

FIRST SETTLERS

By Gary Howard, Pembroke, Ontario, Canada 2008

**They journeyed from Canada's upper and lower domains
to carve a settlement out of the wild
Amidst the magnificent virgin pines
whittling a homestead for each man, woman and child**

**The pioneers heeded the challenge of the Crown
testing the might of Mother Nature's force and power
Lured by seductive grants from upon high
to a land not so gentle to those who cower**

**The Irish, the Scottish and English settlers
labored side by side with those of French descent
From early dawn to evening's fading light
returning to their homes, often tired and over spent**

**Toiling on the allotted acreage
they brought in crops though shackled by their chains
Forever fighting the hardness of the land
they labored through a life that quickly drains**

**Through the wicked winter winds
they sought shelter in the sanctity of hearth and home
Struggling through the four seasons of despair
growing old, no longer any desire to roam**

**Fueled by a passion and a love for the land
they chopped and cropped for their daily bread
Their legacy is eternally etched on Champlain's walls
forever remembered for the courageous life they led.**

Tribute to "The Pioneers of Pembroke Township 1820-1850" mural