

## Death of Alexander Gibson

Gleaner

Aug 1, 1913

The Daily Gleaner

Death Closes Remarkable Life of Alexander Gibson

[same photo as in Saint John Globe]

One of Canada's Greatest Captains of Industry Passed Away at his Home in Marysville this Morning – The town that his Genius Called into Existence and Record of Life of Honorable Toil His Monument – Funeral on Saturday.

Mr. Alexander Gibson, sr., one of Canada's greatest captains of industry, who retired from active business in the latter part of the year of 1908 after one of the most remarkable business careers in the annals of the Dominion, died this morning at his home in Marysville.

Since some time before he celebrated his 94th birthday on August 1st last, Mr. Gibson had been critically ill. He was suffering from a general breakdown, the ravages of old age having attacked his system, and he gradually lost his vitality until the end came. Last night, his pulse was 125 and at 6:15 o'clock this morning he passed peacefully away surrounded by the members of his family.

Mr. Gibson was married when a young man, but was predeceased by his wife some twenty odd years. Two sons, Mr. Alexander Gibson jr., ex MP, and Mr. James Gibson; three daughters, Mrs. John R. McConnell, Mrs. Charles H. Hatt and Mrs. Frank M. Merritt, survive and all reside at Marysville. **One sister, Mrs. Charlotte Glendenning, [Clindinin? Many such in Charlotte County 1851 census] widow of the late James Glendenning, who formerly resided at Marysville, now lives at Mr. Gibson's old home at St. Stephen.** Nineteen grandchildren and several great-grandchildren also survive.

Arrangements are being completed today for the funeral which will be held on Saturday afternoon. Funeral services will be conducted at the deceased's residence at Marysville at 2:30 pm and interment will be made in the family lot at Marysville.

If Mr. Gibson had achieved his success in the United States he would long since have been featured in the Sunday newspapers and popular magazines. **Had he lived his life in the England of the early 19th century, his name and deeds would have been embalmed in such valuable books as "Samuel Smiles Self Helps," but as he spent his days in the quiet of the Dominion, making his way unostentatiously at his chosen calling, doing his good deeds so that his right hand knew not what his left hand was about, his life story has seldom been drawn upon to illustrate the great lessons of industry, thrift and obedience to the Golden Rule.**

With all those with whom he came in contact throughout the Province of New Brunswick, Mr. Gibson has been looked up to with universal respect and admiration. In the eyes of his friends and neighbors he has been regarded as combining **all the good points of Rockefeller and Carnegie with none of their defects.** He made Marysville an important point on the map commercially, and a place of happy homes socially, in which dwell a contented and prosperous people. To his energy and activity much of the industry and prosperity of the whole Province has been due.

Modest Start of Great Career

Alexander Gibson was a native of New Brunswick, having been born in Charlotte County on August 1, 1819, the same year in which the late Queen Victoria was born. It was many a long year ago that a youth appeared before a foreman of one of the sawmills at Milltown on the St. Croix river and applied for a job. The youth had come in from the country nearby. He had no capital except a good constitution, a practical mind, a determined will and a great capacity for work. His services were accepted and the name of Alexander Gibson was inscribed on the pay roll of the mill, his wage being at the rate of one dollar per day. In this humble way the career of the

featured [sic] mill owner. After working for some time at the mills on the St. Croix, *he eventually assumed control of one and began business for himself*. He later moved to Lepreaux where the lumbermen of that section prior to his time, had met with repeated failure. He won success and retired from the river with a large amount of money. Then about fifty years ago he came to the Nashwaak and bought the mills and property, including 7,000 acres of splendid timbered lands altogether valued at \$130,000 of Robert Rankine and Company.

#### **Lumbering on the Nashwaak**

On commencing operations on the river, Mr. Gibson saw at once that the principal obstruction to be overcome was a large boom held by a mile or two of piers. He immediately commenced the construction of dams and increased the river facilities so much that no drive was ever hung up on the stream while he carried on operations there. He also had his lands carefully explored and surveyed. Some of these he purchased at public auction from the crown; others he bought from the N.B. and N.S. Land Co., and he had thus acquired all the most valuable timber land (nearly 170,000 acres) on the river. Since he came to Marysville up to the time of his retirement he had cut fully 900,000,000 feet of logs into deals on the Nash river.

He also had a mill at Blackville, on the ICR, that employed many men and cut about 8,000,000 feet of lumber annually, a property which he bought from the Messrs. Fairley. The deals were brought by rail to Gibson, and there, with the product of the Marysville mills, were placed upon lighters specially built by Mr. Gibson and towed to St. John, where the large lumber was sent to England and the shingles and laths shipped to the United States.

#### **Canada's Biggest Cotton Mill**

The fame of the cotton mill, built and until recently owned by Mr. Gibson, has gone throughout Canada and beyond, it being the largest single mill in the Dominion. It employs over 500 hands, but could accommodate as many more. It was built from brick manufactured by him within a stone's throw of the structure, and at its completion in 1885 was fitted up with the latest machinery, some of which was later replaced by that of a more modern construction. It was lighted by electricity from Mr. Gibson's own dynamos; and nearby was a splendidly equipped machine shop. English experts have declared that this mill surpassed in its equipment the vast majorities of English cotton factories. In June, 1907, this cotton mill was sold to Canadian Colored Cotton Co.

#### **Railway Development**

In the railway development of the province Mr. Gibson played an important part. He realized the necessity for proper transportation facilities if this country was to come into its own, and both the Canada Eastern Railway system, the Gibson branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the steel railway bridge across the St. John River here all owe their existence in a large measure to his energy and public spirit. Mr. Gibson was also one of the members of the second syndicate at the time the CPR's transcontinental scheme was before the Dominion Government who offered to place a deposit of \$1,000,000 as bona fides to proceed with the construction of the railway across Canada under another contract than the one before Parliament.

#### **A Public Benefactor**

Besides the large number of wooden tenements, Mr. Gibson had built about fifty two-story brick houses, each to accommodate two families and several dozens of boarding houses. Not a drop of intoxicating liquor has ever been sold in the place. The town has a steady growth and is still growing. Two large stores and a hotel were built by Mr. Gibson, and the Methodist church,, which was burned a year or two ago, a beautiful building worth \$50,000, was also erected by him. He also gave the site for the Anglican church. In addition to other benefactions Mr. Gibson presented to the town a public hall, a large public library and a fine site for a trotting park.

At the time of the great St. John fire in 1877, Mr. Gibson was one of the first individuals to contribute to the sufferers, but he did it with his customary lack of public announcement that but very few people knew of it. A car load of flour was Mr. Gibson's donation to the sufferers from that disaster.

#### **Messages of Sympathy**

This morning Mrs. C. H. Hatt, of Marysville, received a telegram from Mr. A. O. Dawson of Montreal, Managing Director of the Canadian Cotton Limited,

expressing his deepest sympathy at Mr. Gibson's death. "New Brunswick has lost one of its greatest men," wired Mr. Dawson. Many other messages of sympathy are being received by the family.

The Methodist Sunday school picnic at Marysville, which was to have taken place today, was postponed on account of Mr. Alexander Gibson's death.

#### Alexander Gibson

Alexander Gibson has crossed the borderland and entered upon his long rest, after a wonderful industrial career that will long serve as an inspiration to his countrymen. Like an oak which has weathered the storms of many seasons he stood as a landmark of momentous days gone by, an acknowledged captain of industry who had done a big man's work in Canada. Mr. Gibson was a man of many varied activities, but **he will be best remembered as the founder of the thriving town of Marysville**, with the teeming industries there set in motion through the resourcefulness and indomitable energy of the man who planned its remarkable growth and prosperity. To attain the object Mister Gibson aimed at demanded some unusual qualities. As essentials were the possession **of sound judgment and practical executive ability, but these Mister Gibson had in superabundance.** The result was a model town, unique among the municipal institutions of the Dominion.

Mister Gibson was also one of the greatest and most successful railway builders and organizers of industry in the province. To his initiative the province is indebted for what is now called the Gibson branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway, running from Gibson to Grand Falls, while the old Canada Eastern would perhaps have been still in embryo had it not been for his energy and resourceful genius.

the marvellous success which attended the various enterprises with which he was connected was really due to the skillful management of Mister Gibson, who on many occasions proved himself not only a man of remarkable foresight, but a financier of unusual ability.

Outside of strictly business pursuits, Mister Gibson's personality made itself felt in widely varying ways, but always in behalf of progress and moral improvement. His charitable efforts and contributions were numerous, and his name was a household word from one end of the country to the other. The work he performed for New Brunswick will live after him, and he will long be remembered as one of the province's most distinguished sons.

#### Saint John Globe

Aug 14, 1913

Lumber King of New Brunswick

Alexander Gibson Died This Morning at Marysville

Aged 94 Years

Railroad Builder, Cotton Manufacturer, and Captain of Industry

[nice photograph of Gibson]

Dispatches from Fredericton announce the death this morning of Mr. Alexander Gibson, famous as "the lumber king of the Nashwaak," and known throughout Canada as the founder of Marysville, York Co., with its great lumber and cotton mills, and also for his railway enterprises. As he was in his 94th year, and had been in ill-health for some time, his death was not unexpected.

Mr. Gibson was a native of Charlotte county, and commenced his life work at Milltown when he secured employment as a youth in a lumber mill at Milltown at \$1 a day. He soon began to display the ability that distinguished him in after life, for he became the owner of a mill, but Lepreaux attracted him, and he transferred his activities of that stream. There he was very successful, although other operators had not done well. He was not satisfied, however, with the progress he was making, and the opportunity offering to buy the valuable Mills and lumber lands on the Nashwaak, York Co., from Robert Rankin and Co., he availed himself of it, the purchase price, it is said, being \$130,000. Mr. Gibson was at this time quite a young man, with a good knowledge of the lumber business, possessing vigorous health and fitted with ambition to achieve greater success in business. He quickly improved his milling property, secured large tracts of lands for future supplies of logs, and became the principal shipper of deals from the port of St. John to the English markets. He next

became interested in the development of the upper St. John, and was the builder of what is now the Gibson branch of the CPR. It was then the New Brunswick Railway; it extended to Grand Falls and had branches into Maine. The Canada Eastern, now a branch of the ICR, running from Fredericton to Loggieville, Northumberland Co., was also his work, jointly with the late Hon. J. B. Snowball.

One of Mr. Gibson's greatest enterprises was the erection of a cotton mill at Marysville, soon after the National Policy came into operation. Work was started in it in 1885. It was pronounced by experts to be a superbly equipped mill and it gave employment to hundred of persons.

In time all of these enterprises passed into other hands. The CPR and the Dominion government bought the railways, the Dominion Textile Co. secured the cotton mill, and the Partington Pulp and Paper interests obtained the lumber mills and lumber lands. Mr. Gibson has been practically living in retirement for a few years.

Mr. Gibson was always prominent in York county politics. He was not a party man, and because of his vast interests and the number of men he employed, **there was always a great effort to obtain his support on election day. Indeed, his support was often considered a determining factor. He would never consent to enter political life himself.**

Mr. Gibson was generous to Marysville. He built a handsome church for the Methodists (afterwards destroyed by fire) and presented it with an organ. He erected a town hall, established a free public library, and furnished a site for a trotting park.

It is recorded of him that he took a keen interest in the welfare of those with whom he was brought into contact; **that on a number of occasions he struck off his ledger accounts of debtors whom he knew to be in serious financial difficulties; that he voluntarily paid the expenses of young men who were struggling for an education, while many time barrels of flour and other necessaries of life have arrived in the nick of time to relieve the distress of needy families.** Mr. Gibson was a man with a kind heart, agreeable disposition and very hospitable. His death will be deeply mourned not only on the Nashwaak, but throughout the province.

Some time before he celebrated his 94th birthday on August 1st last, Mr. Gibson had been critically ill. He was suffering from a general breakdown and he gradually lost his vitality until the end came. Last night his pulse was 135 and at 6:15 o'clock this morning he passed peacefully away, surrounded by the members of his family.

Mr. Gibson was married when a young man and was predeceased by his wife upwards of twenty years ago. Two sons, Alexander Gibson, Mr., ex M.P., and James Gibson; three daughters, Mrs. John R. McConnell, Mrs. Charles H. Hartt and Mrs. Frank M. Merritt, survive and all reside at Marysville. One sister, Mrs. Charlotte Glendenning, widow of the late Mr. James Glendenning, who formerly resided at Marysville, now lives at Mr. Gibson's old home in St. Stephen. Nineteen grandchildren and several great grandchildren also survive.

The funeral will be held on Saturday afternoon. Funeral services will be conducted at the deceased's residence at Marysville and interment will be made in the family lot there.

St. John Standard

Aug 15, 1913

Mr. Alexander Gibson

Mr. Alexander Gibson, the "Lumber King of the Nashwaak," whose death occurred yesterday, was a fine representative of the type of business men who laid the foundations of modern industry in this country, a type that unfortunately is disappearing before the extension of the sphere of impersonal corporation. Starting his career without other advantages than splendid health and ambition, Mr. Gibson rose to a commanding position in the lumber industry of the Province, and acquired great wealth. As in the case of many other big men in the days of personal enterprise he had definite ideas **of the responsibility of wealth**, and not only used his fortune to further the development of the country by building railways and promoting other enterprises, but took a keen interest in the welfare of the men who worked for him.

At Marysville, where his principal interests were centered, Mr. Gibson built homes for his work people, erected a church, established stores, and generally exercised a patriarchal sway over the affairs of his town and his people. A man of

exercised a patriarchal sway over the affairs of his town and his people. A man of great business ability and tremendous energy, he did much for the upbuilding of the Province, and though he never entered political life, his immense interests enabled him to exercise **great influence upon the course of public affairs.**

Although Mr. Gibson **possessed somewhat arbitrary ways**, he had a kindly heart, was ever ready to help the unfortunate, and **enjoyed in an unusual degree the esteem of the community.** His career was a **romance of achievement** that is full of interest and inspiration for young men. His death will cause general regret through the province.

Gleaner

Aug 15, 1913

The Dead Founder of Marysville

Late Alexander Gibson's Funeral

Rev. G. M. Campbell, formerly pastor of the Methodist church in this city and now connected with Mount Allison university, will conduct the services at the funeral of Mr. Alexander Gibson, Sr, at Marysville tomorrow. There will be practically a general cessation of business in Marysville while the funeral is being held. A special train on the Intercolonial Railway will take Fredericton people to Marysville for the funeral.

Marysville People Feel Loss of Founder

The death of Mr. Alexander Gibson Sr. has cast a gloom of sadness over the town. Flags are flying at half mast to his honor and all forms of entertainment have been cancelled.

Late Mister Gibson

St. John Globe

Mr. Alexander Gibson was one of the New Brunswick's greatest captains of industry in his years of business activity. Without any advantage in early life, he became the principal manufacturer and shipper of deals in the province, and acquired much wealth. **A man of large ideas**, he used that wealth in railway development and cotton manufacturing, **but did not meet with the success he achieved in the field in which he had been brought up**, and eventually all his enterprises passed into other hands. Mister Gibson was highly esteemed throughout the province; on the Nashwaak he was beloved by all, and his demise will be deeply mourned.

Saint John Times

His example may well be an inspiration to young men in this province, who may now have no higher position than he had in his youth, but who have before them as great opportunities as those which he embraced, and which enabled him to carve out a great industrial career. That community is indeed fortunate which can boast of men of the type of Mister Alexander Gibson.

Saint John Standard

Mr. Alexander Gibson was a fine representative for the type of business men who laid the foundations of modern industry in this country, a type that unfortunately is disappearing before the extension of the sphere of the impersonal corporation. His career was a romance of achievement that is full of interest and inspiration for young men. His death will cause general regret throughout the province.

The Daily Gleaner

August 16, 1913

Obsequies of Late Alexander Gibson

Services will be Conducted by Rev. Dr. Campbell—Many Floral Tributes

At the obsequies of the late Alexander Gibson at Marysville, this afternoon, Rev. Dr. G. M. Campbell, of Mount Allison University, assisted by Rev. Mr. Hicks of Marysville, will conduct the services. A mixed quartette from Fredericton will render the following favorite hymns of the late Mr. Gibson: Rock of Ages, Jesus Lover of My Soul, and The Lord My Shepherd. Among those from out of town places who are here to attend the funeral is Professor Chisholm of London Ont. Several telegrams

here to attend the funeral is Professor Chisholm, of London, Ont., several telegrams of condolence have been received by the family of the deceased, among them being one from Mr. Talmie, one of the officials of the Canada Cottons Limited, in which he expressed his sincere sympathy in the sad bereavement of the family.

#### **Floral Tributes**

The following are the floral tributes:

Wreath – Mayor and Corporation of Marysville

Gates Ajar – Canada Cottons, Limited, Montreal

Wreath – Older Employees of the cotton Mill

Cross – Older employees of the Canada Eastern Railway

Crescent – Methodist church, Marysville

Flat Bouquet – Mr. and Mrs. F. S. Williams, Marysville

Flat Bouquet – Mayor and Mrs. W. H. Gray, Marysville

Flat Bouquet – Weave room, cotton mill

Sheaf of wheat – T. R. Donahue

#### **The Mourners**

The following is the list of mourners:

Alex. Gibson, jr., James Gibson, J. R. McConnell, C. H. Hatt; F. M. Merritt; H. A. Gibson; J. T. G. Hatt; John T. Gibson; Fred McConnell; Alex. McConnell; Frank C. Merritt; Alex. Merritt; Charles L. Chisholm; Dr. A. P. Crocket; W. H. Milican; C. D. Hervey; J. H. Pope; J. E. Cowan; W. A. Gibson; A. M. Gibson; F. H. Gibson; James Boyd; John Boyd; Frank L. Robinson; H. Robinson; Jos. Robinson; Jos. Robinson, jr.; J. D. Robinson; Walter Robinson; Fred Robinson; Frank Robinson; F. S. Williams; Howard Rodgers; William Keyne; George Foster; James Wester; James Robinson; Samuel Stafford; Williard Stafford; John Chisholm; F. S. Williams, Dr. W. C. Crocket; Jos. Blanchard; George Stafford; John Stafford; Master Chas. Millican; Alex. Chisholm; T. R. Donahue, Reuben Wade and others.

The flag at the City Hall is flying at half mast today in honor of the late Alexander Gibson, Sr.

#### **Obsequies Late Alexander Gibson This Afternoon**

All Work in Marysville to Cease as Tribute to the Town's Founder

The last tribute to Alexander Gibson sr the dead funder of Marysville will be paid today. The funeral of the Captain of Industry will take place this afternoon, and all work in the town ill cease while it is in progress as a mark of respect to the deceased it is expected that the funeral procession will be the longest ever seen in central New Brunswick.

General Manager Gutelius of the Intercolonial Railway has, in recognition of the deceased having been the founder of what is now the Canada Eastern branch of the Intercolonial Railway, thoughtfully placed a special train at the disposal of Fredericton people wishing to attend the funeral, and the express arriving at noon today from Loggieville will leave Fredericton at 1:45 for Marysville, returning after the funeral.

Hundreds have called at Mister Gibson's home to take a last look at the remains, and last night and this morning there have been many affecting scenes as old friends who had benefited by the deceased's many kindnesses passed the casket.

Gleaner

Aug 18, 1913

#### **Obsequies Late Alexander Gibson**

the funeral of the late Alexander Gibson sr. was the largest ever seen here. Long before the hour for the service the spacious house and grounds were thronged with people from all sections of the province. The special Intercolonial Railway train brought a large delegation from Fredericton. The Federal government was represented by Mr. O. S. Crocket, M. P., and the Provincial government by Messrs. J. K. Pinder, M. L. A., John A. Young, M. L. A., Dr. Morehouse, M. L. A., and A. R. Slipp, M. L. A. The county was represented by sheriff Howe, Councillors A. E. Neill, J. W. Walker, D. E. Pickard and Harry Smith.

Mr. A. H. Rowley and Mr. Thomas Likely, of Saint John, former employees of Mister Gibson were present, and Mr. Fred S. Murray, of Fredericton, another long-term employee. was also present.

Dr. Campbell, assisted by Rev. Thomas Hicks, conducted the service at the house and at the grave. Dr. Campbell's eulogy on the life of the deceased gentleman was very touching. The music rendered by the quartette, Messrs. Cooper, Smith, Mrs. F. A. Good and Mrs. Smith, was beautifully rendered.

the casket was carried from the house by members of the family, who acted as pallbearers.

the order of the procession was as follows: barouche with flowers, clergy, hearse, mourners, Mayor and Corporation of Marysville, Members of Federal and Provincial governments and County Council, Fredericton Board of Trade, general public on foot and in carriages. Undertaker Harry Adams was funeral director.

While the cortege slowly wended its way to the cemetery the bell from the cotton mill tower tolled, adding to the solemnity of the occasion. Mr. James Malone of Stanley was in town Saturday attending the funeral of the late Mister Gibson.

Mr. Thomas Likely spent Sunday with friends here, returning to Saint John today. Mr. J. E. Cowan, of Saint John, came from Saint John to attend the funeral of the late Mister Gibson.

Mr. Walter H. Miller, of Saint John, was here attending the funeral of the late Mister Gibson.

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A large number of people visited the cemetery yesterday to view the last resting place of the late Alexander Gibson, Esq. A number of pictures were taken of the grave, which was completely hidden by flowers, and many sprays were plucked as souvenirs.

Montreal Daily Star

Alex. Gibson, Sr., Industrial King of Fredericton, Dies

Special to the Montreal Star

Fredericton, NB, August 14

Alexander Gibson, Sr., one of Canada's greatest captains of industry, who retired from active business in the latter part of the year of 1908, after one of the most [something left out here] careers in the annals of Dominion, died this morning at his home in Marysville.

Some time before he celebrated his 94th birthday on August 1st, Mr. Gibson had been critically ill. He was suffering from a general breakdown and he gradually lost his vitality until the end. This morning he passed peacefully away surrounded by the members of his family.

Mr. Gibson was married when a young man and was predeceased by his wife upwards of twenty years ago. Two sons, Alexander Gibson, Jr., ex PM, and James Gibson, three daughters Mr. John R. McConnell, Mrs. Charles H. Hatt, and Mrs. Frank M. Merritt, all resident at Marysville, one sister Mrs. Charlotte Glendenning, widow of the late James Glendenning, who formerly resided at Marysville, and now lives at Mr. Gibson's old home at St. Stephen, nineteen grandchildren and several great-grandchildren survive.

#### **New Brunswick's Industrial King**

The late Alexander Gibson, Sr., was known throughout New Brunswick as "King of the Nashwaak," in view of his immense lumbering interests in that section of the province. He was in every sense of the word an industrial king, the greatest New Brunswick has ever had, and one of the foremost of the Dominion. He first made his mark in the lumbering business, but as he grew richer he widened the scope of his operations to the building up of other lines of business, one of his undertakings being the manufacture of cotton. He also branched out as a railway builder, and in conjunction with the late Lieutenant Governor Snowball was instrumental in the building of a line of railway from Fredericton across the province to Chatham.

He was a man of extraordinary personality. **In appearance he was conspicuous and would be picked out anywhere as a man of note and power.** His parents were from Belfast and were connected with the Methodist church. **No better illustration of the type of man he was could be given than the following incident: One winter evening he stood at the door of his house looking at the brilliantly illuminated cotton mill across the river, the rows of lighted cottages and the**

flickering lights of the sawmills, while down the valley of the river thundered the train along his railway. Stretching forth his arm he remarked to a friend who was standing by:

**“This is my road, all this is mine. All that you see and a great deal more has been accomplished with the brains the Almighty has given me and these hands. These are the moments when I realized that my life has not been a failure.”**

#### **Worked His Way from the Bottom**

Mr. Gibson was counted as among the wealthiest men in Canada. He was born at St. Andrews, NB, of Irish parents in May, 1819. Commencing life a poor boy, he found employment in the lumber regions of his native province. Advancing step by step was a successful man of business, **he became lessee of what was then the finest and fastest mill in the province.** It was situated at Lepreaux, and was owned by the late W. K. Reynolds, of St. John.

He had been in business for himself ever since he was fourteen. He began without any advantages excepting those that nature gave him., **for he said that his first weeks’ earnings were devoted to the purchase of a coat and pair of shoes for church on Sunday.** By his **unaided effort and in a strictly legitimate way** he built up one of the largest businesses in Canada. He built and owned the town of Marysville, New Brunswick with a population between fifteen hundred and two thousand. He erected one of the largest cotton mills in Canada and extensive concerns for the manufacture of all descriptions of lumber. He was one of the promoters of the New Brunswick railway with a mileage of nearly two hundred when his associates were unable to meet the necessary expenditure he took the enterprise off their hands, finished it himself and the road did not owe a dollar.

He sold it to George Stephen and Donald Smith, now Lords Mr. Stephen and Strathcona respectively, who subsequently disposed of it to the CPR. He built the Canada Eastern Railway about 120 miles long, which was the property of Alexander Gibson Co.

[the accompanying illustration appears to be a drawing of the photograph which appears in the Gleaner obituary – and a rather crude one at that. The Caption reads: “Well-known New Brunswick lumber king, dead at Fredericton today.”]

[Gibson’s death wasn’t reported in the Globe and Mail, New York Times, Amherst Daily News,

Beacon

Aug 21/1913

The death of Mr. Alexander Gibson removes a striking figure from the life of this Province. Born 94 years ago, in a little cottage still standing on the Oak Bay road, near St. Stephen, Mr. Gibson early began the struggle for his daily bread. **A man of indomitable will, of abounding energy, a giant almost in size and strength,** he soon began to make his mark in the world. The writer remembers him when in his manhood’s prime he carried on the biggest lumber industry in New Brunswick. **He had an office at the foot of King Street, St. John, and when not attending to the details of his rapidly growing lumber business at Nashwaak, spent his time in this office meeting ship captains, merchants and the thousand and one men of this class who did business with him. In those days he was a “ding,” and a very busy one, and the man who did business with him had to do it very promptly. He was a man of few words, being curt of speech almost to roughness, but beneath this rough exterior his friends knew there beat a great big heart.** Carrying on the biggest lumber business in New Brunswick, it was his ambition that he should have the biggest cotton factory, and when he built his big cotton mill at Marysville it was his proud boast to the writer when he inspected it soon after its erection, that it was the biggest cotton mill in New Brunswick. Mr. Gibson likewise built a railway, which he conducted for a time with profit. He was interested in politics, too, **his sympathies for the most part being with the liberal party, whose platform of free trade with the world at large appealed to his strong, self-reliant manhood.** In the election campaign of 1900, when a St. Andrews man was the standard-bearer of the liberal party, Mr. Gibson manifested his sympathy by coming into the County and assisting

by his presence in the campaign. [this would have been Mr. Armstrong himself!]

Alexander Gibson

The death occurred on Thursday last of Mr. Alexander Gibson, famous as the "lumber king of the Nashwaak," and known throughout Canada as the founder of Marysville, York Co., with its great lumber and cotton mills, and also for his railway enterprises. As he was in his 94th year, and had been in ill-health for some time, his death was not unexpected.

Mr. Gibson was a native of Charlotte County, and commenced his life work at Milltown when he secured employment as a youth in a lumber mill at Milltown at \$1 a day. He soon began to display the ability that distinguished him in after life, for he became the owner of a mill, but Lepreaux attracted him, and he transferred his activities to that stream. There he was very successful, although other operators had not done well. He was not satisfied, however with the progress he was making, and the opportunity offering to buy the valuable mills and lumber lands on the Nashwaak York Co., from Robert Rankin and Co., he availed himself of it, the purchase price, it is said, being \$130,000. Mr. Gibson was at this time quite a young man, with a good knowledge of the lumber business. He quickly improved his milling property, secured large tracts of lands for future supplies of logs, and became the principal shipper of deals from the port of St. John to the English markets. He next became interested in the development of the upper St. John, and was the builder of what is now the Gibson branch of the C.P.R. It was then the New Brunswick Railway; it extended to Grand Falls and had branches into Maine. The Canada Eastern, now a branch of the I.C.R., running from Fredericton to Loggieville, Northumberland, Co., was also his work, jointly with the late Hon. J. b. snowball.

One of Mr. Gibson's greatest enterprises was the erection of a cotton mill at Marysville, soon after the National Policy came into operation. Work was started in it in 1885. It was pronounced by experts to be superbly equipped mill, and it gave employment to hundred of persons.

In time all these enterprises passed into other hands. The CPR and the Dominion government bought the railways, the Dominion Textile Co. secured the cotton mill, and the Partington Pulp and Paper interests obtained the lumber mills and lumber lands. Mr. Gibson has been practically living in retirement for a few years.

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Le Devoir

April 14, 1913

Mort d'un millionnaire

(Services particulier)

Fredericton, NB, 14

Alex Gibson, le roi des marchands de bois, est decede ce matin a l'age of 94 ans. Le defunt etait multimillionnaire.

St. Croix Courier

Aug 21, 1913

A Captain of Industry Passed to His Reward

Alex. Gibson, Born on Oak Bay Road, Hewed out his Fortune and Left Honorable Reward

Marysville is mourning the death of its founder and foremost citizen, Alexander Gibson, New Brunswick's greatest captain on industry, who passed peacefully away at a quarter after six o'clock on Thursday last. The news that his long and useful career had been brought to a close did not come as a surprise, as it had generally been known for some days that the end was near.

He had been in failing health for the last year, but was able to be about the house until three weeks ago, when he suffered an attack of lagrippe with complications. Wednesday he seemed brighter than usual, but toward morning he had a weak spell. He retained consciousness to the time of his death.

Was 94 Years Old

Mr. Gibson celebrated his ninety fourth birthday on August 1. Besides his two sons and three daughters there are seventeen grandchildren and forty-three great-grand children. One sister, Mrs. Glendenning, resides in Milltown.

Mr. Gibson commenced business in Marysville in 1863, and continued active until three years ago, when he retired on a pension of \$5,000 a year. The Alexander Gibson Railway and Mfg. co. took over the entire business fourteen years ago. Soon afterwards the cotton mill was disposed of to the Canadian Colored Cotton Co., and in 1904 the Canada Eastern Railway was sold to the dominion government and became part of the I. C. R. system. The Nashwaak Lumber Company took over the lumber business three years ago and in June, 1912, it was sold to the Edward Partington Pulp and Paper Company, the present owners.

For years it was customary for Mr. Gibson to present \$25 to each member of the Marysville choir on Christmas day. He donated free sites for churches to the Baptists and Anglicans.

Mr. Gibson is said to have been the first . . . aid from the St. John fire sufferers, he having forwarded a cartload of flour as soon as he learned of the terrible disaster.

Alexander Gibson, lumber and cotton manufacturer, was born near the town of St. Stephen, Charlotte County, of Scotch-Irish parentage, in 1819. Commencing life a poor boy, he found employment in the lumber region of his native province. Advancing step by step as a successful man of business, he soon became lessee of what was then the finest and fastest mill in the province. It was situated at Lepreaux, Charlotte county, and was owned by the late William K. Reynolds, of Saint John.

In the year 1866 Mr. Gibson acquired the mill and lumber holdings of Rankine, Ferguson and Company, on the Nashwaak River, and founded the town of Marysville, named in honor of his wife. He at once began a series of improvements, which resulted in the building up of a town which has since excited the wonder and admiration of every visitor, a town without a peer in the dominion.

Here Mr. Gibson established mills for the manufacture of large and small lumber, also grist mills, and brickyards; and as a means of providing employment for the young people of the place, he erected and equipped one of the largest cotton mills in Canada.

A Great Industry

Mr. Gibson's timber holdings on the Nashwaak river include a large tract of land which he acquired from the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Land Company. For forty years he had cut and manufactured on an average 30,000,000 feet of lumber a year, the bulk of which has been shipped to English and European markets. A force of twelve hundred men and nearly one hundred horses was employed to handle this vast quantity of lumber. At the cotton mills six hundred hands are employed and the output is shipped to all parts of Canada. A total of twelve hundred million feet of lumber has been cut out on the Nashwaak lands in Mr. Gibson's time and they are as valuable today as they every were.

A few years ago, Mr. Gibson, by acquiring property at Blackville, extended his lumber operations to the Miramichi.

In addition to his cotton and lumbering business, Mr. Gibson found time to engage in several railway enterprises. In conjunction with the late Hon. J. B. Snowball, he built the Northern and Western railway (afterwards the Canada Eastern), from Gibson to Loggieville, which, in its course, opened up immense tracts of valuable timber lands and promoted settlement everywhere. Mr. Gibson became the sole owner of this railway in 1893, and successfully operated it until 1904, when it

was purchased by the dominion government and made part of the Intercolonial system.

Mr. Gibson also built a narrow gauge line of railway from Gibson to Edmundston, 150 miles in length, and disposed of it to the New Brunswick Railway Company which concern after operating it for several years, in turn disposed of it to the CPR.

Mr. Gibson was also one of the incorporators of the Fredericton and St. Mary's Bridge Company, which erected the magnificent steel bridge which spans the Saint John river at Fredericton, and which is now the property of the dominion government. In 1880 Mr. Gibson was one of the syndicate with the late Sir W. P. Howard that offered to construct the Canadian Pacific railway.

#### Too Much for One to Handle

In 1897, owing to the great increase in his business, which made it impossible for one man to attend properly to all its complicated details, Mr. Gibson's vast enterprises were taken over by a stock company known as the Alexander Gibson Railway and Manufacturing Company, Ltd. Mr. Gibson was appointed president and general manager of the company, and filled the position up to the time of his death, giving it his close personal attention.

He was a man of remarkable energy and it has been many years since he has taken a holiday. He had always been in the enjoyment of perfect health.

In religion, Mr. Gibson was a devout Methodist and one of the greatest benefactors of his church in the maritime provinces. He built, at his own expense, the magnificent church at Marysville and presented it as a free gift to the New Brunswick and PEI conference. He also paid the minister's salary and supported the church out of his own pocket.

Mr. Gibson's wife, who was Miss Mary Robinson, died seventeen years ago. [1896] There are two sons: Alexander Gibson Jr., ex MP, mayor of Marysville; and James Gibson. He also has three daughters—Mrs. John R. McConnell [Jennie Mary Gibson, born 1862, Lepreaux, died 1927], Mrs. Charles H. Hatt, [Annie Watson Gibson, b. 1864, Marysville,] and Mrs. Frank M. Merritt, [Mary Sophia Gibson, b. 1867, Marysville ] all of Marysville.

#### Beacon

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#### The Late Mr. Gibson

Mr. Arthur Doon, who was well acquainted with the late Alexander Gibson, and went to school with him after he had reached man's estate, says that Mr. Gibson was born in St. Andrews in a little house which stood on the shore near the Thomas Odell store. His parents were natives of the North of Ireland. An Older brother of Mr. Doon was born the same day as Mr. Gibson, and had he lived would now be 96 years of age.