

QUEEN'S COUNTY BIOGRAPHY: Hon. D. J. Purdy

(The following is the obituary notice of Hon. D.J. Purdy who died on September 27, 1915): "Hon. D.J. Purdy died today, in 85th year. Well known Merchant and Shipowner had been in poor health for some time.-- Hon. Daniel Jarvis Purdy, merchant and shipowner, one of the oldest and best known residents of the city, died at his home, 325 Main Street, this morning shortly after 10 o'clock.

Mr. Purdy was in his 85th year, having been born at Jemseg, Queens County, May 24th, 1840, the son of Frederick J. and Ann Purdy. He had been in failing health, due to heart trouble, for about three years and was seriously ill this year, but responded to treatment and was able to be around until about three weeks ago.

Mr. Purdy during his long career lead an active life and besides the grocery establishment which he conducted on Main Street, owned and controlled vessels in the coastwise service and on the St. John river and despite his business interests.

Mr. Purdy came to St. John as a youth in his teens and entered the employ of James Watson, who conducted a grocery and commission business on the site where the store of deceased now stands.

Mr. Watson later built on Douglas avenue and his business was bought out by Mr. Purdy, who for over half a century has conducted the grocery business of D.J. Purdy, a name that became a household word in the North End.

Mr. Purdy, about twenty years ago, went into the river steamboat business purchasing the steamer Crystal Stream and later the D.J. Purdy and Majestic, and was president of the Crystal Steamship Company. This year he saw his new boat, the motor ship, D.J. Purdy, put into commission on the river. He took an intense interest in the splendid new boat and during the summer made a dozen trips or more to Fredericton.

Prior to embarking in the river boat business, Mr. Purdy was heavily interested in coastwise schooners. About 40 years ago he entered into partnership with the late George Green in the lime business, which has been continued to the present day, the company doing a large trade. The company has a kiln situated off Adelaide street and Charles Green has succeeded his father as partner in the firm.

Deceased was for five years a councillor in the town of Portland and afterwards alderman-at-large for four years in the city of St. John. He was a member of the provincial legislature under the Pugsley and Robinson administrations and held the office of minister without portfolio, under the Robinson government until the latter's defeat at the polls.

Despite his various business activities Mr. Purdy was an enthusiastic angler and as a member of the South Branch Fishing Club spent a fortnight once or twice a year enjoying his favourite pastime.

His first wife was Diadaney Farris, and his second wife, before her marriage, Amelia Cowan, sister of Joshua E. Cowan, Indiantown, who predeceased her husband fifteen or twenty years ago.

The deceased was a Baptist in religion, and a close attendant at the Main Street Baptist Church, and had much to do with the erection of that large edifice in 1895.

Mr. Purdy is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Warren B. Purdy, Douglas Ave.; Mrs. Percy L. Jordan, Main Street, and two sons, Jarvis C. Purdy, who of late has been conducting the large Purdy interests, and Willard, both of whom reside in the Purdy home, Main street.

Mr. Purdy is also survived by an elder brother, Arch. R. Purdy, Jemseg, and a sister, Mrs. W.H. Chesley, Clarendon St., mother of J.A. Chesley, of the Marine and Fisheries Department.

Mr. Purdy, said a close friend today, was a representative citizen from

the standpoint of honour and kindly influence, and I have personal knowledge of his charitable deeds done in a private and unostentatious manner.

D.J. Purdy was a popular and well-liked man, was the opinion expressed at Indiantown today, where deceased for many years was an active and well-known figure among steamship men, local and up river shippers, and travellers.

\*\*\*

The following is an account of the first Queen's County Fair published in the Oct. 17, 1939 issue of the Maritime Farmer. This was reprinted in "The Valley Banner", edited and published by Fred Hyatt of Cambridge in its Sept. 8, 1956 issue:

"No exhibition which the writer has attended this year received more enthusiastic and encouraging loyal public support than did the Queens County Fair, held in Gagetown, N.B., on the 27th of September. As a result of this support, the directorate may rest assured that their efforts in promoting the first livestock and agricultural show ever held in the County, were duly appreciated and that the Fair of 1939 will be numbered among the many successful exhibitions which will be held in Queens County in years to come.

Sponsored by the people of Queens County, the fair drew exhibitors from all corners within its boundaries with the result that there was assembled on the grounds one of the finest collections of livestock and agricultural exhibits to be found anywhere in Maritime Canada. Indeed, had it not been for the Fair, one would not have realized that the County was capable of furnishing such an excellent collection of entries. This was one of the contentions of Hon. A.C. Taylor, Minister of Agriculture, who officially opened the fair. In the course of his remarks the minister stated: 'I am so proud of the exhibits that I can hardly express my sentiments,' - and these words just about tell the whole story in a nutshell.

President J.J. Jackson and Secretary-treasurer T.H. Scovil were busy men on show day, directing their energies in a hundred-and-one channels, and that they did a splendid job was evidenced by the fact that everything went off without a hitch of any kind. At the end of the day exhibitors and spectators alike were happy; and even the rain which started to fall about dusk failed to dampen the enthusiasm of those who felt that the fair had been a success in every particular.

While all sections of the Fair are worthy of comment, the livestock division really "Stole the show" and was nearly 100 percent larger than anticipated. Not only was there an excellent turnout of horses, cattle and swine, but quality was also in keeping with numerical entity.

The horse division featured entries of unusual merit, especially in the draught and general purpose classes, and Dr. L. A. Donovan, St. John, had some exceptionally large classes to place. W. K. Bayard & Son, Welsford, had the best span of draught horses on the grounds, followed by the Gagetown entry of Fox Bros. In the brood mare with foal competition, George Colwell, Cody's, had the red ribbon entry, with those of Percy P. Bridges and J.H. McKinney & Son, Gagetown, placing second and third. In the general purpose class, Clement Mahoney, Gagetown, had the champion animal on the grounds. Registered entries while few in number, were of good quality, and shown by A.B. Carpenter, Carpenter, James Johnson, Hampstead, and Dr. W.W. Jenkins, Gagetown. Other exhibitors in the horse division included John Gilbert, G.&J. Mahoney, George Allen & Son, G.E. Colwell, Harold Lowery, Clarence Slipp, Wilmot Dykeman, Walter Scovil, George Hendry, Arnold Reicker, John McCrea, Scott Orchard, Norman Merritt and Waldo H. Carpenter.

The cattle show more than eclipsed our expectations, with quality to burn evident in every class. Even the winners in small classes could have retained their standing in many older, and larger shows. Lorne Logan, Wolfville, N.S., placed the awards in all divisions. Exhibitors of purebred Holsteins included Fox Bros., Gagetown; A.B. Carpenter, Carpenter; Fowler Bros. and Harding Bros., Welsford. Fowler had the senior and grand champion male, while Harding had the junior male, along with three female champions. Incidentally, the Harding string was in the best fit we have ever seen it. Grade Holsteins were shown by Fox Bros., Harvie

March and John Walker, with March having a particularly nice animal, - one that any breeder would like to have in his stable. Ayrshire and Guernsey entries were not too numerous, due to the fact that Queens County is not the stronghold of these breeds. Gordon Holder, Jemseg, had the junior and grand championships, in the Ayrshire division. Maurice Webb and Ludlow L. Lyon divided honors in the Guernsey section, with Lyon having senior and grand champions in both male and female divisions. Webb showed the junior male. It was not surprising to find the Jersey show, one of considerable merit, with large classes and close decisions the order of the day. Exhibitors of registered stock included W.K. Bayard & Son and A.M. McKenzie & Son, Welsford; F. Hyatt & Sons, Mill Cove; Lewis S. Akersley, Codys, A. Scott Orchard, Young's Cove Road; C.W. Webb, Hampstead; and the Young's Cove Agricultural Society. McKenzie annexed the grand champion male ribbon on his junior champion, edging the senior championship bull owned by the Young's Cove Agricultural Society. In the female division, two other breeders divided the honors, with Orchard taking the junior ribbon and Hyatt, the senior and grand awards. Grade Jerseys were shown by Bayard, McKenzie, Webb, Harry Scott, Fred Cooper & Sons, Frank DuVernet, Lloyd McKinney, John A. McDonald and H.W. Scott & Son.

The New Brunswick Department of Agriculture Special prize, awarded to the best three dairy cows went to the trio of Holsteins of Harding Bros. The Jersey group owned by Hyatt & Sons, placed in second position, followed by the Guernsey entry of Ludlow L. Lyon."

It is interesting to remember that this fair was apparently a great success even though it was a one day event held without benefit of buildings other than the Court House, without cattle sheds, (the cattle were tied in the open field) grandstand, exhibition hall, midway, fire works, children's day, horse show or many other features now taken for granted.

\*\*\*

#### The Steamer "May Queen"

The May Queen, one of the many boats that plied these waters, served the villages along the St. John River for almost 50 years. She was built in Saint John in 1869 for the Union Steamship Line. Her dimensions are given as 160 ft. long with a capacity of 361 tons, although she was remodeled in 1881 and reregistered with a slightly reduced tonnage.

The Union Line was founded in 1848 by Fred W. Hatheway, and was being operated by Captain Charles Hatheway when the May Queen was commissioned. Other steamers operated by this group were the Union, the Fawn, and the famous David Weston, named for Captain David Weston of Upper Gagetown. Besides Captain Hatheway, other captains of the May Queen were Captain Charles W. Brannan who took over in 1884, Captain David Coy, and Captain Weston.

A newspaper account dated Oct. 24, 1913 tells of a mishap that befell the May Queen. Autumn gales had apparently moved some of the buoys in Grand Lake and on the above date the "Queen" heavily loaded with freight ran hard aground on the shoals near Grand Point. These steamers could carry as much as 1600 barrels of vegetables at one time and the May Queen is described as "carrying one of the heaviest cargoes of the season including 800 barrels of potatoes". These were subsequently taken off by a tug and lighters "sent up from Gagetown" and the May Queen was refloated with only minor damage.

There are several other references to the May Queen over the years. On November 18, 1899 for example, the press notes that the May Queen has made her last trip for the season and is laid up because "the ice has formed thick all above Palmer's". And on April 19, 1915, Mrs. J.M. Colwell at Jemseg wrote in her diary "The May Queen came in today for the first with her flags flying.

These river steamers were wooden boats, fired by either wood or coal, and as such were susceptible to fires as well as to structural damage from ice, groundings, and collisions with wharves and pilings. In 1918 the May Queen, after a long career, met the same fate as many other proud steamers; on February 4 of that year she burned while laid up in winter quarters at Saint John.

This is a copy of both sides of an advertising card for the "Stmr. May Queen" which probably was printed in the second decade of this century:  
"Stmr. 'May Queen' leaves St. John every Wednesday and Saturday at 8 a.m. old, or 9 a.m. new time for Chipman and intermediate points. WE ESPECIALLY

SOLICIT FREIGHT for the following wharves: Sand Point, Westfield, Belyea's Point, Public Landing, Bedford, Brown's Flats, Williams, Cedars, Oak Point, Sterratt's, Palmer's, Evandale, Gerow's, Hampstead, Queenstown, McAlpin's, Fox's, Gagetown. Freights received within half hour of sailing. Our usual careful handling of freights will be given to everything entrusted to our care.

Grand Lake S.S. Co. Ltd.  
F.H. Colwell, Mgr.

\*\*M.D.B.

In Volume I #4 of this Newsletter we printed an article on the wreck of the schooner "Castalia". We included a few lines of a ballad about the event and asked if anyone could supply any further lines to it. In response, we were given this poem, not the same one though, about the "Castalia". It is written "Upon the death of Captain Guilford C. Colwell, and Joseph, his brother, sons of Charles B. and Elizabeth Colwell, of Jemseg, who were wrecked on the schr. 'Castalia', on Marshall's Island, Maine, on the night of the 18th Dec., 1876:

My heart is sad and full of grief;  
My eyes with tears o'erflow:  
Where shall I seek and find relief?  
Oh! whither shall I go?

Here I behold sad, broken hearts,  
Melting with grief and woe;  
Brothers and sisters called to part  
With those they love below.

And broken-hearted parents share  
The sorrows of the day,  
For two of their beloved sons  
Are taken both away.

Oh! hear that lonely widow's cry:  
'I now am sore bereft,-  
My dearest Partner-Oh, Lord, why  
Is there no comfort left?'

Dear little Alice, you must live  
Without your father's love,  
For God has sent the stormy wind  
To carry him above.

While out upon the stormy sea,  
Far, far away from friends,  
The night was dark, and death was near,  
But God kind angels sends.

See, see them hovering o'er the souls  
So soon to launch away,  
To guide them to the realms of light  
And everlasting day.

The dreadful hour at last has come,  
And hope's forever gone:  
One fearful plunge into the deep,  
Their work on earth is done.

A moment's struggle-all is o'er,  
Away their spirits fly,  
With angels to the other shore,  
To dwell with God on high.

And when the sea gives up its dead,  
Dear Joseph then will come;  
When hills and mountains all are fled,  
And saints shall leave the tomb.

Oh! see among the shining throng  
Of saints in bright array,  
The lov'd ones now, so lately gone  
To an eternal day.

In garments white before the throne,  
Mothir's I hear them sing-  
'All glory be to God alone  
The Everlasting King!'

And then the angels say, 'Amen;  
Glory and power divine,  
And honor more than tongues can give  
Be Lord forever thine.'

A Friend.  
Jemseg, Jan. 6, 1877.