Maps of Upper St. John and Madawaska Rivers in 1778 and land requested by the Natives and Kelly's lot, 1787 from Library and Archives Canada
MCC-00502

Finding Aid

Total boxes: 1
Cubic feet: .35

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Maps of Upper St. John and Madawaska Rivers in 1778 and land requested by the Natives and Kelly's lot, 1787 from Library and Archives Canada (MCC-00502)

Shelf List Number: K-502 (cylinder)

Collection Overview

Creator

Library and Archives Canada

Dates

1778 & 1787

Extent

1 map tube (0.35 cubic feet)

Provenance

Material was bought on Compact Disc format from Library and Archives Canada in 2010.

Language

English

Conservation Notes

Maps were printed on vinyl for exhibit

Conditions Governing Access and Use

Restrictions

Access:

None

Physical:

None

Technical:

None

Rights Statement

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Recommended Citation

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Collection Description

Biographical Information

SPROULE (Sprowle), GEORGE, army officer, surveyor, office holder, and politician; b. *c*. 1743 in Athlone (Republic of Ireland), eldest son of Adam Sproule and Prudence Lloyd; d. 30 Nov. 1817 in Fredericton, N.B.

Sproule's major achievements were in the field of surveying. In 1770 Sproule was in the party that surveyed the eastern New England coast in conjunction with work being done by DesBarres. His surveying and mapping efforts were eventually incorporated into DesBarres's famous compilation *The Atlantic Neptune* . . . (2v., London, 1777-[81]). Engaged from 1772 in the first thorough survey of New Hampshire's boundaries, Sproule was two years later appointed surveyor general of that colony, a post he held until the American Revolutionary War broke out. In compensation, and as a reward for his military service and his surveying work, he was appointed on 2 Sept. 1784 surveyor general of the recently established colony of New Brunswick at a salary of £150 per annum.

In the spring of 1785 Sproule energetically took up his new post, which he would hold until his death. He was a significant figure in the province's administrative history because he established the Surveyor General's Office, created and maintained essential land records, and in so doing offered a high degree of stability for new settlers during a particularly turbulent time. On his arrival he found matters "in a very perplexed state": earlier surveys had to be corrected and descriptions of grants regularized. He had also to organize his staff, establish guidelines for their activities, and develop procedures for the maintenance of adequate records. A large number of deputy surveyors were appointed, among them Israel Perley and Abraham Iredell, and under Sproule's supervision they undertook the immense task of surveying land for some 12,000 loyalist refugees. Sproule, who insisted on high standards and did much to improve surveying techniques, was also responsible for laying out roads and reserves and for establishing parish and county boundary lines. Provincial boundaries were a matter of concern as well. In 1787 Lieutenant Governor Thomas Carleton asked Sproule to meet with Hugh Finlay of Quebec to discuss the conflicting claims of the two colonies to the Madawaska region, a dispute that was eventually settled in New

Brunswick's favour. That same year Sproule laid out lots for the Acadians who had settled in this region [*see* Louis Mercure]. In 1795 he acted as a surveyor and map-maker in the efforts to determine the Maine–New Brunswick boundary, and three years later he combined the results of surveys done by Dugald Campbell, Thomas Wright, and others into one general map for the use of the commissioners.[1]

Historical Information

Before the arrival of the first Acadian settlers in about 1784, the Upper St.John River valley was home to Native Peoples, in particular to the Wulustukieg or Maliseet (Malécite) Nation, a branch of the Algonquin peoples. The very name Madawaska is from the Maliseet's Algonquin language: *"madawes"*—porcupine, *"kak"*—place.

The Maliseet's name for themselves, *Wolastoqiyik*, or Wulustukieg, is derived from the word *wolastoq*, which means "beautiful river." ***Wolastoq*** (Wulustuk, or anglicized, Walloostook) is the Maliseet name for the St.John River.

The Wulustukieg or Maliseet people thus call themselves the people of the St.John River, which shows the extent to which they identify with this region.

"Land Grants" and their relationship to Native Peoples

The lands that were granted by European and American governments to the settlers of North America, including in the St.John River valley, were in effect taken from the Native Peoples. Although the European states and the US negotiated treaties with various Native Peoples, recognizing implicitly a form of sovereignty or "ownership" over land, the European theory of land ownership also held that, since the natives had done nothing to "improve" the land, they had forfeited their right to own it.

Indeed, the Natives' sovereignty turned out to be of a very limited kind, and as the demand for land increased among European settlers and their descendants, the various governments assumed sovereignty over that land, allowing the land of the Natives to be taken by treaty, deception, and at times by force. As the European-descent population increased, the pressure to take land likewise increased.

In the area that came to be known as the Madawaska Settlement, this process took place over the course of about 60 or so years. At first, both the French and then the British authorities, though claiming the territory as their own, recognized the rights of the Malecites to live on and use the land in the upper St.John River valley. But by the time the first Acadians arrived in the valley, there had been a shift in attitude by the British crown, which made a number of grants to the Acadian settlers; and, once the region was claimed by the US, the states of Maine and Massachusetts (Maine was a province of Massachusetts until it became a state in 1820) assumed ownership of all of the land in the state of Maine that was not already officially owned, and made grants of that land. Ironically, following the 1842 treaty that settled the border dispute between the US and

[1] http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/sproule_george_5E.html

Great Britain, the State of Maine decided to recognize ownership of any land that, though not officially granted, had been occupied and improved by settlers.

"The first recorded data that we have on the Indians of Madawaska, are the notes of Bishop Saint-Vallier, second Bishop of Quebec. These notes were made during his visit to Acadia in 1686, one hundred years before the first settlement *[by people of European descent]* in the valley. The following is from 'The State of the Church and the French Colony in New France' (*L'État de l'Église et de la colonie française dans la Nouvelle-France*), published in Québec, in 1856.[2]

Scope and Content

This collection consists of a CD with two maps bought from Library and Archives Canada. The maps were printed on vinyl for an exhibit at the Acadian Archives and are part of the Acadian Archives permanent collection.

The first map titled *1778 British Map of Native Village at Mouth of Madawaska River* (LAC, NMC-10867) shows all the major tributaries along the Saint John River from the Allagash to the Bay of Fundy are displayed. A major Indian village at the mouth of the Madawaska River is indicated as mentioned in the title of this map. The printed vinyl map measures 67.5 inches long by 14 inches wide. The top and bottom parts are looped on small wooden sticks for ease of display in an exhibit.

The second map is titled, *A Survey: Native Village & Native Land Claim at the Mouth of the Madawaska River in 1787* ". A Survey from the Great Fall of the River St. John to the head of Lake Tamasquatat [sic] with part of the Portage leading from that Lake to the River St. Laurence. Taken in July and August 1787 by George Sproule, Esq. Surveyor General of New Brunswick by Order of His Excellency Lieu^{t} Governor Carleton". [*Plus a survey of the continuation of the aforementioned portage to the St. Lawrence by Mr. Collins DeputySurveyor of the Province of Quebec.*] A note on the map reads: *The Indians request the tract of land included within the red lines to be reserved for their uses, except Kelly's lot." (LAC, NMC18184).*

This second map also shows the "Indian Portage" from Eagle Lake to "Indian Village" next to the Madawaska River which would be in the Edmundston, New Brunswick area of today. The "French Settlements" next to the Indian Village is indicated in a drawn rectangle on this map. This printed vinyl map measures 71 inches long by 35 inches wide and the top and bottom parts of the map are looped on small wooden sticks for ease of display in an exhibit.

Arrangement

Not applicable

[2] http://www.upperstjohn.com/history/natives.htm

Separated Materials

Not applicable

Subject Headings

Acadians – Colonization – New Brunswick – History
Indians of North America – New Brunswick – Claims
Land claims
Land grants – Madawaska territory – Maps
Madawaska River (NB)
Malecite Indians
Map
St. John River, N.B.

Related Materials

Not applicable.

Collection Inventory:

1. British map of Native Village at mouth of Madawaska River in 1778.
2. Native village and Native land claim at the mouth of the Madawaska River, 1787