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EARLY DAYS OF WOODSTOCK.

W. O. RAYMOND.

No. 10.

The year 1765 was, in some respects, a memorable one in the early history of the River St. John. On the 30th of April, the governor and council of Nova Scotia passed a resolution that the St. John river region should be erected into a county to be called Sunbury, in honor of the Early of Halifax, Secretary of State, one of whose titles was "Viscount Sunbury." Shortly afterwards John Anderson, Beamsley Glasier, Francis Peabody, James Simonds and Charles Morris, jr., were appointed magistrates; Benjamin Atherton, clerk of the peace; James White, deputy sheriff, and Francis Peabody, collector of customs.

Up to this time only three land grants on the River St. John had been recorded at Halifax, but in the month of October of this year twenty new grants were issued, comprising about 750,000 acres. No settlement, however, was attempted north of St. Ann's until after the arrival of the Loyalists in 1783. Doubtless this was due, in part, to the avowed hostility of the Indians, who strongly objected to any encroachment upon their hunting grounds.

It is certain that, in spite of the treaty made at Halifax in 1760, the attitude of the Indians was often a source of much uneasiness to the early settlers. The Maliseets had not yet become accustomed to British supremacy, and felt that their rightful allegiance was due to their "old father," the King of France. This was not unnatural. Their prejudices against the English had been nurtured for generations, and embittered by ruthless warfare, and they now regarded with a jealous eye the presence of the new comers, whose numbers seemed to be always on the increase. Even the proximity of the garrison of Fort Frederick did not prevent the situation of the settlers from being precarious whenever the Indians were disposed to be unfriendly. James Simonds' younger brother, Richard Simonds, lost his life in the defence of his property when the savages were about to carry it off; and in the year 1771, the Indians burned the house and store of Captain Jadis at Grimross (now Gagetown) and destroyed property to the value of £2,000.

The Indians were displeased at being left several years without a missionary, claiming that the Governor of Nova Scotia had promised they should have one. However, the Rev. Father Bailly came to them in the summer of 1767 and entered upon his duties as priest with his headquarters at "la mission d'Ekouipahag en la riviere St. Jean."

The Nova Scotia historian, Beamish Murdoch, gives an account of a rather remarkable interview at Halifax in July, 1768, between the Chiefs of the River St. John and the lieutenant governor and council. The Chiefs were Pierre Thomas and Ambrose St. Aubin. In the course of the interview they requested that their missionary Bailly might remain with them; complained that rum was much too common; said they wanted lands for

cultivation, and asked for tools and implements of agriculture. They further requested that in case of war between England and France they might be allowed to remain quiet. They complained of some Acadians above St. Ann's, who hunted on their lands, and asked for their removal.*

To all their requests the government gave a favorable response. The Chiefs then said, "We have nothing further to ask or represent, and we desire to return soon that our people may not be debauched with liquor in this town."

An example of the hostility of the Indians to the English settlers is to be found in the experience of Thomas Langan, who settled in 1776 about four miles above St. Ann's Point, where he built a log house and barn and cleared about fifteen acres of land. After six years the Indians proved so troublesome, killing his cattle and threatening him with personal violence, that he was obliged to remove to the lower settlements on the river.

While there were not, in all probability, many who desired at this time to settle above St. Ann's, there was another reason that may have led the government of Nova Scotia to refrain from making grants of land upon the Upper St. John. This was the request of the home government to reserve the Crown lands on which the best mast timber was to be found in order to provide masts for the King's ships of war. Surveyor General Morris was asked to report upon the matter to Governor Legge. This he accordingly did and in his report states that there were very few pines fit for masts in the peninsula of Nova Scotia, but that on the River St. John, above the settlements, there were great quantities of pine trees fit for masts as well as great quantities of others growing into that state. "I am therefore of opinion," he adds, "that a reserve of all the lands on the River St. John above the settlements for the whole course of the river, at least twenty-five miles on each side, will be the most advantageous reserve to the Crown of lands within this province; especially as the river is navigable for boats and rafting of masts the whole course of it; and in this tract is contained a black spruce, fit for yards and topmasts, and other timber fit for ship-building."

During the American Revolution each of the contending parties endeavored to obtain the good will of the Indians of the St. John river, and it may be said that they lived at the joint expense of the contending parties until the close of the war. At an early stage in the contest, Pierre Thomas and Ambrose St. Aubin were invited by the Americans to

* [Foot note.] It was doubtless in consequence of the promise made to the Indians that the provincial secretary wrote the following communication a few weeks later:—

"To John Anderson and Francis Peabody, Esquires, justices of the peace for the County of Sunbury, River St. John:—Gentlemen the lieutenant governor desires that you will give notice to all Acadians, except about six families, whom Mr. Bailly (the priest) shall name, to remove themselves from St. John's river, it not being the intention of the government that they should settle there, but to acquaint them that on their application here they shall have lands in other parts of the province."

visit their truck-house on the Penobscot river. They went, of course, and so many were the inducements held out to them and so agreeable was the entertainment provided that they promised to give their assistance to their good brothers and neighbours the Americans. Pierre Thomas even visited Washington at his headquarters on the Delaware and Washington wrote a letter to all his "brothers of the St. John's tribe."

The Mauderville people, in May, 1776, reported that Gen'l. Washington's letter had set the Indians on fire, and they were plundering all people they thought to be Tories. They expressed the fears that when the supply of Tories was exhausted others would share the same fate. They thought it necessary that some person of consequence should be sent among them. The following year Col. John Allan tried to establish a trading post on the St. John river, and to proclaim the authority of the United States Congress over that region. To counteract his influence, the government of Nova Scotia sent Colonel Gould and Major Studholme with a sloop of war and at her coming Allan decamped. No sooner did the sloop return to Halifax than Allan reappeared upon the scene. He left a considerable armed party to guard the mouth of the river and proceeded himself to Aukpaque, where he arrived on the 5th of June. The sentiments of the two head chiefs of the river, Pierre Thomas and Ambrose St. Aubin, were diverse at this time. The former inclined to side with the British while the latter was an out and out "rebel." Colonel Allan's negotiations were prolonged over a period of four weeks. There were formal conferences, harangues, exchanges of wampum belts and other ceremonies. Delegates came from Medoctec and Madawaska. It was finally agreed by the majority that "peace and friendship permanent and lasting" be established between the United States and the several tribes, and that a truck-house be established on the river by Congress for the benefit of the Indians.

While all this was going on at Aukpaque, Colonel Michael Francklin, superintendent of Indian affairs for Nova Scotia, was not idle, and he and Major Studholme hurried to the River St. John with a strong detachment of troops. These upon landing made short work of Allan's guard at the mouth of the river. They were speedily defeated with loss and fled with Studholme in hot pursuit.

On the night of July 6th, Allan's men were surprised at Aukpaque by Studholme's detachment, who secured the baggage, provisions, cannon and arms. Allan and most of the Indians fled to Medoctec, but finding the British still in pursuit and that the soldiers had expressed a determination to follow him "to the very gate of hell," he determined to abandon the St. John and proceed by the old Indian trail, the Eel river waters and lakes to Machias. In his flight Allan was accompanied by a band of 480 Indians, men, women and children—who embarked in 128 canoes. Studholme's men followed as far as Medoctec, and then abandoned the chase. This was the first time the Woodstock neighbourhood was visited by British soldiers.

On his arrival at Medoctec Allan wrote to the Massachusetts council, "I am at present destitute of everything and am forced to put up with the fare the Indians can provide. . . . I must again implore some help for the Indians; I am still suspicious if I leave them they will turn."

The journal of Allan's lieutenant, Deslormiers, thus describes the start from the Meductick village:—"Sunday, July 13.—Removed across the carrying place from Meductick towards the head of Passamaquoddy (or St. Croix) river, about five miles. It is incredible what difficulties the Indians undergo in this troublesome time, when so many of their families are obliged to fly with precipitation rather than become friends to the tyrant Britain. Some backing their aged parents, others their maimed and decrepid brethren; the older women leading the young children, mothers carrying their infants, together with great loads of baggage. As to the canoes the men make it a play to convey them across."

Not all of the Indians went with John Allan to Machias, for Pierre Thomas and his followers were friendly and entered into negotiations with Colonel Francklin. Those who went to Machias relied on Allan's assurances that the Americans would reward them and would soon take possession of the river. But that day never came, and in the course of time many who had followed Allan to Machias came to Fort Howe where, on the 24th September, 1778, the chiefs, captains and principal warriors on their knees took a solemn oath to be faithful and bear true allegiance to his Majesty King George the third. The Indians who took part in the treaty negotiations, included Pierre Thomas, supreme sachem of the St. John river; Francis Xavier, 2nd chief, and four captains and eight principal warriors, as representatives of the Maliseets. Delegates were in attendance also from Richibucto, Miramichi, Minas and Chignecto.

The result of the grand pow-wow at Fort Howe was considered exceedingly fortunate for the province under the circumstances then existing. Sir Richard Hughes, the

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lieutenant governor, in a letter to Lord Germaine, commends the talents, zeal and diligence of Francklin, "to whose discreet conduct and steady perseverance," he says, "assisted by Major Studholme and Monsieur Bourg, the priest, we owe the success of this treaty." Francklin wrote Sir Henry Clinton, "In justice to Major Studholme, I am obliged to say that his constant zeal and singular address and prudence has been a great means of keeping the Indians near his post quiet. Perhaps equal, if not greater credit was due to James White, the deputy agent of Indian affairs on the St. John. Although acting in a subordinate capacity, he was the man who came in the most direct contact with the savages, and that at a time when they were by no means friendly, and his tact and fearlessness paved the way for the negotiations. Most potent of all, perhaps, in the ultimate result of the conference, was the presence of the missionary, Joseph Mathurin Bourg. It was this that filled the Indians with confidence in the good intentions of government and overthrew the influence of John Allen. Father Bourg was the first native of Acadia who was ordained a priest. He filled a difficult position with tact and judgment, and was thoroughly loyal to the government under whose protection he lived. Further particulars of his life and services will be found in the writer's "History of the Saint John River."

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