

APPENDIX, No. XLIII.

EXTRACTS

FROM

BOUCHETTE'S TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION

OF

THE PROVINCE OF LOWER CANADA,

WITH

REMARKS UPON CANADA, AND THE RELATIVE CONNECTION OF BOTH PROVINCES
WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.—LONDON, 1815.

“ At the time this Country fell under the English Government, the feudal system universally prevailed in the tenure of lands, and which, as before mentioned, still continues with respect to such as were then granted; but the townships and tracts disposed of by the British Administration have been granted in free and common soeage, only two or three instances to the contrary being known.

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“ By the ancient custom of Canada, lands were held immediately from the King *en fief*, or *en roture*, on condition of rendering fealty and homage on accession to the seignorial property; and in the event of a transfer thereof, by sale or otherwise, except in hereditary succession, it was subject to the payment of a *quint*, or the fifth part of the whole purchase money, and which, if paid by the purchaser immediately, entitled him to the *rabat*, or a reduction of two-thirds of the *quint*. This custom still prevails.”

“ Beyond this range, at about fifty miles distance, is the ridge, generally denominated the Land's Height, dividing the waters that fall into the St. Lawrence from those taking a direction towards the Atlantic Ocean, and along whose summit is supposed to run the boundary line between the territories of Great Britain and the United States of America. This chain commences upon the Eastern branch of the Connecticut river, takes a north-easterly course, and terminates near Cape Rosier, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.”

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“ On the north side of the ridge just described lies the remaining part of Lower Canada yet unnoticed, and which is contained within the Ottawa river, the 81 degree of west longitude, and the 52 parallel of north latitude, intersected laterally by another and higher range of mountains that forms the Land's Height, and divides the waters that empty into the St. Lawrence from those that descend into Hudson's Bay.”

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“ The river St. Lawrence (which, from its first discovery in 1535, has been called by the inhabitants of the Country, to mark its pre-eminence, the Great River,) re-

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ceives nearly all the rivers that have their sources in the extensive range of mountains to the northwards, called the Land's Height, that separates the waters falling into Hudson's Bay still further to the north, from those that descend into the Atlantic, and all those that rise in the ridge which commences on its southern bank, and runs nearly south-westerly until it falls upon Lake Champlain. Of these, the principal ones are the Ottawa, Masquinonge, Saint Maurice, Saint Anne, Jacques Cartier, Saguenay, Betsiamites, and Manicouagan on the north; and the Salmon river, Chateaugay, Chambly or Richelieu, Yamaska, St. Francis, Becancour, Du Chene, Chaudiere, and du Loup on the South."

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"In the distant range of mountains that form the Land's Height beyond its northern and western shores, several considerable rivers, and numerous small ones, have their rise, which being increased in their course by many small lakes, finally discharge themselves into Lake Superior."

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"At the western angle of Lake Huron is Lake Michigan, which, although distinguished by a separate name, can only be considered as a part of the former, deepening into a Bay of two hundred and sixty-two miles in length, by fifty-five in breadth, and whose entire circumference is 731 miles. Between it and Lake Huron there is a peninsula that, at the widest part, is one hundred and fifty miles, along which, and round the bottom of Michigan, runs part of the chain forming the Land's Height to the southward; from whence descend many large and numerous inferior streams that discharge into it. On the north side of Lake Huron many rivers of considerable size run from the Land's Height down to it. One of them, called French river, communicates with Lake Nipissing, from whence a succession of smaller ones, connected by short portages, opens an intercourse with the Ottawa river that joins the St. Lawrence near Montreal."

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"**RIVIERE DU LOUP** (the Seigniorship of,) in the county of Cornwallis, fronts the St. Lawrence, joining Granville and Lachenaye on the south-west, and the seigniorship of Isle Verte on the north-east: in the rear it is bounded by waste crown lands. It has nearly five leagues in breadth by two in depth; granted April 5th, 1689, to the Sieurs Villeraï and Lachenaye: Alexander Fraser, Esq. is the proprietor. The general appearance of this seigniorship is uneven and mountainous, but it contains some extensive patches of good arable and very fine meadow land; these are divided into several ranges of concessions; bearing the names of St. André Riviere du Loup, St. Patrick Riviere du Loup, Fraserville, Nouvelle Ecosse, St. George, or Caona, St. Anthony, St. Andrew, and St. Jacques: the first, a great part of the second, and a little of the third, are in a very good state of cultivation and well inhabited. The whole seigniorship is abundantly timbered with beech, maple, birch, and large quantities of pine. It is watered by several streams, but the principal one is Riviere du Loup, which rises in the High Lands, and flows in nearly a northerly course into the St. Lawrence; on both sides of it the banks are high, until approaching within about three-quarters of a mile of its discharge, where they become low and flat: vessels of twenty-five tons may ascend it as high as the bridge, a little more than half a mile from its mouth. Fraser Lodge, the residence of the owner of the Seigniorship, is situated on the north side of the entrance of the river."

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"From the Connecticut River, the height of land on which the boundary is supposed to pass runs to the north-east, and divides the waters that fall into the Saint Lawrence from those flowing into the Atlantic; and which height, after running some dis-

tance upon that course, sends off a branch to the eastward, that separates the heads of the streams falling into Lake Timiseouata and river St. John, and by that channel into the Bay of Fundy, from those that descend in a more direct course to the Atlantic. The main ridge, continuing its north-easterly direction, is intersected by an imaginary line, prolonged in a course astronomically due north, from the head of the river St. Croix, and which ridge is supposed to be the boundary between Lower Canada and the United States; at least such appears to be the way in which the Treaty of 1783 is construed by the American Government; but which ought, more fairly, to be understood as follows, viz: That the astronomical line running north from the St. Croix should extend only to the first or easterly ridge, and thence run westerly, along the crest of the said ridge, to the Connecticut; thereby equitably dividing the waters flowing into the St. Lawrence from those that empty into the Atlantic *within the limits of the United States*, and those that have their estuaries within the British province of New Brunswick. It is important, and must always have been had in contemplation, that an uninterrupted communication and connection should exist between all his Majesty's North American possessions; but by the manner in which the treaty is insisted upon by the opposite party, a space of more than eighty-five miles would be placed within the American limits, and by which the British provinces would be completely severed; it would also produce the inconvenience of having the mail from England to Quebec carried over that distance of American Territory; and which may either be deemed a matter of indulgence, or complained of as an encroachment, according to the temper of the times. Within this tract also is the Madawaska Settlement, consisting of nearly 200 families, all holding their grants from the British Government. England, at all times high minded and generous, never shrinks from the strict fulfilment of her engagements; even though from oversight, or want of political acuteness in the persons employed, they may have been framed in a way prejudicial to her true interests. But at the same time she has a right to require that the interpretation of them should not be overstrained or twisted from their obvious meaning and intent by a grasping cupidity after a few miles of territory: which if acquired could be but of little available advantage to the other party. To her, however, this tract is of more value, as securing a free access to all the British provinces, without being obliged to the forbearance of any neighboring State for that enjoyment. If, in the final fulfilment of the fourth and fifth articles of the Treaty of 1815, it should be awarded that the claim of the American Government to have the boundary pass along the north-easterly ridge of land is just, and ought to be acceded to, it is very desirable, and even important to his Majesty's Colonies, that one of the instructions to the British Negotiator should be, to obtain the cession of this tract of Country, either by exchange or other equivalent means, in order that the communication from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick with Lower Canada may be henceforth secured from the chance of interruption."

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"FOUCAULT (the Seigniory of) in the County of Bedford, is bounded on the north by the Seigniory of Noyan, on the south by the State of Vermont, on the east by Missisqui Bay, and on the west by the Richelieu; it was granted, May 1st, 1713, to Sieur Foucault; two leagues in front by two and a half in depth, and is now possessed by General Burton. The line of boundary between Lower Canada and the United States runs through this Seigniory, whereby a great part of it is placed within the State of Vermont."

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“DIVISIONS OF LOWER CANADA.

“The Province of Lower Canada is divided into the Districts of Montreal, Three Rivers, Quebec, and Gaspé, which, by proclamation of the Government, dated May 7.

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Appendix. 1792, were subdivided into the following twenty-one Counties, viz: Bedford, Buckingham, Cornwallis, Devon, Dorchester, Effingham, Gaspé, Hampshire, Hertford, Huntingdon, Kent, Leinster, Montreal, St. Maurice, Northumberland, Orleans, Quebec, Richelieu, Surrey, Warwick, and York. The minor divisions are, 1st. The Seigniories, or the original grants of the French Government under the feudal system; these are again partitioned out into parishes, whose extents were exactly defined by a regulation made in September, 1721, by Messrs. De Vaudreuil and Bigon, assisted by the Bishop of Quebec, and confirmed by an 'Arret du Conseil Superieur,' of the 3d of May, 1722."

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"THE DISTRICT OF THREE RIVERS

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"Lies between those of Montreal and Quebec, is bounded on the south by part of the line of 45 degrees of north latitude, and the ridge of mountains stretching to the north-east; northward its limit is indefinite; or it may be presumed to have only the province boundary for its limit in that direction."

"THE DISTRICT OF QUEBEC

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"Extends from the Seigniori of Grondines, whose western boundary joins the District of Three Rivers, down the St. Lawrence on the north side as far as the River St. John, on the Coast of Labrador; and on the south side from the Seigniori of Deschailons as far down as Cape Chat, where it is met by the District of Gaspé; to the southward it is bounded by the ridge of mountains already designated as the north-easterly chain, and on the northward by the 52d degree of north latitude. It contains the Counties of Cornwallis, Devon, Hertford, Dorchester, Hampshire, Quebec, Orleans, and Northumberland; eighty-seven Seigniories, fourteen whole Townships, four that are partly within the District of Three Rivers, eighteen projected Townships, and forty-two parishes. The quantity of land granted in *fief et seigneurie* amounts to 4,352,500 acres, or 5,109,319 French arpents: in free and common soceage, 561,234 acres. Of the old tenures, one third part, or perhaps a little less, is under cultivation: in the Townships the proportion under tillage is yet but small."

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"DESMAURE, or ST. AUGUSTIN (the Seigniori of,) in the County of Hants, fronting the St. Lawrence, is bounded on the north-east by Gaudarville; on the south-west by Pointe aux Trembles, and in the rear by Guillaume Bonhomme and Faussenbault. No official record has been found relative to this grant; consequently its original date and precise dimensions are not known. *Les Dames Religieuses* of the General Hospital of Quebec, to whom the property belongs, in performing fealty and homage on the 19th March, 1781, produced as their title an act of adjudication, dated September 22, 1733; but which was still indecisive of its dimensions, no notice whatever being taken of the extent."