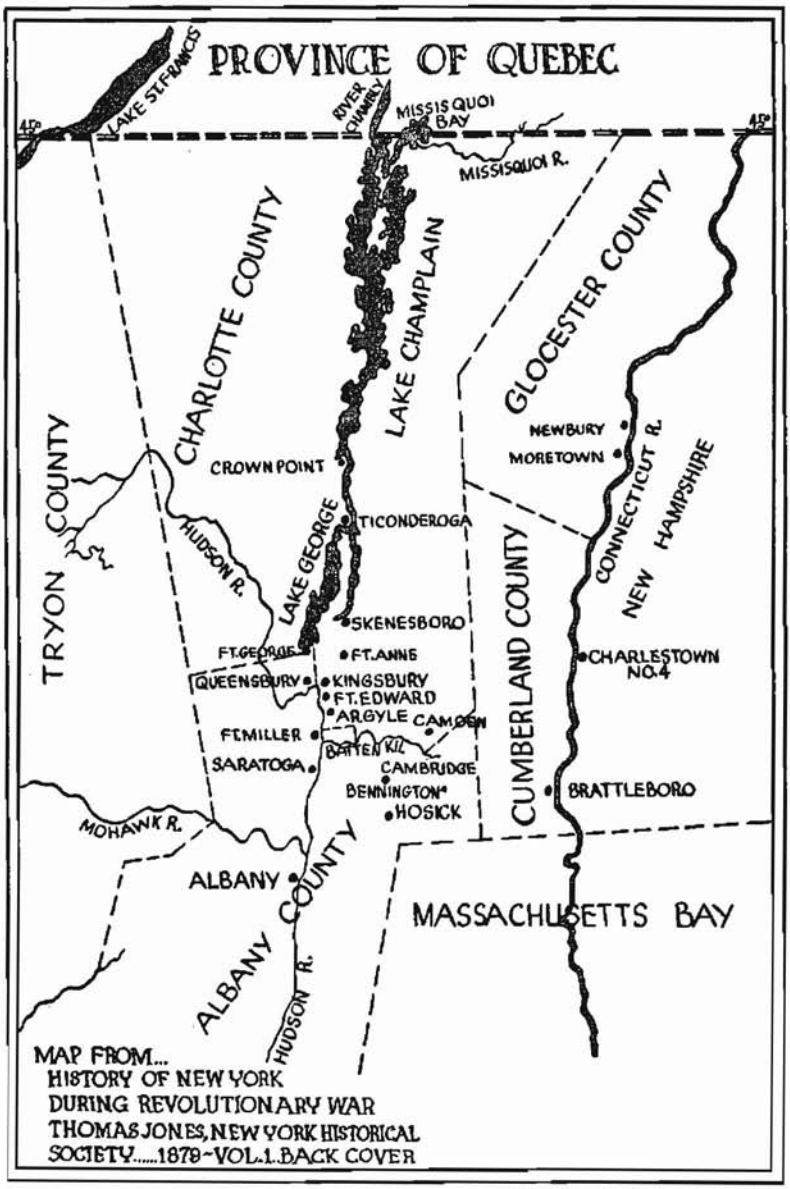

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THE MISSISQUOI LOYALISTS

By THOMAS C. LAMPEE

Relative to the Loyalist settlement at Missisquoi Bay in the spring of 1784, there is an unusual amount of contemporary, documentary evidence. As it happened, this settlement did not meet with the approval of the provincial government, and there ensued a rather spirited correspondence between Quebec headquarters on the one hand, and the Loyalist settlers and local military authorities on the other. Through the courtesy of the Public Archives Office at Ottawa, it has been possible to obtain copies of the more pertinent of these letters. Acknowledgment is due to the excellent treatise by W. H. Siebert on a similar subject, The American Loyalists in the Eastern Seigniories and Townships of the Province of Quebec, *in pointing to the existence of this correspondence.*

An attempt has been made to give a short sketch of the antecedents and background of these settlers, illustrated by the personal experiences of Peter Miller, as perhaps typical of the vicissitudes encountered by an American Loyalist in Canada, and thanks are due Miss Agnes Bradley of St. Armand who has kindly furnished certain family records of her ancestor, an early settler on that seigniory. The paramount importance of the Burgoyne Campaign in bringing about the migration of the New York Loyalists to Canada has necessitated some treatment of the Loyalist participation in that campaign.

Owing to the fact that the title under which the settlement was made proved defective, and as the situation was further complicated

by other conflicting claims and grants, it has been thought desirable to include a brief account of the earlier Indian, French, and English settlements in the immediate vicinity.

T. C. L.

Chapter I. *The Champlain Frontier*

IT is a well-known fact that during the American Revolution, New York State was a stronghold of Loyalism. While a difficult matter to estimate with any degree of certainty, available records would seem to indicate that the Loyalists may have constituted an actual majority of the total population, and the statement has even been made that New York furnished more men to the British forces engaged in this war than to the American.

What was true of the state as a whole applied equally to the then recently settled region extending from a point a few miles above the city of Albany to Lake Champlain. This area lay directly across the old war trail that ran through the Champlain Valley from Canada to the Hudson, and within easy striking distance of the French fortified posts at Ticonderoga and Crown Point; consequently, during the entire period of the Colonial Wars it had been unsafe for occupation.

The fall of Quebec in 1760 removed the menace of the French and Indians, and the region above Albany was soon opened for settlement in the manner usual to the colony. The lands were granted in large tracts to speculators: the Cambridge Patent of 31,500 acres in 1761, the Anaquassacoke Patent of 10,000 acres in 1762, the Wilson Patent for 8,000 acres in 1765, and others in like manner. These speculative proprietors in turn disposed of their holdings as rapidly as possible, usually by means of long-term leases on easy payments.

The tenants who leased these lands included large numbers of recent immigrants from Europe, some Scotch and Irish from the British Isles, with many Germans from the Rhine provinces. There was one small group of these new arrivals who could have been classed as of either Irish or German derivation. They were from Limerick County in Ireland, the descendants of refugee Germans from the Palatinate who had been colonized in Ireland during the reign of Queen Anne in an attempt to promote the Protestant interest in that kingdom. Due to the ministrations of John Wesley, these Irish Palatines had become zealous Methodists. The exactions of land-

lords eventually rendered living conditions in Ireland so difficult that in 1760 Phillip Embury, a lay preacher, conducted a party of his neighbors to New York City for the purpose of establishing there a linen industry. Cheap land on the frontier proved more attractive than the fabrication of linen, with the result that in 1773 Embury negotiated from James Duane, lawyer of New York City, a perpetual lease covering lands in the Camden District of Charlotte County on behalf of himself and the following associates: David Embury, Paul Heck, John Dulmage, Edward Carscallen, Peter Sperling, Valentine Detler, Abraham Binninger, Nathan Hawley, Elizabeth Hoffman, and Peter Miller.[1]

Peter Miller had been a weaver by trade. He had not come with the original party but had sailed from Ireland with his family in April, 1769, and on the long voyage to America one of the small children had been lost overboard. Soon after landing at New York City he had removed to Charlotte County and in 1773 participated in James Duane's lease to Embury to the extent of 125 acres. In the year following he secured, on a lease forever from Ryer Schermerhorn, an additional 210 acres just across the Battenkil in the Cambridge District of Albany County. The rent of the Cambridge farm was not to begin until five years after the date of the lease; it amounted to £7 annually in "York currency." By 1776 Peter Miller had made considerable progress in his farming, having cleared and fenced 46 acres of land, and erected a house and farm buildings at a cost of £39 "York." In addition, he had gotten together a respectable head of stock consisting of two mares, two colts, six cows, a yoke of oxen, a young steer, two calves, six sheep, and fourteen swine of assorted sizes. Relatively, he had prospered.

The advent of the political troubles in 1775 found a large section of this frontier population apathetic toward the issues involved. The foreign immigrants had not been long enough in the country to have become imbued with the political philosophy of the Revolution; they had come to America as a result of economic pressure and they had come land-hungry, intent only on the laborious task of subduing a wilderness. As a rule, these immigrants were not "politically minded"; they preferred a stable government under whose protection they could continue to clear their farms in peace, and in this case the established British institutions seemed to offer the desired strength and security. The conditions and opportunities that they had found

1. *History of Washington County,* W. H. Hill, p. 232.

in the new country were so great an improvement over those that they had left in Europe that an armed insurrection seemed to most the height of folly. As to the little Methodist colony in the Camden District, it was naturally influenced by the attitude of John Wesley, who was a militant opponent of the Revolution. With a population so constituted, a strong Loyalist sentiment would be expected, and such was the case on the Champlain frontier.

Moreover, there was scattered through the countryside a sprinkling of half-pay British officers, many of whom had settled down in the province following the reduction of two battalions of the 60th, or Royal American Regiment, at the conclusion of the last French War. These retired officers were persons of consequence in their communities, the natural leaders of public opinion, and as a matter of course their influence was actively exerted in their neighborhoods in the interest of the constituted authority.

Despite their numbers, the New York Loyalists were unable to offer any effectual resistance, and the Revolutionary Party was soon in control of the government. For the balance of the year 1775 the cause of the Revolution was everywhere successful and, with an American army invading Canada by way of Lake Champlain, the Loyalists on the border could do little but bide their time and wait for the tide to turn. The tide did turn in the following year, but the difficulties of the Loyalists increased rather than diminished. A neutral attitude would have suited many, had it been possible to maintain it, but the inhabitants were required to take an oath of allegiance and serve in the militia or else to submit to some form of restraint. There was the case of Peter Miller, farmer of Cambridge District in Albany County, who refused to subscribe to the oath of allegiance on the ground that he had already taken one as a British subject. John Younglove, chairman of the Cambridge District Committee of Correspondence, entered a complaint with the county committee, and it was voted "to apprehend the said Peter Miller, dis-arm him, and place him under bonds for his future good behavior";[2] the expense of his subsequent arrest and appearance before the committee in Albany, nineteen shillings and five pence, was ordered "levied by distress on the goods and chattels of the aforesaid Peter Miller."[3]

Until midsummer of 1776 the belief had been prevalent that a peaceful solution would be found of the matters at issue between the

2. *Albany County Committee of Correspondence*, Vol. 1, p. 413.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 543.

colonies and the Ministry, but with the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4th it was generally realized that a serious conflict would follow, and there set in a steady trickle of the more zealous Loyalist partisans toward Canada. The Johnsons and Butlers, the landed gentry of the Mohawk Valley, had already departed with their Highland Scotch retainers and Indian allies. Their example was soon followed by others, including such colorful figures as John Peters, a Yale graduate resident in Mooretown, Gloucester County, the Jessup brothers, lumber barons of Charlotte County, and sundry of the half-pay officers.

On July 12, 1776, the Albany County Committee of Correspondence passed a resolution requiring all the half-pay officers of the British Crown resident in the county to give a parole not to bear arms against the United States, hold any correspondence with enemies of the United States, or to depart the county without the leave of their district committee; the alternative offered was arrest and confinement.[4]

On the day following the passage of this resolve, Francis P. Phister appeared before the committee and entered into a parole.[5] Mr. Phister, a reduced lieutenant of the famous Royal Americans, lived at Hoosac Four Corners where he had a fine estate and a mill, and was known by the courtesy title of "Colonel" Phister. During his service in the Royal American Regiment he had been an engineer officer and in the previous February had refused an offer tendered by General Schuyler to serve as chief engineer of the American army in Canada.[6] He now under compulsion had given a parole, a violation of which would deprive him of the privileges that he might normally expect should he later find himself a prisoner of war.

As the months passed, the more restive spirits among the Loyalists continued to slip away toward Canada to take service in Sir John Johnson's newly organized Provincial corps, the "King's Royal Regiment of New York," or more familiarly, the "Loyal Yorkers," which was being recruited from the Mohawk Valley and the Champlain region. However, it was in the autumn of 1776 that the opportunity came for which so many of the Loyalists had been waiting.

During the summer General Sir Guy Carleton had swept back the American invasion from Canada, and by October had penetrated deep into enemy territory at Crown Point. Here he was held up by

4. *Albany County Committee of Correspondence*, Vol. 1, p. 488.
5. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 489.
6. *Lt. Hadden's Journal*, Horatio Rogers, p. 134.

the lateness of the season and ultimately was forced to retreat to winter quarters in Canada, but while the British army was at Crown Point Loyalist recruits flocked in. Among them was Peter Miller, who had earlier suffered arrest at Albany. He came with a party of some thirty Irish Palatine farmers from his neighborhood under the leadership of Justus Sherwood. Sherwood, as proprietor's clerk of New Haven, Vermont, had been active in the land troubles that preceded the Revolution and just before this had been mistreated by the Bennington mob, a piece of bucolic horseplay that cost the colonies the services of a brilliant officer.

It is probable that these Loyalists had left their homes for what they believed would be but a temporary absence, the brief interval necessary for Carleton to reach Albany and restore authority in the province. The event proved quite otherwise, and it was just as well that they were not aware of the misfortunes that were to follow. When the British army retreated over the Lake, they had no choice but to go with it, hopeful, of course, that they would be back as soon as the season would again permit of active operations.

Chapter II. *The Burgoyne Campaign*

IN the spring of 1777 the stage was set in Canada for the most spectacular and dramatic military operation of the war, the ill-fated expedition of Lieutenant General John Burgoyne. During the previous winter a splendidly officered and equipped army had been assembled, and carefully trained in the tactics of wilderness warfare. The plan was to ascend the Champlain Valley by boat, take the forts at Crown Point and Ticonderoga, then march overland to the Hudson to effect a junction at Albany with Sir Henry Clinton, who was expected to advance from New York City.

Burgoyne did not anticipate serious military resistance, but the problem of maintaining the long line of communication and supply was a troublesome one, and he was counting heavily on the support of the New York Loyalists, once in the difficult country south of the Lake. With this in view, Ebenezer Jessup and John Peters had each received provisional appointments to the command of Loyalist corps, which they were expected to raise, Jessup in Charlotte and Peters in Albany County. Carleton had supplied Burgoyne with blank com-

missions, to be issued when the respective corps were two-thirds complete.

Both Jessup and Peters were early at work, with secret agents reaching down into the Loyalist sections north of Albany, spreading propaganda and soliciting recruits. When the army left Canada in June, they had the nucleus of their battalions, a combined total of eighty-three men,[1] most of whom had followed Carleton from Crown Point the previous autumn. Justus Sherwood was a captain under Peters and in his company Peter Miller was a private. The forts at Crown Point and Ticonderoga proved impotent to impede the British advance and in July the army was at Skenesboro, now Whitehall, the southern extremity of the Lake and near the country where Jessup and Peters expected to secure the bulk of their men. From there Burgoyne wrote to Lord George Germain on July 11th that his Loyalist battalions, though in embryo, were very promising; they had fought, and with spirit, and some hundreds of men had joined since arriving at that place.[2]

Four weeks later when Baum was detached to seize the stores at Bennington, Peters' Loyalists formed part of his force; in fact, the completion of this unit was one of the primary objects of the expedition, which was entering a region where Peters was well known. As Baum's troops moved out from Fort Miller, they were preceded by Sherwood's company of Peters' corps. An American picket was encountered at Cambridge, there was a trifling skirmish, and the advance continued. When the movement began, Peters had something over two hundred and sixty men; on the march he was joined by nearly two hundred more, enough to make his required quota and secure the coveted commission.[3]

Meanwhile, "Colonel" Phister of Hoosac in conjunction with Mr. Robert Leake of Pittstown, son of the late British commissary general, had been active in raising the countryside. An American participant in the action that followed wrote that "the greater part of Dutch Hoosac was in the battle against us."[4] Phister and Leake gathered their men in time to join Baum on the Walloomsac, where the whole command was cut to pieces by Stark's militia. Baum and Phister, both mortally wounded in the action, were taken to a house

1. *A State of the Expedition*, J. Burgoyne, "Evidence," p. 74.
2. *Ibid.*, App. XX, No. 8.
3. *History of New York*, Thomas Jones, Vol. 1, p. 690.
4. *The Hoosac Valley*, G. G. Niles, "The Rudd Letter," p. 548.

in Shaftsbury where they died on the following day. For the Loyalists, Bennington was a catastrophe. In addition to the heavy casualties in Phister's corps, Colonel Peters had lost upwards of half his command, and the men who would have been more than enough to ensure his commission were either killed or taken before they had been even formally mustered.[5]

When the survivors of Baum's shattered force rejoined the army on the Hudson, Captain Samuel MacKay, another reduced officer of the Royal Americans, was appointed to command the remnants of Phister's corps, now known as the "Loyal Volunteers." Peter Miller secured a transfer to this unit, which had been raised in his own neighborhood. He had escaped the carnage at Bennington, but his brother had been wounded and taken prisoner.

By this time Burgoyne's Loyalists were divided into four distinct corps under the three commanders already mentioned, and a fourth, Captain Daniel MacAlpin, also a retired officer of the Royal American Regiment. On September 1st these four corps reached the maximum strength attained at any one time on the campaign, a combined total of six hundred and eighty men.[6] As Burgoyne worked slowly southward, the Loyal Volunteers formed the advance posts of Fraser's "flying army," and daily screened the march with their scouting parties. On September 21st one hundred and twenty "brave men of courage and fidelity" were drafted from the four Loyalist corps as replacements into the regular British battalions, which had become sadly depleted from the heavy fighting at the first battle of Saratoga.[7]

When it finally became evident that he could not fight his way through to Albany, General Burgoyne reluctantly decided on a retreat. To facilitate this proposed movement he despatched a working party, guarded by the 47th Regiment and MacKay's Provincials, back up the Hudson to repair the roads and bridges. When within three miles of Fort Edward, the threat of a serious American attack necessitated the recall of the 47th to the army. The regulars were hardly out of sight before the Loyal Volunteers found themselves confronted by a superior enemy force and cut off. MacKay succeeded in withdrawing from the river bank to the cover of a nearby wood, where he was able to maintain his position, but in so doing lost

5. *History of New York*, Thomas Jones, Vol. 1, p. 688.
6. *A State of the Expedition*, J. Burgoyne, "Evidence," p. 86.
7. *Ibid.*, Supplement, p. 25.

forty-three of his hundred and eighty men. Finding it impracticable to return to the British camp, he made good a retreat to Fort George, from where, learning of Burgoyne's surrender, he continued on to Ticonderoga.[8] Brigadier Powell reported from Mount Independence on October 19th that MacKay had arrived with a hundred men and that other small parties had since come in.[9]

The three remaining Loyalist corps were also fortunate enough to avoid the consequences of the surrender at Saratoga. The night before the Convention was signed, the commander-in-chief, through General Phillips, gave leave to the Provincials to attempt an escape to Canada.[10] This was done, in all probability, because a grave doubt existed as to whether the Loyalists would be accorded the status of prisoners of war, inasmuch as so many of them had already taken the oath of allegiance to the State of New York. Fortunately, the Loyalists were able to make their way back successfully without further losses, and a total of five hundred and sixty-two men subsequently returned in safety to Canada.[11]

In the investigation that followed his return to England, General Burgoyne was severely critical of the New York Loyalists and of the troops that they had furnished to his army. He had expected the country to rise *en masse* at his approach and felt that he had been sadly misinformed in regard to the Loyalists, both as to their numbers and their zeal for the Royal cause. In this connection it must be remembered that the General was a bitterly disappointed man, anxious to advance other reasons than his own errors, for the misfortunes that had overtaken him. The country through which he had penetrated was at best but a thinly settled frontier, and in the latter part of the campaign it must have been evident that his success was problematical. He had displayed throughout a total lack of tact in the tone of his official proclamations, and above all, in his threats to let loose the Indians. Candor compels the admission that there had been considerable shuffling about on the part of the inhabitants, following the fluctuations in the fortunes of war. It was true that many who flocked to Burgoyne's camp to "take protection," as it was termed, were actuated by expediency rather than conviction, but it

8. *Narrative of Captain Samuel MacKay*, p. 10.
9. *Canada Archives*, 1890, State Papers, p. 102.
10. *History of New York*, Thomas Jones, Vol. 1, p. 683.
11. *History of Canada*, Kingsford, Vol. 6, p. 249.

was the only way that those exposed settlers could ensure the safety of their homes and families.

Burgoyne was particularly harsh in his strictures on the Provincial troops. "Their various interests made them hard to handle; one's view was to the profit to be enjoyed when his corps was complete, another's the protection of the district in which he resided, while a third was wholly intent on personal revenge." The General had found them all insubordinate, involved in a multiplicity of personal squabbles that required the personal interposition of the commander-in-chief, and "useful only for searching cattle, patrolling roads, and guiding; a few were of distinguished bravery, including Mr. Fistar [Phister] and Captain Sherwood."[12] He referred to the "desertion or timidity of the Provincials in the last days of the Expedition";[13] again, "not half of the four hundred Loyalists may be depended upon, the rest are trimmers, actuated by self interest."[14] Colonel Kingston, his adjutant general, referred to MacKay's corps as "that party of Provincials that ran away while they were employed to repair roads, and that were never heard of afterwards."[15]

It may be admitted that the Provincials were not trained troops and could not be expected to display the steadiness of the disciplined British regulars. However, in addition to the guiding and scouting activities enumerated by the General, the Loyalists, from Hubbardton on, had been heavily engaged in every action of the campaign; if casualties are any criterion, and they are usually so considered, the record of the Provincials compared favorably with that of the best British battalions. In joining the British forces the Loyalists had risked not only their lives, but their homes and property as well, and the dismal failure of the Expedition cost them one or the other, or both. To the Provincial officers in particular, the campaign proved an unmitigated hardship. They had expended freely their money and credit in recruiting, expecting to recover from the pay and allowances of their prospective ranks, but in this they were grievously disappointed, for General Burgoyne saw fit to withhold the commissions on the ground that, technically, their units had failed to attain the required strength.

12. *A State of the Expedition,* J. Burgoyne, "Review of Evidence," p. 102.
13. *Ibid.,* p. 120.
14. *Ibid.,* App. XXIV, No. 9.
15. *Ibid.,* "Kingston's Testimony," p. 88.

CHAPTER III. *After Saratoga*

THE Burgoyne Expedition was the outstanding and, in fact, the last major military operation of the war on the Champlain frontier. The Provincial corps, although reorganized from time to time, were continued as auxiliaries to the British forces in Canada, but in the succeeding years were employed either on minor raids and scouting parties, or in the operations in the Mohawk Valley. These troops were not Canadians, as is sometimes stated, but were recruited exclusively from the revolted colonies and principally from the northern counties of New York. It was with the greatest difficulty that these units were kept up to strength, and recruiting was actively carried on by secret agents who operated even in the city of Albany itself.

Following the return to Canada the Loyal Volunteers were temporarily attached to Sir John Johnson's corps. In the succeeding reorganizations of the Loyalists this unit lost its identity, but Captain Robert Leake's "Independent Company," formed at Sorel in the summer of 1779, had much the same personnel.[1] This unit saw service on the Mohawk, and in 1780 relieved the Loyal Yorkers at Carleton Island, the fortified post at the entrance to Lake Ontario. Peter Miller served in this company until his honorable discharge in the winter of 1781; his two stepsons were with Butler's Rangers at Niagara.

The failure of the Burgoyne Expedition affected profoundly the fortunes and futures of the Loyalist families in the northern counties of New York. They had openly declared themselves and were marked down for reprisal; it was not long before there was a program of persecutions and confiscations directed at the families of those "who had gone with the enemy," and with it the resultant opportunities for the satisfaction of personal grudges and neighborhood spites. Later, the program of confiscations or sequestrations developed into a series of measures that had for their purpose the bodily removal of these families from the state.

On June 30, 1778, the New York legislature passed an act to "prevent mischiefs arising from the influence of Persons of equivocal and suspected characters."[2] It was intended to counteract the in-

1. *Canada Archives*, 1888, p. 684.
2. *Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies*, Vol. 2, p. 783.

fluence of certain prominent people who had professed neutrality, but whose motives were in question; they were required to renew their oath of allegiance in a positive manner and, if they refused, were to be removed forthwith to within the enemy lines. In accordance with this act, John Stevenson, Richard Cartwright, John van Alen, and Isaac Man were ordered to appear at the Albany Court House on August 19, 1778, to be removed northward within the enemy lines.[3] They were to provide fourteen days' provisions for themselves and such of their families as they chose to accompany them (persons capable of bearing arms excepted). Also, they were permitted to take with them all their clothing and household furniture, but the charges for transportation to the enemy lines were to be defrayed by themselves.[4]

Up to now the migration of Loyalists to Canada had been largely confined to men of military age on their way to take service with the Provincials, but on July 23, 1778, Mrs. Phister, widow of Colonel Phister, and a Mrs. Cooper had arrived from Albany.[5] In the fall of that year Brigadier Powell reported from St. Johns that women and children from Albany County and the Connecticut River were coming down the Lake.[6] They were the families of Loyalists with the troops in Canada who had found their situation intolerable, and had been fortunate enough to be able to make their way out. On September 21st the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies directed General Stark to provide a "flag" to Canada for Mrs. Wrag of Fort Miller, Catharine Rederpach, and Mary England, as it appeared that these women whose husbands were with the enemy had become chargeable to the districts in which they resided and were being subsisted at public expense.[7]

The fact was that these families of Loyalists "with the enemy" were becoming something of an embarrassment to the New York authorities. They were, rightly enough, suspected of being in communication with their relatives in Canada, and their presence was considered inimical to the public security. They had been already stripped of most of their possessions, and as they were, or were likely to become, public charges, there was no point in their remaining

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 209.
4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 190.
5. *Canada Archives*, 1887, p. 295.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 338.
7. *Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies*, Vol. 1, p. 238.

longer. On April 15, 1779, the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies resolved that "from the frequent complaints which are exhibited to the Board that the wives of such disaffected Persons who are gone over to the enemy daily harbor Persons who conceal themselves and their holding correspondence with their Husbands it is conceived necessary to prevent this evil, to remove them within the Enemy lines."[8]

On July 1, 1780, and again on March 22, 1781, the New York legislature enacted laws for the purpose of the "Removal of the Families of Persons who have joined the enemy."[9] They were to be given twenty days' notice to either depart the state or to go to such parts of it as were within the enemy's power; at their discretion they could take any of their children not above twelve years of age. The authorities were empowered to take and sell all the goods and chattels in the possession of these persons, and apply the money to defray the expense of their removal.

In accordance with these laws Daniel B. Bradt, Supervisor for the District of Hosick, certified on September 20, 1780, that he had warned the following women to depart the state within twenty days: Rebecca Ruyter, Sarah Cameron, Catharina Best, Elizabeth Ruyter, Hannah Simpson, Elizabeth Letcher, Arcante Wies, Maria Young, and Susannah Lantman.[10] On October 7, 1780, a return was signed by John Younglove of Cambridge District that he had warned the following: Elizabeth Hogle, wife of John Hogle, who had been killed at Bennington, Jane Hogle, wife of Francis Hogle, and the three children of Simeon Covell.[11]

Concentration points were named where these parties designated for removal were to report with two weeks' provisions. From these places the refugees were forwarded under a flag of truce to Crown Point where they boarded British vessels that brought them to Pointe Au Fer and thence to St. Johns.[12] To the end of the war there was a constant succession of these "flags" over the Lake, bringing refugee families from New York and New England. The family of Peter Miller, who had joined the British five years earlier at Crown Point, came in during the fall of 1781. They had been turned from their

8. *Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies*, Vol. 1, p. 327.
9. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 794, 799.
10. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 527.
11. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 540.
12. *Canada Archives*, 1887, p. 338.

two farms, which reverted to the possession of the landlords; the house and barns, the horses and cattle, the sheep and hogs, and the growing crops had all been lost,—but his wife had saved the furniture![13]

The Champlain Valley was not the only avenue of approach to Canada used by the Loyalists. The same things were happening in the other counties of the state, and as the war slowly dragged to a conclusion the refugees were streaming in overland by every available route. When peace finally brought the melancholy business to a close and the city of New York was evacuated by the British troops, whole shiploads of Loyalists left by sea for Quebec.

As the Loyalists for the most part entered the province in a distressed or destitute condition, the government was placed under the necessity of providing for their maintenance and comfort, and this was done as adequately as the available means would permit. Cantonments were established for the accommodation of the refugees at Montreal, Machiche, Sorel, St. Johns, and other places, and a system of rationing instituted. Peter Miller was quartered at Montreal with his wife and three children.[14] They were allowed two portions of provisions per day, but when the oldest daughter was married the allowance was reduced to one and one-half portions.[15] On November 16, 1784, there were 5,652 refugee Loyalists—men, women, and children—on the provision list;[16] at this time the total population of the Province of Quebec, which then included the area later divided into Upper and Lower Canada, was less than 115,000 souls.[17]

Chapter IV. *Haldimand's Problem*

THE burden of the maintenance of these hundreds of refugees proved a severe tax on the resources at the disposal of the Provincial government. The Governor General at the time, Frederick Haldimand, was a Swiss soldier of fortune who had entered the British service in 1754 at the formation of the 60th, or Royal American Regiment, of which he had organized and commanded the second battalion. Through sheer merit he had risen through the various

13. *Ontario Archives*, 1904, Part 1, p. 407.
14. *Haldimand Papers*, Book 166, p. 96.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 129.
16. *Canada Archives*, 1889, p. 109.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

grades until in 1773, at the departure of Gage for England, he had succeeded to the rank of commander-in-chief in America. On the return of General Gage in the following year Haldimand continued on the staff as Major General, second in command, and the logical successor to Gage in the event of the latter's impending retirement. It is interesting to speculate as to what would have been the probable outcome, if the conduct of the war had been left in his competent hands. However, the actual state of rebellion in the colonies required on constitutional grounds that the troops should be commanded by native-born officers; consequently, Haldimand was relieved in October, 1775, and given a nominal appointment as Inspector General of the West India Department,[1] but was recalled to the American continent in 1778 to succeed Sir Guy Carleton as commander-in-chief of the Province of Quebec.

Haldimand was a soldier, and his was frankly a military government, but he was a capable and conscientious officer with an imperial breadth of view. When the refugees first began to come into the province, he had not hesitated to assume the responsibility for their relief; as the months passed and their numbers increased, he had done all in his power to alleviate their condition. There were times when Haldimand felt that the refugees did not properly appreciate his efforts in their behalf; in fact, his relations with the Loyalists frequently moved him to the point of exasperation. The refugees were difficult to satisfy and often unreasonably demanding; they did not get on well with the authorities or with each other, and they were restless, critical, and impatient under any restraint, however well-intentioned. Their attitude, however, is easily understandable when it is recalled that they had suffered the loss of their homes and possessions, and found themselves destitute in a strange land for no fault other than loyalty to their legally constituted government. It was too much to expect that such a situation could or would be taken philosophically.

Naturally, the arrangement of housing the refugees in cantonments was an emergency measure designed to relieve a temporary condition. Until nearly the end of the war the Loyalists had confidently expected an outcome that would permit them to return to their former homes in the revolted colonies, but when the terms of the Treaty of Paris became known it was painfully apparent that there were no provisions to safeguard their interests effectually. Any

1. *Canada Archives*, 1885, p. 230.

thought of a return to the United States was definitely out of the question, and they were now squarely presented with the problem of a permanent disposition of their affairs.

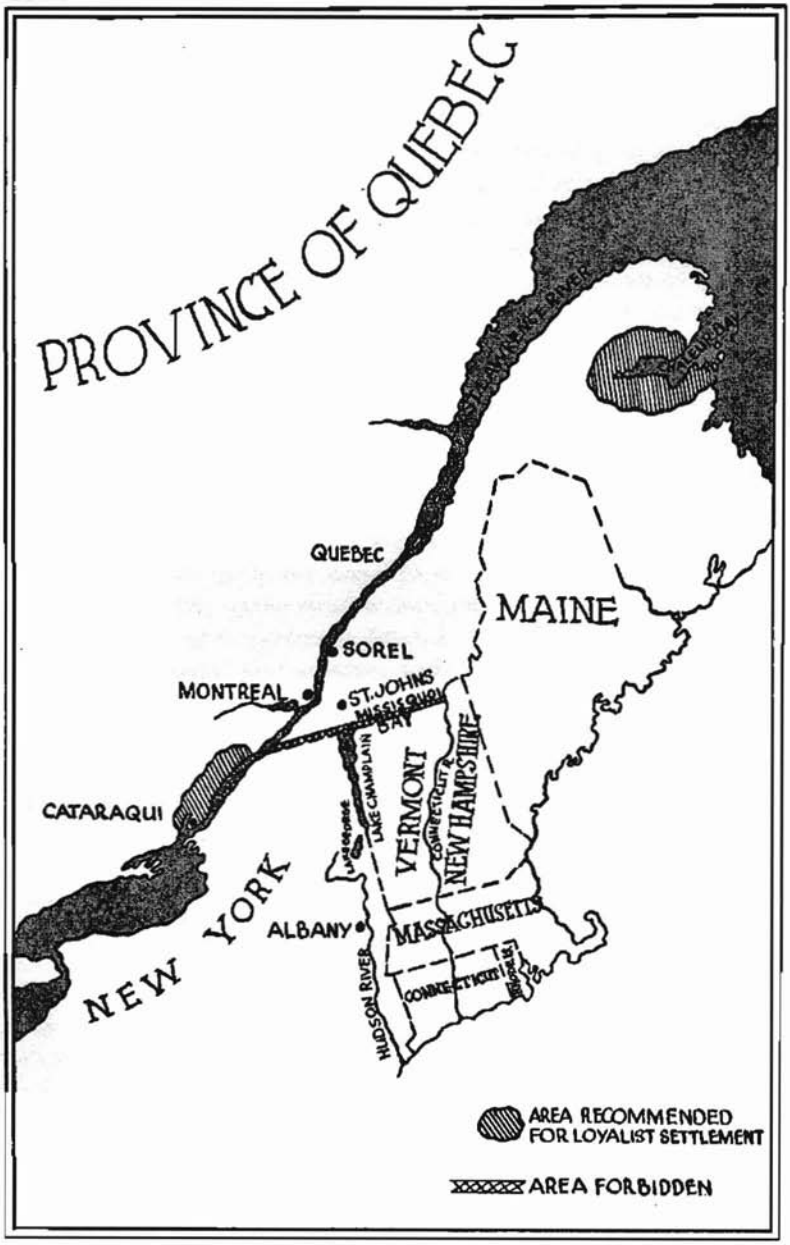
This question of what was to become of the Loyalist refugees was one that had given General Haldimand much concern. Racial and religious factors would render difficult their easy assimilation into the older and more settled portions of that former French province; neither could they be expected to take kindly to its peculiar political institutions or semi-feudal land tenure.

In August, 1783, the Governor General had received a suggestion from Lord North to the effect that the land to the eastward of the St. Lawrence, bounded south and west by the revolted colonies, also the Bay of Chaleurs, were eligible places for Loyalist settlements.[2] Replying to Lord North, Haldimand had definitely stated his policy on this point, as follows: "the frontier to the east of the St. Lawrence should be left unsettled for some time, and then by French Canadians, as an antidote to the restless New England population . . . the danger of mischief by the settling of Loyalists, who could not agree with the Americans . . . will settle them on the St. Lawrence towards the Ottawa, and on the Bay of Chaleurs."[3]

The key to Haldimand's policy lay in the fact that the events of the war had demonstrated the urgent necessity of settlements in the vicinity of the "Upper Posts," the forts on the upper St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes. The excessive cost of the maintenance and supply of these remote points had imposed a terrific financial burden, but their retention was a political and military necessity. The General had now in his grasp a complete solution to the problem. On the one hand, there was a surplus and unattached population absolutely under his control, a population already inured to the privations of pioneer life and thoroughly fitted in every way to cope with frontier conditions; on the other, a wide extent of desirable territory whose settlement was dictated by every consideration of governmental policy.

Accordingly, during the summer and early fall of 1783 surveying parties were despatched to locate suitable tracts for settlements, both up the river west of Lake St. Francis[4] and down the St. Lawrence to the Bay of Chaleurs.[5] Already, on August 27, 1783, Haldimand

2. *Canada Archives*, 1885, p. 309.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 355.
4. *Ibid.*, 1888, p. 843.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 754.



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had written to Lord North that he was preparing for a settlement of Loyalists at Cataraqui, now Kingston, Ontario.[6]

Meanwhile, the Loyalists who had received some inkling of these preparations began to manifest signs of uneasiness. The upper St. Lawrence was then a remote wilderness frequented by tribes of fierce savages and to be reached only after a long and hazardous journey; it was hardly an inviting prospect to a people that had already travelled far and suffered much. However, on September 6th Captain Justus Sherwood of the Secret Service reported that "he had taken means to reassure the Loyalists in regard to the intentions of His Excellency as to their settlement; for the time being they appear to be satisfied."[7]

By the end of the year Haldimand's plans were well advanced. On December 24, 1783, the various Provincial corps were disbanded, but quarters and provisions were to be continued through the winter.[8] On the same day His Excellency issued his proclamation granting lands to the Provincial troops and refugee Loyalists, together with the rules and regulations governing such grants.[9] It had been tentatively decided to move the Loyalists to their new homes as early in the spring of 1784 as the weather would allow, and during the winter months plans were perfected for this removal. There had been sporadic indications of discontent and unrest, but the arrangements seemed to be moving smoothly forward when, on March 1, 1784, a disturbing intelligence was received from Captain Sherwood at St. Johns. Certain Loyalists, in direct defiance of the orders of His Excellency, had begun a settlement at Missisquoi Bay from which they swore that they would be driven only by a superior force![10]

Chapter V. *The Abenaki Village*

THE situation that was developing at Missisquoi Bay was complicated by the fact that a portion of the area was not Crown Domain. On the contrary, the locality many years before had been made the subject of repeated and often conflicting grants by various

6. *Ibid.*, 1885, p. 352.
7. *Ibid.*, 1887, p. 286.
8. *Ibid.*, 1888, p. 732.
9. *Ibid.*, 1886, p. 639.
10. *Ibid.*, 1888, p. 710.

governmental agencies. Consequently, it is necessary to retrace the various claims and titles covering these lands that Haldimand had so definitely pronounced as unsuitable places for a Loyalist settlement, in order to clarify the situation as it existed in the spring of 1784.

This process of retracing takes us back as far as the beginning of the seventeenth century, to the establishment of an Indian village on the banks of the Missisquoi River, near what is now Swanton Falls, Vermont. These were so-called "civilized" or Christian Indians, an offshoot of the Abenaki tribe that had occupied the river valleys of the Province of Maine. At an early date they had come under the religious and political influence of the French and, as an aftermath of King Philip's War, several groups of these Abenakis, at the instigation of the Jesuits, Jacques and Vincent Bigot, had migrated to the St. Lawrence.[1]

The movement began in the fall of 1675 and continued in a desultory manner for many years. The principal settlement of these Indians in Canada was the Mission of St. Francis on the river of the same name, from which they became collectively known as the St. Francis Indians; the village on the Missisquoi was probably an outgrowth of this mission settlement and the Jesuits are supposed to have been at Swanton as early as the year 1700.[2]

Ira Allen refers to "a large Indian town on the Missisquoi River that became greatly depopulated at about 1730 by a mortal sickness. In consequence they evacuated the place and settled on the River St. Francis to get rid of Hoggomog (the Devil), leaving their beautiful fields which extended for four miles along the river."[3]

From fragmentary glimpses afforded by the contemporary French records it is evident that in time Hoggomog was propitiated and that the Indians returned to the Missisquoi. Chauvignerie in 1736 gives the number of their warriors there as one hundred and eighty.[4] In the King's instructions of March 24, 1744, to Beauharnois and Hocquart, Governor and Intendant respectively, a reference is made to the establishment of the Mission of Missisquoi, and the good effect it might have in promoting the spiritual welfare of the new settlers. Close co-operation between Church and State is revealed by the injunction to the Governor and Intendant to fail in no way to further

1. *Frontenac and New France*, F. Parkman, pp. 220, 221.
2. *History of Vermont*, Crockett, Vol. 1, p. 50.
3. *Natural & Political History of Vermont*, I. Allen, p. 15.
4. *History of Vermont*, Crockett, Vol. 1, p. 50.

the efforts of Father Lauverjat in detaching the Loups (Mohegans) and Abenakis dwelling in that region from the English. They were further admonished to make only such outlays as were unavoidably necessary and to keep a careful watch on the Indians in order to anticipate the results of any connections that the Indians might have kept up with the English in order to further foreign trade. In this they could expect the full co-operation of the officer commanding at Fort St. Frederick (Crown Point).[5]

In April of 1745 His Majesty of France expressed his pleasure in learning of the progress made by the village of Missiskouy and the disposition displayed by the Indians on the occasion of the war that was then going on. Beauharnois was directed to take advantage of that disposition to engage the Indians to make raids against the English, which would inevitably result in severing entirely any relations that the Abenakis had hitherto maintained with the English, and might also determine the Loups to withdraw from the settlement. He was again reminded that a principal object in the establishment of the mission was the alienating of the Abenakis from their English contacts.[6]

The St. Francis Indians were a principal instrument of the French in their campaign of "frightfulness" against the frontiers of New York and New England during the several Colonial Wars, and the Missisquoi village was admirably situated to serve as an advanced base for these savage forays. How well Beauharnois succeeded in carrying out the King's instructions is shown by the following laconic items taken from the record of French military operations for the year 1746:[7]

Apr. 26, 1746. *Party of 20 Abenakis of Missiskouy set out towards Boston, and brought in some prisoners and scalps.*

May 28, 1746. *A party of Abenakis of Missiskouy struck a blow near Orange (Albany) and Corlard and brought in some prisoners and scalps.*

Further progress of the mission was shown by the report to the Ministry on October 9, 1749, of the then Governor, La Jonquiere, on the condition of the settlement of Missisquoi at the entrance to

5. *Canada Archives*, B 78-1, pp. 148-49.

6. *Missisquoi County Historical Society*, 5th Report, p. 37.

7. *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York*, Vol. 10, pp. 32-35.

Lake Champlain.[8] He stated that the village had been entirely re-established, that the cabins of the savages and the house of their missionary were in good order, and that the Indians had shown much zeal and done all possible to bring this result about. The savages were, at the time, away on a hunt, and had not as yet resumed the planting of Indian corn. Still, there was reason to hope that the mission would not only hold its own but would continue to gain in strength, an end toward which he would spare no pains.

Until the middle of the eighteenth century the Abenakis had been undisturbed in their occupation of the lands on the Missisquoi River. Nevertheless, it was inevitable that they would in time experience the impact of the expansion of the English colonies as their ancestors had in the valleys of southern Maine in the previous century. Before, however, the Indians had been subjected to the pressure of the English advance, the friendly and paternal government at Quebec issued certain grants covering their lands.

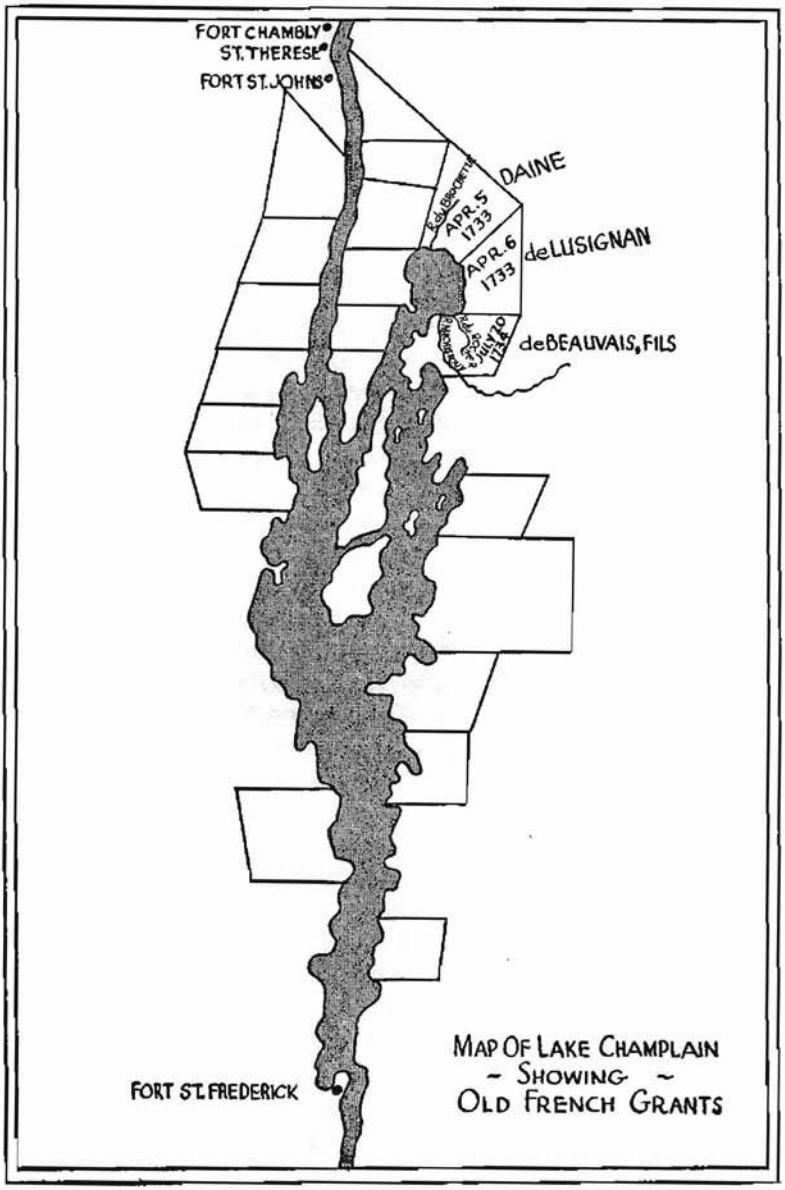
Chapter VI. *The Old French Grants*

SHORTLY after the establishment of Fort St. Frederick at Crown Point, the French colonial government conceived a colonization project that was intended to secure the French grip on the strategic Champlain waterway. To further the program a series of grants was issued in the years 1733 and 1734 covering most of the land abutting on the Lake. These grants were made on the usual seigniorial tenure, the recipients, chiefly military and naval officers, receiving broad privileges subject to certain obligations, the most significant of which called for an actual settlement to be made within a stipulated period.

Among these concessions there were three covering lands on the eastern side of Missisquoi Bay. On April 5, 1733, the Sieur Daine received a league and a half of frontage on the Bay, measured to the east from the mouth of Pike River, by three leagues in depth.[1] The next day a grant was made to the Sieur de Lusignan for two leagues of lake frontage by three leagues in depth, extending from the borders of the Daine grant to a quarter of a league below the mouth of Rock

8. *Canada Archives*, Series C. II A., Vol. 93, p. 198.

1. *Inventaire des Concessions en Fief et Seigneuries*, P. G. Roy, Vol. 4, p. 255.


FORT CHAMBLY
ST. THERESE
FORT ST. JOHNS
DAINE
APR. 5 1733
APR. 6 1733
deLUSIGNAN
deBEAUVAIS, FILS
FORT ST. FREDERICK
MAP OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN
~ SHOWING ~
OLD FRENCH GRANTS

River.[2] On July 20, 1734, the Sieur de Beauvais, Jr., received title to two leagues in front by three in depth, measured south from the property of M. de Lusignan and including a peninsula running into the Lake.[3] This last grant obviously included the site of the Abenaki village on the Missisquoi River.

Evidently this attempt at settlement was premature, for the proprietors, none of them men of large means, were unable to induce settlers to locate in such a wild and remote region as the Champlain Valley at that time. As a consequence, an act was passed May 10, 1741, to re-annex the Champlain seigniories to the Crown Domain for failure to comply with the conditions of the grants—providing, however, that the proprietors might secure new titles by improving their lands within a year's delay. This extension of time failed to afford the required relief to the difficulties of the seigniors, with the result that the greater part of the titles were subsequently cancelled, including the three enumerated on Missisquoi Bay.[4]

Another and more important French grant in the Missisquoi region, the Seigniory of St. Armand, was issued on Sept. 23, 1748, by La Gallissoniere and Bigot, Governor and Intendant respectively; it was ratified by the King of France on April 30, 1749, and registered by the Superior Council at Quebec on September 29th of the same year.[5] The conditions of this concession bring out vividly the semi-feudal character of these seigniorial fiefs, and as the boundaries defined for the tract had a very important bearing on the events that followed, a translation of the document is given:

The Seigniory of St. Armand

On the petition presented to us by the Sieur Nicolas Rene Levasseur, builder of the King's ships in this colony, praying that he would be pleased to grant him a tract of land of six leagues in front along the Missiskouy, in Lake Champlain, by three leagues in depth on both sides of the same, the said six leagues in front to be taken at a distance of eight arpents below the first fall situate three leagues up the said river, ascending the said river Missiskouy; the whole in fief and seigniory, with the right of superior, mean, and inferior jurisdiction, and

2. *Inventaire des Concessions en Fief et Seigneuries,* P. G. Roy.
3. *Ibid.,* p. 282.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*

that of fishing, hunting and trading with the Indians, as well opposite as within the said tract of land; having regard to the same petition,

We, in virtue of the power jointly entrusted to us by His Majesty have given, granted, and conceded, and do give, grant, and concede to the said Sieur Levasseur the said tract of land of six leagues in front by three leagues in depth, as herein above described; to have and to hold the same unto the said Sieur Levasseur, his heirs and assigns, for ever, under the title of fief and seigniory, with the right of haut, moyenne, et basse justice, and that of hunting, fishing, and trading with the Indians throughout the whole extent of the said concession; subject to the performance of fealty and homage at the castle of St. Louis de Quebec, to which he shall be held under the customary rights and dues, agreeable to the Custom of Paris followed in this country; and on condition that he shall preserve and cause to be preserved by his tennants, the oak timber fit for the building of His Majesty's ships; that he shall give notice to the King of the mines, ores, and minerals which may be found within the extent of the said concession; that the appeals from the judge who may be established there shall lie before the royal jurisdiction of Montreal; that he shall keep thereon house and home (feu et lieu), and cause the same to be kept by his tennants; that he shall immediately clear and cause to be cleared the said tract of land, and satisfy us of the works which he shall have caused to be performed from this day till next fall, in default whereof the said concession shall be and remain null and of no avail; that he shall leave the King's highways and other roadways necessary to the public, and cause the condition to be inserted in the concessions which he may grant to his tennants subject to the customary cens et rentes and dues for each arpent of land in front by forty in depth; that he shall allow the beaches to be free to fishermen, with the exception of those which he may require for his own fishery; and should His Majesty hereafter require any portion of the said tract of land to erect thereon forts, batteries, military places, stores, and public works, His Majesty shall have the right of taking it, as well as the timber necessary for the said works, and the firewood for the garrisons of the said forts without being held to pay any indemnity; the whole under the pleasure of His Majesty by whom he shall be held to have these presents confirmed within one year.[6]

Nicolas Rene Levasseur, Seignior of St. Armand, was a naval con-

6. *Contributions to the History of the Eastern Townships*, C. Thomas, p. 9.

structor who had been sent to New France in May, 1739, to direct the building of a "flute" (transport) for the King's account.[7] In the new country the constructor encountered certain difficulties in his shipbuilding;[8] he was able to make use of the iron from the forges of St. Maurice, but there was a scarcity of skilled labor and also of suitable timber. To overcome the first, ship-carpenters were sent out from France, but in the matter of timber he had to exercise some ingenuity. Levasseur boldly decided on the experiment of using spruce for ribs and framing, and proceeded forthwith with that type of construction. His first vessel, "Le Canada," was ready in August, 1742, and a second, "Le Caribou," was immediately undertaken.[9]

The performance of "Le Canada" proved so satisfactory as to earn for Levasseur the commendation of the King, with tangible recognition in the form of an extraordinary annuity of five hundred livres.[10] He was directed to proceed at once with the construction of a twenty-six-gun frigate, "Le Castor," from his own plans and making use of spruce timber. A sixty-gun ship, "Le St. Laurent," soon followed.[11] During the next few years many other vessels were completed, bringing to Levasseur advancement in rank and compensation; on May 1, 1749, he was commissioned Chief of Construction in Canada,[12] and in 1752 received a further appointment as Inspector of Timber and Forests.[13]

In the spring of 1744 and again in the winter following Levasseur had visited the shores of Lake Champlain in search of further sources of ship timber, and particularly of pine trees suitable for use as masts and spars.[14] He was successful in locating extensive pineries in the vicinity of the Saranac and Au Sable Rivers, and, in addition, brought back to Intendant Hocquart a sample of a new confection,—spruce gum! On both these occasions Levasseur stayed for some days at the settlement of Missisquoi, where he probably became interested in the possibilities of the millsite at the falls of the river.

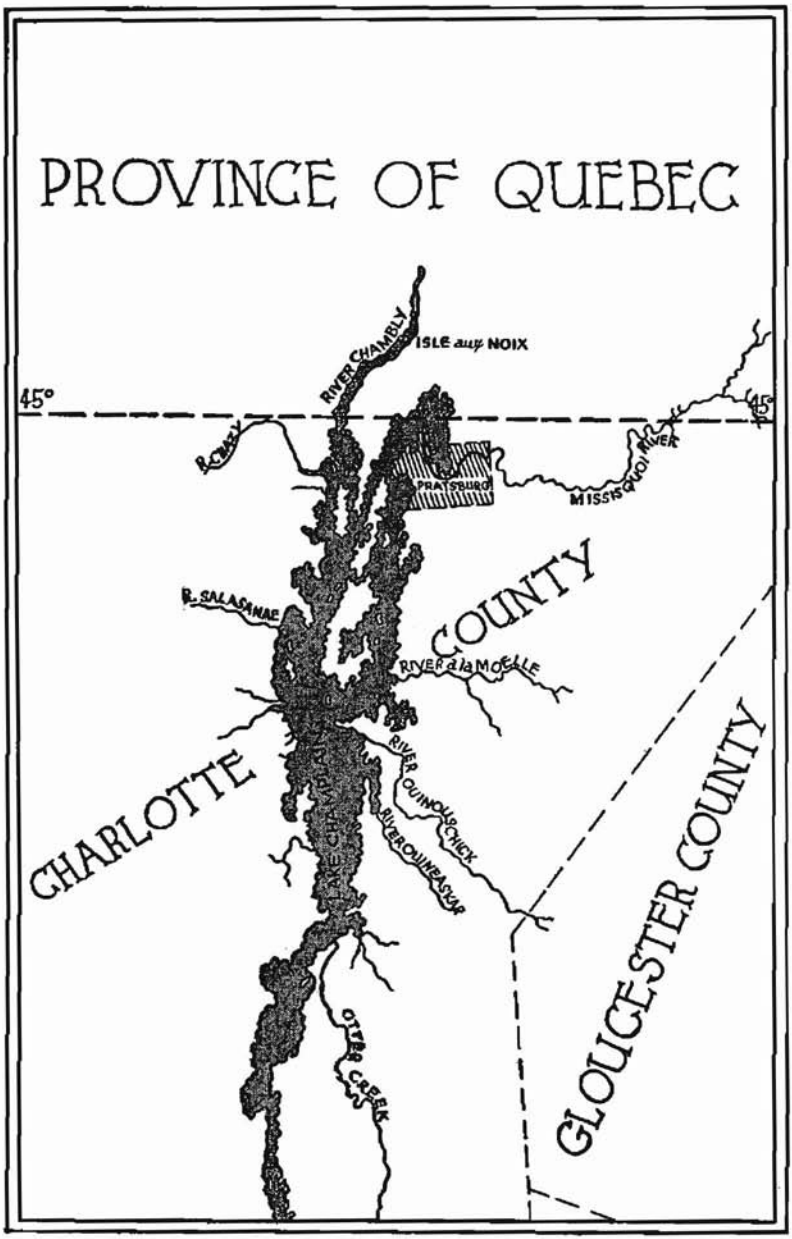
As has been stated, the title to the Seigniory of St. Armand was issued in 1748 and confirmed in the following year. According to

7. *Canada Archives*, 1904, p. 263.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
9. *Ibid.*, 1887, p. cxlv.
10. *Ibid.*, 1905, p. 6.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 512.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
14. *Ibid.*, 1887, pp. cliii, clix.

an early historian,[15] a sawmill was erected with a channel cut through the rocks in place of a dam. The river was then navigable for fifty-ton vessels from the Lake up the six miles to the falls. The timber, mostly pine, was shipped down the Richelieu and St. Lawrence Rivers to Quebec. As a result of the active lumbering operations, the Abenaki village soon developed into a busy French and Indian settlement of fifty huts, with a church that boasted a bell. In 1754 the Intendant, François Bigot, received permission from France to purchase boards from the sawmill owned by the Sieur Levasseur, provided they were of good quality.[16] That Levasseur was able to devote any considerable amount of personal attention to his seigniory at Missisquoi is improbable, inasmuch as he continued to design and build ships. One of these, launched on November 1, 1756, was christened, appropriately enough, "L'Abenakise."[17]

In October of 1757, in view of the decision of the King to discontinue shipbuilding in the colony, Levasseur applied for a recall to France with an appointment there commensurate with his services.[18] For the time being no action was taken on this application, probably on account of the confusion due to the war then in progress. In that same month Intendant Bigot wrote to the Ministry of the difficulty of getting out masts and spars owing to the constant incursions of the enemy in the vicinity of Lake Champlain, and one of these incursions on the part of the British resulted in the destruction of Levasseur's sawmill, thus putting an end to the lumbering at Missisquoi. On November 1, 1757, Levasseur completed his last large vessel in New France, the frigate "Quebec."[19] In February of 1759 it was suggested by the president of the Navy Board that Levasseur might be useful in establishing the fleet on the Great Lakes that M. de Montcalm considered it necessary to construct there.[20] However, the fall of Quebec soon precluded the possibility of further shipbuilding in Canada, and when the colony was evacuated by the French forces in 1760, the name of M. de Levasseur, *maître constructeur*, was listed as returning to France on the staff of Governor General Vaudreuil.[21]

15. *Gazetteer of Vermont*, Z. Thompson, p. 170.
16. *Canada Archives*, 1905, p. 195.
17. *Ibid.*, 1887, p. ccvi.
18. *Ibid.*, p. ccix.
19. *Ibid.*, p. ccx.
20. *Ibid.*, 1905, p. 287.
21. *Ibid.*, 1886, Note E, p. clxxx.


PROVINCE OF QUEBEC
45°
RIVER CHAMBLY
ISLE au NOIX
R. CHAMBLY
PRATSBURG
MISSISQUOI RIVER
R. SALASINAE
COUNTY
RIVER à la MOELLE
CHARLOTTE
RIVER OUINOUSKICHICK
RIVER OUINEAGUP
OTTER CREEK
GLOUCESTER COUNTY

In November, 1763, Levasseur finally liquidated his American adventure by selling the title to his Seigniory of St. Armand, which had not been impaired by the change of regime in Canada, to Henry Guynand, a merchant of London.[22]

Chapter VII. *Prattsburg*

BY the terms of the treaty of peace of 1763 between Great Britain and France, Quebec became a British province with a southern boundary fixed at the forty-fifth parallel. The Abenakis apparently were able to adapt themselves to the new regime, for they continued for many years to occupy their village which, as well as two-thirds of the Seigniory of St. Armand, lay south of the Quebec line and consequently in the region known as the Hampshire Grants, whose jurisdiction was then a matter of dispute between the colonies of New York and New Hampshire.

As it happened, the government of New Hampshire was the next to make free with the lands of the Missisquoi Indians. In 1763 Governor Benning Wentworth granted the townships of Highgate and Swanton to Samuel Hunt and Isiah Goodrich respectively, and their associates. For the time being no attempt at an actual settlement was made nor, for that matter, did any of the original grantees ever settle in either township; moreover, the terms of the charters required that five acres out of every fifty should be improved within five years, a condition that was completely disregarded.

Shortly after Governor Wentworth issued these grants, the locality at Missisquoi attracted the attention of James Robertson, a trader of St. Johns, who saw possibilities in the old millsite at the falls. On June 13, 1765, Robertson negotiated a lease with a number of the Abenakis for a portion of their lands. A copy of this lease was subsequently found among the effects of the deceased Ira Allen.[1] It follows:

James Robertson's Lease

Know all men by these presents, that we, Daniel Poorneuf, Francois Abernard, Francois Joseph, Jean Baptiste, Jeanoses, Charlotte, widow of the late chief of the Abenackque nation at Missisque,

22. *Canada Archives*, 1885, p. 71.

1. *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Hemenway, Vol. 4, p. 962.

Mariane Poorneuf, Theresa, daughter of Joseph Michel, Magdalene Abernard, and Joseph Abomsawin, for themselves, heirs, assigns, etc., do sell, let, and concede unto Mr. James Robertson, merchant of St. Jean, his heirs, etc., for the space of ninety one years from the 28th. day of May, 1765, a certain tract of land lying and being situated as follows, viz: being in the bay of Missisque on a certain point of land, which runs out into the said bay and the river of Missisque, running from the mouth up said river near East, one league and a half, and in depth north and south running from each side of the river sixty arpents, bounded on the bank of the aforesaid bay and etc., and at the end of the said league and a half to lands belonging to Indians joining to a tree marked on the south side of the river, said land belonging to old Abernard; and on the north side of said river to lands belonging to old Whitehead; retaining and reserving to the proprietors hereafter mentioned, to wit; on the north side of said river five farms belonging to Pierre Peckenowax, Francois Nichowizet, Annus Jean, Baptiste Momtock, Joseph Comprent, and on the south side of said river seven farms belonging to Towgisheat, Cecile, Annome Quisse, Jemonganz, Willsomquax, Jean Baptiste the Whitehead, and old Etienne, for them and their heirs, said farms contain two arpents in front nearly, and sixty in depth.

Now the condition of this lease is, that if the aforesaid James Robertson, himself, his heirs, and assigns or administrators, do pay and accomplish unto the aforesaid Daniel Poorneuf et als, their heirs, etc., a yearly rent of Fourteen Spanish dollars, two bushels of Indian corn, and one gallon of rum, and to plow as much land for each of the above persons as shall be sufficient for them to plant their Indian corn every year, not exceeding more than will serve to plant one quarter of a bushel for each family, to them and their heirs and assigns; for which and every said article well and truly accomplished the said James Robertson is to have and to hold for the aforesaid space of time, for himself, his heirs, etc., the aforesaid tract of land as mentioned aforesaid, to build thereon and establish the same for his use, and to concede to inhabitants, make plantations, cut timber of what sort or kind he shall think proper for his use or the use of his heirs, etc., and for the performance of all and every article of the said covenant and agreement either of the said parties bindeth himself unto the other firmly by these presents.

It is refreshing to observe that in this disposition of their lands, the

Abenakis had at last obtained a consideration, and that having foresightedly provided for themselves in the matter of seed corn and spring ploughing, they were free to relax and address themselves to the more congenial pursuits suggested by the rum and Spanish dollars. Of greater significance in this document were the boundaries given for the tract, a league and a half up the river from the mouth by sixty arpents in depth on either side. As an arpent at the time was roughly the equivalent of 126 English feet, the concession was consequently some four and a half miles east and west by less than three miles north and south; moreover, certain farms within this area were expressly excluded.

In contrast to these limits, the grant to Levasseur ran six leagues up the river beginning at a point eight arpents below the first fall, by three leagues in depth on either side. From a glance at the map it is obvious that whereas part of the Seigniory of St. Armand extended into the Province of Quebec, none of the land described in Mr. Robertson's lease could have possibly done so. This fact was later to have importance.

According to the same early authority previously cited, James Robertson shortly re-established the sawmill and embarked in lumbering on an extensive scale.[2] The timber was rafted to St. Johns where there was now an active market. Matters continued thus until 1771 when Governor Dunmore of New York, contrary to the King's prohibitory order, granted as the Patent of Prattsburg the same lands that had been chartered by the governor of New Hampshire in 1763 as the township of Swanton.[3] The new proprietors under Dunmore's title were Simon Metcalfe, a New York surveyor, and his wife Catharine. The situation at this point is somewhat obscure, but it would appear that James Robertson either was dispossessed or else conveyed his interests to Metcalfe, for the latter continued to occupy and improve the property, known as Metcalfe's sawmill farm, until the American Revolution.

When hostilities began, the Abenakis occasioned the British some uneasiness but eventually were brought into line and made use of. Metcalfe attempted to straddle the fence. He observed General Carleton's condition to remain on his own lands until carried off to Crown Point in 1776 by the Americans, who later released him on

2. *Gazetteer of Vermont*, Z. Thompson.
3. *Vermont Historical Society*, Collections for 1870, Vol. 1, p. 156.

the understanding of his neutrality.[4] He then joined Carleton on Lake Champlain, who appointed him a captain of guides at ten shillings per day, a post that he held until 1777 when, despite repeated urging by General Phillips, he could not be induced to accompany the troops under Burgoyne, with the result that his allowance was discontinued.[5] Later he was employed by the Engineer Department in drawing plans of Lake Champlain,[6] but his attitude in 1777 had raised a doubt as to his political principles, and eventually he became classed as an avowed malcontent. In 1780 Metcalfe was confined for debt in Montreal, a predicament from which he was relieved by the intercession of his mother-in-law with General Haldimand.[7]

During the course of the war the Missisquoi Bay area had been frequented by foraging parties for the purpose of procuring hay and lumber for the use of the British forces. Metcalfe had made repeated complaints of the damage thus sustained to his property. In August, 1781, he finally secured permission from General Haldimand to cut wood and hay upon his own lands, subject to certain restrictions that were communicated to Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger, commanding at St. Johns.[8]

Metcalfe immediately returned to his sawmill farm on the Missisquoi River with his eleven-year-old son and three Canadian laborers, but a few days later the whole party was seized and carried off by a rebel scout, the Canadian laborers being released and allowed to return after two days' march. Colonel St. Leger in his report of the affair suggested that there had been collusion.[9] The fact that Metcalfe had brought the child, who could not have been of any possible use and whose presence could not have failed to prove an embarrassment, together with the very trifling arrangements that had been made to transact business, hinted very strongly to the effect that the whole affair had been premeditated to facilitate Metcalfe's defection to the Americans, to whom he was in a position to impart valuable information. What lent further credence to this view was the fact that Sergeant Benjamin Patterson, who led a party on the trail of the fugitives, reported that Metcalfe had been brought to General

4. *Canada Archives*, 1888, p. 908.
5. *Haldimand Papers*, Book 66, p. 203.
6. *Canada Archives*, 1886, p. 660.
7. *Haldimand Papers*, Book 66, p. 203.
8. *Ibid.*, Book 135, p. 258.
9. *Ibid.*, Book 134, p. 134.

Bayley on the Connecticut River, and while Bayley had affected to treat Metcalfe harshly, he had been released on bail furnished by the General's son and had immediately set off, unescorted, for Washington's headquarters.[10]

On the cessation of hostilities three years later, Mr. Metcalfe returned to the Missisquoi and attempted to resume his old claim, which he found disputed by settlers already established there, holding titles from the proprietors of the township of Swanton which had been chartered by Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire in 1763.[11] This township had been purchased by the celebrated Allen brothers of Vermont in 1774 or thereabouts, and immediately after the restoration of peace the enterprising Ira Allen had taken steps to secure possession. On July 2, 1783, Allen and Major Butterfield were reported on their way to Missisquoi to survey it for settlement;[12] by the time of Metcalfe's arrival in June of the next year, several families had been actually established on the ground. The resulting dispute between Metcalfe and the Vermonters was settled by an appeal to a freeholders court, which naturally found in favor of Ira Allen and his associates.

The controversy regarding the conflicting titles issued by New York and New Hampshire to lands lying east of the Hudson River and Lake Champlain continued until the admission of Vermont as a state in the Federal Union in 1791, when the New York titles were extinguished by the payment on the part of Vermont of $30,000, to be divided among the New York claimants. Of this sum the executors of the estate of Simon Metcalfe received $1,417.47 for 28,400 acres, all but about 3,000 acres of which lay in the Patent of Prattsburg. His wife, Catharine Metcalfe, received $99.81 for 2000 acres in the same locality.[13]

Having thus traced the various settlements and attempts at settlements in the Missisquoi Bay area, including the Abenaki village, the Seigniory of St. Armand, the sawmill farm of Robertson and Metcalfe, and the properties of Ira Allen, it is now possible to summarize the situation in regard to land titles on both sides of the international boundary as it existed at the close of the American Revolution.

The Abenakis, whose lands lay wholly in Vermont, had abandoned

10. *Haldimand Papers*, Book 134, p. 144.
11. *Ibid.*, Book 175, p. 283.
12. *Canada Archives*, 1888, p. 841.
13. *History of Vermont*, Hiland Hall, App., p. 508.

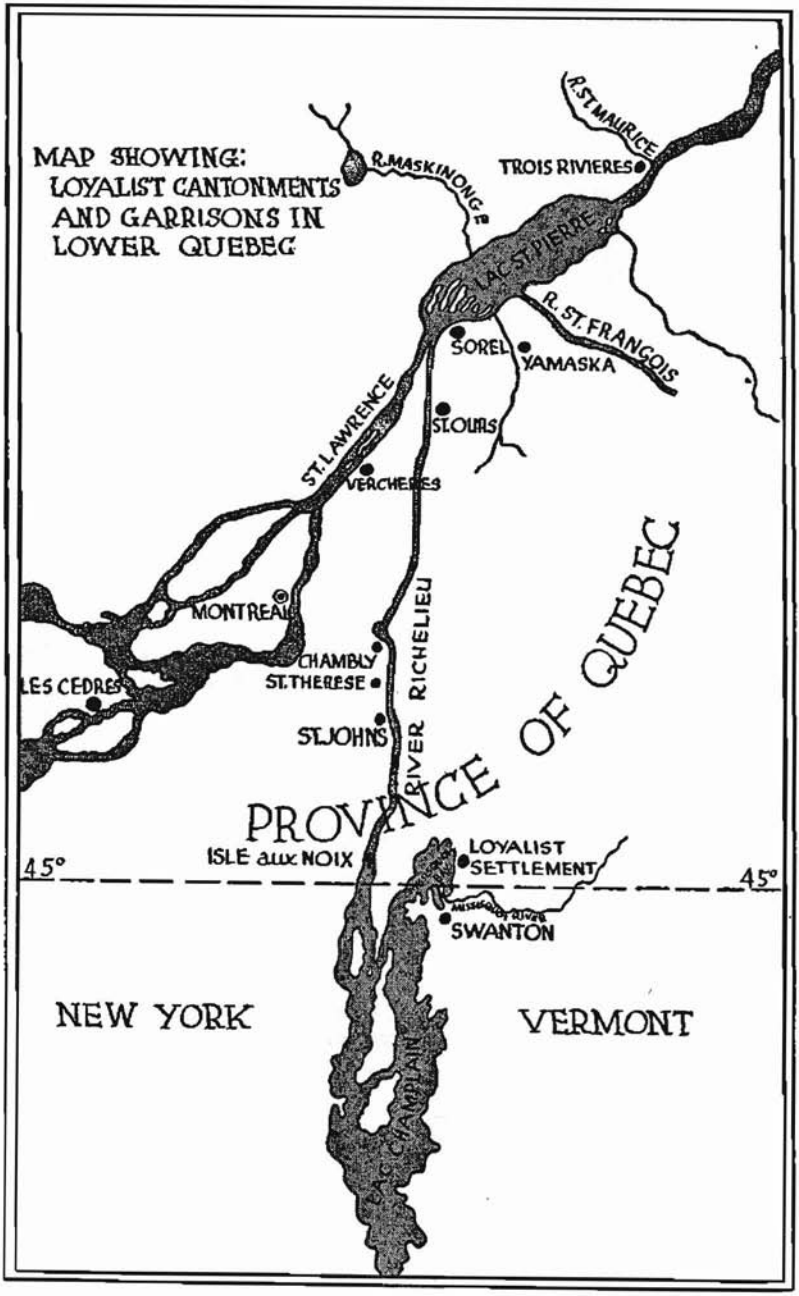
the locality and retired to Canada. Their title had rested solely on occupancy, and even had they remained in possession it is inconceivable that their rights would have been recognized by a Vermont court. The lease that the Abenakis had executed in 1765 in favor of James Robertson, who had since returned to St. Johns, was obviously of no greater validity than their own title. The grant of the township of Swanton by Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire in 1763 was now in the hands of Ethan Allen, Ira Allen, *et al.*, who had definite possession and were upheld by the courts. The Patent of Prattsburg, issued to Simon Metcalfe in 1771 by Governor Dunmore of New York, had been of doubtful legality in its inception; it lacked the important elements of possession and the support of local public opinion, and was subsequently cancelled.

Of the Canadian titles, the old French grants to Daine, de Lusignan, and de Beauvais, Jr., had all reverted to the Crown many years before. The Seigniory of St. Armand, another French grant, was obviously good for only that portion of the tract that lay within the Province of Quebec. This title, though dormant, was still valid. It will be recalled that Levasseur had disposed of his interest to Henry Guyand of London. He, in turn, sold it in 1766 to a syndicate composed of William McKenzie, Benjamin Price, James Moore, and George Fulton; the title was now in the possession of these men, or of their heirs and assigns.

There was, therefore, one valid title on each side of the boundary. The Seigniory of St. Armand was good for the small portion of the grant that extended into Canada, while in Vermont the township of Swanton was legally and actually a fact.

Chapter VIII. *Missisquoi Bay*

DURING the Revolution St. Johns was the largest British base near the Champlain frontier, and frequently the headquarters for the various Provincial units attached to the Northern Division of the army. Prominent among these Provincial corps in the last two years of the war were the "Loyal Rangers," Major Edward Jessup, and the "King's Rangers," commanded by Major James Rogers, a younger brother of the famous Robert Rogers who had destroyed the St. Francis Indian settlement during the last French War. There was also in the town a cantonment of Loyalist refugees and by far


MAP SHOWING:
LOYALIST CANTONMENTS
AND GARRISONS IN
LOWER QUEBEC
R. MASKINONGE
R. ST. MAURICE
TROIS RIVIERES
LAC ST. PIERRE
R. ST. FRANCOIS
SOREL
YAMASKA
ST. LAWRENCE
ST. OURS
VERCHERES
MONTREAL
CHAMBLY
ST. THERESE
LES CEDRES
ST. JOHNS
RIVER RICHELIEU
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC
45°
ISLE aux NOIX
LOYALIST SETTLEMENT
45°
MISSISQUOY RIVER
SWANTON
NEW YORK
VERMONT
LAC CHAMPLAIN

the greater part of this Loyalist population, civilian and military alike, had come from the Province of New York.

As General Haldimand's preparations for a settlement on the upper St. Lawrence were in progress, it was only natural that the attention of the Loyalists at St. Johns should be directed to the advantages of the unoccupied region at nearby Missisquoi Bay. During the war the region had been continually traversed by the Provincial scouting and foraging parties, and hence was well known to these Loyalists at St. Johns. The land was reasonably fertile and partially cleared, and it enjoyed the advantage of a water transportation. Most important to the minds of prospective settlers, there would be a ready market for their produce at St. Johns, only twenty miles by land and sixty by water. Finally, it was easily accessible and not too far removed from previous connections at the other end of the Lake. These were advantages that contrasted strongly with the remote isolation of Cataraqui.

This interest in Missisquoi Bay had been expressed as early as August 30, 1783, when Captain John W. Meyers and Ensign Thomas Sherwood of the Loyal Rangers, on behalf of themselves and associates, petitioned for a grant of land along the line of the forty-fifth parallel to the eastward of Missisquoi Bay.[1] The Governor General's objections to grants in that quarter have already been stated, and no official attention was given to this application.

While waiting for a reply to his petition, Captain Meyers encountered Mr. McCarthy, surveyor for Colonel Caldwell, who presented him with a plan of the old French grant issued to Daine in 1733. Believing that this might contain possibilities, Meyers with Captain Ruiter and Ensign Sherwood took the trouble to examine the land described in the plan, where, to use the expression current at the time, they "made their pitch," that is, staked out their claim. As a precautionary measure, Lieutenant Tyler was sent to Quebec to verify the title where he found, of course, that the grant in question had long since reverted to the Crown. Tyler did discover, however, that there was a valid claim, evidently Levasseur's, that began four acres below Metcalfe's mill on the Missisquoi River, but the title was not deemed worth a purchase, probably because the land appeared to lie beyond the province line; consequently, it was mutually agreed to let the matter drop.[2]

1. *Haldimand Papers*, Book 215, p. 70.
2. *Ibid.*, Book 152, p. 392.

Not having received a reply from Quebec, on October 26th Captain Meyers and Ensign Sherwood (not to be confused with Captain Justus Sherwood) renewed their application to His Excellency, on behalf of themselves and some two hundred and fifty odd enumerated rank and file of the Loyal Rangers, "who were indeed very anxious & in full hopes & great expectation that His Excellency's answer would be favorable, they having had great fears that they would be compelled to go to some distant counties."[3]

This memorial, while signed by Meyers and Sherwood, is easily recognized from the flambuoyant literary style as the handiwork of Christian Wehr, lieutenant in the "Loyal Yorkers." Notwithstanding the florid phrasing and formidable array of Loyal Rangers, the petition was no more successful than the first in eliciting a reply from General Haldimand, so on January 5, 1784, Meyers wrote once more to headquarters, stating that he was most anxious to hear His Excellency's pleasure concerning his request for lands at Missisquoi Bay.[4]

John Walter Meyers, popularly known as John Waltermire, or Waltermeyer, and sometimes Hans Waltymire, was from Albany County and had joined the British with the Jessups. After serving with Burgoyne in the campaign of 1777, he was detailed on recruiting duty and later still distinguished himself by carrying despatches overland through the enemy country between New York City and Quebec. Resigning from Colonel Ludlow's regiment at New York in 1780, he returned to Canada where, after having recruited a company in the colonies, he was posted as a captain in Jessup's "Loyal Rangers."[5] Meyers is best remembered for his bold but unsuccessful attempt to kidnap General Schuyler from the latter's home near Albany, and the scandal concerned with the coincidental disappearance of the worthy General's silver service. Schuyler, righteously indignant, protested through St. Leger to Haldimand at such banditry and the latter, moved by that spirit of camaraderie universal among military officers, sent a curt order to Meyers to the effect that the plate had better be returned, and that quickly.[6] Frantic efforts were made to comply with this order, but only a small portion of the silver was eventually recovered and restored to its rightful owner.[7] Ha-

3. *Ibid.*, Book 215, p. 70.
4. *Canada Archives*, 1888, p. 709.
5. *Ontario Archives*, 1904, Part 2, p. 1050.
6. *Canada Archives*, 1888, p. 850.
7. *Ibid.*, 1888, p. 808.