

STOVE WOOD AND CLUBS

The weather on Tuesday March 4, 1856 was very harsh. In his "Diary of the Wind and Weather," John Collins Clark of Ernestown Township observed "High wind from S.E. to S.W., cloudy, snowing and drifting like a fog—the worst storm this winter." In fact, at the end of that month, he writes that, "This has been the most blustery winter ever known in Upper Canada—and no thaw for three months." George Hill Detlor's diary tells us the same thing in his notation, "Storm severely." It may be that the weather played a part in what happened in Napanee that day. Possibly, the forced inactivity gave the participants more time to consider their injustices and plan their defiance.

The riot that took place that day at the Lennox Hotel in Napanee started with a smaller fight, which soon escalated into something much bigger. Several local people from both the Protestant and Catholic religions were involved, and the end result was arrests, court hearings, and punishments.

It was, in reality, just one more battle in the on-going war between Orangemen and Catholics. The following July 12th saw the commemoration of the 166th anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, probably the most famous clash between the two sects. It was fought by the armies loyal to two claimants to the English throne, William III, a Dutch Protestant, and James II, a Catholic. William, also called William of Orange after the Dutch county he ruled, was asked by the British Parliament to become king in 1689. This position also gave him a claim to the title of King of Ireland. James II, who still controlled many parts of Ireland, tried unsuccessfully to increase his holdings. Matters came to a head on July 1st at the River Boyne, a few miles west of Drogheda. The southern, predominantly Catholic, part of Ireland predictably