

WASHBURN

The main stream of Salmon Brook rises in a beautiful little lake in the northern part of the town of Perham and flowing in a southeasterly course enters the town of Washburn near its northwest corner. The east branch of Salmon Brook rises in the eastern part of Perham and flowing southeasterly across the southwest corner of the town of Woodland, enters Washburn through its northern border, about a mile and a half from the northwest corner of the town. These two fine streams flowing in a southerly direction through the eastern part of the town of Washburn, gradually converging, unite in one strong flowing stream about a mile above its junction with the beautiful Aroostook River. On the western bank of this stream is a lovely plain rising gradually as it recedes from the water until it terminates in a fringe of green forest at the top of the gentle slope. On the eastern side of the stream, below the mouth of the east branch, the land rises somewhat more boldly, but by no means steep, and presents a clean, smooth, verdant slope, as it is seen from the opposite side. On the beautiful plain upon the west side of Salmon brook is situated the principal part of the pleasant village of Washburn, though the recent growth of the village has extended across the stream.

The town of Washburn was formerly known as Township No. 13, R. 3, W. E. L. S. It is a single township, six miles square, and is bounded by Woodland on the north, Caribou on the east, Wade Plantation on the west, and has Mapleton for its neighbor on the southern border.

The first settlers on the township, like those of nearly all the towns along the Aroostook River, came up the river from New Brunswick many years ago and settled along the river bank.

The oldest settler of whom we can obtain any account and probably the first white man who made a home in what is now the town of Washburn was Nathaniel Churchill who came with his family from New Brunswick in 1826, and settled on what is now called the Stratton flat near the mouth of Salmon Brook. He remained there some five years, when he moved farther down the river and settled on Oakes' island. He continued at this place until 1833, when his wife died and he returned with his children to Brunswick. In 1839, having married again, he came

back up the river with his family and settled on the lot where his son, Job Churchill, now lives, some four miles down the river from the town of Washburn. When Mr. Churchill returned a number of settlers had taken up lots along the river and he was no longer alone in the wilderness.

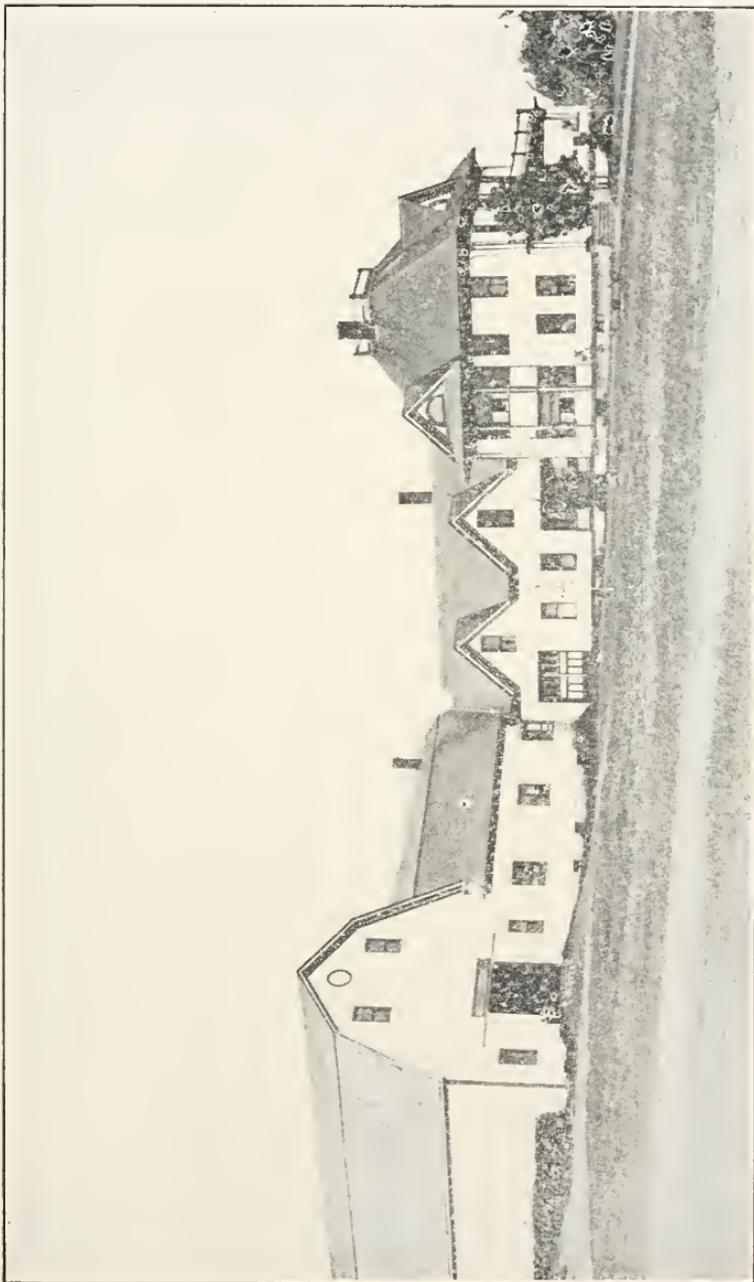
In 1837 Thomas McDonald came from Miramichi and settled on the north side of the Aroostook about a mile below the mouth of Salmon Brook. His son, Mr. John L. McDonald, still resides upon the lot which is now a handsome farm with commodious buildings and fertile fields.

Soon after that Wilder Stratton settled on the lot first taken up by Nathaniel Churchill and his children still occupy the farm, having a beautiful residence on the height some distance back from the river. Mrs. A. W. Stratton, an accomplished writer and a well known contributor to numerous publications, is at present living there.

The first settler in what is now the village of Washburn, and the pioneer business man of the town, was Isaac Wilder, who came to Aroostook from the town of Pembroke in Washington County, about the year 1840. Mr. Wilder remained for a time at Fort Fairfield where he worked on the barracks as a carpenter, then pushing on up the river he built a saw mill in the dense wilderness on the banks of Salmon Brook. At that time the only settlers upon the town were the few who were located on the Aroostook River in the southwest portion of the township. As late as 1844, in the report of the Commissioners of Maine and Massachusetts who in that year visited this section to adjust the settlers' claims, we find mention of but twelve of these settlers along the river bank in 13, R. 3, now Washburn. These were Peter Bull, Nathaniel Churchill, Jabez S. Currier, Joshua Dunn, John Hicky, Lawrence Farrel, Wilder Stratton, Elizabeth, widow of William Mumford, Joshua Christie, Job Churchill, Stephen Harris and Ebenezer Esty.

The State of Massachusetts then owned the town, as the mother State still held each alternate township in this eastern wilderness.

At the time of Mr. Wilder's coming there was no road in in the township, the river being the only thoroughfare. The mill contained an up and down saw and clapboard machine. The boards and other long lumber were rafted in the water, and upon these were piled the clapboards, and the rafts were floated down the stream to the Aroostook River, thence down to the Aroostook Falls, where the lumber had to be taken from the water,



FARM BUILDINGS OF ARTHUR GINN, CARIBOU

hailed by the falls, rafted again below and thence floated out into the St. John and down the river to Fredericton.

With Isaac Wilder, came his brother, Charles Wilder, who settled and commenced a clearing near the mouth of the stream.

In 1843, Charles O. Stoddard came from Perry, in Washington County, and settled on the bank of the Salmon Brook stream a short distance below the mill. In the same year Robert Wilder, brother of Isaac, came from Pembroke and made a clearing next above Stoddard, and with him from the same town came Samuel Bugbee, who settled on the adjoining lot below Stoddard.

In 1843 also came Hiram Braddock, who moved from Calais and made a home on the north bank of the Aroostook, about half a mile below the mouth of Salmon Brook. Soon after these settlers came they cut the road through from the mill to the Aroostook River at the mouth of the brook. This was for some years a road through the woods, hardly passable for teams in summer, and was not turnpiked until 1846. In 1845 the road was cut through from the south bank of the Aroostook, opposite the mouth of Salmon Brook, to what was then called the "State Road," leading from Presque Isle to Ashland. By fording or ferrying across the Aroostook, the settlers near Wilder's mill had communication by means of this road with Presque Isle where much of their trading was then done.

In the winter of 1844—45 the township was organized as the plantation of Salmon Brook and the same year a school was established in the house of one of the settlers. Some three years later a schoolhouse was built near where the village cemetery is now located. In this house religious meetings were held from time to time and occasionally a faithful missionary penetrated these wilds and preached to the settlers.

In 1850 a road was commenced from Wilder's mill toward Caribou. Later on this road was continued to Caribou village and is now a fine smooth turnpike running through a magnificent farming section.

In 1850 Gould Crouse and his sons, Jerry, Abram and William, came from New Brunswick and settled on the Aroostook River in what is now known as East Washburn.

Joshua Dunn, a brother of Elbridge Dunn, Esq., of St. John, then lived on the lot which is now the beautiful homestead of Mr. Jerry Crouse, and sold the lot to the elder Crouse.

In 1852 Mr. Theodore Wilder came from Pembroke and commenced the farm now owned and occupied by Mr. S. W.

Tabor, on a fine swell of land some two miles northeast of the village.

Settlers came slowly for a time, a few making clearings on the new road toward Caribou, and quite a number coming after the Editorial Excursion in 1858, the reports of which made the country better known to the outside world.

Isaac Wilder kept a few goods for sale at his mill, but no store was built in the town until 1860. In that year Chauncy Harris built a store, and in 1861 rented it to Mr. Nathan Perry, then from Bangor, who traded in it for a short time and then moved to Presque Isle. In 1865, Benjamin Wilder, a son of Robert Wilder, built another store where he traded until 1871, when he sold out to Nathan Perry, who still continued his business at Presque Isle, his sons attending to the branch store at Salmon Brook. In 1880 Mr. Perry sold out the business to Farnham Bros., who are today the principal merchants and resident business men of the town.

Isaac Wilder continued to own and operate the mill until 1879, during which time it was twice burnt and rebuilt. In 1879 Mr. Wilder sold the property to Messrs. Johnson & Phair of Presque Isle, and died not long afterward. This firm and the branch firm of E. J. Johnson & Co. continued to operate the mill and increase the business until the firm of Johnson & Phair was dissolved some three years ago and the property came into the hands of Hon. T. H. Phair, the present owner.

The present village of Washburn has been mainly the growth of the last ten years, though the settlement received quite an impetus from the establishment of two starch factories, built by Mr. Miller of New Hampshire, the one at the village about 1875 and that at East Washburn a few years later. Both of these factories are now the property of Hon. T. H. Phair.

The town of Washburn was incorporated in 1861 and was named for Gov. Israel Washburn, from whom the town received a present of a library of two hundred choice volumes. By the census of 1880 the population of the town was 809, and by that of 1890 was 1097. The valuation of the town was \$100,243, which in 1890 had increased to \$215,341.

Adjoining Washburn on the west is Township 13, R. 4, organized as Wade Plantation, but generally known as Duntown. The Aroostook River flows across the southeast corner of this township, and there are numerous settlers along the river on either bank. The road from Washburn to Perham crosses the northeast corner of the township. Farnham Bros. pur-

chased 10,000 acres in the northern part of this township some years ago and have a tract four miles long by one wide, along the Perham line already lotted for settlement, and a road running through the middle of the tract on the line between the tiers of lots. These are all first class settling lots, and there are fifteen lots on the tract still unsold. They will soon run out another tract into 48 lots of most excellent settling land. They sell these lots for \$3.00 per acre to settlers and make no reservation of timber. Settlers are required to pay \$50 down and are allowed all needed time on the balance if interest is paid. The southern part of this town is owned by the Dunns. The Aroostook River runs for a distance of about five miles through the southeast portion of the township and on each side of the river are roads leading to Washburn village. The lots along the river are all taken and there are already some excellent farms. There are two schoolhouses in this part of the plantation and one has already been established among the settlers on the Farnham block. With the exception of the lots along the river and the Farnham lots the township is still in its wilderness state and is for the most part excellent settling land. In the southeast portion of the township on lots number 23 and 24 lying south of the Aroostook River is the deposit of iron described in the report of the scientific survey of the State of Maine. Should a railroad ever run in the vicinity these lands would probably be valuable for the iron ore, which could then be profitably worked.

Wade Plantation was first organized in 1859. In 1862 it lost its organization and was not reorganized until 1874. The population by the census of 1890 was 158.

SHERMAN

The southern portion of Aroostook County comprises an area of five ranges of townships in width from east to west and extending about fifty-five miles northward from the County of Washington and the eastern shoulder of Penobscot. At the northern extremity of this strip, the county extends three ranges of townships farther to the west along the northern border of Penobscot, and two townships farther north the southern line of the county extends across the entire State. The towns along the western border of this southern portion of Aroostook are