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OLD SEIGNIORIES

On the Upper St. John.-Soulanges, Vilrer ard, Belfond, Clignan court and Chesnaye. (No. 16.)

During the latter part of the 17th century seigniorial grants were made by the governors and intendants (or lieutenant governors) of Canada in an exceedingly prodigal fashion. In our last article reference was made to the extensive land grants of Bernard d'Amour at the mouth of the Kennebecasis, of Soulanges at the Jemseg, and of Mathieu d'Amour at the Oromocto. In this a brief description will be given of the several grants along the river from Fredericton to Madawaska prior to the year 1700. The old land owners in this extensive region were Sieurs Soulanges, Vilrenard, Belfoud, Clignancourt and Chesnaye, and we shall consider their seigniories in order ascending the St. John river.

(1) At the mouth of the Nashwalk the land on both sides of the main river was granted on October 12th, 1676, to Pierre de Joibert, Sieur de Soulanges, who at that time commanded the French on the St. John with head quarters at the small wooden fort at Jemseg. His seigniory included the present city of Fredericton, the village of Gibson and St. Marys, and the town of Marysville. (Soulanges died in 1678, and his widow in 1691, received a grant of land which included the greater part of the parish of Gagetown.)

(2) Just above the grant to Soulanges at the Nashwaak was that made on the 23rd of April, 1697, to Charles Genaples, Sieur de Vilrenard, of Quebec. It included both sides of the river St. John up as far as Skouteopskek, or Long's Creek with a depth of two leagues on each side.

(3) Next in order is the grant made Feb. 25th, 1690, to Francis Genaples, Sieur de Belfond, notary royal of Quebec-in all probability a brother of Charles Genaples just mentioned. His seigniory is described as "a tract of land situated on the river St. John in Acadie between Medoktek and Nachouak, to wit, the place called the Longues-Venes beginning at the river, called by the natives Skoutcopskek, as far as the river called Nerkoioutquek, two leagues in depth on both sides of the said river St. John, together with the isles and islets in that distance." It is stated that this grant was made to the Sieur Belfond to enable him to provide for his ven childrn and in consideration of the services which he and his said children rendered in the war with the Iroquois. The localities referred to in the grant are readily recognized: Skoutcopskek is Scoodawabscook or Long's Creek, and Nerkoioutquek is Nackawick. At the mouth of the Nackawick, the river St. John makes a sharp turn to the right after which it runs in a perfectly straight course a distance of 18 miles to the mouth of Long's Creek, when it turns sharply to the left forming what is known as Burgoyne's Eddy, a place rather dreaded in freshet time by men engaged in running rafts down the river. The straight course of the St. John from Nackawick to Long's Creek is sometimes called the Upper Reach being of equal length with Long Reach on the lower St. John. The term employed in the old French grant of Longues Veues (the long view) is quite appropriate in speaking of the locality. The Sieur de Belfond held a government appointment at Quebec and was doubtless indebted to the governor of Canada, Count Frantenac, for his seigniorial grant. A glance at the map will show that it in-

A still more lavish grant was that made to Rene d'Amour Sieur de Clignoncourt, September 20th 1684 by M. de la Barre governor of Canada and M. de Meulle intendant of New France. The bounds are described in the grant as, "de terres non- of the Keswick. The name Cleoucore, which concedees le long de la riviere Saint-Jean, depuis le lieu de Medoctek, icelui compris, jusqu'an long sault qui se trouve en remontant la dite riviere de Saint-Jean icelui com- Sieur de Clignancourt however left little prise avec les islets qui se trouveront dans cet espace et deux lieues de profoundeur de chaque coste de la dite riviere Saint-Jean." That is to say all the ungranted land along day on which a grant of the present parish of the river St. John from the Meductic village as far as the Grand Falls, which are found in ascending the said river, with the islands in that distance, the grant to be two leagues (nearly six miles) in depth on both sides of the said river St. John.

cluded on the one bank the entire river front

of Queensbury and on the other almost the

entire front of Prince William and Dum-

The fief of Madawaska although scarcely so much connected with the up river counties of New Brunswick as with the province of to those already described. It was granted on the 25th of November 1683 to Antoine and Marguerite Angelique the children of Sieur Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye of Quebec. In the grant it is described as "a tract of three leagues of land along each of the two banks of the river called Madoneska near the too far advanced to admit of regular invest river St John with the lake called Cecemisgrants the title of which was not forfeited for Rene d'Amour and Father Simon accomlack of performance of the conditions upon panied the Indians in the expedition. The

iaries engaged in 1840 in determing the in- do any material injury. ternational boundary. Colonel Alexander 1828 was able to show that homage had been done by the French grantees on three occa-St Louis in Quebec as required by the terms

in 1763 the property was sold to his Excellsuccessive purchases to Col. Fraser. The fief of Madawaska was settled and improved at an early date as appears from a statement in the act of acknowledgment and enumeration (aveu et denombrement) of 15th February 1723 which states that there was then a domain partially cleared and improved upon the fief of Madawaska; the buildings had however been burned by the Indians. The Madawaska region was the meeting point of the jurisdiction of the local authorities of Acadia and Canada respectively. This fact Maliseets of the upper St John, for example, about the end of the year 1764 laid a petition before the government at Quebec complaining that "the inhabitants of Canada hunted beaver on lands belonging to them, which lands extended from the Grand Falls of the river St John to Temisquata a space of about 20 leagues, where the French had at all times been forbidden to hunt beaver, that privilege (cette chase) having always been re served to the said Indians."

Seigniorial grants were received gratuitously from the Crown of France and were held by the tenure of faith and homage. Faith and homage were rendered the crown whenever the seigniory changed hands. The act of faith and homage was performed at the castle of St. Louis at Quebec and was the occasion of quite an elaborate ceremony in which the owner of the land divested himself of arms and spurs and with bared head on bended knee repeated before the governor, as representative of the sovereign, his acknowledgement of faith and homage to the crown. Provision was also made in the seigniorial grants for the reservation of oaks for the royal navy and of all mines and minerals also of land required for roadways or fortifications. The seignior was by law required either to reside upon his land or place thereon a certain number of tenants and to clear and improve a certain portion

within a stated time. Rene d'Amour whose immense seigniory extended on both sides of the river St. John from the Meductic village to the Grand Falls made little attempt to fulfil the conditions of his grant, but contented himself with carrying on an extensive trade with the Indians securing their furs and peltry and supplying them in return with but an indifferent compensation largely consisting of French trinkets, rum and brandy. John Gyles in his narrative speaks of the demoralizing effects of this traffic. The Indians after their return from their hunts he says "would be drunk and fight for several days and nights together till they had spent most of their skins in wine and brandy, which was brought to the village by a Frenchman called Monsieur Sigenioncour." (The proper spelling should of course be Clignancourt.)

For about sixteen years Rene d'Amour was engaged in trading with the Indians. His operations very probably extended from the Indian settlement at Aukpaque to the Grand Falls. The Frenchmen incidentally mentioned by John Gyles as living about the Meductic Fort may have been in his employ. Whilst Rene d'Amour spent a good deal of his time at the Meductic village in prosecuting his trade with the Indians it is most likely his residence (if such a range of the woods could be said to have a fixed residence) was at the island of Cleoucore below the mouth appears in many of the old plans in the Crown Land Office at Fredericton, is probably a corruption of Clignancourt. The save his name behind him to show that he ever resided on the island.

On the 15th October 1784 (being the same Woodstock was made to DeLancey's battalions) there was granted to Captain Stephen Hoyt, Lieut. Monson Hoyt, Lieut. James Eccles and seventeen others, most or all of whom were members of the Prince of Wales American Regiment, "the island called Cleoncore in the St. John river containing about 80 acres.

When Villebon's fort at the mouth of the Quebec is for the sake of completeness added Nashwaak, was attacked by the English in October, 1696, Rene d'Amour assisted in its defence as did also Father Simon, the missionary priest. Rene was placed at the head of a party of Indians and assigned a prominent position. The invaders failed to capture the fort by assault and the season being ment they returned to Boston. Villebon couta (Temiscouta) and two leagues in depth. | then stirred up his Indian allies to make a This grant was one of the few seigniorial raid upon the New England settlements. which it was made. In consequence of this orders of the French governor were to burn Upper Woodstock, circumstance the fief of Madawaska was the and to destroy, and to give no quarter. The Oct. 22, 1894.

subject of a good deal of controversy on the expedition annoyed the English and caused RAILWAY TIME TABLE. part of the British and American plenipotent- much uneasiness to the settlers, but failed to

The death of Villebon in July, 1700, was Fraser, the owner of the fief of Madawaska followed by the withdrawal of the French from the river St. John and the restablishment of their headquarters at Port Royal. sions to the King of France at the castle of Rene d'Amour and two of his brothers repaired thither, where the former held a comof the grant. After the conquest of Canada mission in the French service. Soon after the capture of Port Royal by General Nicholency James Murray, first English governor son, in 1710, Rene d'Amour was selected as of Canada from whom it descended by the bearer of a letter from the French inhabitants in that quarter to the Marquis de Vaudreuil at Quebec, explaining their forlorn situation and imploring relief. This is the last incident in the life of the Sieur de Clignancourt that I have been able to discover. Could the old "bush ranger" but visit his ancient seigniory and travel the banks of the river from the Grand Falls to Meductic what would be his wonder at the bustling towns and villages which have sprung into existence upon his ancient domain. With the year 1700 the St. John was recognized even by the Indians. The river was destined to revert for nearly a third of a century to the undisputed possession of its aborignial inhabitants. The savages, however, were not abandoned by their priests whose devotion to their welfare is worthy of all praise, and will be more fully considered in another article.

W. O. RAYMOND.

Some one recently asked Mr. Gladstone what kind of sermon he liked best. In reply the ex-premier wrote that the sermons most needed are those like the one that offended Lord Melbourne. Queen Victoria's first premier complained that he was obliged to listen to a preacher who insisted upon a a man's applying his religion to his private life.

A small boy was at a table where his mother was not near to take care of him, and lady next to him volunteered her services.

"Let me cut your steak for you," she said; "if I can cut it the way you like it," she added, with some degree of doubt. "Thank you," the boy responded, accepting her courtesy; "I shall like it the way you cut it, even if you do not cut it the way I like it."-Detroit Free Press.

> He wrote his love a letter, And poured out all his soul In language too ecstatic. Too ardent to control.

But now he wishes sorely He had been more acute For the lawyer read the letter In a breach of promise suit.

-Somerville Journal.

WINTER

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6.15 A. M.—MIXED—Week days: For Presque Isle and points North. 11.32 A. M.—EXPRESS—Week days: For Houl-ton, McAdam Junction, St. Stephen, Fredericton, St. John, Vanceboro, Bangor, Bos-

12.30 P. M.—MIXED—Week days: For Fredericton, &c., via Gibson Branch. 1.05 P. M. - EXPRESS - Week days: For Presque Isle, Edmundston, and all points

2.40 P. M.-MIXED-Week days: For Vance boro, Montreal, etc. 8.00 P. M.—MIXED—Week days: For Houl-ton, McAdam Junction, St. Stephen, St. ohn, Bangor, Boston, &c.

ARRIVALS.

6.15 A. M.—MIXED—Except Monday, from St. John, St. Stephen, Vanceboro, Bangor, etc. 10.56 A. M.—MIXED—Week days: From Fredericton, etc., via Gibson Branch.

11.00 A. M.-From McAdam Junction, etc.

11.32 A. M.—EXPRESS — Week days: From

1.05 P. M.-EXPRESS-Week days: From St. John, St. Stephen Bangor, Montreal, etc. 7.45 P. M.-MIXED-Week days: From Ed-mundston, Presque Isle, etc.

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