

RENNIE

1835 st jns ang wm f4edk of glasgow married caroline broom williams stjns

RENNIE

1835 oct gaz WM FREDK 13rd son of LATE DAVID married caroline d of thos williams mcht

RENNIE

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1839 sep nflder Mr W funeral of Jas Gower rennie will take place from his LATE residence.

RENNIE

1839 oct nflder W.F. sole exec estate JasGower rennie esq.

MOITDA

Rennie

1842 26 sep gaz WF Esq of st jns married Cath Thorburn d of mr wm mcnaab at glasgow

CASH

Rennie

1845 dec gaz WJ/R insolvent suit of jas stewart

RENNIE

1846 29 jul nfleer WF ESQ sale of hay crop on his farm - 20 acres and unexperied lease to that part of the farm near it

COPIED JOHN (55) 58

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WILLIAM FREDERICK RENNIE
Born 1812 - Died 1902.

OBITUARY NOTICE

Fred Robert J. [unclear]
[unclear]

Death's harvest for the past twelve months has robbed St. John's of much that gave its society individuality and distinction. Many of those who have passed away, by strong personality, by keenest interest in the pursuits and amusements of our little life, by large knowledge, peculiar ability or by pleasant mannerisms, had endeared themselves to those around them and gave a flavor and fragrance to the society in which they moved. Need we instance Mrs. W. Warren, Mr. John Bowring, Mr. Michael Thorburn, Father Scott and Archdeacon Botwood. Last week yet another has been added to those who have gone, leaving us still more the poorer, we refer to Mr. W. F. Rennie, who in the midst of an almost robust life, astonishingly so for one just 90 years of age, was suddenly called away.

He belonged to a time and age that was far removed from the strenuousness and self-assertion of modern life. There was an old world courtesy about him that was so modest as to be almost shy and which never obtruded itself unnecessarily.

Educated at Edinburg University - and it is interesting to note sitting in the same form with Archibald Tait, who afterwards filled so splendidly the Archiepiscopal chair of Canterbury - Mr. Rennie was ever the man of culture; but one whose deep wells of knowledge were only known to his intimates.

Though the associations of a long life furnished him with abundant and most entertaining reminiscences, yet the interests of the present never suffered by the remembrances of the past, for up to the last morning of his long life he was keenly alive to the world's progress and politics.

Mr. Rennie was born in Scotland in 1812 and came to Newfoundland in 1832. His father had carried on business here as partner in the firm of Stuart and Rennie from 1790 to 1810 when he returned to Glasgow. Although Mr. W. F. Rennie had been offered most advantageous business connection in the old land, both he and his brothers seem to have preferred the more untrammelled and adventurous life of the New World, and all of them made their home on this side, one (Robert) going to Prince Edward Island where his father had purchased 20,000 acres of land from the British Government. Mr. W. F. Rennie thought there was a good opening here for a biscuit manufactory, and after visiting the Army bakeries at Portsmouth brought out machinery and men from Scotland and built what is now known as Rennie's Mill as a bakery.

Owing to conditions of trade at this time the venture was not

a success. It is rather remarkable though that this was the first machine bakery established on this side of the Atlantic. After the failure of his business, Mr. Rennie was appointed, about 1848, Usher of the Black Rod in the Legislative Council, which office he held to the day of his death, being the oldest Civil servant in the Colony.

Mr. Rennie's home and social life is sympathetically reviewed in the following tribute from the facile and kindly pen of D.W.P.:

"Mr. Rennie, who has just passed away at the ripe age of 90, was so extremely modest and unassuming that few persons of the present generation were aware of his intellectual capacity and energy, or of the immense service he rendered to this colony in times past. Of no one could it be more truly said that "he did good by stealth, and blushed to find it fame." Only those of us who are verging on the seventies or past it, can now remember Mr. Rennie as the energetic, devoted secretary of the old Agricultural Society.

All the great improvements that have taken place in farming, in the breed of cattle, and in the cultivation of the soil, are mainly due to his unwearied zeal. In his day the general public looked on farming in Newfoundland as a pure delusion. Just in the same spirit as the old West Country man exclaimed when he heard of our making roads: "Ah! said he, "they will be having carriages next in Newfoundland!"

Mr. Rennie, and his brother David, however, believed in the country, and for several years they carried on a grist mill on the site now familiarly known to us as "Rennie's Mill."

The increase in American and Canadian flour, and its cheapness, put an end to their enterprise. I need not say it was the first mill in modern times, if we except the one erected by John Guy in 1618 at Southern River, near Cupids.

Mr. Rennie belonged to one of the oldest Scotch Families of merchants in the colony. His father's partner, Mr. Stuart, was a cousin of Tom Campbell, the poet. The two young Scotchmen, who first came out to this country in 1832, were highly cultivated and extremely well educated. Never were two brothers more united and affectionate. Both took a keen interest in literature. David was especially a book man. Both, however, were so morbidly shy and diffident that only their most intimate friends really knew of their gifts. David married rather late in life the eldest Miss Hoyles, Sir Hugh's sister, Frederick became the husband of the beautiful Caroline Williams, youngest of a bevy of lovely sisters, one of whom was the mother of Lady Rayleigh and Hedley Vicars. Others were Mrs. Blackman, and Mrs. Pimsent, Sir Robert's mother.

The most distinguished scientific man of our time, Lord Rayleigh, is a relative, as well as the great Oriental scholar Sir Monier Williams. Mr. Rennie's first wife died quite young, dearly beloved by her grief-stricken husband and friends. Mrs. Bowring, mother of the Hon. Edgar and Henry Bowring, was her oldest daughter, Mrs. R. Harvey the youngest, and a son, D. Rennie. Several years after her death he married his second wife, Miss McNab, mother of Mrs. Withers, Mrs. Rothwell and an elder daughter who married at home; also five sons, of whom three reside here and are well known and respected in the community.

Only those who had the pleasure of Mr. Rennie's intimate acquaintance could appreciate his sterling qualities, his kindness, his keen appreciation of humor, and his high intellectual attainments. His family, who were so beloved, will sadly miss his genial presence. To each and all of them we tender our warmest sympathy. Mr. Rennie was the younger member of a generation that has completely passed away - a link with the past, with a dear old-fashioned society that shoddy and democracy has almost obliterated.