

Immigrants in a Frontier Community: Madawaska 1785-1850

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Frontier regions normally attract successive waves of immigrants until their territory is fully settled. This does not necessarily mean, however, that local society is open to newcomers. Both the process of socio-economic evolution at work in those areas, and the deliberate actions of earlier settlers trying to provide their offspring with the best possible opportunities may prevent the integration of later migrants into the original community. The result may be, as in the upper St. John valley, the emergence of a clearly stratified society dominated by the descendants of the charter families, and this within 50 years of foundation.

Les fronts pionniers attirent normalement plusieurs vagues successives d'immigrants, jusqu'à ce que leur territoire soit entièrement occupé. Ceci toutefois ne signifie pas nécessairement que la société locale soit ouverte aux nouveaux venus. Aussi bien le processus d'évolution socio-économique qui caractérise ces régions, que les stratégies des premiers pionniers essayant d'accroître les chances de leurs descendants, peuvent prévenir l'intégration d'immigrants plus récents dans la communauté de départ. Il peut en résulter, comme dans la vallée de la St-Jean, l'apparition d'une société visiblement stratifiée, dominée par les descendants des familles souches, et ce moins de 50 ans après la fondation.

In 1829, the French-Canadian priest of the Madawaska district, in North West New Brunswick, sent an unhappy letter to his Bishop in Québec: The "scum" of the lower St Lawrence parishes was invading the settlement, and was leading some members of his flock astray. He was not the only one to take a dim view of the newcomers. Local priests repeatedly described French-Canadian immigrants as undesirable rowdies. On the other hand, they tended to describe the old established families in glowing terms.¹ The latter might have shared the priests' prejudices, as they grew increasingly endogamous as the years went by. This resulted in a society divided at mid-century between tightly related charter families, and newcomers firmly kept outside the pale. Social exclusiveness was, in all likelihood, a surface manifestation of an ongoing process of social evolution.

The charter families were the descendants of Acadians from New Brunswick and French Canadians from the lower St Lawrence valley, who had opened the upper St John river region to colonization in 1785. In 1800, 69 families were permanently established on the banks of the St John; despite its mixed origins, this settlement was tightly bound together by extensive kinship ties. Everybody was related to several other persons in the community and in ninety percent of the cases, family connections pre-dated resettlement

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1. Archives de l'Archevêché de Québec, Lettres des prêtres missionnaires du Madawaska à l'évêque de Québec, letters dated April 4, 1829, September 11, 1822, November 8, 1834.

on the St John. Thirty-two families were headed by a mixed Acadian-Canadian couple.² Only six additional Acadians came afterwards, but French Canadians kept on arriving in increasingly large numbers. For instance, French-Canadian immigration accounted for 19 percent of the population increase on both sides of the river between 1840 and 1850. (See table I infra). The district, which had been part of the territory disputed by Britain and the United States, was divided between the two powers by the Webster Ashburton treaty of 1842. The southern bank of the river became American, but the change in sovereignty had absolutely no impact on French-Canadian immigration. By 1850, the Madawaska society, still unaffected by the international boundary supposed to divide it, was stratified along socio-economic and kinship lines. French-Canadian migrants crowded the bottom rungs of the social ladder. Descendants of the 69 charter families mentioned above were, on the other hand, over-represented in the well-to-do and politically active strata. Social stratification seems to have been the result of the interplay of economic, social and attitudinal factors which all stemmed from one underlying phenomenon: the population was growing rapidly, but economic resources failed to expand accordingly. The charter families and their descendants, in their attempts to maintain their social and economic status, incidentally as well as consciously curtailed the newcomers' opportunities to achieve an equal level of wealth and security.

Madawaska was not the only settlement in the North East in which population eventually outstripped resources. This suggests that the difficulties encountered by the French Canadians on the St John could have plagued other groups of immigrants in other localities. The St John valley would then constitute an interesting case study in the fate of geographically mobile people.

Quantitative and qualitative changes characterized the Madawaska settlement between foundation and the middle of the nineteenth century. As mentioned before, the population grew rapidly. A head count sent to the Bishop of Quebec in 1799 listed 331 persons. The one thousand mark had been reached by 1820, and in 1850, the population exceeded 6,000, distributed in about 850 households.³ The non-Catholic population was insignificant until the 1820s. A dozen of New Englanders interested in lumbering arrived around 1817-1818. The number of non-Catholics gradually increased, and in 1850 they were almost 600. This sub-population was characterized by a high proportion of males, a high celibacy and a high turnover rate. Most came after the boundary was settled. Those late comers were mostly merchants, lumber-camps operators, or officials like postmasters or telegraph operators.⁴ English speaking Catholics were even scarcer, normally married

2. Parish of St-Basile (N.B.), *Register*, 1792-1857; Parish of St-Bruno (Maine), *Register*, 1838-55; Parish of Ste-Luce (Maine), *Register*, 1742-1858; Henry Langlois, *Dictionnaire généalogique du Madawaska, répertoire des mariages du diocèse d'Edmunstun, N.-B. et du comté d'Aroostook, recherches et compilations par Henri Langlois* (St-Basile, N.B.: Ernest Lang, 1971), 8 vols; Bona Arsenault, *Histoire et généalogie des Acadiens* (Ottawa: Leméac, 1978), 7 vols; M^{re} Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Généalogique des familles canadiennes* (Montréal: Eusèbe Sénécal, 1871-90), 7 vols; *Dictionnaire national des Canadiens Français, 1608-1760* (Montréal: Institut généalogique Drouin, 1965), 3 vols.

3. Archives de l'archevêché de Québec, lettres des prêtres missionnaires du Madawaska à l'évêque de Québec, 1803; PANB, Provincial census, 1851. The United States took a census of the right bank of the river in 1850, and New Brunswick counted its portion of the population in 1851. Fortunately, the New Brunswick census also indicates the number of births and deaths which took place in the preceding year, and indicates the year of arrival of immigrants in the province. French speaking immigrants all came from Lower Canada/ Canada East. One can therefore estimate with relative accuracy the population of the left bank in the year preceding the census.

4. Non-Catholics were identified when family reconstitution cards established from the local parish registers were linked with the 1820, 1830 and 1850 U.S. census and 1851 New Brunswick census. The available

locally and assimilated, like Thomas Kennedy, listed as French in the census, and renamed "Canada" by some of the priests, or Joseph Fraser, "French of Scot origins" found in the 1851 census.⁵

The number of farms increased with the population. The New Brunswick government had granted 74 pieces of land averaging 220 acres each in 1790 and 1794. No more grants were issued until 1842; immigrants occupied land without title. After the signature of the treaty in 1842, Maine and New Brunswick legalized the situation of the squatters and issued deeds for 563 and 505 lots respectively.⁶ The growing population spread along the banks of the St. John, as this river was lined with intervalles, and dotted with islands providing natural meadows. Virtually all this preferred riparian land was occupied by the mid-1840s. Second tiers of farms began to appear in the central part of the settlement. These were still very small in 1850, as the settlers preferred to take land along the tributaries of the St John, which at least gave them access to the water.⁷ By then, it was very likely the local population had realized that the supply of farm land was limited and rapidly diminishing. The settling of the international, and then of the interprovincial boundary disputes probably compounded this problem. The state of Maine and the province of New Brunswick expected to sell unoccupied land to forthcoming settlers, instead of giving it away to established squatters as they had been forced to do on account of the treaty. Securing a piece of the dwindling supply of land would subsequently be more difficult for would-be farmers, as it would require a cash expenditure.

Despite this considerable territorial expansion, nodes of population in any given area had not yet appeared. Mills, stores, blacksmith shops, although more numerous in the central area, had not yet led to the formation of a nucleated village. In 1850, Madawaska was still a shoe-string settlement. Until 1842, it lacked clearly defined boundaries as well as a clearly defined focus. Remoteness, and the uncertain international situation meant civil authorities did not attempt to organize it into any form of administrative unit until 1833, when New Brunswick created the parish of Madawaska. This one did not have a defined territory, only an eastern boundary. Until the signature of the treaty, the term "Madawaska settlement" labelled an aggregate of people rather than a defined space.⁸ Ecclesiastical organization followed the same pattern; the parish of St Basil, created in 1792, expanded territorially with the population, until it was finally divided into three sections in 1838 (eastern third) and 1842 (western third).⁹

population schedule for 1840 lists only the inhabitants of the South bank, although the aggregate returns give the population figures for both north and south banks.

5. PANB, Provincial census, 1851.

6. Province of New Brunswick, Crown Land Office, Survey maps of the Mazzerolle and Soucy Grants, 1790 and 1794; Province of New Brunswick, Crown land office, "Maps of the Madawaska Survey conducted by Land Commissioners J.A. MacLaughlin and John C. Allen to settle the claims arising under the treaty of Washington, 1844-48"; University of Maine, Fogler library, Special Collection, "Report of the Commissioners Appointed under the resolve of February 21, 1843 to locate grants and determine the extent of possessory claims under the late treaty with Great Britain." Some farmers were single, and boarded with other families. Some household heads possessed more than one farm, or a farm consisting of scattered holdings. This accounts for the constant excess of farm lots over households.

7. Ibid.

8. W.F. Ganong, "Monograph of the Evolution of the Boundaries of the province of New Brunswick," Royal Society of Canada, *Proceedings and Transactions*, 2d series, 7 (1901) 137-49; Graeme Wynn, "New Brunswick Parish Boundaries in the pre-1861 Census years," *Acadiensis*, VI (Spring 1977): 95-105.

9. Abbé Thomas Albert, *Histoire du Madawaska* (Québec: Imprimerie Franciscaine Missionnaire, 1920).

Population increase paralleled economic development. Before 1825, the region was characterized by a high degree of self-sufficiency: the settlers derived their subsistence from farming and hunting and trapped fur as well. Slightly later sources (1831) also refer to the area as a "large" exporter of maple sugar. This trade must have been going on earlier.¹⁰ One suspects also the settlers cut wood and floated it down to the port of St John. The inhabitants traded in Fredericton or on the St Lawrence for goods they could not make or grow including wood stoves and rum,¹¹ but the distances to the nearest markets were such as to make those transactions neither convenient nor very profitable.¹² Although the riparian land was good, agriculture, especially wheat growing, was a precarious venture. The climate was often uncooperative, and ruined the crops in 1816-1817, 1828, 1833, 1840, 1855 and possibly 1827 and 1832 as well.¹³

In the winter of 1824 lumber-camps operated by New Brunswick lumber-dealers opened in the area. They provided the local population not only with a source of wage labour but also with a market for their products.¹⁴ Cutting took place in the area disputed by the United States and Great Britain, and owing to American protests, the British decided not to renew the timber licences, which had been issued for five years. The moratorium on the issuance of timber licences lasted till the signature of the treaty, but illegal cuttings continued nonetheless. Soon after legal lumbering resumed, a slump in the timber trade brought local operations to an almost standstill.¹⁵ Road building, which was carried out both by the Americans and the British in the 1830's, provided the local population with an additional source of income, but agriculture and forestry remained the mainstay of the local economy well beyond 1850.¹⁶

Before 1825, immigrants to the St John valley encountered a small and close knit community of interrelated farmers, living in relative isolation from the outside world. Land was plentiful, and for all to grab. After 1825, newcomers found a numerically larger society, more closely articulated on the wider market economy of New Brunswick. Opportunities

10. Peter Fisher, *History of New Brunswick* (Originally published in 1825, reprinted by the government of New Brunswick and W.S. Fisher, Saint John, N.B.: New Brunswick Historical Society, 1921), p. 53; Archives de l'archevêché de Québec, lettres des prêtres missionnaires du Madawaska à l'évêque de Québec, letters dated January 22, 1802 and December 18, 1804; "Report of John G. Deane and Edward Kavanagh to Samuel E. Smith, Governor of the State of Maine, and other documents, 1831," New Brunswick Historical Society, *Collection III* (1907): 455 (this is a transcription of the original document held at the Maine State Archives); Edmund Ward, *An Account of the River St John with its Tributary Rivers and Lakes*, 2nd ed., (Fredericton: Sentinel Office, 1841), p. 86.

11. Lettres des prêtres missionnaires, letters dated Jan. 16, 1809; December 3, 1809; and May 16, 1812. The earliest mention of a woodstove was found in an 1803 will: "Firmin Cier. Les déplacements d'un Acadien de 1785 à 1805," Société historique acadienne, *Cahiers*, 7 (March 1976): 34-37.

12. "Le Journal des visites pastorales de M^r Plessis, Evêque de Québec en Acadie, 1811-12-15," Société historique acadienne, *Cahiers* 11 (Mars/Sep. 1980): 126.

13. *Bangor Register* (Bangor, Maine), October 10, 1827; *Republican Journal*, (Belfast, Maine), August 12, 1829; PANB, Journal of the House of Assembly, February 13, February 20, March 1, March 11, March 14, 1834; 1840, pp. 159-60; Papers of the Legislative Assembly relating to the Settlement of Madawaska, 1834; Papers of the Legislative Assembly, Report of the Commissioner of Affairs at Madawaska, 1834; Journal of the House of Assembly, 1840, pp. 159-60.

14. Lettres des prêtres missionnaires, letters dated March, 27, 1824: "Les effets ont assez bon cours à présent parce que des faiseurs de bois de tonnes ont ouvert cet hiver des chantiers dans nos endroits." On the other hand, as late as November 1821, the priest was complaining he could not sell the products collected as tithes.

15. Graeme Wynn, *Timber Colony, a Historical Geography of Early Nineteenth Century New Brunswick* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), pp. 33-53.

16. E. Ward, *An Account of the St John*, p. 88; Graeme Wynn, *Timber Colony*, p. 37; "St John's Settlements", *New Brunswick Courier*, St John, N.B., February 18, 1826.

for non-farm employment had appeared, but on the other hand, land was becoming scarce. Post 1825 immigrant themselves were quite different from their predecessors. They were, firstly, more numerous.

Estimating the number of immigrants who came to the St John valley is at best a tentative endeavour. The precise number shall never be known. One standard method of estimation compares the natural increase over a period (excess of birth over death) with population increase during the same period.¹⁷ The figures suggest that numerically immigration was not very important between 1800 and 1820. After 1820, on the other hand, immigrants kept coming in increasing numbers, except between 1830 and 1834, when people were massively leaving the settlement (see table 1). 1833-1834 was an especially bad period, and the population of the settlement actually decreased.

Net migration figures are rather crude estimate. They do not take into account those who came and left between two population counts, nor the locally-born who out-migrated. Nor do they take into account the contribution of the migrants to natural increase. Those figures therefore hide as much as they reveal. Nonetheless, these net migration figures are worth keeping in mind, because they corroborate the ones derived from a more finely tuned approach, using parish registers.

With the exception of the small group of easily identifiable anglo-protestants, virtually all immigrants were Catholics from French Canada. They were married and buried in the Church, their children were baptized at birth and local priests recorded these marriages,

Table 1 Estimated Net Migration to Madawaska 1803-50

Date	Total Population	Corrected ^a Population	Natural ^b Increase	Net Migration
1803	456	456		
1820	1,171	1,160	481	+ 223
1830	2,474	2,249	638	+ 451
1833	2,518	2,403	336	- 182
1834	2,272	2,170	98	- 331
1840	3,460	3,227	869	+ 188
1850	6,167	5,580	1,910	+ 457

^a These figures exclude the non-Catholics. These people are identified through a linkage of the family reconstitution cards, of the 1820, 1830 and 1850 population schedules, and of the 1833 MacLaughlin return. The 1834 provincial census and the 1840 US census provide only aggregate population figure. I assumed the proportion of non-Catholics was the same in 1834 as in 1833, and estimated the 1840 proportion of non-Catholics by interpolation between the 1833 and 1850 figures.

^b Natural increase = Number of births less number of deaths

Source: Parish of St Basile, N.B., Parish registers, 1792-1860; Parish of Ste-Luce, Me., Parish Registers, 1842-59; Parish of St-Bruno, Me. Parish Registers, 1839-50.

Archives de l'archidiocèse de Québec, Lettres des prêtres missionnaires du Madawaska à l'évêque de Québec, 1803; U.S. Bureau of the census, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th census of the United States, 1820, 1830, 1840, 1850; Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Provincial census, 1834 and 1851; PANB, Papers of the Legislative Assembly relating to the settlement of Madawaska, Return showing the number of inhabitants in the settlement with their stock. (This is a nominal, household per household census taken by J. MacLaughlin, commissioner of the disputed territory for New Brunswick).

17. Louis Henry, *Manuel de démographie historique*, (Paris: Droz, 1970), pp. 56-57.

burials and baptisms in the parish registers. The priests were quite conscientious, and after 1806 there are virtually no gaps in their records (parts of the parish registers are missing for the 1800-05 period). Immigrant couples were usually young and in their reproductive years, and had a new baby on the average every twenty two months.¹⁸ Consequently, if families have been reconstituted, which is the case here, one can time the immigration of couples with a relatively narrow margin of error. The first time they are mentioned in the parish register, less one year, can be taken as a substitute for the year of arrival. Similarly, the last time a couple, whether immigrant or not, is mentioned, plus one year, can be used as an estimate of the year of departure.¹⁹

Figure 1 shows the amplitude and fluctuations in migratory movements starting in 1806. The numbers reported are the total number of couples identified as arriving or leaving in a given year, and with a few very rare exception, they are all French Canadians. Family immigration was limited before 1825 (an average of two a year). The second quarter of the century on the other hand witnessed the arrival of two large waves of immigrant families, one in 1825-27 and another in 1837-39. Families came in much smaller numbers after 1842, and almost not at all between 1833 and 1836. Family outmigration, generally low, peaked in 1832-34, when more families left than came, and again in 1846.

There is no contradiction between these figures and the ones presented in table 1. Both point towards a low level of immigration before 1820, increasing afterwards, and heavy population losses between 1830 and 1834. The second method, on the other hand, reveals some sharp intercensus fluctuations which were smoothed down using the first approach. These fluctuations closely echoed the local socio-economic conditions. The arrival of the first wave of immigrants coincided with the opening of lumber-camps on the upper St John in the winter of 1824. American protests, and occasional seizures of cut wood, coupled with the moratorium put by the British on issuing timber licences restricted the activities of the lumberers. This slow-down coincided with at least two, and perhaps three, successive failures of the wheat crop in 1828 and 1829 and possibly 1827.²⁰ As the food and job supplies constricted, immigration started declining.

The decline continued till 1833, when immigration reached its lowest point since 1819, and out-migration its highest. This population loss coincided with an unusually severe failure of the crops in the fall of 1833, which affected the entire province. The summer of 1833 had been unusually wet, and the first frost came to the upper St John as early as

18. Intergenic intervals were calculated using the family reconstitution cards.

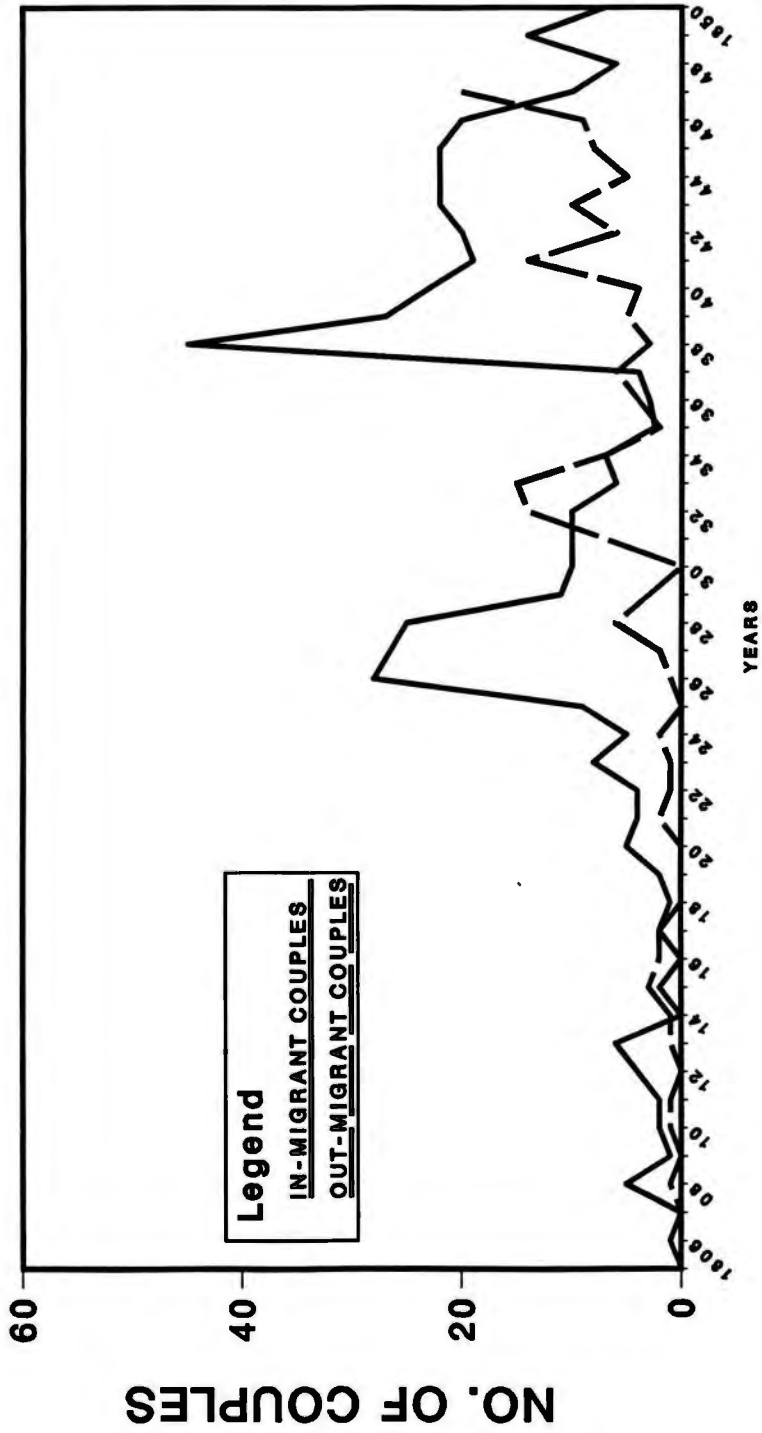
19. Gérard Bouchard used this approach to time out-migration in "Family, Structure and Geographic Mobility at Laterrière, 1851-1935," *Journal of Family History*, II (1977): 361, footnote 19. The existence of a local genealogical dictionary ensures that locally born people marrying outside the parish and coming back will not be confused with true immigrants.

Couples were classified as persistent or non persistent according to the following criteria:

- a) if either head died at Madawaska, a couple was persistent;
- b) if no death was reported for either head, a couple was counted as non-persistent if —
 - the couple was not mentioned in the 1850 U.S. or the 1851 N.B. census and
 - the couple ceased to be mentioned in the Parish Register for at least five years before the date of the census;
- c) all couples formed or arrived before 1845 and mentioned in either census were counted as persistent;
- d) all couples formed or arrived after 1845 were excluded from either categories, as well as all couples not in the census, but mentioned in the parish registers between 1845 and the census dates.

20. See 13 *supra*.

NUMBER OF IN- AND OUT-MIGRANTS COUPLES 1806-1849



September 2, a whole month ahead of schedule. It also seems that the preceding year's harvest had not been sufficient either, as the reports mentioned people who had been obliged to go into debts to obtain seeds in the spring of 1833.²¹

There is no clear-cut reason why the St John valley appealed again to immigrants in 1836-39, except a lack of crisis: crops no longer failed, the food supply and opportunities for labour were again sufficient. The St John valley was once more an attractive place, but not for long. In 1840, the crops failed again, and again this failure was followed by a decrease in immigration.²²

Immigrants who arrived in the 1840s were confronted with great difficulties to secure good farm land. There was less and less of it, and it had to be purchased. Non-farm employment in the neighbouring lumber-camps was also very scarce, on account of the severe recession which affected the New Brunswick lumber trade at the end of the decade.

Beginning in 1844, immigration declined precipitously. Outmigration increased again sharply, and for the first time, included a large proportion of newlyweds; half of the 1843-45 outmigrant couples were young people who had married at Madawaska, but left before the birth of their first child. Previously, hardly any couple married locally had left permanently. There is no literary evidence positively linking migration movements with the short-term cycles of the local economy. Nonetheless, the fluctuations of the former echo the fluctuations of the latter closely enough to suggest one was a response to the other.

Demographically active couples were not the only people to move in: single people of both sexes came as well. A comparison of table 1 and figure 1 shows that family immigration could not have been entirely responsible for the sharp population loss of the 1831-34 period, nor could it account for the relatively high level of net migration between 1820 and 1830 and between 1841 and 1850. Information about these unmarried immigrants is almost non-existent. Some married at Madawaska, and their marriage acts tell us where their parents resided at the time. This helps us locate the origins of migrants who came alone, but we do not know when they came into the valley, how long they resided there before marriage, how many they were, nor what proportion left still single. One aspect of the migrant experience therefore escapes us almost entirely.

More than absolute numbers differentiated the various phases of immigration; the kin ties and persistence rates of the two groups of immigrants were different as well. Before 1830, immigrant families were more likely to have a relative at Madawaska prior to moving there. Kinship and persistence also were linked: unrelated immigrants were less likely to persist in the area. After 1830, the proportion of unrelated immigrants families kept increasing and was above 50 percent by 1837. After 1839, the link between the existence of kin ties and residential persistence also weakened. (See table 2)

Nonetheless, one should not draw the conclusion that immigrants could more easily integrate the community in the 1830's and 1840' than they had previously. The ability to persist did not automatically entail the removal of any social or economic distance that could have existed between newcomers and old residents. On the contrary, other evidence points

21. PANB, Papers of the Legislative Assembly, Papers relating to the Settlement of Madawaska: letter from R. Mercier, Priest, dated November 14, 1833 and Certificate of Commissioners Rice and MacLaughlin, November 16, 1833.

22. Journal of the House of Assembly, 1840, pp. 159-60.

Table 2 Kinship and Persistence among Immigrants Couples, 1800-42

Period	Immigrants couples With kin at Madawaska					Without known kin				
	Persisted		Did not persist		T	Persisted		Did not persist		T
	N	%	N	%		N	%	N	%	
1800-25	28	90	3	10	31	9	33	18	67	27
1825-29	32	80	8	20	40	18	44	23	56	43
1830-36	16	84	3	16	19	10	34	19	66	29
1837-42	35	92	3	8	38	58	67	30	34	88

Sources: Parish Registers, parishes of St-Basile, St-Bruno and Ste-Luce.

towards the widening of the gap between the two groups. One symptom of this widening gap was the increased tendency towards endogamy (marrying within one's group) displayed by the descendants of the founders after 1825. Endogamy is not a result of factors beyond human control! Selecting a marriage partner is a matter of individual or familial choice. Members of the core population, that is the founders and their descendants, did not marry outsiders because they either viewed natives as more desirable marriage partners, or because they believed outsiders were not so desirable additions to society in general. Increased endogamy would have far-reaching consequences, preventing the two groups (core and immigrants) from blending into a single population. This facilitated the emergence of a society stratified along kinship as well as socio-economic lines.

Pre-1825 immigrants were readily accepted as marriage partners by the local population, because most of them were not unknown quantities. Between 1800 and 1825, fifty male immigrants and fifty-five immigrant females married at Madawaska. The majority of them (thirty-four women and twenty-nine men), married a member of the core population. Although those marriages were exogamous, involving locally born and outsiders, the non-native spouses were not really strangers. Half of the "outsiders" who married within the core population had a relative at Madawaska prior to their marriage. More than one in ten were closely enough related to their spouses to need a dispensation for consanguinity before the marriage could take place. On the other hand, most of them were unlikely to have spent most of their lives at Madawaska. Two-third of the males and half the females were children of people still living in Lower Canada when they married, and one can presume they were already adult when they arrived on the St John.

After 1825, when immigrants became more and more numerous, different patterns of exogamy and endogamy appeared. The percentage of exogamous marriages remained relatively constant over the period, shifting from thirty-seven percent of all marriages before 1825 to thirty-six percent afterwards. At the same time, the proportion of outside spouses having a relative at Madawaska prior to marriage dropped from forty-nine percent to twenty-three percent. Does this mean the two populations were more inclined to intermarry? Not really. First of all, the composition of the marriage market had changed dramatically: before 1825, immigrants represented a little less than one-third of all brides and grooms; after 1825, their proportion rose to forty-seven percent of the brides and fifty-seven percent of the

grooms. Outsiders now slightly outnumbered natives among people contracting marriage.²³ The proportion of migrant intermarriage increased from 12 percent to 35 percent. Members of the core population were slightly more likely to marry strangers but immigrants were three times less likely to marry locally-born people than they had previously. The two populations were not blending as freely as previously.

In addition, people whose family had been established at Madawaska for several generations were less likely to marry outside the core population than sons and daughters of the founders (see table 3).

Table 3 Endogamy and Exogamy of Successive Generations of Locally-Born Married at Madawaska 1825-50*

	Marrying a locally-born		Marrying a non locally-born		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Locally-born daughters of immigrants	33	51	32	49	65
Core population second generation women	37	44	32	46	68
Core population third generation women	122	58	91	42	213
Core population fourth generation women	47	62	29	38	76
Total locally-born women	239	57	184	43	423
locally-born sons of immigrants	37	79	10	21	47
Core population second generation men	34	49	35	51	69
Core population, third generation men	126	70	53	31	179
Core population, fourth generation men	42	85	7	15	49
Total locally-born men	239	69	105	31	344

* A total of 797 marriages were celebrated at Madawaska between 1825 and 1850: 239 were endogamous, 289 were exogamous and 268 were immigrant inter-marriages.

Sources: Parish Registers, St-Basile, St-Bruno and Ste-Luce.

The 1800-25 brides and grooms who belonged to the core population had almost all been second generation residents, and seventy-three percent of both sexes married in the core community, by choice or necessity as marriageable immigrants were not in large supply. The second generation members of the founding families who married after 1825 took advantage of the enlarged marriage market. Their descendants on the other hand did

23. 174 marriages were celebrated at Madawaska between 1800 and 1825, involving 119 locally born brides and 124 locally born grooms. Between 1825 and 1850, there were 797 marriages, 423 locally born brides and 344 locally born grooms. The number of Catholics marrying outside the Church, and of local people marrying in a different locality was insignificant.

not follow their example. Each successive generation was more endogamous than the preceding one, and grooms were far more endogamous than brides. Locally-born women were at a disadvantage on the marriage market. Before 1825, an almost equal number of locally-born males and females married at Madawaska. This was no longer the case afterwards, and there were twenty percent more locally-born brides than grooms. There is no evidence of an imbalanced sex ratio at birth favoring girls, nor of male surmortality in childhood. On the contrary, there seems to have been a shortage of little girls.²⁴ Slightly more boys than girls should therefore have reached marriage age, as before 1825. This was not the case, suggesting that locally-born males were beginning to emigrate while still single. Some locally-born women had to marry "outsiders", whether they liked it or not, or remain single, a prospect socially and economically undesirable. They found themselves marrying outsiders more frequently than did their brothers.

Economic factors could probably explain much of the locally-born men's preference; locally born women could have been better endowed, economically speaking, than outsiders. This hypothesis is difficult to prove, because the evidence is sparse. Probate records are non-existent until the 1880s. The records of the register of the deeds are of no use until people obtained clear titles to their land, in the late 1840s. There are no existing tax records, and no marriage contracts either. The reports of the American and British land agents nonetheless allow us a glimpse into inheritance patterns. They list daughters as co-heirs of their recently deceased fathers. Daughters could also receive gifts of land upon marriage; some were given a whole farm lot.²⁵ If daughters could receive land, it seems logical they could receive significant gifts or inheritance of moveable property, such as cattle, farm or household equipment. If the descendants of the founders were on the average better off than the more recently arrived settlers, one would understand why the locally born married among themselves.

The relative level of wealth of charter and immigrant families before 1850 can be derived from a document pertaining to the 1833 crop disaster. In November of that year, the inhabitants petitioned Fredericton for relief. The governor requested a report from the commissioner of the disputed territory, John MacLaughlin. MacLaughlin sent an extremely detailed account of the situation of the 403 families in the territory, including a detailed inventory of their stock, crops past and present, and any other piece of information he deemed relevant.²⁶ All families had land, except twenty-seven tenants, of whom only two were locally born. Thirty-two family heads were listed as laborers, 85 percent of them immigrants. There were altogether 168 families headed by an immigrant male, and 52 percent were listed as destitute and in need of immediate assistance, compared to only 23 percent of the others. Immigrants had less stock, less crops, often had no crops listed for the preceding years. They were probably still clearing. Their land was also unlikely to be as good as the one of the charter families. Old residents had taken very early the habit of marking lots for their children, which they gave them when they came of age or married. The lots selected were normally the best sites for farming or milling.²⁷ Immigrants took

24. In 1820, there were 87 girls under 10 for every 100 boys the same age in the district; in 1830, the ratio was 88 to 100. Fourth Census of the United States, 1820 and Fifth Census of the United States, 1830.

25. Deane and Kavanagh, "Report"; "Maps of the Madawaska Survey... 1844-1848," "Report of the Commissioners appointed under the resolve of February 21, 1843".

26. PANB, Papers of the Legislative Assembly relating to the settlement of Madawaska, "Return showing the Number of Inhabitants in the settlement of Madawaska with their Stock", 1833.

27. Deane and Kavanagh, "Report".

the left overs. Newcomers would therefore have been hard pressed to provide as much for the establishment of a newlywed child as old residents could.

Locally-born males, looking for a spouse, were in an advantageous position on the marriage market. They were in a position to be selective and apparently made economically wise choice: they chose dowries to match their portions. As blood ties were numerous among the various charter families, this led them to marry their cousins. The proportion of consanguineous marriages declined in the population at large from one in four before 1825 to one in ten afterwards. Among the core population on the other hand, consanguineous marriages increased from one in three to one in two. These marriages were disapproved by the Church, but official discouragements, red tapes, fines to be paid, and increased opportunities to marry out of the family were to no avail. By mid-century, locally-born males even preferred brides who belonged to core families to locally-born daughters of migrants. All women belonging to the latter category who married before 1842 married a non migrant. Only thirty-two percent of them did so after 1842; their chance of marrying in the local population were then only three percentage points higher than the one of the non-native females. Locally-born sons of migrants on the other hand did not suffer from this form of discrimination.

Two contradictory factors therefore affected the evolution of endogamy and exogamy. The composition of the marriage market favored increased exogamy, and consequently, the integration of newcomers into the existing kin networks. This happened, but not at all to the extent one could have expected, because economic factors encouraged members of the charter families to marry each other, rather than the less well-off immigrants and their children.

The tendency towards endogamy among the charter families reflected, as well as aggravated, the economic distance between the two groups. Endogamy was not the only symptom of the gap separating newcomers from old residents. Immigrants had greater difficulties entering the local trading networks; they were not given credit in the oldest general store in the valley, which belonged to a wealthy member of the core population.²⁸ The behaviour of the store keeper is hardly surprising. Pre-industrial agrarian societies on the whole were more or less self-sufficient at a regional level, but individual farmers seem not to have been. Regional subsistence economies were also characterized by a large degree of internal interdependence, with each producer exchanging goods and services with a large number of others. Members of the community were bound together by a complex network of credit and debts.²⁹ Madawaska seems to have fitted in this pattern. The ledger of the local general store depicts a population buying a great variety of articles on credit and settling the account in trickles and dribbles with products of any kind, cash, man-, woman-, child-, or animal-power, or credit on someone else's account.³⁰ The name of the newcomers are conspicuously absent from the store credit book. The names that do appear are those of the founding families. This form of economic organization, resting on acquaintance, worked to the disadvantage of strangers; they did not have a credit rating. When newcomers

28. Madawaska, Maine, Madawaska Historical Society, Ledger of the Dufour General Store, 1844-1848. This is the only pre-1850 commercial ledger known to have survived for the region.

29. Christopher Clark, "Household Economy, Market Exchange and the Rise of Capitalism in the Connecticut Valley, 1800-1860," *Journal of Social History*, XII (1979): 169-89; Bettye Hobbs-Pruytt, "Self Sufficiency and the Agricultural Economy of Eighteenth Century Massachusetts," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, XLI (July 1984): 333-64.

30. Dufour Ledger.

needed store goods: nails, tools, salt, patent medicine or tobacco, they had to pay for them immediately or do without.

Newcomers may also have at one point generated hostility. It is quite plausible that the charter families came to view the later generation of newcomers as undesirable interlopers. The Madawaska settlement was not a juxtaposition of unconnected individuals. Because of the coincidence before 1825 of settlement and kin networks, a strong sense of communalism could have developed among the founders and their descendants. Immigrants, who were related would not have been perceived as strangers, but as members of the community who happened to have been born elsewhere. Immigrants who were not members of the kin network simply would not belong. Before 1825, they tended to leave; afterwards, they persisted, accelerating the demographic growth of the valley, and threatened the future livelihood of the charter families. Local residents had numerous children to provide for: completed families averaged ten children, and infant mortality was low.³¹ Before 1825, when land was abundant, it had been easy to establish them on a farm. In the 1830s and especially in the 1840s, it was obvious the immigrants were competing for space with the children and grand-children of the old residents, and were taking land the latter probably had mentally earmarked for their not yet born descendants. This situation was hardly conducive of good will.

The local population, being unschooled and mostly illiterate, did not leave any written records of their feelings towards the newcomers. The priests on the other hand did; although they were themselves of French-Canadian extraction, their attitude was consistently negative. One described them as undesirable elements trying to escape the controls of more organized parishes in order to indulge in lawlessness and ribaldry.³² In the eyes of another priest, the migrants were potential freeloaders: during the food shortage of 1840, the priest warned the government against giving out relief in cash or kind, as this would encourage outsiders to come. Instead, he advocated some form of public work for the destitute.³³ It is hard to know whether the priests' opinions reflected reality, their own prejudices against geographically mobile people, or whether they echoed the opinions of the local inhabitants. Nonetheless, the evidence drawn from the behaviour of the charter families and some members of the local economic elite parallels the one derived from the statements of the spiritual leaders of the community. They all convey the impression of the division of the community into two clearly distinct groups, with a possible undercurrent of resentment and unfriendliness towards the newcomers.

The position of immigrants *vis à vis* the core population therefore changed markedly over time. Before 1825, immigrants often had relatives at Madawaska. The related immigrant couples' chances of persisting were fairly high, and related single immigrants were likely to marry a member of the community. Immigrant couples who did not have relatives found themselves at a noticeable disadvantage, reflected by their low persistence rates. After 1825, immigrants were more likely to be complete strangers. This had a less adverse effect upon their persistence, but persistence no longer equated integration into the local family network through marriage. Gender became an additional factor, with female immigrants less likely to marry into the core group than male immigrants. Persistence did not auto-

31. Completed family size was calculated using the family reconstitution cards. M.H. Sorg and B.C. Craig, "Patterns of Infant Mortality in the Upper St John Valley French Population: 1791-1838," *Human Biology*, 55 (February 1983): 100-13.

32. Lettres des prêtres missionnaires, letter dated May 25, 1825.

33. Journal of the House of Assembly, 1840, pp. 159-60.

matically provide admission into the local commercial networks, through credit in the general store either.

Kinship networks and local population had been almost conterminous before 1825. This was no longer the case afterwards. Then, a core population bound together by innumerable alliances lived side by side with an almost as large population of newly arrived strangers. Those strangers were kept at a distance in many aspects of the social and economic life.

Changes in the volume and composition of the migratory cohorts were taking place within the broader context of regional demographic growth and economic development. The lumbering industry significantly modified the local economy; now, local farmers had access to a market which was nearby enough to be profitable. The combined spurs of trade, and almost simultaneous repeated failures of the wheat crops, prompted a large-scale change in local agricultural production. In its early days, the settlement relied on wheat and potato crops, supplemented by peas, for its subsistence; by 1850, potatoes, buckwheats and oats dominated the landscape; large amounts of hay were also produced. Wheat was by that time a marginal crop, grown in small amount by a limited number of farmers.³⁴ Buckwheat pancakes replaced bread in the local diet; oats, hay, and potatoes were grown for the lumbering market as well as for local consumption.

Lumber-camps provided more than a market for already productive farms. They provided employment for surplus sons and allowed new families which desired to open a farm with a means of subsistence until their land could support them. Wage labour provided a source of income more reliable than a not yet fully cleared farm. It also supplemented the production of the farm, which even when all crops grew to maturity, may not yet have been quantitatively sufficient to support a whole family for a year.

Nearby lumbering was well suited to the needs of the local population, as it occupied the men during the winter, when farm work was greatly reduced. This pattern of combining winter lumbering with summer clearing and farming, using the wages earned to support one's family, and stock and equip one's farm was not uncommon in areas where agricultural land coexisted with forested territories.³⁵

34. Lettres des prêtres missionnaires, tithing records in letters dated March 3, 1799, June 29, 1799, July 27, 1799, August 15, 1807, July 16, 1832, September 16, 1840, July 10, 1841. Deane and Kavanagh, "Report," *passim*. PANB, Papers of the Legislative Assembly Relating to the Settlement of Madawaska, Return Showing the Number of Inhabitants in the Settlement of Madawaska with their Stock, December 1833; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Agricultural Schedule, State of Maine, Hancock, Madawaska and Van Buren plantation; Province of New Brunswick, 1851 Census for Victoria County, parishes of Madawaska, St-Basile, St-François and St-Léonard.

35. Graeme Wynn, *Timber Colony*, pp.79-84; William A. Bowen, *The Willamette Valley, Migration and Settlement on the Oregon Frontier*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978); Gérard Bouchard, "Family Structure and Geographic Mobility at Laterrière". Norman Seguin, *La conquête du sol au 19ème siècle*, Sillery, (Québec: Boréal Express, 1977). The agro-forestry system is usually described in negative terms, as farming activities were often subordinated to the needs of the lumber industry and forced to take place in the vicinity of the cuttings, whether the soil was fit for agriculture or not. When the camps departed, the farmers, unable to subsist without their winter wages, had to abandon their farms, follow the lumberers and start all over again. In areas like the St John Valley, on the other hand, where the soil is good enough for farming, agriculture can develop alongside and even independently of the lumber industry, even though some members of the community may engage in both activities. The Madawaska settlers survived on their farms for forty years before the camps opened in their vicinity and farming is still a viable activity nowadays for a significant proportion of the population.

The availability of wage labour was critical for immigrant families, especially for immigrants without relatives or close friends in the St John valley. Locally born people clearing new land could always rely on their parents for temporary support; related immigrants could call on kin solidarity for help or relief. Unrelated immigrants, on the other hand, did not have access to those forms of help, and were therefore more vulnerable. If they did not manage to produce enough to satisfy their basic needs, they could not turn towards better-off kin for assistance. Even when such help was not needed, the functioning of the local economy could work against the immigrants, as credit for weekly purchases was not available to them. Non-related immigrants were more dependent on cash than the remaining of the population. If they did not have enough, they may be forced to leave.

Before the lumber-camps opened, non-related immigrants had a low rate of persistence, which reflected their precarious standing in the community. After the lumber-camps opened, unrelated migrants had a higher rate of persistence; they were less dependent on their not yet fully productive farm for their subsistence. Their winter wages could tide them over until the next harvest. Their economic security had improved. Nonetheless, the economic situation of the related migrants and of the locally-born remained better, as those two latter categories were protected by two safety nets instead of one: non-farm employment, and their kin network. In times of crisis, newcomers suffered most, had less alternatives, and were the first ones to leave. The persistence rate of unrelated migrants arrived between 1830-36, when agriculture was faltering, is lower than for the preceding five year-period and subsequent five year-period. Unrelated migrants also provided the bulk of the couples who moved out between 1830 and 1834. Another crop failure occurred in 1840, and the priest reported the most destitute were Canadian migrants who had arrived in the preceding two years. When food was in short supply, there was none to spare and sell to those less able to grow their own in sufficient quantities.³⁶

Local economic changes had facilitated the resettlement in the St John valley of migrants unconnected with the already existing community. But the increased ability of unrelated migrants to persist accelerated the population growth of the St John valley, growth which harmed them in the long run, and forced their descendants to leave. The Madawaska settlement was in the process of repeating the pattern of population growth already occurring in the Lower St. Lawrence valley: there, old parishes, from which the migrants originated, were filling up rapidly. By the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, their population was spilling eastward, in the Rivière du Loup-Rimouski area.³⁷ By 1830 the arable land in the lower St Lawrence was almost entirely occupied, and population surplus had to find non-agricultural outlets or migrate at great distance. Some joined the lumbering teams of New Brunswick and Lower Canada. Others in Gaspé turned towards the sea and engaged in fishing, and large numbers of families tried to open farms in newly settled areas in the Canadian shield, starting with the Saguenay in the late 1840's.³⁸

A similar situation prevailed in the St John valley in the 1840s. Land was filling up, newcomers and old residents scrambled for whatever land was still available. The charter families had to devise new strategies to provide for their children. Their options were limited. They could divide the land among several children. This was not a solution they

36. PANB, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1840, pp. 159-60.

37. *Censuses of Canada, 1665 to 1871 — Recensements du Canada; Statistics of Canada — Statistiques du Canada*, IV, (Ottawa: L.B. Taylor, 1876), pp. 64-80.

38. Pierre Biays, *Les marges de l'œkoumène dans l'Est du Canada* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1967), pp. 247-300.

avored, unless they had a larger-than-average amount of property. Land division took place *before* the valley had filled up, not after. Lot sizes in the old part of the settlement dropped from an average of 220 acres in 1790/94 to 165 in 1831 and 150 in 1846. They remained stable afterwards. Farm lots in the newly opened western section dropped from 170 in 1831 to 130 in 1846 and also remained stable in size afterwards.³⁹ Lot boundaries also remained very stable.⁴⁰ Native families resorted to other means to take care of their offsprings: one would get the family farm; some took less desirable land in the back settlements; others simply left the area to find their fortune elsewhere, often in the lumbering industry or in mill towns. This explains the deficit in locally-born males. Single locally-born women did not leave; instead they married immigrants. The locally-born young men who stayed married daughters of other landed families in order to consolidate their economic position. As most of the landowners belonged to the core population, and were related several times over to each other, this meant they married their cousins. Marrying a cousin could also be a deliberate move, if it was an effective way to keep the patrimony in the family, and protect some members of the lineage against possible erosion of their economic status.

The integration of immigrants therefore depended on the interplay of several sets of factors. One set was structural: in the absence of opportunities for wage labour, as before 1825, non-related immigrants were less likely to succeed in opening a farm than those individuals and families who could rely on the help of kin already established at Madawaska. Such a situation minimized the problem of integrating immigrants as those who persisted were already linked to the community through blood ties. The existence of opportunities for wage labour, on the other hand, increased everyone's chances of becoming a farmer, as long as land was accessible. It would lead to the appearance of a larger number of strangers in the midst of the old community. When land ceased to be abundant, established families tried to prevent property from leaving their hands, and one strategy available to them was a high rate of endogamy. Landowners' sons married landowners' daughters.

Another set of factors resulted from economic and demographic changes. The better opportunities for local employment offered by lumber-camps accentuated a pattern of rapid demographic growth, which reduced the chances later-coming migrants had to find land suitable for farming. The last factor, finally, stems from attitude. Strangers represent a threat to the livelihood of the community's descendants, and therefore one cannot expect them to have been welcome.

The interaction of these various sets of factors harmed the immigrants by helping to relegate them to the bottom rung of the socio-economic ladder. The native population benefited from the compounded advantages of a lengthier residence, of well-established farms on the best land, and of pre-emption of the best unoccupied sites (intervalles and mill sites). This, combined with a high level of endogamy, helps explain why members of the native families were found in disproportionate numbers in the wealthier socio-economic group. Economic and social capital reinforced each others.

The immigrants, on the other hand, consistently crowded the bottom rung of the socio-economic ladder. This was true as early as 1831. That year, the State of Maine sent two land agents to the St John valley to assess people's titles to their land. The agents' report

39. Deane and Kavanagh, "Report"; "Report of the Commissioners appointed under the Resolves of February 21, 1843;" and "Maps of the Madawaska Survey conducted ... 1844-1848."

40. The stability of the lots boundaries is evident when one compares the mid-century maps with later ones, such as the ones contained in F.B. Roe, *Atlas of Aroostook County*. (Philadelphia: N. Colby, 1877).

reveals that seventeen of the twenty "better-off" residents belonged to founding families.⁴¹ In 1850, the date at which the first census giving the value of real estate held was taken, a similar picture emerged. Forty-three properties were valued at \$1,000 or more (ten percent of all the farm lots). Six belonged to Anglo-Saxon lumbermen. Thirty-three belonged to a member of one of the founding families or to their descendants or to a migrant belonging to the local kin network.⁴² The proportion of non-native landowners increased as the value of the land diminished, as shown in table 4.

Table 4 Farm Value by Social Group, U.S. Side of the Border, 1850^a

	Farm Value ^b										Total N
	\$1,000 or more		\$800 to \$900		\$500 to \$700		\$400		\$200 to \$300		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Number of farms in category	43		43		57		22		11		176
Number belonging to founding families and related immigrants	33	75	22	50	26	40	6	25	3	25	90
Number belonging to other immigrants	10	25	21	50	31	60	16	75	8	75	86

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the census, 7th census of the United States, 1850, State of Maine, Van Buren, Madawaska and Hancock Plantations.

^a Similar calculations cannot be done for the New Brunswick side, as the census schedule does not report farm values.

^b The census taker reported a value for farms assessed at \$300 and more only, with the exception of one piece of property valued at \$200. All heads of families for whom no land was reported were listed as "laborers". Hardly any of these were landless though, as a comparison between the 1843 land survey and the census schedule reveals. Their holdings included a large number of farms opened within the past ten years. The low value of the land could therefore be attributed to two distinct factors. Either the farm was really worth very little (small size, poor land) or it was not yet cleared. It is impossible to sort out one group from the other.

One was more likely to own valuable real estate if one had been born in the St John Valley than if one had moved there in adulthood, unless one had capital to invest, as was the case of the lumber-operators. This does not necessarily imply that social mobility was out of the reach of the migrants, but it certainly means it was harder for them to achieve a comfortable standard of living, and it seems very likely that most of them were at a disadvantage compared to most locally-born people.

In addition, public offices and other status-conferring positions were bestowed by the British upon the local "elite". Immigrants were seldom Justices of the Peace, registers of the deeds, or even pound keepers and so on.⁴³ After the partition of 1842 American in-

41. Deane and Kavanagh, "Report".

42. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 7th Census of the United States, 1850 Census, Hancock, Madawaska and Van Buren Plantations.

43. W.O. Raymond, "State of the Madawaska and Aroostook Settlements in 1831," New Brunswick Historical Society *Collections* III (1907): 344-80; PANB, Minutes of the General Sessions, York County, 1783-

stitutions were introduced on the southern bank of the river. Immigrants, being Canadians, could not vote legally, nor could they be elected. This gave an added advantage to the founding families, who elected their own as representatives to the state house.⁴⁴

Immigrants who had other assets than a good name, a strong back and a local relative could be very successful too. They were as visible as they were statistically insignificant. One was Louis Bellefleur, son of a Quebec officer. The priest referred to him as “sieur” and to his wife as “demoiselle” in the parish register, a unique privilege. He was a merchant, apparently quite wealthy. He invested \$2,000 in a grist and saw mill in 1831.⁴⁵ His four sons and daughters married in the best local families, owned an abundance of real estate, grist and saw mills and the best located general store in the area (next to the parish church). The men also became officer of the militia or Justices of the Peace.⁴⁶

The other success story is Francis Rice’s, an Irishman who began his career as school master. He became the first Catholic Justice of the Peace in the valley, and the first local M.P.P. Rice capitalized on a locally very rare combination of skills: literacy and bilingualism. He married into one of the charter families, and because of his official position and language abilities, cooperated closely with Commissioner MacLaughlin.⁴⁷ Such stories are few and far between though. Neither Bellefleur nor Rice were ordinary migrants.

The normal immigrants’ experience involved struggling, and as the years went by, greater and greater difficulties to escape initial poverty. Partly through deliberate action, and partly through circumstances, the founding families and their descendants succeeded in preserving the socio-economic status of a large number of their own, relegating the bulk of the migrants to the bottom rung of the social ladder.

Cultural consequences resulted from this dominance. The local oral tradition claims the Madawaska people are descendants of “Acadians”, the group which constituted most of the original families.⁴⁸ This is obviously inaccurate. It seems that the dominant families,

1833, Minutes of the General Sessions, Carleton County, 1833-51, Minutes of the General Sessions, Victoria County, 1851-56; Madawaska was considered by New Brunswick as part of York County until 1833, of Carleton from 1833 to 1851 and of Victoria until 1873. The Minutes of the General Sessions are missing for Carleton from 1833 to 1851, and the names of the J.P.s for that period were culled from the parish registers and from petitions.

44. Abbé Thomas Albert, *Histoire du Madawaska*, Appendix. The representatives sent to the state house between 1842 and 1860 were Joseph and Paul Cyr, two brothers, their second cousin François Thibodeau whose sister was married to Paul, Firmin Cyr, first cousin to the four above mentioned, and Joseph Nadeau, a more remote relative. The five men were sons or grandsons of founders. They were well-to-do: the poorest owned \$800 worth of real estate. Nadeau was a merchant worth \$1,700 in property; Paul Cyr and Thibodeau were among the richest landowners on the American side of the river, boasting \$4,000 and \$3,000 worth of property respectively. In addition, the Cyrs and Thibodeau were all married to their cousins, and the women were closely related to each other. Two of these men also had a son elected state representative in the following fifteen years. The J.P.s on the New Brunswick side were equally interrelated, and had close connections with the American political elite. New Brunswick Justice of the Peace Joseph Cyr was a brother to state representative Firmin Cyr. Justice of the Peace Firmin Thibodeau, who owned land equivalent to eight average farm lots before giving it away to his children, was uncle to two New Brunswick J.P.s, first cousin to the wives of two others and second cousin to a fifth one. He was also state representative François Thibodeau’s father, and father-in-law to state representative Paul Cyr. Two of the New Brunswick J.P.s also had a son returned to the provincial parliament later in the century.

45. Deane and Kavanagh, “Report”.

46. St-Basile Parish Register; PANB, Provincial Census, 1851; Minutes of the General Sessions, Victoria County, 1851-56.

47. *Ibid.*

48. This is especially striking when one glances through the innumerable centennial and commemorative brochures which have been published over the past twenty-five years. Earlier local histories displayed the same bias: the *Histoire du Madawaska*, which relies on a much greater amount of archival material than most publi-

who were able to impose their vision of the past upon the rest of the community, chose to define themselves as Acadians. They chose to ignore their French Canadian ancestry, and they chose to obliterate the contribution of the latter-arriving French Canadians from the collective memory. Boasting about their blue blood may have been a convenient way to dissociate themselves from the newcomers and their children, and to perpetuate their social dominance.

Madawaska was a pioneer settlement, which became a stratified society in less than three generations. Strangers were kept at bay by the socio-economic process underway in the settlement as well as by the deliberate actions of the core population. Many members of the founding families — who perceived the entire St John valley as their territory — had strong advantages over the newcomers: better land, longer residence. They were from the beginning the economic, political and cultural elite of the settlement. They controlled its present, recreated its past, and were in a better position to shape its future than were the French Canadian migrants who came to make a living among them after 1825. And they strove to preserve their position by all means at their disposal.

Was Madawaska an idiosyncratic settlement, or was it unexceptional? The non-integration of migrants seem to have been the result of rapidly increasing population pressure on not very elastic resources. A similar process characterized many North American pioneer settlements in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century. A recent article by Darret Rutman describes the process of social and economic evolution underway in anglo-colonial communities exactly in those terms. Those "little societies" shifted first from an early favorable ratio of resources per settler to a later period of scarcity, leading to out-migration, unless the community could expand its resources by moving away from an exclusively agricultural base. Secondly, economic growth and diversification brought a marked sharpening of social stratification. Finally, colonial settlements were gradually integrated into the larger society partly through the actions of their small, more cosmopolitan oriented elite.⁴⁹ This description of anglo-colonial settlements applies very well to the St John valley.

We should not be surprised to find this process at work in communities where agriculture is the main source of employment, and where the heads of family consider it is their responsibility to establish their children. In such circumstances, established families tried to keep the local resources in their own hands. In Andover and other seventeenth century New England settlements, for example, the common strategy had consisted of not granting the status of "town proprietor" to newcomers who were allowed to settle in a given town. Migrants thus were excluded from any division of the common land which may have taken place after their arrival. Only the town founders and their descendants could share in the distribution.⁵⁰

Demographic growth inevitably would lead to a shortage of land however. Even older families could not provide all their sons with land. Those families, to preserve the standard of living of their members, passed their property to only a limited number of offsprings.

cations of its kind was not different. An even earlier history, written this one by an Anglo-Saxon, also depicted the Madawaska French as essentially Acadians: Charles Collins, *The Acadians of Madawaska* (New England Catholic Historical Society, Pub. 3, Boston, Press of Thomas A. Whalen, 1902).

49. Darret Rutman, "Assessing the Little Communities of Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, (April 1986), vol. XLIII: 163-78.

50. Philip Greven, *Four Generations, Population, Land and Family in Colonial Andover, Mass.* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970), p. 57; Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and their World*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), p. 82.

The others took up trades, or left altogether. Herbert Mays, in his study of the Toronto Gore township⁵¹ found that such a strategy quickly led to a close link between persistence, kinship, landownership and early entry. By the mid-nineteenth century, the most common way to acquire land in this area was through inheritance; people with local kin, or descendants of the earliest settlers were therefore in a favored position. This strategy was also detrimental to immigrants, who for all practical purpose, were barred from acquiring land, and left, as no other forms of local employment was available. The behaviour of the Toronto Gore farmers parallel closely the one of the St John valley charter families, who were mostly farming families.

Sinking deeper and deeper roots in the community was only one of the available strategies, though. In some cases, the entire family pulled out stakes and moved away to some less populated area where all members could enjoy their customary life style and social status.⁵²

Those who stayed behind intermarried and kept land in their hands. In at least one eighteenth-century New England town cousins were favored marriage partners, for economic reasons.⁵³ The Toronto Gore permanent residents also married each others, rather than outsiders, and probably for the same reasons. Out-migration, if it prevented the fragmentation of holdings, could prevent the pauperization of the landed descendants of the earlier settlers. As for poor migrants, they stood a limited chance of acquiring good land, either through purchase or marriage. It was difficult for them to achieve economic equality with the old residents, or integration into existing kin networks. Those impoverished newcomers were viewed with suspicion, as they could become a financial burden on the community. New England, for instance, continued the practice of "warning out" poor strangers until the American Revolution.⁵⁴

No migrations were individual ventures; instead, they were carried under family auspices — that is family and kin networks provided help and assistance to their members on the move. This characteristic was neither cultural, time, or place specific; it was shared by social groups as different as those in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New France, eighteenth-century New England, or the Saguenay in the late nineteenth-century. In New France, there seems to have been a positive link between the existence of kin ties and successful relocation.⁵⁵ Two factors common to most agricultural areas can help explain this phenomenon. One was the characteristic of the local economic organization. Regional subsistence, associated with the interdependence of various producers, relies on complex networks of debits and credits. This type of economic organization works to the disadvantage of outsiders, who are "unknown quantities". Migrants who have the greatest need for the help of their neighbours are in the lesser position to secure it.

51. Herbert J. Mays, "'A Place to Stand', Families, Land and Permanence in Toronto Gore Township, 1820-1890," Canadian Historical Association/Société historique du Canada, *Historical Reports/Communications historiques*, (1980): 185-211.

52. Gérard Bouchard, "Geographic Mobility at Laterrière," and James Henretta, "Family and Farms: *Mentalité* in Pre-Industrial America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, XXXV (January 1978): 4-34.

53. John J. Waters, "Family, Inheritance and Migration in Colonial New England: The Evidence from Guilford, Connecticut," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, XXXIX (January 1982): 66.

54. Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and their World*, p. 90.

55. Yves Beauregard, Serge Goudreault, Andrée Héroux, Alain Laberge, Régnald Lessard, Michèle Jean, Joanne Noël, Lucie Paquet, "Famille, parenté, colonisation en Nouvelle France," Paper presented at the Congrès annuel de l'Institut d'histoire de l'Amérique française, October 1984; Philippe Greven, *Four Generations*, pp. 162-71; Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and their World*, pp. 79-80, 82 and 88.

The other factor is the need for alternative sources of subsistence in the first few years of pioneer farming. There are basically three means to satisfy this need: possessions of enough provisions on arrival to last for a year or two; help from others; or access to jobs. The existence of wage labour was particularly critical for the success of socially isolated migrants. In frontier areas wage labour was usually associated with lumbering — a complementary activity — but any seasonal activity could do. On the other side of the continent, in Oregon for instance, a similar situation prevailed, but unrelated migrants supported themselves by working for the Hudson Bay Company.⁵⁶

Madawaska may not have been the archetype of all agrarian Northeastern pioneer communities, yet it shares a sufficient number of structural and attitudinal characteristics with New England colonial communities, with French and English Canadian pioneer settlements, and even with the Oregon frontier to be placed within the norm, not considered an exception.

56. William Bowen, *The Willamette Valley*, pp. 65, 68, 69-79.