

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.

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## 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,

they do not long remain, but seek other and more congenial fields.

Among the wide awake and forceful citizens Aroostook has had, we have no doubt all will agree that the man who has done as much to put it on the map as any other, whose career has shaped itself in the most unique and unexpected way, measured by the kind of things he has done, and their bigness and importance, is Mr. Arthur R. Gould of Presque Isle.

In the thirty-five years he has lived in the County he has made no greater success than many other men, measured in some ways. But the special interest in what he has done is that what he has brought about has not conformed to any program that any man acquainted with the place and its opportunities would have accepted as among the possibilities of a business career begun and worked out here.

Arthur R. Gould was born in Corinth, Maine. Such contact as he had with books and schools came to an end before he was sixteen. At that time he went West, and as was quite natural, found his way to the home of an elderly uncle in Ohio. This uncle was a hard-headed, practical man, and the way Gould began life in the West was in taking a job from his uncle to cut, split and pile up five hundred cords of two-ft., hickory wood. By the time he got through with this contract, it furnished a pretty good sort of post graduate course for this young graduate of the Corinth, Maine, common schools. It was practical education of the genuine sort, and gave Gould at sixteen an idea of the flavor and sweetness of manual labor.

Coming back East in 1880 he set up for himself in the tobacco business and in the fall of 1886 came to Presque Isle, hired an office in what is now the Forgie Brothers store, and engaged in the wholesale tobacco business. In 1889 he purchased of the late C. F. A. Johnson the mill known as the Aroostook Lumber Co's Mill, pretty thoroughly remodelled the mill, supplied it with up-to-date equipment, and operated it as a local mill for custom-sawing until the advent of the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad. Concluding that the facilities for transportation to the Boston market, which were afforded by the building of this railroad justified him in the venture, he began to manufacture long and short lumber and ship it by rail to the Boston market. In this business Mr. Gould was the pioneer in Northern Maine, and the entire revolution in the lumber manufacturing and shipping business, has been subsequent to his initiative in that direction.

Mr. Gould was fully justified on business grounds, but his venture had a great deal to contend with when, in common with all other lines of business in Aroostook it was overtaken by the disastrous panic of 1894—97. That he was able to pull through this disastrous business depression was only due to his indomitable energy, courage and resourcefulness.

It was in the development of plans to put this business on a broader and better basis that he took steps which led indirectly into very much larger and more important fields of industrial development in which he has been a large figure, has been conspicuously successful individually, and has brought great benefits to the public.

What happened to radically change the course of Mr. Gould's career, and in fact to revolutionize it, was his waking up to the realization that the source of his lumber supply, which was on the territory drained by the Presque Isle Stream, was not only liable to be exhausted in the early future, but that the high charges exacted by the timberland owners in that territory was going to impose too heavy a burden upon his business. He accordingly looked about for other sources of supply, and then the idea occurred to him that if he only had some easy means of transportation from the Aroostook River to his mill his problem of a more abundant and a cheaper supply of logs would be solved. He found a good holding ground for lumber at a point on Bull's Eddy, about five miles from Presque Isle village on the Aroostook River, and then began to figure on the cost of construction and operation of such a railroad as would suffice to serve the purpose he had in view. In the course of this inquiry it occurred to him that if such an enterprise were undertaken, it would be a good business proposition to extend the proposed line up the Aroostook River as far as the village of Washburn, which community at that time was without any railroad outlet. With characteristic energy Mr. Gould entered upon the preliminary steps of developing this enterprise, and as a matter of course was offered the willing co-operation of all the citizens along the line and in the village of Washburn, whose interests would be benefitted by the proposed railroad outlet. A preliminary survey was made, and very good encouragement was offered by the citizens of Washburn and intermediate sections in pledges of aid and in stock subscriptions.

At the last stage of the enterprise as thus outlined and planned, it finally became evident to his mind that the cost of running the road by steam power generated by coal,

would not justify the undertaking, as it would be too expensive a proposition.

Mr. Gould then, instead of dropping the whole matter, and dismissing it as impracticable, as many men would have done, sought some other solution of the difficulty and finally found a possible one in the development of the Aroostook Falls water power. With a view of taking the preliminary steps in this direction, he entered into negotiations with the party who then supposedly controlled the Falls, through holding a charter for its development, and the ownership of the necessary land and shore rights. He was successful in acquiring these rights from the party holding them, and then entered upon the undertaking of making such surveys as would determine the amount of water power at the Falls capable of development, and the feasibility of carrying the scheme into practical fruition. Such surveys as Mr. Gould had made by hydraulic engineers favored his general belief that the amount of water power at Aroostook Falls justified the outlay that would be necessary in developing this power. But his optimism in regard to the enterprise was not shared by the general public, and the undertaking suffered from no small amount of criticism and opposition bred merely of a natural disposition in many people to throw obstacles in the way of any one who undertakes such an experiment as Mr. Gould engaged in in the attempted development of Aroostook Falls power. Capital is naturally timid in lending itself to the support of an untried venture, and in the case of the one undertaken by Mr. Gould, there were plenty of men of reputation and judgment in business circles who discouraged the scheme as visionary, on the grounds, as they said, that the power at the Falls would be trifling in volume, and would be subject to being entirely wiped out in seasons of any considerable drought.

He, however, kept on, and finally, by surveys and re-surveys by experts on water power, established the fact, so far as a fact of that kind can be theoretically established, that there was abundant power for all purposes contemplated in the scheme of development.

One necessary phase of the work of promotion was that of interesting local individuals and sections who would be affected in their business interests by the development of the water power, to lend encouragement to the enterprise and to subscribe financial aid. This was a very long and a very discouraging part of the work, but it was finally carried so far to success, as to lay the foundation for the necessary stages of financial promotion of the scheme.

One very difficult part of the work of promoting this enterprise was in overcoming the legal and technical difficulties involved in the work of acquiring necessary franchise rights, and such land titles connected with the property to be developed as was necessary for the flotation of bonds, and other extension of credit necessary in the course of the project.

This involved much legislation in New Brunswick, and a resort was also necessary to the Dominion Parliament, which proved to be a very long and tedious process. The acquisition of necessary land titles, advice in regard to the various steps in organization was furnished to Mr. Gould, at every step of the progress of the enterprise by the late Hon. Herbert M. Heath of Augusta, without whose counsel and interest in the matter, and whose confidence in the scheme being well founded, he would probably not have been able to land his project successfully.

As all know, the many and various difficulties met with were finally overcome, and the Aroostook Falls power, through the initiative, courage and great executive ability of Mr. Gould, has entered successfully into the business and industrial life of all Aroostook County, and to quite an extent into New Brunswick, and all know what a great factor of benefit it is to the County, and how much it has contributed to the business and social well-being of widely scattered communities.

When the Falls power had been developed, and had been put into very extensive operation, and after it had, in and of itself, demonstrated that it was a great and successful business enterprise, Mr. Gould then reverted to his original idea of making use of this power by the operation of a railroad. To this end he took up the matter of promoting such a line from Presque Isle to Washburn, and as a preliminary thereto made the necessary surveys. As before, he received very warm encouragement from Washburn people, and notwithstanding much opposition, was successful in getting a vote from the town of Presque Isle to subscribe for twenty thousand dollars of stock of the proposed road. As with the original undertaking to develop the power, so with the railroad enterprise, no end of obstacles and discouragements presented themselves, and it was a long time before the point was reached where it could be said that the project was safely financed and a certainty of being carried out. When its success was at last assured by support given to it by the Canadian Pacific, in the shape of a guarantee of bonds of the new electric line, the management of the Bangor & Aroostook became



alive to the effect that the building that this road would have, in robbing their line of traffic in an important part of their territory. The result, as all know, was that the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad, to protect its interests, built extensive additions to its line, through which additions such towns as Washburn, Mapleton, Perham, Woodland, part of New Sweden, Wade, Castle Hill and Chapman, have been afforded much needed rail facilities to connect them with the outside world. This is a large and very fertile portion of Aroostook, and up to the time of the building of the railroad into it, its people had been suffering many inconveniences for lack of a railroad, and progress in increase of wealth and population was practically at a standstill. This whole territory is now as well supplied with railroad facilities as any portion of the County, and its people have this great benefit and advantage as the result of the electric railroad built by Mr. Gould, which forced the hand of the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad, and resulted in giving them, not only one, but two lines of railroad.

Since the coming of the steam and electric railroad transportation, the change in these different towns amounts to a veritable transformation in the way of increased prosperity.

The town of Washburn may be taken as a fair representative of the group of towns affected by the building of the railroad extensions referred to. In Washburn the record shows that in 1909, the year when the town first acquired railroad facilities, there was appropriated \$900 for free high school. In 1921, the appropriation was \$9983.66, a little over ten times as much. In 1909 the record shows that the total valuation of the town was \$299,613. In 1921 it had grown to \$831,675. It is estimated that since the coming of the railroad to Washburn, the increase in the potato acreage has been six fold, and that the same ratio of increase could be applied to the growth of the village, and to the increase in the volume of business done in the town.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### *Other Developments In Gould's Career.*

The Gould Electric Line or the Aroostook Valley Railroad, as it is called, after being built through to Washburn, was subsequently extended to New Sweden, and still later a branch line was built to Caribou. It has been a great success as an agency of development in the section of country it has opened up, and