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April 17th, 1895.

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Woodstock, N. B.

JOB PRINTING done at this office. BOOK BINDING

## PROGRESS OF THE WOODSTOCK SETTLEMENT.

Something About Frederick Dibblee, James Yorke, John Bedell and William Dibblee.

[No 50]

The next of the new settlers to claim our attention is **FREDERICK DIBBLEE**. This gentleman, afterwards so well known as the first English speaking minister on the upper St. John, was not an ordained clergyman when he came to Woodstock.

He was born at Stamford, Connecticut, Dec. 9, 1753 and was the youngest son of the Rev. Ebenezer Dibblee, D. D., for fifty-one years rector of Stamford. His mother, Joanna Bates, was an aunt of Sheriff Bates, of Kings County, N. B., the well known author of the adventures of the celebrated Henry More Smith. Rev. Dr. Dibblee was quite a pronounced loyalist but his personal popularity was such that he escaped the rigorous persecution that befell the majority of his brethren in the ministry. It is recorded however that he was on one occasion "cruelly dragged through mire and dirt" and that at another time he went to Sharon "to be inoculated for the small pox, possibly hoping thereby to enjoy a few weeks' respite from persecution." His loyalty led him to continue the use of the English prayer book in his church until the year 1782 although the American edition had been adopted three years previously, and only at the personal solicitation of Bishop Seabury did he consent to the desired change.

Frederick Dibblee was educated at Kings (now Columbia) College, New York. He married Nancy Beach, of Stratford, Connecticut, about the beginning of the Revolution. She was a niece of the Rev. John Beach a famous New England divine who for his loyalty suffered the most outrageous persecution at the hands of the so called "patriots" of Connecticut. Frederick Dibblee was also a pronounced loyalist and made himself so obnoxious to the Americans that on petition of the "select men" of Stamford he and his family were ordered to depart the town forthwith and never to return. His elder brother Fyler Dibblee, attorney-at-law and a leading man at Stamford, was banished in like manner. Frederick with his wife and two children (of whom the eldest, Elizabeth, afterwards married Capt. Charles Ketchum) came to St. John in 1783 about the same time as his brother Fyler and his wife's two brothers William and Lewis Beach. The latter were grantees at Kingston but afterwards returned to the States. Frederick Dibblee drew lot 116 and his nephew Walter (son of Fyler) lot 117 on the east side of Germain street just below Horsfield street in St. John, and there they probably passed their first winter removing afterwards to Kingston. An entry in the old church records at Kingston tells us that at the Easter Monday meeting in 1785 the people decided to have regular public services and they accordingly "appointed Joseph Scribner's house to begin to read prayer at and Mr. Frederick Dibblee was chosen to read prayers." Mr. Dibblee's oldest son the late Col. John Dibblee was born at Kingston March 3rd 1787.

On the decease of Rev. Geo. Bisset, first rector of St. John, Rev. Dr. Dibblee, of Stamford was spoken of as his successor but his great age prevented his acceptance of the post. Frederick Dibblee was not ordained to the ministry till the 23rd October 1791, but he had contemplated taking Holy Orders some four years previously. This we learn from a letter received by Munson Jarvis of St. John from a Stamford correspondent in 1788 who, referring to Rev. Dr. Dibblee says—"In case his son Frederick was by your Bishop admitted to Holy Orders this spring Mr. Dibblee had intended to be present." The cause of the alteration of Frederick Dibblee's intention of entering the ministry in the spring of 1788, was the proposal made to him by the Board of Commissioners of the Society for the propagation of the Gospel among the Indians \* to establish a school for the Indians of the upper St. John at some convenient centre with the view of educating and christianizing them. The Board considered Mr. Dibblee well qualified for the position of instructor, and after due consideration he agreed to proceed to the old Indian settlement at Meductic and arrange if possible for the opening of a school. Accordingly in the autumn of 1787 he went to Fredericton where he hired an Indian and canoe to carry him to his destination. As the Meductic village was regarded as the centre of his operations, he arranged for a grant of land a little above the old fort where there were some vacant lots. There is a story related by the late Col. John Dibblee that as his father drew near his destination he chanced to fall asleep in the canoe, and the Indian who was poling not having received very clear instructions where he was to land, carried him some miles above the old fort before he awoke. The appearance of the country at that point pleased him so much that he made some inquiries of Col. Griffith about it, and finding that the original grantees had made little or no attempt to fulfil the conditions of their grants, he by the favor of the governor in council soon after secured possession of lots 23 and 24, giving him an estate of some 1200 acres, nearly all of which is yet owned by his grandchildren. Mr. Dibblee spent the winter with Samuel McKee, and the next year moved his family to Woodstock. There seems to have been a notable accession of new settlers that summer, several of whom came from Maugerville and Kingston. Among the newcomers were, Capt. George Bull, Capt. Joseph Cunliffe, John Bedell, William Dibblee, Michael Smith, Jabez Upham and Ephraim Lane. The first house built by Frederick Dibblee stood on the bank of the river in front of the house now occupied by his grandson, Frederick. Like all the first settlers' houses it was a rude log dwelling with rough hewn floor, stone chimney and huge fire place, the chinks and joinings of the walls well caulked with moss and clay, the roof covered with spruce bark or with split cedar, the furniture of the plainest and most primitive description, largely

\*This society had no connection with the well-known S. P. C., or society for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts.

home made but with here and there some article of greater pretensions brought with the family from New England. In such a house, with such additions as were necessitated by a rapidly increasing family, Frederick Dibblee and many another pioneer settler passed their first twenty years at Woodstock. We shall deal with Mr. Dibblee's work as teacher and missionary later on, and have something to say about his descendants.

JAMES YORKE

came to Woodstock from Maugerville about the year 1791 and purchased a small property from Col. B. P. Griffith adjoining the present Indian lot. He taught the first school at Woodstock for white children, in a log school house nearly opposite the parish church on the upper side of the parish road. He continued to teach there till about 1806 when he moved to Wakefield. He was prominent as a parish officer, filling such positions assessor, surveyor of lumber, parish clerk, etc. While living at Maugerville he was an attendant at the Congregational church, but this did not prevent him availing himself of the ministrations of Rev. F. Dibblee who baptized on Aug. 18, 1796, Edward and James, children of James and Lucy Yorke, both born at Woodstock. The House of Assembly passed an act in 1802 for aiding and encouraging public schools under which the sum of £10 was appropriated to each parish in the province to be divided between two school masters approved by the parish magistrates. James Yorke was for some years the only teacher on the river St. John north of the Meductic falls; four or five hundred teachers are now employed on the same region. His modest income of ten pounds from the government was supplemented by small tuition fees and the proceeds of his little farm. The late Col. John Dibblee was one of his scholars. After his removal from Woodstock Mr. Yorke kept school in the Parish of Wakefield for a time and was afterwards a school trustee. He was parish clerk of Wakefield many years, and a man much respected. His descendants still reside in that parish.

JOHN BEDELL

Was born Dec. 9, 1755 at Richmond, Staten Island, New York. During the war he was private secretary to Col. Christopher Billopp alias of Staten Island. He came to New Brunswick at the peace and was employed in conjunction with his brother Paul Bedell in the survey of the city of St. John and in laying out grants in other places for the accommodation of the loyalists. He married Margaret Dibblee, daughter of Fyler and niece of Rev. Frederick Dibblee. She was born at Hartford Conn., Nov. 28, 1767, and at the time of her marriage was living with her widowed mother and brother William in Kingston. John Bedell, together with his brothers-in-law William and Ralph Dibblee, moved to Woodstock in the year 1788. He secured the property at Bedell's Cove part of which is still owned by his grandson Jarvis Bedell. For more than forty years he was the leading magistrate of the parish and a very influential member of society. He was frequently present at the Court of Sessions of the peace for the County of York, his first attendance being in 1794, and after the division of the county, he was Judge of common pleas and registrar of deeds and wills for the County of Carleton. The registry office was kept in a small building on his farm which stood there many years after the office was removed to town.

The year after his arrival in Woodstock Mr. Bedell filled the offices of Commissioner of roads, overseer of the poor and town clerk which shows him to have been an active and useful citizen. He displayed much interest in educational matters and was many years a school trustee. In church matters he was equally prominent, for years he was a Warden of the parish church, and in the absence of "parson Dibblee" conducted divine service. In his capacity of Justice of the Peace he frequently solemnized marriages. He occasionally was employed in his old calling of surveyor and with his sons engaged extensively in trade and lumbering of which more anon. John Bedell died at Woodstock April 53rd 1838 at the age of 83 years; his wife died on the 20th April 1853 at the age of 85 years. Their family comprised seven sons and three daughters of whom William J. and P. Mischeau were magistrates; John, a Judge of the Court of Common pleas; George Augustus, registrar of deeds and wills. Others of the sons were Joseph, Tyler and Walter. The oldest of the family was William J. Bedell. He married first Phebe daughter of Capt. Joseph Cunliffe and afterwards Emma Wetmore daughter of Attorney general Thos. Wetmore who is still living. He moved to Fredericton and was actively engaged in business there for some years as manager for Robert Rankin & Co. and afterwards as member of the firm of Bedell Munroe and Chalmers. He was president of the Central bank and first treasurer of the Diocesan Church Society. His son Mr. A. Rankin Bedell now lives in St. John.

Joseph Bedell married Sylvia Dibblee. He was the founder of the Bedell Settlement which was laid out by his brother.

John Bedell jr. married Caroline Clements daughter of Capt. Peter Clements of Douglas, and we shall have something more to say of him and of his brothers Walter and Augustus who were all leading men in the history of Woodstock.

Paul Mischeau Bedell married the only daughter of Capt. Bull, and lived for years just below Bull's Creek whence he moved to Andover.

The three brothers John, Walter and Augustus died within a fortnight of each other of pneumonia and the sad event created a profound impression in the community which many of our older citizens will readily recall.

John Bedell died March 29, 1864.  
Walter Bedell died April 9, 1864.

Geo. Augustus Bedell died April 10, 1864. John in his 73rd, Walter in his 71st and Augustus in his 69th year.

Augustus Bedell succeeded his father as Registrar of deeds and wills. He married Elizabeth Berton of St. John and his son Jarvis Bedell resides at the old homestead.

Catherine Bedell married Peter Clements and one of their daughters is now the wife of Wm. F. Dibblee, Esq. of Woodstock.

Jane Bedell married Hon. Charles Perley, once a leading merchant in Woodstock and a

member for Carleton County in the House of Assembly. He afterwards sat for many years in the legislative council.

The old Bedell homestead stood near the bank of the river at Bedell's Cove; the site is still marked by the old Lombardy poplars growing on the bank. Here at one time was the chief business centre of Woodstock. We shall have more to say about it hereafter.

WILLIAM DIBBLEE

Came to Woodstock from Kingston with his mother Polly Jarvis widow of Fyler Dibblee, in 1788. His brother Ralph and his brother-in-law John Bedell came at the same time. Our authority on this point is a letter written by Munson Jarvis of St. John to William Jarvis in London under date Aug. 5, 1788 in which he says "John Bedell, William and Ralph Dibblee have taken lands at Meductic, 130 or 140 miles up the river, where they say the lands are much better than where they now are (that is at Kingston); William is a very hard working man, Ralph will work if he can't help it."

The log house built by William Dibblee stood near the site of the house now occupied by Col. Raymond, the old well—long since filled in, being under the carriage house. The old mother Polly (Jarvis) Dibblee died in May 1826 aged 80 years. Her son Ralph and daughter Sally Munday were married by their uncle the Rev. Frederick Dibblee on the same day—Ralph to Elizabeth Ketchum and Sally M. to John D. Beardsley. William never married, he spent his declining years with his niece Mrs. Charles Raymond and at his death bequeathed his property to her son Col. C. W. Raymond. The list of parish officers in the journals of the old York County sessions shows that William Dibblee was town clerk of Woodstock in 1790 and that he filled various other public offices.

W. O. RAYMOND.

Kidney Facts.

In Jan., 1892, my son was taken with Kidney disease. Though attended by three physicians, and change of climate he grew worse and by '93 had fallen from 195 lbs. to 95 lbs. In 10 days from starting to use Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills we were able to move him home. In 4 months he gained 50 pounds and was fully restored to health by the use of this medicine. Jno. S. Hastings, 23 St. Paul St., Montreal.

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