

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

NOBILITY AND NOBLE FISH

The Governor-General of Canada, the Marquis of Lorne, his wife, H.R.H. Princess Louise and fellow salmon fishermen enjoy sport on Gaspesian rivers.

Ken Annett





FROM INVERARY CASTLE TO RIDEAU HALL

A contemporary sketch of the Marquis of Lorne and his wife, H.R.H. Princess Louise on their departure for Canada in 1878.

NOBILITY AND NOBLE FISH

Background

As Governor-General of Canada from 1878 to 1883 the Marquis of Lorne, John Douglas Sutherland Campbell, and his wife, H.R.H. Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria, enjoyed annual salmon-fishing expeditions to the Restigouche and Grand Cascapedia rivers of Gaspesia. Before recalling their fishing experiences some brief family account is in order.

Argyll John, Marquis of Lorne, born 1845, was a son of the 8th Duke of Argyll, George John Douglas Campbell and his first wife, Elizabeth Georgina, Sutherland Leveson Gower, daughter of George Granville, 2nd Duke of Sutherland.

The Scottish county of Argyll, second largest of that country, has had a stirring past, having experienced Roman, Celtic, Pictish and Norse rule. About 1500 A.D. the Campbells of Loch Awe rose to power and enjoyed a run of success unparalleled in Scottish history. The Campbell chiefs were men of such natural ability, successful statecraft and magnificent opportunism that they espoused the causes that ensured their primacy. The prominence of the 9 Campbell Earls of Argyll and of the subsequent 11 Dukes of Argyll is unsurpassed by any other single noble British family.

Upon the death of his father in 1900 John, Marquis of Lorne, became the 9th Duke of Argyll.

HOUSE OF ARGYLL.

- (26) GEORGE DOUGLAS, EIGHTH DUKE OF ARGYLL, born 30th April 1823; died 24th April 1900. On 7th August 1892 he was created DUKE OF ARGYLL in the Peerage of the United Kingdom. He was also a Knight of both the Garter and the Thistle. He married first, 31st July 1844, Elizabeth Georgina Sutherland Leveson Gower, daughter of George Granville, second Duke of Sutherland. She died 25th May 1878, having had:—

(a) John George Edward Henry Douglas Sutherland, ninth Duke (No. 27).

(b) Archibald Campbell, born 18th December 1846; died April 1913. He married 12th January 1869, Janey Sevilla, daughter of James Henry Callendar of Ardkinglass and had:—

(1) Niall Diarmaid, tenth Duke (No. 28).

(c) Walter Campbell, born 30th July 1848; died 2nd May 1889. He married, 14th April 1874, Olivia Rowlandson, only daughter of John Clarkson Miln of Assory House, Bute. She died 17th August 1892, leaving a son:—

(1) Douglas Walter, born 6th March 1877, married 28th November 1899, Aimée, daughter of John Laurence of New York (judicial separation, 1908), and has a son:—

(a) Ian Douglas, born 1903.

He married second, June 1920, Mrs Lutley Harington Morgan, widow of J. W. Harington Morgan, Judge of the Civil Courts of Justice, Khartum, and daughter of Mr Philip Lutley Sclater of Odiham Priory, Hants.

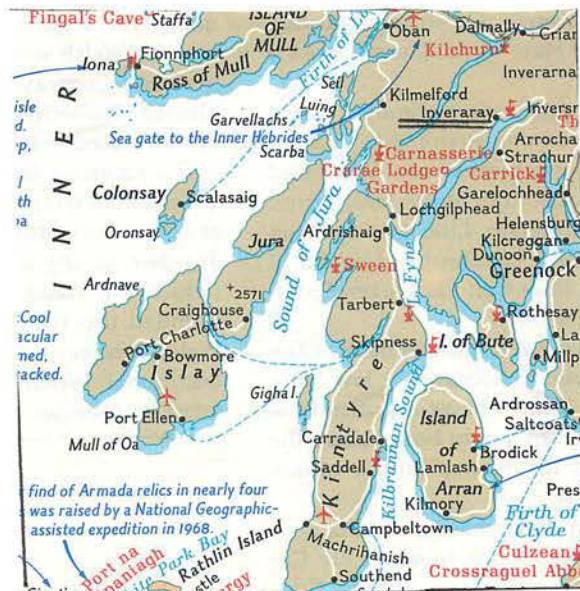
(d) George Granville Campbell, born 25th December 1850; died 21st April 1915. He married 8th May 1879, Sybil Lascelles, only child of James Bruce Alexander and had:—

(1) Ivar, born 14th May 1890. Killed in Mesopotamia January 1916.

(e) Colin Campbell, born 8th March 1853; died *s.p.*, 18th June 1895. He married 21st July 1881, Gertrude Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Maghlin Blood of Breckhill, County Clare.

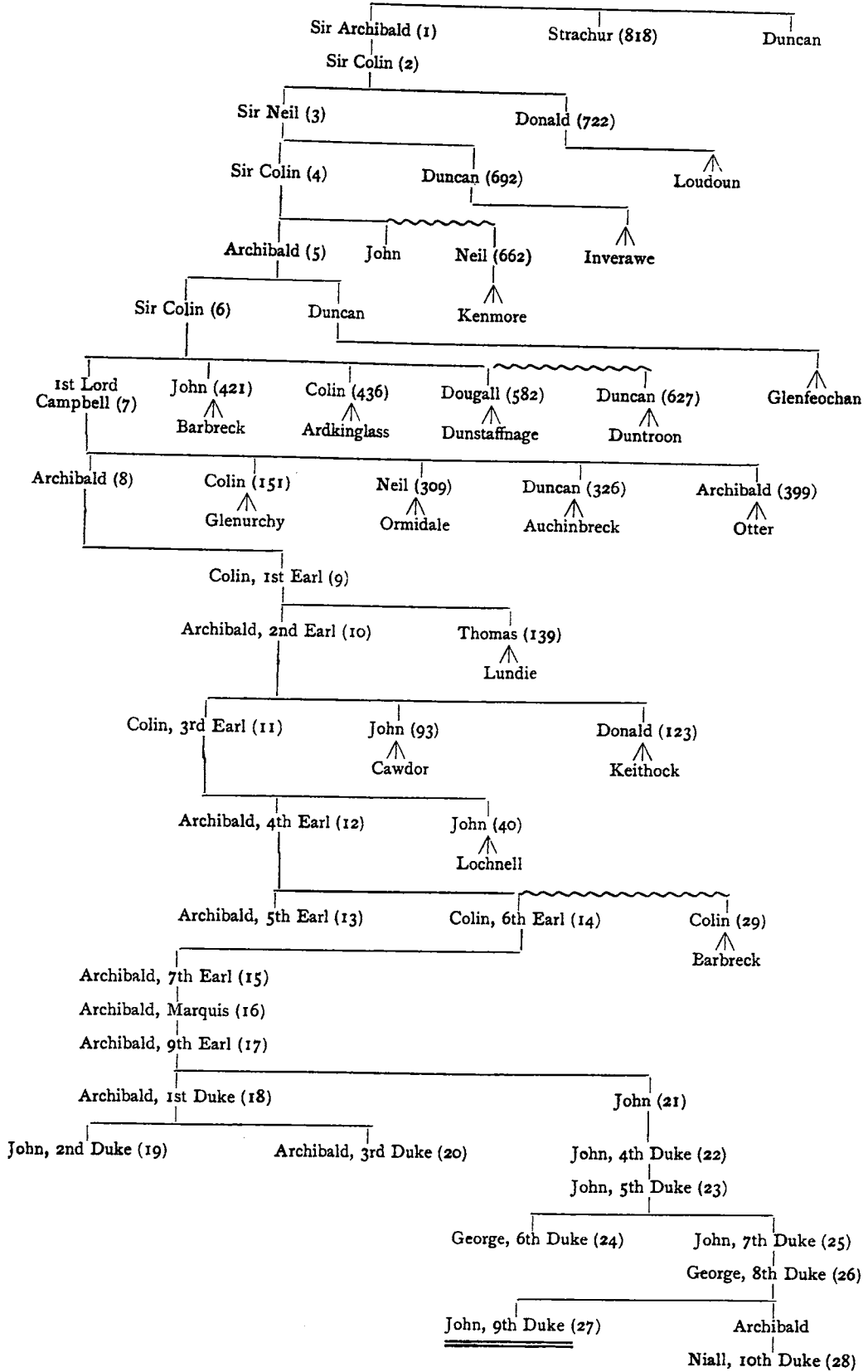
The Duke married second, 13th August 1881, Maria, daughter of Thomas Legh Claughton, Lord Bishop of St. Albans. She died *s.p.* 4th January 1894. The Duke married third, 26th July 1895, The Hon. Ina Erskine, daughter of Archibald Macneill of Colonsay.

(27) JOHN GEORGE EDWARD HENRY DOUGLAS SUTHERLAND, NINTH DUKE OF ARGYLL, born 6th August 1845. M.P. for Argyllshire 1868-78. He married 21st March 1871, H.R.H. Princess Louise, daughter of H.M. Queen Victoria, and died without issue, 2nd May 1914. He was succeeded by his nephew (son of No. 26, *b*):—



ARGYLL

Argyll.



CAMPBELL EARLS AND DUKES OF ARGYLL

H.R.H.Princess
Louise

It is interesting to note that in coming to Canada as the wife of the Governor-General, H.R.H. Princess Louise coming to a land where her grandfather, Edward, Duke of Kent, had served in various locations, including Quebec City and Halifax as a British Army Commander. It is said that of all the daughters of Queen Victoria, Princess Louise least resembled other members of the Royal Family and had most inherited her father's (Prince Albert) characteristics. She had regular features, a fair skin, and an elegant figure which showed none of the Guelph tendency to spread. Her hair was rich brown and her eyes a liquid blue. When she smiled her whole face lighted up. Though she was of serious disposition, her manner was not grave. The London magazine, TRUTH, which was not friendly to the Royal Family, gave her credit for distinct individuality of character...She had an exemplary upbringing. She could cook an omelette and sew a button, but she was not a domestic type of woman for her chief interests were in the arts. She was a competent sculptress. She painted in both oils and water colours as well as the average professional. That she was socially and intellectually progressive was shown by the great amount of practical effort which she had expended upon the education of women.

Summer 1879

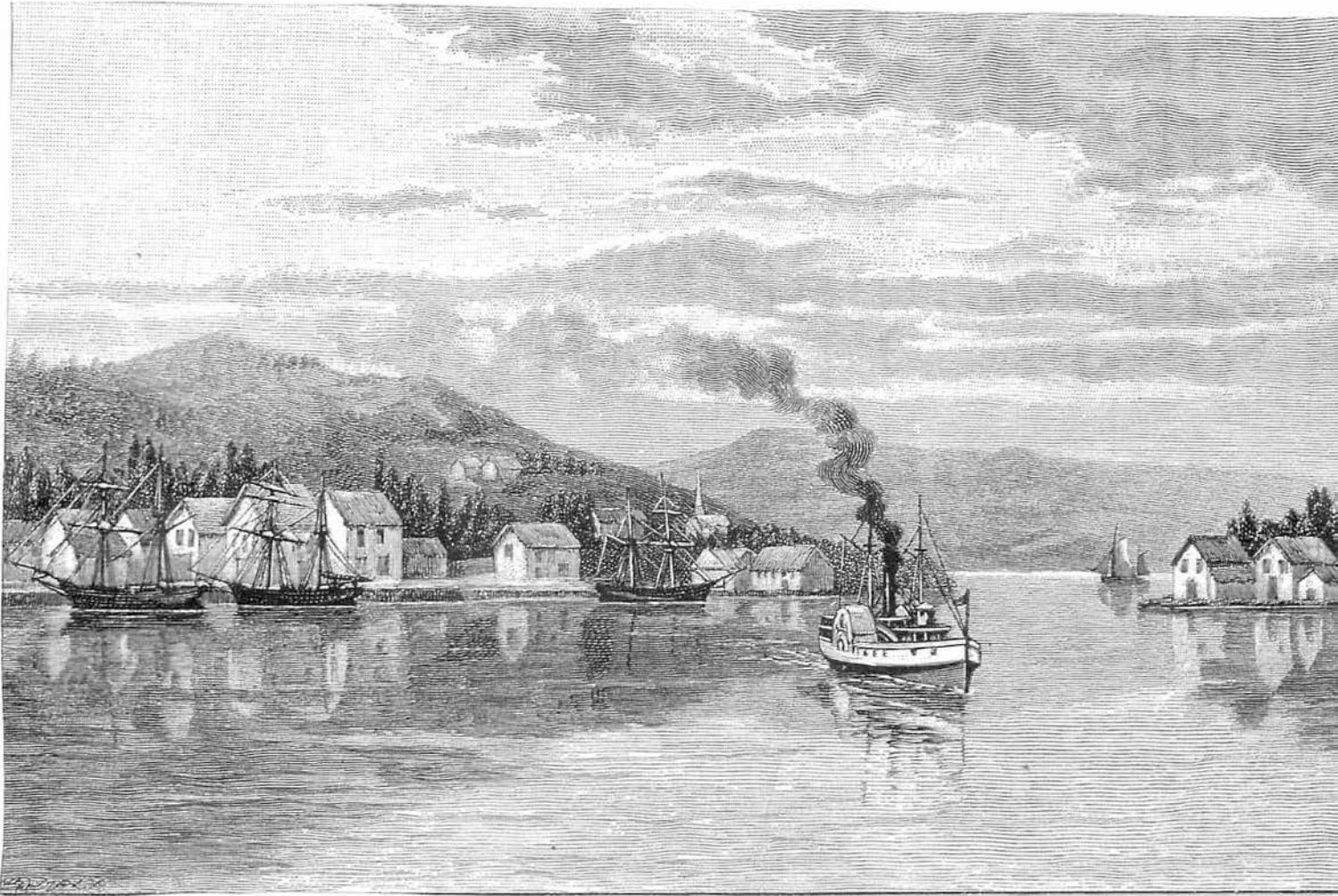
Having arrived in Canada at Halifax on a bleak November day, 1878 and experienced the Canadian winter, it is not surprising that Lord Lorne was arranging for a summer holiday by April as can be seen from the following extract of a letter to his father:

Government House, Ottawa
24 April, 1879.

Dearest Papa,

Do try to come out *sooner*. Mr. Reynolds who is a nice old man and a great fisherman says that my river, "the Restigouche," is much best (and so are all) before 15 June because one can then get all the fresh run fish and the flies are not so troublesome. I am trying to get a larger vessel for a yacht, and if we still have to take the *Druid*, I shall have another vessel so as to have plenty of room. Then the plan is to get over the Montreal functions at the time of the Queen's birthday—go to Kingston for functions there afterwards, up to 31st May, and then go straight to Quebec—get the official functions over there in the first week of June and then embark and go straight to the fishing grounds. When there we can live either on land, or sea, as we choose. The political row at Quebec makes it advisable that we should not be there when the Provincial Parliament meets in the middle of June. Besides the heat becomes great and the salt water is always a remedy for this.

We have the most glorious sun—all the snow is gone. The woods are loud with "Robin's song" and the roads are already very dusty. There never was such a sudden leap from winter into summer...



THE GOVERNMENT YACHT "DRUID"

The "DRUID" was a Glasgow-built, sidewheel steamer normally employed on the Labrador light-house service. Trim and saucy in appearance she became well-known to Gaspesians as the bearer of Governors-General of Canada and their salmon-fishing parties to the rivers of Gaspesia. In 1879 the "DRUID" brought the Marquis of Lorne, his wife, H.R.H. Louise and their party to the Restigouche, and in following years to fish the Grand Cascapedia.

Summer 1879

(ctd)

We are fortunate to have first hand accounts of that 1879 salmon fishing expedition. Included in the Governor-General's party were his father, the Duke of Argyll, his brother, Archibald and his sisters Mary and Elizabeth. The "DRUID" conveyed the Vice-Regal party to Campbellton at the head of Bay Chaleur. At Matapedia the mode of conveyance became a hulking scow especially fitted for the occasion with dining and sleeping accommodation and facetiously named, "GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST". A team of horses on a tow-path drew this clumsy but spectacular craft to Indian House Pool. There an encampment of canvas tents had been provided. The experience was recorded, in part, in the following letter of the Duke of Argyll to Dr. W. F. Cumming:

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL TO Dr. W. F. CUMMING

"Druid" Yacht
Campbellton,
Bay of Chaleur, Canada.
[undated] 1879

My dear Dr.

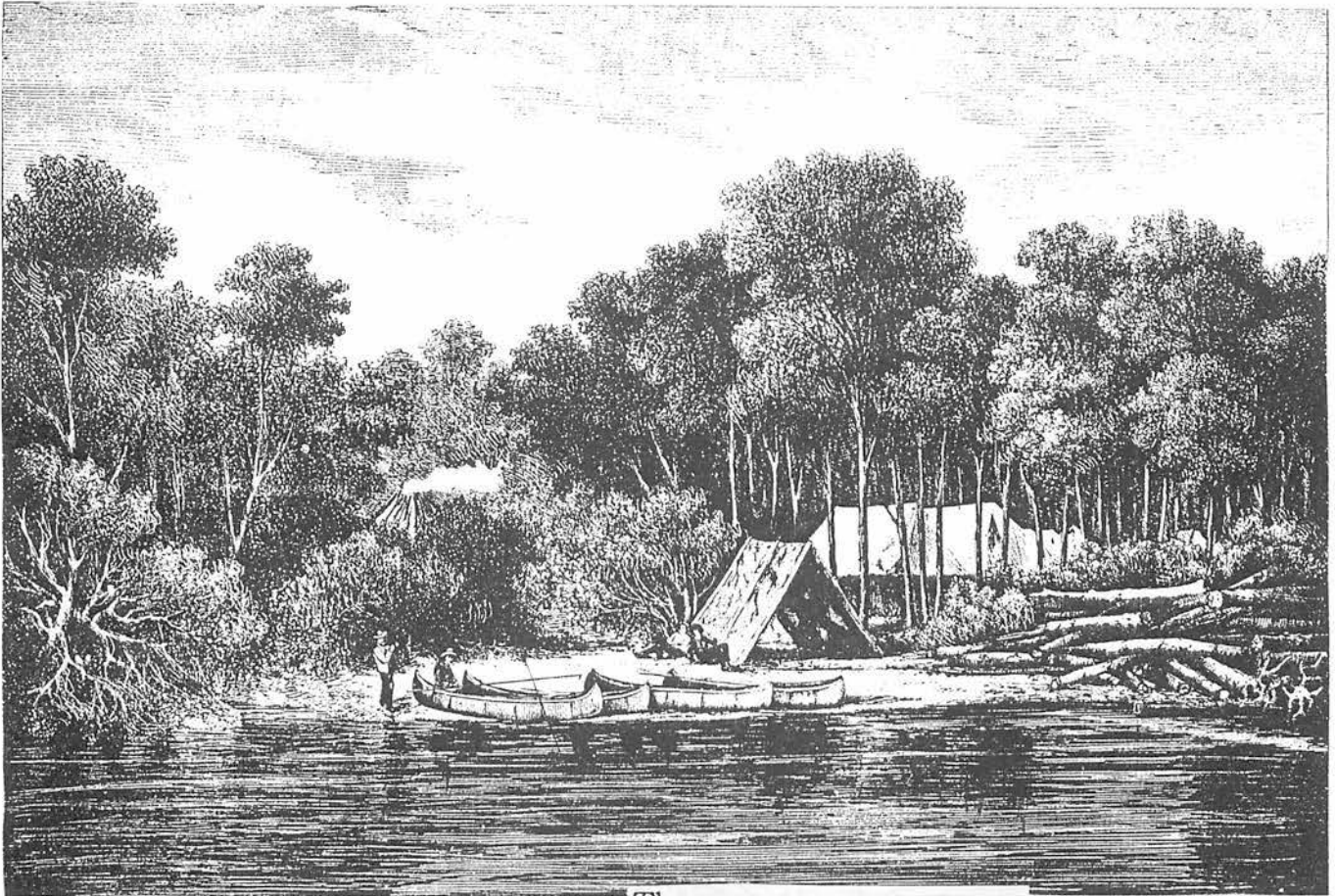
We have now come back to the sea from the Restigouche River after a week's fishing. I got fairly tired of the flies, mosquitoes, saw-flies and the heat. But the fishing was first rate. When we first reached the pool of the camp I went out in a canoe and within half an hour I had killed three fish, one twenty-three and a half pounds, the other twenty-three pounds and the third fourteen pounds. Mary killed the first day she tried one of twenty pounds and Libby killed two—one of thirty-one pounds and the other of twenty-seven pounds.

The last day I was very tired but I determined to try the pool once more and I soon killed two fish, one of twenty-two pounds and the other of twenty-four pounds. The first of these was the loveliest fish I ever beheld—one glorious bar of molten silver, fresh run from the sea. They were indeed all clean fish—but a very few had been some weeks in the river. The Princess killed three one day. The party killed above forty fish, most of them over twenty pounds. You never saw such a noble river, as clear as the Kinglas—pure crystal—running about six miles an hour with great pools half a mile long. All the fishing is from canoes and requires no skill in the world. The stream carries out the fly—altho' good casting may take a few more fish. Of course neither Mary nor Libby nor the Princess could cast well. Yet they were perfectly successful in hooking those magnificent salmon. We have left the Princess still fishing on board a "scow" or barge with cabins in it. The barge is towed up the river by horses. The ice in winter makes a shelf along the bank all the way and there are only a few places where horses can't tow, either from the bank or by wading. The river may be almost one hundred yards wide. We are now going to cruise along the shores of the Bay of Chaleur and to see the mouths of some of the rivers and I hope to catch a few sea trout which is far nicer fishing than catching those monster salmon that seem to rise at anything. But I must confess they are noble fish to look on and delicious to eat boiled at a fire of logs by the Indian half-breeds. I did enjoy the canoes. It is wonderful how they pole up the rapids. It looks very dangerous. But there is hardly ever an accident.

No, Niagara did not disappoint me even at first because I knew exactly what to expect. My first view was illuminated by a flash of lightning at night and the effect was very weird. Lorne and the Princess are both very well. He is rather too stout and will be a very heavy man unless he takes care. She seems in good health and able to rough it, sleeping in tents and barges where the changes of temperature are very trying.

I am not feeling strong myself at all and the heat some days oppressed me much. I soon got tired of hauling out such big salmon and I took to looking after the curious birds in the forest. The whole course of the river is one vast forest with hills as steep as those that descend to Loch Baa covered to the very top with the most beautiful woods of birch, poplar, maple and pines intermixed. The Restigouche is probably the finest salmon river in the whole world. There are some one hundred miles of it—all one vast spawning ground with plenty of deeper places for pools and there are no saw-mills on it to spoil it. It is severely netted at the mouth, in the Bay of Chaleur. But they keep the Saturday rest well and the one day and night a week seems to let enough fish to pass up. I hope to see you in August. Ever my dear Dr.

Yours affectionately
ARGYLL.



There were no women servants and no refinements, and the newspapers commended the Princess for roughing it in the bush. All Canada read the accounts of the *Globe* correspondent who pursued the party into this remote retreat. She was a keener and more patient devotee of the sport than her husband. Borne on a frail canoe between two Micmac guides she exhibited "that same inimitable look of unobtrusive but fearless self-possession" which she displayed on state occasions. On the first day out she caught the largest fish of all the party.

1880 After leaving the Restigouche in the summer of 1879
GRAND the Governor-General visited the Grand Cascapedia
CASCAPEDIA River enroute to Quebec and was so impressed that he
 decided to return to it the following year for the
 salmon fishing season. His patronage, and that of his successors
 in the Vice-Regal office would establish the reputation of the
 Grand Cascapedia as the queen of all salmon rivers with the record
 for the heaviest weight of fish.

The New Richmond authoress, the late Mrs. Margaret
 MacWhirter, has noted in her book, TREASURE TROVE IN GASPE AND THE
 BAIE DES CHALEURS:

"... Lord Lorne did much to publish the
 wonderful fishing facilities of the Grand
 Cascapedia. During his stay in Canada he
 and Princess Louise remained for a time at
 LORNE COTTAGE, which he built upon the west
 side of the river..."

Other sources reveal that Lord Lorne had his summer fishing cabin
 pre-fabricated in Quebec City with four bedrooms, a sitting-room,
 kitchen, large veranda and servant's loft. More comfortable
 accommodation was required for Princess Louise who was still
 recovering from an accident in February when horses drawing her
 sleigh in Ottawa bolted, overturned the sleigh and dragged it
 some four hundred yards before they were stopped. Princess Louise
 suffered concussion and lacerations. She had withdrawn from all
 social engagements during the winter and spring. The Lorne's were
 joined in New Richmond by Princess Louise's younger brother, Prince
 Leopold and Lord Lorne's brother, Archibald Campbell.

Lord Lorne considered the Grand Cascapedia "the
 best salmon stream in the world", offering catches averaging
 20 - 30 lbs. The party rose nearly every morning at dawn, paddled
 upstream to one of the deep, still pools of water that marked the
 river's course and fished from their canoes. They caught far more
 than they could eat themselves, distributing the surplus to local
 notables in New Richmond and sending carefully packed boxes back
 to Ottawa and even to Windsor and Inverary.

1890
GRAND
CASCAPEdia

(ctd)

"We are catching very fine salmon", Lorne informed Lord Granville. "The river is lovely almost beyond belief and were it not that the Princess is not feeling strong, and that the flies are odious, our happiness would be perfect."

Instead of accompanying her husband in daily fishing excursions Princess Louise sought refuge in sketching and painting. Some of her best Canadian painting originates from this summer in Gaspesia. "WOODEN HOUSE"- CASCAPEdia" is a delightful watercolour capturing the eerie stillness of early morning. "ON THE CASCAPEdia", an oil on canvas demonstrates a sensitive use of colour and a fine sense of paint handling. Despite the ruggedness of the surrounding terrain the paintings reflect a serene, almost pastoral sense - also suggesting an inner peace that Louise found along the Cascapedia.

1891
GRAND
CASCAPEdia

The Governor-General returned to the Grand Cascapedia for the 1891 salmon fishing season but his wife, H.R.H. Princess Louise did not accompany him as she had been in England on the advice of her doctors for some months.

1892
GRAND
CASCAPEdia

At the end of 1891 Lord Lorne travelled to England and his wife returned to Canada with him. Again they returned to New Richmond for the salmon fishing season.

1893
GRAND
CASCAPEdia

The end of the term of Lord Lorne as Governor-General was fast approaching. Once again the Vice-Regal party, including H.R.H Princess Louise returned to the Grand Cascapedia for what was to be their last visit. They sailed from Quebec for England on October 27, 1893. Subsequently Lord Lorne published a volume CANADIAN PICTURES illustrated with sketches and paintings of the Cascapedia River.

It seems clear from records of the Lorne's years in Canada that they treasured the happy times they had spent on the salmon rivers of Gaspesia. Indeed, H.R.H. Princess Louise is reported to have remarked to a friend: "...I preferred mosquitos on the Cascapedia to buffoons in Ottawa..."



Clan Campbell

