

FROM THE SCRAPBOOK
An Upstanding Citizen and Businessman, John Taylor of Tweedside, 1852
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Thursday evening, February 11, I was invited to speak to the Youth Group at St. Andrews United Church. I enjoyed it. I think they did, too. We played a word game, something like Jeopardy. The answers involved a family name in the history of Harvey. They had been requested by their leader, Heidi Little, to fill in a genealogical record and I was pleased to know that they are aware of the uniqueness of the history of the Harvey district.

Taylor Field was a name known to them. The Taylor names in the Harvey phone book are not related to the Taylor of Taylor Field. Some of us older people remember Taylor Hall - no longer standing; and there are those who would recall hearing of the Taylor store and above it a room used as a meeting place. This building many of us remember as Arthur and Annie Cunningham's store, restaurant and boarding house. That building no longer exists but its site in part would be covered by Black's Cafe.

This week I tell the story of one of the earliest Taylor's - John Taylor. John Taylor, of Harvey Station. He came to this country from Scotland in 1850; was born at Whigstreet, Parish of Inverarity and County of Forfar, in 1825, and was therefore about the same age as Lieutenant-Governor Boyd. Mr. Taylor settled on a lot of wilderness land at Tweedside, so-called, on the western shore of Oromocto Lake, in 1852, where the Swans and others had "got planted uncoricht" two years previously.

Tweedside is merely an extension of Harvey on the south. It was originally termed the Campbell block, having been granted to Captain Sir Colin Campbell. The land was divided into ten lots and sold to these people by Andrew Inches, who was then or some time shortly after dubbed by George L. Hatheway, "the king of the crown land office".

The road, instead of being a bridle path as has been said, was then at its best; better in fact than it is to-day, and no finer tract of land could then be seen between Fredericton and St. Andrews; and no finer farms can be seen on the same road at the present time. The first frame house was erected by Mr. Taylor.

He went on with his farming for a number of years, but when the American war broke out he turned his attention to business, and opened a trade between the villages and citizens of St. Stephen and Calais. This proved to be a lucky step for him and was a boon to the settlers as well. Fortune favored him and he began to be favorably known to the merchants of not only these towns, but Fredericton and St. John as well.

After the completion of the European and North American Railway (now the Atlantic division of the Canadian Pacific Railway) he sold his farm at Tweedside and removed to Harvey Station. Here he continued trading, and seeing that business at that place promised well, he erected a large and substantial building, the upper portion of which was designed for use as a public hall; the lower divided into two commodious stores for his own use. Previous to this he had become a shareholder in the York woolen mill, the largest mill of the kind in the province, and after a time became sole owner. Carrying on this business took him away from home a great deal and he decided to sell, which he did at a good profit. The mill while under his control got the reputation of manufacturing an extra fine quality of goods, which reputation it has satisfactorily sustained.

Mr. Taylor had been twice married. His first wife, Elizabeth Swan, was a woman of fine attainments and a sister to John and Alex Swan of Tweedside. She died in 1881. Three years

after he married Phoebe Amanda, eldest daughter of the late David Hart of Fredericton Junction, a lady esteemed by all who have the pleasure of her acquaintance. At the time it was written of John Taylor in a newspaper account:

“Mr. Taylor has had no children of his own but has had the care of his brother's children, two boys and two girls, since they became orphans and all who know the young folks will say that he has fulfilled his duty to them in the fullest sense.”

“He is still hale and hearty. He enjoys the friendship of many prominent men throughout the province by whom he is esteemed and respected for his many excellent traits of character.”

“Three times he has been privileged to visit his native land, thus having seven times crossed the Atlantic.”

“In his time he has contributed a good deal to the press, largely for the St. Croix Courier. His productions always show a keen foresight; a fine descriptive faculty, and an accurate estimate of men and matters. It has been said of him that he is a close observer; as glib with the pen as a true Scotchman and a worthy representative of “The land o' cakes." scotch cakes!”