BALLAVIELLEN

A CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE
SIR JOHN JOHNSON MILLING COMPLEX
IN THE VILLAGE OF
WILLIAMSTOWN, ONTARIO
1784-1819

Sir John Johnson House National Historic Site
Researched and written by Preston Scott while employed by the Sir John Johnson Manor House Committee for the Ontario Regional Office of Parks Canada.

c.c. Ellen Manchee, Ontario Regional Office, Parks Canada, Cornwall
Dennis Carter-Edwards, Ontario Regional Office, Parks Canada, Cornwall
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface ................................................................. i
Introduction ......................................................... 1
Report ............................................................... 5
Conclusion ......................................................... 64
Appendix .......................................................... 69
Illustrations ....................................................... 73
Bibliography ....................................................... 94
PREFACE

The purpose of this paper is to place the construction and operation of the first milling complex built on the Raisin River into an historical perspective. Constructed by Sir John Johnson to encourage settlement in Charlottenburgh Township, the former sawmill and grist mill were perhaps the only two mills located between Kingston, Ontario and The Cedars, Quebec (Les Cèdres, Québec) for a number of years.

Situated in the historic village of Williamstown in Ontario’s Glengarry County, the milling complex has a strong association with the United Empire Loyalists and Sir John Johnson. Considered one of the founding fathers of the present-day province of Ontario, Johnson was responsible for resettling thousands of Loyalist refugees along the shores of the upper St. Lawrence River and the Bay of Quinte. Prior to the American Revolution, he was perhaps the largest landowner in the Thirteen Colonies after his father bequeathed to him approximately 200,000 acres of land in upstate New York. Following the war, Johnson was granted £47,000 and several tracts of land in Upper Canada, including the mill site in Charlottenburgh Township.

As mentioned previously, the purpose of this paper is to place the construction and operation of the first milling complex built on the Raisin River into an historical perspective. Owned by Sir John Johnson from 1784 until 1819, this paper will not only deal with the two mills themselves, but it will also briefly describe or make reference to his or other mills located in both Upper and Lower Canada. As well, the paper will also address Johnson’s other properties, his family and marriage, and various historical events that took place in Canada and eastern Ontario.

This paper can only be considered a work in progress due to the fact that very few new archival sources were used in its production. The information supplied essentially came from the files of the Sir John Johnson Manor House Committee, books in the Williamstown branch of the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County Library Board, and other miscellaneous sources.

In order to conduct a full investigation into the two mills, further research must be conducted at the National Archives of Canada (Ottawa), the Archives of Ontario (Toronto), and the Archives nationales du Québec - Centre d’archives de Montréal, de Laval, de Lanaudière, des Laurentides et de la Montérégie (Montreal). Other
sources of information could possibly also be found at the Upper Canada Village Reference Library and Archives (Morrisburg), Queen’s University Archives (Kingston), McGill University Archives (Montreal), and the McCord Museum of Canadian History (Montreal). As well, supplementary information may perhaps also be found at the Musée de Missisquoi Museum (Stanbridge East, Quebec), Musée régional d’Argenteuil Regional Museum (Carillon, Quebec), Gananoque Historical Museum (Gananoque), and Backus Heritage Village (Port Rowan).

In addition, more in-depth information on the technical aspects of operating a sawmill and a grist mill may be found in two books on the subject. First, a reprint edition of The Young Millwright and Miller’s Guide first published in 1795. And second, Grist and Flour Mills in Ontario: From Millstones to Rollers, 1780s-1880s by Felicity L. Leung. Published in 1981 by Parks Canada, this well-researched publication provides readers with the best information on the history of mills and mill technology in Ontario prior to 1890.

Two local historians have also written a couple of well-researched papers on the history of milling in Glengarry County. First, The Priest’s Mill and Its Successors on the Garry River in Alexandria. Privately published by the late Ewan Ross in 1979, this former Glengarry historian traces the history of milling in Alexandria from around 1815 until 1979. And second, McMartin’s Mills: The Milling Establishment at Martintown, 1784-1936. Commissioned by the Raisin Region Conservation Authority in 1987, Dennis Carter-Edwards recounts the history of the milling complex which was established in the village of Martintown around 1805 until it ceased operations in 1936 (the grist mill in fact ceased operations in 1947). Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to thoroughly read the four above-mentioned publications.

Due to time constraints, however, I was not able to concentrate on the period after Sir John Johnson’s ownership. But during my investigation, I discovered that a carding mill was constructed adjacent to “Johnson’s” grist mill during the 1860s. Any reference to the carding mill by previous Parks Canada reports has omitted this fact and requires further investigation.

Preston Scott, Research Technician
Sir John Johnson Manor House Committee

First Draft, April 9, 1998
INTRODUCTION

At the 25th annual conference of The Society for the Preservation of Old Mills (SPOOM), Dennis Carter-Edwards was one of a number of guest speakers to talk at the three-day symposium. Held at the Best Western Parkway Inn and Conference Centre in Cornwall, Ontario, the former president of the Ontario Historical Society addressed the more than 200 delegates in attendance (the majority of whom were from the United States). During his speech which was held on 13 September 1997, Carter-Edwards evoked a number of images and sounds amongst the different mill enthusiasts in the audience. A partial version of his address reads as follows:

The sound of water splashing against the [water] wheel and the steady vibration of the mill machinery conjures up the image of a quieter, gentler time when the pace of life was slower and matched to the daily and seasonal cycles of the weather.

Such an image harkens back to an era of rustic simplicity, when rural values of trust, co-operation and honest labor were deeply held and widely practiced.¹

Ten years earlier, the Parks Canada historian was commissioned by the Raisin River Conservation Authority to conduct historical research on the former milling complex in the village of Martintown. Originally established by Lt. Malcolm McMartin (KRRNY) around 1807, the former Loyalist officer constructed a sawmill, grist mill, and a carding mill (it was the first carding mill built in Glengarry County) along the banks of the River aux Raisins (Raisin River). In the introduction to his report, Carter-Edwards remarked on the importance of mills to the survival of the early settlers in Glengarry County.

Without the mills, they would have to use a whip saw [pit saw?] to manufacture

the boards to construct their “homes, shops, inns and public buildings.” In addition, a broad axe and an adze were required to produce squared-timbers. To grind their grain into flour or animal feed, they would form a cavity in a tree stump or other such item (mortar) and then fashion a type of pulverizer from the hardest wood they could find (pestle). As well, they could have used the hand-operated mills (similar to a coffee mill, they were very difficult to operate) which were supplied by the Crown to the Loyalist refugees following the American Revolution. Several years later, Lord Selkirk (the founder of the ill-fated Red River Colony) would pass through Glengarry County in 1804. In his diary he noted that, “[querns] were also used for grinding in the first beginnings of the Settlement – but have disappeared since good mills have been erected.” These querns would have been imported by emigrants from either the Mohawk Valley in upstate New York or from the Scottish Highlands and brought with them to Glengarry. And to card their wool, the female settlers would have to separate the wool fibres using a pair of wire brushes. All of these tasks were very time-consuming and required a lot of manual effort; therefore, the construction of a mill (or mills) was an important addition to the pioneer community.

Generally speaking, a sawmill was “usually the first building to go up... It also provided [the necessary] materials for constructing other milling establishments” in the neighbourhood. Shortly after the sawmill was completed, the mill owner would usually erect a grist mill on the opposite bank of the given body of water (river, creek, stream, etc.). On the other hand, a carding mill was less likely to be built and was usually combined with a fulling mill.

With the establishment of a mill or a milling complex, it would attract a variety of enterprising individuals who would construct an assortment of buildings to serve the diverse needs of the patrons of the mill. These individuals would include general merchants, tavern keepers, innkeepers, tailors, cobblers, cooperers, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, and others. “Soon schools, churches and other agencies... [would join the
medley] of shops and soon the trappings of town life took firm root.”

In Glengarry County for example, mills have been established on the Raisin River (*Rivière aux Raisins*; *River aux Raisins*; *Aux Raisins River*), Garry River (*River Garry*), Scotch River, Rigaud River (*Rivière de Grasse*; *River de Grasse*; *Rivière Rigaud*), *Rivière Delisle* (*River de Lisle*; *De Lisle River*; *Delisle River*), *Rivière Beaudette* (*Beaudette River*), and Sutherland Creek (*Sutherland’s Creek*). And along these different tributaries the communities of Priest’s Mill (Alexandria), McMartin’s Mills (Martintown), Munro’s Mills (Munroes Mills), Robertson’s Mills (Dalkeith), and Dalhousie Mills were either developed around a mill or a milling complex. Thus, mills “provided a nucleus around which a small community might develop.”

Of the more than fifty [one hundred?] mills constructed in Glengarry County within the past two centuries, only two mills from that time period survive today. One of these mills is located in the village of Martintown. Constructed in 1846 by Alexander McMartin, the three-and-a-half-storey grist mill replaced an earlier structure which was built by his father at the turn of the century. Acquired by the Raisin River Conservation Authority in 1982, the environmental agency undertook a three-year stabilization project (between 1985 and 1987) to prevent the stone mill from collapsing into the river. Transferred to the Martintown Mill Preservation Society Corporation in 1997 (the provincial government changed the rules regarding the responsibilities of conservation authorities between 1995 and 1997), the non-profit organization aims to preserve the historic structure for future generations. Its “primary objectives . . . are to obtain ownership of the grounds (the building has already been purchased), to maintain the building and grounds in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Foundation, to raise funds for future repairs and maintenance, to develop programs to illustrate the role of the mill in the history of Martintown, as well as to plan for the eventual opening of the building to the public.”

The other mill is located in the town of Alexandria. Constructed in 1902 to replace a previous grist mill which was destroyed by fire in 1896, the three-storey feed 

---

*Carter-Edwards, op. cit., 10.*


mill was also destroyed by fire in 1944. Converted into a restaurant (Priest's Mill Restaurant) sometime after 1979 by Ewen MacDonald, the restaurant (The Hub of Glengarry Restaurant and Pub) is now owned and operated by Ernie and Chris Sauer of Alexandria. These two gentlemen plan to transform the stone mill "into a 22-room inn, catering to tourists and business travellers" in eastern Ontario. Unfortunately, these two entrepreneurs can not receive financing from the Federal Business Development Bank; therefore, there is a very strong possibility that the restaurant may close indefinitely if not forever.

It is through the efforts of the Preservation Society and the Sauers that the preservation and possible restoration of the two mills will ensure future generations of Glengarrians the opportunity to view and admire the architectural heritage of their forebearers.

---

As one strolls through the historic village of Williamstown, Ontario, there is little if any evidence to prove that the community was once a thriving industrial centre. Today, only a provincial plaque to mark the site of the former milling complex and a millstone on the grounds of the Sir John Johnson House National Historic Site survive. (Illustration 1)

The origins of the milling complex date back to 1784 when Sir John Johnson led a group of Loyalists from the Mohawk Valley in upstate New York to the wilderness of Glengarry County. Constructed shortly after their arrival, the two mills provided the nucleus around which the village of Williamstown developed. (Illustration 2)

The only son of Sir William Johnson and Catherine Weissenberg [Weissenburg, Weisenberg, Wisenberg?], Sir John Johnson rose to prominence following the death of his father in 1774. Born near Amsterdam, New York, on 5 November 1741, John first saw action prior to the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763) in Lake George, New York. Under the command of his father, the thirteen year old served as a volunteer in an engagement against French troops at the Battle of Lake George on 8 September 1755.

Following the war, John had the opportunity to visit England between 1765 and 1767. While in London, the twenty-four year old was knighted at St. James’s Palace by King George III on 22 November 1765. He received his title not for his accomplishments, but as a favour to his father.

After his return from overseas, John established a common-law relationship with Clarissa Putman with whom he produced two children. However, his father disapproved of the union and he was persuaded to marry a woman who travelled in the same social and political circles.

Several years later he married Mary (“Polly”) Watts on 29 June 1773 in New York (City). As a result, his common-law wife and her two children were forced to vacate their home which was known as Fort Johnson. After their departure, he continued to financially compensate his one-true-love and their two children, William
and Margaret ("Peggy"), until his death.

One year later, Lady Mary Johnson gave birth to the first of her fourteen children. Born on 5 July 1774 at Fort Johnson, the euphoric occasion of the birth of their daughter Anne ("Nancy") was quickly followed by tragedy.

Six days later, his father passed away at Johnson Hall in Johnstown, New York. Upon his death, Sir John Johnson inherited his father’s baronetcy and approximately 200,000 acres of land in the Mohawk Valley. As a result, "[he] assumed responsibility for the numerous tenants and accepted the commission of major-general of the district militia."\(^1\)

After he moved into Johnson Hall with his wife Mary and their daughter Anne, it is reported that the property was so vast that he became the largest landowner in the Thirteen Colonies, "with the possible exception of Lord Fairfax in Virginia."\(^2\) Unfortunately, he did not have the opportunity to enjoy his stay at Johnson Hall either.

With the passing of the Quebec Act on 22 June 1774, relations between the American colonial government and the British government quickly soured. The following year, the first major incident of the American Revolution (1775-1783) took place on 19 April 1775 when a contingent of British troops was ambushed by a group of Minutemen in Lexington, Massachusetts (Battle of Lexington). This incident quickly sealed the fate of Sir John Johnson as there was little doubt as to which side he would support.

In the spring of 1776, Johnson was forced to flee to Quebec (Québec) when he received advanced warning that he was about to be arrested. Fearing that the Hudson River and Lake Champlain corridor would be under enemy control, he and a number of his tenants were able to reach Montreal (Montréal) by crossing over the Adirondack Mountains in upstate New York.

---


2 Canada, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Restoration Services Division, Technical Services Branch, *Sir John Johnson House, Williamstown, Ontario* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1972) 1.
While stationed in Montreal, Sir John Johnson was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and was given the task of forming a battalion at his own expense. Comprised of men from his former estate, the King's Royal Regiment of New York (KRRNY) made frequent raids into the Mohawk Valley. Also known unofficially as the “Royal Yorkers,” a second battalion was created in 1780 due to the large number of tenants fleeing into the province and enlisting.

Throughout the war, Johnson was able to maintain “his long association with the Indians [and] he never failed to champion their cause and to demonstrate his concern for their interests and rights.” As a result, he was appointed to the post of Superintendent-General and Inspector-General of Indian Affairs on 14 March 1782. His appointment was not much of a surprise, however, because his father held the same position at the time of his death. Shortly thereafter, he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General.

As the war was finally drawing to a close in the early stages of 1783, Governor Frederick Haldimand was faced with a serious problem. Since the beginning of the American Revolution, hundreds of destitute refugees were seeking sanctuary north of the border. In order to resolve this situation, he recommended that the Loyalists should be settled along the Rivière du Détroit (Detroit River) in present-day Essex County. However, he was overruled by the British government who advised him that the displaced residents should be settled along the north shore of the upper St. Lawrence River and in the Bay of Quinte region.

Despite his objections, on 26 May 1783 Governor Haldimand instructed Captain Samuel Holland (Land Surveyor-General of the Province of Quebec) to conduct an exploratory survey between Pointe au Beaudette and the Niagara frontier. This event would mark the first official survey of the future province of Ontario by the British government.

Several months later in September, the same month in which the Treaty of Paris was signed, Lieutenant Walter Sutherland (KRRNY) made another preliminary survey of the northern shoreline along the St. Lawrence River. Apparently following instructions given to him by Johnson, Lt. Sutherland began to examine the land west of the same starting point. Situated on the north shore of Lake St. Francis, Pointe au

---

Earle Thomas, *DCB*, 353.
Beaudette marked the western boundary of M. (Mr.) de Longueuil’s seigneurie.

After leaving from the seigneurie in an unknown watercraft, Sutherland and his companions slowly made their way to the mouth of the Rivière aux Raisins (Raisin River). Named for the number of wild grapes that grew along the riverbank, the men carefully travelled up the waterway exploring its potential for future settlement.

In his journal, Lt. Sutherland noted in excellent detail the description of the terrain and the possibility for the establishment of mills and farms along the watercourse. In addition, he also remarked on the availability of timber and masonry materials in the immediate vicinity. Today, this report provides readers with an excellent glimpse of the landscape along the Raisin River prior to the arrival of the Loyalist settlers the following year. In his journal he recorded that:

We sailed up . . . [the] River for five miles, its Course so far being N.W. from thence for three miles further up its course is N. -- The Breadth of the River is very equal, being about 80 feet & from 10 to 8 feet deep -- except [for] six Shoals which are capable [of] carying [sic] a loaded Batteau [sic] with a few loose stones being removed . . . [Within] a 100 yards of the upermost [sic] Shoal is a Fall of 5 feet 8 inches, with a good situation for a Mill on each side and plainty [sic] of water. -- From the Lake to the Falls the Land for the most part is bad, except [for] some points and within a half mile and a half of the Mouth of the River -- The Land for seven Miles above is mostly broken Ground, Pine Ridges, Hemlock and Ceadar [sic] Swamps.

At the Mill Falls there is about 300 Acres of good Land. Two miles N.E. of the said falls grows the largest Ceadar [sic] I ever saw.

On the South side of the River, one mile below the falls a Creek [(South Branch of the Raisin River)] comes in, its course S.W. has a number of small Rapids, but unfit for a Mill.
We supposed that upon An Average there is Two Thousand Acres [of] good Land on it within 3 Miles of the River.

There is plenty [sic] of good Pine on the River and plenty [sic] of excellent Lime Stone. I believe that on both sides of it, from the Falls to the Lake there is about 3000 Acres [of] good Land.  

The following month, Captain William Crawford (KRRNY) acting on behalf of Sir John Johnson negotiated a land treaty with the Mississauga First Nations. Signed on 9 October 1783 at Fort Haldimand (located on Carleton Island in the Thousand Islands near present-day Cape Vincent, New York), the Crawford Purchase entitled the British government to all of the land between the Trent River (the site of the present-day city of Trenton) and the Seigneurie of Nouvelle-Longueuil.

When Governor Haldimand finally received official notice from London that a peace treaty had been signed, he authorized the disbandment of the various Loyalist troops under his command on Christmas Eve (24 December 1783). As a result, however, he was presented with two major problems. First, it was impractical to demobilize the troops in the middle of winter. And second, the land was not properly surveyed to allow for the settlement of the discharged soldiers and their families.

To alleviate the situation, Governor Haldimand recommended that the servicemen should be released in June of the following year. “The only exception was the First Battalion of the KRRNY, then in barracks in Montreal, which Haldimand ordered to be replaced immediately by regular troops.”

In a letter written by Major Robert Mathews to Sir John Johnson on 19 February 1784, Governor Haldimand’s military secretary informed Johnson of his superior’s reaction to his previous correspondence. He stated in the letter that, “His Excellency

---


5John L. Ladell, They Left Their Mark: Surveyors and Their Role in the Settlement of Ontario (Toronto: Dundurn Press Ltd., 1993) 70.
desires you will make choice of the situation for yourself that you shall like best, and build the saw Mill you mentioned to Him whenever you think fit.”

Although the letter does not refer to Williamstown or the Rivière aux Raisins by name, it must be assumed that Mathews is making reference to the Glengarry location. As well, it must be remembered that Johnson was familiar with the potential mill site, because he would have read the survey report that he commissioned from Lt. Sutherland. In addition, Sir John Johnson also developed another mill site in Gananoque, but it was not constructed until quite sometime later.

Around the same time, another survey party was being organized by Johnson to conduct a more detailed examination of the land bordering the upper St. Lawrence River. The survey team was led by Lt. Walter Sutherland, Lt. William Coffin (both supplied by Sir John Johnson), Lt. Lewis [Louis?] Cotté [Kotté?], and Patrick McNiff (both supplied by Capt. Samuel Holland). Up to this point all of the surveying in the province had been directed by officers in both the British army and the various Loyalist regiments. Patrick “McNiff, therefore, was the first strictly civilian surveyor employed by the Crown in Ontario.”

Later during the month of March, Johnson and McNiff both chose Pointe Maligne from two possible sites as the location for a new townsite. However, the final approval was given to Lt. Cotté who was based in the new townsite of Cataraqui (Kingston). Originally known as New Johnstown, the community was named after Johnstown in the Mohawk Valley. It was later renamed Cornwall in 1797 after the Duke of Cornwall. The eldest son of King George III, the Duke of Cornwall (also the Prince of Wales) later reigned as King George IV from 1820 to 1830.

Shortly thereafter, Patrick McNiff began to survey the land west of Pointe au Beaudette. But due to the fact that the front concessions were considered too swampy for settlement, the area was quickly abandoned. Although later that year, “McNiff and James McDonell would return to the township and start laying it out.”

Renamed Lancaster Township three years later, the township went by a variety of names,

*Cruikshank, op. cit., 51.
*Ladell, op. cit., 70.
*Ladell, op. cit., 70-71.
including the “Sunken Township,” “Lake Township,” and “Township by the Lake.”

The eight townships that were laid west of Lancaster Township were given the rather unimaginative names of Royal Township No. 1 through to Royal Township No. 8. They would later be renamed in 1787 after members of the Royal Family or titles in which they possessed. Thus, the redesignated townships running from east to west are as follows: Charlottenburgh, Cornwall, Osnabruck, Williamsburgh, Matilda, Edwardsburgh, Augusta, and Elizabethtown. The lower five townships were known as the New Johnstown settlement while the upper three townships were known as the New Oswegatchie settlement. (Illustration 3)

In May, Sir John Johnson was handed the enormous responsibility of supervising the allocation of land to the discharged Loyalist troops and their families. Divided based upon the regiment in which they served, the Loyalists were also separated according to their religious beliefs and ethnic background. As a result, the New Johnstown settlement was reserved for members of the First Battalion of the King’s Royal Regiment of New York. While further upstream, veterans of Major Edward Jessup’s Loyal Rangers (“Jessup’s Rangers”) settled in New Oswegatchie.

By this time, however, the Loyalists were becoming quite restless due to the fact that they were still stationed in and around Montreal. Despite their displeasure, Governor Haldimand was reluctant to send them to the recently surveyed Royal Townships until the ice cleared from the St. Lawrence River (Benjamin Franklin speculated that the winter of 1783-84 was colder and longer than normal due to a possible volcanic eruption in Iceland).

On 24 May 1784, the disbanded soldiers and their families left La Chine (Lachine) by bateaux and arrived at the recently surveyed townsite of New Johnstown early the following month. After they arrived, the Loyalists set up their government-issued tents and waited until they received their land grants. (Illustration 4)

In an effort “[to] prevent officers [from] taking the best land for themselves, Haldimand ordered that pieces of paper called certificates, with lot numbers on them, be drawn from a hat, at which time each applicant had to swear an oath of allegiance”

to the Crown. Drawn sometime in June, the amount of land each veteran soldier received depended upon the person’s rank and the number of his dependents. Although the average amount of land received was between one hundred and “two hundred acres, . . . one end of the property [was] no more than a mile and a quarter from either the St. Lawrence or the Raisin . . . rivers.”

One notable exception to this rule was the amount of land granted to Sir John Johnson. At the beginning of the American Revolution, Johnson was perhaps the largest landowner in the Thirteen Colonies. Therefore, he was entitled to considerably more land than the average individual. To compensate him for his extensive losses, the British government awarded the Baronet £47,000 and several tracts of land. Two of these tracts of land (totalling 2400 acres) were located in Royal Township No. 1 (Charlottenburgh Township). He chose four lots of marshland [including an unknown number of lots east of Johnson’s Point (Frasers Point) in the vicinity of the present-day Cooper Marsh] along the north shore of Lake St. Francis because of their ability to “furnish Hay and Pasture in the dry Season” to his herd of cattle. While the three lots on either side of the River aux Raisins (Raisin River) were selected because of their potential to attract Loyalist settlers to a proposed village that he was to develop around the mill site. Unlike the other Loyalists, Governor Haldimand allowed Johnson the opportunity to select his own land grants.

After visiting the mill site later that summer, Sir John Johnson wrote to Governor Haldimand about his findings. The 11 August 1784 letter stated that he:

left Montreal with a View to examine the Mill Place on the River au Raisin [sic], which falls in the rear of one of My Lotts [sic], and proves to be a very good situation for Mills -- It will admit of both Grist and Saw Mills on the same Dam, but it will be a very expensive one . . . [But] as the Numerous Inhabitants now settling on that River will stand in great need of Boards, I mean immediately to set about the


Mill, provided your Excellency will be pleased to direct that [Jonathan] Muchmore the Mill Wright, who has the Charge of the Canalls [sic] at the Cedars, may be permitted to superintend the Works, upon my paying him, and his finding a proper person to attend in his absence -- and to bring with him such Tools as may be Necessary out of the King’s Store.12

At this time, the present-day province of Ontario was officially known either as the “District of Montreal” or as the “Upper District of the Province of Quebec.” As such, the residents were obliged to comply with French civil law and to adhere to the regulations of the seigneurial system. “Under the seigneurial system the rights of building and operating a mill were reserved to the Crown.”13 Therefore, private individuals were prohibited from establishing mills in the western portion of the province.

Nevertheless, Sir John Johnson was afforded more rights and privileges than the average Loyalist due to his extensive losses and for his involvement with the American Revolution. As a result, he “received special permission to acquire the mill rights on his property along the River aux Raisin [sic].”14

In an effort to attract more settlers to take up residence in the recently surveyed township of Royal Township No. 1, Johnson commissioned the construction of a milling complex shortly thereafter. Consisting of a sawmill, grist mill, and an adjoining log house, the milling complex provided the nucleus around which the present-day village of Williamstown developed.

As mentioned previously, the Loyalists were separated according to their ethnic background. In Royal Township No. 1 for example, it was initially settled by Scottish Highlanders who had served in the First Battalion of the King’s Royal Regiment of New York. As well, some members of the Royal Highland Emigrants (84th Regiment

---

12Cruikshank, op. cit., 152.


14Ibid.
of Foot) also took up residence in Royal Township No. 1.

Two years later, the Reverend Alexander Macdonell (Scotus) led a group of approximately 500 Highlanders from Knoydart, Scotland to the wilderness of Royal Township No. 1. Fleeing economic hardships in their homeland, the Scots later encouraged fellow clansmen to emigrate from Scotland. Meanwhile, more Loyalists continued to take up land in the Royal Townships after making their way from the encampments near Montreal and along the Richelieu River (Rivière Richelieu).

In a series of reports issued to Governor Haldimand in 1784, it is recorded that there were approximately 6,000 Loyalists stationed in the Royal Townships and in the various encampments. For three years the British government provided them with a variety of items in an effort to make them self-sufficient in the years to come. These provisions included tents, muskets, clothing, textiles, blankets, seeds, food rations, livestock, and an assortment of tools and equipment for logging and farming purposes. Among these items given out were axes, cross-cut saws, whip saws [pit saws?], hoes, spades, mattocks, and primitive hand-operated mills. Somewhat similar to a coffee mill, these appliances consisted of revolving steel plates which were turned by hand.

The settlers also had the option of taking their grain downstream to The Cedars (Les Cèdres) to be processed. As well, the Crown also supplied the Loyalists with a sawmill and a grist mill as per the requirements of the seigneurial system. Constructed on the Cataraqui River between 1783 and 1784, the distance to King’s Mills (Kingston Mills) made it prohibitive to the residents of the New Johnstown settlement. The following year, the Crown began to establish another milling complex at Appanea Falls (Napanee). Constructed on the Appanea River (Napanee River) between 1785 and 1787, the sawmill and grist mill were built to serve the needs of the Loyalists in the Bay of Quinte region.

In April 1785, frustrations with both the seigneurial system of land tenure and the French form of civil law led Sir John Johnson:

and a group of officers . . . [to petition] the King on behalf of themselves and their fellow Loyalists . . . They explained to the British Government that the Loyalists had fought to preserve their British form of government and that the French laws, particularly those pertaining to the holding of
of which] the grounds are only beginning to be cleared.” As well, the two mills also appear in William Chewett’s map (General Plan of the District of Lunenburgh) of eastern Ontario which was published on 12 October 1792.

Quite some time later in 1820 while commenting on the confusion surrounding the land surveys in Charlottenburgh Township, Johnson made reference to his original millwright. In the letter he mentions that, “Old Muchmore who built my mill . . . was lost under its wheel.”

On 18 June 1787, his widow presented a land claim on behalf of her late husband. The claim states that Jonathan Muchmore died intestate on 1 May 1787. The petition also noted that the former New Jersey-native was employed as a foreman in the King’s Works when she first met him at The Cedars in 1780. Mary (née Livingston) Muchmore later goes on to mention that her late husband left behind three young children: Elizabeth, 4½ years old; John, 3 years old; and Mary, 1 year old. Although the former Pennsylvania-native never saw her deceased husband’s property, her mother-in-law and sister-in-law could vouch for her claim.

The following year, Mrs. Muchmore presented an affidavit which was signed by her sister-in-law (Abigail Smith) to the claim committee. The affidavit acknowledged “that she knew the late Jonathan Muchmore . . . [and] that he had a House a Grist Mill and Tools for his Trade there, and a Horse.”

Several years later in 1801, Sir John Johnson wrote to David William Smith (Surveyor-General of the Province of Upper Canada) concerning the delay in granting land to the widow of his former millwright. Two years later, registry records indicate that the late Jonathan [their son John?] Muchmore received the patent for the western two-thirds (133 acres) of Lot 47 in the 1st Concession North of the River aux Raisins. Located on the western outskirts of the village of Williamstown next to the Johnson tract of land, the widow received her land grant on 14 May 1803, almost sixteen years

---

23Canada, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, op. cit., 4.


to the day of her late husband’s accidental death.

Archival records do not indicate where the Muchmore family resided at the time of the millwright’s untimely death in 1787, but it is perhaps possible that they were living in the “small country Lodge” built for Sir John Johnson. Although constructed for Johnson, the Baronet never resided in Williamstown, but instead preferred to live in either Montreal or at one of his two seigneuries.

According to restoration architect Peter John Stokes, construction on the house was started shortly before the sawmill was in full operation, but finished after the mill was producing its first sawn timber. He noted during the “investigation of the structure... that it... [was] made up of ground floor beams, generally hewn on one side and pit sawn on the other,... [with] hewn... vertical posts and pit sawn horizontal fillers tongued at the ends and let into the grooves of the posts.” Constructed in the French-Canadian style, the upstairs framing and the floor boards of the log house were manufactured by the adjacent sawmill. (Illustration 5)

Known as the pièces sur pièces (literally, piece on piece) technique of log construction, quite a sizeable structure could be built using this method. Found primarily in the province of Quebec, this style of building construction was also utilized by the Acadians in the Atlantic provinces, and the fur traders in western Canada. However, this technique is considered quite unusual in the province of Ontario.

Situated alongside the River aux Raisins, the original five-bay portion in the centre of the Sir John Johnson House would have stood apart from the other domestic structures in the vicinity. Typically, the traditional settlers cabin would have resembled the Peter Ferguson (KRRNY) residence, which is presently the south wing of the historic Bethune-Thompson House. Also located in the scenic village of Williamstown, the one-storey rectangular structure consists of a single room with a large fieldstone fireplace constructed in the gable end. Adjacent to the fireplace is a

26Canada, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, op. cit., 4.

small set of stairs built against the hearth which lead to an upstairs loft.

In comparison, the “small country Lodge” built for Sir John Johnson was constructed according to the principles of Georgian architecture. During his preliminary investigation of the structure for the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, Peter Stokes maintained that the original floor plan of the house conformed to the traditional Georgian-style floor plan. Despite its obvious reconfiguration in later years, the restoration architect concluded that the one-and-a-half-storey building originally consisted of a central hallway with a pair of rooms flanking either side of the corridor with a single flight of stairs leading to the upstairs sleeping quarters.

An unusual architectural feature worthy of notice is the fireplace mantle immediately to the right of the main entrance. Located in the former parlour or drawing room, the classical Greek-inspired mantle displays a pair of “pilasters that taper from top to bottom. A similar feature can also be found, though in a more elaborate form, in the Simon McTavish [(one of the co-founders of the North West Company)] house” in Montreal, which was built in 1785.

“Although no written descriptions of the two mills have been discovered, an 1813 map [of the village of Williamstown] provides a few clues on the layout of the structures.” Commissioned by Sir John Johnson, the detailed map drawn by land surveyor Jeremiah McCarthy on 20 May 1813 clearly depicts the location of the two milling structures and their position on the river. Located on the west bank of the river on Lot 3 in the 1st Concession South of the River aux Raisins, the sawmill was situated to the southeast of the Johnson homestead. Somewhat larger than the “small country Lodge,” the rectangular-shaped building had a greater area fronting on the river than its depth. (Illustration 6)

---

28Canada, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, op. cit., 4.


31Canada, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, op. cit., 4.
Situated slightly downstream from the sawmill, the grist mill was located across the river on Lot 49 in the 1st Concession North of the River aux Raisins. Sited near the present-day bend in the road which leads to Lancaster, the rectangular-shaped edifice was a moderately larger structure than its counterpart. But unlike the sawmill, the breadth of the grist mill faced the river as compared with its length.

The map (*Plan and Survey of Williamstown*) also indicated that both water-powered mills each had a penstock or a millrace to generate energy to the interior machinery by means of an exterior waterwheel. Of the three types of waterwheels available, the undershot, overshot, and the breast, it is perhaps possible that either the overshot or the breast wheel was utilized.

The waterwheel would then transfer power to either the saw blade or the pair of millstones through a set of wooden gears and shafts. During the late-eighteenth century, millers would apply animal fat to the wooden gears and shafts to prevent fires caused by the constant friction of the various moving parts. As the animal fat melted due to the heat created as the parts rubbed together, it also worked as a lubricant. The gears could also be quickly and easily repaired if one of the wooden teeth broke off. If one should happen to break off, the miller would carve a new one and insert it back into place.

The interior machinery and the physical layout of the two mills may have resembled the illustrations provided in two technical manuals both published in 1795. Entitled, *The Practical Millwright* and *The Young Millwright and Miller's Guide*, the two Colonial American publications provided readers with sound technical and practical advice in operating and managing sawmills and grist mills. (Illustrations 7 and 8)

The interior mechanism of the Williamstown flour mill may have also looked similar to that of the Backus (Backhouse) Grist Mill located near Port Rowan, Ontario. Constructed in 1798 by John C. Backhouse, the frame structure is Ontario’s oldest surviving grist mill. Purchased in 1955 by the Long Point Region Conservation Authority (formerly the Big Creek Region Conservation Authority) from the Backus family, the fully restored mill still produces ground flour for its many visitors in southwestern Ontario. (Illustrations 9 and 10)

In order to produce flour or any other type of edible grain product, a pair of
millstones were required. Known as a run, the round, flat stones of the early mills were usually obtained locally from available natural resources. The millstone on the front lawn of the Sir John Johnson House National Historic Site is made from a solid piece of red granite, perhaps quarried from the Canadian Shield [Grindstone Island in the Thousand Islands?]. Prone to constant chipping and cracking, buhr stones imported from France were the preferred material of choice among millers.

Depending on the type of grain being ground, the miller would have to adjust the distance between the pair of millstones. "For example, wheat needed less space than corn for grinding. The miller [also] had to make sure that the stones never touched" each other. If for instance the fixed bedstone should have came into contact with the revolving runner stone, there was a possibility that the grain would catch fire from the sparks caused by the friction between the two stones.

It was also necessary for the miller to dress his stones every couple of weeks to ensure that the grooves were cut deep enough and the surfaces were level. This required either the miller or a craftsman known as a dresser to finish the stones using a special tool known as a mill pick. Used to deepen the grooves of the millstones, it was important for the miller to maintain a proper depth in order to permit his stones to work more efficiently. More properly referred to as furrows, the grooves allowed the stone to remove the husk from the grain, "directed the . . . [processed grain] to the outside of the wheel, and allowed air to . . . [circulate] through the stones to . . . [prevent a build up of] heat created during the grinding" process. "To test the levels of the stones and ensure equal contact, a wooden bar whose edge was smeared with red earth moistened with water was drawn across their surfaces. The higher parts where the red smear was seen were then dressed off until the whole surface was perfectly level."

The 1813 map of Williamstown (drawn by Jeremiah McCarthy, he occasionally suffered from bouts of alcoholism) also indicated that a dam was built between the two

---


33Kalman, op. cit., 20.

riverbanks. Constructed to allow the miller to have an adequate supply of water to operate his machinery through the creation of a millpond, a dam was almost always built prior to the establishment of a mill.

The dam would have been built using the available natural resources found near the mill site. One material that the settlers had in great abundance was trees. In his description of the area surrounding the mill site in 1783, Lt. Sutherland noted in his journal that pine, hemlock, and cedar were in plentiful supply. “Cedar . . . [for example made for] an excellent building material for dams as its water resistant properties made it a durable item for cribs and other components.”

As mentioned previously, historians and academics estimate that the sawmill, grist mill, and the adjoining log house were built between 1784 and 1792. But from additional research it was discovered that Jonathan Muchmore was accidentally killed on 1 May 1787 while working around the waterwheel of one of his mills. From the signed affidavit signed by his sister (Abigail Smith), it was revealed that the millwright previously owned a grist mill in the United States. Assuming that Muchmore was killed while trying to dislodge an obstruction from the base of the waterwheel attached to the grist mill, it can be presumed that the grist mill was in full operation. It can also be speculated, in all probability, that the grist mill was the last structure to be constructed.

In the letter written to Governor Haldimand on 11 August 1784, Sir John Johnson wrote that construction on the Williamstown milling complex would commence once Jonathan Muchmore found a replacement. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that the three buildings and the dam were built between 11 August 1784 and 1 May 1787. With the possibility that the sawmill, house, and dam were built in 1785, and the grist mill constructed the following year.

The community that was established around the milling complex was named Williamstown by Sir John Johnson to honour the memory of his late father who had gained the trust and friendship of the Six Nations. However, the name Williamstown was not officially recognized until 1833 when a post office was first opened in the village. Although there are unconfirmed reports that the village may have also been known as “Johnstown,” “Johnson’s Mills,” “Sir John Johnson’s Mills,”

"Charlottenburgh Mills," "Mill Town," "Milltown," and "Ballaviellen," a Gaelic word meaning "mill town." It is also interesting to note that three of the four communities that were founded by the Loyalists along the upper St. Lawrence River were named in recognition of the Johnson family: "Williamstown," "Johnstown," "New Johnstown" (Cornwall), and "New Oswegatchie" (Blue Church - located in Augusta Township).

When Lt. John Enys and Joseph Hadfield visited Sir John Johnson's property on Lake St. Francis in 1785, they not only commented on the Baronet's "cottage," but on the condition of the agricultural crops as well. In his journal, the British military officer noted on 5 June 1785 that the soil in Glengarry County was "said to be some of the best Land in the country... [Which] I think seems in some measure confirmed by the Garden stuff I have seen come from it and the looks of the crops as we passed by." Several days later (28 June 1785), Joseph Hadfield and his travelling companion sailed upstream and pitched their tents for the night along the shore of Captain Samuel Anderson's (KRRNY) property (presently the site of the Glen-Stor-Dun Lodge in the city of Cornwall). During his conversation with the English merchant later that evening, "Captain Anderson [(who later became the first judge of the District Court and the Surrogate Court in the Eastern District)] complained of a grub which was destroying his wheat and which he hoped would be only temporary."

The following year, Sir Guy Carleton replaced Sir Frederick Haldimand, who had returned to England on a leave of absence at the end of 1784, as the new Governor-in-Chief. Granted the title of Lord Dorchester (1st Baron of Dorchester) on 21 August 1786, Sir Guy Carleton returned to Quebec not as the Governor of the Province of Quebec (a post he previously held from 1768 to 1778), but as the Governor of British North America.

Upon his arrival in Quebec (City) two months later, Lord Dorchester "found the province rife with discontent." Still frustrated with the lack of progress in dividing the territory into two separate districts, the inhabitants of the "Upper District of the

---

36 Harkness, op. cit., 49.

37 Cometti, op. cit., 96.

38 Harkness, op. cit., 49.

39 Ladell, op. cit., 77.
Province of Quebec" were still sending petitions to their appointed officials. On 2 December 1786, residents of the townsite of New Johnstown issued a petition to the British government concerning their displeasure with the seigneurial system of land tenure and the French form of civil law. In the petition, the settlers also requested that the new district should be divided into counties with the town of Cataract (Kingston) becoming the new capital. A few days later on 19 December 1786, "several half-pay officers at New Oswegatchie wrote to Johnson requesting his help in obtaining changes in the [form of] government." They were also discouraged with their inability to own their own land.

A few months later, yet another petition was presented to the British authorities. Issued to Lord Dorchester in April 1787, the petition was signed by a group of men who referred to themselves as the "Western Loyalists." Representing all thirteen Royal Townships, the sixteen petitioners made eleven requests to the governor. In addition to complaining about the French form of government, they also requested their need for government depots in which to store their surplus grain.

Unfortunately, the Loyalists had more pressing concerns the following year than worrying over their inability to acquire their own land. Prior to 1787, "[the] British Government had been supplying provisions to the settlers for three years and when that source of supply was cut off, coupled with a partial failure of crops in 1787, there was a period of dire distress in many parts of Upper Canada." Known as the "Hungry Year," there were many reports in which several individuals, especially children, died of starvation and malnutrition. The situation was so severe that many Loyalists resorted to eating plants, weeds, roots, leaves, and tree bark.

Upstream at the Cataract settlement, both government-sponsored grist mills at King’s Mills (Kingston Mills) and Appanea Falls (Napanee) had little or no grain to process. In all probability, the same circumstances may have applied to Sir John Johnson’s grist mill in Williamstown.

Concerned over the well-being of his loyal subjects, Lord Dorchester notified the British government about:

\[\text{\textsuperscript{40}}\text{Fryer, op. cit., 329.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{41}}\text{Harkness, op. cit., 55.}\]

the famine and received permission to obtain relief supplies where he could find them. Some livestock and seed may have been purchased in the southern United States, where the drought was less severe. Good climatic conditions prevailed during the growing season of 1788, but shortages persisted because all [of the] seed was imported and [then] rationed.42

Although Lord Dorchester did not grant the Loyalists their wish of living in a separate province, he went so far as awarding them the opportunity to control their own local affairs. He managed this by dividing the “Upper District” into four separate regions. “[With] boundaries that ran between them due north and south, the four districts were, from east to west: Luneburg [(later known as Lunenburg or Lunenburgh)], extending from the eastern boundary of Lancaster Township to [the mouth of] the Gananoque River; Mecklenburgh, from the Gananoque to [the mouth of] the Trent [River]; Nassau, from the Trent to Long Point on Lake Erie; and Hesse, from Long Point to Detroit.”43 The four districts were named in honour of the sovereign’s German heritage and his association with the Royal House of Hanover. Proclaimed on 24 July 1788 by Lord Dorchester, the bill entitled each district to Courts of Common Pleas (to handle civil trials), Courts of Quarter Sessions (to administer criminal trials), and “a land board to award grants to settlers.”44

Appointed to the post of Brigadier-General in 1782, Johnson was also given the added responsibility of supervising the various militia units throughout the four districts shortly thereafter. He was also given the honourary title of Colonel-in-Chief of the militia for the Eastern Townships (Lower Canada) in the spring of 1804. But upon hearing of his appointment, Johnson was infuriated at the notion of receiving such a lowly title, but accepted the appointment nevertheless.

A bitter controversy which had arisen between Sir John Johnson and Joel Stone over a potential mill site in the Thousand Islands finally came to a conclusion in 1789.

42Fryer, op. cit., 334.
43Ladell, op. cit., 77.
44Fryer, op. cit., 335.
The dispute arose in 1787 when both men applied for the same grant of land at the mouth of the Gananoque River. "A compromise was reached . . . [between the two parties when] Sir John Johnson obtained a grant of 1,000 acres on the east side of the river and Joel Stone received 700 acres on the west bank."45

After the decision had been agreed upon, the Baronet established another milling complex, this time on the Gananoque River. Administered by Thomas F. Howland, a timber merchant and a local agent employed by Johnson, the sawmill and grist mill were constructed by 1793.

During the summer of 1792 Lieutenant-Colonel John Graves Simcoe, the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Upper Canada, and his wife Elizabeth visited Gananoque while making their way to his new posting in Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake). After visiting the Gananoque mill site on 30 June 1792, Lt.-Gov. Simcoe returned the following day with his wife. She noted in her diary that, “We rose very early this morning [(1 July 1792)] in order to take a view of the mill at Gananowui [sic] before we proceeded on our way to Kingston. The scenery about the mill was so pretty that I was repaid for the trouble of going."46 It was during this visit that Elizabeth Posthuma (née Gwillim) Simcoe painted one of her numerous watercolour sketches while stationed in the province of Upper Canada. The watercolour painting which is in the collection of the Archives of Ontario depicts a three-and-a-half-storey frame milling structure, most probably a grist mill, with an attached lean-to covering the mill race. (Illustration 11)

The grist mill may in fact be much larger than its Williamstown counterpart, because the mill was constructed next to a body of water that dropped over twenty feet, while there was only a 5 foot 8 inch drop on the River aux Raisins. As well, the Gananoque River was a much wider river; therefore, the larger volume of water could generate more power to a much larger milling structure.


By 26 March 1793 the other mill was completed, because a notice in the *Montreal Gazette* newspaper notified the public that Sir John Johnson was leasing "several [of his] parcels of Land &c. in Upper Canada."\(^{47}\) One of these parcels of land was located at the mouth of the Gananoque River. The advertisement noting this states that, "SEVERAL LOTS [are] to be laid out near the entrance of the new River Thames, (late the Gannanoque [sic]) on which River is an excellent Grist and Saw Mill."\(^{48}\) If an individual was interested in leasing one of these lots, they had to contact the Rev. John Stuart of Kingston. A close personal acquaintance of the Johnson family, the founder of St. George's Anglican Church (later Cathedral) was also responsible for leasing parcels of land on Johnson's Island (Amherst Island) and "A LOT in the Town of Kingston with a convenient and well finished dwelling House on it."\(^{49}\)

The following year, Mrs. Simcoe returned to Gananoque without her husband. Accompanied by Captain John McGill of the Queen's Rangers, Mrs. Simcoe was travelling to Quebec (City) to visit friends. During her stay in Gananoque she spent the evening with the William Fairfield Jr. family. The son of a Vermont farmer who later established a successful mercantile business in Ernestown Township, Mr. Fairfield was apparently leasing the two mills from Sir John Johnson. In 1796, he moved to Ernestown (Bath) where he built a house\(^{50}\) and formed a partnership with his father and three brothers. "Originally known as Fairfield and Sons, the family business became involved in lumbering, merchandising, shipbuilding, shipping, milling and

---


\(^{48}\) Ibid.

\(^{49}\) Ibid.

\(^{50}\) Constructed in 1796 by William Fairfield Jr. and his brother Benjamin, the Fairfield-Gutzeit House was donated to the St. Lawrence Parks Commission in 1961. Previously owned by Dr. W.H. Gutzeit and his wife Mabel Gutzeit (William Fairfield Jr.'s great granddaughter), the couple presented the house and its contents to the provincial government to ensure its preservation for future generations. Today, the building is owned by the Bath Heritage Society and operated as a seasonal museum. Open to the public on Sunday afternoons during the summer months, the one-and-a-half-storey Georgian residential structure is restored to the 1930s and '40s time period.
trading on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River.”

On the evening of 15 September 1794, Mrs. Simcoe wrote in her diary that, “Mr. [Joel] Stone is building a saw mill here, opposite Sir. J. Johnstone’s [sic]. It will work 15 saws at once.” For its time period, this sawmill was quite larger than most.

constructed five years after he received the 700 acres of land on the west bank of the Gananoque River, the Connecticut-native was unable to begin construction on his milling complex after he had received the land due to a number of unforeseeable circumstances. With the drought of 1788, Mr. Stone suffered severe economic hardship when there was an insufficient amount of grain to operate the small distillery that he established in New Johnstown (Cornwall) the previous year. As a result, the marriage to his first wife Leah Moore began to fall apart and they separated the following year.

In the spring of 1792, Mr. Stone moved to Gananoque after he sent his two young children to Hartford to live with his sister. Meanwhile, his wife relocated to Montreal where she died in 1793. Upon his arrival in Gananoque, he began “to work clearing his well-timbered grant, established a general store, planted an orchard, and engaged in agriculture.” As well as his milling enterprise, the town founder also sent timber rafts downstream to Montreal and Quebec (City), and transported lumber to various ports aboard his 17-ton schooner the Leeds Trader.

Shortly after he was appointed the Colonel of the 2nd Leeds Militia on 2 January 1809, his son William passed away four months later at the age of twenty-eight due to tuberculosis. Left without a successor to operate his extensive business holdings, the justice of the peace entered into a partnership with Charles McDonald who was working at the time for Thomas Howland. After receiving a similar offer from Howland a few months earlier, McDonald “officially” signed the deal when he married Col. Stone’s daughter Mary in 1811.


52Robertson, op. cit., 250.

Following the War of 1812 (1812-1814), the Colonel divested himself of his business interests in 1815 and leased his property on the west side of the Gananoque River to his son-in-law. Later that year his son-in-law replaced the sawmill with a larger structure and acquired the area's only grist mill [Johnson's?] in 1817. To help administer all of these business ventures, Charles McDonald and his brother John became partners on 17 January 1818. "The business expanded steadily from 1818 through the 1820s. Its inventory of mercantile goods grew in both volume and variety while its inventory of lumber in Gananoque and Montreal doubled between 1819 and 1822."\(^{54}\)

"In 1823, Sir John Johnson disposed of his property in Gananoque"\(^{55}\) and transferred it to his daughter Catherine Maria Bowes, the widow of the late Major-General Barnard Foord Bowes. The tenth of his fourteen children with his wife Mary, Maria was born in Montreal on 12 May 1786 and she was married on 15 April 1805 at the same location. Unfortunately, her marriage to the military officer came to a tragic conclusion when he was killed in Spain on 23 June 1812 while attempting to storm a fort at Salamanca during the Peninsular War (1808-1813). Two years later (1825), Mrs. Bowes sold the property "to John McDonald who in turn sold a half interest to his brother Charles under the condition of their partnership."\(^{56}\)

After much argument and debate by the British government, on 25 February 1791 it was finally agreed upon by its members that the Province of Quebec should be divided into two separate jurisdictions. Several months later, the bill known as the Constitutional Act received royal ascent on 19 June 1791. Also known as the Canada Act, one of the provisions of the bill entitled the Lieutenant-Governor of the new Province of Upper Canada to divide the territory into districts or counties and to appoint members to represent each district or territory.

It was generally expected among the Loyalists that Sir John Johnson would be chosen as the first Lieutenant-Governor of the new province, but Lt.-Col. John Graves


\(^{56}\)Mika, Mika and Turner, op. cit., 35.
On 8 July 1792, Lt.-Gov. "Simcoe took his oath of office [at St. George's Anglican Church in Kingston], and issued two proclamations. One divided the province into nineteen counties and ... [the] other proclamation called for elections." Along the upper St. Lawrence River, the five easternmost counties in Upper Canada were, as now, from east to west: Glengarry, Stormont, Dundas, Grenville, and Leeds. Unlike today, the five counties extended from the St. Lawrence River to the Grand River (Ottawa River).

By the spring of 1792, Johnson was physically and mentally exhausted after touring the province several times serving in a variety of different capacities. As a result, he was granted an extended leave of absence by the Crown to recuperate. Accompanied by his wife and several of their children, they left Montreal and travelled to England in July 1792. Upon their arrival in England, the Johnson family "took up residence on Golden Square in London and placed their older children in school or university." While in London, Lady Mary Johnson gave birth to their son Archibald Kennedy Johnson, the last of her fourteen children, on 19 December 1792.

The following year, Sir John Johnson purchased a country estate outside of London in nearby Twickenham. During his stay at the estate, "[much] of Sir John’s energy and money went to seek out and buying military commissions for his older sons." After several years, the unemployed Baronet began to reconsider his decision to move to England, because it was beginning to take a toll on his financial resources. As well, he began to believe "that those he had left in charge of his affairs and estates in Canada were not being attentive to his interests." Thus, despite the protests from his wife and children, Johnson returned to Montreal with his family in October 1796.

The same month in which the Johnson family moved to England, Sir John

---


62Ibid.

63Ibid.
Johnson leased his two mills on the River *aux Raisins* to his cousin Captain William Byrne (KRRNY). Notarized on 8 July 1792 by John Gerbrand Beek, a Dutch notary public from Montreal, Capt. Byrne who along with Capt. William Crawford (Crawford Purchase) had previously retrieved the Baronet’s buried papers during a raid of the Mohawk Valley in October 1778. “Unfortunately, these papers were in such bad condition that most of them were illegible. Sir John estimated his loss from their destruction as at least £20,000.”

When the unknown traveller of 1792 noticed Johnson’s “small country Lodge” situated on the banks of the River *aux Raisins*, he mentioned that the house “was apparently in the care but not occupancy of a Captain Byrne.” Therefore, it can be speculated that the house was occupied by one of the mill employees, most probably the mill foreman or the millwright.

According to Patrick McNiff’s map of 1786, Capt. William Byrne was granted Lot 5 and part of Lot 6 in the 1st Concession Fronting on the St. Lawrence River. Located next to the Johnson tract of land on Lake St. Francis (Johnson’s Point), Capt. Byrne received the land patent for his property on 12 March 1797. He was also granted 2300 acres of land adjacent to the Johnson mill site on the Gananoque River in (the Front of) Leeds (and Lansdowne) Township. Prior to his departure for England in 1792, the Baronet purchased the property which was located at the rear of his mill site.

The same year, Johnson purchased yet another piece of property in Upper Canada. On 19 September 1792 he acquired 1200 acres of land in Charlottenburgh Township which had been previously granted to Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen De Lancey [de Lancey, DeLancey, Delancey?] to whom he was related to by marriage. The previous year, the former Inspector-General of the Loyalists in Quebec moved to Annapolis County in Nova Scotia to be closer to his younger brother, Major James De Lancey.

---

64Archibald, op. cit., 209.
65Canada, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, op. cit., 4.
66Canada, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, op. cit., 6.
In William Chewett's map published on 12 October 1792, there were three sawmills located in present-day Glengarry County. The first two mills were located on Lot 10, Concession 1 (Lt. Walter Sutherland) and Lot 22, Concession 2 (Jacob Snyder) in Lancaster Township. And finally, the third sawmill was Johnson’s located on Lot 3 in the 1st Concession South of the River aux Raisins in Charlottenburgh Township.

Three days later at Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake), the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada passed an act which redesignated the names of the four districts. Under the act, the District of Lunenburgh became the Eastern District. While the other districts were renamed, from east to west: Midland, Home, and Western.

Of the eight acts passed at the first session of the legislature, the seventh act dealt with the amount in which millers could charge their customers for grinding grain. According to the statute, millers were entitled to claim one-twelfth of the finished product. While in Lower Canada, the ratio was one to fourteen.

Four years later, "[in] July, 1796, a miller [from the Eastern District] was fined £10.0.0 (half to the King and half to the complainant) together with [court] costs, for taking [an] unlawful toll for grinding wheat." Although the source of this information does not specifically state which individual was fined, there is a very small possibility that either the miller in Williamstown or in Gananoque was charged with this offence.

Shortly after his arrival in North America in October 1796, Sir John Johnson was appointed to the Legislative Council of Lower Canada where he served as a member until his death in 1830. Previously, he was appointed to represent the District of Montreal in the Legislative Council of Quebec from 1786 to 1791.

A couple of years later, on 28 January 1798 Johnson leased his two mills on the River aux Raisins to a millwright from Montreal by the name of William McPherson.

It was not until 16 May 1798 that Sir John Johnson received the land patent for his vast tract of land in Charlottenburgh Township. Since receiving the 2400 acre parcel of land in 1784, the Baronet had significantly improved his property with the

establishment of both a "plantation" on the St. Lawrence River and a milling complex on the River aux Raisins.

During the second session of parliament, the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada divided each of the four districts into half on 5 July 1798. As a result, the Eastern District was divided into the Eastern District and the Johnstown District. Named for the administrative centre of the Eastern District, Johnstown eventually lost its court facilities in 1808 to Elizabethtown (Brockville) due to its shallow harbour. As well, the district boundaries were reconfigured to conform with county boundaries and not with longitudinal lines.

It was not until 1 January 1800 that the act came into effect. From that date the Johnstown District was comprised of the counties of Leeds and Grenville, and the present-day counties of Lanark, west Carleton (RMOC), and southeast Renfrew. While the Eastern District was comprised of the counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry, and the present-day counties of Prescott, Russell, and east Carleton (RMOC). As mentioned previously, the administrative centre of the new Johnstown District was Johnstown, while Cornwall served as the other regional headquarters.

Earlier, in 1798 Charlottenburgh Township was divided into half and the rear concessions were separated from the municipality to form Kenyon Township. Named for the Welsh-born Lord Chief Justice Lloyd Kenyon (1st Baron of Kenyon), the township was primarily settled at the turn of the century by emigrants from the Scottish Highlands. But it was not until 1818 that Lancaster Township was divided into half. Designated as Lochiel to commemorate the ancestral home (Lochiel Castle) of the Clan Cameron, Lochiel was first settled in 1794 when Alexander MacLeod brought over approximately forty families from Scotland.

During the autumn of 1798 or the winter of 1799, Sir John Johnson and his family moved into the palatial Château de Longueuil. Located along the waterfront in Old Montreal, he purchased the large stone mansion from the Le Moyne de Longueuil family shortly after his return from England in 1785. At the time, befitting a man of great social standing and wealth, the two-storey (dilapidated) château was the largest (and formerly grandest) residence in Montreal. Situated on a site now occupied by the Marché Bonsecours (Bonsecours Market) along Rue Saint-Paul (St. Paul

\[^{68}\]Harkness, op. cit., 49.
Street), Johnson spent approximately fifteen years extensively renovating and furnishing the residential structure. As well, “for the sake of convenience and perhaps economy, [he decided] to set aside a room in"\textsuperscript{69} his mansion to be used as the headquarters for the Office of the Indian Department.

Prior to moving into the Château de Longueuil, the Johnson family resided in a “two-storey stone house on the corner of St. Paul [(Rue Saint-Paul)] and St. Denis [(Rue Saint-Denis)?] Streets.”\textsuperscript{70} Purchased in 1782 from Joseph and Benjamin Frobisher (two of the co-founders of the North West Company), the house was later put up for sale in 1792 after it no longer met their needs.

While residing at his country estate in Twickenham, Sir John Johnson had his agent purchase the vast Seigneurie of Monnoir in 1795. Located near Fort St. John’s (Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu) on the Richelieu River (Rivière Richelieu), the 84,000 acre parcel of land was acquired from the prominent de Ramezay family. The previous year, Johnson instructed his nephew William Claus (KRRNY) to try to obtain the farm which was situated next to his house in La Chine (Lachine).

Around the turn of the century, Johnson was “[determined] to recover at least the equivalent of what he had lost in New York . . . [following the American Revolution. In what may be considered almost an obsession,] he became engrossed in the relentless pursuit of [acquiring] more [and more] real estate”\textsuperscript{71} in Upper and Lower Canada.

Also around the same time, Lady Mary Johnson began to seek her independence from her husband shortly after she returned from England in 1796. Perhaps due to boredom, homesickness, or a loveless marriage, she made two separate trips to Albany and New York (City) without her husband. On her second trip to New York (City) in January 1798, Lady Johnson was accompanied by her daughter Maria, her eldest daughter Anne (“Nancy”), and her new son-in-law. Married the previous month in Montreal, “Nancy” and her husband Major Edward Macdonell [McDonell?] of the

\textsuperscript{69}Earle Thomas, Loyalist Baronet, 156.

\textsuperscript{70}Earle Thomas, Loyalist Baronet, 123.

\textsuperscript{71}Earle Thomas, DCB, 354.
46th Regiment of Foot left from New York (City) in February and sailed for Ireland where they spent the majority of their married life.

Despite moving into the palatial Château de Longueuil in the autumn of 1798 or the winter of 1799, Lady Johnson grew restless once again and began to badger and cajole her husband to move back to England. “When she realized that he had no intention of leaving Canada and nothing she could say would persuade him, she resolved to go without him.”

After much pleading and begging by his wife, Johnson finally broke down in the fall of 1800 and agreed to let his wife return to England. Accompanied by five of their youngest children (Catherine Maria, Robert Thomas, Charles Christopher, Marianne, and Archibald Kennedy), Lady Johnson left for England in the spring of 1801 and returned the following year. While overseas, the Johnson family resided at their country estate in Twickenham.

By the turn of the century it became advantageous for vendors to announce their proximity to mills and other establishments. In May 1802, Francis Badgley, a Montreal merchant who was having financial difficulties, placed an advertisement in the Montreal Gazette. In the newspaper, he notified the public of his intention to sell two parcels of land in Charlottenburgh Township. One of these parcels of land was located in the village of Williamstown next to Sir John Johnson’s grist mill. The advertisement noting this states the following:

FOR SALE by the Subscriber, a large, spacious and handsome dwelling house situated at Williamstown in the county of Glengarry, Province of Upper Canada, together with a good garden, outhouses, &c. with a lot of excellent meadow land of 95 acres sown with timothy, and an additional lot adjoining the garden of one acre on which are erected a pot and pearl ash work with two kettles, a pearling oven, tubs, vats and other apparatus, and all lying on the bank of the River Tweed [(River aux Raisins)] -- The house is but a few paces distant from a grist mill, and in the centre of a populous village and settlement, which makes it

---

Earle Thomas, Loyalist Baronet, 150.
remarkably well adapted to the residence of a merchant. This property formerly belonged to William and Philip [Phillip?] Byrne, and was lately in [the] possession of Alexander Wilson.\textsuperscript{73}

According to historians and academics, William Byrne resided in the “small country Lodge”\textsuperscript{74} during Johnson’s ownership. But the advertisement states that he previously owned the property across the river which “is but a few paces distant from a grist mill.”\textsuperscript{75} As well, the unknown traveller of 1792 also mentioned that “Johnson’s house . . . was apparently in the care but not occupancy of a Captain Byrne.”\textsuperscript{76} Furthermore, sometime during Johnson’s ownership of the mill site, Capt. William Byrne briefly resided in the British Isles. And it must also be remembered that Byrne was granted land along Lake St. Francis and the Gananoque River, as well as in Lower Canada near St. Andrew’s [Saint-André-Est]. This evidence thus proves that William Byrne did not reside in the Johnson House, but was merely a caretaker.

Twenty years later, William would manage the Seigneurly of Monnoir. Meanwhile, Philip [Phillip?] Byrne would later represent Sir John Johnson when the Baronet sold his property in Williamstown to Hugh McGillis. At the time, the attorney resided at Johnson’s other domain in Lower Canada, namely the Seigneurly of Argenteuil which was located along the Grand (Ottawa) River.

“In [July] 1802, the Court of [General] Quarter Session[s] in the Eastern District ordered roads to be opened.”\textsuperscript{77} However, as early as 1799 it was proposed that a road should be built between Lower Canada and Kingston. This perhaps was the incentive to construct the King’s Road (Kings Road). Originating at Coteau Landing (Coteau-Landing) and terminating at Dickinson’s Landing (one of the Lost Villages), the King’s Road followed a natural esker several concessions back from the St. Lawrence River.


\textsuperscript{74}Canada, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, op. cit., 4.

\textsuperscript{75} “To Settlers in Upper Canada,” op. cit., 4.

\textsuperscript{76}Canada, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, op. cit., 6.

\textsuperscript{77}MacGillivray and Ross, op. cit., 296.
“It was placed so far from the St. Lawrence for two reasons. First,” it bypassed the swampy and low-lying areas along the waterfront. And second, it would be more difficult for American soldiers to blockade the road if they had to travel several miles through dense brush.

A couple of years later, Lord Selkirk (5th Earl of Selkirk) visited the Reverend John Bethune at his residence on the St. Lawrence River on 22 January 1804. Born Thomas Douglas, the Earl wrote extensively in his diary about his observations of and enquiries with the local Highland population. Today, Lord Selkirk’s diary provides readers with an excellent account of life in Glengarry County shortly after the turn of the century.

As with other communities he visited, the founder of the ill-fated Red River Colony wrote “about the terrain, crop expectations and prices, conditions of trade” and commerce, and the local industrial and transportation infrastructure. In the diary he noted the following:

... -- along the 8th is the only land road [King’s Road] in summer, from the Upper to the Lower province -- along River Raisin (called Avon Du by the Hrs. [Highlanders]) is a double front & thick Settlement tho’ the land is poor -- the back land is better -- in front is mostly pine & hemlock, but the first Settlers thought it impossible to leave navigation. --

The clearings I saw on the front of R. Raisin were not extensive, except Col. McD’s [Lt.-Col. John Macdonell (Aberchalder) of Glengarry House] who has 150 acres, let on shares -- Mr. B. [Rev. John Bethune] etc. reckon 30 or 40 acres the common run of clearing on an old settled lot -- from 50 to 100 bushels of Wheat annually sold . . . Wheat

---


costs ¼$ per bushel to carry to Montreal on Slays [sic]. --

. . . -- Querns were also used for grinding in the first beginnings of the Settlement -- but have disappeared since good mills have been erected. Sr. J. Johnston [sic] has a valuable grist & saw mill just bye [sic] Mr. B's [Bethune's] meeting house -- there are one or two others in the Settlement -- . . .

. . . -- threshing Wheat is done differently from Oats, etc.80

The reference to "Mr. B's meeting house"81 in Lord Selkirk's diary is a confusing bit of information. According to documentary sources, the Rev. John Bethune moved to Charlottenburgh Township in May 1787 upon "the invitation of a group of Highland settlers."82 The former chaplain of the disbanded Royal Highland Emigrants (84th Regiment of Foot), Bethune thus became the first Presbyterian minister to settle in Upper Canada. Well-respected by his congregation as well as by several prominent individuals [Rev. John Strachan (later Anglican bishop), Rev. Alexander Macdonell (later Roman Catholic bishop), and Sir Alexander Mackenzie (fur trader and western explorer)], the Gaelic-speaking minister later purchased the Peter Ferguson property in 1804. "Due to his status in the community, as well as the size of his family, the Ferguson house was [quite simply] inadequate. As a result, a new, much larger home [(Bethune-Thompson House)] was built incorporating the original Ferguson house as the kitchen wing."83

According to Farquhar D. McLennan (1863-1949), a former Williamstown--


81White, op. cit., 199.


native “well skilled in the lore of old Glengarry, . . . there is no local tradition as to any house occupied by Mr. Bethune in Williamstown prior to the building of the Manse in 1805.” This conclusion was also supported by local historian John Graham Harkness (1864-1948) in his book, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry: A History, 1784-1945. In his book, he refers to the fact that Patrick Campbell and Lord Selkirk had both visited with Lt.-Col. Macdonell (Aberchalder) and with Rev. Bethune at their homes while travelling along the St. Lawrence River. It may even be possible that the Bethune family resided in the Johnson residence on Johnson’s Point (Fraser's Point). The “meeting house”\textsuperscript{85} alluded to in the diary may in fact be a log church which was constructed by the congregation in 1787 along the banks of the River aux Raisins.

Between the years of 1802 and 1805, approximately one million bushels of wheat was exported annually from Upper and Lower Canada to the British Isles. As well, timber, potash, and animal pelts were also shipped abroad, with the majority of the exports coming from Upper Canada. It is not known whether or not if the flour or timber produced in Williamstown was intended for overseas consumption, but in all probability it had a small local market with some of the finished products being shipped downstream to Lower Canada.

In 1805, access to Sir John Johnson’s milling complex increased significantly with the issuance of an order to open a road between Williamstown and the King’s Road. Issued during the month of October by the Court of General Quarter Sessions, the Johnson Road was to be constructed through the middle of the Johnson tract of land. Situated between Lots 49 and 50 in the 1st Concession North of the River aux Raisins, no documentary evidence survives to reveal if the [corduroy?] road was usable year-round or only during the summer and winter months. And with the establishment of a road, it would encourage Highland immigrants to settle in the community and it would also enable the settlers to ship unprocessed materials to and finished products from the milling complex.

The following year, the Court issued another order to construct a road between Upper and Lower Canada along the St. Lawrence River. Issued in April 1806, the road originated east of Moulinette (one of the Lost Villages) on Lot 29, Concession 1

\textsuperscript{84}Harkness, op. cit., 82.

\textsuperscript{85}White, op. cit., 199.
in Cornwall Township and terminated at Pointe au Beaudette. Possibly named for Jesse Pennoyer, a land surveyor who laid out roads in Upper and Lower Canada, the Penoyer [Pennoyer?] Road passed through the Johnson tract of land along Lake St. Francis. But as late as 1817, the road was still unfinished in the Pointe au Beaudette area. According to Robert Gourlay in his Statistical Account of Upper Canada, the road still had not been constructed on either side of the boundary. Three miles in Lower Canada and five miles in Upper Canada.

Sometime around 1807, Lt. Malcolm McMartin (KRRNY) established another milling complex in Charlottenburgh Township. Located upstream from Williamstown at the junction of the River aux Raisins and the King’s Road, the complex gave rise to the village of McMartin’s Mills (Martintown). Consisting of a saw, grist, and carding mill, McMartin also built an ashery and a general store to serve the needs of the local community.

According to Rhodes Grant, the local historian states that the mill site was developed between 1801 and 1803. However, archival records prove otherwise. Unfortunately, some of the historical information in his book, The Story of Martintown: A Pioneer Story is incorrect and therefore unreliable.

Following the American Revolution, the native of Perthshire, Scotland was granted land in both Royal Township No. 1 (Charlottenburgh) and Royal Township No. 4 (Williamsburgh). Situated to the east of the present-day town of Morrisburg, McMartin was grant Lot 26 and the east-half of Lot 27 in the 1st and 2nd Concession of Royal Township No. 4. It is also possible that he may have even developed a mill site on a creek which passed through his property. Several years later, Malcolm would serve as a Major with the Dundas Militia in 1803.

As mentioned previously, he was also granted land in Royal Township No. 1 for his eight years of service with the “Royal Yorkers.” According to Patrick McNiff’s map of 1786, Lt. Malcolm McMartin and Cpl. Daniel Campbell were both granted Lot 42 in the 1st Concession North of the River aux Raisins. Meanwhile, the map confirms that John Cameron and a John McMartin were both granted Lot 23 in the 1st Concession South of the River aux Raisins. Shortly afterwards, John McMartin purchased part of Lot 25 (mill site) in the same concession from Patrick O’Hale prior to 1 November 1786. Subsequently, Malcolm McMartin acquired both Lot 25 and the lot (Lot 27 in the 1st Concession North of the River aux Raisins) directly across the
river. After he obtained both lots, Malcolm erected a dam across the river to create a mill pond. Once the dam was completed, he built a sawmill, carding mill, and an ashery on the west bank (Lot 25) of the river. While on the east side (Lot 27) he constructed a grist mill and a general store.

It has also been speculated that Thomas Munro (KRRNY) developed yet another milling complex in Charlottenburgh Township around the turn of the century. But according to Vera Reid, the genealogist states that Thomas Munro did not acquire the mill site until about 1826.

A native of Ross-shire, Scotland, Thomas Munro emigrated from the Mohawk Valley in upstate New York as a result of the American Revolution. Upon its conclusion, Thomas Munro and a R. McDonell were both granted Lot 13 in the 1st Concession South of the River aux Raisins (MacGillivrays Bridge).

Several years later, Munro and his family moved to Finney’s Bridge [Finneys Bridge is located between Williamstown and Kirktown (South Lancaster)] after he sold his farm to John McGillivray (Dalcrombie). A former “wintering partner” with the North West Company, he purchased the Munro farm for £1450 after he retired in 1818. Upon his retirement from the company, he married Isabella McLean [his second wife was the daughter of the Hon. Neil McLean of St. Andrew’s (St. Andrews West)] on 23 February 1819. After their marriage, the newlyweds moved into the small frame farmhouse built by Thomas Munro. Shortly afterwards, he built a magnificent Neoclassical addition onto the front of the house and named it Dalcrombie (Avondbloem).

As mentioned previously, Munro acquired the mill site on the Rivière Beaudette around 1826. Located northeast of Martintown on Lots 27 and 28 in the 8th Concession North of the River aux Raisins, Thomas Munro and his son John established the third milling complex in Charlottenburgh Township. Consisting of a sawmill on the north side of the river and a grist mill on the other, the hamlet that developed around the complex was known as Munro’s Mills (Munroes Mills). Unfortunately, however, the water-powered sawmill was later consumed by fire and it was later rebuilt across the river.

In a letter written to Captain William Claus (Deputy Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs) on 5 July 1807, Sir John Johnson informed his nephew that he was
“building a small Neat Log House of 28 by 19 [feet].”\textsuperscript{86} Constructed at the base of a cone-shaped “mountain” in Quebec’s Montregian Hills, the house was built to attract Scottish immigrants to settle in the Seigneury of Monnoir. A similar situation also occurred two decades earlier with the construction of a log house in Royal Township No. 1.

Situated at the base of Mont Sainte-Thérèse, Johnson renamed the landscape feature Mount Johnson (Mont Saint-Grégoire) after the frame house in which he was born near Amsterdam, New York. He was “[so] taken . . . with the place [(because it reminded him of the Mohawk Valley)] that he chose it as the site of the family [burial] vault and even entertained the idea of having the remains of his parents . . . removed to it from New York State.”\textsuperscript{87}

As with Charlottenburgh Township, Johnson was also required to construct a milling complex as part of his obligation to serve the residents of his seigneury. Located across the river (Rivière Richelieu) from Chambly on the Huron River (Rivière des Hurons), it cost him more than £1000 to build the two mills. In addition, he also had a manor house (not the Georgian-style manor house which is standing today) at Pointe Olivier (Saint-Mathias). During this time, his son John (his seventh child with Lady Mary Johnson and the second named John) was living quite comfortably in the manor house after reluctantly serving three years in the navy aboard a frigate.

In the same letter, Sir John Johnson confided with his nephew that his discontented wife was planning yet another extended trip to England. It is not known whether or not if he gave his consent, but Lady Johnson and their daughter Marianne left fifteen days later from Quebec (City).

Sometime later, Johnson purchased the Seigneury of Argenteuil from Major James Murray. Acquired either in late 1807 or early 1808, the 54,000 [58,000?] acre parcel of land was located near the spot where the Ottawa River (Grand River) empties into the Lake of Two Mountains (Lac des Deux-Montagnes). But in order to acquire the property, Johnson was forced to sell a number of his houses (one was sold at a loss) in the Montreal area. He was also required to borrow £7000 from Joseph-Maurice

\textsuperscript{86}Earle Thomas, Loyalist Baronet, 155.

\textsuperscript{87}Ibid.
Lamothe [La Mothe?]. Lamothe was later appointed in 1812 to the post of Resident Agent of the Indian Department at Montreal due to Johnson’s influence.

Shortly afterwards, the Baronet built yet another manor house. Constructed in a style similar to that of Johnson Hall, the two-storey brick edifice was built along the banks of the North River (Rivière du Nord). Situated near the village of St. Andrew’s (Saint-André-Est), Johnson spent many of his latter years in the fourteen-room mansion. While commenting on Sir John Johnson’s stay at the manor house, in 1896 a local historian by the name of Cyrus Thomas noted the following:

In that manor house he resided for several years, surrounded by comforts and luxuries far in excess of what might be expected in a comparatively new country... [And he] was very free and affable in his deportment, and was noted for his kind and hospitable treatment to all who sought his acquaintance.\(^88\)

By 1815 the seigneury contained two sawmills, two grist mills, and a paper mill. Constructed during the summer of 1804 in the village of St. Andrew’s, the paper mill was one of the first facilities of its kind in Canada capable of producing a variety of paper products. These products included: “wrapping-paper, blue and blotting-paper, notepaper, bonnet board, printing-paper, and cartridge-paper.”\(^89\) Sometime after 1834, the mill ceased production after Lt. Charles Christopher Johnson (the seigneur of Argenteuil, Johnson was the twelfth child produced by Sir John and Lady Mary Johnson) purchased the mill from James Brown.

In an effort to convince his wife to return home, Sir John Johnson sold his country estate in England during the fall of 1808. But in an act of defiance, Lady Mary informed her husband that she did not plan on returning to Montreal until the spring of the following year. Nevertheless, she remained at Twickenham until she sailed back to Canada during the summer of 1809. Accompanied by her two youngest children,

\(^88\) Cyrus Thomas, History of the Counties of Argenteuil, Que., and Prescott, Ont.: From the Earliest Settlement to the Present (Montreal: John Lovell & Son, 1896) 69.

Marianne and Archibald, the voyage would mark the last trip undertaken by Mrs. Johnson.

While his wife remained in England, Johnson invited Clarissa Putman to visit him in Montreal. She accepted his offer and travelled to Lower Canada in 1809 to renew old acquaintances.

After their secret rendezvous, Johnson wrote a letter to his former lover. In the letter, dated 16 September 1809, he reconfirmed his promise to her that he would give her an annuity of “fifty Pounds New York Currency, or one hundred and twenty Eight Dollars”\textsuperscript{90} for the rest of her life. He also agreed in the letter to buy her a house in Schenectady, New York.

At the beginning of the Peninsular War (between 1809 and 1811), timber was exported from Upper and Lower Canada to Great Britain due to a naval blockade on the Baltic Sea. Costing approximately £200,000 for the entire shipment, the timber was intended for the construction of [war?] ships and [gunpowder?] barrels. During this time period, “there were 320 vessels employed in taking away this produce, amounting to 4500 tons.”\textsuperscript{91}

In 1812, the Johnson family would be severely traumatized with the premature deaths of five of its members within a short period of time. The first person to pass away was Lieutenant-Colonel William Johnson. Born at Johnson Hall in Johnstown, New York, the eldest son of Lady Mary Johnson died in Montreal of a fatal illness which claimed his life on 11 January 1812. Shortly afterwards, Captain James Stephen Johnson and his brother-in-law Major-General Barnard Foord Boones were both killed in Spain while participating in the Peninsular War (1808-1813). On 30 October 1812, Colonel Edward Macdonell [McDonell?] passed away in Montreal due to unknown causes. The husband of Lady Johnson’s eldest daughter (Anne “Nancy” Johnson), Col. Macdonell was serving as the Deputy Quartermaster-General of Canada at the

\textsuperscript{90}Archibald, op. cit., 220.

\textsuperscript{91}M.[ichael] Smith, Geographical View of the Province of Upper Canada, and Promiscuous Remarks Upon the Government. In Two Parts, With an Appendix Containing a Complete Description of the Niagara Falls. And Remarks Relative to the Situation of the Inhabitants Respecting the War (Hartford, Connecticut: Hale & Hosmer, 1813) 28.
time of his death. And with the departure of Captain Robert Thomas Johnson on 31 March 1813, Sir John and Lady Mary Johnson had lost seven of their fourteen children.

Prior to the commencement of the War of 1812 (1812-1814), Michael Smith toured the province of Upper Canada. An American by birth, he emigrated from Pennsylvania in 1810 and taught school the following year near Niagara (Niagara-on-the-Lake). After receiving permission from Lieutenant-Governor Francis Gore that same year, he travelled extensively throughout the province exploring its potential for future settlement. But with the outbreak of war, Smith and his family were required to report to an alien board to take an oath of allegiance to His Majesty. “Although Smith stated that he had taken the oath, he and his family, ‘desirous of returning to the States,’ travelled to Kingston, where on 26 December . . . [they] received [their] passports. [As a result,] Smith’s manuscript was confiscated . . . [and the] family went on to Prescott and crossed into the United States at Ogdensburg, N.Y.”

Within the next four months he rewrote his manuscript based upon his memory and a few loose notes he had managed to save. In his book which was entitled, *A Geographical View of the Province of Upper Canada*, Smith recalled that wheat cost between one dollar and one dollar and twenty-five cents per bushel. While in terms of other grains, corn cost fifty cents and rye was seventy-five cents per bushel. He also noted that the soil in the Eastern District was “sandy, cold and stoney [sic], in general producing peas, potatoes, oats and some wheat.”

In a dispute arising over maritime rights on the high seas, President James Madison of the United States declared war against Great Britain on 18 June 1812. Although he was seventy years of age at the outbreak of the war, Sir John Johnson was given the responsibility of mobilizing the First Nations in the Montreal area. “And on 8 August 1814 he was appointed Superintendent of [the] Indian Warriors with the rank of Colonel and [was] instructed to be prepared to move forward at the shortest notice. [But the] War drew to a close without Colonel . . . Johnson leading his troops . . . to

---


93Smith, op. cit., 55.
battle.”

“Upon the declaration of war, [Michael Smith noted that] the governour [sic] had laid an embargo on all the flour, wheat and pork, then in the province, [which was] destined for market.” He also mentioned in his book that the harvest of 1812 had produced an excellent crop (buckwheat, corn, and peas) which was of an exceptional quality and quantity. But due to the war, the majority of the crops had been harvested that season with the exception of the buckwheat crop. As well, less than half of the farmers were able to sow their winter wheat, because they were in uniform. And Smith also noted that flour was already beginning to be in short supply and with the continuation of the war, the matter could only get worse.

Later that year around December, the British colonial government offered to pay individuals a more than fair price for flour and pork, especially along the international boundary between upstate New York and New Hampshire. In an attempt “to induce the citizens of the United States to transgress the laws . . . it appears that some, by the love of money, were prevailed upon to” sell their produce to the enemy.

On 22 November 1813, [(President)] Major-General Francis [Franz?] de Rottenburg (Baron de Rottenburg) had proclaimed martial law throughout the Johnstown and Eastern Districts:

to force farmers to sell supplies to the army. Although he was criticized both by individuals and by the House of Assembly, his action was probably justified, since he was not an officer who gave way to unreasonable fears. [(President) Lieutenant-General Gordon] Drummond repealed the proclamation in January 1814, but three months later was compelled to impose it on the entire colony for the

---


95 Smith, op. cit., 100.

96 Smith, op. cit., 101.
[Edward] Doyle [, a clerk in the Commissariat at Cornwall,] took advantage of the proclamation to send parties to the farm houses in the neighbourhoods to thresh the wheat found in their barns . . . [After the grain was separated from the wheat, it was then sent] to the mills to be manufactured into flour for use of His Majesty’s troops.98

In an act of generosity, Sir John Johnson donated twelve acres of land in the village of Williamstown to the residents of Glengarry County for the express purpose of holding an agricultural fair. Situated on both Lots 48 and 49 in the 1st Concession North of the River aux Raisins, the parcel of land was officially transferred to the Sheriff of the Eastern District (Hon. Neil McLean) on 25 June 1814. Having received its patent from Lt.-Gov. Francis Gore on 29 March 1808, the Williamstown Fair is Ontario’s oldest continually operating agricultural fair.

Although the War of 1812 raged on for a little more than two-and-a-half years, no side could claim victory in the end. And after the illegal naval boardings on the high seas by the British Navy had ceased following the Peninsular War, both parties agreed to sign a peace treaty to end the conflict. Signed in the Belgian town [city?] of Ghent on 24 December 1814 (Christmas Eve), the Treaty of Ghent simply ended the war, but it did not resolve any of the issues that took place prior to the conflict.

Sir John Johnson’s proprietorship at Williamstown was characterized by the sub-division of his land grant into rural acreages and town lots. Before 1815, Johnson sold or leased [very] few land tracts [in Charlottenburgh Township]. However, during 1815 to 1819 a more buoyant market developed for Johnson’s lands. During these final five years he sold nine parcels of farm lands and leased five


98Harkness, op. cit., 136.
additional acreages. [He may have also sold or leased these parcels of land because he was in financial difficulties at the time.] In addition, Johnson disposed of a few town lots by either sale, lease, or gift [(fairgrounds)]. During 1815 to 1819 a lease was negotiated for one town lot while another was sold . . . [to] the local school board . . . Despite these transactions, he still retained a significant portion of his grant.99

One of the nine parcels of farm land that was sold by Sir John Johnson was purchased by Donald Fraser of Williamstown. An emigrant from Inverness-shire, Scotland, Fraser established a mercantile business in the village sometime after he settled in Glengarry County in either 1803 or 1804. After a number of years, the former member of the (Scottish) Glengarry Fencibles purchased Johnson’s Point (Lot 1 in the 1st Concession Fronting on the St. Lawrence River) on 5 May 1815 with the proceeds he made from his general store. Originally known as Pointe du Lac by the French, Johnson renamed the land feature Johnson’s Point or Point Johnson after he had received his land grant on Lake St. Francis. The property remained in the possession of the Fraser family from 1815 until 1951 and subsequently the land feature became known as Fraser’s Point (Frasers Point). Purchased in 1958 by the St. Lawrence Development Commission (St. Lawrence Parks Commission) for the sum of $50,000, the former provincial campground and picnic area (Charlottenburgh Park) sits idle and neglected today due to budgetary cutbacks.

By 1815, the number of milling establishments in Glengarry County was slowly beginning to increase as the population rose in conjunction. According to the assessment rolls for the Eastern District, there were an equal number of water-powered sawmills and grist mills in the county. From these rolls, it is revealed that there were three sawmills in both Lancaster (which included Lochiel) and Charlottenburgh Townships. As well, Lancaster Township contained only one grist mill, but Charlottenburgh had five times as many. In addition, one of the grist mills in Charlottenburgh Township contained an extra run of millstones. Therefore, this unidentified mill was one of only four mills in the Eastern District with an additional pair of stones.

According to the assessment rolls for the Eastern District, there were almost an equal number of sawmills and grist mills in the region. These figures indicate that there were nineteen sawmills in the area with the majority in Cornwall (and Roxborough) and Hawkesbury Townships with four each. While there were seventeen grist mills in the Eastern District, with the majority of the mills located in Charlottenburgh Township.

During the summer of 1815, Lady Mary Johnson passed away after suffering three unbearable weeks with dysentery and palsy. She finally succumbed to her deteriorating health on 7 August 1815. Her two youngest daughters took the death of their mother particularly hard, especially Marianne who contracted the same symptoms as her mother. After recovering from her near fatal disease, Marianne continued to live with her father and later worked as his housekeeper until the time of his death in 1830.

Immediately following the funeral, the widower and his two youngest daughters went to the Seigneury of Argenteuil to recover from their grief. “Since his daughters did not wish to return to ‘the forlorn great house’ on St. Paul Street [(Rue Saint-Paul)], he offered it for sale, and the house in Lachine, too.”¹⁰⁰ Later that year John Molson Sr., the founder of Molson’s Brewery, purchased the Château de Longueuil from Sir John Johnson on 16 December 1815. The following year, “Molson added two wings to the building and turned it into the Mansion House Hotel.”¹⁰¹ Unfortunately, the hotel was destroyed by fire six years later on 16 March 1821.

Within one year of Lady Mary’s death, Sir John Johnson constructed a smaller two-and-a-half-storey [frame?] residence on the eastern outskirts of Montreal. Located at 57 St. Mary Street (Rue Notre-Dame) in the Quebec Suburb (faubourg Sainte-Marie) of Montreal, it was in this house in which the Baronet spent the majority of his latter years.

On 26 April 1816, the Court of General Quarter Sessions ordered that the Court of Requests would be held in the town of Cornwall and in the village of Williamstown on the first Saturday of every month. While on the third Saturday of every month it

¹⁰⁰Earle Thomas, Loyalist Baronet, 160.

would be held at the Adam Baker residence in Osnabruck Township and at or near the mill of Alexander Ross in Lancaster (and Lochiel) Township. Although nothing else is known about this unidentified mill, it must have been a going concern to warrant this kind of judicial attention.

Three months later, Rev. Alexander Macdonell [McDonell?] acquired Lot 37, Concession 11 of Lancaster Township (Lot 37, Concession 2 of Lochiel Township) from [the late?] Captain John McDonell (KRRNY) on 10 July 1816. It was on this site that he erected a water-powered grist mill on the River Garry (Garry River). Situated on the east-side of Main Street in the present-day town of Alexandria, the community was originally named after the grist mill which was known as the Priest’s Mill. Although it is not known when the frame mill was actually constructed, it is widely believed that it was in full operation by 1819. Seven years later, Macdonell was appointed as the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Upper Canada. He remained at St. Raphael’s (St. Raphaels) until 1831 when he moved to York (Toronto) and represented Glengarry in the Legislative Council of Upper Canada.

Previously, Capt. McDonell mentioned in his will of 1816 that he owned a grist mill two miles east of the present-day town of Alexandria on the Rivière Delisle. Located on either Lot 31 or 32 in Concession 10 of Lancaster Township (Lot 31 or 32, Concession 1 of Lochiel Township), the grist mill was apparently plagued with many problems and is never mentioned of again.

During the summer of 1816, Sir John Johnson’s granddaughter from Schenectady, New York came to Montreal to visit her maternal grandfather. When she returned home to her parents, James and Margaret (“Peggy”) Van Horne, Johnson gave her a letter to pass onto Clarissa Putman. Dated 27 August 1816, the letter told his former common-law wife that he was heavily in debt and that he was trying to pay off his creditors. In order to pay his bills, he notified Clarissa that he was selling a number of his properties and that he hoped that by the course of the next summer that he had enough money to pay her annuity. As well, he also informed her that he was in the midst of building his new house in the Quebec Suburb.

Sometime during 1816, the Ottawa District was created following the detachment of Prescott and Russell Counties from the Eastern District. Meanwhile, Carleton County (RMOC) was separated to form the Dalhousie District. Named for colonial administrators, all three northern counties were formed in 1798.
The year of 1816 was also known as “The Year Without a Summer.” This was attributed to the effects of a volcanic explosion which occurred on a small island (Sumbawa) east of Java in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia). Less famous than its sister volcano Krakatoa, the “eruption [of Mount Tambora in April 1815] released 6 million times more energy than that of an atomic bomb.”

As a result of the volcanic explosion:

an estimated 1.7 million tons of ash and debris [was forced] into the air, killing more than 10,000 islanders immediately and some 82,000 more from disease and starvation in the following months. It cast a blanket of ash over a million square miles, could be heard 1,600 miles away, and turned day into night within a radius of 370 miles.

A large quantity of the volcanic ash did not fall to earth but floated high in the stratosphere as a fine dust, light as talcum [powder], circling the globe at an altitude of some 25 miles. At this height it functioned as a vast filter, reflecting sunlight back into space while allowing heat to escape from the lower atmosphere.

On account of the large amount of volcanic ash floating in the stratosphere, temperatures around the globe dropped significantly. On average it is estimated that the temperature in 1816 dropped more than 4°F worldwide. As a result of the colder temperatures, crops in New England produced very low yields. One consequence of the poor harvest was an increase in the cost of food. “Grain prices [for example] during the winter of 1816-17 went through the ceiling: corn, usually 75 cents a bushel, more than doubled in price; oats leaped from 12 cents to 92, [and] wheat from 50 cents to $2.75.” The situation proved so severe that many individuals resorted to eating raccoons and groundhogs to survive.

---


Further north in Glengarry County, the conditions were also desperate. During the month of October, two separate groups of individuals issued petitions to the government requesting their need for assistance:

One was from some of the settlers who had arrived from Scotland the previous year. Their crops of Indian corn [(maize)] and potatoes had been destroyed by the severe frosts of the summer and they asked for further aid in the form of government rations. The other petition was from Glengarrians of Lancaster [(and Lochiel)] Township who declared that they had never yet received government aid but needed it now in the form of a loan of flour, their crops of last year having been injured by the frost and this year being almost entirely ruined. In March of 1817, the provincial parliament considered a petition which had been sent from Glengarry to the Lieutenant Governor [(Francis Gore)], and in which the petitioners spoke of "the horrible prospect of approaching starvation." They alleged "that no less than five hundred and fifty families within this County are sufferers, from the total failure of the crops, the greater part of whom have not at this moment provisions sufficient for the support of their families for one week," and that "the early frosts which have unfortunately destroyed the crops in many other parts of the Province have entirely ruined the crops of every kind in the back parts of this County." They asked for assistance in the form of a loan rather than an outright gift, but the assembly [(Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada)] refused their request.  

Although there is no documentary evidence to prove otherwise, it is perhaps possible that the grist mill in Williamstown ceased operations in 1816 due to the lack of grain to process. As well, due to the extremely cold temperatures, it is documented that snow fell twelve months of the year in New England. Therefore, it can be assumed that there was perhaps a thin layer of ice in the River aux Raisins during the summer of 1816 preventing the grist mill from operating.

105MacGillivray and Ross, op. cit., 39.
On 17 October 1817, Sir John Johnson instructed [his cousin?] Philip [Phillip?] Byrne to place his remaining property in Charlottenburgh Township up for sale. A resident of St. Andrew’s (Saint-André-Est), the attorney may “have [previously] managed Johnson’s Charlottenburgh holdings.”

It was also during this time period that Johnson began to dispose of all his numerous properties in Upper Canada. These properties included parcels of land on Amherst Island and along the Rideau River, and lots or parcels of land in or near Cornwall, Gananoque, and Kingston. He was forced to make this hard decision in an effort to pay off his debts in which he had incurred while trying to support his family’s extravagant lifestyle. His largest expense was as a result of the countless overseas trips undertaken by his family and the cost in maintaining his numerous properties.

Old age had finally caught up with the eighty-four year old Baronet when he began to forget which properties he still owned in Upper Canada. His son Charles, who had earlier moved from England to assume the position of seigneur of the Seigneury of Argenteuil in 1821, became concerned over his father’s mental state. In a letter written (on 4 June 1826) to Col. William Claus five months before his cousin died of lip cancer (on 11 November 1826), Charles wrote:

“The old gentleman has lately suffered great losses by selling lands which did not appear to be his . . . and at the present time he is in difficulty with Bishop McDonnell [sic].” The Bishop had called upon Sir John’s attorney [(Philip Byrne?)] to pay him 300 pounds sterling for a lot in Charlottenburg [sic] with interest and costs. Sir John had sold the lot to one Duncan McPherson who in turn sold it to the Bishop. The court had evicted the Bishop, the lot having proved to have been granted to a person other than Johnson. “My father,” Charles added, “met with a similar loss some years ago.”

Eight years earlier, Charles Johnson married Susan Griffiths Colpoys on 8

---


January 1818. The daughter of Rear Admiral Edward Griffiths, the couple was married in her hometown of Bishops Waltham, Southampton, England. Later that same year, his younger brother Archibald was married to Maria Johnson Langan in Plattsburgh, New York. The daughter of Patrick Langan (a seigneur and a friend of Sir John Johnson), the wedding took place on 13 September 1818. But for some unknown reason, the newlywed couple renewed their wedding vows the following month at the Seigneurie of Argenteuil. Performed by the [Anglican?] minister of St. Andrew’s (Saint-André-Est), the second wedding took place on 12 October 1818 at the two-storey brick manor house situated in York County (Argenteuil County).

In late-May or early-June of 1818, Robert (Fleming) Gourlay visited Glengarry County while on his tour through the eastern part of the province. A native of Craigrothie, Fifeshire, Scotland, he was in the midst of distributing a controversial pamphlet when “he learned that in Williamstown ‘open war had been declared against the cause by leading characters’.”108 Considered a firebrand for his radical views on the rights of the poor and the oppressed, Gourlay was compiling information for an upcoming book he was writing to encourage British emigrants to reside in Upper Canada.

Based upon a book (The Statistical Account of Scotland: Drawn Up From the Communications of the Ministers of the Different Parishes) written by Sir John Sinclair during the 1790s, he handed out a questionnaire to all of the resident landowners of the province to fill out. As with the previous book, both accounts were based upon a series of thirty-one questions. But unlike Scotland, the thirty-first question raised the ire of its citizens, especially those who were in power. Thus, the controversial thirty-first question reads as follows: “What, in your opinion, retards the improvement of your township in particular, or the province in general; and what would most contribute to the same?”109 The majority of the replies received referred to the Crown and Clergy Reserves held by the province and the Church of England.

After leaving Glengarry County, Robert Gourlay was physically assaulted and

---

108 Harkness, op. cit., 141.

verbally threatened in Cornwall, Johnstown, Prescott, and Kingston by prominent members of the local community. The majority of whom were graduates of Rev. John Strachan’s Grammar School in the town of Cornwall. The students later grew up to be general merchants, postmasters, newspaper publishers, militia officers, lawyers, judges, and office holders.

Arrested and charged with seditious libel in Cornwall, Brockville, and Kingston, he was released from jail after posting bail in all three circumstances. “Gourlay was [then] tried in Kingston on 15 August and in Brockville on 31 August. In both cases he defended himself; in both the jury found him innocent.”

Frustrated by their attempts to muzzle the Scottish firebrand, Gourlay was then charged under the seldomly used Sedition Act of 1804. Also known as the Alien Act, the statute gave sweeping powers to judges and legislative councillors. Thus, due to the fact that he had not been a resident of Upper Canada within the past six months (he visited New York State immediately after his second acquittal) and that he had never taken the oath of allegiance to the Crown (in Upper Canada), he was brought before a two-person adjudication committee in Niagara (Niagara-on-the-Lake) for sedition. Consisting of the Hon. William Dickson and the Hon. William Claus (Sir John Johnson’s nephew), the two legislative councillors ordered him to leave the province within ten days. “On his refusal to obey, he was committed on 4 Jan. 1819 to [the] Niagara jail to await trial. Except for a court appearance in York [(Toronto)] on 8 February to seek bail, a relief denied him by the chief justice [(Chief Justice William Dummer Powell)] as expressly forbidden by the act, he remained in jail until 20 August.”

“In the meantime, [from his jail cell] he . . . [wrote] an ill-advised letter . . . [to the editor (Bartimus Ferguson) of] the Niagara Spectator, which resulted in . . . [all of his] privileges . . . being taken away.” As a result of his defiant act of rebellion, Gourlay was placed in solitary confinement during an excessively hot and humid summer.

---

110Wise, op. cit., 334.

111Ibid.

112Harkness, op. cit., 143.
By the time his trial date arrived on 20 August 1819, he was an emotional and physical wreck. Perhaps due to the stress and/or the excessive heat in his jail cell, Gourlay may have suffered a nervous breakdown. Therefore, he was incapable of properly defending himself against Chief Justice Powell and a jury of his peers. Not surprisingly, the jury found him guilty of refusing to obey the order issued by Dickson and Claus to leave the province within the given period of time. The following day, Gourlay was in New York State, thus becoming the first British subject in Upper Canada to be exiled from the province.

Two years prior to the time he was committed to an English psychiatric hospital, Robert (Fleming) Gourlay finally had his book published in 1822. Printed in London, England for a British audience, the two-volume body of work (*Statistical Account of Upper Canada: Compiled With a View to a Grand System of Emigration*) is perhaps "the best compendium of information about Upper Canada for . . . [its time] period."

According to the statistics, it is revealed that Charlottenburgh Township contained six sawmills, four grist mills, and one carding mill between 1817 and 1818. Yet these statistics look remotely familiar to the assessment roll for the entire county of Glengarry in 1815. At that time, Glengarry County had six sawmills and six grist mills. Shortly afterwards, Capt. John McDonell’s grist mill ceased production and Rev. Alexander Macdonell’s (McDonell’s) grist mill was still under construction (this would account for the four grist mills). As well, Lancaster (and Lochiel) Township was not listed in Gourlay’s *Statistical Account of Upper Canada*. Of the four listed grist mills in the book, two of them had an extra pair of millstones. And one of the additional pairs of millstones was reserved for “hulling barley and oats.”

The rate by which a miller could charge his customers was based upon a set of regulations passed by the colonial government. Thus, the fee at which a miller could charge his customers to process grain was to claim one-twelfth of the finished product. This rate had not changed since the act was first passed in 1792. Meanwhile, a sawyer was entitled to claim one-half of the sawn timber, while a miller from a carding mill

---

113 Wise, op. cit., 335.

was allowed to charge six pence for every pound of wool carded.

In the book it is reported that "pine, oak, maple, beech, elm, basswood, cedar, fir, hemlock, ash, butternut, [and] walnut" trees could be found in "Charlottenburgh Township." These trees could then be used to manufacture a variety of items including: houses, furniture, kitchen utensils, barrels, tool handles, carriages and wagons.

Between 1817 and 1818, four different types of grain crops were grown by farmers in "Charlottenburgh Township." They consisted of:

wheat, oats, rye, and barley.


The necessary quantity of seed [that must be distributed on a ploughed field] is about one bushel of wheat to an acre on new lands, and [a] little less than one bushel and a half to an acre of old land . . . [The] average crop per acre is from 15 to 20 bushels.

[Wheat] is generally the first crop sown in dry land, and oats in low land, [which is usually] seeded also with timothy . . . [It] will yield four to five crops of hay before it requires to be let out to pasture . . . [After] pasturing a few years, it is then ploughed up and will answer either for fall or spring wheat . . . [It] will yield three crops, and then requires manuring, or letting to pasture. Manure is necessary to produce a crop of potatoes, or Indian corn [(maize)], except in new land or the first crop after pasturing. Manure is

---

115Gourlay, op. cit., 560.
frequently used for a crop of wheat also, in more sandy soil.\textsuperscript{116}

Unlike today, “the assessment of property was . . . [based upon] a fixed valuation”\textsuperscript{117} which was established by the colonial government in 1819. For example, houses were assessed according to its type of construction, the number of stories, and the number of fireplaces (a stove was classified as a fireplace) that the residence contained. Whereas, sawmills, regardless of the type of construction, the number of stories, or the number of fireplaces, were assessed at £100. While water-powered grist mills with one pair of stones were assessed at £150. And for each additional pair of stones, grist mill owners were charged £50 for every additional set.

Financial and legal problems continued to plague Sir John Johnson in 1819 as well. “In April . . . [of that year, he] was forced to request [the Governor’s (the Duke of Richmond’s\textsuperscript{118})] permission for a brief leave of absence to proceed to Williamstown to see for himself the extent of the damage to his mills, one having been totally destroyed, and to make arrangements for their repair.”\textsuperscript{119} But this statement begs a number of questions. If the majority of his responsibilities were transferred to his sons and his nephew (William Claus), why would Johnson have “to ask the Governor’s permission to leave his post in Montreal[?]”\textsuperscript{120} Which mill was destroyed by the spring flood? Why would the seventy-seven year old Baronet repair his two mills when he was in financial difficulties? Therefore, these and other important questions all require a satisfactory response. (Illustration 13)

\textsuperscript{116}Gourlay, op. cit., 561-562.

\textsuperscript{117}Pringle, op. cit., 149-150.

\textsuperscript{118}Born Charles Lennox, the 4th Duke of Richmond and Lennox was bitten on the hand by his pet fox while touring Upper and Lower Canada during the summer of 1819. After visiting the recently established military settlement in Carleton County which was named in his honour the previous year, the Duke of Richmond succumbed to the effects of rabies on 28 August 1819. This event took place four months after he gave his permission to Sir John Johnson to visit his damaged mills on the River aux Raisins.

\textsuperscript{119}Earle Thomas, Loyalist Baronet, 165.

\textsuperscript{120}Canada, Dept. of the Environment, Sir John Johnson House, 6.
The following month (20 May 1819), Johnson wrote a letter to the Duke of Richmond's military secretary (Major Bowles) concerning his land located along the Gananoque River. In his correspondence with the officer, he informed Major Bowles that he was seeking the restitution of his land which was expropriated by the colonial government during the War of 1812. Although he was not seeking financial compensation, Johnson was hoping that the various wartime buildings which had been constructed on his property would be turned over to him. This would help reimburse him for the loss of timber on his property which was used to construct the various buildings (including a blockhouse) and the firewood which was used by the troops stationed there. As was mentioned previously, the claim must have been settled by 1823, because he gave the property or a portion of the property to his daughter, Catherine Maria Bowes.

Two months later, a retired fur trader by the name of Hugh McGillis purchased Sir John Johnson's mill site along the River aux Raisins for £3000. Acquired on 22 July 1819, the 350 acre parcel of land also included the adjoining “manor house”, the village of Williamstown, and the surrounding countryside. Negotiated by Johnson's attorney, Philip [Phillip?] Byrne, the sale entitled the retired fur trader to collect rent from his numerous tenants. Thus, Hugh McGillis became the first “Laird of Williamstown.” Unfortunately, the bill of sale does not refer to the condition of the two mills nor does it state which individual repaired and/or rebuilt the two mills. (Appendix)

Born in or around 1767, Hugh McGillis was the fifth son born to Donald and Mary [née Macdonell (Lundie)] McGillis of Muneraghie, Inverness-shire, Scotland. In 1773 he emigrated with his parents and settled in the Mohawk Valley. Following the American Revolution, he and his family moved to Royal Township No. 1 after his father (Sgt. Donald McGillis) was granted land in the newly formed settlement. In 1790 “[he] entered the service of the North West Company as a clerk . . . and in 1801 he became a partner of the Company.”121 After working at a number of posts, including: Fort Dauphin (Manitoba), Fond du Lac (Saskatchewan), Fort William (Ontario), Michipicoten (Ontario), and Lesser Slave Lake (Alberta), McGillis retired from the service of the North West Company either in 1817 or in 1818. (Illustration 14)

---

While living out west, Hugh McGillis married a native woman with whom he produced seven children. Following his retirement, he brought his wife and his seven mixed-blood children with him to Glengarry County. According to speculation, McGillis either ordered his family to return home or they voluntarily returned out west by their own initiative. It may perhaps be possible that they returned out west either because they were homesick or that they could not adjust to “civilization.” Although one thing is for certain, his wife and their seven children predeceased the retired fur trader who died in 1848.

Shortly after Hugh McGillis acquired the mill site, he received many complaints about the quality of work performed by his miller. In a letter written to his nephew (Donald McGillis of Rigaud, Lower Canada) on 7 February 1820, McGillis noted that:

On my way up [from Montreal?] I met [(received?) at Long Cedars and Coteau many Complaints against my miller . . . [And] when I arrived here [in Williamstown?] I was told [that] the fellow ought to be hung without trial. In short I found publick [sic] prejudice so high against him that it would have been a serious loss to me to continue him any longer in my imploy [sic]. I, therefore, have hired Duncan McCrae and have given him [the] most extravagant [of] terms.¹²²

Regrettably, we do not know the name of the incompetent miller, but rest assured, it could not have been William McPherson (a millwright from Montreal) who leased the two mills from Sir John Johnson in 1798.

Ten years later, Sir John Johnson passed away at the age of eighty-eight. Survived by seven of his fourteen children (not to mention his former common-law wife, their two children, and countless grandchildren), the Baronet died of natural causes on 4 January 1830. At the time of his death, he was residing with his daughter Marianne in the home which he had built fifteen years earlier in the eastern outskirts of Montreal [St. Mary Suburb (faubourg Sainte-Marie) - formerly the Quebec Suburb].

¹²²National Archives of Canada, Kipling Papers, MG 31, I3, 264, Hugh McGillis to Donald McGillis, 7 February 1820.
His funeral service was held four days later in an Anglican church located in Montreal. Led by Reverend Stevens (Chaplain of the Forces), the military and Masonic funeral was attended by a wide assortment of individuals who paid their last respects to the former Brigadier-General. These individuals included: relatives, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, and the general public. Also in attendance were members of the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Freemasons (Sir John Johnson was the Provincial Grand Master) and approximately 300 natives from the three outlying Indian reservations [Caughnawaga, Lake of Two Mountains (Oka), and St. Regis (Akwesasne)].

Following the funeral service, his draped coffin was placed in a hearse which was drawn by four black horses. Accompanied by the regimental band of the 24th Regiment of Foot, the funeral procession slowly made its way to the waterfront “where a boat was waiting to carry the remains across. At this point the procession halted. A very old chief [Lazare Teconwarinan (Teconwarisan?)] from Caughnawaga stood on the shore and addressed the Indians [(in their native language)] in a touching speech in tribute to their late friend.”

After the native elder gave his eulogy, Sir John Johnson’s casket was placed aboard a boat for its final journey to the family burial vault on Mount Johnson (Mont Saint-Grégoire). When the vessel finally pulled away from the shore, a number of volleys were fired by the troops stationed along the upper bank. They in turn were answered by “a fifteen-gun salute . . . from the batteries [(The Old Fort at the Musée David M. Stewart Museum)] on St. Helen’s Island [(Île Sainte-Hélène)].”

Best remembered as the man largely responsible for resettling thousands of Loyalist refugees along the upper St. Lawrence River and the Bay of Quinte, Sir John Johnson died in Montreal a poor and bitter man. At the time of his death, he was very heavily in debt. He incurred these expenses while trying to maintain a number of distant properties in both Upper and Lower Canada and the British Isles. As well, he felt obliged to support not only his immediate family, but the families of his former common-law wife and his two sisters. Among his contemporaries, he was regarded as a whiner and a complainer who could not manage his financial and personal affairs.

---

123Earle Thomas, Loyalist Baronet, 170.

124Ibid.
For example, on four separate occasions Lady Mary Johnson sought her independence from her husband while she either visited relatives in New York State or the country estate in Twickenham. And while he was still living in Montreal, months and even years would pass before he would hear from some of his sons, even though some of them lived in the same municipality.

For a man with so much potential prior to the American Revolution, Sir John Johnson is regarded by many historians as “not [being] the man his father was; if not, he was no less for it. He was the product of a different time, of a different set of events and circumstances, to which he responded effectively as his father had done a generation before.”

In fact, were it not for the influence of Johnson, the face of eastern Ontario might have looked quite different today. He was largely responsible for resettling thousands of Loyalist refugees according to their ethnic and religious background. He was instrumental in having the Royal Townships along the upper St. Lawrence River and in the Bay of Quinte region surveyed. He advocated the creation of a separate province for the English-speaking majority in the western portion of the Province of Quebec. And he was responsible for founding a number of communities in the area, including: Cornwall (New Johnstown), Johnstown, and Williamstown. Today, these three communities take great pride in knowing that they were founded by one of Canada’s most important and historic figures.

---

CONCLUSION

Two years after the Devaux family (Lionel A. and his son Lionel Patrick Devaux) sold their farm to the Les Soeurs de Sacré Coeur de Jésus, the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of Ontario commemorated the former milling complex with a provincial plaque. In a special ceremony which took place on 23 May 1958 in front of St. Andrew’s United Church, former Williamstown-native Col. Donald Fraser MacRae of Toronto served as the Master of Ceremonies. The guest speakers at the plaque unveiling ceremony included: Dr. George F.G. Stanley (Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of Ontario), Osie F. Villeneuve (M.P. for Glengarry), Fernand Guidon (M.P.P. for Glengarry), the Hon. Fred M. Cass (Minister of Highways and M.P.P. for Grenville-Dundas), Gerard Brunet (Reeve for Charlottenburgh Township), Allan Vallance (Warden for the United Counties), and Wellington “Wellie” J.C. Barrett (former principal of Williamstown High School). Also in attendance at the dedication service was the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario (Lt.-Col. the Hon. John Keiller Mackay) who inspired the audience members to take pride in their Loyalist and Highland heritage.

Of the five plaques (Bethune-Thompson House, Duncan Cameron, Fraserfield, St. Andrew’s Church, and Sir John Johnson’s Mills) unveiled that Friday afternoon, one recognized the importance of the former milling complex to the development of the village of Williamstown and the county of Glengarry in general. Now situated near the corner in the road (County Road 17) which leads to Lancaster, the task of unveiling the distinctive blue and gold metal plaque fell to Mrs. Susan (née Ferguson) Barton¹ of Vankleek Hill, the great-great-granddaughter of Sir John Johnson. The plaque was then dedicated by the Rev. Donald Bernard McDougald, the parish priest of St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church.

Located near the site of the former grist mill in the village of Williamstown, the provincial plaque reads as follows:

¹Mrs. Susan Barton was the great-granddaughter of William Johnson who was born to Sir John Johnson and Clarissa Putman. Following the American Revolution, William worked with the Indian Department at Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake) and was later employed as the lockmaster at The Cascades (Pointe-des-Cascades) lock station on the St. Lawrence River near Montreal.
Sir John Johnson's Mills

Son of the celebrated Indian superintendent Sir William Johnson, Sir John was born in 1742 [he was born in 1741] in New York's Mohawk Valley. During the American Revolution, his Loyalist sympathies brought him to Canada where he organized the King’s Royal Regiment of New York. After the Revolution, he received extensive Crown-land grants in Glengarry County and elsewhere. He built a grist-mill and sawmill here on the Au Raisin River [sic] about 1790 and, on the bank opposite, a manor-house. Appointed to the Legislative Council of Lower Canada in 1796, he died near Montreal in 1830.2

During this time, the St. Lawrence Development Commission (St. Lawrence Parks Commission) was in discussion with the teaching order of nuns to move the “manor house” to the proposed historical village (Upper Canada Village) that was to be developed near Morrisburg. But it was through the efforts of Llewella Dunlop of Williamstown that prevented the Sir John Johnson House from being relocated to Upper Canada Village. She advocated that the house should remain in Williamstown, because of its importance to the local community.

As a result of her efforts:

the Sir John Johnson House was designated [to be] of national historic significance by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. It received the honour [in May 1961] because of its age, historical association, and architectural design. That same year, a comprehensive architectural condition assessment was carried out by Peter [John] Stokes, a noted restoration architect.3

---


3 Canada, Department of Public Works and Government Services Canada, Heritage Conservation Program, Real Property Services (CH/EC), Sir John Johnson House National Historic Site, Williamstown, Ontario: Historic Landscape Conservation Study, rev. ed. (Ottawa:
Ten years later, the property (8.263 acres - from the original 1200 acres) was acquired by Parks Canada in 1971. Recognized as one of Ontario’s oldest remaining residential structures, the house was essentially left vacant until 1975. At that time, the eastern half of the house was renovated to accommodate the Williamstown branch of the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County Library Board. As well, an obtrusive fire sprinkler suppression system was installed throughout the entire building.

In a low-key ceremony held on 19 May 1995, a federal plaque was unveiled on the grounds of the Sir John Johnson House National Historic Site. With less pomp and circumstance than the previous provincial plaque unveiling thirty-seven years earlier, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada commemorated the historic structure. With more than one hundred people in attendance, including descendants from the Johnson and McGillis families, the dedication ceremony came as a result of more than twenty years of neglect by the federal government. Brought to the attention of Don Boudria (M.P. for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell), the Government Whip announced during his speech that “had the home been in the United States, it would have been declared a national historic site a long time ago.”

Other guest speakers during the commemoration included: Professor Thomas H.B. Symons (Chair, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada), the Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage), Judge John Matheson (Honourary Dominion President of the United Empire Loyalists), David G. Anderson [The Friends of the Manor House (Sir John Johnson Manor House Committee)], and Russell Roundpoint (Grand Chief Mohawk Council of Akwesasne).

Located alongside the driveway near the house, the burgundy and gold metal plaque reads as follows:

**Sir John Johnson House**

One of the oldest buildings standing in Ontario, the original five-bay structure at the centre of this house was built between 1784 and 1792. It was once part of a mill site developed by Sir John Johnson to encourage Loyalists to

---


settle along the St. Lawrence River after the American Revolution. The original log house, constructed in the French-Canadian manner, was enlarged to the west after 1813 and to the east with a large Gothic Revival wing in the 1860s. This house provides an excellent record of vernacular building in early Canada.\(^5\)

The following year, Parks Canada [or Public Works & Government Services Canada?] commissioned an Historic Landscape Conservation Study to determine the historical value of the landscape at the site and to make a list of recommendations to preserve or enhance the landscape. Based upon a possible threat to each individual landscape resource, "[each] proposed conservation recommendation is assigned a priority, according to when it would best be implemented."\(^6\) Those assigned as high priority should be carried out within the next two years (1996-1997), because of the possibility that the individual landscape resource may be under threat. When an individual landscape resource is under no immediate threat, it is classified as a medium priority and that it should be put into effect within the next three to five years (1998-2000). And for those individual landscape resources that are under no immediate threat from the passage of time, they are identified as low priority and they should be implemented within the next six to ten years (2001-2005).

According to the Historic Landscape Conservation Study, high priority was given to protecting the millstone on the front lawn. It was recommended that it should either be supported on a stone foundation or placed on a bed of gravel. Although it is not mentioned in the report, it is the objective of Parks Canada to relocate the millstone to near the location of the former sawmill, because the grist mill site is now private property. As well, the mate to this millstone is situated downstream [the millstone may have been forced downstream either due to spring flooding or an ice jam] on the David Rawnsley property. In order to obtain this historic millstone, Mr. Rawnsley would like financial compensation. Perhaps Parks Canada could persuade Mr. Rawnsley to donate the millstone to the Sir John Johnson House National Historic Site for a tax credit.

---


\(^6\)Canada, Dept. of Public Works and Government Services Canada, op. cit., 36.
Also assessed as having high priority is to conduct an archaeological investigation of the former sawmill site. But in order to determine the exact size and location of Sir John Johnson’s sawmill and its successor constructed in the mid-19th century, an archaeological dig will need to be undertaken. In addition, an archaeological excavation needs to be done to determine the exact location of the former sawmill road (William Street) which once connected the mill with the village. During the fall of 1997, the author walked along the former mill site and found over one hundred artifact shards and remnants in the Raisin River within a half an hour.

According to the Historic Landscape Conservation Study a number of individual landscape resources were assessed as being of medium priority. These included the preservation of the plant community (trees and plants) along the riverbank in order to provide a visual screen from the village. However, in the vicinity of the former milling complex the vegetation should be selectively removed in order to properly interpret the site to visitors. This would include not only the sawmill itself, but the lumber yard as well. In addition, the former sawmill road should be cleared of vegetation and its existence “communicated to the visitor through appropriate interpretation techniques.” During the fall of 1997, the vegetation along the former sawmill road was removed following the instructions provided by Achim Jankowski (Head, Landscape Architecture).

Of those individual landscape resources that were determined to be of low priority, the following recommendations were proposed. First, an archaeological investigation should be conducted to determine the location of middens associated with the mill site. And second, “[a] stronger presentation of the saw mill could be developed by constructing a volumetric representation of the mill, in the spirit of Les Forges du Saint-Maurice.”

Due to financial restraints imposed by the federal government, it may be possible that few, if any, of the recommendations will be implemented within the given time period as outlined by the Historic Landscape Conservation Study. But through the cooperation between Parks Canada and the Sir John Johnson Manor House Committee, these recommendations may come to fruition within the given time period.

---

7Ibid.

8Canada, Dept. of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 37.
APPENDIX

Sale of Sir John Johnson Land Grant to Hugh McGillis, 1819.

A Memorial to be Registered pursuant to the Laws of the Province of Upper Canada -- Of an Indenture Bearing date, at Williamstown in the Township of Charlottenburgh in the Province of Upper Canada, the Twenty Second day of July in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred & nineteen, made by & between Sir John Johnson of the City & District of Montreal in the Province of Lower Canada, Baronet, And Phillip [Philip?] Byrne of the Village of St. Andrews in the Seigneury of Argenteuil in the County of York in the District of Montreal in the Province of Lower Canada, Esquire, Of the one part, And Hugh McGillis of the Township of Charlottenburgh in the County of Glengarry in the Eastern District of the Province of Upper Canada, Esquire, of the other part, Whereas the said Sir John Johnson by a Certain Letter of Attorney under his hand & seal duly executed at Montreal aforesaid, the Seventeenth day of October in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred & Seventeen -- did authorize the said Phillip [Philip?] Byrne, in the name of him the said Sir John Johnson & on his part, & behalf to Execute Deeds of Conveyance for & of such part of his Lands and Hereditaments in the Township of Charlottenburgh aforesaid in the Eastern District of the Province of Upper Canada as by the said Phillip [Philip?] Byrne Should be thought fit to be Sold. Now the said Indenture purporting to be an Indenture of Bargain & Sale, Whereby the Said Sir John Johnson by his said Agent Phillip [Philip?] Byrne, for & in Consideration of the Sum of Three thousand Pounds of Lawful Money of the said Provinces to him by the said Hugh McGillis in hand paid & the Receipt thereof Acknowledged, Hath Granted, bargained, Sold, Aliened, transferred, conveyed & confirmed unto the Said Hugh McGillis and unto his heirs & Assigns forever, All & Singular those Certain Parcels or Tracts of Land & Premised situate, lying & being in the Township of Charlottenburgh in the County of Glengarry in the Eastern District of the Province of Upper Canada aforesaid, being Composed of the Town of Williamstown, and part of Lots Number Forty-eight & Forty-nine, On the South & North Banks of the River Aux Raisins, in the Township of Charlottenburgh aforesaid, (together with a Mill-place & a Grist & a Saw-Mill, thereon erected & being,) Containing by Admeasurement Three Hundred & Fifty Acres, be the same more or less; which Said Three Hundred & Fifty Acres of Land are Butted & Bounded, or may be Otherwise known as follows, that is to say, Firstly, Commencing on the North Side of the said River aux Raisins, at the waters Edge in the Limit between the Town-Plot
of Williamstown aforesaid, & the Lands of Doctor Roderick McLeod, which Limit is in the Bay to the South East from the Landing place in front of Lot Number One in the Town of Williamstown aforesaid; From thence North, Sixty-Six Degrees East, Three Chains, more or less to the Western Limit of a Gore of Land Granted by the Said Sir John Johnson to the late Reverend John Bethune; From thence along the Western Limit of the said Gore of Land, Nine Chains, & Seventy Links, more or less, to the South-East Angle of Lot Number Three on the North Side of the Public Highway leading to & from Williamstown aforesaid; -- From thence along the south Side of the Said Public Highway, Three Chains & Thirty Links, more or less to the South West Angle of Lot Number Four on the North East side of John's Street in Williamstown aforesaid, which said Angle is formed by the Said Public High-Way & John's Street; -- From thence along the North Side of John's Street aforesaid Three Chains & Fifty Links, more or less, to the North West Angle of Lot Number Four aforesaid; -- From thence North Sixty-four Degrees East, Two Chains & Fifteen Links, more or less to the Division Line Between the Lands of Donald Fraser & the Town Plot of Williamstown aforesaid; -- From thence North Twenty-four Degrees West Fourteen Chains & Twenty Links, more or less, to the Rear of the Second Range of Town-Lots on Warren Street in Williamstown aforesaid; From thence North Seventy-three Degrees West, twenty-four Chains, more or less, to the Eastern Limit of the Fair-place in Williamstown aforesaid; -- From thence South Twenty-four Degrees East, Six Chains, more or less, to the North West Angle of Lot Number Twenty or School-Lot, on the South Side of Warren Street in Williamstown aforesaid; -- From thence South Seventy-three Degrees West, One Chain & Sixty Links, more or less, to the North-East angle of the said Lot Number Twenty or School-Lot; -- From thence South Eleven Degrees West, Three Chains & Fifty Links, more or less, to the South-East Angle of the said School Lot, on the North side of John’s Street, aforesaid; From thence South Seventy-three Degrees East, along the North side of John’s Street aforesaid, Ten Chains & Eighty Links, more or less to the Limit Between Lots Number Thirteen & Fourteen on the North Side of John’s Street aforesaid; -- From thence South Eleven Degrees West, One Chain & Eighty Links, more or less, to the River aux Raisins;-- From thence along the said River to the Western Limit of a Gore of Land in front of Lot Number Eleven, between John’s Street & the said River aux Raisins; -- From thence North Eleven Degrees East, Twenty Links More or less, to John’s Street aforesaid; -- From thence South to Bridge Street; -- From thence South Eleven Degrees West, along the West Side of Bridge Street, Eighty Links, more or less to the River aux Raisins aforesaid; And from thence along the Said River, Embracing the Mill-place & Grist-Mill aforesaid to the place of Beginning. Secondly Commencing in rear of Said Fair-place joining the Town of
Williamstown aforesaid, at the Western Limit of a Certain parcel or Tract of Land
Granted by the said Sir John Johnson to John McLennan; -- From thence North Twenty-four Degrees West, Ninety Chains, more or less to the Southern Limit of the Lands of Alexander Ferguson; -- From thence on a Westerly Direction, along the said Limit, Nine Chains, more or less to the Eastern Limit of the Lands of Alexander McKenzie Esquire; -- From thence South Twenty-four Degrees East, Ninety-five Chains, more or less to the North-West, angle of the said Fair-Place; -- And from thence North Sixty Degrees, Eight Chains, more or less to the place of Beginning. Thirdly & Lastly Commencing at the South Bank of the River aux Raisins aforesaid, at a Boundary mark between the said Lot Number Forty-eight & Lot Number 5; -- From thence South Twenty-four Degrees East, Eighty Chains, more or less, to the River Commonly called the South Branch, to the River aux Raisins; From thence North-westerly, along the said River aux Raisins, Embracing the Mill-place & Saw-Mill as aforesaid to the Eastern Limit of a Gore of Land in front of Lot Number One between William’s Street & the River aux Raisins aforesaid; -- From thence South Eleven Degrees West, along the North Side of William’s Street, Eight Chains & Sixty Links, more or less, to the South West angle of a gore of Land in front of Lot Number Five, between William’s Street & the River aux Raisins; -- From thence North Eleven Degrees East, Fifty Links, -- more or less, to the River aux Raisins; -- And from thence Westerly along the Said River aux Raisins to the Place of Beginning. Together with all Houses, Out-houses, Woods & Waters, thereon erected, lying & being & all Singular, the hereditaments & Appurtenances to the said premises in any wise belonging & the reversion & reversions, remainder & remainders, rents, leases, & Profits thereof & all the estate, right, little, interest, Claim, property & demand whatsoever, either at Law or in Equity, of him the said Sir John Johnson, of, in, to, or out of the same & every part thereof, TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, with the Appurtenances, freed and discharged from all encumbrances, whatsoever, unto the Said Hugh McGillis, his heirs & Assigns for ever, under the reservations, limitations & Conditions espressed [sic] in the Original Grant from the Crown; And Subject to all the Clauses, Convenants & Conditions expressed & contained in Leases granted by the said Sir John Johnson for part of the above described Lands & Hereditaments: which said Indenture is witnessed by Alexander McKenzie, Esquire, & John McLennan, Teacher, Both of the Township of Charlottenburgh in the Eastern District of the Province of Upper Canada. And upon which Indenture is endorsed an Acknowledgement of Approbation, under the hand & Seal of the said Sir John Johnson duly executed at Montreal aforesaid, the Thirty-first day of July in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred & nineteen, by which the said Sir John Johnson hath Ratified & Confirmed the said Indenture of Bargain &
1 Maps indicating the location of the Sir John Johnson House National Historic Site in Williamstown, Ontario.

2 A portrait of Sir John Johnson (1741-1830) by an unknown artist. The painting is in the collection of Johnson Hall in Johnstown, New York.

Loyalist Townships along the St. Lawrence and Bay of Quinte 1784

Eight townships were laid out beside the upper St. Lawrence. The lower five were the New Johnstown settlement, the upper three New Oswegatchie. The first five around the Bay of Quinte were the Cataraqui settlement. When they were named, #1 beside the St. Lawrence was Charlottenburgh, #2 Cornwall, #3 Osnabruck, #4 Williamsburgh, #5 Matilda, #6 Edwardsburgh, #7 Augusta, #8 Elizabethtown. Of the Bay of Quinte townships, #1 was Kingston, #2 Ernestown, #3 Fredericksburgh, #4 Adolphustown, #5 Marysburgh. Also shown are the first three townsites, Kingston (#1 Cataraqui), Johnstown (#6 New Oswegatchie), New Johnstown (#2 New Johnstown).

Map of the Loyalist Townships along the upper St. Lawrence River and in the Bay of Quinte region in 1784.

"A Loyalist Encampment on the St. Lawrence in 1784,"
by James Peachey

Pen and ink sketch with watercolour highlights of the Loyalist encampment at the recently surveyed townsite of New Johnstown (Cornwall). Drawn by James Peachey a few days after its establishment (6 June 1784), the sketch provides an excellent glimpse of daily Loyalist life prior to their settlement in the Royal Townships. [National Archives of Canada, Documentary Art and Photography Division, C-2001. Encampment of the Loyalists at Johnstown, a New Settlement, on the Banks of the River St. Laurence [sic] in Canada by James Peachey, 6 June 1784]

Gerald M. Craig, *Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 1784-1841* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1963) n.p. [Figure 2 Facing Page 64].
Pen and ink sketch of what the timber-framed Sir John Johnson House may have resembled between 1784 and 1819 (post 1813). This artist's representation is based upon information gathered from archival documents and an investigation of the historic fabric of the residential structure. Lacking several architectural features present in today's structure (two flanking wings, clapboard siding, dormer windows, and a verandah), the western addition to the "small country Lodge" visible in Jeremiah McCarthy's 1813 map of Williamstown may have either been a woodshed or a summer kitchen.

Detail of the map of the village of Williamstown which was commissioned by Sir John Johnson in 1813. Entitled, "Sir John Johnson's Domain," Jeremiah McCarthy's map clearly depicts the two mills with their adjoining penstocks, the dam, the sawmill road, and the Sir John Johnson House with its western addition. [National Archives of Canada, National Map Collection, V1/440-1813. Plan & Survey of Williamstown by Jeremiah McCarthy, 20 May 1813]

Architectural drawings taken from two Colonial American technical manuals both published in 1795. The drawings illustrate the physical layout of a typical water-powered sawmill and grist mill from the late 18th century. They also name the various components of the machinery which operate both mills.

PLAN of WATER GRIST MILL
From "The Practical Mill-wright" 1795

Lower Floor: 12. Step-ladder from Lower Floor.
14, 15. Meal-troughs & Spouts. 16. Sieve for Corn & Buckwheat. 17. Box for bran to fall into from sieve.
31. Water-wheel, 18 feet diameter. 33. Head-block at Water End. 34. Sill to support End-block.
35. Water-house Door. 36. Hole in Wall for Trunk to go through. 37. Windows.
PLAN of WATER GRIST MILL

Second Floor: 16, Stairs to 3rd Floor: 17, Stone for Wheat laid off & turned up to be dressed, 19, Stairway, 20, Stone for Corn & Buckwheat laid off, 22, Cranes for lifting stones, 24, Pulley-wheel to turn Rolling-screen & Fan, 25, 26, Shaft & Wheel that turns Screen & Fan, 28, Wheel on upper end of upright shaft, 29, Pulley to turn Fan, 31, Fan, 32, Screen, 34, 35, Posts supporting girders of 3rd floor, 36, Room for Tailings, 37, Room for Jennings, 38, Room for Screenings, 39, Room for Dust, 40, Penstock of Water, 41, Millers Office, 42, Fire-place, 43, End Door, 44, Windows
Pen and ink sketches of the interior of the Backus (Backhouse) Grist Mill located near Port Rowan, Ontario. Constructed in 1798 by John C. Backhouse, the two diagrams illustrate the interior mechanism of the grist mill and a detail of the wooden crane used to lift the millstone.

GRIST MILL MECHANISM

Plan of Water Power Transmission

Pine

Maple Shaft & Mill Stones

Water Wheel

Cog Wheel

Cog Wheel

Sectional Diagram of Water Power Transmission

Beam

Floor

Shaft

Crane

Interior of Grist Mill, showing Crane for lifting upper stone. Backhouse Mill near Port Rowan, Ont.

Steel Picks for Sharpening Grooves of Mill Stones

Hopper Mill Stones

Tongs gripping stone at X

Upper Stone lifted

Lower Stone

Iron bands

Straightedge for levelling stones

Stone 4 feet Diameter

84

85
10  The exterior of Sir John Johnson’s grist mill, which was located in the village of Williamstown, may have resembled that of the Backus (Backhouse) Grist Mill. Constructed in 1798 by John C. Backhouse, the two-and-a-half-storey edifice is now operated as a museum by the Long Point Region Conservation Authority.

Watercolour painting of Sir John Johnson's mill at Gananoque. It was painted on 1 July 1792 by Elizabeth Simcoe (the wife of the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Upper Canada) while she was stationed in the province of Upper Canada. Drawn while she was accompanying her husband on his way to his new posting in Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake), the watercolour painting is one of many documentary works of art held by the Archives of Ontario for future generations.

FAIRFIELD'S HOUSE AND MILL.
(From a Drawing by Mrs. Simcoe.)

Pen and ink sketch of William Fairfield Jr.'s house and adjoining mill in Gananoque. Drawn by Elizabeth Simcoe on 15 September 1794, Fairfield was apparently leasing Sir John Johnson's two mills on the Gananoque River.

Map produced by Parks Canada indicating what the Sir John Johnson House National Historic Site may have resembled between 1784 and 1819. The series of dashes in the middle of the map indicate the extent of the property as it now exists in the village of Williamstown, Ontario.

Phase 1: 1784–1819 Sir John Johnson, Ownership

Sir John Johnson House N.H.S. Historic Landscape Conservation Study

Williamstown, Ontario
Portrait of retired fur trader Hugh McGillis (c.1767-1848). Employed by the North West Company between 1790 and sometime around 1817, he purchased the Williamstown milling complex from Sir John Johnson on 22 July 1819.

Unveiling ceremony (Williamstown, 1958) for five provincial plaques: "St. Andrew's Church", "Bethune-Thompson House", "Sir John Johnson's Mills", "Fraserfield" and "Duncan Cameron".

Standing is John Keiller Mackay, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. Seated fourth from the right is Professor George F. Stanley of the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of Ontario.

Photograph of the plaque unveiling ceremony which took place on 23 May 1958 in Williamstown, Ontario. Officiated by Lt.-Col. The Hon. John Keiller Mackay (the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario), five plaques were unveiled at the ceremony to commemorate one individual, three buildings, and the former "Sir John Johnson's Mills."


Manson, Lyall. *An Index of Names in “Lunenburgh or the Old Eastern District” by Jacob Farrand Pringle.* Cornwall, Ontario: Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Historical Society, 1975.


Scott, David E. *Ontario’s Place Names: The Historical, Offbeat or Humorous Origins of Close to 1,000 Communities*. Vancouver: Whitecap Books Ltd., 1993.


d\textsuperscript{v}an Beek, Evelyn Theakston. *The MacGillivrays of "Dalcombie."* n.p., [1981?].


