

## Fly Killer was a unique Bowdoinham Product!

By Frank Connors

The honorable James H. Ames, attorney, Judge and entrepreneur was a dynamic figure in Bowdoinham in the early 1900's, and Eureka Fly Killer was one of the reasons why. A "stinky, stinging liquid," it came in bottles and unsealed cans, and its sole purpose was to help farmers remove pests from their stock and farm buildings.

"Shake thoroughly," the directions say, "always apply in a mist or spray. For destruction of flies on stock, apply morning and night. After several applications, once a day may be sufficient. Entirely harmless if applied according to directions," the directions say, And then comes a caution, "like any good article (Eureka Fly Killer) should not be used excessively."

Intended primarily for large stock such as cows and horses, directions also talk of Lice and other vermin. "For lice on cattle," directions say, "spray thoroughly on the animal once a week. For vermin in poultry houses, spray the roosts and whole interior of the building every two weeks, or until rid of the pests."

In his book, "**Bowdoinham Was My Hometown**," John Wallace Ames, (son of James Ames) reports the Eureka manufacturing plant, painted yellow, "to excite business," was located near the shore of the Cathance River, where the Kendall Brothers built their Fertilizer plant. The Town now owns that site as a recreation area. Ames moved his business upriver about a quarter mile when the Kendall's proposed their Plant. The product was distributed nationally. John Ames often described the Eureka Fly Killer formula as a "family secret, to die with me," but he often added, "it smelled a lot like kerosene!"

James Ames was appointed municipal judge for Bowdoinham in 1917 and kept that position nearly two decades. He was twice a candidate for Governor of Maine as a Prohibitionist. He and his wife Nettie raised seven children in their Main Street home.

