

**An Index to the 1786 McNiff Maps
of the Townships of Lancaster,
Charlottenburgh, Cornwall, Osnabruck,
Williamsburgh and Matilda
(the Loyalist Maps)**



Encampment of the Loyalists at Johnstown (Cornwall)

Painted by James Peachey June 6, 1784

Credit: Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1989-218-1, neg. C-002001

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Edward Kipp & George Anderson

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Dedication

This index is dedicated to the memory of our Loyalist ancestors, who came to this wilderness, chopped the trees down, cleared the land and cultivated the land to make farms, to build homes and to establish the communities which exist in Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry today.

Acknowledgements

Janet Anderson and Elizabeth Kipp diligently proofread several drafts of data which was input into the database. This was a very difficult task since many of the names on the maps often seem to be illegible.

We would also like to thank the Library Archives Canada for granting permission to use the two 1786 McNiff maps.

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McNiff, Patrick/Library and Archives Canada/NMC 21346

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Introduction

This Index to the two 1786 McNiff maps shows who held land and where it was located in the Three United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry in 1786.

Most of these land holders were Loyalists. Each name is based on information obtained from surveyor Patrick McNiff's 1786 maps. The two maps obtained from the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) were labelled as **NMC21346 and NMC13193** and are available on microform in the maps section of the Library and Archive Canada. They both bear the same date of November 1, 1786 but there are differences between the maps. One could consider that the NMC21346 is more of an original as the handwriting is not entirely consistent within in the map. With NMC13193, the handwriting is consistent throughout.

The original index to the McNiff map was published in the book **Lunenburg or the Old Eastern District, Its Settlement and Early Progress**, by J. F. Pringle, Standard Printing House, Cornwall: 1890. Since that time a lot has been learned about transcribing documents and thus a new index has been prepared. In most cases the names are the same as in Pringle's index but there are significant differences and interpretations. Note that the name "McDonnell" often appeared as "McDonel or McDonnel" on the map.

Patrick McNiff was one of the surveyors who assisted Major Holland of the British Army to survey Eastern Ontario before the Loyalists began to settle it. In early 1784, McNiff surveyed the front of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry along the St. Lawrence River. The results of this survey were used to allocate the land. Each Loyalist drew a paper which contained the location of a lot. McNiff later prepared maps for Sir John Johnson of the six eastern townships dated November 1, 1786. These maps gave the concession and the lot number along with the name of the owner of each lot.

The townships were originally part of the Seignury of Longueuil in the Province of Quebec. Except for Lancaster which was originally known as Lake Township, the other five townships in SD&G were not yet named in the year 1786. At that time they were numbered: township No. 1 (now Charlottenburgh); township No. 2 (now Cornwall); township No. 3 (now Osnabruck); township No. 4 (now Williamsburgh); and township No. 5 (now Matilda).

In 1788 Sir Guy Carleton (Lord Dorchester) created four judicial districts in what is now Ontario. The most easterly of these districts, which included these townships, was called Lunenburg. The name of the District of Lunenburg was changed to the Eastern District in 1792. The townships along the St. Lawrence River were also then given names to replace the numbers. The townships were also known as the Royal Townships.

Today these townships no longer exist due to provincial municipal re-organizations. Lancaster and Charlottenburgh Townships are now combined under the Township of South Glengarry. Cornwall and Osnabruck Townships are consolidated under the Township of South Stormont. Williamsburgh and Matilda are now replaced by The Township of South Dundas.

The CD-ROM is arranged by township beginning with Lancaster and ending with Matilda. There are two maps for each township corresponding to the two LAC maps. There is a Concession/Lot/Owner index for each township. In some cases lots on the map do not have a number. In our index these lots are designated by "0" and always precede lot 1. There is an overall alphabetical index to all townships. In each index there is a map number pointing to which maps to look at for the original text. If there are differences between the maps, the alternate spelling is found in brackets. If the difference was significant the alternate text was placed on a separate line.

If there is a blank in the map number column then the entry does not appear in that map.

Correlation of file name, map number, map letter used in the indexes and the township number and name.

File name	Map	Map Letter used in the indexes	Township
Lan21346	NMC21346	A	Lancaster
T1a21346	NMC21346	B	No. 1 Charlottenburgh
T1b21346	NMC21346	C	No. 1 Charlottenburgh
T1c21346	NMC21346	D	No. 1 Charlottenburgh
T2a21346	NMC21346	E	No. 2 Cornwall
T2b21346	NMC21346	F	No. 2 Cornwall
T2c21346	NMC21346	G	No. 2 Cornwall
T2d21346	NMC21346	H	No. 2 Cornwall
T3a21346	NMC21346	I	No. 3 Osnabruck
T3b21346	NMC21346	J	No. 3 Osnabruck
T4a21346	NMC21346	K	No. 4 Williamsburgh
T5a21346	NMC21346	L	No. 5 Matilda
T5b21346	NMC21346	M	No. 5 Matilda
Lan13193	NMC13193	N	Lancaster
T1a13193	NMC13193	O	No. 1 Charlottenburgh
T1b13193	NMC13193	P	No. 1 Charlottenburgh
T2a13193	NMC13193	Q	No. 2 Cornwall
T2b13193	NMC13193	R	No. 2 Cornwall
T3a13193	NMC13193	S	No. 3 Osnabruck
T4a13193	NMC13193	T	No. 4 Williamsburgh
T4b13193	NMC13193	U	No. 4 Williamsburgh
T5a13193	NMC13193	V	No. 5 Matilda

Individual Township Indexes

File name	Township
0_Lancaster	Lan - Lancaster
1_Charlottenburgh	No. 1 - Charlottenburgh
2_Cornwall	No. 2 - Cornwall
3_Osnabruck	No. 3 - Osnabruck
4_Williamsburgh	No. 4 - Williamsburgh
5_Matilda	No. 5 - Matilda

Pringle's index

Lunenburg or the Old Eastern District, Its Settlement and Early Progress,
by J. F. Pringle, Standard Printing House, Cornwall: 1890.

Pringle on the original surveys of the land (p. 33):

“...It is well known that Patrick McNiff made the first survey of that portion of the counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry that lies along the River St. Lawrence. He made a map of the survey, showing the lots as far back as the rear of the second concession north of the River Aux Raisin in Charlottenburg, the eighth concession as numbered on the eastern boundary of the township of Cornwall, the third concession of Osnabruck, and the second concession of Williamsburg and Matilda. In each of the concessions the lots are marked, and on each lot located or settled upon is given the name of the owner. This map (in the possession of D.B. McLennan, of Cornwall, Barrister), which is dated 1st November, 1786, and signed “Patrick McNiff,” was made by him for Sir John Johnson. The title is: A Plan of part of the new settlements on the north bank of the south-west branch of the St. Lawrence River, commencing near the Point au Bodett, on Lake St. Francis, and extending westerly along the said north bank of the west boundary of Township No. 5, laid down from the latest surveys and observations.”

A copy of the index as printed in Pringle's book (pages 403-411) is provided for comparison purposes.

The Maps

NMC13193 (3 Sect) and NMC21346 (H2) (5 Sect)
McNiff, Patrick

H2/400/1786
R/400/1786
H1/400/1786 (3 Sect)

1786

Landownership
Loyalists

A plan of part of the new settlements on the north bank of the Smith [south] west bank of the St. Lawrence River commencing near Point au Bodett on Lake St. Francis and extending westerly along the said north bank to the west boundary of Township No. 5. Laid down from the latest surveys & observations by Patrick McNiff. November the 1st 1786.

Blueprints; 1 inch to 40 chains; 33.5 by 134

This map is sometimes known as the “Loyalist Map.” It is described by Judge Pringle of Cornwall in the 1884 Archives Report. An additional copy is reported by Hugh P. MacMillan to be in the Bishop’s Palace at Alexandria. Original – Ontario Archives. This entry comes from: Loyalist Settlements 1783-1789 (NMC G 1146 .E27 L69 1985 fol.) (written by Joan Winearls): PLATE 2 “ A Pla[n of part of the] New Settlements on the north bank of the South-west bran[ch of the St.L]aurence River, commencing near Point au Bodett on La[ke St. Fra]ncis and extending westerly along the said North bank to the west boundry of [Township No.] 5 Laid down from: the Latest Surveys & observations By [Signed] Patrick McNiff November the 1st 1786. Col. MS 71 by 326 cm. Scale 1” to 40 chains. Archives of Ontario, Map Collection: (Survey Records Micro. No. 11081). Patrick McNiff’s plan of 1786 shows the survey of the first six townships along the St. Lawrence river beginning at the boundary with Quebec. (Lake township now Lancaster and townships 1 to 5 now respectively Charlottenburgh, Cornwall, Osnabruck, Williamsburgh and Matilda). After exploratory surveys in 1783 by Captain Sherwood and others, McNiff began assembling a party of military personnel in early 1784 to begin the survey. Lieut. Kotte laid out part of the first townships and the front concessions of the others were completed in that year. In June 1785 McNiff was instructed by Collins to lay out the front on the 2nd and 3rd concessions of Lancaster township, and the front of the 2nd, 3rd and the concessions in Osnabruck, Williamsburgh, and Matilda with road allowances between concessions and “taking care to set up two posts at proper distances in the division line between each Lot, to serve as a government to the inhabitants to divide their lands.” He was also instructed to lay out a road along the front of the townships (shown on the map), as near the lake as possible. These townships were also on a ‘single-front system’ with 200 acre lots but the concessions were about 37 lots wide and the townships were eventually extended to 8 or 9 concessions deep. By the spring of 1785 McNiff reported that all the settlers were on their land.

In early 1786 he was appointed surveyor in charge of the first eight townships and he prepared this map to summarize the survey and settlement that had taken place. The roughness of the map and the dotted lines for the fronts of concessions suggests the primitive nature of these early surveys. Indeed in June 1785 Collins reported that the plan of the Township of Cornwall was the only one regularly surveyed all others having only the front lines marked and a picket at the end of the lots.

On the transcript, Bodett is spelt "Baudett." South west appears as "Smith west" on all copies. One blueprint filed 14 May 1884 by Alexander McDonald, Registrar. Another copy filed 30 Oct. 1854 by G.C. Wood.

Photocopy in 11 sections of the original located at the Archives of Ontario; H3/400/1786/11 sections.

The Plan

A PLAN a part of the NEW Settlements on the North bank of the Smith west branch of the St Lawrence River commencing near Point au Baudett on Lake St Francis and extending westerly along the said North bank to the West boundary of Township No 1 to 5 Laid down from the Lake Surveys and observations. November the 1st 1786, by Patrick McNiff

A Scale of Chains 40 to an Inch

Remarks

Lake Township – The Land in front of the Township is generally low and wet and will require a number of small drains and thus it to make it fit for Culture the land five and six concessions back is much better being high & dry interspersed with Wild Meadow There is no valuable Timber in front of this Township the best Pine and Oak having been cut off long since. I find no stream in front of this Township fit to seat a Mill on excepting that of Mr. Sutherland's about one mile an a Quarter from its entrance.

Township No 1 – The Land in front of this Township from its commencement is flat but very Rich up as far as Lot No. 5 from thence upwards the Land is high and stony. The only stream of consequence in this Township is the River au Raisins [as written on maps] on which no Mill can be erected before going six or seven miles up it. There is no valuable Timber in front of the Township. The Oak having long since been cut off.

Township No 2 – The Land in front of this Township is high Rich and Dry and is with very little exception for six concessions back. The Timber, Bass, Maple and Beach. There is no valuable Timber in front of the Township excepting the Pines at the Mille Roches: I find in the Township two places very convenient for erecting Mills on the one in front of Lot No 6 on Riviere au Raisins, the other at the Mille Roches on the great River.

Township No 3 – The Land in front of this Township is very indifferent being either very stoney or sandy up as far as Lot No 27 from thence upwards very good. The only valuable Timber here is Pine of which there is a great plenty. I find in this Township two streams that are very convenient for erecting Mills upon. The one emptying into the great River Lot No 10 & 11 on which there is now a Mill erected by Mr. Philip which will grind in a few days the other on Lot No 34 where a Dam may be made with very little expense close to the great River.

Township No 4 – The front of this Township is very good. The second concession is generally a Cedar swamp the third, fourth and fifth concession are said to be good Land. The Timber in front of this Township is of no consequence. I find in this Township only one Place on which a Mill could be erected which is on a stream emptying into the great River Lot No 26 about 14 chains from its entrance.

Township No 5 – The Land in front of the Township is high, dry and Rich, the back concessions are not so good, no valuable Timber in front. I find in this Township but one place on which a Mill can be erected which is on the great River in front of Lot 6 on a point.

The bearing of the six Lines is N24W.

The dotted Lines are all Run & Marked.

The double Lines are Roads left.

The Bearing of Monsieur Longuillis West Boundary Line is N34W.