

Bridgewater was incorporated as a town in 1858. The population increased from 143 in 1850 to 722 in 1880 and the recent census makes it together with the very few settlers upon the adjoining township of Letter D., 030. The valuation of the town last year was \$148,354, and the rate of taxation fourteen mills on the dollar.

CARIBOU

Caribou is one of the busiest and most thriving villages in Maine. Its situation is picturesque and reminds one of a Swiss village, as a large part of the thickly settled portion of the town is located upon the sloping hills which rise from the river and stream and give to the village a most beautiful background as one views it on entering by the road from Presque Isle. The village is situated on the Caribou Stream, a short distance above the point of its confluence with the Aroostook. The town of Caribou, like Presque Isle and Fort Fairfield, comprises two full townships and embraces an area of twelve miles long by six miles wide. The township in which the village is situated was originally known as H., Range 2. The Aroostook River enters this town on its southern border and flowing completely across the town makes an abrupt turn near the line between H. and I., Range 2, and doubling upon itself forms one of the "ox bows" so common on this tortuous river, and leaves the town on its eastern line, flowing into Fort Fairfield and thence to the St. John. A strip containing 10,000 acres on the east side of this township, H., was years ago granted by the State of Massachusetts to Gen. Eaton of that State for meritorious services rendered during the war with Tripoli, and this strip was known for a long time as Eaton Grant, and was afterwards organized as Eaton Plantation.

As the granting of this tract of land connects Caribou with the early history of our nation, it will be interesting to give a somewhat detailed account of the circumstances which gave rise to this action by the Massachusetts Legislature. Gen. William Eaton was in command of the land forces sent to Tripoli to unite with our fleet in bringing that piratical state to terms. Landing at Alexandria, he succeeded in forming an alliance with Hamet, the ex-bashan of Tripoli, who had been dethroned and expelled

by his brother, and uniting his forces with those of Hamet, started from Alexandria on the 6th of March, 1805, on his westward march of more than 1000 miles. This march was attended by almost unparalleled suffering, peril and fatigue, and on the 25th of April Eaton and Hamet arrived before Derne, the capital of a large province of Tripoli. In answer to General Eaton's summons for the surrender of the place, the governor returned the laconic reply, "My head or yours." On April 27th Eaton assaulted the city, the American squadron having arrived in the bay and taking part in the action. After a desperate contest of nearly three hours the place was carried at the point of the bayonet, the governor and many of his adherents fleeing to the desert. This, together with other successful operations on the part of Gen. Eaton, brought about the termination of the war and the release of a large number of American prisoners. On the 4th of March, 1806, the following resolve was passed by the Legislature of Massachusetts:

"Whereas in a rising republic it is highly important to cherish that patriotism which conquers a love of ease, of pleasure and of wealth, which prompts individuals to a love of their country and induces them to embrace every opportunity to advance its prosperity and happiness, as well by ameliorating the fate of those citizens whom the fortune of war has thrown into captivity, as by cheerfully contributing to its support and defence; And whereas the love of enterprise, when guided by a just sense of propriety and benevolence, may become the parent of many virtues and a state is sometimes indebted for its safety to the virtues and undaunted courage of a single man; And whereas the Senate and House of Representatives of this Commonwealth are desirous to perpetuate a remembrance of the heroic enterprise of William Eaton, while engaged in the service of the United States, whose undaunted courage and brilliant services so eminently contributed to release a large number of his fellow citizens, late prisoners in Tripoli, from the chains of slavery and to restore them to freedom, their country and their friends; Therefore, Resolved:—That the committee for the sale of eastern lands be and are hereby authorized and directed to convey to William Eaton, Esq., a citizen of this commonwealth, and to his heirs and assigns a tract of land to contain ten thousand acres of any of the unappropriated land of the Commonwealth in the District of Maine (excepting the ten townships on the Penobscot River). And be it further resolved, that His Excellency, the Governor, be requested, as soon as conveniently

may be, to cause to be transmitted to the said William Eaton an authentic copy of this resolution."

This tract of land was surveyed by Park Holland and was conveyed to Gen. Eaton by deed dated January 28, 1808, and is now a part of the town of Caribou.

In 1859, that part of "H., R. 2" lying west of the Aroostook River and comprising a tract six miles long and about three miles wide was incorporated as the town of Lyndon, Eaton still remaining a plantation. There was also a strip of land lying east of the Aroostook River, between the river and the west line of Eaton Grant, which was not included in either organization. This territory was organized for election purposes, or, as some of the old settlers used to say, "for electioneering purposes," as the plantation of Sheridan. Township I, Range 2, lying north of Lyndon, was also organized as the plantation of Forestville. In 1869 the plantations of Eaton, Sheridan and Forestville were annexed to Lyndon, thus making that town to include the two entire townships of H. and I., Range 2, and comprising a tract twelve miles in length by six miles in width. The name of the town was subsequently changed to Caribou, by which name the village had always been known.

The first man to make a settlement within the limits of the present town of Caribou for the purpose of making a farm was Mr. Ivory Hardison, who came from the town of Winslow, in Kennebec Co., in the spring of 1839 and took the lot on the line of the present road from Presque Isle to Caribou, now occupied by his son, Oliver Hardison, and Mr. Henry Fish. After taking up his lot Mr. Hardison returned to Winslow, and though he came back in the spring of 1842 and made a clearing on his lot, did not move his family and establish a permanent residence in his now home in the forest until the spring of 1843.

In the meantime Mr. Alexander Cochran of New Brunswick had made a small clearing at the mouth of Caribou Stream and had erected a rude grist mill.

In 1843 Col. Harvey Ormsby came from Denmark, in Oxford County, and took up four lots in the western part of the town near the south line. He was a very eccentric man, but a man of much energy and business ability. He engaged successfully in farming and lumbering for a number of years and then sold his property in Caribou and moved no one knew whither.

In the spring of 1843 Messrs Winslow and Hiram Hall came from Hartford in Oxford County, and settled a short dis-

tance south of Mr. Hardison. Hiram Hall cleared the farm afterwards known as the Tuck place, and built the large barn now standing on the farm. He afterwards removed to Minnesota. Winslow Hall cleared the farm now occupied by his G. C. Hall, and after living upon it fourteen years, during a part of which time he was engaged in trade, removed to Presque Isle.

In March, 1844, Hon. Samuel W. Collins and W. A. Vaughan came from Calais and bought of the State four lots each, including the present mill site and also the site of the Vaughan Hotel. They paid for this land one dollar per acre, three-fourths of the price being paid in road labor and one-fourth in cash.

A blacksmith by the name of Williams then had a chopping of about four acres near where the village burying ground now is, and David T. Adams had a small clearing on what is now the Moses Thomas farm. There was also a small clearing near the mouth of Caribou Stream. With the exception of these few openings, the territory now comprised in the village and vicinity was an unbroken wilderness. At that time Alexander Cochran had a small mill with one run of stones at the mouth of Caribou Stream. Winslow Hall lived where his son, Mr. G. C. Hall now lives, and had ten acres cleared and a small log house built. There was then no store nearer than Towle's at Presque Isle.

Immediately upon arriving and locating their land, Collins and Vaughan commenced clearing away the forest near where the grist mill now stands, and hewing the timber upon the spot, before the snow was off the ground had the frame of the present grist mill up and ready for boarding. As soon as the ice left the river they towed a raft of boards up from Fort Fairfield and finished the mill. They had two run of stones and a cleanser. They hauled one set of stones from Lincoln to Ashland, where they placed them on a raft and floated them down the Aroostook River to the mill. The other set was towed on a raft up the St. John and Aroostook Rivers from New Brunswick. They commenced grinding in the fall of 1848. They also opened a store gor, and afterwards bringing them in boats up the St. John and Aroostook, the New Brunswick legislature having passed a law in a room in the grist mill, at first hauling their goods from Ban-allowing goods to come through in bond.

Among the first settlers who came after Collins and Vaughan were George and Cephas Sampson and Mr. Watson Starbird.

In 1845 Collins and Vaughan built on the site of the present mill a large saw mill with one up and down saw and a clap-

board machine. This mill was burnt in the winter of 1848 and rebuilt in the following year. In 1863 the mill was again destroyed by fire and the present fine mill was built during the same year.

The first school taught in Caribou was a private school started in a log house in 1848 by Miss Mary Ann Hardison, sister to Jacob Hardison and to Mrs. S. W. Collins. The first schoolhouse was built in 1851 on the spot where the present village schoolhouse stands.

In 1852 Collins & Vaughan built a tannery on the Caribou Stream below the grist mill. This tannery was operated by William Farrell, who bought hides of the farmers and also of the lumbermen who sometimes drove beef cattle into the woods to be slaughtered. Mr. Farrell also manufactured the leather into thick boots for the lumber trade. Collins & Vaughan also built a blacksmith shop the same year and employed Benj. Annis, who was the first blacksmith in the town.

They also built the first store in Caribou in 1855. The building is still standing and is now occupied by Mr. John Anderson as a boot and shoe shop.

No meetinghouse was built until 1860, when the Union house was erected, but religious meetings had previously been held in the schoolhouse.

In 1858 Sylvester Washburn built a sash and blind factory near where the present factory is located. It was afterwards destroyed by fire and rebuilt. The next year Mr. Washburn built the house afterwards occupied as a hotel by J. W. Gary and Harry Small. This house was burned some seven years ago, and has not been rebuilt.

The second store erected in Caribou was built by D. F. Adams about the year 1860, soon after which another store was opened by Mr. Nathaniel Bartlett. In 1862 John S. Arnold built the store now owned by Mr. Alba Holmes, and in 1867 Sawin & Teague started in trade. They first opened a store in the old tannery building, and afterwards moved into the large new store built by Mr. W. A. Vaughan and now occupied by Samuel Taylor. Since that time the number of stores has increased until there are something over thirty in the village today.

The first bridge across the Aroostook River at Caribou was built in 1863. The State appropriated one-half of the cost and the citizens contributed the other half.

In 1871 Mr. Alba Holmes started the first potato starch factory in Aroostook. The building was built by Mr. J. C. Barnes

of Fort Fairfield for a woolen mill, but was never used for that purpose. A carding machine was run in the building until Mr. Holmes purchased it and converted it into the largest starch factory in the United States if not in the world. Mr. Holmes still continues the business of manufacturing starch, and distributes among the farmers a large amount of money each year for potatoes. He also does a large business in the manufacture of cedar shingles and his enterprise adds much to the business activity of this thriving town. There are two other starch factories in the town, one owned by Howe & Taylor, and the other by F. M. York, Esq., About 500 tons of starch was manufactured in the three factories last year. This was a light make, as the high price of potatoes for shipping prevented the factories from receiving as large a stock as usual.

In 1872 Rev. W. T. Sleeper commenced the publication of the North Star at Caribou. Mr. Sleeper at once undertook the work of making known the resources of the Aroostook Valley, and seeing the need of some better means of communication with the outside world, suggested the idea of building a narrow gauge railroad up the Aroostook River from Andover, N. B., to connect with the New Brunswick Railway which was then in process of construction. Mr. Sleeper first suggested a road with wooden rails, which idea was much ridiculed at the time. The articles in the North Star, however, attracted the attention of railroad men and the consequence was that the idea began to be earnestly considered. The outcome of the discussion was that a charter was granted by the Legislature in the winter of 1873, and the Aroostook River Railroad Company was incorporated. This company had the right to construct a railroad from the boundary line to Caribou with wooden or iron rails as they saw fit. The idea of the wooden rails was soon abandoned, and the New Brunswick Railway taking hold of the project, a narrow gauge railroad with iron rails was completed to Fort Fairfield in 1875 and by the energy and enterprise of the people of Caribou the road bed was made ready for the rails and the track continued to Caribou in 1876.

From that date the growth of the town has been steady, healthy and continuous. The citizens of Caribou are an enterprising, energetic people and are always awake to any movement which promises to add to the business of the town or to increase its social or educational advantages. The town has an air of business push and the men of the town have that off-hand, breezy energy more often seen in the new towns of the far West.

Like other thriving villages in Aroostook, Caribou depends for its support and for the sure basis of its business upon its grand outlying agricultural region and upon the immense supply of cedar and spruce lumber growing upon all the lands in its vicinity.

No abandoned farms are found in this section, and a stranger riding through the country would at once pronounce it the home of a peaceful, happy and prosperous people.

That part of the old township H., R. 2 which lies on the west side of the Aroostook River, and which once formed the town of Lyndon is a solid block of fine farming land with hardly a waste lot upon the whole tract.

The road from Presque Isle to Caribou runs through this tract on a line nearly parallel with the Aroostook River, the farms on the east side of this road having a frontage on the road and stretching away back to the river. Hardwood Creek crosses this road about a half mile north of the Presque Isle line and flows down into the Aroostook River. A saw mill is built upon this creek, which is a great convenience to the settlers in the vicinity. Something over two miles from the Presque Isle line on this road is a post office which still bears the name of Lyndon, the name of the old town. The office is kept by Mr. G. C. Hall, a son of Mr. Winslow Hall, who was one of the original settlers of this region.

The mail runs from Presque Isle to Caribou every morning and back at night for the accommodation of all the residents along the road, another office being established at Maysville Centre, three miles from Presque Isle village. The through mail between the villages is carried upon the train.

The land included in the "ox-bow" formed by the Aroostook River as it bends, and turning upon its course, runs southward again through a part of what was formerly Eaton Grant is splendid farming land. About midway in this bend of the river, on a beautiful elevation, is the farm of N. S. Lufkin, Esq., one of the oldest settlers on the tract. When Mr. Lufkin settled here he could look down upon the village of Caribou and could see but five lights, and they made by tallow candles, while now of an evening he can look upon a thriving village with its streets and business houses lighted by electricity and the bright lights flashing from hundreds of windows of comfortable homes.

The population of the section now included in the town of Caribou was in 1860 about 800. In 1870 it had increased to

1410; in 1880 to 2756, and in 1890 to 4087, being the largest population of any town in the County. This large increase in population is in a great measure accounted for by the fact that the northern portion of the town is almost entirely inhabited by French settlers who are a very prolific people. The valuation of Caribou in 1880 was \$337,388, and in 1890 \$780,439.

We append the following personal reminiscences of Mr. Jacob Hardison, one of the earliest settlers of the town. Mr. Hardison died at Caribou March 27, 1891. He was a valued citizen and was widely known as a man of sterling integrity and sound judgment:

"In the spring of 1839 my father, Ivory Hardison, and myself, then a boy 15 years old, with one or two other men, left our home in the town of Winslow, Kennebec County, Maine, to seek a new home in the wilderness of Northern Aroostook.

"As there was no road from Houlton to Presque Isle at that time, our only way was to take the Aroostook road leading from a point in the military road from Mattawamkeag to Houlton, about seven miles north of Mattawamkeag through Patten to Township 15, Range 5, and from there to Ashland there was only a winter road.

"Over these roads we managed, with no little difficulty, to haul our scanty supplies. We at last reached Masardis, the end of the road, having been five days on the way from Patten, a distance of thirtyseven miles. Here we stopped a few days with the few settlers who had collected on the bank of the Aroostook River to rest and look for settling lands.

"We soon decided to go further down the river, so sending our team back to Patten, we constructed a raft and packing our supplies on it, set adrift to seek a place that suited us better.

"With the swift current of a spring freshet we reached the mouth of the Presque Isle Stream in one day. Here we met Mr. Cunningham, who was surveying on letter H., R. 2 (Caribou) about 12 miles below, and who advised us to go down with him. Following his advice we floated on down the river, landing at an old lumber camp located on the east side of the river on what was afterwards known as the Hall farm, which the English had occupied the winter before, but on hearing the clanking of arms and the tread of the State militia had fled to safe quarters, leaving timber cut in the woods, throwing logs from their sleds and leaving tons of fine timber on the landings, and even leaving their cooking utensils in some instances. On the landing just below their camp on the lot afterwards occu

plied by father, was to be seen a large pile of pine timber that they left, which after the Ashburton Treaty, they were allowed to run down the river to St. John, by paying stumpage to the State.

"We remained at this camp till a location was settled upon, which was soon done. Going about half a mile west of our camp we built a bark shelter and commenced to clear on the lot now occupied by my brother, Oliver, and Henry Fish.

"Later we joined the surveying party and helped finish the survey of the township and locate the road as now traveled from Caribou to Presque Isle.

"In the fall we returned to Winslow, and in the spring of 1842 father and I returned to Aroostook. During our absence a road had been partly constructed between Houlton and Presque Isle and we came that way, but before reaching Presque Isle the road was so bad that we were obliged to leave our wagon and pack our scanty supplies, including a little corn and two bushels of wheat on our horses. Upon reaching the Aroostook River in Maysville we followed it down to our new home.

"We then set to work burning and clearing the chopping we had made, and planting our wheat and corn.

"During the first four months of our stay we saw no one, but in the fall Harvey Ormsby and John T. Pike, who were also seeking homes for themselves, came and stayed with us several weeks. We had already commenced to build a log house, and our visitors helped us finish it. It was of squared timber and in one end had a huge stone fireplace that would burn wood four feet long.

Having harvested our small crop of corn and wheat and hauled a large supply of wood to our door, we, in December, started for China, Me., where our family then was.

"On Februray 14, 1843, we started again for Aroostook with our family and household effects. The family consisted of father, mother and seven children.

"As no road had been opened from Presque Isle to Caribou, upon reaching the Aroostook River, we drove down it upon the ice. On February 28, 1843, we reached our new home, and if ever there was a happy family we were one that night. Mother cried for joy. We were "monarchs of all we surveyed."

"We had no neighbors within four miles. Soon after our arrival the snow became very deep, and as we had no snow shoes it was impossible for us to get out of our clearing. Our supplies began to run short but we had the Canada corn which

we had raised the year before. For six weeks the bread, which was our only food, was made from meal ground in a small coffee mill. On the crust, in the spring, we boys hauled our first grist of corn on a handsled to the old Cochran mill, which stood at the mouth of the Caribou Stream. The original Cochran mill was a very primitive affair, consisting of one run of stone, which were split from a granite boulder on the bank of the river and rafted down. The bolt for separating the flour from the bran and hull was made of narrow strips of wood set up edgewise and set at an angle of 40 degrees so the flour would pass through and the bran and hull would pass down under the mill, where he kept a few hogs on the bran at the expense of his neighbors, who were ignorant of its quality. Mr. Cochran made the first opening in this town in order to get a mill site.

"We made the first break in the forest of this town for the purpose of making a farm. On one occasion the Cochran boys went hunting and struck the trail of a caribou. Their dogs took the trail and run the caribou down the river on the ice. The old man at the mill heard the barking of the dogs and went to the river bank, and with an old fowling piece managed to wound the animal so that the dogs caught and killed the caribou as he turned up the creek, and from that event originated the name of Caribou Stream.

"In March, Harvey Ormsby returned with his family and settled in the western part of the town some three miles from our place. They, for a year, were our nearest neighbors.

"During the summer the State grubbed the road as now traveled from the Aroostook River in Maysville (it having been built to there before) to Caribou Stream. In the winter of 1843 Hiram and Winslow Hall, with their families, moved from Oxford County and settled within half a mile of our place.

"In the spring of 1844 our worthy townsman, S. W. Collins, and his partner, W. A. Vaughan, commenced to erect a grist mill which has since been remodeled, and is still standing upon the old site.

"They also erected a saw mill which was afterwards burned and the one now owned by Mr. Collins was erected on the old site.

"Our town grew fast and soon nearly every settling lot was taken. It was incorporated as the town of Lyndon in 1859, and afterwards changed to Caribou, which name the village and stream always bore."

J. HARDISON.