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Tantramar Heritage Trust

29B Queens Road
P.O. Box 3554
Sackville, NB E4L 4G4
(506) 536-2541
tantramarheritage@gmail.com
heritage.tantramar.com



Editorial

Dear friends,

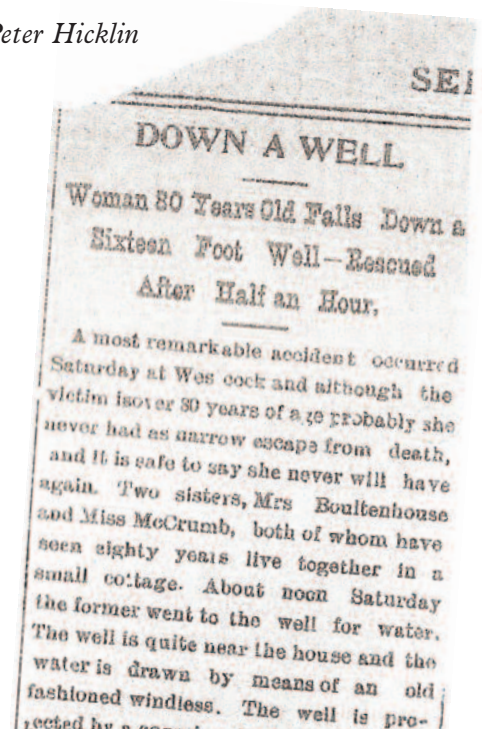
Diaries are personal keepsakes that provide first-hand accounts of events which, over time, become important historic treasures. They are the gold that history-prospectors seek. One of today's prospectors is Charlie Scobie who was handed some of these treasures by David Fullerton whose late mother Marcie (maiden name Morice) had collected and carefully stored them in her attic. Rather than just dealing with issues of their personal lives, the two diaries cover events in the community over a period of 42 years ending at the death of Kate Morice in 1930. Kate alone dutifully maintained her "log book" over a period of 33 years! We should be grateful to all these members of the Morice family for informing us, not only of their business affairs but also of the community in which they lived at the time they wrote.

Marcie also collected newspaper clippings of interest, and one of these clippings (another special treasure!) documents an accident suffered by Mrs. M. A. Boultenhouse while retrieving a bucket of water from her well in Westcock in 1903. Both articles provide information on interesting local events across the long history of Sackville. I wish to use this opportunity to remind all readers to prospect their attics for similar treasures that assist us in illuminating historical events within the boundaries of the Tantramar region over time. This newsletter would not have materialized without those special efforts by Marcie (Morice) Fullerton to conserve and

protect historical documents and her son David's careful examination of her archival information after her passing. Thank you Marcie – this issue of *The White Fence* is dedicated to your memory. And, dear readers, as you take the opportunity to pour through these interesting accounts of historic events, I hope that you will recognize the value of conserving important documents to be unearthed at a later time and which serve to inform community members of aspects (both large and small) of our local history. The Tantramar Heritage Trust has an archive to preserve these important documents to be made available to anyone interested in undertaking some historical prospecting. So, sit in your favourite chair, read on, and as always,

Enjoy!

Peter Hicklin



The Morice Diaries

An Introduction

By Charlie Scobie

University of New Brunswick Professor Emerita Gail G. Campbell has recently published an in-depth study of 28 nineteenth-century diaries written by women in the Province of New Brunswick.¹ The Mount Allison University Archives hold the diaries of three of the women: Annie Trueman (1851-1914), her sister Laura (Trueman) Wood (1856-1934), the wife of Josiah Wood, and Laura Cynthia Fullerton (1870-1953). Another diary, that of Helen Catherine “Kate” Morice (1864-1930), which has remained in the hands of her family, also deserves a place in any list of New Brunswick women diarists. The diary of her uncle, William Morice, is also worthy of attention.

The Morice diaries are contained in two substantial, hard-cover, leather-bound ledgers. The first of these contains 500 pages, measuring 32.5 x 20 cm. On the spine are the words “DAY BOOK.” The first 368 pages contain the day-by-day business transactions of a country store operated by the Morice family, covering the period from 1880 to 1890. Pages 2 through 48 had been used at some point as a scrapbook with newspaper clippings and containing mainly illustrations of contemporary events, pasted over the original Day Book entries. In 1888, the ledger had been reversed and the blank pages at the back of the book were used for some

notes (one page is missing); then starting at page 495, these pages were used for a diary written by William Morice (1815-1897), son of John Morice (1785-1860) who came from Aberdeen, Scotland, and, in 1821, purchased the north easterly part of the mill pond, including a grist mill and saw mill.

William Morice took over the family business and only started a diary in 1888 at the age of 73, by which time the third generation of Morices was running the mills. Page 495 of the ledger is headed “Diary and Memorandum of Occurances Notes by the family of Morices Commencing May 1 1888” (quotations from the diaries are transcribed as written, regardless of spelling or grammar). The handwriting is small and William seems to have been determined to get as much into each page as possible, so that deciphering it can be a challenge at times.

The diary continues into 1894, but on page 475 (one has to read the page numbers backwards) the handwriting changes and the page that begins with 23 April is penned in a more elegant and readable hand, that of William’s niece Helen Catherine Morice (1864-1930), always known as “Kate.” The entry announces that Uncle William had a fall in his bedroom and “hurt himself quite badly.” Since William was unable to write his diary, Kate takes over for the next page and a half until the entry for 7 August 1894,



Kate Morice (1864-1930). The picture was taken by G. W. Freeman, “Photographic Artist,” Charlestown, Mass. (No date).

when the original handwriting resumes. William comments that since his fall, he is “going yet on 2 Sticks but getting stronger and much better.”

William’s diary continues for another three years until 12 March 1897, the date which marks the transition to Kate’s diary. The first part of page 450 reads:

“Uncle William passed peacefully away on Friday evening at eleven o’clock March 12. Appeared as well as usual until Sunday when the disease he so much dreaded ‘Grippe’ set in, which took him from us so sudden and unexpected. He knew us all up to a short time before he died. Several of his old friends called in to see him. Mr Howard was in to see him during his sickness & talked very nicely with him. On Monday March 15th the funeral services were conducted by Rev Mr. Howard. He was the last surviving partner of the old firm of John Morice & Sons. The Morice family carried on a grist mill, saw mill

1. Campbell, G.G., “*I wish to keep a record*”: *Nineteenth-Century New Brunswick Women Diarists and Their World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017).

and carding mill for many years with great success and they were one of the most substantial and respected commercial firms in this part of the country. Uncle was never married and the business has devolved upon his nephews. Uncle William was an exceedingly well read man and so bright and genial in his manner and always ready with a joke. He was in his 82nd year. Uncle commenced his diary in May 1888, took great pleasure in keeping it – he often expressed a wish that it might be continued.”

Kate was obviously close to her uncle, and having already kept the diary going during his illness in 1894, seems to have had no problem taking it over in accordance with her uncle’s wishes. Her diary then continues until page 368 when she runs out of space, as this is where the original Day Book entries ended. The page is headed “This ends the year of 1908. To be continued in another volume.”

Kate seems to have been as canny as her uncle; rather than going to the expense of buying a new book to continue her diary she found a second ledger that had been used in the family store. This too is a hardcover, leather-bound volume of 500 pages, but with pages 40.5 x 16.5 cm, i.e. taller and narrower than the first volume. It also has the words “DAY BOOK” on the spine. Pages 1-181 contain Day Book entries for 1891 and 1892. Kate’s diary begins on page 182 with the entry: “Diary and Memorandum of Occurrences. Commenced by Uncle William Morice in the year 1880. To be continued in this volume from Vol I. January 1909.”

The diary then continues until page 292 where the last entry is for 3 January 1930 (a notice of the death of Mrs. David Estabrooks). There

follows, in a different hand, this note: “Kate Morice took very ill on Jan 20th with [blank] of the brain and passed away Jan 28th 1930, aged 66 years.” The rest of this ledger remains unused. Thus while William kept his diary only for the last nine years of his life, Kate kept hers from 1897 until her death in 1930, a period of over three decades.

William’s diary is not a personal one; with a few exceptions, it says little about his own experiences or opinions. Rather, as a “**Memorandum of Occurrences**”, it chronicles happenings in the local community – everything from concerts in the Music Hall to horse racing on the frozen pond. He does record happenings in the Morice family, mainly the children of his brother John Morice (1823-1878): Kate Morice, her brothers Frank, John, Charles and William, and her sister Margaret. In January, 1892, he reports that Frank is in bed and has “the Grip,” which is “quite rife through the Country.” (The reference would be to the “Asian flu” pandemic of 1889-1894). On 26 February, 1892, he writes that “Frank H. Morice died this morning: at the age of 33.”

Not surprisingly, William’s diary contains many references to the family business, especially the various mills. One matter seems to have weighed heavily on his mind: the burning of the grist mill in 1882. Shortly before his death, on the last page of his diary, in February 1897, he gives his account of the event, making clear that he was in no way responsible for the fire. He writes, “The Grist Mill burned in 1882, on Sunday. Was in my opinion caused by over heating the water wheel shaft. The Journal was not greased as it should have been. Ferguson told James Mair some time before that the Rats eat off the

Grease. If Ferguson had told me I would have at once remedied that... Our loss on up to this date 1897 cannot be less than \$10,000. I blame laziness for nearly all of it... this is my opinion of the matter... William Morice Senior.”

As in many diaries, there are frequent references to that perennial topic, the weather. It has to be remembered, however, that weather conditions could often have a bearing on the operation of the mills – from the state of the ice in winter, to the level of water in the pond during the summer.

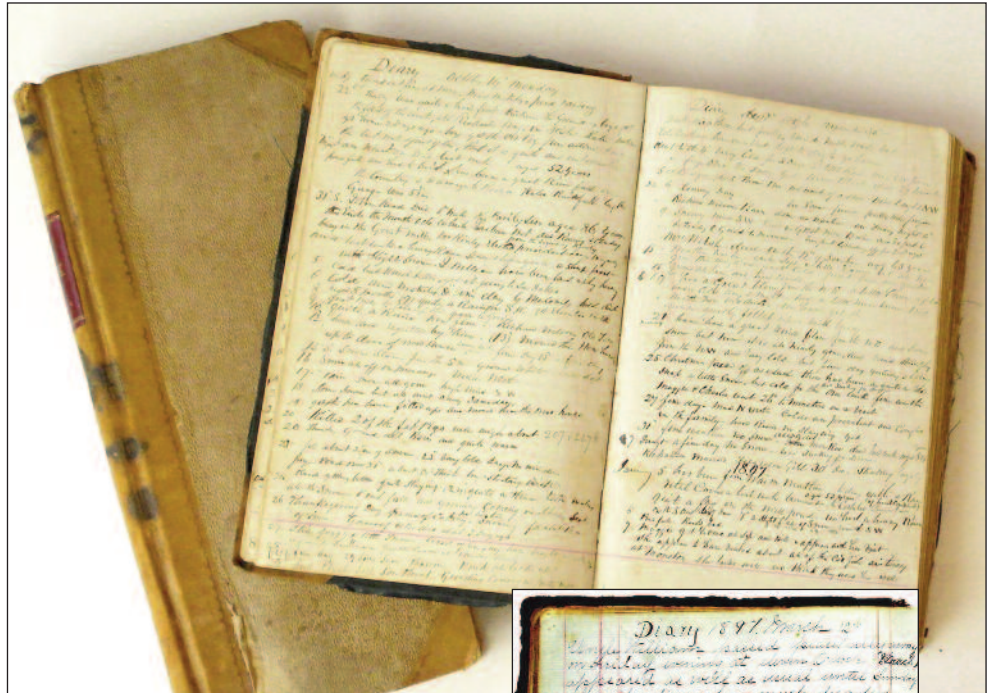
William did take some interest in politics, particularly the federal election of 1896. The contest in the Westmorland constituency was particularly close, with Conservative candidate H.A. Powell and Liberal candidate C.N. Robinson running neck and neck. On election day, 23 June, 1896, “They made Bon fires at Cranes Corner – made by the Grits – and burnt Dr Tupper in Effigy” and “Reported the Yankees sent on to help the Grits in the election about \$10,000.00 which is now reported it was counterfeit money. Quebec went all for Gritism.” As William reports on 10 July, in Westmorland, after a recount, Powell won by a majority of 15 votes (nationally, the Tories under Sir Charles Tupper won a plurality of votes, but the Liberals under Wilfred Laurier won a majority of seats, and formed the government).

Kate Morice was the daughter of John Morice Jr. (1823-1878) and Ann W. Wilson (1826-1913). She attended the Mount Allison Ladies’ Academy from 1879 to 1882 where she studied painting. One sketch and several oil paintings of hers have survived, though only one page in her diary, which refers to “sketching in a lake scene,” suggests that she may have

continued painting in later life. She never married and lived all her life in the Morice family home beside the mill pond, along with her brothers John and Charles, and sister Margaret, none of whom married either.

In her diary, Kate follows the general pattern established by her uncle William; she applies his term “**Diary and Memorandum of Occurrences**” to her own work (page 182). She recounts events occurring in her own family, in the Tantram community and, to a lesser extent, in national and international affairs. There is no indication that she was ever employed in any way, though she does maintain a close interest in the family business, with most of the work now being done by her brothers Charles and William. Like her uncle, there are many references to weather in her diary, but perhaps even more than he, she is aware of how the weather has a bearing on the operation of the family business. Most years she notes when the pond freezes over and when the spring thaw allows the mills to resume operations. She also notes when “the boys” (her brothers) are able to cut ice from the pond and store it in the icehouse for sale within the community during the rest of the year. She monitors the water level in the pond, especially when very heavy rain might pose a threat to the mill dam. In summer she notes when the weather is favourable for cutting hay on the marsh.

Kate led a busy social life which involved entertaining as well as being entertained by a wide circle of family and friends. Visitors were invited to tea and, if they came from a distance, they often stayed for several days. Similarly, she enjoyed travelling to visit and sometimes stay with friends.

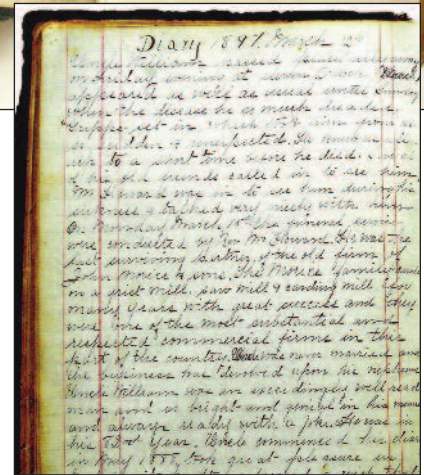


ABOVE The two “Day Books” which contain the Morice Diaries.

AT RIGHT Page 450 in the first ledger, the point where Kate Morice records her uncle William’s death and commences her own diary.

This “endless round of visiting and being visited” was very characteristic of the period.² In her diary’s earlier years, travel was by carriage in the summer and sleigh in winter; later it was by automobile. She and her family made frequent use of the Intercolonial Railway especially for visits to Amherst and Moncton. Given today’s train service, it is interesting to note that she could go to Amherst to shop or visit friends and return on the same day – by train!

Much more so than her uncle, Kate provides a rich source of information on the life of the local community. In many ways she adopts the stance of an impartial observer, seldom revealing where her own sympathies lie. Churches played a central role in society, and Kate reports equally on events in the life of the Methodist, Baptist and Church of England (Anglican) churches, and to a lesser extent of the Roman Catholic



Church. A feature of the life of many groups (church and otherwise) was an annual excursion, sometimes to Cape Tormentine but often to the Morice property that catered to picnickers and offered sails on the lake in a launch. Present at many of these excursions was the *Citizens’ Band*. There is also an occasional mention of the *Sackville Cornet Band*.

As a graduate of the Ladies’ College, Kate maintained an interest in “the Mount Allison institutions,” often reporting on the annual “exercises” and noting who preached the Baccalaureate Sermon. At the May, 1897, event, Lieut. Governor McClelan, who was in attendance, “made some remarks about life at

Mt Allison in the long, long ago, reviving pleasant memories to many of the old students.” She reports the celebration of the Jubilee of the Ladies’ College on 4th and 5th October 1904 when “over three hundred old students attended.”

The entry for 11 June, 1899, provides a graphic account of one of Mount Allison’s disastrous fires: “The University Residence in a little over an hour this Sunday morning was rendered a mass of blackened and broken walls and crumbled bricks. And not only was the building itself destroyed but practically everything in it fell a prey to the flames. The fire was discovered between five and six o’clock by Matthew Pringle. The greater part of the parlor furniture was saved. With great difficulty the Hospital apparatus was saved. Mrs Mundy’s loss was very heavy. She lost a very handsome piano besides clothing, bedding etc. Prof Tweedie lost his library valued at \$2,000 dollars. A great many of the students lost their winter clothing. There was \$40,000 insurance on the building and \$5,000 on the furniture. The total loss will be about \$65,000 so that the loss will be in the vicinity of \$20,000.”³

While there is no indication in the diary that Kate played a musical instrument, the fact that she appreciated good music is attested by references to musical events at Mount Allison, e.g. a concert in Beethoven Hall in April, 1901, when the guest artist was the renowned pianist Leopold Godowsky. “His mastery of the piano is perfect,” she notes; “he seemed to make it live.”

Kate took an interest in national and international affairs and was obviously a keen reader of “the papers.” Her diary covers the period of the Boer War and World War I. She takes note

of such events as the death of Queen Victoria (1901), the San Francisco earthquake (1906), the sinking of the Titanic (1912) and the sinking of the Lusitania (1915). Occasionally she will summarize the latest news in her own words, as for example, her account of the Halifax Explosion written on 7 December 1917, the day after the event:

“Horrible disaster happened in Halifax on Dec 6th as the result of an explosion of the French munitions ship Mont Blanc, when she was rammed by the Belgian relief ship Imo here yesterday – was steadily increasing early today with the work of rescue progressing slowly, estimates made by city officials at nine o’clock this morning place the dead close to 2,500. The scene as dawn broke over the city was indescribable. About the smouldering ruins of what had been their homes men and women scantily clad, and with blood-shot eyes, clawed at the wreckage [with] bleeding hands in an effort to find lost relatives.”

A feature of William’s diary is the frequent reference to deaths of members of the community, usually in brief form, giving the name of the deceased and age at death. Kate’s diary also gives numerous notices of death but in a fuller form, usually providing the name of the deceased, date of death, age at death, cause of death, location of the funeral, name of the clergyman conducting the service, and a note of the attendance. Causes of death include typhoid fever, scarlet fever, small pox and

influenza. She does not shy away from recording accidents (industrial and otherwise) and suicides. Dr. Gail Campbell notes that the diaries she studied are full of accounts of illness and death but argues that we should not conclude from this (as has sometimes been assumed) that the diarists were obsessed with death and dying.⁴ This is a valid comment on Kate Morice’s diary. Death could strike at any age: medical science was much less advanced in the early 20th century than it is today and industrial accidents seem to have been more common. Funerals were important events, enabling members of the community to come to terms with loss. Moreover, references to death are often juxtaposed with accounts of happier events.

The Morice diaries constitute an invaluable source of information on life in the Tantramar area in the late 19th century and the first three decades of the 20th century. The “Day Book” portions of the ledgers (which would repay detailed study), along with the references to the mills in William’s diary and to a lesser extent in Kate’s, shed important light on the operations of the Morice family businesses at what is one of the oldest industrial sites in Canada. Kate’s diary is a treasure trove of material relating to the social history of the period. Transcribing and editing the diaries would be a major challenge but would add greatly to our knowledge and understanding of an important period in Tantramar history.

2. Campbell, *op.cit.*, p. 153.

3. Cf. the account in: Reid, J.G., *Mount Allison University: a history to 1963, Vol. I* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), pp. 233-4.

4. Campbell, *op.cit.*, pp. 284-302.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to David Fullerton for access to the Day Books containing the diaries and to Kate’s autograph book, for use of the photograph of Kate, and for much helpful information on the Morice family.

Mrs. Boultenhouse Down a Well

By Al Smith

This past March, David Fullerton of Sackville was sorting through some items from his mother's (Marcie Fullerton 1920-2015) collections and passed on an interesting newspaper clipping to the Trust. The clipping was from a 1903 issue of a local newspaper, possibly the semi-weekly *Sackville Post*, dated September 1903.

The clipping recounts an amazing story of a somewhat elderly Mrs. Boultenhouse falling into an open, 16 foot deep, hand-dug farm well after trying to draw a bucket of water for household use. The article does not say how she was found but her sister was living with her and likely discovered the mishap when she did not return. When finally discovered, she was holding onto the water bucket that was fastened by a rope to a windlass at the top of the well and only her head was above water. Neighbours were advised and immediately came to the rescue. A ladder was put down the well and William Barnes descended and fastened a rope around the unfortunate lady and she was raised to the surface – unconscious but revivable... a happy ending to a scary incident.

The newspaper did not identify who the Mrs. Boultenhouse was and only gave information that she lived with her sister, a Miss McCrum at a "cottage" in Westcock. So through a combination of genealogical research and local knowledge provided by Wood Point resident Bill Snowdon, we have been able to recover the missing information while speculating on some.

The Mrs. Boultenhouse of the story was Margery Ann (McCrum)

Boultenhouse (1825-1904), widow of John Edmund Boultenhouse (1828-1883). The property where the incident took place was on a section of the original homestead of John Boultenhouse (1795-1873) the father of John E. Boultenhouse. That property is located just off Route #935 at the top of the hill just before entering the community of Wood Point. The property is currently a vacant lot next to the home owned by Jerry Ward and Debbie Stewart – civic # 243.

Eager to see if we could find the site of the 1903 incident I checked with both Bill Snowdon and Jerry Ward and was advised that the old well site could still be found. So on Tuesday May 1st, Jerry Ward escorted Colin MacKinnon, Peter Hicklin and myself across his back fields and up an old crown-reserve road to the site where the "cottage" once stood, but now heavily grown over with regenerating forest cover. To my amazement, we easily found the well, still open and accessible, perfectly round, three feet across and lined with cut stones. Colin measured its current depth at 12 feet. Close by were foundation cellars of two small dwellings. It was an eerie feeling standing beside the site of a near tragedy some 115 years ago.

John E. Boultenhouse was a nephew of Christopher Boultenhouse, the prolific shipbuilder featured at the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre. John E. was a ship's carpenter and was likely employed at his father's small shipyard in Westcock. According to the shipping registers he was the builder of the little 92-ton Brigantine *Rose* in 1846. He was 19 years old when he married Margery McCrum

in Liverpool, England, on November 30, 1847. How and when John E. Boultenhouse got to Liverpool is not known. However, it was very common for Sackville-built ships to be loaded with lumber and sailed to Liverpool where both cargo and ship were sold and the crew would stay in Liverpool until passage could be secured for a return trip back. We can only speculate on how John E. got to Liverpool but a good guess would be as a crew-member of the Brig *Three Sisters*. That vessel was built by his older brother Bedford Boultenhouse (1816-1870) and owned initially by his father John and brothers Bedford and Reuben Boultenhouse (1820-1848). Initially registered in Saint John, NB on May 12, 1847, it was sailed to Liverpool and sold and registered there in April, 1848. The other possibility is that he sailed with his



Tombstone of John Edmund Boultenhouse and Margery Ann Boultenhouse in Westcock cemetery. Note the spelling on the stone is Margery not "Margery" which all references in genealogical searches list as the correct spelling of her first name.

own vessel, the Brigantine *Rose*, as it was sold in Greenock, Scotland in 1846.

The 1851 Census lists the couple in Canada and shows an immigration date of 1848 for Margery and lists John E.'s occupation as Mariner. The young couple lived on a property near Westcock Landing and in 1854 Margery's younger sister Ellen McCrum immigrated to Canada and moved in with them. The 1861 census lists John E. as a Ship's Carpenter so he was likely employed in one of the local shipyards. John and Margery had one son George W. Boultenhouse, born on July 10th, 1866.

John E. Boultenhouse died in 1883 and sometime thereafter the Westcock Landing property was sold, and Margery and her sister Ellen McCrum moved in (or had built) a small "cottage" on a small parcel of the original property of John Boultenhouse Sr. When John Boultenhouse Sr. died in 1873, that homestead property was subdivided and the original farmhouse section transferred to Joe Cook, a son-in-law. Joe Cook married Beriah Ann Boultenhouse (1832-1879) in 1854.

George W. Boultenhouse was living with his mother and her sister in 1901 (according to census returns) but Margery Boultenhouse died in 1904 and shortly thereafter George W. moved into Sackville. He married Mary Goodwin (1884-1968) and they lived on the corner of Queen's Road and Bulmer Lane, just 100 yards or so from the original home of Christopher Boultenhouse. George died in 1951 and Mary in 1968, the last of the Boultenhouse line here in the Tantramar region. Sadly it was the end of a once very prominent and influential family in our community.

Sources

Boultenhouse Genealogy on Al Smith's *Boultenhouse Family Tree* (Ancestry.ca), *Shipbuilding in Westmorland County NB* by Charles Armour and Allan D. Smith – THT publication in 2008 and Emails from Bill Snowdon.



The site of the near tragedy – still an open well in perfect shape after all those years



Colin MacKinnon measuring the depth of the well, May 1, 2018.

Acknowledgements

We are all very grateful to David Fullerton to making the Morice diaries available to Charlie Scobie and for passing on his late mother's preserved newspaper clipping to the Tantramar Heritage Trust (Marcie would be proud to see this issue!). Furthermore, Al, Colin and your newsletter editor are especially thankful for Jerry Ward for showing us where this now-famous Boultenhouse well was located.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, May 30, 7 pm
Annual General Meeting – Octagonal House

Guest speaker: Charlie Scobie on his new book **People of the Tantramar**. All are welcome, light refreshments.

Sunday, June 17, 12-5 pm
Official Opening of Campbell Carriage Factory Museum

Entertainment, games, blacksmithing demonstrations and the very popular annual Plant Sale.

Sunday, July 1, 2-4 pm
Canada Day Strawberry – Boultenhouse Heritage Centre

Join us for games, tours, music, and delicious homemade strawberry shortcake.

July and August
Make It Workshops

Heritage-themed children's workshops. Details TBA.

July and August – Under the Sky Events

Community events at our museums. Details TBA.

Sunday, August 12, 12-5 pm
Heritage Field Day – Campbell Carriage Factory Museum

Blacksmithing demonstrations, live music, dancing, snacks, artisan demonstrations, tours and much more.



People of the Tantramar

Charlie Scobie



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TREASURE**

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