

Aroostook in 1895

Geo. H. Gilman, Editor and Proprietor.

Illustrated Souvenir Edition. Houlton, Spring of 1895.

All Rights Reserved.

HOULTON IN 1895.

Topographical Description.

Its Streets, Business Blocks and Residences.

ITS WATER POWER, MILLS AND OTHER INDUSTRIES.

ITS RAILROAD FACILITIES, STAGE LINES, WATER WORKS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTS.

Its Banks, Board of Trade, Loan and Building and Fish and Game Associations, Fire Department and Military Company.

ITS COUNTY BUILDINGS, SCHOOLS, CHURCHES AND FRATERNAL SOCIETIES.

HOULTON AS A SUMMER RESORT.—ITS NEEDS AND POSSIBILITIES.

HOULTON is often called the handsomest town in Maine. This statement is true in more senses than one. Nature made this town and its surroundings beautiful, while man has erected on this favored spot large business blocks and fine residences, second in comeliness and elegance to none in the State. We do not propose to give in this article a history of the early settlement, growth and development of this most



western branch, the Pearce brook and the Cook brook from the south, and the north branch and Moose brook from the north.

Houlton lies just north of the 46th parallel of latitude. It is not so far north as London, Berlin or Paris, but as the warm waters of the gulf stream do not temper the climate of North America as they do that of Europe, the cold is somewhat more severe here in the same latitude.

The surface of the town has the characteristics which make Aroostook county so beautiful. Oval, dome-shaped hills, and long swelling ridges prevail everywhere, giving natural drainage to the soil, upland and lowland for cultivation, and adding much to the picturesqueness and attractiveness of the landscape. There is one singular formation running across the town in a north-westerly and south-easterly direction. We refer to the horseback, so called, a ridge of earth two or three hundred feet in width at the base, 40 or 50 feet in height, and extending beyond the limits of the town for many miles.

In regard to its geology, Aroostook county differs from all other parts of the State. One marked feature which

is impregnated with lime, and vegetable loam is found sometimes 10 feet below the surface. For cereals, and in fact for almost any crop, no soil can have a better composition. Houlton is similar to the rest of the county in its geological formation, the underlying calcareous ledge coming so close to the surface, that the cellars of houses and public buildings in the village had to be excavated from this peculiar rock. This rock seems to decompose and to work up towards the surface, thus impregnating the soil with lime and giving it just the right chemical constituents for cultivation.

The forest growth consists mainly of yellow birch, maple, spruce and cedar. We shall speak in another place concerning the beauty and value of these different kinds of wood. Within the memory of citizens of Houlton now living, the whole region roundabout was covered with a magnificent forest growth; but it is the Houlton of to-day with its broad, cultivated fields, comfortable farm buildings, and the stirring village along the Meduxnekeag with which we have to do, rather than the Houlton of the past.

All who come to Houlton for the first time should visit the old parade ground, where the United States barracks once stood. This is on quite an elevation of land at the eastern extremity of the village. From this point there is as fine a view not only of the town of Houlton, but of the surrounding towns as well, as can be obtained. Looking towards the west one sees the busy, handsome village extended along the gentle incline that leads up from the junction of the north branch with the main stream, to the elevated ridge where you are standing. Beyond the village are the broad, smooth fields, having, in the



north and running parallel with Main and Military streets to Foxcroft street where it ends. South of Military street there are two other shorter streets having the same general direction, namely, Park and Weeks streets.

As we pass up Main street from Market Square, we find on our left streets branching off at right angles in the following order: Water, Mechanic, Prospect, Elm and Cary; af-



JAMES R. THURLOUGH, Chairman Board County Commissioners.

ter Main street joins Military street, we find on the left Willard, Foxcroft and Barracks streets. From Mechanic street there are two branch streets, River street, which follows the course of the Meduxnekeag, and Orchard street, which leads from Mechanic to Charles street.

Returning to Market Square, we will go south on Court street to Military street, then traveling in the same direction as on Main street we find on our right in the following order: School, Kelleran, High, Spring and Depot streets. Between Main and Pleasant we find Winter and Summer streets. West of Court street we find Kendall, Pearce, Franklin and Brook streets, parallel to Court; and Leonard, Green, Columbia and Cleveland streets running at right angles with Court street.

The last three streets extend across Fairview, that beautiful section of Houlton, which we describe at some length elsewhere. Bangor street extends from Market Square in a westerly direction. Branching off from Bangor street towards the right, we find Florence avenue, leading to the B. & A. R. R. station, and beyond

of five large brick blocks has given a more solid and substantial appearance to it, and has added much to the beauty of the village. A description of these buildings will be given in another place.

The "Block" at the corner of Main and Water streets still holds its supremacy as the largest brick block in the county. This block has a frontage on Main street of 182 feet. The stores in this block are of different sizes; varying from 80 to 120 feet in length. The government building on Water street is completed and will be described later on.

There are nearly one hundred places of business in Houlton, where goods are sold, not including dress-making rooms and tailor shops. Many of these stores are equal in size, finish and appointments to city stores, those in the blocks erected during the past season, not being excelled in convenience, taste and elegance, by any stores in the State.

All strangers, on visiting Houlton for the first time, are surprised, not only at the size of the village and the beauty of its location, but also, at the remarkably fresh and attractive appearance of its residences. While there are not many costly residences, probably not a dozen that cost \$10,000 each, yet nearly all are handsome and comfortable, and as they are kept newly painted, the impression made upon the mind of a first visitor is exceedingly favorable and pleasing.

There is hardly a village in New England that has so many handsome front yards, so many lawns and grass-plots, as Houlton. The writer of this article has come to Houlton from some coast town in the spring of the year, more than once, to find here, green grass, and shrubbery in full bud, while vegetation in the more southern locality had hardly shown any signs of awakening.

The village being situated on a gentle slope, receives the benefit of natural drainage and all those advantages in building sites, location of plats, lawns, etc., that such a declivity always affords.

This northern Maine village, in the beauty of its location and surroundings, in its wide, clean streets lined with fine shade trees, in its elegant business blocks and other convenient business houses, in its tasty residences surrounded by yards and lawns, presents as attractive an appearance as any village of its size in New England.

Houlton, aside from being the county seat, is the natural center of trade for a large circle of flourishing towns. Driving out on the beautiful Calais

St. Stephen, Calais, Fredericton, St. Andrews, St. John, Woodstock, and all points in the provinces. By the Bangor and Aroostook road, it is connected with the important towns in the county north and west of it; also with Bangor and the remainder of the State.

By this road Bangor can be reached in four hours, Portland in eight hours and Boston in twelve hours. When the road northward is properly ballasted, Caribou and Fort Fairfield can be reached in two hours.

We give in another place an approximation of the business done by the B. & A. R. R. during the two months since its completion to Caribou. No new railroad ever constructed in this country can show for a similar period of time a more satisfactory volume of business.

It is solidly built, and well equipped with rolling stock. Some of the engines weigh 102 tons each, and all new engines have the latest pattern Westinghouse brake, also, steam attachment for heating cars. The coaches are neat in design, comfortable and roomy, capable of seating about 80 passengers each. Everything in rolling stock and equipment is modern, solid and substantial.

The B. & A. passenger station at Houlton is what is known as first-class with independent baggage and express stations. The platform and awnings are 200 feet in length. The freight station is a large standard station with connected platforms. There is a six stall round house, and coal sheds with a capacity of 2,500 tons. There are tramways and trolleys by which large tubs of coal are suspended, so that engines can be coaled in ten minutes' time.

Twenty acres of land are occupied for buildings and the railroad yard at Houlton. This land was bought of A. W. Ingersoll, whose father came to Aroostook in 1823. Three avenues have been made across the Ingersoll homestead leading to the railroad station and grounds and these avenues have been named respectively, Florence, Alice and Phyllis in honor of the three daughters of Mr. Ingersoll.

There are excellent sites along the Meduxnekeag and its tributaries for the establishment of wood-working or other plants operated by steam power.

St. Stephen, Calais, Fredericton, St. Andrews, St. John, Woodstock, and all points in the provinces. By the Bangor and Aroostook road, it is connected with the important towns in the county north and west of it; also with Bangor and the remainder of the State.

From eight to ten miles of pipe are already laid to which additions are being constantly made. About 1,200 feet of pipe were laid last year, and already 900 feet have been contracted for to be laid as soon as frost leaves the ground the coming season. The pipe ranges from 4 to 12 inches in diameter. The stand pipe has a capacity of 113,000 gallons. Steam is kept up at the pumping station all the time both day and night.

St. Stephen, Calais, Fredericton, St. Andrews, St. John, Woodstock, and all points in the provinces. By the Bangor and Aroostook road, it is connected with the important towns in the county north and west of it; also with Bangor and the remainder of the State.

By this road Bangor can be reached in four hours, Portland in eight hours and Boston in twelve hours. When the road northward is properly ballasted, Caribou and Fort Fairfield can be reached in two hours.

We give in another place an approximation of the business done by the B. & A. R. R. during the two months since its completion to Caribou. No new railroad ever constructed in this country can show for a similar period of time a more satisfactory volume of business.

It is solidly built, and well equipped with rolling stock. Some of the engines weigh 102 tons each, and all new engines have the latest pattern Westinghouse brake, also, steam attachment for heating cars. The coaches are neat in design, comfortable and roomy, capable of seating about 80 passengers each. Everything in rolling stock and equipment is modern, solid and substantial.

The B. & A. passenger station at Houlton is what is known as first-class with independent baggage and express stations. The platform and awnings are 200 feet in length. The freight station is a large standard station with connected platforms. There is a six stall round house, and coal sheds with a capacity of 2,500 tons. There are tramways and trolleys by which large tubs of coal are suspended, so that engines can be coaled in ten minutes' time.

Twenty acres of land are occupied for buildings and the railroad yard at Houlton. This land was bought of A. W. Ingersoll, whose father came to Aroostook in 1823. Three avenues have been made across the Ingersoll homestead leading to the railroad station and grounds and these avenues have been named respectively, Florence, Alice and Phyllis in honor of the three daughters of Mr. Ingersoll.

There are excellent sites along the Meduxnekeag and its tributaries for the establishment of wood-working or other plants operated by steam power.

From eight to ten miles of pipe are already laid to which additions are being constantly made. About 1,200 feet of pipe were laid last year, and already 900 feet have been contracted for to be laid as soon as frost leaves the ground the coming season. The pipe ranges from 4 to 12 inches in diameter. The stand pipe has a capacity of 113,000 gallons. Steam is kept up at the pumping station all the time both day and night.

From eight to ten miles of pipe are already laid to which additions are being constantly made. About 1,200 feet of pipe were laid last year, and already 900 feet have been contracted for to be laid as soon as frost leaves the ground the coming season. The pipe ranges from 4 to 12 inches in diameter. The stand pipe has a capacity of 113,000 gallons. Steam is kept up at the pumping station all the time both day and night.

Steam is kept up at the pumping station all the time both day and night.



JAMES W. AMBROSE, Member Board County Commissioners.

and everything is in readiness at a moment's notice in case of fire. During the ten years since the water works were put in every fire which has occurred in the village has been confined to the building in which it originated, a fact that shows the almost perfect efficiency of the works.

There are 42 hydrants in the village and the town pays \$1,800 yearly for its water and protection against fire, a lower sum than is paid by other towns for equal service.

The capital stock of the water company is \$50,000. The officers and directors are as follows: C. H. Pearce, President; Walter Mansur, Secretary and Treasurer; H. T. Frisbie, C. P. Tenney and J. A. Browne, directors.

The Houlton Sewerage Co. was formed several years ago and has at present from two to three miles of sewers built. This system is confined

more than one. Nature made this town and its surroundings beautiful, while man has erected on this favored spot large business blocks and fine residences, second in comeliness and elegance to none in the State.

We do not propose to give in this article a history of the early settlement, growth and development of this most



MICHAEL M. CLARK, Chairman Board Selectmen.

interesting of Maine towns, but shall fully describe the Houlton of to-day, in all its varied aspects and interests.

Houlton is situated on the extreme eastern border of Maine in the first range of townships. It is 276 miles from Portland by way of the Maine Central and the Bangor and Aroostook railroads, and 140 miles from Bangor by way of the last named road. When we add to the above statement of distances, the fact that Fort Kent, the most northern town in the State, is 126 miles from Houlton, one gets an idea of the extent of the great State of Maine.

Houlton is six miles square, containing 23,040 acres of land. It really lies in the valley of the great St. John river, although this fact is usually lost sight of, the St. John being for the greater part of its course, in the province of New Brunswick.

The Meduxnekeag river, a tributary of the St. John, enters the limits of the town near the south-west corner, flows, first east, then north, then east again, joining the Monticello

one sees the busy, handsome village extended along the gentle incline that leads up from the junction of the north branch with the main stream, to the elevated ridge where you are standing. Beyond the village are the broad, smooth fields, having, in the

The surface of the town has the characteristics which make Aroostook county so beautiful. Oval, dome-shaped hills, and long swelling ridges prevail everywhere, giving natural drainage to the soil, upland and lowland for cultivation, and adding much to the picturesqueness and attractiveness of the landscape. There is one singular formation running across the town in a north-westerly and south-easterly direction. We refer to the horseback, so called, a ridge of earth two or three hundred feet in width at the base, 40 or 50 feet in height, and extending beyond the limits of the town for many miles.

In regard to its geology, Aroostook county differs from all other parts of the State. One marked feature which at once attracts the attention of the stranger from the central and western part of the State, is the absence of boulders, and the almost entire ab-



ALEXANDER WILSON, Member Board Selectmen.

sence of cobble stones, pebbles, gravel and other material usually denom-

one sees the busy, handsome village extended along the gentle incline that leads up from the junction of the north branch with the main stream, to the elevated ridge where you are standing. Beyond the village are the broad, smooth fields, having, in the



MELLES D. PUTNAM, Member Board Selectmen.

summer time, more the appearance of lawns than of farms, while far in the west, amid the glories of the sunset clouds, the topmost peak of Katahdin looms up in all its solitary grandeur. In the east, we see the highlands of New Brunswick, in the north, rise the wooded slopes of Mars Hill, while all along the slopes and ridges of the intervening country lie the fertile farms that have made Aroostook county so famous.

"The mountains that unfold,
In their wide sweep, the colored landscape round,
Seem groups of giant kings, in purple and gold,
That guard the enchanted ground."

Streets, Business Blocks, Residences.

Houlton, unlike many New England towns, has expanded to its present size along regular and systematically arranged streets, so that but few cities present a more attractive appearance in this respect, than does this northern Maine village.

Extending from the Meduxnekeag river in an easterly direction towards

we find on the left Willard, Foxcroft and Barracks streets. From Mechanic street there are two branch streets, River street, which follows the course of the Meduxnekeag, and Orchard street, which leads from Mechanic to Charles street.

Returning to Market Square, we will go south on Court street to Military street, then traveling in the same direction as on Main street we find on our right in the following order: School, Kellerau, High, Spring and Depot streets. Between Main and Pleasant we find Winter and Summer streets. West of Court street we find Kendall, Pearce, Franklin and Brook streets, parallel to Court; and Leonard, Green, Columbia and Cleveland streets running at right angles with Court street.

The last three streets extend across Fairview, that beautiful section of Houlton, which we describe at some length elsewhere. Bangor street extends from Market Square in a westerly direction. Branching off from Bangor street towards the right, we find Florence avenue, leading to the B. & A. R. R. station, and beyond this are Alice and Phyllis avenues.

From Main street and Market Sq., a short walk takes us to the new iron bridge across the Meduxnekeag. Beyond this, Putnam street extends in a northerly direction, becoming North street at a point near the old Unitarian church, and getting tired of that name in a short time, it takes the name of Presque Isle road. Returning to the bridge and again facing towards the north we find on our left Riverside street, which winds along near the Meduxnekeag till it joins the County road, which also leads off



FRANK M. HUME, Capt. Co. "L."

from Putnam street towards the left. Branching off towards the right, we find Maple and Washburn streets leading to that sightly section of Houlton called the Highlands. We find here, also, Highland avenue, Lincoln and Bluff streets.

There are several small streets and alleys that we have not mentioned in the above enumeration, making about 50 streets in all. Court street takes the name of Calais road, after it leaves the village, and Bangor street undergoes a similar change of name, as it winds its way out into the country. The streets are all quite wide, Main, Court and Military streets especially so.

Maple and elm are the favorite shade trees in this town and the streets of Houlton are well ornamented with these beautiful trees. Looking down on the village from garrison hill in the summer season, one would almost think it to be situated in the midst of a beautiful grove.

The business portion of Houlton village is principally in the vicinity of Market Square, and on Main and Court streets. The past year has made a wonderful change in the appearance of the business section. The erection

England that has so many handsome front yards, so many lawns and grass-plots, as Houlton. The writer of this article has come to Houlton from some coast town in the spring of the year, more than once, to find here, green grass, and shrubbery in full bud, while vegetation in the more southern locality had hardly shown any signs of awakening.

The village being situated on a gentle slope, receives the benefit of natural drainage and all those advantages in building sites, location of plats, lawns, etc., that such a declivity always affords.

This northern Maine village, in the beauty of its location and surroundings, in its wide, clean streets lined with fine shade trees, in its elegant business blocks and other convenient business houses, in its tasty residences surrounded by yards and lawns, presents as attractive an appearance as any village of its size in New England.

Houlton, aside from being the county seat, is the natural center of trade for a large circle of flourishing towns. Driving out on the beautiful Calais road, a distance of five miles brings us to the town of Hodgdon with a population of about 1,200. Five miles further out we come to Cary plantation with a population of 400. Fourteen miles from Houlton on this same road we find the town of Amity, and twenty-five miles out, lies the south-eastern town of the county, with the suggestive name of Orient.

Returning to Houlton, we drive northward on the Presque Isle road coming in turn to Littleton, seven miles out, with a population of about 1,000; Monticello, twelve miles out, with a population of about 1,000; Bridge-water, twenty-two miles out, with a population of about 1,000; Blaine, twenty-six miles out, with a population of about 900.

Starting from Houlton again, we drive on the Bangor road to the fine town of Linneus, nine miles out, with a population of 1,000. We can reach Oakfield, fifteen miles out, in this direction if we choose, and then proceed to the growing town of Island Falls, twenty-seven miles out, a town that doubled its population in 1894, and is very likely to do the same thing in 1895. The fine manufacturing town of New Limerick lies six miles west of Houlton, and the farming town of Ludlow is seven miles west of Houlton. Smyrna is eleven miles out, on the stage road to Patten, and Patten in Penobscot county just beyond the Aroostook line, is twenty-six miles west of Houlton.

Water Powers and Mills.

The water powers of Houlton are on the Meduxnekeag and its tributaries. This river while not large is quite constant and could be made more so at slight expense by flowing some of the lakes connected with its head waters. The most important of these lakes are: Draw, Cochran, Spaulding, Bradbury, New Limerick and Nicerson.

About two miles west of Houlton village, on the Hodgdon branch, is one of the finest small water powers in the State, having a head of about 30 feet. W. H. Sincocock has here a grist and carding mill. This power is only partially utilized at present.

On the main streams, not far from the above-named privilege, is a good water power, susceptible of great improvement, now partly utilized in operating the saw mill of S. H. Sincocock. Near the mouth of Moose brook, a tributary of the Meduxnekeag, the lumber mill and starch factory of Morrill Mansur are situated.

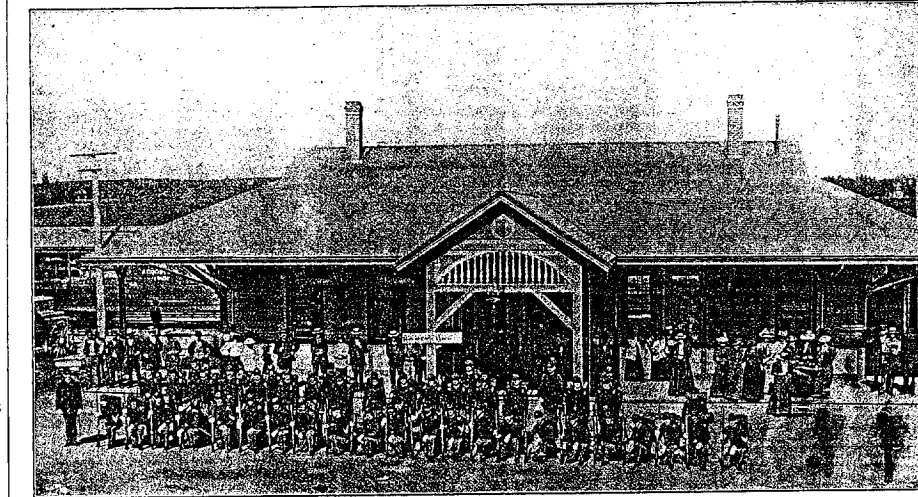
At the village the fine water power on the main stream of the Meduxnekeag is all utilized. On the west side are the planing mill and wood-working plant of Chadwick & Wiggins; Page & Madigan's plaster mill, also



CHARLES E. DUNN, Member Board County Commissioners.

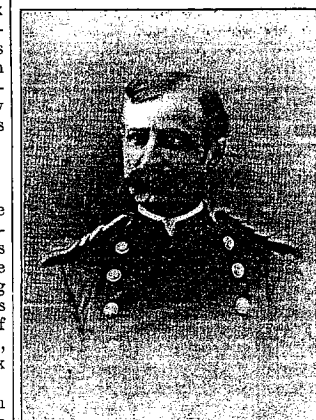
establishment of the New England Dressed Meat & Wool Company and a cheese factory on Bangor Street, owned by Alfred Somerville. Some of the above plants will receive more particular mention in another column.

There are excellent sites along the Meduxnekeag and its tributaries for the establishment of wood-working or other plants operated by steam power.



Company "L," N. G. S. M.—View taken of the "boys," in front of Passenger Station B. & A., prior to the Company's departure for the Annual Encampment at Augusta, '94.

The water powers on the Hodgdon branch and at S. H. Sincocock's saw mill, might be made to operate a great deal of machinery if utilized to their full extent. The town has important industries at present, but should have more, in order to keep it steadily advancing in the line of pro-



OLIN M. SMITH, 1st Lieut. Co. "L."

perity and growth that have made it the large and beautiful town we find it to-day.

The magnificent hard woods of Aroostook county will prove a bonanza some day when novelty wood-working or veneering plants shall be established at Houlton and other central points.

Railroad Facilities and Stage Lines.

By the completion of the Bangor and Aroostook railroad to the upper part of the county, Houlton now has as good railroad facilities as any interior town in the State. By the Canadian Pacific road it is connected with

works were put in every fire which has occurred in the village has been confined to the building in which it originated, a fact that shows the almost perfect efficiency of the works.

There are 42 hydrants in the village and the town pays \$1,800 yearly for its water and protection against fire, a lower sum than is paid by other towns for equal service.

The capital stock of the water company is \$50,000. The officers and directors are as follows: C. H. Pearce, President; Walter Mansur, Secretary and Treasurer; H. T. Frisbie, C. P. Tenney and J. A. Browne, directors.

The Houlton Sewerage Co. was formed several years ago and has at present from two to three miles of sewers built. This system is confined

spans and two 35 feet deck girders, with 270 feet of hard pine trestle approach, and 230 feet of pile bridge on the north end, followed by a 40 feet deck girder over the Smyrna road, the whole forming a continuous bridge 910 feet in length. The following stage lines run from Houlton: To Woodstock, 8 miles; to Linneus, 9 miles; to New Limerick, 6 miles; to Danforth on the line of the Maine Central railroad, 35 miles and to Patten, 26 miles.

Telegraph & Telephone Connections.

Houlton has excellent telegraphic communication with Bangor and points westward, also with Woodstock, Calais, Fredericton and St. John, by means of the Western Union, and the Northern Telegraph companies. The office of both lines in Houlton is under the management of Miss Jennie Wetmore. Houlton is, also, connected by telephone with all the larger towns in the county by the wires of the White Mountain Telephone Co. The office in Houlton is under the management of Mr. J. E. Robinson.

Water Works, Sewerage, Electric Lights.

The Houlton water works were established ten years ago by a company composed of business men of the town. The water is taken from the north branch of the Meduxnekeag river. The pumping station is a brick structure situated on the bank of a mile from the new iron bridge across the main stream. A 250 h. p. boiler and a Worthington steam pump of 1,000,000 gallons a day capacity were put in. Another pump of 1,000,000 gallons a day capacity will be added during the coming season. As only about 175,000 gallons daily are used ordinarily it will be seen that all emergencies are provided for.

now mostly to Main, Court and Pleasant streets, but will be extended eventually to all the principal streets.

The officers and directors of this company are: H. T. Frisbie, President; Walter Mansur, Secretary and Treasurer; A. A. Burleigh, C. P. Tenney, F. A. Powers, directors.

Houlton has two electric light plants: The Houlton Electric Co. with the following officers: H. T. Frisbie, President; Walter Mansur, Treasurer and Manager; C. P. Tenney and C. H. Pierce, directors. The Thomson-Houston system is used, and there are at present two dynamos with 30 arc and 650 incandescent lights. Another dynamo is to be added soon when the whole capacity will be increased to more than 1,000 lights.

This system is operated from the pumping station, the power used be-



WILLIAM A. MARTIN, 2d Lieut. Co. "L."

ing a 135 h. p. boiler and a 125 h. p. engine. E. Merritt & Sons own and operate



Aroostook's County Buildings, Military Street.

branch in the edge of New Brunswick. The united streams of the Meduxnekeag then flow in a south-east direction, emptying their waters into the St. John at Woodstock, N. B., only eight miles from Houlton in a direct line. The Meduxnekeag has the following tributaries in the limits of the town. The Hodgdon or south-

inated drift. The few rocks found in some localities are generally calcareous, and the bed rock which underlies the whole county is either clay, or calcareous slate, with occasional veins of trap. This bed rock or ledge is everywhere reached at a few feet below the surface.

The soil is a vegetable loam strong-

the old parade ground are three principal streets: Military street, constructed in the time of the border troubles; Main street, which commences at Market Square and gradually approaches Military street, finally joining it about half a mile east of the square; and Pleasant street, commencing still farther towards the