

THE LOYALISTS AND LAND SETTLEMENT IN NEW BRUNSWICK, 1783 - 1790

A Study in Colonial Administration

by

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The gauntlet was cast down in the last issue of The Canadian Archivist by Hugh A. Taylor when he expressed in his article, "Administrative History: An Archivist's Need", a desire to see more studies made of the administrative offices producing records and cautioned that: "We cannot accurately arrange or assess the significance of a department's records until we understand thoroughly how it works."<sup>1</sup> But who should undertake such studies - archivists or historians? Detailed historical research work is the historian's job; but the archivist could provoke or stimulate administrative studies by taking the records he acceptions, sorts and inventories, and prepare a brief report for the historian's use, outlining the strong points of a collection and suggesting valuable administrative themes that might be explored. If this information reaches professors responsible for guiding post-graduate studies, no doubt uncommitted students could be encouraged to undertake administrative research.

If the archivist is ambitious, or masochistically enjoys spending evenings and weekends doing historical research, he might select a promising record series, decide upon a critical focal point or theme, a momentous event or a particularly interesting administrator, and do a brief historical study himself! By using the records of New Brunswick Crown Lands, and by selecting the Loyalist settlement from 1784 to 1790 as my theme, I have attempted a brief study of some of the key officials involved in getting the Loyalists to their lands, with special emphasis being placed upon the Surveyor-General and his deputies, their functions, their problems and their accomplishments, as these administrators laboured to provide the Loyalists with lands.

A flood of Loyalists poured into New Brunswick in the Spring and Fall of 1783, creating an instant population of defeated, demoralized refugees, stunned by their uprooting from the rebellious American colonies and faced with the depressing necessity of re-establishing themselves in a virtual wilderness.<sup>2</sup> The need for land was paramount; it meant survival, food, fuel; it also meant status and wealth - a reward for their long suffering. Land was in abundance, but getting clear title to it was another matter. Many thousands of acres remained locked up in pre-Revolution grants, and although Governor Parr of Nova Scotia began escheating parts of them immediately to provide lands for the newcomers jamming into port towns clamouring for grants, there were delays. The Nova Scotian Surveyor-General, Charles Morris, and his harassed deputies laid out town lots in Parr and Carleton (now Saint John) and military reserves for the use of the disbanded troops, but they were hard-pressed to do the survey work necessary to provide several thousand families, many of whom had waited months and had petitioned repeatedly, with surveyed farm lands. These deputies were hindered in their work by hazardous working conditions, poor pay, an excessive work load and the constant bickering and squabbling among the

Loyalists as they raced to corner choice town and farm lands.<sup>3</sup> Delays brought complaints and dissatisfaction; in fact, Parr's general inability to settle the Loyalists seemed to be one of the key reasons Nova Scotia was partitioned in 1784 and New Brunswick created.<sup>4</sup>

Governor Thomas Carleton<sup>5</sup> and most of his executive arrived in Saint John in November of 1784 to establish their new government and direct the colonization of New Brunswick. The key officials, besides Carleton, soon to be involved in land matters were the Provincial Secretary, Jonathan Odell; the Solicitor-, Attorney-, and Surveyor-General, Ward Chipman, Jonathan Bliss and George Sproule respectively (the latter two arriving some months later). For one year, Carleton and his Executive Council ruled from Saint John as the sole executive, judicial and legislative power until an elected Assembly was called together in January, 1786. It was during this year that these officials turned to the Loyalist settlement problem. Guiding Carleton and his executive were colonial precedents and administrative procedures, their own experience, intelligence and ability - and the royal instructions. These instructions, in a very general way, set out the reasonable terms and the proper methods for granting and administering Crown lands, for laying out townships, for escheating old grants, for surveying and passing new grants, for collecting fees and quitrents and for the recording of all land transactions.<sup>6</sup>

By January 1785, a scant six weeks after their arrival, Carleton and his council were meeting almost daily as a land committee to supervise and direct the Loyalist settlement; to screen applicants and deal with their petitions; to settle disputes; to inspect improvements and escheat the neglected older grants; to lay out reserves for public, military and naval use; to issue instructions to subordinates, and in general, to handle the minor problems that arose from the submission of a land petition to the signing of the patent.<sup>7</sup> The first major chore was to gather together the necessary old records and begin the creation of new ones. Odell and Chipman undertook this difficult task in the absence of Bliss and Sproule. New lists of Loyalists wanting lands were composed, as were registers of those already in receipt of allotments. Old Nova Scotian grants were ordered and re-registered, and earlier warrants of survey were inspected. Next, the escheat work begun by Parr was continued by Carleton. The New Brunswick officials tried to avoid unnecessary hardship to those proprietors who really intended to improve their lands. The Executive Council appointed commissioners to evaluate the old settlements and "to enquire by jury into the present state of settlement, and the fulfilment of the conditions of a grand of land".<sup>8</sup> In many cases old inhabitants had no clear title to their lands but the Council showed its magnanimity by taking the hardships and poverty of these people into account and granting to them their improvements and excusing them from paying the established fees - in other words, the pre-Loyalists were placed on the same footing as the Loyalists.<sup>9</sup> The Council reassured anxious pre-Loyalists who feared the loss of their lands and exhorted them "to remain quiet and pursue (your) honest labor on (your) present possessions where no steps to (your) prejudice will be taken or countenanced by government".<sup>10</sup> If, however, an old inhabitant's land did unfortunately fall within one of the Loyalist's reserves, he was paid for his improvements and given first choice of available land elsewhere. Representatives of the parties went to assess improvements and arrive at a price; if no agreement could be reached, an arbitrator's decision was usually final. The last step was appearance before Council or presentation of the case in court. Besides the escheat proceedings initiated by the Council, an individual Loyalist could launch escheat action himself

by requesting, and paying for, an inquest which was held after notice had been given for three months in The Royal Gazette.<sup>11</sup> After the land was escheated, it passed to the petitioner. In all cases, the Executive Council carefully directed the Attorney-General's legal actions.

To guide the settlers and speed up Loyalist settling, the Executive Council published a list of regulations in January, 1785, aimed at getting the Loyalists to their lands as quickly as possible to allow cultivation to begin. Petitioners submitted their memorials to the Secretary's office. Odell dated their reception and abstracted their contents, jotting the information on the back of each petition and thus greatly speeding up the administrative work of the land committee. After his arrival, the Surveyor-General, George Sproule, would add his comments upon the status of the land to the well-used backs of these petitions. Odell, acting as Provincial Secretary, Registrar and Clerk of the Council, occupied a very important position on the land-granting administrative machine, as did the Surveyor-General; it was primarily by these two offices that land records were kept and it was by these two men that the bulk of administrative work was done. The land committee, consisting of all the councillors acting in the distinct role of land administrators, read and acted upon each petition, informed the memorialist why a particular grant was impossible or, as was more often the case, complied with the request, granted its "conditional approbation" and instructed the applicant to advertise. The petitioner's name was recorded in the Secretary's and the Auditor-General's offices, and a survey was ordered.

A petitioner who did not require a specific allotment had his name registered and drew in turn for the newly surveyed land, either in person under the supervision of a deputy surveyor, or by agent. Those memorialists desiring particular grants first got the Council's permission, then advertised for three consecutive weeks in the local newspapers, giving rival claimants ample time to present their cases before the Council. Once affidavits were presented to the Council proving compliance to the regulations, the committee issued a warrant directing the Surveyor-General to conduct a faithful and exact survey and return this warrant and a description of the land surveyed to the Secretary within six months.<sup>12</sup> Once the survey was completed, a grant with the terms and conditions outlined usually passed, if the fees (where applicable) were paid. The patent was signed by Carleton and recorded in both Odell's and Sproule's offices. The signing of the patent marked the end of the land committee's and the Surveyor-General's authority; further problems were referred to the courts.

Grants were relatively small, the average being one hundred acres for a family's head, and fifty acres for each additional member, thus frustrating speculators and preventing the locking up of valuable sections of available land. Military personnel received additional grants; as follows: privates were given one hundred acres; subalterns, staff and warrant officers, five hundred acres; captains, seven hundred acres; field officers, one thousand acres.<sup>13</sup> Additional allotments could be obtained by those who could afford to pay the quit-rents on a larger grant or who had fulfilled the terms of their first grant. Many Loyalists banded together and appointed one main grantee in whose name the grant was made, but each grantee was legally bound to the terms of the grant. The terms to be upheld were made known to the grantee: for each fifty acres, the Loyalist had to clear and cultivate three acres if the land was arable, drain the same amount if the land was swampy, sustain three neat cattle if the land was wilderness, or dig a stone quarry if the land

was rocky. If the land was unfit for agriculture, a good dwelling house had to be built.<sup>14</sup> Within three years after the grant passed, the Loyalist had to submit proof of his compliance to these terms via the county courts to the Council. No more than two hundred acres was granted to any one person until all the "numerous and indigent claimants" were accommodated; these early grants were made to the Loyalists free and without quit-rents.<sup>15</sup>

George Sproule's late arrival in the spring of 1785, a full six months after Carleton had established his government, caused more delays in settling the Loyalists and stirred up hostile feelings between the executive and the new Surveyor-General. The Council's instructions to Sproule were distinctly cool, formal and over-detailed; clearly Sproule was looked upon at first as a technical appendage - an instrument for carrying out legislative policy. Sproule did not even receive a Council seat as did his counterparts in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Odell was slow to hand over the lists of deputations, warrants of survey, returns, plans and other records needed by the Surveyor-General but lodged in the Secretary's office. Co-operation was forced by the necessity of the situation and not by friendly feelings. But as Sproule set his temporary office in Saint John in order, gathered together the necessary records, officially deputized his staff and began carrying out the Council's decisions, tempers cooled and resentment over his late arrival waned.

George Sproule seemed to be an excellent choice for the job of Surveyor-General. Ample experience in his profession had been acquired during a decade of surveying work with Captain Holland in the north-eastern coastal region, as the Surveyor-General of New Hampshire prior to the outbreak of the American Revolution and as an engineer during the conflict.<sup>16</sup> Sproule received the New Brunswick office as a reward for earlier services and as compensation for his losses as a Loyalist. Sproule's job was "to execute the government's warrants for the distribution of the Crown Lands, to return plans and descriptions for the patents, in such manner as to ascertain, guard and record the territorial rights of the Crown".<sup>17</sup> His authority extended only to the point where lands were granted. He only rarely became involved in serious disputes, usually referring them to the land committee. Sproule reported abuses committed on Crown Lands to the Attorney-General, but Sproule personally had no policing authority. The Surveyor-General of the King's Woods, Sir John Wentworth, in Halifax and his deputies in New Brunswick had the primary task of protecting the Crown Lands; the ambiguity created by the existence of two offices involved in guarding the King's forests presented Sproule and his successors with numerous headaches in later years.

George Sproule was a very busy man after his arrival. He found the surveying business "in a very perplexed state", and it was necessary to copy out the descriptions and plans of grants already passed and to correct earlier surveys as well as to describe all new patents and secure them from future litigation.<sup>18</sup> Sproule supervised much of the surveying, exploring and mapping done in the province. He relayed the warrants of survey issued by the Council to his deputies and then gathered in and inspected their returns. Old settlements were investigated to see when and by whom they were surveyed. Town lots, farms, roads and reserves for public use, for military and naval use, for religious and educational use, were all laid out chiefly under Sproule's direction.

There were many problems to be overcome; his strained relations with the executive had to be patched up, the office itself had to be put in

order, staff had to be appointed, tasks assigned and the submission of accounts and returns regulated and standardized. There was a huge backlog of work to be attacked. The size and confused state of New Brunswick made necessary materials and assistance difficult and expensive to obtain. Suspicion and a lack of co-operation on the part of some irate old inhabitants had to be combatted: rival claims in Westmorland County prompted Sproule to confide in his deputy that "I only wish that the people in your district were less illiberal and more contented".<sup>19</sup> Loyalists complicated matters by knowingly applying for land cultivated by others. The old surveys and pre-partition records were inadequate. Carelessly-done surveys caused confusion and necessitated in many cases resurveys; Sproule complained that the shoddy work done in Charlotte County "has created more troubles and perplexity to me than all the other parts of my office".<sup>20</sup> Sproule, on occasion, refused to accept the accounts submitted for work done before his arrival until the surveys were inspected and re-surveys done when necessary. Slowly but surely, during 1785, the office gained a sure footing, and the deputies working for Sproule steadily moved the refugees to their farms.

All the early deputies were Loyalists with military experience as engineers; some had worked for the Nova Scotian government; most lived in the regions in which they did their surveying work, and most were farmers or merchants or held other official positions, such as sheriff or magistrate, to augment the fees received as a deputy-surveyor.<sup>21</sup> The role of a deputy-surveyor was "to admeasure, survey, and set out and impartially ascertain the bounds and limits of land ordered surveyed by the Surveyor-General".<sup>22</sup> Each deputy took an oath to do his work to the best of his ability, diligently and faithfully, with skill and knowledge, showing no favouritism and committing no abuse.<sup>23</sup>

In June, 1785, Sproule sent a circular letter to his deputies stating that "in case you should incline to continue in the surveying service, it will be requisite that you should make a tour to this place [Saint John] to receive the necessary papers, and take the oath of qualifications before His Excellency."<sup>24</sup> Twenty-seven deputies were duly sworn in; of these, only a dozen worked continuously with Sproule; several of the others performed special clerical, settlement, supervision or inspection chores under Carleton's direction. There was an acute shortage of qualified surveyors able to spare the time from the demanding efforts needed to establish themselves and their families in the new colony. To persuade men to work as deputies, Sproule appealed to their sense of duty to their community; "Indeed", as the Surveyor-General wrote, urging Samuel Lee to accept a commission, "this can be your only inducement for little or no profit can attend it."<sup>25</sup> In some remote parts of the province, the local inhabitants were instructed to do their own surveys and were issued with temporary licenses of occupation until an official survey could be carried out.<sup>26</sup>

Besides surveying farm and town lots, the deputy's work often involved evaluating improvements, arbitrating minor disputes, supervising town settlements, verifying old surveys, exploring, mapping and reporting on land, timber and mineral resources. The deputy-surveyor was the Surveyor-General's man in the field, his out-door establishment. He kept Sproule posted on local news and in return relayed to the public new government policies. More importantly, the deputy sent to Sproule the names of Loyalists entitled to free grants or lists of memorialists requesting land, as well as other pertinent land records. He had to certify that the contents of each petition he forwarded were true and that the memorialist

was of sound character and really intended to settle the land in question. The status of the land, vacant or occupied for example, was also sent on to Fredericton. One deputy even relayed one hundred pounds of cheese for Sproule's table!

Letters from the Surveyor-General brought warrants of survey, surveying aids in the form of sketches, copies of old grants and plans, as well as specific instructions for laying out roads, public landings, reservations; the scale to be used, the size and shape of the grant and lists of settlers entitled to lands in the area were also enclosed. Occasionally, Sproule even forwarded surveying tools on loan to his deputy. Surveying instruments consisted of theodolites with spirit levels and telescopes, field compasses and two or four-pole chains, the former consisting of fifty links and more preferred for work in the woods. Inaccurate surveying tools caused Sproule problems, and he encouraged his deputies to make checks "by frequent tryal and examination".<sup>27</sup> Circumferentors could vary one or two degrees "which the best artists in London told me proceeded from an attraction in the brass".<sup>28</sup> Bad weather was especially hard on both instruments and surveyors, and then there was the problem of magnetic shift that made older surveys obsolete.

Surveys laying out farms, town lots, roads, reserves, etc., were the most common type done, but during these early post-partition years, exploratory and mapping surveys were undertaken with the aim of producing general plans of the province. Local settlers acted as guides and even provided sketches of unknown regions; rivers and lakes were checked for navigability, and the quality of the soil and timber resources were reported to Sproule. When farms were plotted they were usually two hundred acres in size, rectangular in shape, possessing a breadth one-third of their length, and were set out side by side, thus allowing the owners to share adjacent rivers or streams, meadows or marsh lands. If possible, within each grant, equal portions of arable and barren lands were included. By using the bounds of an earlier grant, if they were accurate, or by using a fixed and permanent marker, the deputy-surveyor would mark off his front line and establish another end marker. From these two end markers, which he cautioned the proprietor to carefully preserve, the surveyor would measure the angles of his side lines, and with the aid of chainmen and axemen, he would run these lines out.<sup>29</sup> Usually the rear lines and, in some cases, also the side lines were left to Sproule to determine on paper from the surveyors' plans sent to Fredericton.<sup>30</sup>

In doing surveys, the deputy was cautioned to avoid any encroachment upon older grants; if doubt existed, an extra amount besides the usual ten percent allowance for waste lands was tacked on to compensate for any possible errors in the vicinity of unknown or disputed boundary lines. Lands were surveyed upriver only as far as a small boat could travel in summertime. All surveys done were to be kept secret. All assignments of lots of land were made from the applicant registers in Odell's office and not by the deputy on the spot. While engaged upon official work in a region, the deputy could, however, accept private surveying tasks if terms could be arranged. A settler paying for his survey could choose the location of his grant (except, of course, on reserved lands), but its dimensions had to conform to the regulations. The surveyor tried to include within his survey the improvements made by any settler, legally or illegally, on the land. The squatter was instructed to submit a petition to Odell and a grant usually followed, especially if the settler had made improvements. The deputy often advised settlers to apply for grants as a group to lower costs. Associations were usually represented

by agents who accompanied the surveyor and provided chainbearers and axemen. If no workers were provided, the deputy usually hired some at government expense. Allowances were usually made for roads between certain lots to let the people on back lots have access to the river. Public landings were set aside for shared use. Extra surveys were prepared to cover future demands and back lines were laid out in such a way as to allow them to be used for the second tier of lots in more fertile areas. Most of these early surveys were done along the shores of numerous rivers and streams, thus guaranteeing easy communication, trade and travel but producing a widely scattered rural population that made surveying costs, in terms of labour and materials, higher than was necessary.

Occasionally, there was interference from local officials or irate settlers. In the case of one settler who refused to allow the deputy-surveyor to cross his property to do a survey, Sproule wrote explaining that "I conceive my authority extends only to Crown lands and that I cannot compel any man to submit to having his property traversed and measured, and his trees marked after that property has been duly conveyed to him by patent."<sup>31</sup> In this case, and in all his dealings with his deputies, Sproule showed his understanding and sympathy for his deputies' problems. He cautioned them to try persuasion first, and then, if this failed, to report back to Sproule and legal steps would be taken. Always the deputy was to act with care, to readily show settlers his instructions and to adhere to them closely.

When the work was done, returns were submitted to the Surveyor-General by each deputy explaining the task, stating the beginning point of each survey, the length and bearings of lines run out, the type of boundary markers used, the men hired as axemen and chainbearers, and the expenses incurred in doing the survey. The deputy was also to report on the terrain he passed over, "sketching and describing all ponds, lakes, streams of water, mountains, hills and morrass - noting at the same time the quality of the soil and timber".<sup>32</sup> After certifying that the contents of his return, which listed the names of those taking up lots, the extra allowance included for waste lands and the plan of each survey, were correct, the deputy relayed them personally or by a trusted traveller to Fredericton. Until standardized by Sproule, the returns sent to Fredericton were often poorly and inaccurately done. In some cases, deputies were reluctant to carry out their duties, even though the Council had placed a six-month time limit on completion of the work. Sproule sometimes threatened to send a man from Fredericton if the deputy continued to ignore his instructions.<sup>33</sup>

No doubt, inadequate pay had a great deal to do with the difficulties Sproule had in getting surveyors to cooperate, as neither the deputies nor any other Loyalist officials made much profit from settling the refugees and disbanded Loyalist troops. In the period from 1 January, 1785 to 25 June, 1790, Jonathan Odell made slightly over £ 513, and Sproule made slightly over £ 373 in half-fees.<sup>34</sup> George Sproule's case is interesting because he believed that, besides his annual salary of £ 150, he would receive an additional £ 170 annually to cover official contingent expenses, clerks' wages, stationery, office rent, fuel, etc. The Surveyor-General complained that the costs of settling the Loyalists were high, due to the confused state of the country as well as its great size, necessitating an advancement of £ 500 of his own capital derived from the sale of two military commissions he had purchased during his twenty-one years of military service.<sup>35</sup> Sproule felt that a just British government would reimburse him for his losses, but Grenville unsympathetically wrote to

Carleton after disallowing Sproule's expense account of £ 245: "The duties required from him for the immediate purposes of government and for which a salary is allowed, cannot, I am persuaded, entirely occupy his attention, and in cases where surveys are necessary to be made for ascertaining the limits of lands to be disposed of, a reasonable fee is allowed to compensate his services, and where half fees only have been admitted, the accounts which are now before government are sufficient to ascertain that the principal part of the duty has been performed by deputies, who have been paid by the public."<sup>36</sup> Pecuniary difficulties compelled Sproule to remove his son from school in England to help him with the office work. Even when full fees were collected after February, 1786, when Council decided that since sufficient surveys had been completed to accommodate all general applicants, future surveys for particular grants would be paid for by the petitioner, the money trickling into the chief surveyor's till was still meagre. Fees were taken on land grants, orders, plans and warrants of survey, on searches, on memorials for land, and for copying official records; the fees scale followed that established in 1772 in Nova Scotia.<sup>37</sup> For Sproule, fees were absolutely necessary "as I have no allowance made by government of any kind for a clerk, stationery or any other expense of office, I must make a charge for the business I do in inspecting and explaining memorials and issuing orders of survey and instructions on them and registering them in my office."<sup>38</sup> But Sproule was not unreasonable: "You will observe that I only mean to charge such as are able to pay, you will therefore remit it to any very poor whose circumstances are not adequate to pay." <sup>39</sup>

While the years from 1784 to 1790 may not have been financially profitable to the colonial officials involved in settling the Loyalists, nevertheless a great deal was accomplished. Food, clothing, farming and building supplies, as well as land, were provided by Carleton's government; counties and parishes were created; a new capital at Fredericton was established; most of the Loyalists were placed on their farms. During the period, a total of 507,667 acres was surveyed at a cost to the British government of £ 1402:3:2, excluding half fees; exploration work was also undertaken and a general plan of the province produced.<sup>40</sup>

In 1785 only thirteen grants were issued, totalling 8,039 acres. During 1786, the land committee met nearly daily to process petitions<sup>41</sup> and in February, the Executive Council, feeling that there were enough surveys done at government expense to provide for the needy Loyalists, ordered that the surveying costs for future applications for particular tracts of land would be paid for by the memorialists.<sup>42</sup> Slightly over 200,000 acres passed into Loyalist hands in 1786. During 1787, another 184,246 acres were granted, but it is interesting to note that some Loyalists were moving about seeking better allotments of land or were even returning to the United States. Where the conditions of settlement were not being met, a portion of these early grants returned to the Crown and were re-granted to other Loyalists. In 1788 and 1789, there was a sizable reduction in the amount of land acreage granted, to 31,584 and 52,141 respectively. Between 1784 and 1790, a total of 476,025 acres passed into Loyalist hands.<sup>43</sup> Most individuals received in the vicinity of 200 to 400 acres; there were some grants of over 1,000 acres to single Loyalists, but less than a half-dozen grants over 5,000 acres.<sup>44</sup>

While most of the Loyalists received grants of one size or another, it is ironical to note that when the restrictions upon the passing of grants were levied upon New Brunswick in 1790, there were a number of Executive Councillors, officers of government and other gentlemen entitled



to lands amounting to 50,000 acres who had postponed taking their lands until their fellow Loyalists were accommodated and thus had to wait another decade and more before they themselves received lands.<sup>45</sup> Other Loyalists had applied for lands before 1790 and had cultivated and improved them, but had not taken out patents; their claims amounted to 27,300 acres.<sup>46</sup> Just before the 1790 restrictions were levied upon the colony, we note in Sproule's letter book an interesting understatement: "I could wish that such people as can afford to take out their grants would not delay it much longer for the office is now so crammed with surveys from all quarters, that notwithstanding all my attention, inconveniences may arise and much trouble both to me and the settlers may happen."<sup>47</sup> The years after 1802, when these restrictions were lifted, proved to be nearly as hectic for New Brunswick's Surveyor-General as had been the years spent in settling the Loyalists.

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What were some of the benefits derived from this administrative study? We now have a much better understanding of land administration and, more specifically, of the Surveyor-General's office in this early colonial period. We know how, when and why land records were created, and this helps us to order these records in a manner most useful for glean- ing information. Perhaps more significantly, we have gained a wider know- ledge of the whole administrative picture of the period. Involvement in land matters seemed to be a common denominator among New Brunswick's officials. The personalities of the officials, their roles and duties, inter-office relations, a chain of command, division of labours, delega- tion of authority, all provide clues to comprehending the larger adminis- trative puzzle. Our departmental record series have become more closely knitted together; our attitudes towards administrative records have been altered. We have raised many questions and answered a few of them; still, we are in a much better position to direct further research. Personally, of course, the land records and Crown land administration mean a great deal to me. Although this paper is limited to the early settlement years, I was fortunate enough to be able to study the whole three decades of George Sproule's term as Surveyor-General from 1785 to 1817, from the hectic settlement years, through the depression of the last decade of the century, during the period of revived business after 1800 and through the prosperous years after 1807, to Sproule's death in 1817 - his wobbly hand- writing in evidence to the last upon the record books of his office. It is impossible for the archivist to do detailed administrative studies on all the departmental record series within his care, but by producing a number of brief detailed descriptions, listing strong points and sugges- ting administrative themes that might be explored by the historian, and by occasionally doing personal research work of his own, I feel that the archivist will be better able to serve himself, his institution and historians.

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1. Canadian Archivist, Volume 2, No. 1: 1970, p. 5.
  2. Esther Clark Wright's, The Loyalists of New Brunswick, (Fredericton, 1955) and Don. W. Thomson's, Men and Meridians: The History of Surveying and Mapping in Canada, are two good books for general background informa- tion. (Volume 1, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1966).

3. W. S. MacNutt, New Brunswick: A History: 1784 - 1867 (Toronto, MacMillan of Canada, 1963) deals with the Loyalist "race for privilege", pp. 33 - 36.
4. Marion Gilroy, "The Partition of Nova Scotia", Canadian Historical Review, Volume 14 (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1933), p. 378.
5. Thomas Carleton was appointed Captain General and Governor-in-Chief of New Brunswick in 1784, but when his older brother became the Governor-in-Chief of Canada in 1786, Thomas Carleton's first commission was revoked and he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor.
6. C.O./189/1 Instructions to Thomas Carleton. In L. W. Labaree's Royal Instructions to British Colonial Governors, 1670 - 1776, Volume 2, one sees that only slight changes were made in the instructions regarding land matters when the pre-Revolution directives are compared with those issued to Thomas Carleton after the war.
7. Information of the Executive Council's functions as a land committee are found in the "Journals of the Proceedings Respecting Allotments of Land" (J.P.) and in the Executive Council Minute Books (ECMB).
8. ECMB, Volume I, p. 100.
9. Ibid, pp. 133 - 134.
10. J.P., Volume 1, p. 20.
11. Ibid, Volume 10, p. 33.
12. ECMB, Volume I, pp. 29 - 32.
13. C.O./189/1, p. 97 Instructions to Thomas Carleton.
14. C.O./188/1, p. 80.
15. ECMB, Volume I, pp. 31 - 32.
16. C.O./188/15, p. 74.
17. Ibid.
18. C.O./188/4, pp. 46 - 47.
19. Surveyor General Letter Book (SGLB), Volume II, p. 125.
20. Ibid, p. 203.
21. Three volumes of Benjamin Marston's diaries, 1778 - 1787, make interesting reading. The last volume covers the period 1782 - 1787 and deals with some of his duties, and problems, as a deputy-surveyor in New Brunswick.
22. SGLB, Volume I, p. 11.
23. Ibid.
24. SGLB, Volume I, p. 23.

25. SGLB, Volume I, p. 349.
26. Ibid, p. 175.
27. Ibid, Volume II, p. 194.
28. Ibid, Volume II, p. 215.
29. Angles were to be measured from a north point eastward "in the manner of the R(ight) A(n)gle of a star which is reckoned from the first point of Aries, eastward". SGLB, Volume I, inside cover.
30. SGLB, Volume II, p. 3.
31. Ibid, p. 22.
32. Ibid, Volume I, p. 237.
33. Ibid, Volume II, p. 132.
34. ECMB, Volume I, pp. 151, 163, 186.
35. C.O./188/4, pp. 46 - 47.
36. C.O./189/3, p. 96.
37. C.O./189/10, p. 25.
38. SGLB, Volume II, pp. 64 - 65.
39. Ibid, p. 65.
40. C.O./188/4, p. 47.
41. In 1785, a total of 1,697 petitions were processed; most of them dealt with land matters. By month: In January, 112; in February, 105; in March, 355; in April, 261; in May, 134; in June, 138; in July, 175; in August, 156; in September, 90; in October, 55; in November, 80, and in December, 36. By day: On Mondays, 141; on Tuesdays, 470; on Wednesdays, 318; on Thursdays, 76; on Fridays, 536, and on Saturdays, 156. Compiled from the "Journals of Proceedings Respecting Allotments of Land".
42. ECMB, Volume I, p. 106.
43. Compiled from the List of Land Grants.
44. Giant Index of land grants.
45. C.O./188/12, p. 56.
46. Ibid.
47. SGLB, Volume II, p. 63.