

(by Bill Stevens - slightly edited from article originally published in the March 2006 Newsletter with a copy of the ad which does not appear here)

The Special Collections room in the St. Catharines Library's Downtown branch has many old directories. Looking through these old city directories can be fun, and one never knows what interesting advertisement you will find. The following advertisement was found in an 1877-1878 City Directory of St. Catharines and reads as follows:

The Commodious, Fast Sailing

Steam Yacht Ferry

"Prowett Beyer"

Has resumed her trips between

Port Dalhousie & St. Catharines

and will run as follows until further notice

Leaves Port Dalhousie at 8, 10, A.M., 1, 3, 5, P.M.

Leaves St. Catharines Lock 2 qat 9, 11, A.M., 2, 4, 6, P.M.

an omnibus will run in connection with the boat, to all parts of the city.

Calls at the Ellis House will receive prompt attention.

Chas. Quackenbush,

Late Cooke & Quackenbush.                      Proprietor

One must remember that the automobile had yet to be invented and people used horses, trains and ships. In 1877 the Second Welland Canal was still in use. Remnants of Lock One still remain in old Port

Dalhousie. Ships entered the harbour and passed through Lock One near the intersection of Lakeport Road and Lock Street and into the canal, which ran through today's Rennie Park area and along a route which is now the rowing course and then under the Q.E.W. Henley Bridge. Following the route of Twelve Mile Creek, ships sailed up towards Lock Two located near Welland Vale.

The PROWETT BEYER was constructed in Buffalo, New York in 1874 and originally named the Prowett Boyer. It was registered as the PROWETT BEYER on 21 August 1875 and Port of Registry was St. Catharines. An advertisement in the October 9, 1875 St. Catharines Daily Times announces that the steam yacht PROWETT BEYER goes between Port Dalhousie and St. Catharines and that A. Quackenbush is the proprietor. The ship was built of iron and wood and had a gross tonnage of ten tons, with a net tonnage of six tons. It was 46 feet long, had a breadth of 9 feet and a depth of 4 feet, with steam screw propulsion, and one deck. The hull was built in the Carvel style with a round stern type, no figurehead and unrigged rigging and made of composite hull material. The PROWETT BEYER burned on Lake Erie on June 18, 1892 and registry closed on July 21, 1892.

Charles QUACKENBUSH was born in Fort Erie around 1853 to Alonzo and Elizabeth Quackenbush. Charles is listed on his marriage registration as an engineer, living in Toronto and a member of the Church of England. He married Mary Piouette, daughter of John and Marry Ann, at the residence of William Hutchinson, Port Dalhousie on 11 July 1879 by Rev. John Gribble of the Church of England. This was a couple years after the advertisement appeared in the City Directory. Alonzo Quackenbush is listed in the 1865 Directory living on Queen Street in Port Dalhousie and shown as a tugboat owner. Alonzo is buried in St. John's Cemetery in Port Dalhousie. The 1877-1878 Directory lists four Quackenbush's in Port Dalhousie (Capt. Alonzo, Capt. Conrad, Charles and Edward); Charles is listed as living on the west side of Lock Street. The 1881-1882 Directory has two Quackenbush listings in Port

Dalhousie: Charles, a tug boat proprietor living on Queen Street near Gertrude; and Connor, also a tug boat proprietor, living at the corner of Lock and Main streets. In the 1881 Census Charles and his wife Mary are shown as having a baby boy, Conrad, born in September 1880. The 1898 Directory entries for Port Dalhousie show only a Capt. and Mrs. Quackenbush and they are living on Queen Street. A newspaper entry in the March 14, 1900 edition of the Standard indicates that Captain C. Quackenbush and family moved to Niagara Falls, New York to take up residence there.