

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

EDWARD ISAAC MANN AS WITNESS IN 1823

THE VEXING QUESTION OF CROWN LAND GRANTS LOOMED LARGE ON THE AGENDA OF QUEBEC PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE EARLY DECADES OF THE 19th CENTURY.

THE RECORDS OF THAT TIME ABOUND IN PETITIONS, INQUIRIES, AND REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS REGARDING THE GRANTING OF PUBLIC LANDS.

THE PARTICULAR COMMITTEE THAT HEARD THE FOLLOWING TESTIMONY OF EDWARD ISAAC MANN OF RESTIGOUCHE WAS CHAIRED BY ANDREW STUART. IN THE COURSE OF ITS HEARINGS IT ACCUMULATED A WEALTH OF INFORMATION ON LAND GRANTS THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, INCLUDING THE DISTRICT OF GASPE.

LET US IMAGINE, THEN, THAT WE ARE IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM IN OLD QUEBEC IN MARCH, 1823, AS EDWARD ISAAC MANN IS SWORN IN AS A WITNESS.

KEN ANNETT

EDWARD ISAAC MAN, ESQ., OF RESTIGOUCHE, IN THE DISTRICT OF GASPE, MERCHANT, APPEARED BEFORE YOUR COMMITTEE AND ANSWERED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

Q. Did your Father and Your Family reside in any and which of the old British Colonies in North America, and when did he leave the same and for what cause ?

A. My Father and his Family were natives of the State of New York: at the breaking out of the American Revolutionary War he was a Colonel of Militia, held other appointments under the Crown; he was the first in the State of New York who was brought before a Rebel Committee at Albany, and upon declaring his sentiments was sent as a Prisoner into the State of Connecticut, with a married brother of mine named John, he was there kept thirteen months and then sent into Canada, under an Act of Banishment; my brother, John, was liberated at the end of six months and joined Burgoyne's Army as a Lieutenant of a Provincial Corps shortly before it surrendered: in the same Army I had two other brothers, Thomas, a Captain of Guides and Isaac, a Lieutenant in a Provincial Corps: myself and my brother, William, did duty as Volunteers in Sir John Johnson's First Battalion of the Royal Regiment of New York. In the Autumn of 1784 and Spring of 1785 my father, two married brothers and myself, with their wives and families and with my two other brothers, unmarried, amounting altogether to about eighteen persons, went to Chaleurs Bay, and settled at New Carlisle.

Q. What was the number of Loyalists and others settled in the District of Gaspé about that time, exclusive of the old settlers, what allowances in Land and otherwise was made to them by His Majesty's Government and what was the fate of the said settlement ?

A. There were about two hundred and fifty families and Loyalists settled at New Carlisle in Chaleurs Bay, and Douglas Town in the Bay of Gaspé, and there were besides these, sixty or eighty disbanded soldiers, mostly unmarried, of the Eighty-fourth Regiment and some few of the Thirty-fourth and other

Regiments. There was allowed to each head of family and full-grown person of the family, two hundred acres, and to the females and minor children fifty acres each; at New Carlisle, whither we went, a Town was laid out in Acre Lots, which were distributed amongst the heads of families and grown male settlers, under which denomination boys of sixteen years and upwards were included, upon them the Loyalists built houses for their residence. The survey of the Country Lots commenced in the Autumn of 1784 and was continued through 1785 and 1786, when the same was chiefly completed, and a Land Board composed of the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. Cox, Mr. Charles Robin, Isaac Man Jr., and one or two others, was in 1786 or 1787 appointed, by which Board, Location Tickets for Lots in Town and Country were given: it was not till 1786 and 1787 that the Country Lots were allotted.

Q. How were the Loyalist Families, in the interval of time which elapsed from 1784 to 1786, supported ?

A. There were allowed from His Majesty, Rations to each Man and his Family, for three years, besides which a very liberal supply was given by their Majesties, the King and Queen, of the Materials for necessary Raiment, Bedding, etc., also Farming Utensils and every thing that was necessary for building and clearing Lands, which were distributed among the Loyalists by Commissaries and Commissioners, for which they rendered Accounts to the Government at Québec.

Q. What was the value, in your estimation, of the said Rations, and other donations ?

A. It was very great. I have been after informed, and it was generally said and believed, that it exceeded Eighty-two Thousand Pounds, but from want of proper management in the Commissioners that bountiful donation was far from producing the good which was intended. It certainly did not give general satisfaction, but we had no right to complain of Government.

Q. What was the fate of the said Settlements, and what were the circumstances which in their infancy served to advance or retard their Prosperity ?

A. Immediately upon the arrival of the Loyalists in Chaleurs Bay, to the number of about Two Hundred Families, they expressed the wish to be immediately settled upon their Country Lots, which they were not allowed to do ?

Q. Why ?

A. It was thought proper by Lieutenant-Governor Cox and others who had the management of the Settlement of Loyalists to confine them to the Cultivation of their Town Lots during the whole period that we were supported by His Majesty's Government, this, however, with the exception of a very few, perhaps half a dozen Families, who were indulged with the privilege of settling upon their Country Lots. These last had the advantage of making great progress in improving their Lands during the period they were supported; and at the end of three years some of them had from thirty to fifty acres in a cleared and productive state; with comfortable buildings, whilst the other Loyalists were afterwards obliged to commence the clearing and settling of their Country Lots without any aid and under great privations and difficulties, abandoning the Houses which they had built at New Carlisle, and the greater and most industrious and enterprising part leaving the Country and going, some to Upper Canada, and others to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. I do not think that one-half of the Men who participated in the Bounty of Government effected Settlements in the Country Lots, and this principally from the delay which occurred in obtaining allotments and anticipations of other and greater delays on obtaining the Patents.

Q. When were the Patents, in point of fact, obtained for these lands?

A. Not yet [as of 1823] with the exception of that portion of the District of Gaspé lying in the Vicinity of Gaspé Bay. A statute was lately passed in the Provincial Legislature under which the Claims of the occupiers and possessors of Lands in the District of Gaspé will be adjusted and Patents issue.

IT SEEMS PERTINENT AND APPROPRIATE TO INTERRUPT THE TESTIMONY OF EDWARD ISAAC MANN, AT THIS POINT, TO RECALL THE CLAIM FOR LANDS AT RESTIGOUCHE THAT HE HAD MADE BEFORE THE GASPE LAND COMMISSIONERS.

Québec, 18 Nov. 1822

Public Notice is hereby given that a claim by Edward Isaac Man, Esq., of Ristigouche in the Inferior District of Gaspé, to the lands hereunder described, situate in the said Inferior District of Gaspé, hath been fyled with the Commissioners appointed under and in virtue of the Act GEO.III 59, An Act to secure the Inhabitants of the Inferior District of Gaspé in the possession and enjoyment of their lands.

By reason whereof, all and every other person and persons having any claims or pretensions to the said lands, or to any of them, or any part of the same, in opposition to the claim of the said Edward Isaac Man, or to the claims or pretensions of the other persons also hereunder mentioned, are required to present the same at the Office of the said Commissioners, No.21 Mountain Street in the City of Québec, within two months immediately following the expiration of three months from the publication hereof, that is to say, within five months after this date.

The said Lands are severally described as followeth - that is to say: A Lot of land on the N. side of the River Ristigouche, bounded on the E. by Lot No.1 of the Lands laid out for Loyalists, on the N.entrance of the River du Loup or Porcupine River, on the S. by the several courses of the River Ristigouche, on the W. by a line running N.45°W. from two Chains distance above Point à la Croix to the Mountain, thence along the base of the Mountains to the line of departure, containing about 2400 acres.

Also another Lot of Land commencing at a Pine tree on the bank of the River Ristigouche, about 20 yards above the dwelling house of Peter Adams opposite the first North Island, thence running up the several courses of the River to the Westward about one Mile and a half to an Elm tree at the foot of the first rapids, with the usual depths in rear, including the three small islands fronting on the Southward, the said Tract acquired by purchase of Samuel Parry, Jr., Allan Cameron and others and occupied by the claimant for upwards of thirty years.

Also Lots Nos. 14 and 15 at Ristigouche aforesaid, situate at Battery Point, containing each Lot 200 acres thereabouts, acquired by purchase of William Harlow at New Carlisle, 7 March 1789.

Thomas Man of the said Inferior District of Gaspé, Esq., and Isaac Man of the same District claim the undivided $2/4$ th parts of the first above mentioned Lot of Land as Heirs or Legatees of the late Isaac Man Sr., (Colonel Man) in his lifetime of the said Inferior District.

Francois Coudeau and other Indians of the Mickmack Tribe at Ristigouche have also fyled a Claim for a Tract of Land which comprises the said Lot first above mentioned.

Claims have been fyled by Sebastien Landry, Joseph Landry, Romain Landry, Jean Baptiste Landry, Raymond Landry, Severe Landry, Jacques Auffroy, Augustin Allard, J-B Leblanc, Joseph Leblanc, U. Leblanc and Hilary Michaud for lands comprised within the first mentioned Lot of Land, which claims are opposed by Urbain Laviolette and a number of the Inhabitants of Carleton....representing that the Marshes from which the Inhabitants of Carleton, since the settlement of that place, derive their annual supplies of hay, and praying that the same may remain as COMMON for the Inhabitants.

[The adjustment and settlement of the above claims - a long and complex process - is beyond the scope of this article, but the text has been included to illustrate the extent of the Ristigouche lands that served as the home base of Edward Isaac Man]

Now, to resume testimony -

- Q. Have you had any and what means of becoming acquainted with the Amount of the Fees upon Land Patents taken in the adjoining Province of New Brunswick ?
- A. I have, these thirty-four years past [i.e. from 1789] been an Inhabitant of Ristigouche, which divides the Provinces of Lower-Canada and New Brunswick and have traded extensively in that Province, in the course of which trade I have been employed to apply for and take out Grants for a great number of 200 Acre Lots of Land in the Province of New Brunswick, for persons who declared to me their intentions of settling there, which Grants I have with

great facility obtained, by making application only to the Surveyor-General of that Province.....Grants were issued some twelve years ago, in block, to twelve or fourteen applicants which cost them from \$6.00 to \$7.00 for each Lot of 200 Acres.

Q. Have you had any or what means of becoming acquainted with the quality of the Land lying between the hither boundary line of New Brunswick and the old Settlements of this Colony ?

A. Yes, I have in the pursuit of my private concerns travelled, since the year 1787, fourteen journies from Chaleurs Bay to Québec through the interior of the country lying between the St.Lawrence and Ristigouche, passing by the Route of Matapedia out to Mitis, and by another Route up the Ristigouche to its source, thence to the River Saint John, coming out to the St. Lawrence over the Temiscouta Portage. I have also had another opportunity of becoming acquainted with that part of the Country from having explored several hundred Miles as Surveyor of the King's Forests under Commission dated in Halifax, N.S., in the year 1813 from Sir John Wentworth, Baronet.

Q. Do the Settlements advance with more or less rapidity on this side of the New Brunswick Boundary Line, or on the other, and upon what causes in your estimation does this depend ?

A. With much greater rapidity on the other side and this for causes which are very obvious; the chief has been, the people of the District of Gaspé having been so long destitute of any secure Title to their Lands; that alone has been the means of driving away a great many of our best Settlers; the administration of Justice and the want of proper regulations of our Fisheries, have also retarded the progress of the Country.....

THE COMMITTEE LATER RECALLED EDWARD ISAAC MAN AND IN THE COURSE OF FURTHER QUESTIONING RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

Q. Have you at any time and when explored the Country lying between the Great Falls of St.John and the old Settlements on the South Shore of the St.Lawrence at or near Kamouraska ?

A. Yes. I did so in the winter of 1787 and 1788 and subsequently seven or eight times, but only as a Common Traveller from Ristigouche to Québec, striking the St. John a few miles above the Great Falls, thence across Lemiscouata Lake and the Portage, out to the Parish of St. André on the South Shore of the St. Lawrence, about thirty-eight leagues below Québec.

Q. Did you ever explore the Country lying between the Parish of Mitis on the St. Lawrence and the head of the Baie of Chaleur, and if so, at what time and upon what occasion ?

A. I had this Route explored in the months of December and January of the years 1821 and 1822 as one of the Commissioners for the Internal Communications of the Inferior District of Gaspé, for the express purpose of ascertaining a Route of Communication between the Parish of Little Mitis, situate about sixty-four leagues below Québec on the South Shore of the St. Lawrence and the head of the Bay of Chaleurs, as contemplated by a Grant of L £000 from the Legislature of this Province, to open a Road between these two points, a distance of about 100 miles.

Q. State particularly the Expense of the said exploring, the number of men, etc., the time employed etc., and generally the circumstances and manner of it, and the practical results to which you came ?

A. As one of the Commissioners for the Internal Communications of the Inferior District of Gaspé, I filled out a well-chosen party of four white men and two Indians who were employed in exploring the above mentioned Tract during the period of 36 days, which with the Report of their proceeding; together with a Map and description of the Tract of Country they explored cost £ 163, a Copy of which Report and description, being voluminous, I herewith submit, as also the above mentioned Map for further particulars.

In September, 1824, Archdeacon George Jehoshaphat Mountain of Québec, returning from a pastoral visit to the Mission of the District of Gaspé, was a guest at the Ristigouche home of Edward Isaac Man and has left us, in his JOURNAL, an account of the man and his family:

Sept. 12th (Sunday) - ...Before 6 we arrived at the house of Mr. Man - one of those comfortless looking dwellings in which the more newly settled parts of America abound. The house, as was discoverable at one end only, had once been painted red - it stood without enclosure next the river, surrounded by barns and out buildings of the same hue of weather-beaten wood, and of a make-shift and unfinished appearance tho' old and out of repair. After I had taken a farewell embrace of the salt-water, we got a comfortable breakfast enough, and Mr. M. sent round notice of service to be held at two o'clock.....the church there is a mile or two from Mr. Man's house, on the N. Brunswick side and consequently in the Diocese of N. Scotia. At the appointed hour we walked to the Mission Point - a sandy projection with some old spiked guns upon it, so called from its proximity to the Indian village and Church - the former consisting of scattered habitations partly cabins with chimnies however and windows; partly wig-wams with a little patch of rough garden annexed to each - the latter a wooden edifice which the Indians built wholly at their own expense, with a cupola and bell. One of these Indians is a Merchant, who buys fish, etc., from the others and makes shipments for Québec, it is said to the value of £ 300 a year. His credit is good and he keeps his accounts in some kind of Indian hieroglyphics. Mr. Man and his whole family speak the Micmac language with fluency - his daughters however are allowed to excel both father and brother in this accomplishment. Mr. Man himself is a decent kind of a man, so like Col. Johnson of the 68th in person that I once spoke to him as Col. J. in the streets of Québec; he is brother to the Sheriff of the District (Thomas) and has another brother who is a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas at Québec (Isaac) but was himself after his father came to establish himself, as a loyalist refugee, the Bay of Chaleurs, owner and Master of a trading vessel to the W. Indies, etc., and no man living perhaps has been more conversant with the ruder scenes of life. In the woods he is a perfect Indian hunter

and "alike to him is time or tide, December's snow or July's pride". Upon the rivers which intersect the mountain and forest, put him down in his birch canoe and he is as much at home as in arm-chair by the chimney corner. At the same time he is more attentive to the decencies of outward appearance...He is amply stored with narratives of "moving accidents by flood and field" and uses uses expressions now and then which are rather amusing and out of the common way... His wife and daughters...seem kind and well-disposed people.....

Indeed the JOURNAL of Archdeacon Mountain goes on to reflect the kindness and hospitality extended to him as a guest of the family of Edward Isaac Man. Mr. Man was helpful in arranging for canoes and Indian guides for the Archdeacon's journey onward from Ristigouche via the Matapedia route and insisted on accompanying him as far as the junction of the Matapedia and Restigouche. The following extract from the JOURNAL reflects the high opinion that the Archdeacon had of Mr. Man:

"....We turned into this lesser river from the Ristigouche after our breakfast, and Mr. Man took his leave of me, after we had mounted it for a couple of leagues. As he had shown me such particular attention, I judged him worthy of having my father's little bottle of special Cherry-brandy....he made many objections to diminishing my stock of liquor which, of course, was reduced within a very portable compass, and recommended rather an attack upon his own - but when he had once tasted, he made but feeble and brief resistance to a repetition of the draft. I record this as a testimony to the excellence of the liquor..."

These brief glimpses of Edward Isaac Man and his references to his father, Colonel Man and to his brothers provide eloquent argument for the need of a definitive biography of the family. Such a study would be a major contribution to the Gaspesian heritage.