

## EARLY SCHOOLS AND EARLY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN FREDERICTON

History of Schools as They Existed Before the Free Schools Act --- The University and Collegiate School

At the York and Sunbury Historical Society meeting on Wednesday evening, Mrs. Susan Squires read an interesting paper on "Early Schools and Early Teachers." Mrs. Squires named many old time teachers who may be remembered by our older citizens. She also gave a history of the old Collegiate School, the mother of our present High School. The University was also mentioned. Mrs. Squires' paper was as follows:

(By Susan K. Squires)

When this paper was first suggested, the idea was to gather up all of the available information about the school teachers who had taught in Fredericton prior to the Free School Law. As it is impossible to write about school teachers without saying something about their schools, the theme has been enlarged.

In reading and hearing about these old schools one comes to the conclusion that the quality of the school was governed by the ability of the teacher. The woman, with less attainments contented herself with teaching an infant school and learning tiny children their letters and keeping them amused, the woman with more ability attempted more. They had no

standard to measure up to but the standard they set themselves. Some of the schools for older pupils probably did not teach much but the three R's, spelling and sewing while in some the young ladies learned what were called "elegant accomplishments." They were taught fine sewing but also how to embroider and each girl was expected to make a sampler. A few of these old samplers are around yet. They were worked on canvas in cross and needle-point stitch with Berlin wool. The letters of the alphabet were worked in half a dozen different ways, small letters, capitals, writing capitals and other ways, the figures from one to ten, rows of trees and even men and women adorned the sampler with the name and age of the girl worker in one corner. Probably the schools presided over by men gave more real education.

Historians tell us that when the Loyalists arrived at St. Anne's Point in 1783, that they only found three houses, so the first school must of necessity be after that date. The first teacher in Fredericton of whom there is any authentic information was called Bealing Stevens Williams. He was born in Cornwall, England, and came to Nova Scotia in 1779 as a clerk in the navy. He settled in Cumberland where he taught school and married. He came to Fredericton in 1790 and had a school near where the old McFarlane, Thompson and Anderson foundry stood in later years. He was clerk to Brigadier Major Harris William Hailes who was at one time President and Commander in Chief of the Province. Stephens taught school in Fredericton for thirty-nine years. He was an accomplished penman and an expert in elementary mathematics. He died Sept. 18th, 1829. Through his long and notable career as a teacher he made a lasting impression on the rising generation. His daughter Susanna married Peter Fisher who was one of his pupils.

In March 1797 Matthew Brannen opened a school in Fredericton with thirty white and eleven black children. He was a Major in the militia and a clerk in the Provincial Secretary's office. His father was Charles Brannen of the third Battalion of De Lancey's Brigade. Charles Brannen's second wife was Sarah Winslow.

Another school master who taught for a long period of years was John Baird. His son, Lieut. Colonel Baird of Woodstock, gives quite an account of his father in his book "Seventy years of New Brunswick life." John Baird was born in county Monaghan, Ireland, and came to Fredericton with the 74th Regiment under contract to teach seven years after which he was to receive his discharge and a grant of land of two hundred acres. He taught the seven years and then moved to his land in the parish of Kent, Carleton County, where he only stayed two years. He came back to Fredericton in 1825 as principal of the National School which he taught for twenty years more. The school house was opposite Wilton's Alley, and just above the stone barracks. This building was burned in the big fire of 1835. The school was reopened in the second flat of the market house directly opposite Taylor's Alley on Queen Street. The County Court House now occupies the site. Later a National School building was erected on King street, a little above the Parliament building, with ample accommodation and a separate apartment for an African school for many of the Loyalists brought slaves with them when they came to New Brunswick.

Solomon Denton was a prominent teacher in the middle of the last century. His father Samuel Denton, as a boy or young man ran away from a man-of-war, came up the St. John river and settled on a farm on one of the islands. He lost this farm when the Loyalists arrived because he had no grant of the land. The son's school was on King Street two doors above the fire station. The house is still standing although moved back from the street. Both boys and girls attended this school which was conducted in the good old fashioned way with a two foot ruler occupying a prominent place on Solomon Denton's desk which stood on a raised platform near the entrance. He was a typical pedagogue of his time. School hours were from 8 A. M. to 1 P. M. and from 2 P. M. till 4 P. M. with fifteen minutes for recess at 11 A. M. He had the name of being a good teacher and of making his pupils learn. The late John McCarthy was one of his pupils and then passed on to the Collegiate School. He was a diffident boy and did not answer readily when questioned. His new master burst out at him, "You needn't tell me you don't know the answers to my questions for Sol Denton would not have recommended you to my

## ORANGE PEKOE BLEND "SALADA" TEA

school if you had not known something." Dr. Atherton was another of his pupils. One day he and another boy got into a dispute and the other boy threw a slate without a frame. If it had hit it would have killed. Denton was Inspector of Schools for York county; so it is said, when he stopped teaching he retired to a farm on Grand Lake. There are still Dentons on Grand and Maquapit lakes and they may be some of his descendants.

Margaret Gaynor Dayton is the earliest female teacher of whom there is any record. She was the widow of Samuel Dayton who fought on the side of the Revolution and was postmaster in Salisbury, North Carolina. In those days women were not expected to have any political opinions but when her husband died in 1796 she started with a daughter of twelve and a son two years old to join her relatives the Gaynors who had come to Fredericton with the Loyalists. One sister was a Mrs. Gill of the stone house in Lower St. Mary's, another was a Mrs. Lee and lived about a mile below Springhill. The father of Joseph Gaynor, who figures in the early history of Fredericton, was her brother. She opened a school for both boys and girls and later her nephew built for her the small white house back of the Parliament Building at present owned and occupied by Mrs. Annie Whittaker. Mrs. Dayton taught the older pupils in one room and her daughter Catherine taught the small children in the other. Later the daughter took the whole responsibility of the school. Mr. Wm. Lemont, Mr. Joseph Gill, Mr. Henry Clark Mrs. Martha Rutter and Mrs. King Hazen and others went to school to the daughter. To the daughter also belongs the credit of starting the first permanent Methodist Sabbath school in Fredericton in 1821. Her cousin Joseph Gaynor was the first superintendent from 1821 to 1833. Miss Dayton died about 1845. Then the school was carried on by a Miss Wright, a daughter of Capt. Wright. She afterwards had her school uptown on King street or Brunswick or perhaps on both. She was assisted by her niece, Miss Bertha Bonnell. Miss Wright's sister Mrs. Bonnell also had a school. She had a small daughter called Arabella on whom she lavished so much attention that the other children detested the child.

David Holder kept a boy's school about 1860 or 1865. He took a keen interest in his scholars. One man told me that he had to leave school at fourteen because his mother was a widow and needed the money he could earn. Mr. Holder used to come to his home nights and help him with his lessons. He must have been quite conscientious for one woman wrote him a note and asked him to give her big son a thrashing as he was too big for her to handle any longer and she believed with Solomon that if she spared the rod she would spoil the child. Mr. Holder married a Miss McKay from Kingsclear and moved to Upper Woodstock and ran a grocery business after he retired from teaching.

Another male teacher named McGeehan who taught about twenty years earlier was a very different kind of man. His boys evidently did not respect him much for they used to fill the chimney with sods to make the stove smoke and break the glass in the windows. He would fill the holes with rags until there was not enough light in the room and then he would give the children a holiday while he put in some glass. He must have been quite economical, too, for he chewed his tobacco first, then he put it on the stove and dried it and then smoked it. His school was on Northumberland street near where Mr. Saunders' store now is.

(To be Continued)

### ELECTRIC MOTOR and GENERATOR REPAIRS

OF ALL CLASSES

Harry C. Moore, E.E.  
360 KING STREET

### LUMBERMEN, ATTENTION

We carry a full line of LUMBERMEN'S SUPPLIES

including

AXES, CABLE, WIRE ROPE, BLOCKS, SIMONDS SAWS, TARRED PAPER, BASKETS, CAMP EQUIPMENT, STOVES, etc.

Why not try us with your next order?

E. M. YOUNG LTD.

Hardware — Sporting Goods  
81-83 York Street  
Store open until 9 on Saturday

### SPECIALS

For This Week

Minc'd Ham Sandwich with Pickle, Tea or Coffee.....15c

Cream of Tomato Soup and Toast .....20c

Hotcha Sundae .....15c

### THE NU-PALMS

### Dress Up

The new Fall and Winter Samples are here and we invite your inspection.

FREDERICTON CLOTHIERS

TOM BOYD Mgr.

65 Carleton St.

Exclusive Agents for "TIP TOP TAILORS" and "CLOTHES OF QUALITY"

We clothe the best dressed men you meet

THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES IS MORE

## THRIFTY

THAN THE MALE!

That remark is meant as a real Compliment

and DEAR MADAM is probably the reason why YOU have been doing 80 per cent of the family buying for many years now. Even bachelors admit that it takes a woman to scent a bargain!

Which is why we want to emphasize that

CHRISTMAS IS GETTING VERY NEAR!

So while stocks are complete and bargains available why not pick out your requirements and have them reserved.

A Small Deposit Will Hold Them FOR YOU

Beautiful White or Colored Wool

Blankets in PLAIN or Reversible

\$5.25 to \$7.50

Linen Cloth Sets LACE CLOTHS 72" x 90"

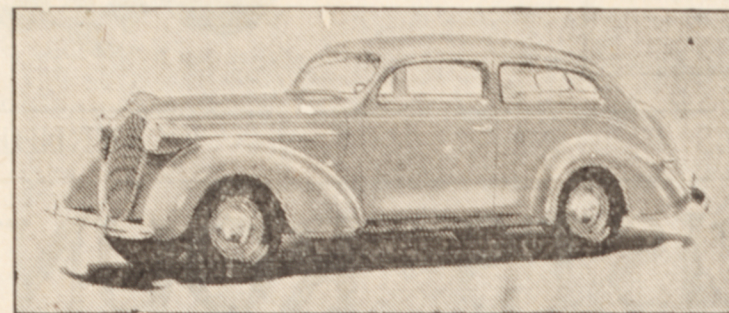
Lace Doyleys 6", 8", 10", 12" LUNCHEON SETS 36" cloths with Serviettes 85c to \$3.75

ALSO A GREAT VARIETY OF OTHER GOODS

FRED BARNES 72 York St.

PHONE 1190-21

## 1937 Plymouth Coach



PLYMOUTH DE LUXE TWO-DOOR TOURING SEDAN

### Purchased From Phillips & Pringle

THE DAILY MAIL SUBSCRIPTION CONTEST IS GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START. AS THIS WEEK IS ENTRY WEEK IN THE BIG CONTEST WE ARE GETTING A LARGE NUMBER OF NEW CONTESTANTS. TO ANY PERSON NOMINATING A NEW CONTESTANT IN THE MAIL'S BIG SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE THIS PAPER WILL PAY \$10.00 IN CASH AT THE END OF THE CONTEST, PROVIDING THE CANDIDATE YOU NOMINATE WINS THE FIRST PRIZE. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO TO EARN THIS \$10.00 OFFER IS CLIP OUT THE ENTRY COUPON, SEND THE NAME OF THE PERSON YOU NOMINATE TO THIS PAPER. YOU MAY SEND AS MANY NAMES IN AS YOU WANT. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE CONTEST IS HALF OVER—GET INTO IT WHILE IT IS STILL EASY TO GET SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BIG VOTES.

\$75.00

SPECIAL CASH PRIZES

FOR OPENING WEEK, ENDING SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21  
Twelve Special Cash Prizes will be awarded to those bringing in the best cash subscription reports before 9.00 p.m. NOV. 21st, but a minimum of \$50.00 in cash sales is necessary to qualify for one of the special cash prizes.

ENTER TODAY—START WORK NOW!

## THIS IS ENTRY WEEK

Phone 460 for full particulars! Make an appointment with the Campaign Manager, office on First Floor Room 3, Waverley Hotel, Regent St. Open Evenings.



Entry Coupon

GOOD FOR 5000 FREE CREDITS

M .....

Address .....

NOTE—Only ONE Entry Coupon accepted for each "Weekly Payroll" Participant.

FIRST SUBSCRIPTION COUPON  
GOOD FOR 100,000 FREE VOTES

When accompanied by the Nomination Blank, and your first subscription, this coupon will start you in the race for the magnificent Daily Mail prizes with a grand total of more than 120,000. This coupon may be used only once and is valid when accompanied by a subscription remittance.

Name of Subscriber .....

Candidate's Name .....

Amount Enclosed .....

This coupon will count 100,000 EXTRA FREE votes when returned to the Campaign Manager, together with the first subscription you obtain. It must be accompanied by the cash, and the subscription must be for a period of one year or longer. The 100,000 EXTRA FREE votes are in addition to the regular number of votes given on the subscription as per the regular vote schedule.