

had written to Lord North that he was preparing for a settlement of Loyalists at Cataraqui, now Kingston, Ontario.<sup>6</sup>

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."<sup>7</sup>

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.<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup> 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!<sup>10</sup>

#### 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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."<sup>3</sup>

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.<sup>4</sup> 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 Laverjat 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).<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup>

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:<sup>7</sup>

- 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.<sup>8</sup> 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.

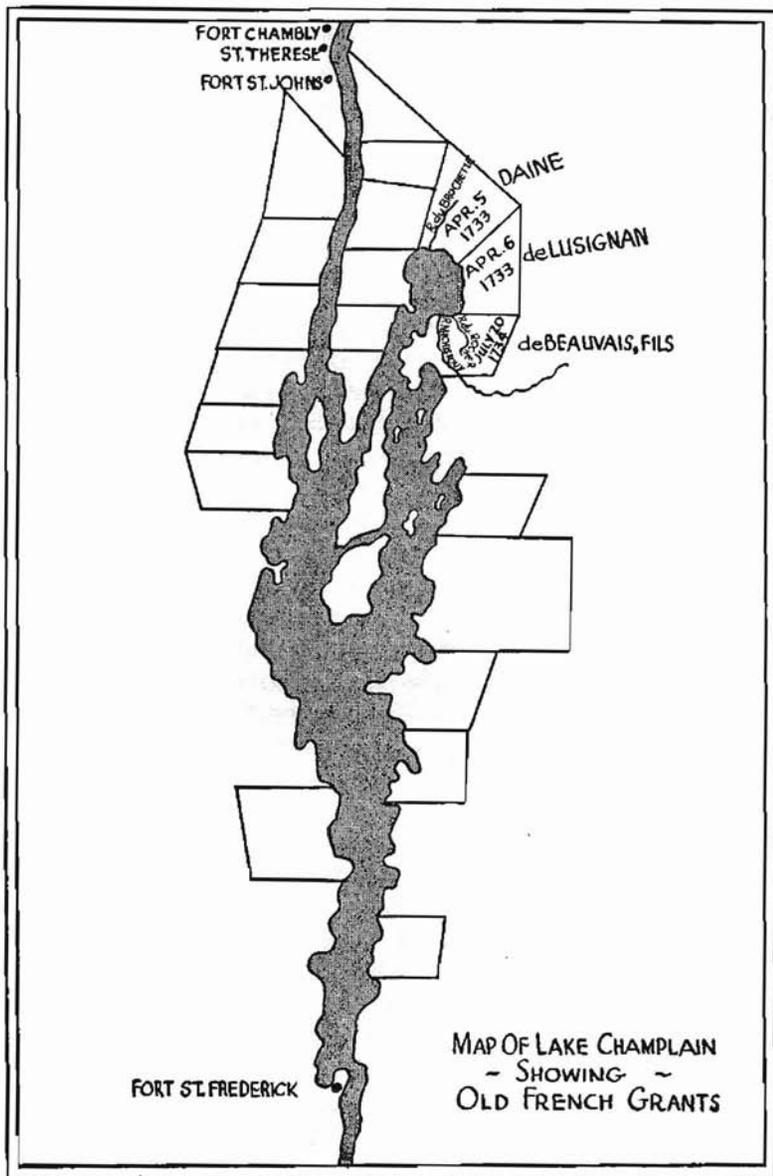
#### CHAPTER VI. *The Old French Grants*

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.<sup>1</sup> 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.



River.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

Another and more important French grant in the Missisquoi region, the Seigniorship 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.<sup>5</sup> 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 SEIGNIORITY 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 seigniority, 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 seignior, 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 tenants, 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 tenants; 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 tenants 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.<sup>a</sup>

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.<sup>7</sup> In the new country the constructor encountered certain difficulties in his shipbuilding;<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

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.<sup>10</sup> 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.<sup>11</sup> 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,<sup>12</sup> and in 1752 received a further appointment as Inspector of Timber and Forests.<sup>13</sup>

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.<sup>14</sup> 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 Seigniorship 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,<sup>15</sup> 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.<sup>16</sup> 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."<sup>17</sup>

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.<sup>18</sup> 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."<sup>19</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup>

15. *Gazetteer of Vermont*, Z. Thompson, p. 170.

16. *Canada Archives*, 1905, p. 195.

17. *Ibid.*, 1887, p. ccvi.

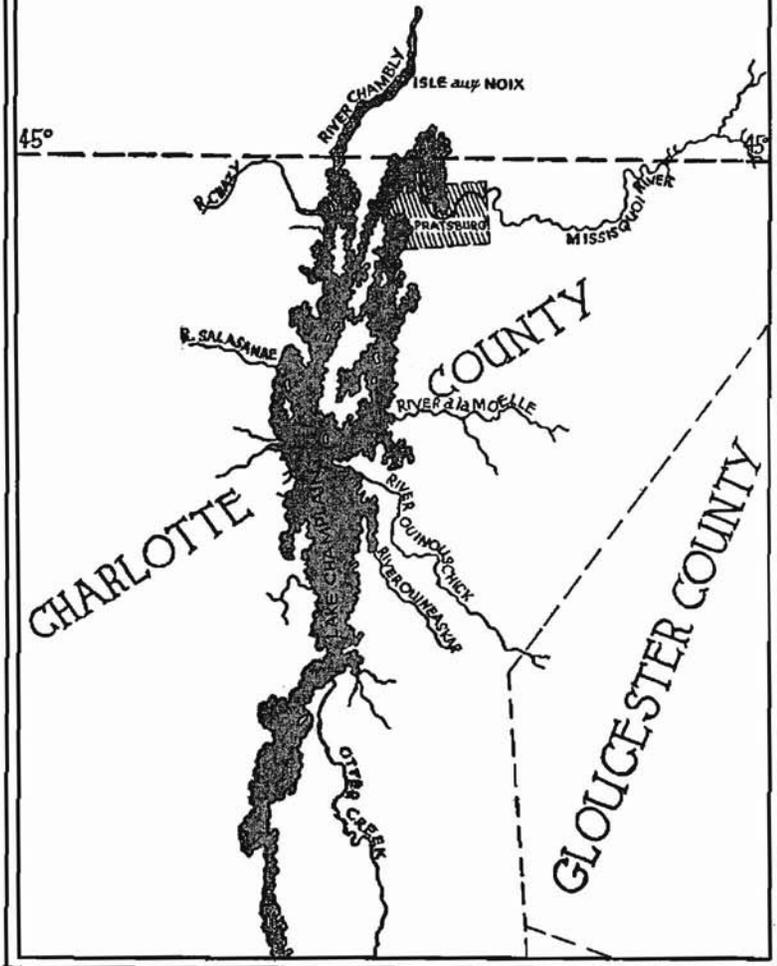
18. *Ibid.*, p. ccix.

19. *Ibid.*, p. ccx.

20. *Ibid.*, 1905, p. 287.

21. *Ibid.*, 1886, Note E, p. clxxx.

# PROVINCE OF QUEBEC



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

## 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 Seigniorship 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.<sup>1</sup> 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 Seigniorship 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> Later he was employed by the Engineer Department in drawing plans of Lake Champlain,<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup>

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.<sup>8</sup>

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.<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup>

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.<sup>11</sup> 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;<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup>

Having thus traced the various settlements and attempts at settlements in the Missisquoi Bay area, including the Abenaki village, the Seigniorie 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.

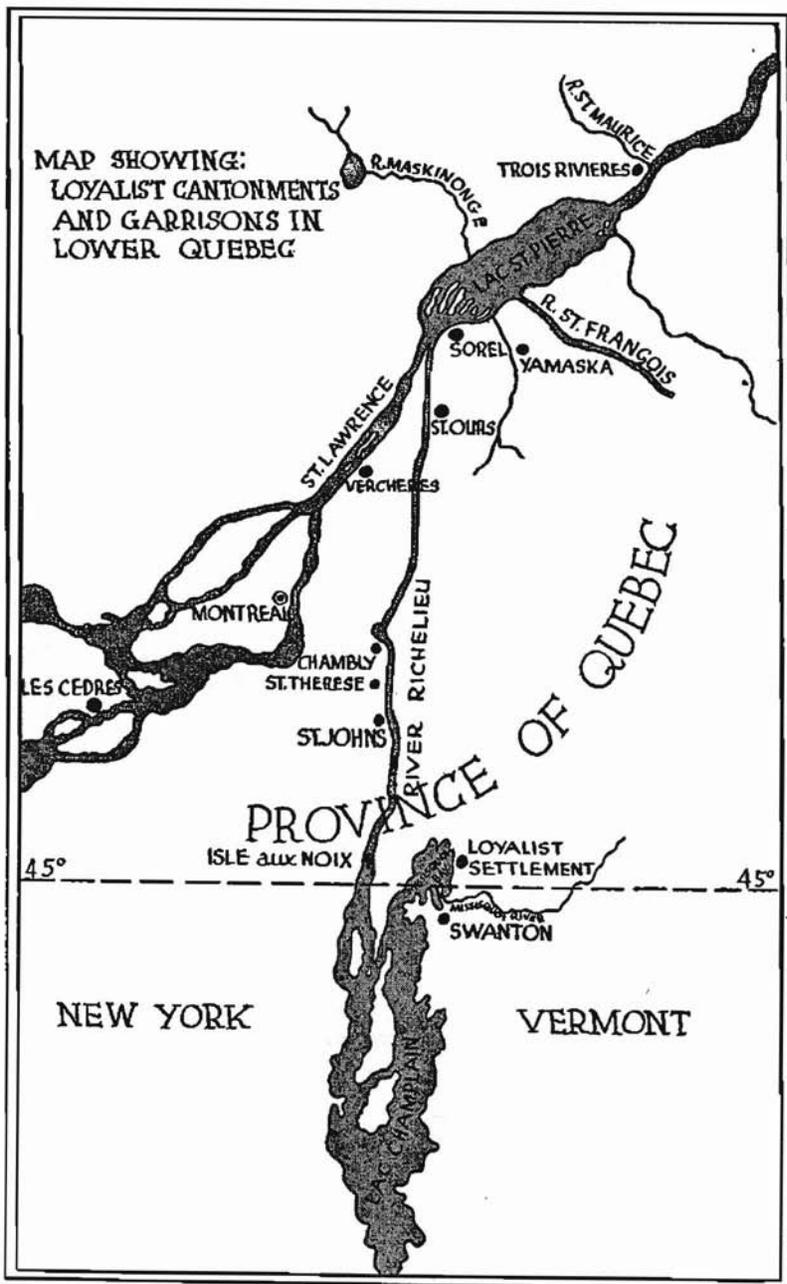
Of the Canadian titles, the old French grants to Daine, de Lusignan, and de Beauvais, Jr., had all reverted to the Crown many years before. The Seigniory of St. Armand, another French grant, was obviously good for only that portion of the tract that lay within the Province of Quebec. This title, though 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*

**D**URING 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



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 Cataragui.

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.<sup>1</sup> 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 Ruitter 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.<sup>2</sup>

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."<sup>3</sup>

This memorial, while signed by Meyers and Sherwood, is easily recognized from the flamboyant 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.<sup>4</sup>

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."<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.