

WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 55 ISSUE # 2 JUNE, 2020 ISBN320813

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Challenging times for WHS—and for all of us!

Will we be open this season or not? At the time of writing (May 22) we hope we will be in a position to open in late June—but things are still somewhat uncertain. The *Calendar of Events*—usually enclosed in the June Newsletter, has not been printed this year—since all ‘events’ are (officially) cancelled—but if an event or activity is reinstated, it will be posted on FaceBook or the Keillor House website. Stay tuned.

Initiatives

Government financial help—rolling out over the past few weeks—while certainly welcome, has made planning for the season a difficult challenge but

we are now (May 22) able to report on our financial position, and on our preparations for the season.

The Board—and particularly the Finance Committee, has been working hard to see that the Society remains in a sound financial position, and that we can support our core staff during this difficult time.

WHS Financial Position

The Graydon Milton portfolio was put into an ‘all cash’ position in early March (\$250,000) *Preservation of capital is our primary objective for the portfolio at this point.*

We have received 75% of our \$20,000 (annual) operating grant

from Heritage Branch—earlier than usual, with 25% to be received later this year—and the usual \$3,000 grant for cataloguing. We have opened a Canadian Emergency Business Account which offers a \$40,000 loan, with \$10,000 forgivable if paid back by 2022. (I want to thank Bonnie Swift, our VP, for securing the Business Account, and also for volunteering to help staff to apply for assistance during this crisis. Well done, Bonnie.)

Staffing and Museum Operations

Donald has been rehired as our Curator/Manager (May 4) and is currently preparing the museums for the season—whether we open part time, or full time. He is currently working up safe working protocols

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KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM —SPECIAL EVENTS

For updates on this year's Special Events, please check our website and/or FaceBook on a regular basis.

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A COMPANY'S GUILT OR A CHILD'S INNOCENCE? THE TRAGIC DEATH OF AGNES MELANSON AT THE DOMINION COTTON MILL, MONCTON 1893

Editor's Note: As a specialist in domestic textiles and their production, Judith Rygiel's researches have led her into some interesting corners of the past, including the cotton mill established in Moncton in 1881. Along the way she has turned up many stories of human interest, including the one below that so tragically intersects with the history of the mill. She offered to share it with us, and I gladly accepted.

Eleven year old Agnes Melanson awoke early on the morning of Thursday, June 8, 1893 for her nine and a half hour shift at the Dominion Cotton Mill in Moncton. Her job started promptly at 6:30 am in the weaving department where she would spend her day assisting the women threading the fine cotton warp threads for greige goods, a type of unbleached cotton cloth that was one of the mill's main products. Agnes had been on the job about two weeks but had yet to receive any of her wages, which would go into the family coffers. Three of her siblings also contributed to the family finances by working sixty-hour weeks at the cotton mill. Her fifteen year old brother, Tilman, and her two sisters, twenty-two year old Dina and seventeen year old Leonie, both laboured in the spinning department under the watchful eye of foreman Peter Duxberry. In a good week the four siblings could earn up to \$7, a big help in uncertain times—which the 1890s were, being on the cusp of a world-wide recession that lasted until near the end of the decade.

The children's wages were important to this Acadian family of eight. Agnes' father, sixty-three year

old Laurent, could barely scrape a living from the small plot of land he farmed at Melanson Settlement, a few miles back of Fox Creek. Agnes' mother, forty-seven year old Marguerite, was at the farm that June day with eight year old Delina, the baby of the family, leaving the other children in the care of Catelina Melanson, a fifty-six year old relative who lived in the Melanson household on Steadman Street. (Laurent worked his little farm during the summer and lived in town during the winter.)

Agnes finished her day's work at 5 pm and walked to her home nearby for supper. She was glad that Catelina was there to greet her, as both her sisters were working overtime at the mill filling bobbins for the next day's production. She told Catelina that she was going to return to the mill after her meal to meet her sisters after they got off work at 7 pm. By all accounts, Agnes was an inquisitive child, and she was particularly fascinated by the factory elevator. On that evening her fascination led to tragedy. As reported in the *Moncton Daily Times*, about 6:15 pm, fifteen year old Michael Bourque, a worker in the spinning department, noticed a young child wedged in the two-inch space between the elevator—which was just an open platform moving up and down a narrow shaft adjacent to one of the mill's walls—and the ceiling of the third floor. He immediately sought out Peter Duxberry, the overseer in the spinning department, who was walking along the third floor. Although its face and the back of its head were badly crushed, he recognized the child as Agnes. He released her by slowly

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for various scenarios. The Association Museums New Brunswick has issued a guideline, and the Canadian Museum Association has offered advice as well. At this point we are aware we will have to provide masks for our visitors and staff, and to maintain social distancing. The staff will receive additional training to enable them to work 'safely at a distance' as guides and/or as specialists working on projects related to museum operations, e.g. cataloguing, photographing artefacts, weaving textiles for sale, etc. If there are many fewer visitors this season—which is expected—we will finally have time to concentrate on working on these operational projects.

Donald has secured at least four totally or partially subsidized wage grants, so we are in position to hire our core staff this season. This will enable us to hire Alice and Dee, who are eligible for two Province of NB grants, allowing them to finish those outstanding projects for which time can never be found during a regular season. Two YCW in Heritage grants, one for a Curatorial Assistant, another for a Textile Museum Assistant, will allow us to hire students who can work as guides and specialists in these areas. Four Canada Summer Jobs applications have been submitted (100% subsidized), and we should receive confirmation that these are approved in the next week or so. Donald is currently interviewing for positions.

Fund-Raising

If events are cancelled into the fall, and we cannot stage our Halloween Nights, which would seriously impact fund-raising. However, with the financial precautions taken, I believe we are in a position to weather any fund-raising challenges. Rents in the historic properties continue to be paid, and we anticipate that the three businesses in these properties will reopen in the near future—with appropriate distancing in place. Currently, New Brunswick is at stage 'Yellow', which is encouraging for opening the province responsibly over the next months.)

The best sources of information for Keillor House and St. James in the next weeks will be our Facebook accounts—Donald and Dee will be updating on opening times, and the precautions we all need to take when visiting the museums.

We are looking into holding our AGM on line and will post information on how you can participate on the Keillor House Facebook account.

Be safe and keep well.

Cole Morison

moving the elevator downwards while another employee, Mr. Francis, lifted her out. Unfortunately, some of the young women working in the spinning department, including one of Agnes' sisters, could not avoid witnessing the terrible sight. Duxberry promptly informed the manager, Mr. William Wilson, of the accident. Wilson notified Agnes' parents and the Sheriff, who, as was standard procedure in such cases, promptly called Coroner Jacob Wortman to preside over a seven-man jury to determine the cause of death, and whether there was evidence of foul play or criminal negligence.

The scene of the tragedy was some ten years in the setting and leads us into an important chapter in Moncton's history. Until 1879, greige goods, the primary material for sheeting, as well as for printed or dyed shirting, were very largely imported from the United States. Facilitated by a low tariff of 17.5%, they represented a significant portion of all imports into the country. Then came John A. MacDonald's famous "National Policy" of high tariffs on manufactured goods, intended to stimulate domestic production, make Canada economically self-sufficient, and free her from the talons of the American eagle. The long proposed all-Canadian transcontinental railway (completed in 1885), together with a number of branch lines to improve the transportation of goods across the country, was also part of the package. If provincial and municipal governments would encourage local entrepreneurs to build cotton mills, so the thinking went, then the country would no longer be dependant on high-priced imports. To get them started, and to protect a nascent Canadian cotton industry, the federal government doubled the tariff on greige goods to 28.7%.

The effects were almost immediate. In 1880 there were just seven cotton mills in all Canada. Only one of them was in the Maritimes, but there was a basis from which to

expand. As early as 1861 John Parks had established a small cotton mill in Saint John, but it met only a small part of even local demand. In the late 1870s some small-time woolen mill operators such as Moncton's William Snow, owner of the English Woolen Cloth Manufacturing Company, added weaving looms to their carding and fulling mills to produce a limited amount of "custom cloth" composed of imported cotton warp and machine spun woolen weft. In 1881 Snow joined forces with the Humphrey brothers, John Albert and William, owners of lumber and grist, as well as carding and fulling, mills, to produce custom cloth as well as flannels, homespun, tweeds, and wool yarns. In 1884 the Humphreys would buy Snow out and rename the enterprise The Humphrey Mill.

John Albert's business, technical, and management skills were instrumental in convincing other local entrepreneurs to join him in pushing for a cotton mill in Moncton, as, no doubt, were the connections he would have made as an MLA for Westmorland County from 1872 to 1878. Cotton mills in other places were generating significant profits for investors and bringing benefits to communities, so it was an easy sell, especially in Moncton where there was ready access to abundant water on Hall's Creek, a good supply of bricks for construction, cheap coal to power the plant, gas lights, and a site available at nominal cost. Moncton was also the hub for the Intercolonial Railway as well as the terminus for some short-line railways servicing smaller local communities. As yet, the Intercolonial only ran between Moncton and Halifax, but a proposed expansion to Montreal would allow easy connections to mar-

kets in Eastern Canada and the West. In 1881 municipal government also stepped in, offering bonuses and exemptions from both school and municipal taxes for new industrial enterprises, including the proposed cotton mill. In 1883 the newly incorporated town of Moncton would grant the cotton mill a twenty year exemption from rates and taxes.

Favourable winds also blew from another quarter. A sudden downturn in both the American and British textile industries offered an unexpected opportunity to acquire both skilled personnel and equipment at a good price. A number of laid off mill experts were looking for work and there was an abundant supply of mill equipment available. Promoters sought the advice of Fred Bosson, a Boston architect and engineer who was, according to the *Moncton Daily Times*, “conversant with everything relating to the cotton business, including the construction of the mill, selection of machinery, and the general management of the work.” He and the promoters came up with a proposal for a vertically integrated mill that would perform the entire operation, from opening the bales of imported cotton, to cleaning, carding, and spinning the fiber, to weaving and finishing the cloth, all in a single plant. Mill machinery would come from the best “English makers” and enter the country duty free. With it, the mill could produce a variety of greige cotton cloth, including both twill and plain fabrics for sheeting and shirting as well as ducks and jaconets. Further research revealed that it would need to produce upwards of 10,000 yards per day to be profitable. This would require some 150-180 employees working about 250 spindles and as many looms full time.

In their subscription campaigns, local entrepreneurs appealed to old loyalties, kinship networks, and civic pride to raise the necessary capital. Research showed that they would need at least \$400,000, with half of it required to commence construction. In November 1881 the promoters offered 4000 shares at \$100 each. Within four days they raised \$120,000, with \$30,000 promised on the first day alone. On December 29 eighty shareholders attended the first board meeting to elect the seven directors. The *Moncton Daily Times* published the names of twenty-three local investors from the elite business families of Shediac, Sackville, Dorchester, Coverdale, Weldford (a parish in Kent County), Peticodiac, and Moncton. The Dorchester worthies included C.R. Palmer, Hiram Weldon Palmer (the well known shipbuilder), George and Charles Chandler (lawyer sons of E. B. Chandler, Dorchester’s Father of Confederation), and H.R. Emerson (well known lawyer and politician). The Sackville investors were D.G. Dickson, David Dickson, Josiah Wood (the town’s leading merchant, first mayor, and later Lt. Governor of New Brunswick), Professor C. Weldon, and Amos Edwin Botsford (grandson of the Westcock squire). The Moncton investors were Thomas Taylor, John McKenzie, John Leonard Harris, Christopher Prince Harris, John Albert Humphrey, W.J. Robinson, C.B. Record, and R.A. Borden.

So, the venture was successful and the Moncton Cotton Factory was built, along with many other industrial facilities sheltering under the protection of the National Policy. Moncton alone saw the arrival of a brass and iron manufacturing company, a combination lock company, and a sugar refinery during this period. But with industrialization came, if in milder form, many of the problems and abuses associated with the

“dark satanic mills” of the earlier industrial revolution in Britain: long hours for low wages, super-cheap child and female labour, dirty, poorly ventilated and dangerous workplaces, ill treatment of children, obscene language, etc. When complaints came to the ears of the federal government, it appointed a Royal Commission on Labour and Capital in 1888 to interview managers and workers about labour practices at factories and mills across eastern Canada. The *Moncton Daily Times* reported on the enquiry but gave only a brief summary of the eleven Moncton Cotton Mill employees’ testimony while leaving out some crucial information about the mill’s management, the working conditions for youngsters and women, and the names of the five women who testified. The Royal Commission’s Report, published in 1889, provided a much clearer and more detailed picture of the conditions and practices in the Moncton Cotton Mill.

The manager, W.S. Hockin, stated that the 170 employees generally worked sixty-hour weeks, from 6:30 am until 6 pm five days a week and from 6:30 am until 3 pm on Saturdays, with an hour off for lunch. Some employees worked full time while others did piece-work and might work shorter hours, depending on the amount of orders or mechanical breakdowns. There was no Factory Law in New Brunswick until 1905, so factories were allowed to hire lower paid women and children for both skilled and unskilled work, with the additional advantage that they were generally more docile than men. Sixty-eight percent of all workers at the Moncton Cotton Mill were women or children. There were sixty-five children between the ages of twelve and sixteen, thirty of them girls. Eighteen of these thirty worked in the weaving room “drawing threads” for \$1.50 a week, while the other twelve girls worked at various other “light tasks.”

Hockin did not think there were any children younger than twelve in the mill, but admitted that he relied on his foremen to ask the children their ages before hiring them. He did not say so, but it is quite likely that some children lied about their age because their family needed the money.

Fining employees was another common abuse in factories. Hockin noted that in his factory children were not fined for bad work, as they did not perform specialized tasks such as running looms. There were also no fines for tardiness in the Moncton mill, unlike in most American mills. There was no need for them: The watchman gave everyone a five minute grace period in the morning before locking the main doors to the three-story building at 6:35 am and keeping them locked during the rest of the day. In case of an accident or emergency, one of the three foremen would summon the watchman, since employees could not leave by fire escapes, of which there were none on the outside of the building. There had been one or two accidents in the past but no serious ones reported in the last two years since Hockin became manager, and none among the children. The foremen were responsible for their own departments and written rules in English governing employees’ work habits were posted in the office, by the elevator, and on each floor.

Thus, in 1888 working conditions at the Moncton Cotton Mill seemed to have been more or less up to the standard of the time, unacceptable as they would be today. By 1891 they appear to have deteriorated. The mill proved to be unprofitable for local investors because of a glut on the market of cotton greige goods as well as serious competition from larger and

more efficient mills in Central Canada. In 1891 the Dominion Cotton Company of Montreal bought the Moncton mill, hired a new manager while retaining many of its employees, including spinning foreman Peter Duxberry, and began cutting costs. In the same year, the federal government conducted its decennial census, which included an Industrial Table giving statistics on industrial and business enterprises. The statistics tabulated the fixed capital, the working capital, the number of employees by sex and age, the total amount of wages paid per year, the total value of the raw materials, and the total value of the product produced. In the case of the Moncton mill, when the cost of materials and labour was subtracted from the value of the production, the net profit was less than \$40,000. There were 179 employees, fifty-eight of them men, sixty-eight women, and fifty three children under sixteen. The children earned from \$1.25 to \$1.50 a week in the spinning or weaving departments. However, these numbers do not tell the whole story, as only ninety-one workers (51%) reported their employment on the nominative schedules. This suggests that the other eighty-eight were either laid off due to lack of orders, or were only seasonal employees.

Information provided by the full-time employees included their age, "ethnicity" and family connections. There were twenty-two children under sixteen. The youngest, ironically named Harry Elder, was just seven! Two Pularg brothers, James and Philip, were ten and twelve, respectably. Ten of the children were girls, while twenty females over sixteen worked in the weaving department and twenty-nine in the spinning department. Over half the ninety-one employees whose names appear on the census had one or more family members working in the mill as well. None of

the Melanson family was listed on the 1891 census, but, in addition to Agnes, the 1893 *Moncton Daily Times* article mentioned her two sisters, Dina and Leonie, and an unnamed brother, probably Tilman, as working at the mill, although it gave no indication when they started there. More than half of the ninety-one named employees were Acadians, while the manager, William Wilson, and the three foremen, Harvey Wilkinson, George Wilson, and Peter Duxberry, were all originally from England. It is highly unlikely that any of them spoke French or understood the Acadian dialect, nor would they have thought it in any way necessary. New Brunswick was a long way from the official bilingualism of today, and in the 1890s Moncton was still mostly Anglophone, as the influx of Acadians into the city did not get solidly underway until well after the turn of the century. Those who, like the Melansons, did settle there—at least the adults among them—would have needed at least some English in order to find employment, especially with an Anglophone-run business like the Moncton Cotton Mill. But, if at least some of the Acadians working there must have understood spoken English well enough to communicate with their supervisors, this does not mean they could necessarily read it fluently. This would have been especially true of young children like eleven year old Agnes Melanson. Given her poverty stricken background and the poor state of public education at the time (only 7% of Acadians made it to Grade 6) it is unclear that she could have read the regulations, even if they had been in French. But lack of proper communication was only one possible factor in her tragic death. Others became apparent at the coroner's inquest, held in the Moncton City Police court two days later.

The first question that came up was why Agnes was on the elevator and how it came to kill her. Peter Duxbury, the superintendant in charge of the spinning department, stated, "I cannot see how the deceased got into the position I found her except she was lying on the elevator and looking down below, and caught her head between the elevator and the floor." Even before the inquest, the *Times* reporter had observed that "if she was standing up, there would be plenty of time to withdraw the head after coming in contact with the floor. The elevator moves very slowly and would hardly strike with sufficient force to knock her down." The obvious conclusion was that, having seen how the elevator worked, she "took a fancy to have a ride and was in the act of doing so in a playful manner when she met her death." She must have been fascinated by the sight of the bottom of the shaft receding as she peered over the edge of the ascending open platform into the gap between it and the shaft wall, not realizing that the platform had gone past the last entry and would continue almost up to the ceiling.

This raised the question: did she know she was not supposed to use the elevator, let alone play on it? Although it was not mentioned at the inquest, the *Times* noted that she had only been working in the mill for two weeks, and although this, too, was not mentioned in either of our sources of information, she may not have understood English. Adell Breau, one of the girls who saw her poor mangled body (the other being Agnes' sister) gave her testimony through bilingual Alice White, as Adell could not "talk English." This suggests that the Acadians at the mill normally worked in their own language, and that quite a number of them, probably the younger ones in particular, were unilingual.

But did Agnes know, or ought she to have known, anyway, that she should not use the elevator? Duxbury stated, "We have notices on the walls... as follows: 'No one is to use the elevator except the beam and bobbin carriers.'" Of course it was in English (which he did not note), but he went on to say, "The deceased had no business on the elevator; new hands are made acquainted with the above rules. It is generally known that the elevator should not be used except by the beam and bobbin carriers." His implication was that, like all new hands, Agnes was made aware of this, even if only through her Acadian co-workers. The general manager, William Williams, corroborated Duxbury's testimony: "There are notices posted up as stated by him; these notices were put up before I took charge. They have been up about six years. Three persons only are allowed to use the elevator, these are the beam and bobbin carriers; they are the three who transport all the material in the process." But then he added a comment that puts the matter in a rather different light: "We have often ordered employees off the elevator; it is impossible to keep them off." A little later in answer to a question from one of the jurors he said, "The mill foreman and myself do all we can to stop boys and girls from using the elevator; we adopted the system of fining them for using the elevator and it prevented them to some extent for a time." In other words, for some time it had been common practice for employees, whether adults or children, to ignore the rules regarding the elevator, in spite of the threat of fines, and the supervisors had more or less thrown up their hands. Michael Bourque, the fifteen year old who first discovered Agnes said, "I go up and down on the ele-

vator myself.”

This raised a question from one of the jurors whether there ought to have been, or should in future be, safety features such as folding doors instead of open doorways at the entry points. Mr. Wilson thought “they could be opened by boys and girls and the elevator got at just the same.” Nor did he or Duxbury know of any other improvements that could be made. When another of the jurors asked Duxbury whether, as a mechanic, he thought the risk of accidents would be lessened if elevators were “encased all around excepting the door on each side for taking in and putting out [materials],” he replied, “I have never seen any elevator cases in any cotton mill I have ever been in...This one has the same protection that others have that I have seen.” Wilson later added that doors were unnecessary because the “bobbin and beam carriers are always in charge of the elevator.”

However, there was an unfortunate exception that fatal evening: “An extra hour was being put in by the spinning department...the beam and bobbin carriers had stopped work with the rest at 6 o’clock and there was no one attending the elevator as it was not in use; the little girl must have started it herself.”

The fatal evening was an unfortunate exception in another way. Wilson stated that “it is only occasionally that the elevator is workable without someone being in charge.” If the mill ran on “the best English machinery,” the elevator was no doubt moved by a heavy piston, itself propelled by oil under pressure from an air tank pressurized by a pump run by an engine. When the engine was shut off—which the

(male) beam and bobbin carriers most likely did upon leaving—the pressure would leak down and the elevator would no longer work. But this would take some time, and it appears that Agnes took her tragic joyride only minutes after the lads had left. As revealed by Wilson’s testimony, she would have had plenty of opportunity to observe other children doing the same thing and to have learned that all she had to do was pull the starting chain. She must have been seized by a sudden impulse to have some fun after a long and dreary day. Adell Breau testified that after Agnes came back from her supper she “went upstairs to help her sister put on bobbins...Myself and her sister went into the washroom and the deceased left. I next saw her fast in the elevator.”

After hearing the evidence the coroner’s jury deliberated only a few minutes before returning a verdict that “the deceased came to her death from being caught in the elevator by her own act and no blame can be attached to any one in charge.”

No doubt the verdict satisfied the public opinion of the day. It is a measure of the moral distance between that time and this that it would not do so today.

Judith Rygiel

Editor’s Addition see next page.

Editor's Addition

There is a short sequel to Judith's story that, although not directly relevant to Agnes' tragedy, will be of some interest to our Moncton members. When the Dominion Cotton Mills Company took over the Moncton Cotton Mill in 1891 it also acquired plants in Halifax, Windsor, Montreal, Quebec, and a number of other places. However, even this merger was not enough to stave off financial ruin when the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900 disrupted trade to that lucrative market. The response was another merger in the form of the Dominion Textile Company that left the Moncton mill as road-kill on the path to renewed prosperity. It closed in 1917, but was quickly bought up and repurposed by an enterprising baker named Joe Marvin whose cookies and graham crackers had become a household name in the Moncton area. The J.A. Marven Biscuit Company became a Moncton landmark and proud tradition until it closed in 1978. After being used as a lumber yard for a few years, it was restored and turned into high-end office space, in which form it still stands at 1 Factory Lane.



Moncton Cotton Mill/Marven's Biscuit Factory, Moncton, May 1931.



NOTES FROM MARLENE'S SCRAPBOOK

In the course of her researches into her family history, Marlene Hickman collected many interesting items from old newspapers pertaining to Dorchester and the surrounding area. It has been a while since they last appeared in the Newsletter, and I thought I had exhausted them. Happily, I found a few more to round out this issue. Thanks again for sharing them with us, Marlene.

January 26, 1882 - Chignecto Post

Dorchesterisms: The Store of J H Hickman & Co is being completed in the upper stories for sales rooms. – There is about eighteen inches of snow in the woods now and the exceptionally good sleighing has an appreciable effect on business. – The finishing of the Methodist Church has been given to Mr. John Ward of Shediac. The sum is \$1100. It is to be completed in June. – Barlow Palmer and wife and Mrs. Robb left last week to take the barque “Queen of the Fleet” at New York, for a trip up the Mediterranean. – Chas E Knapp Esq has offered the County Council \$3000 for the Devil’s Half Acre. If they accept, he proposed ordaining himself a missionary to evangelize it. – McDowell & Co’s new tannery is doing a stirring business, besides the hum in their shoes and larakin factory [a “larakin” is actually a “larrigan” – a high moccasin made of oiled leather, worn by woodsmen]. Although only established last year, the tannery disposes of about 1200 hides yearly, all of which, with a trifling exception is worked up into goods in the factory. A car load of bark is being hauled to the tannery now for the more delicate kinds of leather. Mr. McDowell uses Miller’s extract for the heavier grades. The firm is working up a grade of larrikins that bids fair to rival any other in the Province. This winter they will turn out about 1000 pairs and the fact that the stock is all cold tanned from the best of skins seems to make lumbermen partial to this line of goods. The skin of the Penitentiary prize ox was worked up by this factory into larrikins, remarkable for their thickness. Sixty or seventy pounds is a fair weight for a cow hide, but the one in question tipped the beam at 127 lbs. Mr. McDowell is quite enthusiastic over the possibilities of this industry of which he is the head and, staunch Liberal though he is, he feels bound to admit that the brilliancy of the present prospect has developed entirely within the last two years.

August 11, 1865 – The Borderer

Oil Mines – Extensive preparations are now being made in Rockland about four miles from Dorchester for the manufacture of oil from oil stone. Large buildings are in course of erection for the company. The second cargo of oil stone has been shipped from here for the United States.

August 2, 1877 – Chignecto Post

Brick making has been commenced by R A Chapman Esq. at his shipyard, Rockland, for the St John Market. The facilities for making a good article are said to be excellent.

January 2, 1879 – Chignecto Post

Belliveau Items – A new siding and platform has been made by the Intercolonial Railway at the crossing near the new bridge over the Memramcook which is named “Rockland”. This name is approved by all the leading business men on this side of the River for whose accommodation the siding, etc. has been granted, but the singular part of it is that several of the residents on both sides of the River who have no business connection with the railway are very much opposed to the name and propose having it changed to “Upper Dorchester” or “Dorchester Bridge,” &c. but none of them is as appropriate as “Rockland.”

August 28, 1879 – Chignecto Post

From Rockland Station: Mr. A. W. Edgetts new store is about completed. His first installation of goods have arrived. An hotel is to be built here this autumn by one of Saint John’s moneyed men. A steam grist and flouring mill is in prospect in the very near future by one of our prominent mill owners. The Boudreau Stone Quarry Co are making some large shipments to New York.



Donations, Memberships and Newsletter
 Submissions to:
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 www.keillorhousemuseum.com

Museum Hours

PRESERVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

The Westmorland Historical Society is a non-profit charitable organization founded in 1960 with the mandate to collect, preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of Westmorland County, NB. For four decades the WHS has worked with local partners to apply this mandate in a unique *entrepreneurial way* by encouraging *self-financing historic sites* attracting visitors from across North America. The historic Sir Pierre Landry House, the Bell Inn, and the Payzant & Card Building, contain apartments or businesses that help off-set the costs of preserving these historic buildings.

The Society's stellar museums—the Keillor House Museum (1813) housing the Graydon Milton Library and Genealogical Centre— and the St. James Textile Museum, contain remarkable collections attracting genealogists, researchers and visitors from across North America.

How to become a WHS Member?

Contact Judy Morison, our Membership Secretary, at 4974 Main Street, Dorchester, NB, E4L 2Z1. (506) 379-6682. morc@rogers.com

Annual Fees (Includes Newsletter)

- Individual: \$15.00
- Family: \$20.00
- Student: \$5.00
- Life: \$150.00

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SALUTING OUR OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

To be updated in the September Issue.