

# EARLY HISTORY of HOULTON

## CHAPTER NINE

Reprinted verbatim in the exact form in which it appeared in the Aroostook Pioneer, July 13, 1858.—Ed.

### Cold Seasons and High Prices

In 1816 the series of cold seasons commenced, when, it was said, spots were discovered on the rye disk. Those frosty summers reduced the inhabitants to severe privations. At Houlton it even snowed in June. Birds sought shelter wherever they could but many died of the cold. Wheat and other crops, except rye, were cut off by untimely frosts—potatoes were half grown, wheat, our principal staff for bread, was so badly bitten as to produce an unsavory article to the palatable nerves, instead of ripening to the accustomed golden harvest, and proving more than a remuneration for the sowing and clearing of the forest. These were trying times,—years, enough to produce despondency on the spirits of the most resolute and stout-hearted; but Providence ever mindful of its dependent creatures, did not allow us to perish with hunger.—The creek, which now winds the me channel and winds its way, dividing the village, then abounded with salmon, that were easily caught, (and of which we shall say more hereafter) the partridge were numerous and tame as domestic fowls, and very good. The

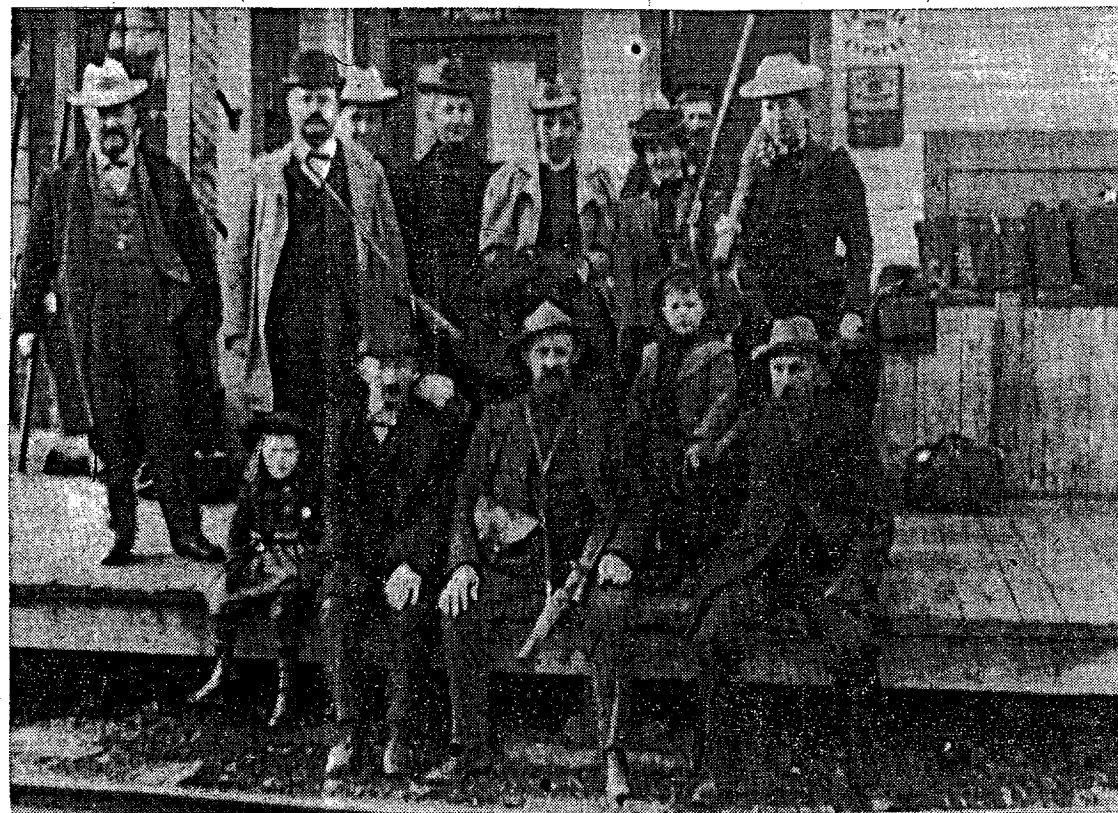
wild ducks, though shy, were frequent captives of the hunter; and the sugar-maple, with which the forest abounds, contributed not a little to our comfort and support, and yielding an ample supply of sap, from which was made syrup, candy and sugar of a pure refined quality, being whole-some, nutritive and delicious. Cows that had no pasture, save the woods, which furnished a supply of Solomon's seal and adder tongue during the summer months, gave a pail of milk each night and morning, from which were made one pound of butter per day and of good quality.

When rye flour sold at Woodstock for \$17 per barrel, the inhabitants were obliged to adopt a simple regime — changing new milk to curd, mixing it with cream and sugar, which was nutritious and palatable, a good substitute for custard. During the hard times, lumbering, however delusive, absorbed capital and controlled the enterprise of the people of the county. Eighteen inch shingles were three dollars per thousand, boards ten and twelve dollars per thousand, and hew timber found competition at a

high price. From the signal failure of crops the farmers, as an alternate, changed their occupation for a time, and became lumbermen, consequently their farms were neglected. Boards and shingles were run in rafts to Woodstock and Fredericton, which was their principal places of market. Ten miles below Houlton there were falls, where they unrafted, carrying the lumber some fifty rods or more over a rough path, dodging the trees, bouncing against the roots and rocks. This Herculean labor was necessarily performed in the spring and autumn, during the time of a freshet.

An incident connected with this hazardous enterprise, we think, is here deserving a place. In November, a young man and a boy of some years, started for Woodstock on a raft of shingles. Being unaccustomed to rafting and running shingles, when they arrived at the falls, they barely escaped going over, which, under the circumstances, must have proved inevitable destruction, but with their utmost effort they landed the raft. The next morning having lugged their shingles over the portage and rafted again, they pushed off for Woodstock; they had gone but a short distance before they landed on a sand-bar, which tore the raft all to pieces, the shingles floating at random—driven by wind and current. Catching the axe, pole and packs they put for the shore. Having made a raft of cedar, they floated down to Woodstock, where they procured provisions, a bark canoe and a bottle of Jamaica, without

## A Hunting Party is On Its Way



The chances are that this party, posing on the Bangor and Aroostook platform here, in the early 1900's was heading up the Ashland branch. In the group are, rear row, left to right, John B. Madigan, Frederick A. Powers, Mrs. Madigan, Mrs. Michael M. Clark, Mrs. Fred Butler, Mrs. S. L. Friedman and Mrs. Fred Powers. Seated on the platform, left to right, Simon Friedman, Fred Butler and Michael M. Clark. The two youngsters are the Butlers' children.

which, in those days, it would have been thought presumption, exposed to the cold storms of November, to endure the fatigue and

hardship of raftmen. The next morning those green hands, with their poles and paddles, worked their passage up some five miles, the water freezing to the poles, and the ballast light, so that a miss-step would upset the ticklish bark; the current in many places deep and strong, dashing alternately from shore to shore, in their haste to reach the falls, the boy at the bow, whose pole slipped from the ledgy bottom, falling on the gun-wale, it capsized instantly, precipitating them both head foremost into the cold stream of some eight or ten feet of water; the poor boy swam for life to the nearest shore, but the ledges were so bluff, it was impossible for some distance, to get foot-hold. The other with the locomotive power of his legs and one hand, while with the other he righted the canoe, securing the paraphernalia of poles, paddles, baggage and with great effort swam to the shore some thirty rods below. Resuming their places, with the greatest exertion

After they arrived, having hauled the lumber, at night the horse was turned to water, but suddenly disappeared. Search was made,

but without success. In the morning they renewed the search, but without success as before. The animal being young and valuable, Mr. Putnam employed several men, who were a week in pursuit of him, but finally gave up the creature for lost.

On the 12th of February following, there were men with teams passing down the creek, upon the ice, who discovered the track of a horse, which they followed a short distance and found the poor brute alive in the woods, but reduced to a mere skeleton. This creature had been from fall till February, suffering from the storms of rain and snow, limited at last to a narrow beat of a few rods, that he kept open by browsing, without water, shelter or food, except what he gathered in the forest. The poor animal was taken home on a sled, restored and became a valuable servant for years after. The above incident, we believe, surpasses all history of a horse's endurance,—exposed to the severities of a winter of hard frosts and deep snow in this high latitude. Cattle have rambled off many miles from their summer haunts and been found alive, by lumbermen, late in the winter, but a horse never before, to my knowledge.

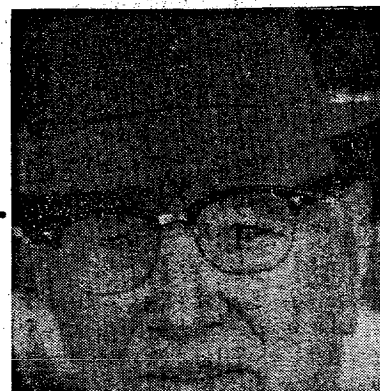
Harry Garrison is getting to be a mighty nimrod. Saturday last he shot a Caribou, about 12 miles above Monticello; shot him through the heart at first fire, distance 50 pards. The rifle used was a Stevens Bicycle, .22 calibre. The animal weighed 300 pounds. Harry is

very proud of his achievement and he has every right to be. It is very good for a 13 year old lad. The carcass was brought to Houlton, placed in natural position, with Harry beside it, rifle in hand, in Tenney's woods, and was photographed by Bryson. — Aroostook Pioneer, Nov. 12, 1885.

Ira G. Hersey, Esq. of this town, and James Archibald, Esq., of Monticello, have formed a law partnership under the firm name of Hersey and Archibald. They have a model law office in the new brick block, and a pleasant location for business. Both are men of energy and integrity, respected in society and the bar. Judging from the past, they will in the future take a leading position among the lawyers of this section of the state.—Aroostook Pioneer, Dec. 23, 1885.

The attention of those passing by could not but be attracted to the building of C. B. Smith, Esq., which was yesterday moving from the hill to the Creek Village in this town. Some 75 or 100 yoke of oxen were on the ground. They were from different towns in the vicinity and were a sight worth beholding. — Aroostook Times, Aug. 24, 1860.

Mr. C. H. Rideout is building a new tannery at Pearce Brook, near Low's mill. It is designed for the tanning of moccasins for lumberman's use, of which Mr. Rideout will engage in the manufacture on quite an extensive scale. — Aroostook Times, October 5, 1885.



# Congratulations Houlton . . .

on this your  
150th  
BIRTHDAY

. . . and to the Houlton Pioneer



1905 - 1957

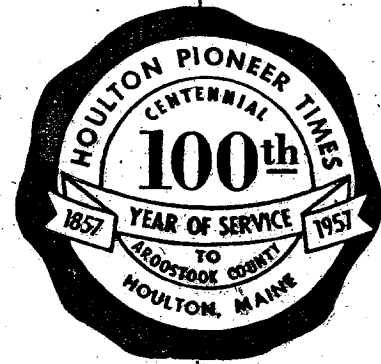
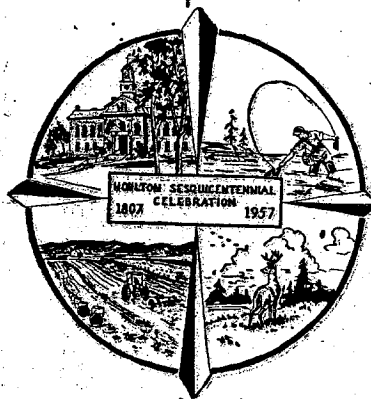
JAMES S. PEABODY, FOUNDER

# 52 YEARS SERVING HOULTON and Surrounding Area . . .

It has been a distinct pleasure to have been the John Deere Plow Company representative in this area for the past 52 years . . . and to have handled the Fairbanks - Morse line of products in this territory since 1913 . . . Later in 1915 the De Laval Company, makers of cream separators, added the James S. Peabody company to their list of dealers . . . these lines have made for the consistent growth of the Peabody Company . . . and the many friends that we have made over the past 52 years . . . has made operating this business a pleasure.

We pause at this time to enter the festive mood and celebration of the towns people and wish them well . . . for it has been their patronage that has added to our growth.

CONGRATULATIONS . . . CITIZENS  
OF HOULTON ON YOUR  
**150th BIRTHDAY**  
. . . AND OUR BEST WISHES TO THE . . .  
HOULTON PIONEER TIMES  
on its 100 years of service to Aroostook County



# JAS. S. PEABODY CO.

— INCORPORATED —

BANGOR STREET

HOULTON

below. Resuming their places, with the greatest exertion to keep from freezing, they pushed their treacherous bark three or four miles when they upset precisely as before, having to clear for the shore where they best could. Well for them they were expert swimmers, otherwise they must have drowned. Being soaking wet and nine miles from inhabitants, fireworks, baggage, blankets all saturated, and the little fellow, in his desperate effort to reach the shore, lost off one shoe, it being more than half a mile to their place of camping, provisions entirely wet, and to cap the climax, the bottle sunken, they were in a quandary about what to do, but finally they resolved to make another effort to gain the falls; if they could find no fire there to walk the shore till morning to keep from freezing to death, rather than abandon the raft and return to Woodstock without accomplishing their object. Proceeding with caution, they at last reached the falls with clothes stiff with frost, cold hands and limbs and heavy hearts, but soon, to their infinite joy, they discovered a blazing fire, a man having arrived there that day, had made provisions for the night. Their blankets dripping wet, and no covering but the canopy of Heaven, there was consequently no sleep for them. Placing themselves before a good fire, turning round and round, smoking and steaming like old fashioned basted turkeys, until morning, when doubtless they, with drooping heads, through "keen demands of appetite" partook of their water-soaked fare after which they proceeded to the task of collecting their fragmentary raft. Having succeeded and marketed the shingles at Woodstock, they slung their packs, which were blankets tied at the extreme corners, containing various articles, to the amount of lumber, of some thirty or forty pounds, and trudged home, where they told the sad story, which, though pitiful, yet exhorted laughter from the facetious guests, listening to the rehearsal of the duckings they had, their desperate swimming effort in the freezing elements; the loss of the shoe and bottle, though not like honest Gilpin, who broke both of his with loss of hat and wig, exclaimed "such fellows were not reared in the woods to be frightened at an owl, nor quail before a storm.

In the autumn Mr. Amos Putnam took a horse on a raft of boards, to haul them by the falls,

. . . and to the Houlton Pioneer Times for your 100 years of service in Aroostook County . . .  
A job well done.

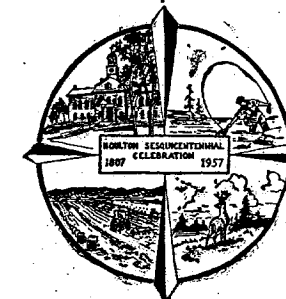
## HOULTON LODGE No. 835 B. P. O. ELKS



### WE ARE PLEASED . . .

TO EXTEND OUR SINCERE  
GREETINGS to  
THE RESIDENTS OF  
**HOULTON . .**  
On This Their  
150th BIRTHDAY

. . . AND TO THE HOULTON PIONEER TIMES  
FOR ITS 100 YEARS OF SERVICE IN  
AROOSTOOK COUNTY.



## FARBER LUMBER

— COMPANY —

HOULTON AIRPORT

HOULTON