

Bangor an independent line, and by drawing the freight of productive Aroostook to the Bangor & Piscataquis Railroad, would vitalize that then struggling road, and build it up to profit and importance. It would at the same time give Aroostook the boon of competition and lower freight rates.

Another company, consisting of Geo. I. Tricky, Caribou, Ira B. Gardner, Patter, Frank Gilman and others, proposed asking for a charter from some point in the town of Mattawamkeag to some point in the town of Medway, thence to some point on the Aroostook River in the County of Aroostook.

In addition, the Grand Trunk, as before stated, was supposed to have a scheme to build down through Aroostook to tidewater. But all these had the ever watchful Maine Central and Boston & Maine standing ready to nip any such schemes in the bud.

CHAPTER VII.

The First Publicity Given Burleigh Plan.

The first publicity given to the so-called "Burleigh Railroad Plan" was in the Star-Herald, December 18, 1890. The Burleigh plan, as then published, was to ask the Legislature for a charter for a road to start from Van Buren and extend to some point on the Maine Central, with branches to Fort Fairfield and Ashland. The editorial in the Star-Herald on this proposition was as follows: "An act of Legislature will be asked for the coming session to enable the County to issue bonds to the extent of five per cent of its valuation, amounting to \$500,000, to be taken in stock. After this it is proposed to issue \$400,000 more stock, giving the people of Aroostook the preference as subscribers thereto, and then to issue first mortgage bonds to complete the construction of the road. At 5 per cent the interest on the \$500,000 would be \$25,000, two-fifths of which would be borne by the wild land owners.

"All railroad men agree that the line would be a paying one from the start, so that the County would not be called upon to pay either principal or interest. It is claimed by good judges that in ten years the already large freight traffic would be doubled, and that the increase in property value along the line of the road would be more than the stock taken by the County.

"At a meeting of Pomona Grange held in Caribou last Saturday, Mr. Burleigh presented and explained his plan, which was favorably received. It was then voted by that body to petition

the Legislature for a charter. A committee was appointed, consisting of J. G. Teague, Geo. M. Park and Edward Wiggin, to issue a circular of information to accompany the petition. It was also voted to ask the State Grange to take action in favor of this charter, and of the State granting an enabling act, and Hon. Edward Wiggin was instructed to bring the matter before the State Grange which meets at Lewiston this week."



HON. ALBERT A. BURLEIGH
Chief Figure in Campaign for B. & A. Railroad,
and one of the County's Ablest Citizens

Coincidentally with the movement to organize under the Burleigh plan for securing a short line railroad for Aroostook, the Canadian Pacific Railroad took over the New Brunswick Railroad, of which F. W. Cram was then manager, and made it the Atlantic Division of the Canadian Pacific Railroad. When the change was made, Mr. Cram was urged to remain and take charge of all the C. P. line east of the St. Lawrence River. In that connection he was told "The C. P. has Aroostook bottled. It will go when and pay what the C. P. says."

Mr. Cram questioned the justice of that attitude of the Canadian Pacific, and told the heads of that road that the statement they had made would put an independent line into Aroostook. It did, as Mr. Cram retired, espoused the Burleigh project

and in the end made it successful. He might have gone elsewhere at the time, and got a far easier job, with no gruelling pioneer work involved, at a much bigger income than promoting the Aroostook short line afforded at the outset. He was not only a man of marked ability and force, but he was widely so recognized in railroad circles. Therefore, when he enlisted in the infant enterprise of getting a road for Aroostook, it was a re-enforcement of the undertaking which went far toward solving Aroostook's long-standing railroad difficulties.

The ball was really earnestly set in motion in behalf of the Burleigh Railroad plan by the action of Pomona Grange in the latter part of December, 1890. Speaking of this the Star-Herald in its first issue in Jan., 1891, says: The Aroostook Grangers have set the ball rolling toward an earnest support of the railroad project of Hon. Albert A. Burleigh, explanation of which has been given in our columns.

"In pursuance of this object, Hon. Edward Wiggin, Secretary of the Committee appointed by Pomona Grange, has this week engaged in circulating through the County and State Legislative petitions for signature. These petitions bear the following headings:

"To the Honorable Legislature of Maine:

We, the undersigned, citizens of the Town of _____ County of _____, respectfully ask that an enabling act be passed, authorizing the County of Aroostook to issue its bonds for an amount not exceeding 5 per cent of the valuation of the County, and for the charter for said road asked for by Hon. Albert A. Burleigh and his associates, be guaranteed."

"Accompanying the petition is a circular letter of information as follows:

"Presque Isle, Me., Dec. 26, 1890.

"Worthy Brother:

"A movement is being made in Aroostook County to secure the construction of a short line of railroad to this County. Believing that God helps those who help themselves, Aroostook County Pomona Grange has appointed a committee to prepare and circulate petitions in aid of the project. The Maine State Grange has cordially endorsed the movement. Please have the enclosed petition signed as fully as possible, and return to me at an early date.

George M. Park, Chairman
Edward Wiggin, Secretary of Committee."

The editorial of that issue then says: "Inasmuch as the State Grange at its recent meeting in Lewiston pledged its support to this movement, and as it is one that, on its own merits, commends itself to public support and favor, Aroostook will be likely to go to the Legislature this winter as formidably equipped to press her railroad demand as any section ever was in behalf of any project.

"It would seem as if the Legislature could not fail to grant this just demand and pass the bill asked for, after which it merely remains to establish its constitutionality by the adjudication of the Supreme Court, and then for Aroostook to ratify the plan by voting the requisite five per cent. And when the vote is thus cast, it means a successful issue to Aroostook's thirty years' struggle to secure a railroad."

Mass meetings, petitions, and a local press jammed full of articles booming the Burleigh movement, followed, and the result was that the charter was granted, and the "enabling act," so called, was passed and approved March 19, 1891. In the same session an act was passed and approved, providing that for a period of 20 years from the passage of the act, no railroad should be built into Aroostook which should at any point on its line, be less than 15 miles from the line of the B. & A. Railroad. Provided, that the B. & A. R. R. should, within three years from the passage of the act, have built its line from Brownville or some point on the line of the Bangor & Katahdin Iron Works Railroad to Houlton, and have begun within two years work on its line beyond Houlton, and within four years from the passage of the act have built its line to Presque Isle, Caribou and Fort Fairfield.

The same act authorized the Bangor & Aroostook Company to acquire by purchase or lease the line of the Bangor & Piscataquis Railroad Co., and its subsidiary corporation, the Bangor & Katahdin Iron Works Railroad.

In consideration of the stipulation that it should furnish free transportation to troops and munitions in times of war, insurrection, and civil commotion, the State agreed to remit for a period of 20 years 95 per cent of the taxes on the property and franchises of said road.

By an act approved March 28, 1891, the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad Company was authorized to issue preferred stock to the amount of \$600,000 in addition to the capital stock to be issued to the County of Aroostook, the dividends on which were to be secondary to the stock issued to the County. The \$500,-

000 preferred stock subscription by the County was later added to by \$228,000.

It is saying only the exact truth to assert that if Aroostook had not had an Albert A. Burleigh to step into the breach and take up and push the enterprise of securing a railroad, no railroad relief would have come to this great County when it did, and it might have been delayed for an indefinite time.

The plan he presented, though simple, was original with him, and no other man in the County or State had the qualifications he possessed for pushing it through its initial stages. He laid the foundation to build the structure upon the campaign he conducted to win the support of the people of Aroostook, and to secure needed legislation. This was made possible by his ability, his thorough knowledge of Aroostook and its people, and by the complete confidence they had in his honesty and sincerity.

At the time the idea of County aid to a railroad was broached, half a million dollars was the equivalent of several times that sum today, for Aroostook has now reached a point in the way of accumulated wealth where \$500,000 for any public undertaking is not a staggering proposition. But had any other man than Albert Burleigh come forward with such a plan thirty years ago, the people of Aroostook would have said no, because Aroostook people were then poor, and their experience with railroad promotion which appealed to them for material gifts or assistance, had been very unfortunate. They had not forgotten the flirtation they had with the European & North American in 1870. The vast tract of wild land they lost in that venture represented thirty years ago less than a tithe of its value today, but it was a bad piece of business. Added to that useless sacrifice of wealth, succeeding railroad schemes which promised well, had invariably miscarried, chiefly, as it seemed, for lack of honest purpose on the part of their promoters to build a railroad into Aroostook. Mr. Burleigh was therefore handicapped by what had preceded his enterprise. The whole pathway up to the time he took hold of the job, was strewn with failures, losses and disappointments, brought about by individuals who sought to loot Aroostook of her forest wealth under false pretenses, or by corporations which got control of charters for railroads into Aroostook merely to be used as pawns in a game they were playing with other lines.

But Mr. Burleigh boosted his County Aid scheme forward by sheer force of his personal ability, character and standing.

Almost every man in every township and corporation in Aroostook knew Albert Burleigh, either personally or by reputation, and they were willing to pledge County aid to the limit on the strength of any scheme which had his endorsement.

Had he not come forward as he did and mobilized the energy and resources of Aroostook into an effective unit, things would have continued in suspense, Aroostook would have drifted into the long period of financial depression which began in 1893 and continued for a decade, during which there was an absolute bar to all new railroad and industrial enterprises. She was saved by him at least fifteen and possibly twenty years of the arrested growth and development she would otherwise have had to suffer.

She was saved by his public spirit and splendid devotion to the public welfare, possibly much worse consequences than merely waiting for fifteen years longer than she did wait—"Large bodies move slow," but it seems almost incredible that the Canadian Pacific, to which Aroostook County was tied by the leading strings of the two spur lines, one into Houlton, and the other into North Aroostook via Fort Fairfield, Caribou to Presque Isle should not, sooner or later, have waked up to the potential value of Aroostook as a traffic feeder, and taken active steps to nail down good and solid her control and possession of this territory. All the great "C. P." would have needed to do thirty years ago was to fill in the gap between Houlton and Presque Isle, and to build from the main line a branch into Fort Fairfield, just as the Bangor & Aroostook has done. Thus the building of some fifty miles of road through an easy territory, where the people would have given the right of way, and the towns would have voted substantial money aid, would have stopped all future railroad development in Aroostook, and handed it over, tied hand and foot, to a foreign corporation. Inasmuch as the Canadian Pacific would have been content with what she milked out of the County through a mileage which went just far enough to hold it in subjection, it follows that if Aroostook had fallen into the hands of the Canadian Pacific, the territory southward of Houlton and westward of Presque Isle would not have been developed. There would have been no big lumber manufacturing industries, no Ashland, Fort Kent, Van Buren and Washburn in the modern, up-to-date standard of prosperity; no Millinocket, none of the expansion and vast business prosperity the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad has brought to the County and State.

Following the passage of the so called enabling act, in March 1891, by which the people of Aroostook County were authorized to pledge their credit in aid of the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad to the extent of half a million dollars, there was a strenuous and earnest canvass of the County made, covering all the large towns, and most of the small ones. This canvass was largely conducted by Mr. Burleigh himself, who made journeys often covering long distances by team. He also carried on an extensive correspondence with the leading men in every town in the County, with nearly all of whom he was personally acquainted, and many of whom were his warm personal friends, enlisting, as far as possible, their active aid in securing a favorable vote for the new road. How earnestly and to what effective purpose he labored is shown by the returns of the vote, which was taken Monday, April 20, 1891.

When the returns from this vote were tabulated it was found that the total affirmative vote was 5182, and the negative vote was 491. In the list Houlton cast 527, all in favor; Fort Fairfield cast 402 votes to 1 against; Presque Isle 543 yes votes and one vote against. With the exception of Fort Kent the votes against came almost entirely from the towns on the eastern border from Houlton southward, which naturally were not enthusiastic in supporting a proposition which brought them no promise of direct benefit. The vote of Fort Kent, 410 against to 10 in favor is difficult to explain except on the ground that Fort Kent may have been seriously interested in the so-called Grand Trunk project to build southward through the County from that town.

One can see by the large vote cast by Presque Isle, Houlton and Fort Fairfield, as stated, that these towns were intensely interested in the result. A proportionate interest was expressed in every other part of the County. This is not surprising, for the vote for the B. & A. R. R. enabling act was the most important vote ever cast by Aroostook. It laid the foundation stone on which was built to a successful completion what Aroostook had been struggling for for over a quarter of a century.

After Aroostook had voted and done her part, it was after all only a successful beginning. There was as much more to be raised before it was possible to finance the undertaking. Much was hoped for from Bangor, which was interested in getting the proposed new Aroostook line hitched to the moribund Bangor & Piscataquis, a dead and alive institution which had been running for years on the deficit side of the ledger, a serious burden to the city. Bangor also had much to hope from

the building of a direct line into the new and growing County of Aroostook. But Bangor is a financial pool where the fishing is uncertain, and pretty likely to be on the disappointing side even when the bait is attractive. Everything was said and written to arouse Bangor, but Bangor did not enthuse.

In May after the Aroostook vote was passed in April, the newly organized Bangor & Aroostook Railroad Company issued a circular letter to the business men of Bangor, reciting to them the many advantages direct railroad connection with Aroostook would bring them. It was pointed out to them that even with the meagre rail facilities the great County of Aroostook had had, with no hold whatever on the great world outside its borders, it had been the one growing section of the State, and had saved Maine and New England from retrograding in the census returns.

It appears from this circular letter issued to the apathetic Bangoreans, that up to 1877 Aroostook had had but two and a half miles of railroad within her borders. In 1881 this was increased to 59 miles, at which figure it remained until the time of the coming of the Bangor & Aroostook. The European & North American was opened in 1871, and billing from Aroostook to Bangor and points further west commenced January 1, 1872. The first year (1872) the tonnage of freight shipped to and from points east of Bangor was about 13,000,000 lbs., and the bulk of this was Aroostook business. In the first year the E. & N. A. road was opened, 4,000 bushels comprised the potato shipments, but at the time the circular was issued they had increased to 3,000,000 bushels in potatoes and starch combined. In 1877 Aroostook could not ship pressed hay at all, but in 1891 (at the time of the publication of the circular) it was a small year when she did not ship over 10,000 tons. The potato acreage of 1890, double that of 1880, was estimated at 28,000 acres, with a production of 5,000,000 bushels, of which over 1,500,000 was manufactured into starch in the 42 factories in the County.

These statistics, and the interest Bangor had in getting rid of the Bangor & Piscataquis to so good a customer as the Bangor & Aroostook, should have appealed strongly to the people of that wealthy city to take hold and boost the project of building a railroad into their natural tributary territory. But so slowly did the work of selling the preferred stock of the new road go that on the date of October 8, 1891, when a statement of the Bangor subscriptions, with a list of the names of subscribers was published, only \$107,000 had been taken. On the 15th of the same

month individual subscriptions in Aroostook to the preferred stock of the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad aggregated \$29,800. Capitalists whom efforts were being made to interest in financing the new line required a stock subscription of at least a million as a prerequisite to putting in their money to the needed amount, so that in the fall of 1891, notwithstanding what the County had voted and private citizens had subscribed, there was a big gap remaining to be closed up. The responsibility of boosting the subscriptions up to the necessary amount, and of putting the financial part of the job through fell to Mr. Cram, and for many months he never rested on his oars for a single day, in prosecuting the wearisome and discouraging task of getting the pledges up to the required amount.

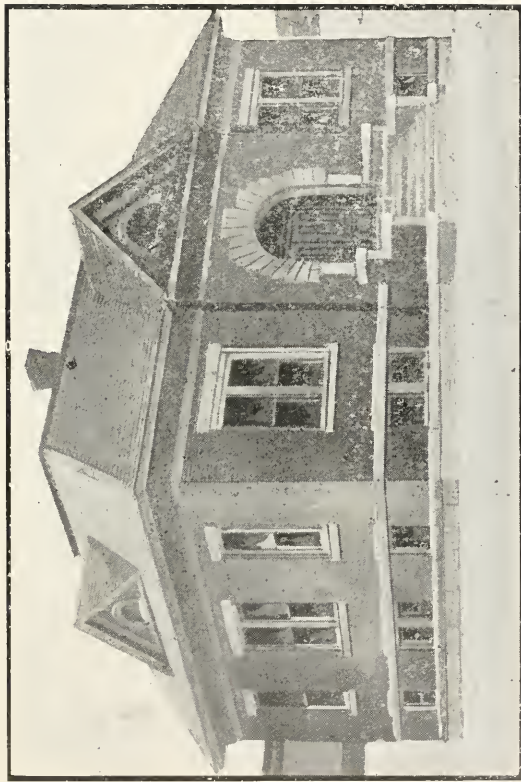
It is no exaggeration to say that no great enterprise started in Maine was ever more fortunate than the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad in the resolute spirit, the energy, and the well directed effort of its two chief promoters. They labored constantly, earnestly and persistently, with a zeal which no obstacles could discourage, and with splendid courage.

During the time that the enterprise was climbing the steep and rocky hill on its tedious road to the top, hundreds within and without the County lent a hand, but all were directed and inspired by the two men who had charge of the destinies of the enterprise, and indirectly of the County which was so vitally interested in its failure or success.

The Star-Herald canvass, whose list was headed by a subscription of \$200 by A. R. Gould, additional to what he had previously given, which continued for a number of months, gathered in a total of over \$30,000 in stock subscriptions. This was conducted by its agent, the late A. E. McGuire, whose work was backed up by articles published each week booming the subscription campaign, and by weekly publication of the names of subscribers.

The city of Bangor subscription was largely raised by the personal solicitation of Mr. Cram, as were also additional outside subscriptions from mercantile firms in Portland and Boston interested in the trade of Aroostook, and subscriptions of some thousands of dollars which came from potato dealing concerns in Boston.

The great capital event in the work of bringing the subscriptions up to the million mark, came in the opening month of 1892, when the American Express Company signed up for \$200,000 worth of the preferred stock. When this came Bangor had con-



PRESQUE ISLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

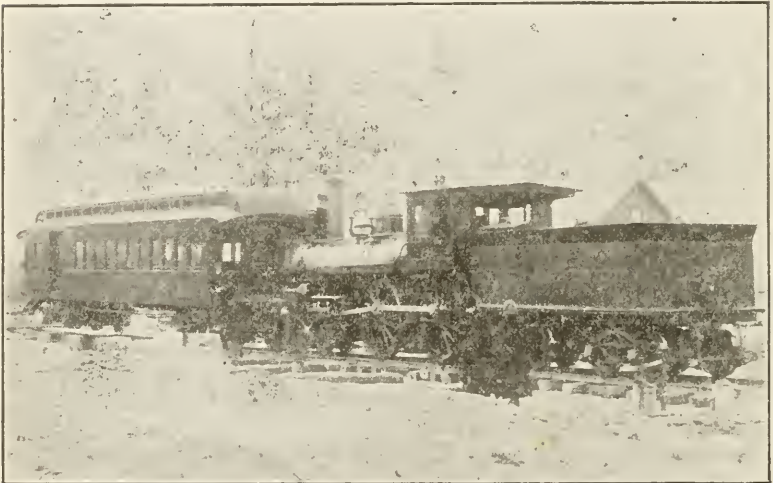
tributed around \$150,000. From Aroostook and outside sources had come about \$50,000, and this, together with the half million dollars of County aid, and the Express Company's big lift put the total up to about \$900,000. This left \$100,000, an amount which was gathered in more speedily as a result of the stimulus the enterprise received from the big donation, and the seal of assured success which it placed upon it.

The Express Company's subscription brought many congratulations to Mr. Cram. Hon. E. C. Burleigh, then Governor, sent the following message: "Accept for yourself and your collaborators my hearty congratulations on the splendid subscription that will undoubtedly assure the success of the great undertaking for whose advancement you have labored so earnestly. The road will pay from the start, and its construction will stimulate the future growth and prosperity of our State." All the daily and many of the weekly papers of Maine joined in the chorus of congratulation, and it was an event worthy of it, for it brought into the limelight the importance, magnitude and significance of what this set the seal of certainty and success upon.

Of the American Express Company it may be said that in making this subscription it was not acting in any spirit of mere sentiment or soft-hearted benevolence toward the long-suffering people of Aroostook. It was merely a hard-headed business transaction, to get even with the Canadian Pacific, which drove the American Company off its line, and gave the business the American Express Company had been doing, to the Dominion Express Co. Had the C. P. Ry. fostered the American Company, there would have been no \$200,000 subscription to the stock of the new Aroostook short line road, and without that subscription, with the material aid and moral support and prestige it brought the struggling enterprise, possibly that enterprise might have failed of success. This was even probable, as the gap this then big subscription closed, could hardly have been bridged before the hard times settled down upon the country, and strangled every enterprise which had not gotten everything in the way of finance securely settled and tied up.

However, as we understand the record, Mr. Cram so far succeeded on the strength of the million dollar stock subscription in his task, that his initial success in that line sufficed to finance the building of the line to Houlton. Then it got into the slough of the prevailing general depression, and construction beyond Houlton might have been suspended had it not been for Mr. Burleigh. When the road had reached Houlton, its financial

backers absolutely refused to furnish further funds to extend it north of that point. In that crisis Mr. Treat, the contractor, went to Mr. Burleigh and declared that unless he got orders within a week, he would be compelled to give up the contract and go elsewhere. In that juncture, when the capitalists who were backing it had apparently deserted the enterprise, Mr. Burleigh stepped into the breach, and by pledging his personal credit to the limit, pushed the work forward. As a result the road was graded during 1894, and the track laid to Caribou and and Fort Fairfield, and opened to traffic the first day of January, 1895.



FIRST TRAIN TO ARRIVE IN PRESQUE ISLE
OVER B. & A. RAILROAD

The splendid courage and loyalty of Mr. Burleigh was successful, as the extension of the road greatly increased its earnings, and enabled it to make a good showing for 1895.

It will be remembered that this period marked the hardest times Aroostook has ever known, and the added revenue brought to the line by Mr. Burleigh's courageous act in putting at risk all his fortune, it is not improbable, saved it from going to wreck almost immediately following its partial construction.

The articles heretofore published in this series have been written with the purpose of tracing the history of the railroad movement in Aroostook from its beginning to the point where

it was finally successful. This point was reached when a stem or trunk line direct railroad was pushed through as far as Caribou. The branches and extensions which have come later have followed as a logical sequence to the building of the main trunk line.

The original conception of the Burleigh plan was a railroad to connect with the Maine Central at Mattawamkeag. When Mr. Cram came into the enterprise, the original plan was wholly re-shaped. The Mattawamkeag connection with the Maine Central was abandoned, and the plan of amalgamating the proposed Bangor & Aroostook Railroad proper with the Bangor & Piscataquis Railroad was adopted. This involved a radical change, the location of the line as approved by Mr. Cram swinging westward, and after traveling a region of country commonly supposed to be barren and unproductive, made a connection with the Bangor & Piscataquis line at Brownville. This change met with criticism and even protest in some quarters in Aroostook. It was claimed that the route chosen was through a poverty-stricken wilderness, and that its choice was dictated by the motive of serving the interests of parties interested in the Bangor & Piscataquis, and other selfishly interested individuals and corporations.

Results have proved that this view was unfounded, and that the plan of Mr. Cram was eminently wise, far-sighted, and in the interest of developing a strong, self-sustaining and independent railroad. The so-called "barren wilderness" has proved to be immensely rich in resources of the sort that maintain railroad freight traffic. No sooner had the rails been laid through this vast forest tract than the little settlements which were found on the way began to grow and thrive; new settlements sprang up, and finally the Great Northern Paper Company came, and selecting what was to all appearances the barrenest and nakedest spot on the line, made it the site of a big pulp and paper industry—so big that a flourishing village, as populous and quite as up-to-date as the best villages in North Aroostook, has sprung up around this single plant. We have not the statistics of tonnage this one plant contributes to the railroad, but we think we are not mistaken in saying that in outward and inward freight, it represents a volume as large and important as the combined townships of Presque Isle, Caribou and Fort Fairfield.

In addition to forest industries this Houlton to Brownville Junction part of the Bangor & Aroostook opened up a hunting and fishing resort not surpassed in New England. The tract

itself, and the region which it serves as a gateway, have attracted additional thousands of pleasure seekers to Maine annually. Each year the management of the new line, with commendable enterprise in exploiting this field of patronage and profit, has advertised these attractions throughout the country, with great resulting benefits to itself and to the State.

It is a fact, of course, that the primary and fundamental reason for building the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad, was to give the great County of Aroostook, with its thousands of fine and productive farms and its many splendid communities, access to the outside world, but from the standpoint of immediate profit returns, the great, and at the time supposedly worthless timbered area it penetrated, has turned out to be a gold mine of almost fabulous value. This was because it had forest resources vastly greater in extent and variety than had been dreamed of, and because, in the lapse of time, this forest wealth has increased in value in some cases fifty fold.

The addition of this new asset to Maine's industrial list, and this magnificent contribution to Maine's present and future progress and prosperity must be credited to Mr. Cram, whose brain and hand have been creating factors of the first importance in shaping and directing Northern Maine in the pathway of a great and broad development.

Incidentally, as a part of the plan, it was no mean achievement that pulled the Bangor & Piscataquis Railroad up out of the slough it had gotten into, and made it a progressive and up-to-date railroad. Since it was consolidated with the Bangor & Aroostook it has got into swing and has kept pace with its virile and progressive young partner.

Since the opening of the main line of the Bangor & Aroostook to Caribou, successive additions have been made, the entire system as it stands today representing, we believe, over 500 miles. The first move was in the construction of the Ashland Branch in 1895, which now runs from Oakfield Junction on the main line to Fort Kent. The building of the Ashland branch involved another grant of County aid on the same terms and conditions as applied in connection with the building of the main line. Following this came an extension of the main line to Van Buren, this added development being aided by the application toward its construction of \$60,000, the residue left after the legal \$4,000 per mile limit of County aid of half a million had been expended on the main line to Caribou and Fort Fairfield.

The earlier development provided for the needs of the great

agricultural belt of fertile country in the eastern tier of townships, and it also opened up the immense timber territory of which Ashland is the center. Great mills and later great tie, pulp, and an infinite variety of small wood industries sprang up on the Ashland branch, and at Van Buren, when the road had been extended to that point, it resulted in the building there of the largest lumber manufacturing plant east of the Pacific Coast. Through the coming of the B. & A. Railroad the lumber industry of the County has not only been expanded, but entirely revolutionized. Prior to the coming of the railroad the only outlet for the forest products of Aroostook was the St. John and the numerous tributaries of that river which penetrated the county. The lumber industry long ante-dated the farming industry in Aroostook; went back to a date prior to the so-called Aroostook War, and was to a great extent the occasion of the clashes and disputes which culminated in that near war with Great Britain, and finally led to a settlement through the Webster—Ashburton Treaty negotiation, of the boundary line, as it is now fixed. The river highway carried off into New Brunswick the wealth of pine timber which once covered Aroostook; it then took vast quantities of hardwood timber for shipbuilding uses. When spruce at last became recognized as a forest product of very important commercial value, then the spruce, just as the pine had done, began to be drained from Aroostook to a foreign seaport, for manufacture there and re-importation into American markets under legislation which permitted the industry to be so carried on. On or about the time of the building of the B. & A. Railroad the law which permitted this practice was repealed, the reasons urged for changing the existing system being that it was unjust and prejudicial to American rights and interests, and was a privilege which generally led to abuse through being made a cloak for the bringing in duty free of a vast quantity of Provincial manufactured lumber.

The handicap to Aroostook's progress and prosperity of having its great lumber cut annually floated away into a foreign country for manufacture, ceased when the B. & A. Railroad came. The tide then turned from the river which led across the boundary line to St. John, to the "steel river," which took the millions of feet of manufactured lumber from mills on American soil, and transported the product to American markets. This in itself was a revolution which wrought a vast change for the better in Aroostook. But it did not stop there, for an immense percentage of forest products which had no value before, became valuable

when the railroad came, and afforded facilities for utilizing them. The value of this variety of forest products in the lapse of years, and under new conditions which have arisen and made a demand for them, has been almost beyond calculation, the vast accretion of added wealth, and the broadened industrial prosperity being very largely the result of the coming of the railroad.

While the timber country to the westward, and the extreme eastern strip of settled farming country along the boundary line from Houlton northward had their needs met by the main line of the Bangor & Aroostook and the Ashland Branch, there was still left out in the cold, so far as railroad relief was concerned, a large belt of settled and highly productive farming country between the main line and the branch, so distant from a railroad on either side as to be practically without rail accommodation. In this belt were Mapleton, Castle Hill, Chapman, Washburn, Wade, Perham and Woodland. These towns represented some of the best and most industrious communities in the County. Their citizens voted to assume the large financial obligation involved in securing rail accommodation for other communities, but they were compelled to wait for a long period before the railroad finally came to their doors. Fortunately they have now a rail outlet, by a course of development which the railroad itself did not seek of its own option to assume, but which circumstances compelled it to go into.

At the present time Aroostook enjoys, as a County, the advantage of rail transportation furnished by the Bangor & Aroostook, whose facilities reached nearly every settled portion of the County. The Bangor & Aroostook Railroad pretty completely covers a large area of Aroostook. And it covers it by a very complete and comprehensive system.

As an incident to the policy of broadening the base of the system, stabilizing it and making it independent, there was added the Searsport branch, which gave the line a seaport terminal. The whole plan, the rich and extensive territory the road serves, and the future development sure to come, make the Bangor & Aroostook a big road in the class of little railroads in the country.

Under its first active and directing head, F. W. Cram, who largely created the system, it succeeded in the achievement, unique in railroad history, of taking off the hands of the people of Aroostook, the entire burden of indebtedness which the County assumed in order to aid the financing of the line. So far as

we know it has served the needs of the County to a great and more complete extent, more effectively and in more enterprising fashion, than was ever dreamed of by those who were working for our Aroostook short-line railroad in the early days.

It has not escaped the storm of anti-railroad sentiment which a decade or more ago swept the country, when "sowing to the wind" in abuse and misrepresentation was the fashion, to be followed later on, and notably today by "the whirlwind" which proverbially succeeds such reckless seed sowing.

But on the whole its record is good, and it is a monument to the arduous and untiring labors of its founders.

CHAPTER VIII.

Electric Development In Aroostook.

At the present time Aroostook enjoys as a County the advantage of rail transportation furnished by the Bangor & Aroostook, whose facilities reached every settled portion of the County, and which is a line that has reasonably satisfied the expectations of those who planned and helped to build it. It also has the more limited advantages of the service rendered by the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Finally, it has acquired more recently an electric railroad which serves a very important service as a public utility in a comparatively small area of which Presque Isle may be termed the center.

As the coming of the electric road may be said to round out the story of the railroad development of Aroostook, and bring it up to date, it is not out of place, though it is a recent enterprise to give a sketch of its history in this connection. It is the more pertinent because the telling of the story of the electric road tells the story of the various enterprises of one of the County's citizens whose energy and initiative, covering a period of thirty-five years, have been particularly fruitful in advancing the welfare of his community and the County as a whole.

We think it is a fact that, favored as Aroostook is in natural advantages, these factors are entitled to less credit for its progress and prosperity than the fact that it has had from first to last the benefit of individual energy, initiative and enterprise in its leading citizens, and material of the most substantial quality in the whole body of its citizenship. Able and progressive men are rarely attracted to communities which are dead and inert in spirit, and if, by accident, they settle in such places,