

## The Lepreau Mill

Charlotte

No. 261. Lease. William K. Reynolds (of Saint John) to S. T. King and Alexander Gibson.

This agreement made and executed this sixth day July A.D. 1854 between William K. Reynolds of Saint John New Brunswick in the one part and Samuel T. King of Calais, Maine, and Alexander Gibson of St. Stephen New Brunswick on the other part, witnesseth, that the said Reynolds for and in consideration herein named, hath remised, leased and doth hereby remise and lease to the said King and Gibson all his saw mill machines, water power, and water privileges ? as the Lepreaux River in the province of New Brunswick from the tide to the head of the River. Also two gangs of saws with two or more lath machines to be erected by said Reynolds in the new mills and to be fully completed for operation by the first day of April next together with all rights to cut spruce and pine mill logs or masts and spars or other lumber anywhere near the Lepreaux river or its branches on either side up to its sources from the banks as far back as the said King and Gibson may choose to haul for the purpose of supplying said mills into logs for sawing. Also the store and wharf below the mills and the four dwelling houses belonging to said Reynolds near the mills the blacksmith's shop also the stable near one of said dwelling houses and a garden plot for each house. To have and to hold said mills, premises water power and privileges of every description rents to said King and Gibson their executors administrators and assigns for the full term of five years from the 1st day of January next the said King and Gibson yielding and paying to said Reynolds by way of rent the sum of seven shillings and six pence for each and every thousand feet of long lumber that may be manufactured in the gangs and single saws before named the quantity to be ascertained . . . and to be so surveyed before leaving the wharves at the mills and further to pay the same rate for all masts and spars sold . . . mills million being sawed, the said King and Gibson being permitted to cut and have as well for masts and spars as for the purpose of stocking said mills, such sum to be paid as each hundred thousand feet is sawed, it being understood that the said Reynolds is to have a lien on all lumber sawed and on all masts and spars until the rent is fully paid and satisfied. And the said King and Gibson . . . agree with said Reynolds that all logs they may cut under this contract and lease shall be manufactured in the said mills and not otherwise disposed of except those logs cut and sold for masts and spars and that they will manufacture all the logs which may be in the mill belonging to B. B Laurence not exceeding two million feet said logs to be manufactured in the old mills only if the said King and Gibson so choose for the sum of five shillings and six pence . . . per thousand feet that the said King and Gibson being entitled to the slabs. And the said Reynolds agrees with the said King and Gibson that he will furnish and fully complete the new mills now in course of construction by the first day of April next and to furnish the same mills sufficient gangs and single saws lamps bars dogs and tools of every description and put said mills in first-rate running order, and will also provide wharves and piling places below said mills, if sufficient ? to hold a million feet of sawed lumber and one million laths by piling the same ten thousand high, and also build a ? road with sufficient hacks? and cars to take away the edgings and refuse wood from said mills to a proper place for burning same and also that he will repair and shingle . . . in the same, also that he will raise the main dam above the mills at least one foot in height further that he will keep the same dam higher and in good order during the term aforementioned and make all repairs of a permanent character in the mills, buildings and erections hereby demised and leased, and that the mills now? erected in good working order and it is further agreed that the said King and Gibson during the term mentioned agree to keep the premises in good and furnish the mills with all saw belts, tools, implements for working and running the same, and will deliver up the whole premises in like good order, and condition as when secured

reasonable wear and tear and loss by fire and flood only excepted and will also deliver over to the said Reynolds in good order the like number of saws, belts, tools and implements that they may receive on taking possession of the same it being understood that the said Reynolds is to furnish all of said articles when the said King and Gibson take possession and that the said King and Gibson . . . good during the term of the lease. And they also agree that any improvements that may make on said Lepreaux mills for their own convenience or advantage shall be left at the end of the term without charge for the benefit of said Reynolds and that they will during the term mentioned employ a ? and competent person to have charge and management of the machinery in said mills and will carry out and burn the edgings and not allow any thing to be thrown into the river to obstruct the navigation and that they will not interfere directly or indirectly with the sale, purchase or leasing of lands or said Lepreaux River or do any act which may embarrass or prevent the said Reynolds from obtaining all the timber lands he may require to supply the said mills at any time hereof and it is further agreed that if the said mills or any of the buildings or erections hereby demised shall be damaged or destroyed by fire or otherwise the said Reynolds the said Reynolds shall repair or rebuild the same with all possible dispatch, and further that the said King and Gibson shall have leave to build, and erect dwelling houses or other buildings on the premises hereby demised, and hold the same free of ? at the end of the time specified the same shall be paid for at a time to be agreed upon by the valuation of ? disinterested parties to be named, mutually and further if the said King and Gibson at the end of said term shall have any logs remaining in the Lepreaux River or branches or lake connected with the same that said Reynolds shall rate the same at a fair price per thousand feet; and if a price cannot be agreed upon by the parties hereto that the said King and Gibson shall have the privilege of manufacturing the same on the same terms as the other logs specified in the contract. And it is further agreed that the said King and Gibson shall not assign or underlet any portion of the premises specified herein without consent in writing of the said Reynolds this clause not applying to said dwellings, houses, stable, store and shop. It is further agreed that in the new saws hereby agreed to be erected, completed by said Reynolds there shall be an edger and trimmer for the single saw as well as for the gangs and it is further agreed and understood that the lease and privilege of cutting logs and other lumber mentioned in this contract extending to all lands upon Lepreaux River or its branches or lakes whether the same are owned by said Reynolds or not, and that whatever portions of said lands are not owned by said Reynolds he hereby agrees to procure for said King and Gibson a license from the owners of the same to cut and haul logs during the term of this lease free of expense to said King and Gibson other than the pay of seven shillings and six pence per thousand which to said King and Gibson being agree to pay and which sum it is understood to be in full for all the property leased and all the rights specified in this agreement, said Reynolds not to be compelled to procure a license to haul logs from lands heretofore granted by the government to persons other than said Reynolds and the said Reynolds further agrees that during the term of this lease no other person shall haul logs into said river or branches or lakes without permission of the said King and Gibson and should any party or parties go on to haul or drive logs in said waters the said Reynolds herby agrees to pay said King and Gibson any damages such cutting, hauling, and driving or ? may occasion to them. It is further understood and agreed that the said Reynolds is to pay said King, Gibson five shillings, six pence for manufacturing the logs belonging to B. R. Laurence to be paid as fast as a hundred thousand feet is sawed and so on from time to time until the whole is sawed. . . .

In presence of F. A. Pike.

. . .

It is understood in making this agreement which contemplates allowing King and Gibson to drive masts and spars past the mills and over the dams on the Lepreaux River owned by said Reynolds he does not ? any of his rights in the same or to have it considered a private stream.

July 6, 1854.

Date June 18 1859

County Saint John

Place Saint John

Newspaper New Brunswick Courier

On Tuesday eve., Moore ELLIS of Lancaster (St. John) was lodged in the city jail charged with inflicting a wound upon the head of John CASSIDY with a sharp instrument described as a butcher's cleaver from the effects of which he died Tuesday morn. The deceased, when not under the influence of liquor, was highly esteemed by his employers, the last of whom was Alex. GIBSON of Lepreau (Charlotte Co.) for whom he had been engaged in river driving. – Presbyterian

Date September 24 1859

County Saint John

Place Saint John

Newspaper New Brunswick Courier

We learn that a young man, the second son of Abram LODGE of Chamcook (Charlotte Co.) was stabbed and horribly lacerated by a man named GARDENER at Lepreau on Sunday. The young man's life is despaired of. GARDENER was taken up and conveyed to gaol of this County. - St. Andrews Standard

St. Croix Courier

Jan 27, 1876

The Lepreau Saw Mill Burned

The water power saw mill of Mr. W. K. Reynolds, at Lepreau, was totally destroyed by fire on Saturday evening. The origin of the fire is unknown. It was discovered about 9 o'clock and when noticed had made such headway that nothing could be done to stay the progress of the flames, and they continued their course until only a heap of ashes was left of one of the finest mills in Canada. There was no opportunity to save even a belt or a saw. The mill was built by Mr. Reynolds in 1854, and was then leased by Messrs. King and Gibson, and subsequently by Alexander Gibson, Esquire, who left it to establish operations at the Nashwaak. During the continuance of the lease it performed some remarkable feats of sawing. On one occasion it sawed with one gang 67,000 feet of long lumber in ten hours, the logs being taken from the pond without being sorted for the purpose. It is believed that this, taking everything into consideration, has never been beaten.

Since Mr. Gibson left Lepreau, the mill had been run at different periods by Mr. Nathan Short and Mr. Reynolds, but it had not been in operation during the past season. IT was built with great care, and the water power, as is well known, had few equals on the continent. The cost of the mill was about \$20,000, and it was in good order and condition at the time of its destruction. It was insured for \$6000 in one of the Saint John offices. The public will be sorry to learn that a gentleman of such enterprise as Mr. Reynolds has suffered so great a loss.—Telegraph [Weekly Telegraph]

Pilot

Oct 3/1878

The New River Tragedy!

Thomas Dowd and Mrs. Eliza Ward arrested for the murder of Thomas E. Ward. And committed to the Jail in St. Andrews.

Charlotte County, it is to be regretted, has now its murder-tragedy to record. The "Shediac Tragedy" which created such excitement throughout the Province, and which is destined to create yet more, does not now stand out as the only murder-tragedy in New Brunswick.

The New River Tragedy exceeds in atrocity the Shediac tragedy, inasmuch, as a wife is implicated in the murder of her husband!

The wife of the murdered man, and her paramour, Thomas Dowd, have received the verdict of "wilful murder" by a Coroner's Jury, after a lengthened, patient, and careful investigation of circumstances and the testimony of witnesses. Thomas Dowd as principal, and Eliza Ward as accomplice.

The contradictory statement of the accused parties themselves, are deemed sufficient to fix the suspicion, if not the certainty of the crime of murder, upon them. That the awful deed—a cold-blooded, premeditated murder has been perpetrated in

New River, in this County, within the past few weeks, there is not the shadow of a doubt.

The residence where the murdered man lived, is the well-known "McGowan House," located a few rods west of the New River Bridge. It overlooks the rapid New River stream, and was at one time a favourite "Inn by the Wayside". It is on the main road leading from St. George to Saint John, and distant from the Lepreaux Mills and Village, about 3 ½ miles.

It appears from testimony adduced before the Coroner's Jury that, an improper and illicit intimacy sprang up between Dowd and Ward's wife; which bad beginning has, it is feared, culminated in the murder of the unfortunate husband.

The evidence of several witnesses went to prove that Ward left the house early in the morning to cut grass on the meadow a short distance up the river; and that Dowd went in a short time also, in the same direction. Also, that Ward never returned; while Dowd came back to the house about 10 o'clock the same morning, went to the Pantry and took a "lunch." And, that Dowd and Mrs. Ward were both seen returning during the same day towards the house from the direction of the Meadow.

A young man of Lepreaux, a few days ago, being in search of his cows in the vicinity of the meadow, noticed by the unusual movements of his little dog, that, something more than common was nigh; instituted a search, discovering the toe of a man's boot projecting out from bush and moss. Further examination discovered the body of a man, giving forth offensive effluvia of decomposition. The body was subsequently identified as that of Thomas E. Ward.

Suspicion soon pointed to Thomas Dowd as the murderer, and he was promptly arrested at Musquash—several miles distant from the scene of the murder. The wife of Ward in giving her testimony, made such and so many conflicting statements as led also to her arrest as an accomplice.

An inquest under Coroner Reynolds of Lepreaux after a protracted investigation concluded their services by rendering a verdict of wilful murder against Thomas Dowd, as principal, and against Eliza Ward an accomplice. On Sunday afternoon, Sept. 29th ultimo, two teams from Lepreaux drove into St. Andrews, and in the first was seated Thomas Dowd—in the second team sat Mrs. Ward and her daughter, with a young child about 7 months old. Dowd and Mrs. Ward entered the prison doors of the County Jail as prisoners, and Annie Ward, the daughter, a young unmarried girl of 17 years of age (with her illegitimate child) as witness in the case.

The Editor of the Bay Pilot on Tuesday morning visited the prisoners in their respective rooms. Thomas Dowd was first interviewed. In personal appearance he is small of stature—with but very little muscular development—just assassinate but not kill a fellow man in a face to face, stand up fight. His complexion is quite dark—black hair, and wearing it thickly around his mouth and on his chin. His eyes are dark, rather small, and seemingly restless. His features, take them in all, are not comely. His voice is clear and his utterance low, but distinct and rather pleasing. The whole physique of the man is against either strength or courage.

In answer to a few questions, he gave his age as over 40 years; was born in the City St. John, where his father was killed when he was quite a child. Has been living at, and about Lepreaux for the last 30 years. **Worked for Mr. Christopher Robinson, when Alexander Gibson, Esq., owned the Lepreaux Mills. Was never married.**

Had lived with the murdered man Ward, since the 5th of April last. Had a contract from Mr. Joshua Knight last winter to get out railway sleepers for Mr. Ross of St. Andrews. Declared his innocence of the crime of which he is accused, and seemed anxious to know when his trial would come on, and wanted to know if he could get a lawyer to defend him. For one in his situation, he appeared cheerful, and expressed a desire to get some newspapers to read—"to wear away the time," as he expressed it.

Mrs. Eliza Ward's room was next visited; and we found her sitting by a window busily employed in sewing; while Annie, the daughter, sat also near the window nursing her babe—the poor little creature all unconscious of the wretched condition of its mother and grandmother, trying to be playful as all babies do.

Mrs. Ward gave her maiden name as Eliza Summerton. Born at Digdeguash, Parish of St. Patrick, 43 years of age. Moved to Lepreaux in November 1877.

In person, Mrs. Ward is small—thin-featured, light complexion, but rather yellow. Her forehead is the best looking part of her face or head—indicative of

slender. Her forehead is the best looking part of her face or head—indicative of intellectuality; but lost, for want of culture. She is very free to talk, and only for a moment or so, hesitated, and seemed reluctant to answer, when questioned as to her husband's age—she soon rallied however, and talked as fast and freely as if presiding at the "McGowan House." She said she had always worked hard for a living; had sold liquor last winter, as—"she had a good 'slew' of Boarders," Such were her own words, and we would not attempt to mar them by change of phraseology, or of diction. She said her husband had always been kind to her, and she "called god to witness her innocence of doing anything to hurt him." At this stage of her conversation, her lips trembled, a tear welled up to the eye, and her whole frame seemed to shake with agitation.

Turning from the mother to the daughter, we found her much more reticent. She "believed her father had been murdered"—"had no doubt of it"—then, spoke of her child, of its "being unwell"—when the interview ended by both Mother and daughter expressing desire to get some papers to read—the mother particularly desiring to get a Saint John paper, "to see what it said," which request, received a promise of compliance.

The Bay Pilot will give full particulars of the trial when it takes place, and our readers may look forward to its columns for a plain, unvarnished report of the trial of—The New River Tragedy, as it progresses, from beginning to end.

Date March 9 1882

County Saint John

Place Saint John

Newspaper Saint John Globe

W.K. REYNOLDS, Esq. died at his residence at Lepreau (Charlotte Co.) 6:30 a.m. Born in Pembroke, Maine, he came here in 1846. He was well known as the promoter of the street railway between Reed's Point and Indiantown, but owing to the hilly nature of the locality, it was not worked successfully. He was also the promoter, engineer and builder of the Suspension Bridge over the falls. He once tried to get a charter for a traffic bridge from Thompson's Slip, Portland across to Old Fort, Carleton over Navy Island. The deceased lived in Saint John from 1846 until about ten years ago when he removed to Lepreau. He was 71 years of age.

Date January 15 1891

County Charlotte

Place Saint Stephen

Newspaper Saint Croix Courier

The death is announced of S. T. King which occurred on Sunday in Chicago where, with his wife, he had gone to spend the winter. Samuel Tyler KING was born a few miles out of Calais, Me. on Dec. 9th, 1811 and therefore was in the 80th year of his age. He first embarked in business in Baring, Me. and afterwards removed to Calais. From the latter place he went to Lepreau (Charlotte Co.) when, in partnership with Alex. GIBSON, now of Marysville, he carried on the lumber business for a number of years. After separating from Mr. Gibson he went to Calais, but only for a short time [King was Mayor of Calais 1868] and in May 1869 he took up permanent residence in St. John. From that time up to about one year ago he carried on extensive milling and lumbering operations when he retired and sold his business to his sons, Charles W. KING and Horace KING. The mill, which is situated at the south side of the river St. John, at the entrance of the Narrows, is one of the best in the province. Mr. King was twice married, his first wife being a Miss RICKER, by whom he had six children, three now living, namely Mrs. EMMERSON, Minnesota, Charles KING and Horace KING. His second wife, who survives him, was Miss BECKWOOD of Calais and two children are living, namely, Mrs. RITCHIE of Chicago and Mrs. James STRATON of St. John. The remains will be brought to Calais for interment.

Gleaner

Aug 28, 1891

On the Shore Line

Various Points of Interest in Charlotte

Through the Musquash and Lepreau Valleys

The Malakoff - Shooting and Fishing Privileges

The Shore Line Railway although a comparatively new road is rapidly extending its traffic, and besides doing a large and increasing freight traffic is having much passenger travel on account of the scenery and shooting and fishing privileges along its route. The road is well made, the culverts and bridges rest of substantial foundations and are good structures.

Along the sea shore its line of route is laid and the passenger by it sees varied scenery so that the trip far from proving monotonous is pleasing and attractive.

Leaving Carleton the road for a time skirts the sea shore and then strikes out into the country past fertile fields and neat cottages, the homes of thrifty and well doing people. The first object of special interest is Spruce Lake, seven miles long and about two wide. It has many islands and numerous bays. It was at one time famous for lumber but the axe and the still more destructive fire have long since left it bare. Now stunted cedar and spruce clothe its borders and the wild rhododendrons and white blossoms of Labrador tea mingle their beauties with that of the water lilies that nestle on its bosom. From this lake the water supply of Carleton is conducted. Pipes are laid from the centre of the lake to the town, a distance of seven miles. Here is the seven miles house, well known to old timers who used to take the stage from St. Andrews to Saint John. Boats are kept here, and many parties come out from the city to enjoy themselves.

Our train, in charge of conductor Green, is humming over the rails at a very rapid rate and it may be said in this connection that the cars are well furnished, and comfortable and neat and the conductors and other train hands all that can be desired. Fast time is made, the distance from Saint John to St. Stephen, 84 miles, is made in a little over three hours, schedule time.

Musquash, once the centre of great lumber industries, is a very pretty place. Lumbering has given place to farming, although quite a business in sawing is yet done. The farms are well tilled, the land fertile and easy to cultivate, and being in the neighborhood of large salt marshes has much hay at a very cheap rate. This place is much frequented by summer visitors who all decide after their visit that they had made a wise choice in a spot for their summer's outing.

Mrs. Richards, the station agent at his place, wins golden opinions from all by her kind and courteous treatment of all. She has a beautiful collection of choice flowers which grace the windows and add another attractive feature to the station.

But the cry of all aboard sets us moving again and we glide past low barrens clad with blueberry bushes and clumps of dwarf alders and juniper. Here and there a granite ledge crops up through the surrounding bogs, perfectly bare of verdure they are, except some straggling club mosses and lichens.

The four toots of the locomotive whistle proclaims the near proximity of a station and a few minutes brings us across the Lepreau river and we stop at Lepreau.

The place is now the remains of former splendor. A relic of what was once one of the bustling villages of this province, nothing new remains but old and deserted buildings. **Here for eleven years Mr. Alexander Gibson, the Nashwaak lumber and cotton king, began that busy lumbering life that reached its consummation at Marysville and the Nashwaak. The old saw mill stood on a high wall of red sandstone that barred the advance of the tide from the Bay of Fundy and had a fine head of water and a grand supply of logs. Nothing now remains of the mill but some old iron wheels, a few rotten timbers and a general appearance of desolation. The old store where many thousand of dollars changed hands, and where the officers of ships from all countries came to make character is now but a tottering ruin, the next winter's storm will level it with the earth.** The property here is owned by Dr. H. Reynolds who has a fine residence and shows many of the business traits that distinguished his father, the promoter and builder of the suspension bridge at Fairville. The principal hotel and store is kept by Samuel Stafford, who makes all comfortable and is a shrewd, careful business man. This is the general resort of sportsmen who leave the railway at this point and get Mr. Stafford to drive them to the many choice fishing or shooting grounds in the neighborhood. Sea or river fishing and fowling may be had and of the very best.

the station agent. Mr. Cameron. is kind and obliging and a great sportsman. He

keeps a complete outfit of all kinds of sporting requisites, knows the best spots in the neighborhood for a day's gunning and is very careful in his official capacity. The agents on this line are well fitted to make the road popular and the same may be said of all connected with the road.

It would not do to close this sketch without a reference to the Malakoff. This is a fort mounting two cannons, six pounders. Some have said that they were on board the ship, Revenge, when under command of the noted Captain Kidd, who was one of the first tourist in this locality. The guns are kept in good order by the agent and on the Queen's birthday and Dominion day belch forth their salute over the echoing waters of the lower river. They give the village a somewhat martial appearance, and, although so thought by some, yet were not placed there to repel a Fenian invasion.

This neighborhood has been much sought by the seekers after buried treasure but up to the present the spot where the bank was kept has not been located.

No better spot can be chosen in the province of those who wish a good place for game, both water and ground game, and all sorts of fish. The people are kind and courteous, and are even ready to wit on visitors. All should pay it a visit.

Gleaner

Aug 31, 1891

At Shaw's Cove

(continuation of Shore Line excursion)

One of the Pleasure Spots on the Shore Line Railway

How Weirs are Constructed and Mackerel Taken

All about the Place as a Health and Recreation Resort

**Three miles below Lepreau Station on the Shore Line Railway, the Lepreau river meets the waters of the bay of Fundy. Here a wide basin or arm of the bay may be seen, known as Shaw's Cove in old time the holding ground for the ships that visited Lepreau for deals from Gibson's mills.**

This cove is famous for its fishing. Captain William Shaw, his three brothers and sisters live here and are the owners of the land surrounding the cove, to low water mark. They have a fine schooner, the Emma, which they use for carrying the barreled fish to Saint John. One of the peculiar laws of the United States prevents any fish from being landed at Eastport, unless the vessel that carried them is classed as a coaster or freighter.