

Middleton and Its Surroundings.

UNLIKE some other towns of the province, whose early histories are lost in tradition, carrying the reader back to those fierce contentions of French and English for the possession of this country, Middleton is a town of comparatively recent growth. But what it lacks in antiquity and the respectability of age, it makes up in the vigor and extent of its growth and material development during the past few years.

Forty-five years ago the town of Middleton was unknown. It had neither a local habitation nor a name. Where it now stands were some three or four dwellings, and one store, that kept by William A. Fowler.

tion of that line a boom, of a healthy and substantial nature, has been going on which continues until the present time. The Windsor and Annapolis railway has erected a handsome new station of two storeys, the finest on the entire line. Two new hotels have been built during recent years, the Hatfield House near the station, and the American House, kept by D. Feindel, the latter of whom aims to make his house "the best hotel in Nova Scotia, outside of Halifax." These, together with the Middleton Hotel, amply provide for the wants of the travelling public, and assure the wayfarer of the comforts and conveniences of a first-class hotel.

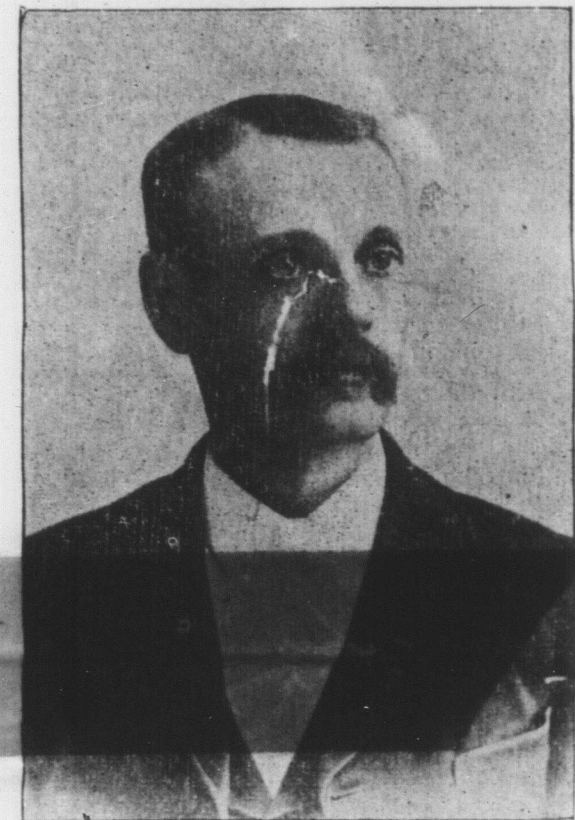
Some two years ago an ample supply of

Valley Telephone Company, which enterprise owes its existence to the push and energy of some of our business men. Not far distant are the famous Wilmot Spa Springs, the medicinal properties of whose waters have long been known, where large bottling works for the manufacture of ginger ale and other aerated beverages from these mineral waters were established some three years ago, and which are now in active operation. In another direction, but a few miles distant, are the Torbrook Iron Mines, where over 100 men are employed in mining iron ores for shipment to Londonderry, N. S., at which place it is smelted.

This town stands prominently to the front in the small fruit industry. The farm of G.

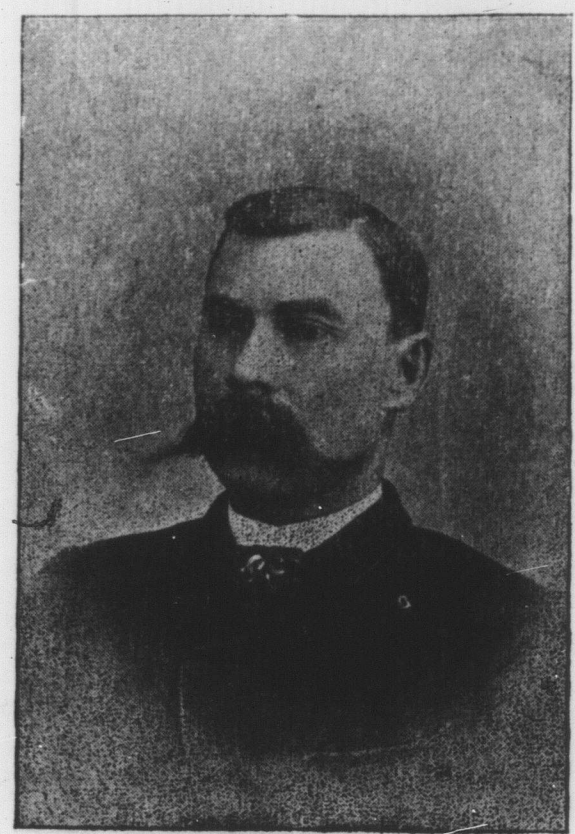
J. A. SPONAGLE, M.D.

J. A. SPONAGLE, M.D., of Middleton, is the only son of Rev. J. L. Sponagle, for many years a prominent Methodist minister of the Nova Scotia Conference, now retired and living at Middleton. Born at Parrsboro, N. S., in 1861. Received his preliminary education at the Annapolis Academy, and entered the Halifax Medical College in 1879, graduating M.D., C.M. in 1883. At the end of his third year he passed a competitive examination for the position of Clinical Clerk of the Provincial and City (now Victoria General) Hospital and won. Served one year in this capacity and the succeeding year as House Surgeon. After leaving the hospital he took a special post graduate course in New York. Settled in Middleton in 1884, where he has since remained, having a large and widely extended practice. Is Assistant-Surgeon of 72nd Battalion of militia, and a member of the masonic fraternity. Energetic and public-spirited, Dr. Sponagle has done much to promote the prosperity of Middleton and assist in the rapid growth which the town has had during the past few years. He was one of the original promoters of the Valley Telephone Company, and did much of the preliminary work at its inception. Has been a Director of the Company from its origin, and is now its Vice-President. He owns a handsome residence on Main st., which appears elsewhere.



A. R. ANDREWS, M.D.

A. R. ANDREWS, M.D., of Middleton, was born in London, England, Sept. 4th, 1836, and came to this country with his parents when quite young. Educated in the common schools and at Normal school, taking a diploma of the highest grade when 17 years of age. Taught school for some years. Took special courses at Dalhousie College for two years, and graduated M.D., C.M. from Halifax Medical College in 1879. Practiced at Aylesford and Lunenburg, having a very large practice at both places. Was appointed in 1885 by Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to a position in the British colonial office, and was sent to Turks Island, B. W. Indies, in charge of that station. In 1887 the Governor-in-Chief of Jamaica, Sir Henry Norman, K.C.M.G., appointed him an official member of the legislative board of the Turks and Caicos Islands, this appointment being for life, and giving its members the title of "Honorable." After a residence of five years in the West Indies he resigned his position owing to ill health of himself and Mrs. Andrews. Spent a summer in Nova Scotia recuperating and then took a post-graduate course in New York, under the leading physicians of that city, giving special attention to diseases of the eye, ear and throat. Holds special certificates from Prof. Webster and others for proficiency in diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the eye. Settled in Middleton in 1893, where he now enjoys a large and rapidly increasing practice.



T. A. CROAKER, D.D.S.

T. A. CROAKER, of Middleton, was born at Clarence, Annapolis County, April 16th, 1833, of loyalist parentage. Left an orphan when quite young he fought the battle of life unaided, struggling bravely against many difficulties in acquiring his education. He attended the school in his native place until he obtained a teacher's license, then attended the Normal School, Truro, and gained a diploma of the highest grade. Afterwards taught at Grandville Ferry and elsewhere for some years. Took a course at the Philadelphia Dental College, graduating D.D.S. in 1881. Settled in Middleton, where he practises, visiting Berwick and Kingston Station alternate weeks. Dr. Croaker is a superior dentist, has an extensive practice and a wide circle of friends. A picture of the Dr.'s handsome residence appears elsewhere.



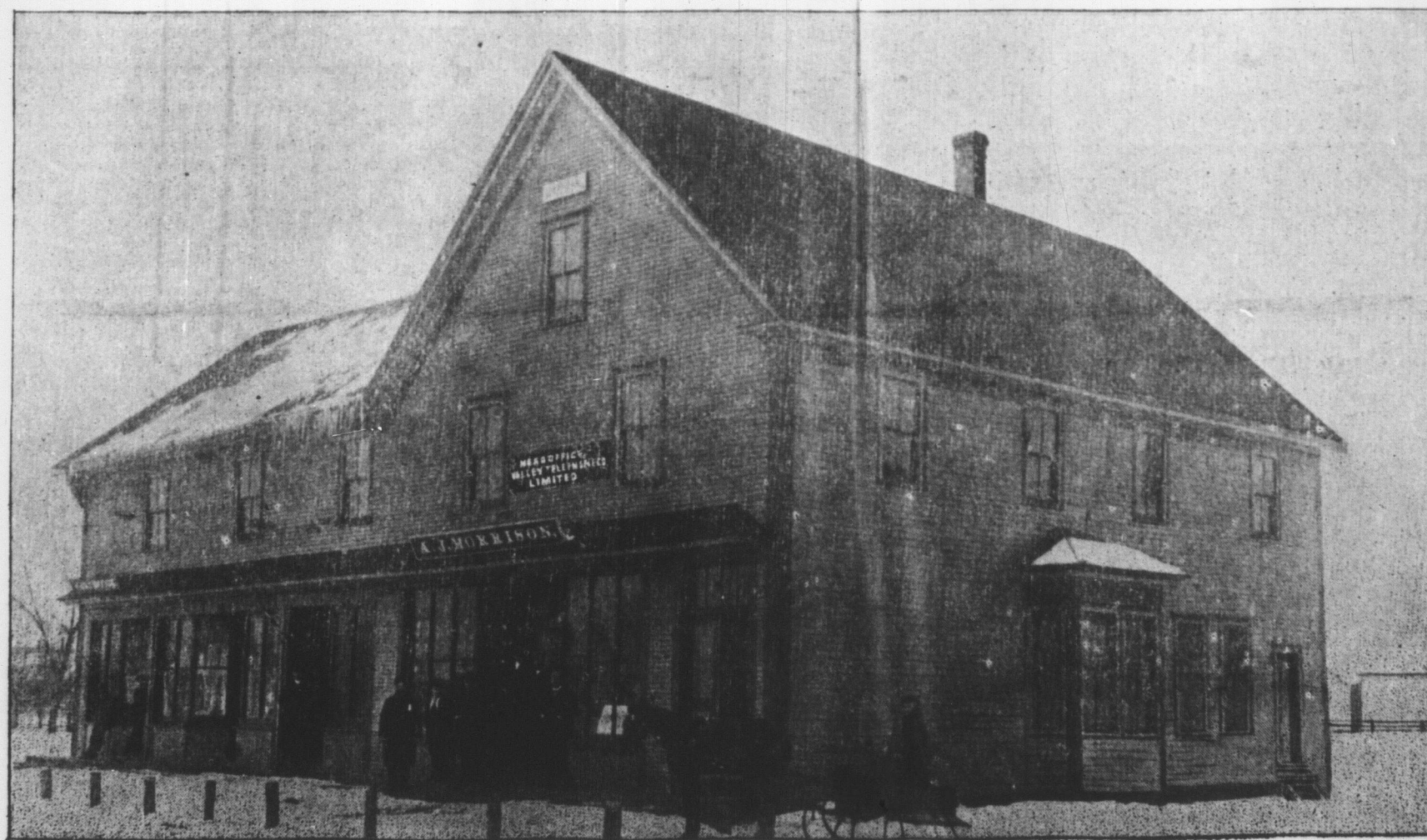
THE NEW BAPTIST CHURCH AT MIDDLETON.

Much of the land in the vicinity was of a swampy nature, covered quite largely with alder bushes and shrubs, presenting a prospect far from inviting. About this time, at an informal meeting of the people from the surrounding district the name it now bears was given to it. It is believed that this name was suggested by the late Rev. Dr. Robertson, rector of the parish of Wilmot at that time, from its central, or middle position in the Annapolis Valley. As the years passed on, one after another bought lots, drained them and erected dwellings upon them. Then came the Pearce Hotel, where for years the travelling public was entertained and hospitality dispensed to the people of the surrounding country. The opening of the Windsor and Annapolis railway

water for domestic and fire purposes was introduced into the town at an expense of something like \$25,000. A reservoir built on the side of the North Mountain, fed by perennial springs, forms the basis of this supply, from which pipes extend throughout the fire district. A fire company has been organized, officers selected, hose and reels provided, and ample provision made for grappling with fires should they occur. A fine new school building has recently been erected, and the town now boasts of one of the best equipped schools in the county.

During the summer of 1893 a new Episcopal church, of modern style and finish, has been built and opened for worship. This, together with the new rectory and grounds, has involved an expenditure of nearly \$5,000.

C. Miller, and the adjoining one of F. S. Ross, being objects of interest and admiration to the visitor. These farms, comprising about ten acres each, extend from the main street to the Annapolis river, some two or three hundred rods distant, with a slight but graded slope to the south. They comprise, without doubt, the most highly cultivated and productive ten acres in the province. Here, in the proper season, can be seen apples and plums and the various kinds of small fruits cultivated almost to a state of perfection. Mr. Miller can show the visitor a small plum orchard, comprising about one-fifth of an acre, from which he has sold as many as \$300 worth of plums in a single year, or at the unusually large rate of \$1,500 per acre.



A. J. MORRISON'S NEW BLOCK, MIDDLETON.

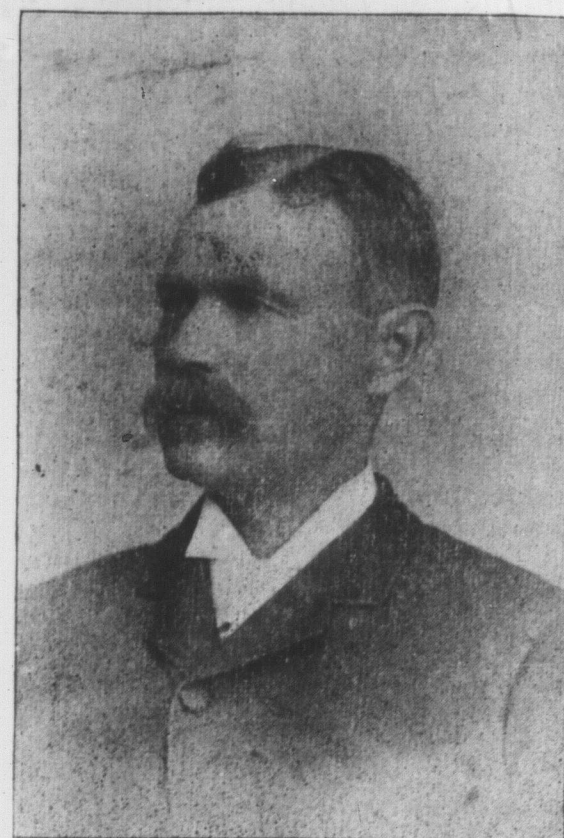
and the location of a station gave Middleton its first impetus. From that time its increase in size and population became more marked. A new hotel was built upon the spot where its predecessor stood, when destroyed by fire in 1861. Lots were laid out both on the main road and near the station, houses and stores were erected upon these, and the census of 1881 showed it to be fast overtaking the shire town and Bridgetown, in population and the extent of its business.

During the past few years it has grown very rapidly. The opening of the Nova Scotia Central railway, connecting it with Bridgewater and Lunenburg, has aided materially in its growth, and since the comple-

Within a few weeks the Baptists have also opened and dedicated a new house of worship, erected during the past season, at an expense of \$7,000. This house, a model of neatness and architectural beauty, is an ornament to the town and the finest church edifice in the county. In addition to these, there have been erected during the past few years, a large number of fine residences all constructed in modern style of architecture and presenting a pleasing appearance.

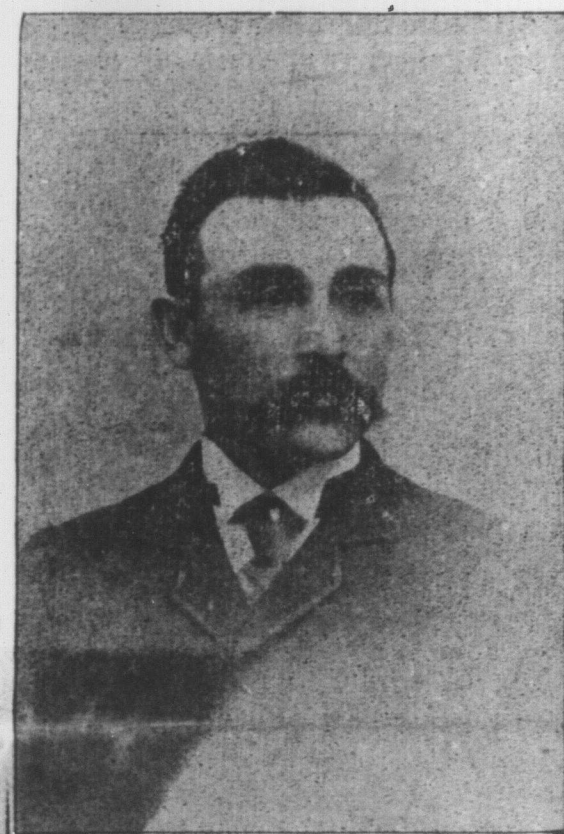
An agency of the Commercial Bank of Windsor was opened in Middleton some two years ago, and the volume of business now transacted requires three persons to attend to it. Here, too, is the head office of the

The business of Middleton is largely in the hands of young men, and the rapid development of the town during the past few years is to a considerable extent due to the enterprise and energy of these. Favorably situated in the midst of the finest fruit growing section of the Annapolis Valley, surrounded by a rich agricultural district on every side, beside one line of railway and forming the terminus of another, with a population in which young and enterprising business men predominate, Middleton may be expected in the next decade to become the largest, as it is even now the most progressive town in the valley. It is surely a town with a history before it.



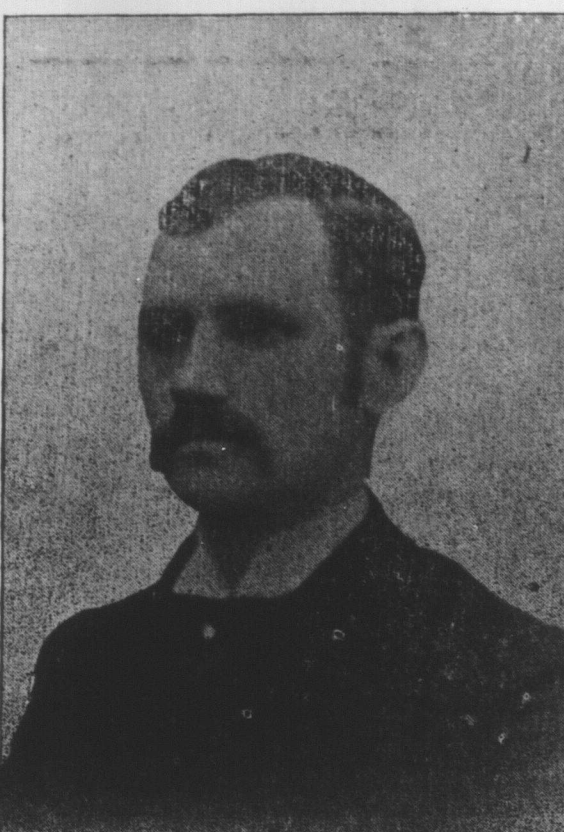
GEORGE ARMSTRONG.

GEORGE ARMSTRONG, merchant, of Kingston Station, is of Scotch descent, being a son of Walker Armstrong of Nictaux, where he was born March 13th, 1851. He was educated in our common schools and entered mercantile life at the early age of 19, at Springfield, Mass., dealing in wooden-ware and traveling through many of the western states. Returning to his native province some thirteen years ago he started a small general store at Victoriavale, in this county. Selling out there he conducted a similar business at the old Gibbon's store at Wilmot. From there he removed to Kingston Station, where he has since carried on business. He has speculated extensively in apples, shipping to the English market, and generally being fortunate in his ventures. Some years ago he was appointed provincial agent of the firm of N. W. White & Co., of London, England, one of the largest fruit houses of the world's metropolis, which position he still holds, shipping each year since that time from ten to twelve thousand barrels of apples. Besides general merchandise he deals extensively in flour and feed, handling twenty car-loads of flour per year. Mr. Armstrong is a good specimen of a successful Nova Scotian.



ANDREAS B. GATES.

ANDREAS B. GATES, of Middleton, Annapolis County, is the only child of Cal b Gates and his wife Annie Bohaker. Was born March 7th, 1857; married Bessie, daughter of Arthur Fugles, of Annapolis. Received a common school education and attended the county academy for a short time. At the age of 17 took charge of the manufacture and home business of the medicines so favorably known as Gates' Life of Man Bitters, Invigorating Syrup, etc., while his father did the travelling in connection therewith. At 21 he became a full partner under the firm name of C. Gates, Son & Co. Shortly after this the factory was burned, entailing a heavy loss, besides a stoppage of business until the present factory was erected. On the death of his father in 1887, Mr. Gates became sole owner of the business, which he has since carried on in connection with the management of a large farm. As soon as he can dispose of this farm he intends building a factory near Middleton Station, on the property he recently purchased there. The demands for his medicines have steadily increased, until now they are sold by regular agents all over Nova Scotia, a large part of New Brunswick, with occasional shipments to the United States and England. Mr. Gates is one of the Directors of the Valley Telephone Company, and is now filling the office of secretary, the many arduous duties involving upon his official capacity receiving prompt and satisfactory attention.



A. J. MORRISON.

A. J. MORRISON, merchant, of Middleton, is a native of Sydney, C. B., where he was born June, 1853, of Scotch parentage. He began business for himself in Amherst, as junior member of the firm of Dunlap, McDonald & Morrison, where he remained six years. Severing his connection with that firm he removed to Middleton in 1883, and established the business he has since carried on at that place in the line of fine tailoring and gentlemen's furnishings. Mr. Morrison is a clear headed, enterprising business man, and to-day conducts the largest and most successful business, in his line, in the county. In 1893 he erected a handsome residence for himself and the fine business premises on Commercial street, known as "Morrison's Block," a picture of which is given elsewhere in this issue. He has for several years been a director of the Wilmot Spa Spring Co., and is at present Secretary and Treasurer of that company. He is also Managing Director and Treasurer of the Valley Telephone Company, Ltd.