railway—the Grand Trunk and Great Western, one north and the other south of the town—has been the principal factor in producing this result. But, after all, it may be said that few places in Canada excel Galt in beauty of situation,\* in manufacturing enterprise, or in accumulated wealth and solid prosperity.

---

\* "The situation of Galt is remarkably picturesque and beautiful, lying embosomed, as it does, in the valley of the Grand River, with the high ridges

The present position of both Galt and Dumfries affords evidence of what can be accomplished in Canada, either by individuals or communities, with a proper display of industry and thrift, and their early history is well fitted to teach a lesson—to

“ Point a moral and adorn a tale,”

to the descendants of those early Pioneers and true heroes of Canada, who, as we have already stated, found our Dominion a wilderness, and have made it blossom as the rose.

---

of the bank on each side, and with the river, spanned by three massive bridges, flowing about midway between. The adjacent ridges are dotted with many fine private residences, conspicuous among which are those of Messrs. A. T. H. Ball, Hugh McCulloch, James Young, M.P., Dr. Kerr, F. G. Allenby, and John Goldie. Other fine residences are to be found on the principal streets. The houses, both public and private, are mostly built of stone, whereof the neighbourhood furnishes a very abundant crop. From the latter circumstance Galt is sometimes called the ‘Granite City.’ Its unlimited water power has given it great manufacturing advantages, and its prominence as a manufacturing town, has also procured for it the name of the ‘Manchester of Canada,’ which, if somewhat pretentious, is not more so than a host of other names colloquially applied to the various towns throughout the country.”—*From an article on Galt, in the Toronto Globe.*

THE END.



14 DAY USE  
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED  
**LOAN DEPT.**

This book is due on the last date stamped below,  
or on the date to which renewed. Renewals only:  
Tel. No. 642-3405  
Renewals may be made 4 days prior to date due.  
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

Due end of WINTER Quarter

subject to recall after —

FEB 12 '73

RECALL LD APR 5 '73 - PM 10 8

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

MAR 08 1991

UNIV. OF CALIF., BERK.

LD21A-40m-3,'72  
(Q1173810)476-A-32

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley



