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The Settlement of Augusta Township
Upper Canada 1783-1840

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the initial settlement of Augusta Township, Upper Canada. The particular themes treated are: the role of official authority in directing settlement; the impact of the physical environment on settlement patterns; the role of accessibility to roads leading to milling facilities and markets and the impact of land speculation on the development of the township.

Among the sources used to test these relationships were the Abstract Index to Deeds, the Assessment Returns, surveyor's diaries, field notes and maps, papers of the Crown Lands' Department, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada, the Upper Canada Sundries, the Ontario Archives Land Record Index, along with local histories and other relevant literature on Upper Canada.

It is shown that the locating and patenting of land preceeded actual settlement, a reflection of government land policy. The earliest settlement patterns reflected both accessibility to the St. Lawrence River and local accessibility to the emerging road network in addition to population pressure. Good lands were found to be more important to settlers than to land speculators.

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Chapter One

Introduction to the Study Area and Literature

1.1 The Study Area

Augusta Township was one of the first townships surveyed for the purpose of relocating disbanded military personnel and United Empire Loyalists following the American Revolution. The township is located in Grenville County on the northern shore of the St. Lawrence River in Eastern Ontario. The County extends north to the Rideau River where it is bounded by the Counties of Lanark and Carleton. Dundas County adjoins it to the east and Leeds County to the west.

Prescott is the largest urban center in Grenville County today, with a population of 5,500. The town is located on the St. Lawrence River in Augusta Township. It is approximately 120 miles from Montreal and 60 miles from Kingston, at the foot of Lake Ontario. Prior to the completion of the St. Lawrence Canals, Prescott was situated at the head of the rapids and thus developed as an early forwarding center where goods being transported between Montreal and the interior settlements were transshipped from small river boats to larger lake vessels. Although Prescott lost much of its importance as a forwarding center when the railways came, the harbour is still used today, being the only deep sea harbour between Montreal and Toronto. In the 1930s the National Harbours Board built a grain elevator two miles east of Prescott and lake freighters unload the grain at the warehouse where it is reloaded on to ocean going vessels bound for the eastern markets. Thus, the forwarding trade continues.

Farming is still carried on in Augusta Township although the rural population has declined. Beginning in the 1860's, farms were steadily converted to dairying, a general trend in Eastern Ontario where the soils support fodder crops and pasturage. Some industrial development has been established along the St. Lawrence in the way of chemical and synthetic fiber plants.

Because of the lack of large scale industrialization and the limited agricultural potential in the area, there has been little competition for land and many historical buildings, ranging from log homesteads to elegant stone mansions, have survived. Some still house the descendants of the earliest settlers. Other visual remains of the township's history include Fort Wellington and the old stone Windmill where historic battles have been fought in the defence of Upper Canada. To the outsider, the township is perhaps best known for these historic sites which represent such an important period in our military heritage.

Because Augusta Township has witnessed a continuous history from the inception of Upper Canada, and because its first settlers played an important role in the commercial and political life of the province, it was of particular interest to this researcher. Furthermore, while there is a growing body of literature on the historical geography of southern and southwestern Ontario, Eastern Ontario has been relatively ignored. This study therefore directs some attention to this part of the province where the settlement process may well have differed.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the settlement of Augusta Township from the arrival of the first settlers in 1784 until the close of the Upper Canadian period in 1840. Emphasis is placed on the role of authority in directing and shaping the settlement as well as the roles of accessibility and the physical environment; important themes identified in the historical litera-

ture of Upper Canada. This chapter discusses the relevance of the literature to the particular problem in hand.

1.3 Literature Review: (a) The Role of Authority

Louis Gentilcore¹ and R. Cole Harris and John Warkentin² have demonstrated how the initial pattern of settlement in Upper Canada was a product of government choice and direction. On a smaller scale, the survey of Upper Canada into townships and lots influenced the location of roads and houses leaving a distinct, linear impression on the landscape³. Viewed in another light, the role of authority, expressed in terms of land policies which were shaped by political considerations, gave rise to unique occurrences within this general pattern.

Historians such as Gerald Craig⁴, S.F. Wise⁵, S.R. Mealing⁶, Aileen Dunham⁷, and Terry Cook⁸, have viewed the political framework imposed upon the new colony of Upper Canada as a reflection of a stiffened British conservatism. Conservative attitudes had strengthened in light of the causes attributed to the American War of Independence and the resultant rupture in the British Empire as well as the tragedies of the French Revolution. The British Whig tradition of the late nineteenth century supported an hierarchical social structure and a landed aristocracy with an autocratic system of government and an Established Church. The policies introduced in Upper Canada were directed towards these ends. They met with varying levels of success but even the attempt had profound effects upon the new settlements.

Lillian Gates⁹, George Patterson¹⁰, and Alan Wilson¹¹ have examined the land policies implemented in Upper Canada. These studies explain that rather than depending upon the popular element for revenue by taxation, which it was feared would put them in too powerful a position, the government perceived land as a means of supporting the goals set out above and for a wide range of

public purposes. Consequently, thousands of acres of land were lavishly granted to favoured persons. Land was also used as a means of rewarding disbanded troops and Loyalists and to attract other American settlers into the colony. Also, under an instruction of 1791, one-seventh of all the lands granted were reserved for the Crown as it was felt that their lease or sale would provide a "certain and improving" revenue for the purpose of civil government ¹². An additional one-seventh was appropriated for the support and maintenance of a Protestant Clergy ¹³.

On October 15, 1792, the Land Committee of Upper Canada adopted D.W. Smith's chequered plan for locating the reserved lands ¹⁴. This plan staggered the reserves throughout each concession of the township and consequently prevented compact settlement. Furthermore, because the settlers were required to perform statute labour on the roads fronting their property the unoccupied reserve lots placed an additional burden on them. The discontent generated by these reserves is well documented in Robert Gourlay's publication of 1818 ¹⁵. A leasing system had been introduced in 1802 whereby a person could lease reserved lands for twenty-one years, renewing the lease every seven. However, as Lillian Gates points out, there was little incentive to lease the reserves because of the abundance of land and a free grant system operative until 1826 ¹⁶. John Clarke's study of the reserved lands in the Western District further attests to this lack of interest ¹⁷. In 1824, the Government decided to sell the reserves to the Canada Company which would in turn be responsible for their sale. The Clergy Reserves were at first included in this agreement but were subsequently withdrawn ¹⁸. They were however opened to purchase in 1827.

Another problem pertaining to land matters and addressed in the literature is the issue of land speculation and absentee ownership. Leo Johnson's study of the Home District has shown that many persons who received free land from the Government had

no intentions of settling it but viewed it as an investment, a means of realizing a profit at some later date ¹⁹. It was noted however that because land was easily acquired its value was often depressed until population pressure created a market. Johnson suggests that land speculators were not wholly responsible for dispersed settlement patterns and lack of progress in the area. In fact, the large volume of land transfers disproves the fact that land was withdrawn from settlement. However, by having acquired the land closer to York, immigrants unable to afford these lots were forced to locate further away ²⁰.

While land speculators were usually absentee owners, absentee owners were not necessarily speculators. According to Lillian Gates, land grants to Loyalists and military claimants ranged from 50 acres to 5,000 acres, Executive Councillors receiving as much as 6,000 acres ²¹. Obviously, many persons received much more land than they required for a viable farming unit. Some lots would necessarily be left unoccupied unless of course they could be sold. The fact that there were persons who received excessive acreage from a generous government is not sufficient reason to classify them as a speculator. The question of motivation for acquiring land has been explored in a thesis by Randy Widdis who offers a typology for classifying speculators ²².

Other studies on land speculation by John Clarke ²³, David Gagan ²⁴, Bruce Wilson ²⁵, and Jessie Weldon ²⁶ have demonstrated that many large speculators were linked to the government and/or merchant class. Wilson has shown how Robert Hamilton's involvement in the "Laurentian" trading network was instrumental in his attainment of a privileged political position. Once his political career was secured he used his influence to promote his own personal interests as well as those of his kinsmen. Land speculation was but one interest. These same authors have shown that many land speculators were inter-related by political, economic, and social interests often strengthened by marital ties. These associations

linked them to the Family Compact, a label attached to a small group of men surrounding the seat of government²⁷, either as key personnel or as members of a local oligarchy²⁸.

The land policies of Upper Canada gave rise to serious problems and led to agitation for agrarian reform. Aileen Dunham draws many parallels between the underlying currents of the Upper Canadian reform movement and the grievances espoused by the rebel Whigs in the former Thirteen Colonies some sixty years earlier²⁹.

1.4 Literature Review: (b) The Role of Accessibility and the Physical Environment

Accessibility has been broken down by various authors to include distance to transportation routes, mill seats, urban centers, neighbours and kin. Various components of the physical environment have also been examined. The extent to which any one of these factors affected settlement patterns in Upper Canada remains a matter of some controversy.

Louis Gentilcore for example asserts that the initial settlement of Upper Canada was directed by the government whose first concern was with establishing a defensible colony³⁰. Settlement took place on all types of land, along the lake shores and in the interior. Gentilcore concludes that accessibility and government direction outweighed consideration for the physical environment, even when advantages to be derived from the latter were perceived. As the settlement matured, there was increasing emphasis on soil and drainage, proximity to a navigable waterway, access to roads, towns, mills and proximity to neighbours.

Kenneth Kelly on the other hand maintains that the settler did have a practical knowledge of lands suitable for agriculture and chose his land accordingly³¹. The settler may have brought this knowledge with him or could have acquired this information from settlers guides, word of mouth or from the surveyor himself. In examining information recorded in the settlers guides, Kelly

concludes that the vegetation cover was used as an indicator of soil quality. According to Kelly, soils were assessed for their capability for wheat production and the mixed hardwood forest was considered the best tree cover. A pure softwood cover of pine or beech with hemlock was considered mediocre. The light upland soils were associated with oak-chestnut or beech-maple groupings. Although the fertility level was low they were known to be easier to bring into cultivation and thus offered the settler with little capital a good alternative. Kelly also maintains that soils underlying swamp vegetation such as cedar, fir, spruce, and tamarack were considered to be very fertile but the cost of making them productive was too prohibitive and so they were usually by-passed. Low lying wet lands and sandy soils associated with pure stands of pine were avoided. Kelly also points out that the settlers were cautioned against "plains land".

Detailed studies of particular areas cautions against accepting Kelly's and Gentilcore's sweeping generalizations. For example, J.D. Wood's study of Dumfries Township has shown that the "oak openings" or "plains" were the first lands to be taken up³². Jessie Weldon's study of East and West Hawkesbury shows that in the latter half of the settlement period there was an influx of French Canadians who settled on more swampy lands which they considered best for tillage³³. Allan Brunger, in his study on the Talbot Settlement, tested the relationship between vegetation cover and drainage. Using regression and cluster analysis he found no significant difference³⁴. Furthermore, he found no significant difference between date of settlement on "good" and "poor" lands. On the other hand, John Clarke, in his study of the Western District, found a significant association between two dominant tree groupings and drainage³⁵. Using trend surface analysis he established the possibility that vegetation was used as an index of suitable land for settlement. In testing the relationship between date of settlement and drainage it was found statistically significant.

In testing Gentilcore's theory that initial settlement patterns were largely a function of accessibility, Clarke mapped the residuals of land patenting which showed that the negative residuals were associated with the River Thames and Sydenham³⁶. Similarly, C.J.B. Wood found that settlement in the Long Point Region was strongly influenced by proximity to transportation routes, being Lake Ontario, Indian trails and river valleys³⁷. However, in the Talbot settlement, Brunger found that location of individuals bore little relationship to the existence of principle communication routes by land or water. The factor which did seem to influence an individual's location was the proximity to kin³⁸. This latter consideration has been investigated by P. MacLeod in his study of Scottish settlements in nineteenth century Ontario³⁹. MacLeod explains that for religious and cultural reasons, the Scottish clans tended to cluster together.

In a similar vein studies of the selection process by "interest" groups or land speculators reveal some interesting aspects on the role of accessibility. In Clarke's study of land speculation in the Western District, he concluded that accessibility was of prime importance, apparently more important than the actual site conditions⁴⁰. Bruce Wilson has noted the locational pattern of the speculative holdings of Robert Hamilton seems to show little consideration for the quality of land; accessibility seems to have been a concern⁴¹. Similarly, in the Home District, Johnson is of the opinion that large scale patentees had never seen their lands and were quite unconcerned about the quality⁴². It would appear that distance from the capital was their "chief" if not "only" concern. John Clarke has shown that in Essex County, when it was expected that London should become the capital of Upper Canada, there was a rush of patenting, mainly by speculators who realized the effect this would have on land values⁴³. Once the economic and social foci had shifted to the Toronto-Hamilton area patenting lagged.

The importance of mill seats has been recognized by such authors as Gerald Craig⁴⁴, Louis Gentilcore⁴⁵, E. Guillet⁴⁶, and Dan Mackay⁴⁷.

Once saw and grist mills were established other small industries were usually attracted and the mill seat often became a center of social activity and trade. Robert Jones notes that the millers were often middlemen, buying local grain and forwarding it to the larger centers on the waterfront ⁴⁸. The presence of the mill and the services encouraged agricultural production.

In Norton's study of rural land values in Southern Ontario, he found that small pockets of relatively high land values surrounded local market centers and a strong linear relationship existed between land values and distance to a major urban center ⁴⁹. Likewise, Widdis states that the value of land in the vicinity of Brockville, a very early center in Eastern Ontario, had risen 400 per cent by 1817, clearly indicating the advantage derived from proximity to market ⁵⁰. Accordingly, there was a greater frequency of land transfers in the rear concessions of Elizabethtown Township before 1821; the relationship between the number of transfers and distance to Brockville showing a significant correlation. Brian Osborne notes that in Frontenac County, distance to market and poor roads put the settlers at a great disadvantage ⁵¹. Produce from Loughborough Township could not compete with the American goods imported into Kingston simply because local produce could not be brought to market.

In short, the literature suggests that the role of accessibility and the physical environment varied both temporally and spatially. It further suggests that the role of perception played an important part in the settlement of Upper Canada. Consequently, the importance attached to any one factor may vary from individual to individual, between cultural groups, "interest" groups and so on. This cautions against making any sweeping generalizations and invites more detailed studies on the settlement process.

1.5 Conclusion and Layout of Thesis

This survey of the literature has suggested that there are a number of themes which a student of Upper Canadian settlement should be

cognizant of. These are: the role of government in selecting the areas which were to be settled as well as influencing the settlement pattern within those areas by way of the official survey adopted and the land policies; the role of the physical environment in the settlers' selection and occupation of land and the effects of the location of roads and waterways and ease of access to neighbours, mills, and markets. The literature offers an approach to the study of settlement in Augusta Township and provides a basis for comparison. The extent to which any or each of these factors were operative within the study area will be examined.

A general overview of the political, economic and social forces operating in Upper Canada is provided in the following chapter in order to place the township in its historical context. Chapter Three reviews the historical and physical background of the particular study area. Before examining the actual settlement processes, Chapter Four provides more detail on the development of roads, mill seats, villages and urban centers, all of which affected the desire to acquire land or settle in a particular location. Chapter Six explores the theme of land speculation and identifies speculators by name and group typology. A brief biographical sketch of each individual is given and the speculative holdings are mapped. The main issues of this thesis are summarized in Chapter Seven.

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Chapter Two

Historical Background to Upper Canada

2.1 Introduction

Augusta Township was one of the first townships surveyed and settled in Upper Canada. The purpose of this chapter is to place it in the context of the circumstances surrounding the founding and settlement of this new British colony. In providing this background it will be easier to assess those factors affecting the settlement of the study area. A part of this chapter is devoted to the fur trade as it first attracted the French to Canada and led to open conflict between the French and British in North America. Because of the fur trade the St. Lawrence -- Great Lakes waterway became an important transportation route into the interior and thus became the battle ground during the ensuing conflict between the French and British and subsequently the British and Americans. The fur trade and the defence of this waterway influenced the strategic positioning of trading posts, military garrisons and eventually settlement patterns in Upper Canada. This chapter also reviews the early survey of Upper Canada and its division into administrative districts. The political organization of the colony is examined followed by the land granting policies implemented. A permanent British settlement in Upper Canada enhanced the importance of the St. Lawrence -- Great Lakes waterway as a new economy, distinct from the fur trade, developed. This early commercial development is examined.

2.2 The French Fur Trade

The French were lured into the interior of Canada by the promise of a profitable trade in furs. As early as 1600, Chavin de Tonnetuit, a fur trader, established a settlement at Tadoussac at the mouth of the Saguenay which gave access to the rich fur bearing areas of the

Canadian Shield ¹. In 1608 Quebec was founded. The French formed early alliances with the Algonkian and Huron Indians who in the first half of the seventeenth century brought the furs by way of the Ottawa, Saguenay and St. Maurice Rivers. The Algonkian tribe was a mixed group of migratory Indians who hunted and fished along the southern edge of the Canadian Shield. The Hurons were a sedentary people who lived in large agricultural villages between Lake Simcoe and Georgian Bay. The Hurons became the middlemen in the fur trade. To the south in the St. Lawrence valley were the Iroquois who were trading with the Dutch who were succeeded in 1664 by the English. The competition for furs and the better fur producing areas of the north attracted the Iroquois into the Huron -- Algonkian territory resulting in violent clashes between the Indian nations and between the Iroquois and the French.

For protection, the French built forts close to the mouths of the rivers used by the Indians in transporting their furs. A fort was established at Three Rivers in 1634 and a settlement was made at Montreal in 1641-42 ². The Iroquois attacks persisted driving the Algonkians and Hurons further west. In 1649-1650, the Hurons were defeated by the Iroquois and the few remaining survivors were forced to move further west.

2.3 The Fur Trade and the French-British Struggle

The extermination of the Hurons did not end the French fur trade but forced the French to "take to the woods" ³. As the courier de bois assumed the role of middlemen, new forts were built in the interior for the purposes of trade and defence.

In an attempt to secure the trade route of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence, the French launched successful raids into Iroquois territory in 1665 and 1666 ⁴. Taking advantage of their strengthened position they built Fort Frontenac at the foot of Lake Ontario. In 1679, they established a temporary fort at Niagara. These posts opened up a new route to the interior by way of the Great Lakes.

The use of this waterway allowed for larger transporting vessels in addition to the canoe. The building of four barges in 1677 marks the beginning of Great Lakes Navigation ⁵.

The Iroquois wars were resumed after 1684 and the French were again moved to tighten up their defence. Fort Frontenac was re-established in 1694 after its abandonment in 1689, and Fort St. Joseph was built on the Detroit River. Fort Frontenac was strategically located at the confluence of the St. Lawrence river and Lake Ontario. Detroit was a very important post as it was so situated as to control the interior waterways. In August 1701, the French negotiated a peace treaty with the Iroquois which allowed them to establish settlements at their posts at Cataraqui and Detroit ⁶. This would serve a dual purpose of providing agricultural goods and military service when need be.

The English fur traders to the south were persistent competitors. In an attempt to penetrate the trade into the interior by way of Lake Ontario, they also established posts at strategic locations. In 1722, a fort was built at Oswego on the south shore of Lake Ontario almost directly opposite Fort Frontenac ⁷. The French, in moving to check the trade at Oswego, established a strong post at Niagara in 1726 ⁸. This post controlled the portage between Lake Ontario and the Niagara River. In 1748, a mission and fort were established at Oswegatchie, now Odgensburg, across the river from Prescott. (See Figure 2.1)

By the middle of the eighteenth century, both the English and the French had built more trading posts, forts, in a struggle to monopolize western trade. In the 1730's and 40's, the French were building forts on Lake Winnipeg and on the Saskatchewan River ⁹. Not only were the French competing with the Americans to the south but also with the Hudsons Bay Company to the north. This company was granted a charter in 1670 which gave them a monopoly to trade in Ruperts land, a vast territory taking in the Hudson Bay drainage basin. Sandwiched between these two strong competitors, the French trade pushed west into the interior forming a long linear route

Figure 2.1
Map of Eastern Ontario

which was costly to maintain in terms of transportation and defence ¹⁰.

The contest eventually moved into the Ohio Valley which lay between the Appalachians and the Mississippi. The French were in possession of the Mississippi along which they had built forts and traded between New Orleans and the Great Lakes. The Ohio Valley was actually a no mans land separating the French and American colonists. In 1748, a group from Virginia formed the Ohio Company for the purpose of granting colonists land west of the Appalachians. This aroused the hostility of the French because once the mountain range was crossed there was no natural barrier to check the colonists from advancing into their territory. The French therefore built posts in the Ohio Valley, the chief one being Fort Duquesne established at the forks of the Ohio River which provided a shorter transportation route to Lake Erie ¹¹.

This territorial struggle was given fresh impetus by the Seven Years War between France and England which broke out in 1755 ¹². The British first took the forts which were strategically located along the French line of trade; Fort Duquesne, Fort Niagara and Fort Frontenac. In 1759, Quebec was taken and in 1760, Montreal capitulated signalling the end of the war in North America. In 1763, the Treaty of Paris was signed and Britain took over most of the French possessions in North America.

2.4 The British Conquest and the Province of Quebec

At the close of the Seven Years War, the population of French Canada was an estimated 50,000 ¹³. The French settlers at Cataraqui were transported to Montreal and Lake George ¹⁴. A sizeable French settlement had grown up around Fort Detroit which remained even after the French defeat ¹⁵. With this exception, the French settlement in Canada was concentrated along the river between Montreal and Quebec ¹⁶.

The Proclamation of 1763 named the new colony Province of Quebec and reduced its boundaries considerably by reserving for the Indians much of the former French hinterland in the south-west. English law

was established throughout the colony and land was to be granted in freehold tenure¹⁷. However, the seigneurial system and French customary law continued in practice. The Quebec Act of 1774 re-established French civil law and the governor was further instructed, in 1775, to grant crown land under the seigneurial tenure. The western boundaries were again changed and much of the Ohio country was returned to Quebec reserving a much smaller buffer zone for the Indians west of the Thirteen Colonies.

In outward appearances, little had changed. The techniques developed by the French to carry out their trade over long distances remained virtually intact¹⁸. As Harold Innis explains, the element of distance necessitated the fur traders to take up residence in the interior¹⁹. A trading pattern developed whereby merchant-traders in Quebec and Montreal would purchase the necessary supplies for the fur trade from Europe. They would forward these supplies to their correspondents at Detroit and other posts which did business with the traders in the interior. In this way a profit sharing or partnership developed between the trader in the interior and the Montreal merchant.

It was this system which continued after the Conquest; however, the internal organization of the trade underwent drastic changes as English traders displaced the French²⁰. Tempted by the British acquisition of such a vast territory with an already established fur trading organization, and with a large civilian and military population, merchants were quick to move into Quebec. In addition to the fur trade Creighton notes that "there were no commissariat services in those days, and British merchants followed the red-coats around the world to profit by their necessities."²¹ Some of these entrepreneurs firmly implanted themselves in the Canadian economy. They were soon to become promoters, money lenders, and carriers of the new agricultural society, as well as land speculators²². Their economic interests pulled them into the political arena and in both endeavours they came to exert considerable influence over Canadian affairs. In their role as fur traders and forwarders of supplies for that trade they adopted

the same economic and territorial interests as the French. This perpetuated the rivalry between the north and south traders for the interior trade and was one of the factors contributing to the American war against Great Britain ²³.

2.5 The American War of Independence and the Founding of Upper Canada

The acquisition of the vast French territory in North America placed a financial burden on an already exhausted British Treasury. Vincent Harlow states that the administrative cost for the Department of Indian Affairs was estimated at £20,000 per year ²⁴. Money had to be raised for defence. The British were not only concerned about a possible French uprising but also feared the rage of their Indian allies who violently resented the westward expansion of the colonists. An additional £350,000 per year was needed to maintain the forts and troops. In order to raise the necessary funds without placing an additional burden on the British taxpayer, the Stamp Act was passed in 1764. This placed a duty on paper products, licenses and certain other products entering the Thirteen Colonies. This bill evoked much hostility among the colonists, culminating in riots and organized resistance. Although the Act was repealed in 1766, the momentum of anger created in the colonies was not to subside. The right of the British Parliament to tax the colonies without their consent became one of the main contentions in the ensuing struggle.

Certainly there were grievances other than taxation which added fuel to the fire. As noted above, the competition between the fur traders of Canada and the southern colonies continued. The American traders and land companies were outraged by the Quebec Act which returned the Ohio/Mississippi territory to the control of Quebec. Restrictions on trade and navigation were also sorely felt on the Atlantic seaboard. Britain, in an attempt to suppress colonial development and competition, placed restrictions on colonial manufacturing and shipping ²⁵. These regulations were felt to be too repressive.

Dora Mae Clark explains that the revolution occurred during a transitional phase of ideologies ²⁶. The philosophy concerning the natural rights of men to be equal and to enjoy civil and religious liberties found an important place in the revolutionary documents of the colonies. It would appear that the colonies had simply outgrown their accorded role in the British Empire.

The number of adherents to the cause of independence is unknown. Williamson notes that in 1775 the exiled Gallaway claimed that not one-fifth of the colonists sought independence and others estimated that no more than a half of the population sympathized with the insurrection ²⁷. The signing of the American Declaration of Independence forced the colonists to choose one side or the other. Some of those who were opposed to armed revolt and independence from Britain left their homes and made their way to safety behind British lines. Others were forced out by such groups as the Sons of Liberty. Much of their property was confiscated and sold to support the war ²⁸. The refugees made their way to British posts in Quebec and New York which had been in British possession since 1776. Many men enlisted in the Provincial troops raised throughout the war.

In 1783, at the close of the war, there were five Provincial Corps serving in Canada: Sir John Johnson's two battalions, Colonel John Butler's Rangers, Major Edward Jessup's Corp of Loyal Rangers and a detachment of the King's Rangers under Major Rogers ²⁹. There were 30,000 Loyalists in New York ³⁰ and an estimated 5,960 in the refugee camps in Quebec ³¹.

Throughout the war some Loyalists had made their way to British posts in Niagara, Detroit, and Carleton Island, which were in the paths of the natural entry ways into Canada ³². These persons were allowed to settle around the military posts upon the condition that they sell their surplus to the garrisons ³³. With an American victory the British were left to provide for these Loyalists as their open declaration of loyalty had cost them their homes, and

for the majority their possessions. Plans had to be made for their resettlement. In addition to providing for the Loyalists, the British also had to give consideration to the Indians who had supported them throughout the war and who consequently lost their lands in the Mohawk Valley.

By the Treaty of Paris, the British signed away their claims to the territory between the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers. The forts at Niagara, Detroit, Michilimackinac and Grand Portage were all surrendered although not evacuated until 1796³⁴. The St. Lawrence -- Great Lakes Waterway became the boundary between Canada and the newly created United States of America. In order to placate the Indians, whose lands had been ceded to the Americans, Governor-General Haldimand purchased a 45 mile tract on the Bay of Quinte from the Mississauga Indians and assigned it to the Six Nations³⁵. Subsequently, a majority of these Indians, influenced by Joseph Grant, requested land on the Grand River. Haldimand then gave instructions for another purchase from the Mississauga and the Six Nations were granted a tract of land extending six miles wide on both sides of the river running from its mouth to its source. Haldimand further planned to establish two strong military colonies at Detroit and Carleton Island as a means of showing the Indians that Britain had not abandoned them. Detroit was, however, ceded to the Americans. The refugees stationed at Carleton Island were removed to Cataraqui because Haldimand felt that the Island may as well be ceded to the Americans. Therefore, the military posts were established at Niagara and Cataraqui. These posts became the cores from which settlement spread³⁶.

Of those Loyalists who were in New York, 28,000 were transported to Nova Scotia and 1,500 to Quebec³⁷. Haldimand felt that there was no room for the Loyalists in Lower Quebec whose growing population would require all the uncultivated lands left in French Canada³⁸. He therefore suggested settling the Gaspé Peninsula, Cape Breton Island and along Chaleur Bay. This would be in keeping with Britain's

mercantile interests as the colonists could engage in lumbering and fishing. The Loyalists however had different plans and petitioned Haldimand for an inland settlement as they wished to take up farming ³⁹.

In compliance with their wishes, Haldimand issued orders for a reconnaissance of the country adjacent to the French settlements and bordering the St. Lawrence as a means of assessing its potential for settlement. From the favorable reports received he decided to settle the Loyalists in two sections; the New Oswegatchie, or St. Lawrence Settlement, to be eight townships extending from the seigniory of Monsieur de Longueuil in the east to just above Brockville where the land became unsuitable for cultivation. The second settlement was to initially include five townships from Cataraqui to the Bay of Quinte which did not upset Haldimand's initial plan of establishing a military colony at Cataraqui.

Haldimand was instructed to pay special attention to "the contiguous settlement of the Officers and Privates of each Corps reduced" as it would add to the strength and security of the distant settlements as well as of the Province at large ⁴⁰. In accordance with these plans the townships in the New Oswegatchie settlement were allotted as follows: Townships Number 1 to 5 were settled by Sir John Johnson's 1st Battalion of the King's Royal Regiment of New York; Townships Number 6, 7, and 8 by a part of Jessup's Corps which had formerly been attached to the King's Royal Regiment ⁴¹. Township Number 7 became Augusta Township. The townships of Cataraqui were largely settled by Loyalists from New York, a part of Jessup's Corp, Major Roger's men, some from the Second Battalion of the 84th Regiment and Captain Archibald McDonnell's men ⁴². In June 1784 Butler's Rangers were disbanded and a majority of them agreed to settle at Niagara.

As the area to be settled was still a part of the Province of Quebec, French law and custom prevailed. Therefore these townships were not to be named but referred to as Royal Seigneuries numbered from east to west. As seigneuries the land was to be held in "fief"

meaning that the settlers would be tenants of the King ⁴³. This method of land holding became the first major grievance amongst the Loyalists ⁴⁴. In 1787 there were signs of unrest and the settlers petitioned the Crown demanding that their grants be made "according to English tenure". To appease the Loyalists the Constitutional Act of 1791 divided the Province of Quebec into Upper and Lower Canada. English law was re-established and settlers were guaranteed the right to hold their land in free and common socage.

2.6 Territorial and Administrative Divisions

In 1788 the part of the old Province of Quebec which was settled by the Loyalists was divided into four districts for purposes of administration ⁴⁵. Beginning in the east these districts were named Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nassua and Hesse. After the division of the province in 1791 they were renamed the Eastern, Midland, Home, and Western Districts respectively. (See Figure 2.2.) These districts remained the basic unit of local government until 1849 ⁴⁶. In 1792 the province was further divided into counties which had three basic functions: as a riding, as the organizational division for the militia and for land registration purposes. The township had existed since 1784 and in 1793 each township was allowed to elect its own officials for minor local matters. These included assessors, collectors, overseers of highways, pound keepers and town wardens ⁴⁷. These officials were supervised by district magistrates sitting in the Court of Quarter Sessions. These justices of the peace assessed local taxes, appointed and supervised the treasurers of districts; they superintended the laying out of highways, the building of gaols, and regulation of ferries and markets, the sale of liquor licences, and, in fact, practically all matters of local government ⁴⁸. In 1841 these administrative powers passed to an elected District Council and in 1850 the districts were abolished and the District Council became the County Council ⁴⁹. Augusta Township was within the Eastern District. In 1798 several new districts

Figure 2.2
Administrative Districts of Upper Canada
1788 and 1816

were created. The Counties of Grenville, Leeds and Carleton were carved out of the Eastern District to become the Johnstown District. Carleton County was declared a separate district in 1822.

2.7 Political Organization

The political framework imposed upon Upper Canada was an attempt to circumvent a recurrence of "unbridled democracy". The result of the direction pursued is what historians have come to refer to as the "Family Compact"⁵⁰. This term refers to the network of government officials who dominated the government of Upper Canada. This small group of men were not necessarily related to each other but shared common social, religious, political and economic interests. The existence of such a closely knit group was facilitated by the system of government adopted.

The Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada was appointed by the Imperial authorities. He appointed both Executive and Legislative Councillors. These persons often held seats in both chambers which were responsible only to the governor⁵¹. This rendered the power of the elective body in the House of Assembly virtually negligible. The fact that the assembly was an elected body did not mean that the democratic principle had been introduced into Upper Canada simply because the other branches of government had power to veto any legislation introduced by the Lower House. In fact, the circle of government officials abhorred the democratic principle. The American experience proved that "every American election was a kind of social revolution, and the electoral process a most potent instrument for social leveling."⁵² It tended to unleash the worst of human passions. Local administration was a further avenue of patronage. The governor appointed to each District Justices of the Peace who met in the Courts of Quarter Sessions. These magistrates tried legal cases and were responsible for practically all of the administration of the District. They were empowered to appoint other minor officials upon the approval of the governor. Simcoe, the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, also implemented a system of

military organization whereby he appointed county lieutenants who were intended to command the highest government prestige ⁵³. These lieutenants were to select other officers for the militia and also advise the governor on appointments to the Courts and so on. Thus, by way of the channels of appointments a labyrinth of senior and petty officials of like mind came to run the machinery of government ⁵⁴.

2.8 The Survey of Upper Canada

The first surveys carried out in Upper Canada were actually exploratory surveys for the purpose of selecting land to be settled. Surveyors were directed to report on "the Nature and Quality of the Soil and climate, the Rivers, Bays and Harbours, and every other circumstance attending the natural state of it." ⁵⁵

Canniff states that the first order for a survey was given by General Clarke, Acting Governor in 1781 ⁵⁶. This was to explore the land along the lower St. Lawrence between Lake St. Francis to just above present day Brockville. In the same year, Lieutenant Gershom French and his surveying party explored the lands along the Ottawa River from Carillon to the Rideau and then down the Gananoque River to the St. Lawrence ⁵⁷. Two years later Lieutenant Walter Sutherland of the Royal Regiment of New York was ordered to do the same ⁵⁸.

About the same time, Deputy Surveyor John Collins was at Cataraqui and his assistants explored up the Cataraqui River and then along the north shore of Lake Ontario to Niagara ⁵⁹. Once the lands had been selected for settlement, Haldimand issued specific instructions to commence an actual survey on the ground. Haldimand decided that the township would be the unit of settlement as he felt the "People to be settled there are most used to it." ⁶⁰ The townships were to be laid out in six mile squares containing lots of 120 acres. These plans were altered somewhat and lots of 200 acres became the standard unit. In 1789, an attempt was made to standardize

the surveys and the size of townships were to measure ten by ten miles in the interior and 9 by 12 miles along a navigable river ⁶¹.

As there were thousands of persons waiting to be resettled, the first surveys were confined to the laying out and posting of frontages or base lines of townships bordering rivers and lakes ⁶². This base line did not follow the curve of the shore but was carried along the inner ends of inlets ⁶³. These resulted in irregularly shaped areas known as the "broken front" whose lots were either attached to adjacent lots or separated from them and granted in large pieces. Once the front was surveyed the surveyor could block out on paper townships to be constructed on the frontages drawn ⁶⁴. This blocking out process included indications of concessions or ranges as well as lots and road allowances. By this method, lots were often granted and recorded ahead of the actual survey which resulted in a lot of confusion as settlers could not possibly know the boundaries of their land ⁶⁵. The remaining concession lines were surveyed and resurveyed some years later, often as a response to petitions from the inhabitants themselves. The survey of the sidelines was often left up to the settler ⁶⁶. There was a Deputy Surveyor appointed to each District. The surveyors were required to keep field notebooks which included information on vegetation, hydrography, topography and soils. The type and amount of information contained in these books however vary from one surveyor to another. Their usefulness therefore depends on the diligence and accuracy of the individual surveyors.

The initial pattern of survey in Ontario was the single front system which remained in effect from 1783-1815 ⁶⁷. This plan laid out townships of six miles square having seven concessions of 25 lots each. In front of each concession and between every five lots there was a 40 foot allowance for a road. The size of the lots varied from 120 to 200 acres. This resulted in long narrow lots, ranging from 19 by 63 chains to 19 by 105 chains. Between 1787 and 1813, a Front and Rear system was used but confined to only 13 townships in

the Niagara Peninsula. The lots were of 100 acres being 50 by 20 chains. A road allowance was provided between each concession and between every other lot. In 1815, the Double Front plan was introduced which resulted in wider lots of 200 acres, being 30 by 67 chains. This system resulted in a double row of lots in between the concessions, the back of each lot meeting in the middle of the concession. In 1829, the 2,400 acre sectional system was used creating a 2,400 acre section made up of 12 lots of 200 acres each. The size of the lot measured 66.67 chains by 30 chains. This was altered somewhat and used by the Canada Company in the survey of its land beginning in 1835. Instead of 2,400 acre sections, they used 1,000 acre sections consisting of 100 acre lots. In 1850 this plan was adopted as the official survey of Ontario for opening up government owned lands between Georgian Bay and Lake Ontario.

These surveys have had a pronounced effect upon the landscape in Ontario. The survey has usually been a decisive factor in the location of roads and consequently houses, farms, and so on.

2.9 Land Granting Policies

In 1784, disbanded troops and Tory refugees were granted free land as a reward for military services and loyalty. Field officers received 1000 acres, captains 700, staff officers 500, non-commissioned officers 200 and privates 100 acres⁶⁸. The head of each loyalist family received 100 acres and all were entitled to an additional 50 acres for each member of the family. In 1787 the grants to non-commissioned officers and private soldiers were increased to 400 and 300 acres respectively. In 1790, Lord Dorchester increased the size of grant to all reduced officers to that received by the 84th Regiment of Foot⁶⁹. The special allotments were then 5,000 acres for field officers, 3,000 acres for captains and 2,000 acres for subalterns. These grants were free of all expense.

In an effort to grant lands on an impartial basis, orders were given that single lots of 100 and 200 acres were to be drawn by a

ballot method which would give each settler an equal opportunity to draw lands near the river ⁷⁰. Many of the officers were adverse to this method being of the opinion that they should be shown preferential treatment by receiving their grants along the front ⁷¹. This would give them easy access to the water, the only means of transportation. In most cases, their demands were ignored but there were instances of surveyors complying with their wishes.

In order to encourage the "speedy settlement of the upper country", Lord Dorchester offered grants of 200 acres to American settlers ⁷³. This generous treatment of the Americans aroused much hostility amongst the early Loyalists. In order to "pacify" them, Dorchester issued a proclamation whereby he proceeded "to put a mark of honour upon the families who had adhered to the unity of the Empire and joined the Royal Standard in America before the Treaty of Separation in the year 1783." These persons and their descendants were entitled to have the letters U.E. affixed to their names which qualified them to receive special privileges. One of these privileges was an additional grant of 200 acres to their sons and daughters upon coming of age or upon marriage in the latter case. To cope with the numerous petitions for land, Dorchester appointed four Land Boards, one for each district.

These Land Boards met monthly and were authorized to grant certificates of 200 acres. The Deputy Surveyor of the District generally attended these sittings to receive the certificates upon which he made location. Petitions for larger amounts were referred to the Executive Council. These land boards were responsible for deciding upon claimants eligibility for privileges as a Loyalist. On November 6, 1794, the Land Boards were abolished and their authority was transferred to the magistrates.

There was considerable confusion over who was to be considered a Loyalist as many settlers professing loyalty had entered the province since the Treaty of 1783. Also, there was confusion over eligibility for Dorchester's Bounty. It would appear that

these policies were stretched to include as many claimants as possible ⁷⁴.

As many of the claimants were entitled to more than 100 acres, the method of land granting tended to break up their holdings. Many persons found their lots scattered throughout the township, and for the large claimants, throughout many townships. As the front townships along the St. Lawrence and at Cataraqui were located very early, additional claims for "Bounty" Lands and military lands were necessarily located further away, often in another District. In an attempt to consolidate their holdings, many sales and exchanges of property took place. The location tickets were being used as if the grantee actually owned the property and they were often mortgaged and used as articles of barter. Gates notes that settlers often became indebted to merchants and in failing to make a living in the bush were forced to sell them their land at very low rates ⁷⁵. S.D. Clark refers to the merchant class as the "Shopkeeper Aristocracy" who acquired thousands of acres of land because of farmers' indebtedness to them ⁷⁶.

The frequency of land transactions during the eleven intervening years, that is between the issuing of location tickets and their conversion to deeds of patent after 1795, was such as to necessitate the appointment of an Heir and Devisee Commission to investigate disputed claims. Accusations have been made that

persons such as John Askin, Richard Cartwright and Robert Hamilton, all speculators in certificates and all well acquainted with one another passed on one another's certificates.

The serious problem in the settlement process was the large tracts of land left unimproved. Settlement duties had been imposed on the settlers from the outset, however they were not clearly defined and were seldom enforced ⁷⁸. Because of the generous land grants to Loyalists and military claimants, and the large acquisitions by land speculators, much of the land remained unsettled. Adding to this problem of absentee ownership was the Crown and Clergy Reserves. This situation had a very immediate effect upon actual settlers.

Road building was the responsibility of the land owners, each being required to clear the road allowance in front of their property. Absentee owners neglected to perform this statute labour and thus the neighbouring farmers were inconvenienced for lack of roads.

Robert Gourlay, a Scotsman, arrived in Upper Canada in May 1817. During his short stay in the colony, he incited public awareness of the evils which had arisen because of the land granting policies. By organizing township meetings and circulating questionnaires he was able to compile and publish a great deal of information used in his incessant attacks upon the government. Gourlay's endeavours were not entirely futile and probably influenced Sir Peregrine Maitland who became the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada in 1818. During Maitland's 10 years in office, he introduced a number of policies directed at alleviating the short-comings of the land granting policies. Only months after his arrival he ordered that future grants would be made strictly on the condition of occupation and settlement⁷⁹. Also, all lands already granted and which remained unimproved would be subject to a wild land tax.

Land taxes in Upper Canada date back to 1793⁸⁰. The owners were divided into eight classes according to the amount of real and personal property possessed. The money collected was turned over to the Justices of the Peace in the Courts of Quarter Session who would allocate the funds for county purposes. This Act affected only resident landowners and it is not clear whether wild land was taxed or not as the principles of assessment were not laid down⁸¹.

In 1803, the Assessment Act was passed which set specific rates on cultivated and wild lands, being £1 and 1s per acre respectively⁸². Again, non-resident landowners could often escape this tax. Each house holder was required to submit to the assessor of his parish or township a list of all rateable property he possessed no matter in what township or district it lay⁸³. Failure to deliver the list subjected the offender to a fine and decisions on these matters rested with the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions. This Act also exempted the

wild lands held by infants and married women.

The most serious defect in this Act was the fact that the taxes collected from each landowner were to be paid to the Treasurer of the District in which the owner resided. This Act was re-enacted three times at four year intervals with only minor changes. In 1815 the Act was changed so that the taxes would be transferred to the Districts within which the wild lands were located. This proved to be unworkable. The Act of 1819 provided that taxes were to be paid only in the Districts where the land lay. The problem of non-residents escaping the tax and residents not reporting their land remained.

The Assessment Act of 1819 no longer accepted the word of the taxpayer as to the amount of real property he owned. Again, the taxpayer was to provide a list of all his personal property in the province. The Surveyor General was required to furnish each District Treasurer with a list of the land granted or leased in his District, updated annually. All land on this list, whether occupied or not, was to be taxed. Wild land was taxed at 4s an acre and cultivated land at 20s. The taxes collected were turned over to the District Treasurer and were to be used for county purposes, not just roads. A Road Act was also passed which placed a tax of 1/8d an acre on unoccupied granted land to be used for the improvement of roads in lieu of statute labour.

However good Maitland's intentions, they did little to improve the situation in Upper Canada. There remained the problem of enforcing these regulations and the Act did not include adequate penalties⁸⁴. If the taxes were not paid within 14 days the collectors were empowered to seize and sell the goods and chattels found on that property. However, speculators who did not improve their land had nothing to be confiscated, their debt merely accumulated, and many felt that the Act would be repealed. Realizing this defect, Maitland introduced a bill to the Assembly in 1823 which would make the Assessment Act of 1819 permanent and subject to sale by auction all land on which

the taxes of eight years were in arrears ⁸⁵. Only as much of the owner's property was put up for auction as would cover the assessment. This met with a lot of opposition from Council but Maitland, wielding his influence, had the Act passed in 1824. The first sales of tax delinquent lands took place in the spring of 1830 and one million acres, at most, was put up at auction ⁸⁶.

The result was not altogether expected. The depressed land market attributed to the sale of Crown and Clergy Reserves and the Canada Company lands resulted in an average sale price of 6½d/acre for tax delinquent lands ⁸⁷. This low price attracted speculators and investors who were in a position to retain the lands for eight years without paying taxes before they could be forfeited and sold for arrears ⁸⁸.

The problems inherent in the wild lands tax and its enforcement persisted. Lord Durham reported on it and an attempt was made in 1841, with the establishment of District Councils, to wrestle with it, without much success. The tax of 4s laid on wild land imposed in 1819 remained in effect until 1851. ⁸⁹

2.10 Early Commerce

The St. Lawrence - Great Lakes waterway has been a significant transportation route since the French occupation of Canada. As the fur trade pushed further into the interior, particularly into the south west, there was a steady diversion of trade away from the Ottawa River route to the St. Lawrence River. The transporting of a necessarily larger volume of supplies was facilitated by the use of larger vessels on the lakes. Shipbuilding went hand in hand with Great Lakes Navigation. As early as 1678, a shipyard was established by LaSalle at Fort Frontenac and four sailing vessels were built ⁹⁰.

Because the trading posts and forts were located along the waterway and received their supplies by boat from Montreal and Quebec, their security depended upon control of the lakes. During the Seven Years War, both the French and British hastened to build more ships in their attempt to gain this control. Those sites possessing good harbours and a

good supply of lumber, particularly oak, were selected for ship-building⁹¹. The British victory was largely a result of their superior naval strength. After the war, British merchants moved into Quebec taking up positions in the fur trade and supply houses. Merchants such as James McGill, Simon McTavish, and Lymburners and the Frobisher Brothers acquired and maintained an important position in the early commercial life of Upper Canada⁹².

With the outbreak of the American Revolution the former French posts, particularly Detroit, Niagara, and Cataraqui became important military garrisons. This war had a significant effect upon the early commercial organization of Upper Canada. The fur trade was still a thriving concern and dependent upon a steady supply of English manufactures. During the Revolution the supply to Albany traders by way of New York was interrupted. This forced the traders to move to Montreal⁹³. As the Albany trade had depended upon the use of large boats rather than canoes, the traders brought with them this experience giving them an advantage in the Great Lakes trade which continued until the middle of the next century as the names of McTavish, Ellice and McGillvray attest⁹⁴.

The presence of British troops stationed at posts in the interior also attracted merchants⁹⁵. The military did not have any commissariat services at this time and merchants were awarded contracts for provisioning the garrisons. Men such as Richard Cartwright of Cataraqui and Robert Hamilton of Niagara were given their start this way. Their early connections with the military and the suppliers at Montreal gave them an incredible advantage in establishing themselves in the network of Upper Canada.

The merchants with such influential business connections expanded their interest to other sectors of the Upper Canadian economy. The profit made during the early years was redirected into receiving, forwarding, portaging, provisioning and into massive land speculation.⁹⁶ It also carried over into milling, processing, and retailing. Bruce Wilson has demonstrated how these "Laurentian" merchants came to

virtually monopolize the well organized trading network extending from London to Montreal and into the interior⁹⁷. This network was maintained by social and kinship ties as well as business associations and economic interests. They were well represented in the political arena and used the political and economic avenues to extend their influence and patronage across the country.⁹⁸

The pattern of trade which evolved was a natural outcome of early navigation. Transportation on the St. Lawrence - Great Lakes waterway was interrupted by numerous rapids at Lachine, the Cedars, the Cascades and the abrupt break at Niagara. On the difficult journey upstream from Montreal to the entrance of the Lake, bateaux were used as they were more easily manned and could be pulled through the rapids. Once at Cataraqui, the goods could be loaded on to larger lake vessels and transported to Niagara. Here they had to be unloaded and carried overland ten miles before again being loaded on to boats bound for Lake Erie. These breaks in the route were of course decisive factors in the location of transshipping centers. Cataraqui and Niagara became important trading depots as well as garrison and naval bases.

Improvements in this transportation route were made very early in the history of the Great Lakes Navigation. Between 1779 and 1783, a canal was cut at Coteau du Lac, just below Lake St. Francis, and a second series of canals and mere "cuttings" at the Cedars and the Cascades was completed⁹⁹. In 1789, a group of traders organized a transport service over the new portage at Niagara on the Canadian side of the river¹⁰⁰. Even with these improvements the transporting of goods up the river was confined to flat bottomed bateaux. After about 1800, the durham boat was used which was a larger and more efficient craft¹⁰¹. In 1816, the first steamship on Lake Ontario was launched at Ernestown¹⁰². This boat, the Frontenac, ran between New Castle, York, Niagara, Burlington, and Prescott. Prescott was just upstream of the rapids at the Gallops and so steamers could ply as far downstream as Prescott. The steamship became the primary

vessel used in transporting goods and passengers.

Throughout the early period, the settlement of Upper Canada was spread out in a thin belt along the St. Lawrence, the north shore of Lake Ontario and into the Niagara Peninsula¹⁰³. Small centers grew up along the shore to cater to local needs. Again, these service centers were usually located where there was an adequate harbour as transportation continued to be by water¹⁰⁴.

The transporting of goods along the St. Lawrence route generated revenue for Upper and Lower Canada. Much of this revenue came from the transporting of American goods from the interior out through Canadian ports. This trade was threatened by the construction of the Erie Canal in 1825 which connected Buffalo with the New York via the Mohawk - Hudson route. This route was cheaper and also opened into an ice free port on the Atlantic Seaboard and thus diverted a lot of the trade from the St. Lawrence¹⁰⁵. In an attempt to draw back this western trade to Canada, the Welland Canal was built and completed in 1829¹⁰⁶. It had become apparent that the St. Lawrence route had to be improved and made easier and cheaper to navigate. In 1824, a committee was formed to look into this matter.

At the same time, plans were underway to construct the Rideau Canal which would provide an interior waterway between Kingston and Montreal. This canal was started in 1826 and completed in 1832. Its construction was motivated for reasons of defence rather than commerce¹⁰⁷. The outbreak of the War of 1812 aroused old hostilities between Britain and the United States. In the event of another war, the St. Lawrence route could easily be blockaded by the Americans thus cutting off the life line to the western settlements. The Rideau would provide a means of moving supplies and troops from Montreal to the Western posts in such a case. The British government undertook the expense of building the Rideau. Other projects were proposed to improve the internal navigation of the colonies but were met with opposition from the Assemblies, which would not vote the necessary funds¹⁰⁸. The St. Lawrence canals were therefore delayed and not

completed until 1851. The Rideau Canal diverted some of the trade from the St. Lawrence, particularly the up trade as the St. Lawrence rapids could be bypassed¹⁰⁹. The down trade was still largely carried by the St. Lawrence as it was faster and cheaper. The opening of the Rideau Canal had some effect upon ports between Montreal and Kingston where goods were transshipped from river boat to lake vessel¹¹⁰. The completing of the St. Lawrence canals greatly affected these ports as well as other transshipping centers such as at Kingston. The technological changes in shipbuilding also played a part in relegating once thriving ports to local service centers¹¹¹.

2.11 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has touched on a variety of topics in order to point out some of the operative forces shaping the Upper Canadian environment. This chapter has emphasized the importance of the Great Lakes -- St. Lawrence waterway; the geography of the waterway being a decisive factor in patterns of trade and settlement and the growth of local and urban centers. The political organization of the colony gave a small group of officials extraordinary power, some of which was used to promote their interests in land. Representatives of the merchant class were amongst this group. Because of the shortage of currency in Upper Canada and the abundance of land the merchant class was in a position to acquire large acreages. The land policies introduced promoted land speculation and did little to enforce settlement duties. These policies worked to the advantage of the "interest" groups but were detrimental to settlement. One would expect from this review that geographical location would have a significant effect upon detailed settlement patterns, not only because of the circumstances under which land was granted in a particular area but also because of the type of persons that area attracted.

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Chapter Three

Historical Background and Physiography of the Study Area

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the physical environment of the study area. The occupation and usage of the area by the Indians and French is reviewed in order to assess their impact on the natural landscape. The survey of the township is also examined in this particular chapter as the surveyor's field notes make some reference to the natural vegetation and drainage. The physiography and soils of the area are described as well using present day sources.

3.2 Pre-historic Settlement

In 1854, an Indian village in Augusta Township was identified and studied by archaeologist W.E. Guest¹. The site is located about eight miles north of Prescott and one-half mile north-east of Roebuck (from which it is named). It is located on the north half of lots 2 and 3 in the sixth concession. (See Figure 2.1) The site occupies about eight acres being more or less a flat top of a long sand hill within a hundred feet of Indian Creek which empties into the Nation River about a mile to the southeast². It was surrounded on the north, east, and south by a black alder swamp. The soil consists largely of a light yellow sand. The site was high and dry for habitation. Because of the sandy soil, the area has been subjected to erosion and according to some of the local inhabitants interviewed by Guest, the hill had been much higher at one time³.

The village consisted of long houses surrounded by a palisade. The people cultivated plants such as corn, beans, sunflowers, and squash. They also hunted. The absence of trade goods such as iron arrow-points, iron axes and brass kettles suggests that the area was abandoned before contact with the white man⁴. Archaeologists have

identified the site as of Iroquoian culture ⁵. The artifacts are in many respects similar to those from a site at Hochelaga (Montreal) and from sites in Jefferson County, New York; the former regarded as having been occupied by Mohawk and the latter by the Onondaga.

J.D. Wright explains that there is enough evidence to suggest that a late prehistoric, relatively homogeneous, archaeological complex attributable to the Onondaga and in part to the affiliated Oneida extended from extreme eastern Ontario down the St. Lawrence River nearly to Quebec City, over into Jefferson County, New York, and the Lake Champlain area of Vermont ⁶. Wintenberg adds that the Oneida's earlier homes seem to have been on either side of the St. Lawrence, in the vicinity of the Oswegatchie River, which is about 9 miles south of Roebuck. ⁷ As the Roebuck site shares similarities with both the Mohawk and Onondaga sites, it is possible that the Roebuck site, as well as the other sites in Grenville County, was occupied before the Mohawk, Oneida and Onondaga became separated into the present different tribes. ⁸ These people retreated to Jefferson County, New York, some time between 1536 and 1603. Wright notes that this north-south migration theory applies not to all the Iroquois tribes, of which there were ten, but only to possibly two, the Onondaga and Oneida. ⁹

There are numerous other Indian sites strewn throughout the Counties of Leeds and Grenville. ¹⁰ Those located in the adjacent township of Edwardsburgh, near Spencerville, appear to be closely associated with the Roebuck site. These several sites may have been separate villages occupied at the same time or may be an indication of the successive moves made by the Iroquois. Beauchamp says the Onondaga "had generally one large and small village at a time, and this was the case with the Oneida" and that "the Mohawk commenced with two, but soon had three or four." ¹¹ Perhaps too they were occupied successively, one village after another being abandoned for a new and more desirable location, as was the practice with the Iroquois. The Huron and Neutral are known to have removed their villages every five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years, from one to three or more leagues, when the land became exhausted by

cultivation.¹² The New York Iroquois removed their villages every ten or twelve years.

The small acreage of land occupied by this group, and for such a short period of time, minimized any impact they had upon the landscape, although on a small scale, these Indians did leave their imprint. Guest interviewed old residents who remembered the property before it was cleared and settled.¹³ According to Mr. Drummond, the country was heavily wooded and the village site was covered with small pines, whereas the surrounding country was covered with large pines. The land would have been cleared by the Indians to make way for the corn fields. Of course, clearing the forest cover of a light sandy soil resulted in some erosion as mentioned above.

The location of the village also suggests that Indian Creek and the South Nation River were once navigable waterways. This was confirmed by another old resident of the area, who claimed that not only the size of the river had altered within living memory but its course had been diverted as well.¹⁴

There is no mention of Indian trails in Augusta. There are references to an Indian trail running north from Johnstown, or the fort at Oswegatchie, to the Rideau River at Burritts Rapids.¹⁵ This trail probably passed through the Indian sites at Spencerville and was likely used by the Indians at Roebuck. This trail was, in all likelihood, the one referred to by Leavitt as the Lower Road and used by settlers moving away from the banks of the St. Lawrence into the interior.¹⁶

There is nothing on the landscape today to indicate the presence of an Indian site at Roebuck. The numerous artifacts have been collected and deposited with the National Museum of Man.

3.3 French Occupation

Early in the eighteenth century the French established themselves on the south shore of the St. Lawrence at the mouth of the Oswegatchie River. This was directly across the river from the study area. A fort, La Présentation, was built there and was an important French stronghold as it commanded the narrow stretch of the St. Lawrence which was only

about a half mile wide at that spot.¹⁷

After the capture of the French fort at Cataraqui and the destruction of seven French vessels in 1758¹⁸, a fortified shipyard was built in a sheltered bay on the north shore of the St. Lawrence about seven miles above the Oswegatchie River where the present day village of Maitland in the township of Augusta is located.¹⁹ This site was called Point au Pins and was apparently selected by the French Engineer Pontleroy because it offered a sheltered bay, sandy shore, and a good supply of oak and pine.²⁰ Two war ships were built at Point au Pins, the Iroquoise and the Outouaise. Both were launched in April 1759.²¹

In 1760, these ships were captured by the British as well as Fort de la Galette just west of Oswegatchie. The French abandoned the shipyard and retreated to Fort Levis on Isle Royale. This fort had been built about three miles downstream from Oswegatchie, opposite the present day village of Johnstown. It was the last French stronghold to capitulate to British arms.

The French occupation of the site lasted but one year and therefore had little impact on the landscape. Remains of the fort were still visible when the Loyalists arrived in 1784.²² One of the log houses built inside the fort and used to quarter the men was later opened as the first school in the township.²³

3.4 The Survey

Very little information has survived regarding the early surveys and natural vegetation of Augusta Township. The first records describing the area to be settled, while not specific, point out that the surveyor considered the land to be quite good for agriculture. On September 19, 1763, Captain Justus Sherwood left Montreal to do an exploratory survey of the lands along the St. Lawrence and Bay of Quinte in order to assess their suitability for settlement. On the 26th and 27th, he wrote:²⁴

Proceeded about twenty eight miles to the head of all the Rapids, this place is call'd the Galloon and is about three Leagues below Oswegacha. I sent out frequent partys all this way, as before their reports all agree in the excellent Quality of the Land...

On September 28th, he wrote:

Proceeded five Leagues the Land in this distance is not so good as above described on the whole the land many said to be of the very best quality from the Lake St. Francois all the way up the River Twelve miles above Oswaygacha and would admit of at least twelve Townships on the River, each six miles square but the six lower Townships would be the best of the Twelve, indeed I think there cannot be better land in America.

From this and similar reports eight townships were initially laid out. Townships number 1 to 5 were referred to as the New Johnstown settlement and Townships number 6, 7, and 8 were called the New Oswegatchie settlement. New Johnstown was settled by Sir John Johnson's Regiment and the New Oswegatchie townships were settled by Major Edward Jessup's Loyal Rangers. Township number 7 was later named Augusta Township.

According to Deputy Surveyor William Chewitt, the front of Augusta was laid out in 1784 by a Mr. Lewis Kotte.²⁵ The second and third concessions were laid out by Mr. Jeremiah McCarthy and Edward Jessup in the years 1785 and 1787.²⁶ If there were field notes made of this survey they have not survived. In 1793 the 2nd, 3rd and 4th concession lines were equalized and marked out by Reuben Sherwood.²⁷ Again, the field notes of this survey have not survived. In 1795, John Stegmann surveyed the 4th concession line and "opened" the concession lines between concessions 3 to 10.²⁸ This survey must not have been completed or perhaps only the boundary lines were marked because in a letter from Samuel Sherwood and Peter Howard, dated January 27, 1808, they state that there were several concessions in Augusta left unsurveyed although the Crown had issued grants and settlement had been made.²⁹ This was confirmed in a letter from Reuben Sherwood to the Surveyor General in 1806 in which he states that concessions 5, 7, 9, 10 and 11 had not yet been run.³⁰

In 1810, Reuben Sherwood chained the 5th concession line west of lot 10, and concession lines 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.³¹ The field notes from this survey have survived but provide little information on the natural vegetation of the township. Sherwood does state whether or not he considered the land good, but gives no indication as to the

criteria he used in making that decision. Reference is also made to what appears to be earlier survey markings, likely made by Stegmann. An extract from Sherwood's notes appears in Table 3.1. These descriptions are unusually terse, contrasting with the surveyor's notes in Essex County which record up to 50 plant species on any one lot.³² Figure 3.1 is a map depicting Sherwood's descriptions.

Although natural vegetation is seldom mentioned in these notes, a few associations are suggested. Swamp land is often described as tamarack, cedar, or hemlock swamp. Ash is mentioned a few times in describing lots 13, 14 and 15 in concession 5 as "low ash land". These lots are crossed by tributaries of the South Nation River. The adjacent lots are described as containing ash as well as cedar or ash and hemlock. hemlock and beech, which may, as well, be associated with low lands. Those lots containing white pine timber are described as good land. It is interesting to note that whereas Sherwood seldom mentions the tree coverage, he does mention the presence of white pine timber. This was probably due to the fact that white pine was a marketable timber, most often used in shipbuilding. At the outset of settlement, the finest pine and oak stands were reserved for the Royal Navy and could only be cut by Royal contractors. There is no way of knowing if Sherwood made note of each lot containing pine. Only five are mentioned as containing pine being lots 1, 2 and 3 in the seventh concession, lot 5 in the tenth and lot 12 in the fifth. It also was noted above that there was pine timber on lots 2 and 3 in concession 6 and in the adjacent lots as well. This was on the Indian site at Roebuck which occupied a high sandy ridge being of light well drained soils. There were also references to oak and pine stands at Point au Pins, as the name suggests, which were used to build French ships.

It would appear that Sherwood considered all but "low lands" and swamp as good land. The vegetation cover on "good lands" is not given but a variety of tree genera is stated, namely, maple, beech, basswood, ironwood and birch.

Table 3.1

Extract from Reuben Sherwood's Field Notes

(Source: Ministry of Natural Resources, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario; copy available at Government Document Center, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. Field Notes and Reports, Books #1-88, Mfm Reel #7, "Reuben Sherwood, No. 27, Field Book No. 1. completion of Survey Augusta, 1810".)

Commenced Running 7th Concession from eastern boundary line thence running south 59 degrees west.

No.	Chains	Links	Remarks
1	19	80	good land white pine timber to a maple post
2	19	80	good land pine timber to a tamarack post
3	19	80	good land to a maple post
4	19	80	good land white pine timber to an ironwood post
5	19	80	good land to a maple saplin
6			good land to a hemlock post
R		63	to a hemlock post
7	19	80	cedar swamp to a hemlock saplin
8	8	00	cedar swamp
	11	80	good land to a maple post
9	13	00	good land
	6	80	cedar swamp to an ash post
10	8	00	swamp
	10	80	good land to a maple post
11	19	80	good land to a maple tree
12	19	80	good land to an ironwood post Road
R		63	to a maple post
13	15	00	good land
	4	80	tamarack swamp to a tamarack post
14	19	80	swamp to a tamarack post
15	19	80	swamp to a tamarack post
16	14	00	swamp
	5	80	good land to a beech post
17	6	00	good land
	13	80	tamarack swamp to a tamarack post
18	19	80	swamp to a cedar post

Table 3.1 cont'd.

Comm	6	25	swamp to a tamarack post
19	19	30	swamp to a tamarack post
20	19	30	swamp to a tamarack post
21	19	30	swamp
22	19	30	good land to a maple post
23	19	30	tamarack swamp to a tamarack post
24	19	30	swamp to a hemlock post
R		63	to a cedar post
25	19	30	swamp to a hemlock post
26	19	30	good land to a beech saplin
27	19	30	swamp to a cedar post
28	19	30	swamp to a hemlock post
29	19	30	swamp to a cedar post
30	19	30	swamp to a cedar post
R		63	to a cedar post
31	10	00	swamp
	9	30	good land to a hemlock post
32	19	30	good land to an ironwood post
33	19	30	good land to a hemlock post
34	19	30	cedar swamp to a cedar post
35	5	00	swamp
	14	80	good land to a maple post
36	19	30	good land to a hemlock post
37	19	30	good land to the west boundary line at a post no. 1 R 7th Conc. and Coms.

Figure 3.1

Map Depicting Surveyor's Description
of Land in Augusta - 1810

A-low ash land
H-hemlock
C-cedar
B-beech

⊙-good land
□-swamp
P-white pine
●-hard stoney land

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources, Queen's
Park, Toronto, Ontario, Field Notes and Reports
Books #1-88, Reuben Sherwood, No. 27, Field Book No. 1.

3.5 Summary and Conclusions

The study area had been known, traversed, and occupied by both the Indians and the French. Each cultural group stayed for a short period of time and occupied only a small acreage of land. Each group left physical evidence of their occupation on the landscape. On a very small scale, the physical landscape was altered and the wilderness was broken by buildings and clearings. However, with regards to the total area, the physical environment remained in its natural state up until the arrival of the Loyalists.

In preparation for their settlement, surveys were carried out and the reports indicate that the land to be settled was favourably regarded. The field notes of Reuben Sherwood give a glimpse of the natural vegetation for part of the township but are scant in detail. Certain associations between vegetation cover and drainage were suggested but not with enough detail to be tested. A more detailed examination of the physiography and soils of Augusta Township is provided in the following section.

3.6 The Physical Environment

The lands in Eastern Ontario have been subjected to a number of geological forces which have resulted in an admixture of physiographic regions. Augusta Township lies at the confluence of three main physiographic regions; the Smith Falls Limestone Plain, the Edwardsburgh Sand Plain and the Winchester Clay Plain. (See Figure 3.2) Much of Leeds, Grenville, Carleton and Lanark Counties is underlain with Beekmantown Limestone which predates the period of glaciation which largely shaped the landscape of Southern Ontario.³³ The last glaciation, referred to as the Wisconsin, and the invasion of the Champlain Sea had the most impact on the present day landscape features.

There were three main glacial advances in Eastern Ontario.³⁴ The first advanced from the north east and left Malone till as drumlin-like hills near the St. Lawrence River. The Fort Covington advance was from the north west and overrode the Malone till. The melt waters or inner glacier streams deposited moraines at right angles to the till ridges in

Stormont, Dundas and Grenville Counties. The third advance was from the north and drumlins were produced just north of the low till ridges. A few areas of sandy moraines occur running east and west.

During this glaciation period the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes drainage system was dammed and the sea level rose. At the same time the St. Lawrence-Ottawa lowlands were depressed due to isostatic pressure and the area was submerged beneath the Champlain Sea.³⁵ Clay was then deposited in the lowlands. As the land was uplifted and the sea retreated many of the till ridges, drumlins and moraines were reworked by wave action leaving excessively stoney surfaces in many areas.³⁶ The sandy moraines were also spread out by the Champlain Sea.

Most of this area drains to the north, the drainage divide being just north of the St. Lawrence River. The southern Counties are mostly drained by the South Nation River Basin. This river is post-glacial in origin and has its source just a few miles north of Brockville.³⁷ There is little variation in the topography, ranging from 250' to 400' in altitude, so the rivers and streams tend to be sluggish and the drainage system is described as immature.³⁸ Because of this the shallow valleys and adjacent lands are often flooded in the spring. Organic soils occur in the depressed areas which indicates the lack of effective drainage.

The Smith Falls Limestone plain covers about 1400 square miles and straddles the Rideau River. Smith Falls is located almost in the center. This area is fairly level and covered with a thin veneer of soil which is usually less than one foot in depth.³⁹ Limestone outcroppings are quite common. The soils vary from heavy textured clays to light loams and sand but are all classified as Farmington Loams. Drainage is a serious problem and large expanses of muck and peat occur. Because of the shallowness of the soils there is often excess water in the spring and droughty conditions in the summer. Crop production is practically prohibited and the area is classified as submarginal cropland.⁴⁰

The Edwardsburgh Sand Plain covers most of the township of Edwardsburgh and extends into the adjacent townships of Augusta and Matilda. It is glacio-fluvial in origin and has been reworked by wave action. The relief is small ranging from 300' to 400' in altitude. The excess-

Figure 3.2 Physiography of Grenville County and parts of Leeds and Dundas Counties

Source The Physiography of Southern Ontario, Chapman, L.J. and Putman, D.F.,
University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Ontario, 1966, Map 2227 - Eastern Portion.

6. Till Plain (Drumlinized)

9. Limestone Plains

11. Sand Plains

12. Clay Plains

Old shorelines

Organic Soils

ive drainage has leached soluble salts and calcium carbonate out of the soils leaving them acidic and deficient in all important nutrients.⁴¹ The imperfectly drained sands and sandy loams are only fairly well suited to the production of farm crops. The poorly drained sands prevent spring cropping and are only suitable for limited fodder crops.

The Glengarry Till Plain extends from the eastern boundary of the province south westward until forming a narrow band fronting the township of Augusta. It forms the drainage divide between the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Basins. As noted above, ridges were formed by the first glacial advance from the north east. This till is loamy in texture and is very stoney. On the ridges, where it has been reworked by waves, there are boulder pavements. Many of the stoniest areas remain uncleared. The soil is described as immature because of the large amount of calcareous material which has slowed down the weathering process and resulted in a very shallow soil profile.⁴² Those areas of the till plain which are well drained and free of stones are well suited to the production of most cereal grains.

The intervening low lands were filled with clay deposited by the Champlain Sea. The soils on the clay plain contain most plant nutrients but because of poor drainage the soil profile is poorly defined and their use is limited. When weather conditions permit they are capable of yielding cereal crops and are well suited to the production of hay and pasture.⁴³

Shallowness to bedrock and poor drainage are the most limiting factors to agriculture.⁴⁴ Figure 5.9 maps the drainage pattern in Augusta Township. It has been included in Chapter Five for easier reference as the chapter examines the association between soil distribution and settlement patterns.

3.7 Conclusion

The physiography of Augusta Township, as well as the more detailed drainage pattern, reveals a diversified environment. Without the field notes describing the natural vegetation, it is difficult to say just how varied this landscape may have appeared to the early settlers. Using

Kelly's observations,⁴⁵ it is possible to suggest what land may have been avoided by settlers with reference to Figure 5.9.

Organic soils were probably avoided as they were too costly to bring into production. The low lying wet lands, and sandy loams underlain with clay were likely by-passed until after the 1830s when under-drainage techniques were introduced. With these considerations, one might expect practically the entire middle section of the township from the third concession to the sixth concession to be settled in later years. Excessively drained sands and bogs occupy a considerable portion of the north east section of the township and a stretch of land along the western boundary between concessions 4 and 6. According to Kelly's observations, these areas were probably avoided.

The front of the township, along the St. Lawrence and especially in the south west corner, and along the high ridge of the third concession, was probably considered good land as it is broken with deep till soils which are well drained. The Farmington loams, although shallow and relatively infertile, may have been considered easier to bring under cultivation. Sherwood crossed over lots of predominately Farmington loams and described them as good land. They may have been likewise considered by the early settlers. The top soil on these shallow soils likely produced good crops in the first few years of cultivation. The forest cover, before entirely cleared, would also have retained more moisture and summer droughts may not have been as prevalent as they are today. With these considerations, one would expect that those lots containing largely Farmington loams would be taken up before the excessively drained sands and poorly drained sandy loams.

Endnote -- Chapter Three

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3. Ibid., p. 2.
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5. Ibid., p. 121.
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9. Wright, op. cit., p. 4.
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11. cited in Wintemberg, op. cit., p. 122.
12. Ibid., p. 122.
13. Ibid., p. 3.
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19. Ibid., p. 34.
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22. W. A. D. Jackson, "The Lands Along the Upper St. Lawrence: Canadian-American Development During the Nineteenth Century", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, Maryland, U.S., 1953, p. 26; Ruth McKenzie, Leeds and Grenville: The first two hundred years, McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto, Ontario, p. 5.
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24. "Captain Sherwood's Journal", cited in Ernest Cruikshank (ed), The Settlement of the United Empire Loyalists on the Upper St. Lawrence and Bay of Quinte in 1784, A Documentary History, Ontario Historical Society, Toronto, Ontario, 1966, p. .
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33. See L. Chapman and D. Putnam, The Physiography of Southern Ontario, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1966, pp. 5, 338.
34. Ibid., pp. 47-48.

35. Ibid., pp. 19, 47-50.
36. Ibid., p. 117.
37. Ibid., p. 162.
38. Ibid., p. 29.
39. Ibid., p. 72.
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41. Ibid., p. 56; Chapman and Putnam, op. cit., p. 343.
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45. Kenneth Kelly, "Practical Knowledge of Physical Geography In Southern Ontario During the Nineteenth Century", in A. Falconer, B. C. Fahey and R. D. Thompson, (eds), Physical Geography: The Canadian Context, McGraw Hill, Toronto, Ontario, 1974, pp. 10-17.

Chapter Four

The Human Background of the Study Area

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide more detail on the human background of the particular study area within which the themes outlined in Chapter One are explored. The location of roads is described as well as the location of mill seats, villages and urban centers, all of which affected the desire to acquire land or settle in a particular location. A brief description of the area's immediate hinterland is included in order to better understand its effect on the development of the township.

4.2 Transportation and the Development of the Road Network

When the Loyalists arrived in Augusta Township, there were no trails whatsoever. In the adjacent township of Edwardsburg, there was an old Indian trail which commenced at Johnstown and ran north to about the sixth concession.¹ It then turned north east and ran through South Gower Township. Today, Highway 16 follows much the same route.² For the first few years then, the settlers were dependent upon the St. Lawrence River. The importance of the river to the first settlers is well documented. For example, in preparing to settle the Loyalists, Major Jessup submitted plans to Haldimand for relocating Sir John Johnson's men and the Loyal Rangers along the St. Lawrence and both sides of the Ottawa River. This would prevent jealousy over transportation facilities.³ In another instance, Governor-General Haldimand had to deal with dissatisfied officers who claimed that they would rather relinquish their land than ballot for it and take a chance in drawing lots not located on the water.⁴

A variety of sources have been used to reconstruct the early road network in Augusta. Petitions for roads and improvements were laid

before the District Courts of Quarter Sessions. These records are not known to exist for the Johnstown District. The documentation available is fragmented and it has only been possible to produce maps, of varying accuracy, for the years 1815, 1825 and 1850. The most valuable sources for locating roads in Augusta Township have been maps from both the Ontario Archives and the Public Archives of Canada. The following account of the road network prior to 1815 relies upon a few records on highways at the Ontario Archives,⁵ Stegmann's surveying notes⁶ and primarily Ruth McKenzie's county history.⁷

By 1800 the King's Highway was completed through the county.⁸ This road ran along the St. Lawrence from Montreal to Kingston. The road was apparently very poorly kept with dangerous crossings and many hills and gulleys. The settlers preferred to use the 3rd Concession Road which was considered the first real road.⁹ This road was built on a height of land which crossed the entire township and continued two-thirds the way across Elizabethtown. Another early road ran north from Maitland to the fifth concession, curved easterly then north again as far as the seventh concession. This was the beginning of the Maitland-Merrickville Road. There is also a reference to a blazed trail from Merrickville, passing through Augusta and ending at the Blue Church in lot 15, concession 10.

By 1815 no road ran further north than the eighth concession, although there were trails. There were several connecting roads, mostly between the first and second concessions. A map of "Roads in Augusta" dated c1815 shows these roads.¹¹ Why this map was produced and by whom is not known. It is however considered to be quite accurate as it includes only the township of Augusta and shows the concession lines as well as the location of individual houses. Figure 4.1 is an adaption of the original. The roads could be fairly accurately placed with reference to Stegmann's survey notes.¹² Stegmann wrote that he had equalized and marked the 2nd, 3rd and 4th concessions and ran the side roads between lots 6 and 7, 14 and 15, 24 and 25, 29 and 30. Also, McKenzie refers to these connecting roads as "Merwin's Lane just west of Prescott", "the Blue Church Road" and the "Wells Road by the William Wells homestead".¹³

Figure 4.1
Location of Roads - 1815

Adapted from original in PAO, Map Collection,
A7, Roads in Augusta c1815

The place names as well as the Abstract Index to Deeds were helpful in placing these roads.

Along the western boundary line there are a few connecting roads leading west into Elizabethtown Township. These roads would have joined up with a road which ran north from just east of Brockville to the fifth concession. There it branched and connected with other roads. This is now known as the North Augusta Road but it follows a different course beyond the fifth concession.¹⁴ North Augusta is a small village in Augusta Township located in the eighth and ninth concessions on lots 32 and 33.

Unfortunately, the condition of these roads is not known, except for the fact that the settlers preferred the 3rd Concession Road. This appears to have been the situation during the War of 1812-1814 as well being that the road was used as a line of communication for supplies.¹⁵ Also, it appears that the Maitland-Merrickville Road was a major transportation route. This is more evident in later maps of the road network.

Figure 4.2 maps the location of roads in 1825 as recorded on a map compiled by James Grant Chewitt.¹⁶ The map was compiled upon the request of the Commissioners of Internal Navigation for the purpose of showing the proposed route for the Rideau Canal. As the canal was constructed for military purposes, that is to provide internal navigation should the St. Lawrence be blockaded, it is assumed that the major transportation routes were also included for military purposes. Also, it was necessary to know which roads could be used to transport materials and supplies needed for the construction of the canal. Lot and concession lines are not included on this map. The roads have been located arbitrarily. This map is not considered to be accurate. The road pattern is much more symmetrical than either the 1815 or 1850 map. Although road allowances were laid out in such a fashion, the actual construction of the roads usually diverged from this plan as consideration was given to the physical irregularities of the landscape. Furthermore, the map covers the entire area through which the canal passed and it is not likely that the accurate placement of roads was a priority. The map is however useful in that it shows the northern extension of the roads

Figure 4.2
Location of Roads - 1825

Adapted from original in PAC, NMC,
H1 (R)/400, James Chewitt Map-1825

Figure 4.3
Location of Roads - 1850

Adapted from original in PAC, NMC,
H1/400, Rottenburg Map-1850

into the back concessions and linking up to the roads leading to the Rideau settlements. The main Maitland-Merrickville road is included as well as a road leading from around the Blue Church north to the Rideau, the King's Highway, and the 3rd Concession Road. The road along the western boundary line should probably be located west of the line being the North Augusta Road from Brockville.

The 1850 map is outside the study period but is still very useful.¹⁷ It appears that the construction of roads follows very much upon the pattern as laid out by 1815. There is still a concentration of connecting roads in the first two concessions and along the western boundary. There are roads leading from Prescott north to Roebuck then veering west to join the road leading to the Rideau, and east through Edwardsburg, Oxford, and on to Bytown (Ottawa). There is an absence of roads in the center of the township and in the north east quarter in both the 1815 and 1850 maps. In 1815, the north west quarter of the township was without roads but by 1850 was fairly well serviced with connecting roads leading from North Augusta east to the Rideau Road leading to Burritts Rapids. The 1815 and 1850 maps show many similarities which suggests that they are fairly accurate, just how accurate one cannot say. The development of the road network does fit in with the general pattern of development of local and urban centers.

4.3 Growth of Local and Urban Centers

One of the first necessities in a frontier settlement was the construction of a mill. Logs had to be sawed and wheat and corn had to be ground. These early mill seats attracted settlers and often developed into small centers of trade and social interaction.¹⁸ There was, as well, the small mill which was used for only a very short time until a larger and more efficient one was built in the vicinity. Dan Mackay has located many of the early mill seats in the St. Lawrence Counties but as he has pointed out, there is a scarcity of early records pertaining to mills and in many cases evidence of their existence has been wiped off the landscape.¹⁹ In locating mills in Augusta Township, reliance has been made on the Abstract Index to Deeds, the Assessment

Returns, MacKay's thesis, early maps, local records and secondary sources. (See Figure 2.1 for place names.)

It is often stated that the first saw and grist mill in the area was built at Johnstown in Edwardsburg Township about the year 1790.²⁰ This does not appear to be the case however. An early survey map of 1787 records the presence of both a "Watermill" and a "Windmill" in Augusta Township.¹⁹ Both are situated along the St. Lawrence. One would assume that these mills would have been owned by the government as the construction of privately owned mills was forbidden until 1793. There have been no documentary references found concerning these mills. It would however seem only reasonable that the government would have provided the settlers of the New Oswegatchie settlement with mill privileges as they had for those settlers at Cataraqui and Niagara.²⁰

The water mill was located on Ensign Elijah Bottom's grant being lot 26 and the eastern half of lot 27 in concession 1. The assessment lists Bottom as having a grist mill with one run of stone.²¹ Possibly, the government had made a special arrangement with Ensign Bottom relating to mill privileges. The wind mill was located on a part of Ephraim Jone's grant being the east half of lot 20 in concession 1. In 1796, Mrs. Simcoe noted in her diary that they had passed Commissary Jone's saw mill, Ephraim Jones' wind mill and Mr. Cowan's pot ashery near Johnstown.²² Ephraim Jones was the Commissary and the wind mill is undoubtedly the same one, likely used to drive the saw mill. As the 1805 assessment lists only the Bottom mill, it would appear that Jone's mill had fallen out of use.

The assessment return for 1810 lists William Wells as operating a grist mill.²³ These early returns do not record the lot or concession of the persons assessed; however, the Abstract Index to Deeds shows that Wells had bought a parcel of property in the eastern half of lot 27 from Elijah Bottom, with "privileges" which would appear to be mill privileges as Bottom is not assessed for a mill in 1810.²⁴ A transaction on the same lot, dated 1839, refers to the creek which runs through the property as Mill Creek. There are two other grist mills listed as being operated by Samuel Weatherhead and Asa Closson, and by John Read.

The Abstract Index to Deeds was checked to see what property they owned and it was found that they had several lots scattered throughout the township. Selecting the property shown to be located on the water course was not considered to be a reliable means of locating these mills. Streams powerful enough to turn a water wheel may certainly have dried up since then. These two mills had ceased operating by 1815 according to the assessment return of that year²⁵. It is however possible that the property was just not assessed as witnessed in the following example. The Abstract Index to Deeds records a saw mill on the eastern half on lot 8 in concession one included in a property transaction dated October 1821²⁶. The property had been owned by Rice Honeywell since 1799 but the assessment returns do not assess Honeywell or the purchaser, Justus Merwin, for a mill. Interestingly enough, Ruth McKenzie refers to Honeywell's Creek and the 1815 road map shows a creek running through this property which is not shown on present day maps²⁷.

In 1815, there are two grist mills listed, one owned by William Wells, the other by Francis Scott²⁸. It was felt that Scott's mill may have been one of the unlocated mills of 1810 but after checking the Abstract Index to Deeds it does not appear so. Francis Scott owned only one lot at that time being lot 8 in concession 3, which he had patented in 1804. By 1815, David Spencer had built mills on the South Nation River in the adjacent Township of Edwardsburg²⁹. This was the beginning of the village of Spencerville which occupied lot 27, concession 6, just east of the Augusta Township boundary.

The several mill sites which had been established in Augusta Township up to 1815 had failed to develop into any hamlet or village. In fact, there really were no centers at all except for perhaps the works on Commissary Jones property and after 1812 at Prescott. In 1810, Major Edward Jessup had the town site surveyed out of the front of lots 2 and 3 in the first concession. At that time there were only three houses on the site³⁰. The town was named after Robert Prescott, Governor-in-Chief of Canada, 1797 to 1807, and a

noted British General during the American Revolution ³¹.

The town was very slow to develop and in 1813 there were but five houses ³². One of the earliest merchants attracted to the town was William Gickinson who built a wharf and a warehouse and entered into business as a forwarder of supplies ³³. The War of 1812 provided the real impetus for the early growth of Prescott ³⁴. Because of the war, the British quickly organized troops to protect the St. Lawrence shipping route which was the major transportation route for supplies. This was especially necessary at such places as canals and rapids. Troops were based at several points along the St. Lawrence including Prescott. Prescott was a particularly vulnerable area because it was located just above a long stretch of rapids and across from the American military post at Ogdensburg ³⁵.

For these reasons, the British decided to build a fort at Prescott. William Merrick, of Merrickville, was foreman and overseer of the carpenters and axemen employed in building Fort Wellington ³⁶. Although it was not completed until the end of the war, it was strongly garrisoned by both local militia and British troops which included several foreign regiments ³⁷. For example, in the summer of 1813, over 200 men of the de Watteville Regiment came to serve at Fort Wellington from Spain where they had been fighting under the Duke of Wellington against the armies of Napoleon. In the same year, the Glengarry Light Infantry Fencibles regiment was revived and Major Macdonell was placed in command of the force at Prescott which was about 500 strong ³⁸. The garrison also included 120 of the King's Regiment (Liverpool), some of the 41st regiment (Welsh), 40 of the Royal Newfoundlander and about 200 Canadian militia ³⁹. After the Americans had attacked and looted the town of Brockville, in Elizabethtown Township, Macdonell's men attacked Ogdensburg and burned all the military buildings and ships preventing the Americans from re-establishing a military post there for the balance of the war. After this skirmish, everything quieted down but many of the troops remained stationed at the fort.

The local inhabitants were called upon to provide labour and supplies to the garrison which put an unaccustomed quantity of cash into circulation ⁴⁰. In the winter of 1813-14, food prices became so high that martial law was proclaimed and price controls established ⁴¹. According to Mary Quayle Innis, money was freely spent during the war and merchants extended credit to such an extent that at the close of the war, when the circulation of money decreased, an estimated two-thirds of the farmers in Upper Canada would have been ruined should the merchants have chosen to collect their debts ⁴². Many of the farmers returned to "ravished and uncultivated farms" and some were forced to sell their property because of debt.

The importance of the St. Lawrence route was keenly felt throughout the war and shipbuilding took on even greater importance ⁴³.

Prescott was one of the centers where ships were built. In 1816, the first steamboat on Lake Ontario was built at Bath for "the purpose of transporting stores and merchandise from Prescott to Kingston..." ⁴⁴. With the introduction of steam navigation, Prescott became a principal transshipping port where goods were transferred from river boat to lake boat. Also, in 1816, a regular stage run between Montreal and Kingston was established and Prescott became a major stopping place ⁴⁵. Travellers would often leave Montreal by stage and travel as far as Prescott where they could transfer into a steamer bound for Kingston and the western settlements ⁴⁶.

The activity generated by the war was partially responsible for attracting merchants to the town. Not only were merchants involved in the transshipment of goods but some established small industries. Prescott did not have the advantages of water power but an enterprising Indian merchant built a windmill less than a mile east of Fort Wellington in 1822 ⁴⁷. This stone windmill still stands today and is best remembered for its role in the 1837-38 Rebellion. In November of 1838, nearly 200 American sympathizers and a handful of rebels tried to seize Fort Wellington which, having left fall into ruins, was being rebuilt ⁴⁸. Meeting with troops stationed at

the fort, they took refuge in the windmill where they held out for four days before surrendering. Another industry operating at the time the windmill was built was a saw mill located just west of Prescott on Honeywell's Creek, being lot 3, concession 1⁴⁹.

In 1825, John Howison noted that:

Prescott although no more than a village at present, must eventually become a place of some importance; for it may be termed the head of the schooner and sloop navigation... Prescott must be made a depot for all merchandise sent to the western parts of the province and likewise for all produce forwarded from thence to Montreal.⁵⁰

In 1834, the town was incorporated as a police village⁵¹. By 1835, the population was about 500 and the town was described as one of considerable commercial importance, completely overshadowing old Johnstown⁵². There were shipyards, wholesale and retailing businesses, a foundry for building steam engines, a distillery, pottery, and other small businesses. The forwarding business was very active.

As early as 1835, the future of Prescott was questioned. The Rideau Canal had been opened in 1832 and diverted some of the carrying trade, particularly the up trade, from the St. Lawrence⁵³. Also, steamers were being built that could descend the St. Lawrence as far as the Long Sault which meant that Prescott was no longer at the foot of the steamboat navigation. A real blow to the town came in 1842 when the canal was opened at Cornwall⁵⁴. These technological changes had an adverse effect upon other small ports along the river and lake as well, relegating them to local trade and service centers⁵⁵.

The railroad boom of the 1850's also had an adverse effect upon Prescott as goods could be transported overland, non-stop. The Prescott-Bytown railroad gave some business to the town as lumber was shipped from Ottawa to Prescott where it was reloaded onto boats bound for Ogdensburg and the American market⁴⁹. In 1852, the population of Prescott was about 2156⁵⁷. Businesses included a steam flouring mill, foundry, merchants stores and various mechanics shops of various kinds. It was also noted at the time that

the country immediately in rear of the town was very indifferent for agricultural purposes ⁵⁸. Similar comments were made about the country traversed by the Bytown-Prescott Railroad; the southern portion of Grenville County was both timbered and swampy; it was not until the traveller came within a few miles of Kemptville that he would see extensively cleared fields ⁵⁹.

The village of Maitland on the other hand was surrounded by good farming country which boasted some of the finest farms in the county ⁶⁰. The advantages of this site were early recognized by George Longley who in 1826 settled at Maitland and launched the village into a busy milling and shipping center ⁶¹. Longley had surveyed the area for timber much earlier as an agent for the Royal Navy ⁶². Apparently, the trees, being oak and pine, were marked with the "King's Arrow", felled and hauled to Maitland where they were made into rafts and floated down river to Quebec. This was around 1812, after Napoleon's continental blockade which meant a great demand for Canadian timber to maintain the British Navy.

Before Longley moved to Maitland, a Ziba Phillips had laid out the east side of the village around 1818 ⁶³. The village is named after Sir Peregrine Maitland, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada from 1818 to 1828. Local histories claim that George Longley moved to Maitland in 1826, however, he had purchased land in lots 30 and 31 four years earlier ⁶⁴. Longley's business interests were probably promoted by his marriage to Ruth Wells in 1824. Ruth was the daughter of William Wells of Augusta, who had extensive operations in the lumber business stretching along the St. Lawrence, the Bay of Quinte and the Rideau River ⁶⁵. Longley was active in the square timber business for several years ⁶⁶. In 1829, he built a stone tower as a windmill for grinding grain. This project proved unsuccessful so he imported a steam engine from England which is claimed to be the first used in Upper Canada ⁶⁷. This was a flour mill and the business steadily increased until it became one of the largest milling industries west of the Ottawa River ⁶⁸. Buildings, wharves, and

warehouses sprang up at Maitland and steamships regularly called at the port. Supplies bound for the Rideau settlements were transferred at Maitland⁶⁹. The village was given a further boost during the construction of the Rideau Canal. All the supplies going to Merrickville and its vicinity were unloaded at Maitland and forwarded north by team and sleigh along the Maitland-Merrickville Road⁷⁰. By 1852, the village had a population of about 200, "a church, school house, post office, a large steam fouring mill, merchants' stores and mechanics' shops"⁷¹.

Another village which was active in the township during the study period was North Augusta, or Bellamy's Mills as it was initially called. In 1816, four Bellamy brothers moved from Vermont to Upper Canada⁷². In 1821, Chauncey, Samuel, and Hiram Bellamy purchased the site which was to become the village of North Augusta, being the north half of lot 34 in the 8th concession, adjacent to the Maitland-Merrickville Road⁷³. This purchase also included the mill rights on the stream which passed through the property and a partially built saw mill. In 1826, the Bellamys started selling small parcels of land to other small businessmen⁷⁴. One such entrepreneur was Aaron B. Pardee whose mother was a sister of the Bellamy brothers⁷⁵. Pardee opened up a tannery and shoe making shop. In the years that followed a grist mill, distillery, pot and pearl ash works, woolen mill, cloth dressing works, shingle factory, general store, and post office were opened in the village⁷⁶. By 1852, the village was said to have a population of about 250⁷⁷. It was connected to Brockville by a "plank macadamized road" and the surrounding country was described as "rapidly clearing up" with many improved farms⁷⁸.

Dan Mackay refers to a "Lordmill" built in Augusta some time between 1823 and 1833⁷⁹. Present day maps record a village by the name of Lord Mills on lot 22, Concession 4. The South Nation River passes through this lot and no doubt a mill was operated there. The Abstract Index to Deeds records a Charles Lord purchasing the property in November 1827, but by June 1828 he had re-sold all of it⁸⁰.

Lord purchased the property for £25 and sold it for £200 so it would seem very likely that he had built a mill on the lot thus explaining the incredible rise in value, and of course the place name. There are no references today of the village having existed there.

4.4 Summary

Milling facilities were available to the settlers of Augusta at a very early date. These mill sites were short lived but as one ceased operating another was built. It is quite possible that there were mills that have not been located. Of those which have been located within the study period, all but three were built along the St. Lawrence. The earliest mills in the adjacent townships were also located close to the river at Brockville and Johnstown. The other three mills appear to have been located close to existing roads, being the Third Concession Road and the Maitland-Merrickville Road. Also, the Spencerville mill was built close to the old Indian trail which became a major road.

The early mill seats in Augusta Township did not develop into villages. After 1820, Prescott, Maitland, and North Augusta grew into sizeable settlements but their growth can be attributed to factors other than the provision of milling facilities. Maitland and Prescott possessed good harbours and much of their industry was related to the St. Lawrence shipping and forwarding trade. The growth of these villages was affected by changing technology which drastically changed the nature and pattern of the St. Lawrence trade. Furthermore, there was strong competition from the nearby port of Brockville which had the advantage of being the administrative center of the district which was a particularly important factor in the early growth of towns⁸¹. The growth of villages and towns was also related to the productivity and needs of the hinterland⁸². This topic will be examined in the following section.

4.5 The Hinterland

River and lake ports were often the focus of trade for an area running miles inland⁸³. Such was the case for the St. Lawrence ports in the Johnstown District. Brockville, Maitland, Prescott and Johnstown served a wide area which included the townships along the Rideau from the Upper Rideau Lakes to perhaps the eastern boundary of Grenville County. This country, which will be referred to as the Rideau Settlements, was slow to develop and did not offer enough advantages to hold any sizeable population.

In very early years, even before the Rideau townships were surveyed, a few adventurous pioneers from the St. Lawrence settlements had made their way to the banks of the Rideau⁸⁴. Mill sites were selected and limited settlements grew up around them but for many years these tiny communities remained isolated and largely self sufficient. Roads into the interior were lacking or at best inadequate and they were separated from the St. Lawrence settlements by large tracts of land held by absentee owners.

As noted earlier, the land grants to Loyalists and military claimants were very generous and the front townships were quickly located. Many of these grants could not be accommodated in the first townships surveyed and therefore the rear townships were opened up for that purpose⁸⁵. In 1791, a list containing the names of thirty-three reduced officers residing in the Lunenburg District and entitled to additional land grants was laid before the Executive Council⁸⁶. The amount of land still due these officers came to 48,600 acres. It was this kind of situation which retarded the settlement of many of the rear townships. Oxford Township was first surveyed in 1791 and ten years later still contained only fourteen settlers, all Harris by name⁸⁷. The settlement of Wolford township was slow because of similar reasons. In response to Gourlay's questionnaire the inhabitants complained that Americans had come in upon the invitation of the government, obtained title to their lands then sold them to speculators who held them at a prohibitive price⁸⁸.

Following the War of 1812, American immigration was brought to a halt and British emigration to Upper Canada was encouraged and assisted⁸⁹. Military settlements were planned in the Rideau area which could repel any future invasion. Disbanded soldiers and officers, as well as British immigrants, were settled at Richmond and Perth. By the spring of 1816, a road had been completed from Brockville to Perth crossing the townships of Elizabethtown, Kitley, North and South Elmsley⁹⁰. This road became the chief line of communications and route for supplies⁹¹.

While the immigrants were waiting to be settled some twenty-five petitioned the government for land elsewhere⁹². Since their arrival they had learned that the lands to be settled were subject to early frost, were badly watered for cattle and at an immense distance from the St. Lawrence with no water conveyance for their wood or produce. The land in the township of North Burgess, adjacent to the Perth settlement was described as of poor quality "unsuited for agriculture, rocky and swampy"⁹³.

Most of the townships along the Rideau, from Kingston to Merrickville, were comprised of poor agricultural lands with small pockets of good land in several townships⁹⁴. This of course did not help to attract immigrants to the area. By 1824, the populations were: South Gower - 426, Oxford - 359, Marlborough and Montague, including Smith Falls - 539, North and South Elmsley - 232, North Burgess - 227, Wolford, including Merrickville - 509, Bastard - 243, Drummond including Perth 1983, and Kitley - 575⁹⁵.

• The completion of the Rideau Canal in 1832, which opened up the Rideau area to lumbering, and the massive immigration characteristic of the 30's and 40's, contributed significantly to the development of the area⁹⁶. By 1836, the populations of several of the townships had increased: Oxford - 1892, Marlborough - 638, Montague - 1,361, North and South Elmsley - 1481, Wolford - 1,136, Drummond - 2,793, Kitley - 1999⁹⁷. The industry and trade generated by this increase was largely captured by the centers which had grown up along the canal

such as Smiths Falls, Merrickville, Burritts Rapids, and of course Perth. In 1835, the Tay Canal was completed which gave Perth direct access to the Rideau waterway. Prior to this the closest market for the settlers in that vicinity was Brockville⁹⁸. During the winter months supplies were still forwarded to the Rideau settlements and lumbering areas from the river ports, especially Brockville and Maitland⁹⁹.

The spread of the lumbering industry into the Rideau area opened up an important market to farmers¹⁰⁰. It also provided many with winter employment. The population of many of the townships reached its peak by 1851 and some out migration was evident by 1861¹⁰¹. Local centers such as Smiths Falls, Merrickville, and Perth continued to increase in size. By 1870, the timber reserves along the Rideau were pretty well depleted and by 1881 practically all of the townships were recording losses in rural population¹⁰².

4.6 Summary

Absentee ownership and land speculation withdrew a considerable amount of land from settlements within the immediate hinterland of Augusta Township. Poor agricultural land and a lack of roads also deterred settlers from taking up lands in the Rideau townships. Small settlements grew around mill sites and planned military settlements were established. The Rideau Canal provided the impetus for growth and opened up the area to lumbering. The population of the area increased significantly and the local centers grew accordingly. Once the timber was depleted there was little to hold the settler. It might also be assumed that the immigrant would have realized by this time that the land was not suitable for agriculture and thus moved on to something else. By the 1860s and 70s there was an outmigration. Of the rural population that stayed, many enlarged their holdings and turned to dairying and cheese making.

4.7 Conclusions

The growth of towns in Augusta Township was limited by an under-developed and relatively poor hinterland. Much of the trade generated by the Rideau settlements was captured by Brockville in the early years and then diverted to the Rideau waterway upon the completion of the canal. Maitland shared in some of the forwarding trade as supplies could be moved over the Maitland-Merrickville Road. Prescott would have served some of the area, but its major function continued to be as a transshipment port for freight carried on the St. Lawrence. Changes in transportation facilities and the growth of larger manufacturing and service centers enjoying a more productive hinterland, such as Toronto and Hamilton, were also significant factors contributing to the stagnation of these ports¹⁰³. This decline was however not readily apparent until the second half of the nineteenth century.

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Chapter Five

The Acquisition of Land

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the acquisition and occupation of land in Augusta Township and to analyze the role of accessibility and the physical environment in the settlement process. The rate of land alienation and the issue of absentee ownership is compared to other studies of settlement in Upper Canada. The development of the township, expressed in terms of population and improved land, is compared with other townships settled under similar circumstances.

5.2 Methodology and Data Sources

The first part of this chapter includes a brief look at the settlement in 1784 as described in the Haldimand Papers¹ and the allotment of location tickets as recorded on a surveyor's map of 1787². The names and locations of persons receiving certificates is compared to those actually patenting the land as recorded in the Abstract Index to Deeds³. A histogram showing the rate at which land was patented is included which is compared with several other studies on settlement in Upper Canada. Another histogram showing the patenting of Crown and Clergy Reserves is included. The location of the reserved lands has been gleaned from various Schedules of Crown and Clergy Reserves at the Public Archives of Ontario and are shown on the maps used in this chapter⁴.

A series of eight maps are presented showing the occupation of land between 1805 and 1840, as reflected in the Assessment Returns, the earliest available being 1803⁵. A cross sectional approach is used with a five year interval. The early assessment returns do not

record the lot and concession of the person assessed which limits their usefulness in reconstructing the earliest settlement patterns. However, another method is used employing both the Assessment Returns and the Abstract Index to Deeds in an attempt to show lots which were probably not occupied. This method, as well as its shortcomings, is discussed later in the chapter. An adaption of a map showing the location of houses, dated circa 1815, is included which enables a much more detailed analysis of the early settlement pattern⁶. The original is in the Public Archives of Ontario.

A fairly complete population graph has been compiled from various sources including the Haldimand Papers, the F.D. Smith Papers⁷ at the Public Archives of Ontario, the Census Returns⁸, and the Appendices to the Journals of the House of Assembly in Upper Canada⁹. These Journals are also used to tabulate the population figures and the improved acreage for seven other townships along the St. Lawrence comprising the New Oswegatchie and New Johnstown settlements.

5.3 The First Year of Settlement

As noted earlier the New Oswegatchie settlement, being Townships 6 (Edwardsburg), 7 (Augusta), and 8 (Elizabethtown) was allotted to men formerly attached to Jessup's Loyal Rangers. Captain Justus Sherwood superintended the settlement. The Loyalists arrived during the early summer months of 1784 and by July there were 495 persons in the three townships¹⁰. On July 2, Captain Sherwood reported that upwards of 50 lots were settled throughout Townships 6, 7, and 8 and the settlement was rapidly progressing¹¹. Sherwood himself settled in Augusta Township and stated that "any farm was tolerably good". On July 23, he wrote that everyone was on their farm and almost every lot in the front of the townships was showing considerable improvements.¹² In May, 1785, Major Jessup reported that when he left the settlement in September 1784, there were nearly 600 people¹³.

5.4 Land Grants 1784-1787

In 1784, General Haldimand ordered that Deputy Surveyors be stationed at each new settlement to assign land and issue certificates or location tickets. These location tickets recorded the names of the grantee and the particular lot assigned him. The certificates were issued by Captain Justus Sherwood and are recorded on the 1787 map. This map shows that practically every lot from concession 1 to concession 8 was assigned. Lots 1 through 8 and lot 11 in concession 9 were also located. Although the lots had been assigned, it was noted in Chapter 3 that by 1787 only the first three concessions had been surveyed.

Haldimand had issued specific instructions that the grants were to be made on an impartial basis; however, the consolidated blocks of land granted in the front two concessions indicates that there was a show of favoritism. Eight persons were granted 5,600 acres in the first two concessions: Major Edward Jessup - 1,200 acres, Captain Justus Sherwood - 700 acres, Commissary Ephraim Jones - 500 acres, Ensign Elijah Bottom - 600 acres, and Captain John Jones - 1200 acres. The remaining grants were broken up into 100 and 200 acres totalling 440 in all.

The names and locations on the map were compared with those on the deeds of patent which are recorded in the Abstract Index to Deeds. It was found that only 211 of the lots were actually patented by the same person to whom it had been initially granted. This is an approximate figure as some of the names were rather illegible. The locations of the lots which changed hands are mapped in Figure 5.1. There was a fairly even spread of transfers in the first six concessions averaging 30 lots in each. Only 15 transfers took place in concessions seven and eight. Of the eight lots located in concession nine, only three changed hands.

The sale and exchange of location tickets was widespread throughout the settlements¹⁴. A closer look at the persons selling location tickets in Augusta suggests that the vast majority did not stay in

Source: P.A.O., Abstract Index to Deeds; Department of Lands and Forests, Toronto, Field Notes and Reports, Surveys, Town Plans, Mfm roll no. 15, Plan of Augusta, Surveyed 1785 and 1787.

the township. Many were obviously disbanded from the military and perhaps settled amongst neighbours in Edwardsburg, Elizabethtown, or Ernestown Townships, all allotted to Jessup's Corps. The amount of land available allowed many of those who did settle to purchase more favorably located lots. Some were able to amass considerable holdings. For example, Rice Honeywell was issued 100 acres but patented an additional 1000¹⁵. Joseph Bass was not one of the original grantees yet acquired and patented 1000 acres. Even large landowners bought up more land. Ephraim Jones acquired an additional 550 acres. Lieutenant Alexander Campbell acquired another 775 acres, his initial grant being 700 acres. Other persons actively buying location tickets include Lieutenant James Campbell - 500 acres, Samuel Heck - approximately 950 acres, Lieutenant David Breckenridge - 600 acres, Caleb Clawson - 500 acres and Levius P. Sherwood - 800 acres.

5.5 Land Patents and the Occupation of Land

In 1791, the Constitutional Act guaranteed settlers the right to hold their land in free and common socage. This necessitated the conversion of location tickets into deeds of patent. The issuing of patents was however delayed until 1796 at which time a table of fees was agreed upon. The process for obtaining a patent involved reference to six officials and the Lieutenant Governor¹⁶. If the grant had passed to an heir, been devised by will, or assigned, before patented the claim had to be proved before the Heir and Devisee Commission before the patent could be issued in the name of the claimant. This all took time with the result that patents were often issued after the lot had been located and settled. Other persons may not have been aware of, or concerned about, the necessity of patenting land. The time lapse between the granting of land and the date of patent is referred to as patent lag.

As one would expect, patenting in Augusta Township began at an early date, 1796, and continued unbroken until the War of 1812. (Figure 5.2) This initial period accounts for 66 per cent of all

Figure 5.2
Frequency of Land Patents 1796-1840

Source: PA0, Abstract Index to Deeds

patents taken out. This percentage would be considerably higher if the reserved lands were omitted. Figure 5.5 shows that all of the tenth concession and practically all of the ninth concession was reserved for the Crown and the Clergy, the Crown Reserves accounting for only seven lots. By 1805, only 8600 acres of located lands remained to be patented. Practically all of the first two concessions were patented. (See Figure 5.5.) Most of the unpatented lots were located in concessions 6, 7, and 8 and between lots 1 and 8 in the fourth and fifth concessions. Between 1805 and 1810, 3500 acres were patented and another 1300 acres were patented between 1810 and 1815. Figures 5.7 and 5.11 show that the relatively small acreage of located land which remained unpatented in 1815 and 1820 was largely located in a section bounded by lots 1 and 12 in concession 4 to 6. It was not until about 1846 that the Clergy Reserves began to be patented in earnest (Figure 5.3). Prior to this, only the seven Crown Reserves located in concession 10, patented between 1820 and 1828, the Glebe lots in Concession 4, patented in 1836, and the two Commons lots were patented.

As shown in Figure 5.2, the main rush of patenting occurred between the years 1801 and 1804 and is in keeping with the general trend in Upper Canada as a whole. Gates explains that the incredible volume of patents processed between 1798 and 1804 was not to be equalled in any other year except 1824¹⁷. In comparing the rate of land alienation in Augusta with that of other townships the pattern is similar. For example, by 1810 most of the adjacent township of Elizabethtown had been taken up and the greatest number of patents were taken out between 1800 and 1805¹⁸. Kingston and Pittsburgh Townships in Frontenac County were surveyed about the same time and were nearly all patented by 1814 except for the large blocks of reserved lands¹⁹. The second tier of townships in that County, being Loughborough and Portland, were for the most part patented. Further north in the townships of East and West Hawkesbury much of the land was alienated by 1811²⁰. Patenting in Essex County, located in

Figure 5.3
Frequency of Land Patents Taken out on Reserved Land

Source: PAO, Abstract Index to Deeds

southern Ontario, reflects two major periods separated by the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 ²¹. Again, the years 1800 to 1805 show a marked increase in the number of patents taken out which was surpassed only in the period 1835 to 1840 and 1845 to 1850. Patents taken out in Malden, Sandwich North and East, Colchester South, Sandwich West and Gosfield South Townships totalled more than 50 per cent by 1820 ²². The Home District shows similar patterns ²³. For example, between 1797 and 1800 only 3,620 acres were patented in King Township. Between 1801 and 1803 38,984 acres were patented being 69 per cent of the total land available. Uxbridge Township was surveyed in 1804 and by 1809 96.6 per cent of the available lands were taken up. Johnson states that this "land rush" pattern of patenting continued between 1805 and the War of 1812. In all but two of the 13 townships, over 50 per cent of the lands open for location were patented by 1812.

Although land in Augusta Township was quickly patented, excepting of course the Crown and the Clergy Reserves, it says little about the actual occupation of that land. Many persons received land that did not intend to settle while others received more land than they could possibly manage. It was found that 36 persons had patented 26,490 acres by 1805, being 55.4 per cent of the total acreage patented. An additional 1764 acres was patented by 1810, 600 by 1815 and 150 by 1820. These figures are consistent with other studies. In the Home District for example 55.4 per cent of the land patented between 1795 and 1799 was patented by individuals acquiring more than 500 acres ²⁴. Of the patented land in Essex County in the period 1796 to 1800, 52.9 per cent was acquired by persons patenting over 400 acres ²⁵. Between 1801 and 1805 the percentage increased to 57.3 per cent.

An attempt was made to identify those persons patenting over 400 acres in Augusta Township. It was found that very little information exists except for the more prominent families such as the Jessups, Sherwoods, and Jones. The biographical data is listed in Table 6.2 in the following chapter. Of the 36 large patentees identified, 24 were military claimants of which 15 were officers attached to

Jessup's Corps. This is certainly in accord with what one would expect in a township surveyed for the purpose of accommodating these men. Six of the patentees were United Empire Loyalist claimants and four were American settlers. Two have not been identified.

The assessment returns were used in conjunction with the sources listed above to identify non-residents. Only eight have been so identified. These persons patented 5,571 acres by 1810, being only 10.8 per cent of the total acreage patented, a relatively small amount compared to other areas. Johnson has pointed out that absentee ownership in the Home District was particularly manifest in those townships which were in close proximity to York²⁶. In 1805, only 12.2 per cent of the lands patented in Scarboro, King, Pickering and Whitby Townships were actually occupied. Scott Township was opened for location in 1807 and by 1813 92.8 per cent had been patented but all by absentee owners. Weldon's study of East and West Hawkesbury Townships has shown that absentee ownership was widespread²⁷. Weldon attributes the attraction of land speculators to the influence of the North West Company and its use of the Ottawa River to travel into the interior.

The fact that there were a small number of non-resident owners in Augusta Township can be attributed to the fact that it was a planned settlement. Lots were assigned by 1787 and except for the reserved lands all had been located. Subsequent acquisitions of land would have been made by purchase and with the availability of free lands speculators would have looked elsewhere. It was however noted that persons were buying up location tickets, most of whom have been identified in Table 6.1 and are known to be resident landowners. These large patentees owned more land than they could possibly occupy, some obviously speculating in land, and therefore were in a position to influence the settlement of the township. Figure 5.4 maps the location of lots patented by persons acquiring over 400 acres.

Before proceeding with an analysis of the roles of accessibility and the physical environment in the settlement process, it was necessary

Figure 5.4 Location of Patented Land by Large Landowners (greater than 400 acres)

to determine which lots were actually occupied. The occupation of land would normally be recorded in the assessment returns. However, in the case of Augusta Township, the location of the persons assessed is not recorded until after 1820. However, another method has been used to produce maps which suggest areas of occupation. By compiling a list of all landowners for the years 1805, 1810, 1815, and 1820 and comparing it with the assessment returns for those years, it was possible to identify those landowners who were not assessed and to map their property. These lots are assumed to have been unoccupied. The land retained and purchased by those persons who had patented over 400 acres is also assumed to have been unoccupied as they were possibly speculating in land and withholding it from actual settlement. The Crown and the Clergy Reserves as well as those lots not patented are also assumed to have been unoccupied. The remaining lots are those owned by the smaller landowners who were assessed and apparently settled on their land.

The four maps produced in this manner do not account for the fact that the large landowner may have resided on a part of his holding. However, it is felt that this problem is confined to the first three concessions as it is assumed that they would have settled near the river and existing roads. Another shortcoming is the fact that many of the smaller landowners, although assessed, held lots scattered throughout the township, several of which would not have been occupied. Furthermore, there is always the possibility that some persons were simply not assessed, or the land was rented out and assessed under the tenants name. While keeping in mind these limitations, the following analysis is offered.

Figure 5.5 shows that although the large patentees still retained a considerable amount of land by 1805, they had sold off some acreage. Approximately 4,412 acres had been sold of which 2,500 acres was located within the first five concessions, almost half in Concessions 1 and 2. In this same time period, some of these landowners purchased 900 acres throughout these concessions. Ten lots were sold by the

Figure 5.5 Land Ownership - 1806

Source: P.A.O., Abstract Index to Deeds and Assessment Returns; P.A.O., R81, A-IV, Vol. 32
 *Crown and Clergy Reserves Purchased by the Canada Company, 1824, R81, A-VI-5, Vol. 7,
 *Clergy Reserves, 1844; P.A.C., R81, L7, Vol. 31, *Statement of Clergy Reserves Sold, 1841;
 Ontario Archives Land Record Index, Township Listing no. 008.

large patentees in concessions 6, 7, and 8 but six were bought, in addition to 12 more, by others having patented over 400 acres. The remaining lots which were patented and whose owners were on the assessment roll were scattered throughout the township. It is assumed that only those in concessions 1 to 5 were actually occupied considering the large tracts of land held by large landowners, not assessed and not patented in concessions 6, 7 and 8.

By comparing Figures 5.5 and 5.6 one can see that little had changed by 1810. Only about 690 acres remained to be patented in concessions 1, 2 and 3 which contained few lots which were not assessed. A large tract of land in concession 4 would appear to have been unoccupied. It will be remembered that in the same year Reuben Sherwood was running the concession line for concession 5, west of lot 10, and concessions 7 to 11. In running the fifth concession Sherwood noted that lots 25 to 31 were all improved with "people resident thereon".²⁸ This reference strongly suggests that had there been settlers and improvements made in the other concessions surveyed Sherwood would have noted it. If this was the case then settlement was very limited in the fifth concession and certainly no further north than the sixth. The lots Sherwood refers to were for the most part unassessed in 1810 but assessed in 1815 which points out one of the problems encountered in using the assessment records.

By comparing Figures 5.6 and 5.7 one can see that the large patentees had sold off a few more lots in concessions 1 to 3. More landowners were assessed in concessions 4, 5, and 6. Lot 29 in concession 6, the western half of lot 35, lot 33 and the eastern half of lot 31 in concession 7 had been patented as well as the eastern half of lot 27 in concession 8. The eastern half of the township between concessions 5 to 9 remained virtually the same.

Although the method used has several limitations, the pattern emerging by 1815 is comparable to a map showing the actual location of houses and roads c1815. Figure 5.8 clearly shows that the

(Sources same as Figure 5.5)

scale - 1 104 480

- Held by owners having over 400 acres (either assessed or non-assessed)
- Not patented
- Owned by small owners but not assessed
- Clergy reserves
- Crown reserves
- Owned by small owners and assessed

(Sources same as Figure 5.5)

Figure 5.8
Location of Roads and Houses c1815

Adapted from original map of
"Roads in Augusta", PAO, Map
Collection, A7, c1815

Figure 5.9 DRAINAGE MAP OF AUGUSTA TOWNSHIP

settlement was tied to the road network in a very definite pattern. The entire waterfront was dotted with houses which was to be expected. They not only enjoyed the advantages of water transportation but it will be remembered that the early mill sites were located along the St. Lawrence. Also, the King's Highway followed along the waterfront giving access to the early supply and administrative center at Johnstown, and after 1808 Brockville. Houses were also concentrated along the 3rd Concession Road which was considered to be better than the King's Highway. Another concentration of houses was strung out along a road leading from about the middle of lot 35 in the fourth concession to the Maitland-Merrickville Road, north-east to Wells Road and continuing east to the Rideau Road. There was also settlement between lots 1 and 12 in concessions 2, 3, and 4.

By comparing the location of houses with the drainage map of Augusta, Figure 5.9, it becomes apparent that the physical environment significantly influenced both the road network and the settlement pattern. The well drained loams on the till plain were settled being largely located in concessions 1 and 3. The 3rd Concession Road was built on the height of land which separates the St. Lawrence and Ottawa drainage basins. The houses which would normally have been located at the front of the lots were instead located in the rear of the lot on well drained soils and fronting the road. The connecting roads along the western boundary, particularly in concessions 6 and 7 were built around the swamp. Most of the houses were situated on well, imperfectly drained loams and Farmington loams and only nine were located on the poorly drained clays.²⁹ Whereas there were houses located along the Maitland-Merrickville Road in concessions 1 and 2 there is an absence of houses along the road north of the intersection with the 3rd Concession Road. This was swampy land. Also, the houses along the road leading from the 4th concession to the Rideau River Road are located on well and imperfectly drained loams as well as the shallow Farmington loams. They avoid the large swamp to the north and the poorly drained loams which cover most of the clay plain, to

Figure 5.10
Population Graph 1784-1840 Augusta Township

Source: Ernest Cruikshank, (ed), The Settlement of the United Empire Loyalists on the Upper St. Lawrence and Bay of Quinte in 1784, A Documentary History, Ontario Historical Society, Toronto, Ontario, 1966; Ruth McKenzie, Leeds and Grenville: The first two hundred years, McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto, Ontario; PAO, F. D. Smith Papers, Package #23; PAC, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Assembly in Upper Canada; PAC, MG 9, D8-8 and D8-1.

(Sources same as Figure 5.5)

the south. There was an obvious preference for the well drained loams as the roads actually link up with the scattered pockets of well drained soils. This can be seen again in the eastern part of concessions 2, 3, and 4. The roads cut across the shallow and excessively drained soils, skirt the clay plain and connect up with the pockets of well drained soils where the houses are located.

Settlement does not appear to have been retarded by land speculation or absentee ownership. Although the large patentees still owned quite a few lots in concessions 6, 7, and 8 they had continually sold off property in the front concessions allowing for more compact settlement. Figure 5.10 charts the growth of population between 1784 and 1840. Although the records are fragmented it is still clear that there was a steady increase in population up to 1804 which stabilized until after 1817. This indicates there was little demand for land after 1805. The assessment returns show that acreage cultivated in 1805, 1810, and 1815 was 5645 acres, 6385 acres and 5887 acres respectively which again shows steady improvements up to 1810. The decrease in acreage cultivated between the years 1810 and 1815 is attributed to the war as the men were called out for the militia. The total acreage reported assessed is misleading as the returns before 1821 included at least some land owned outside the township.

Figure 5.11 shows that by 1820, more land had been sold by the large patentees in concessions 1 and 2, particularly in the Maitland area. A few lots were also sold in the vicinity of North Augusta and patents were taken out on the Crown Reserves in concession 10, otherwise the pattern remains the same as in 1815. Figure 5.10 shows that between 1817 and 1820 the population of Augusta increased by almost 700 persons. This increase undoubtedly created a market for land explaining the sales of property which took place. The growth of population can be attributed to the disbanding of troops following the War of 1812 as some took up residence in the township, and immigration. Because of the war, American immigration into Upper Canada was

brought to a halt and assisted emigration from the British Isles began. Those destined for Perth arrived in Prescott and Brockville in 1816 and no doubt many of those who could afford to stay in the front townships did, rather than travel some 40 miles to settle in a wilderness surrounded only by more wilderness. Between 1815 and 1820 the reported acreage cultivated increased by 1,558 acres, an increase which can be partially attributed to the increase of population but for the most part reflects the return of men to their farms and the post war boom.

Figure 5.12 maps those lots actually occupied in 1825 and the percentage of land cultivated, aggregated by lot. The pattern of occupation corresponds with the direction of settlement suggested in the maps of preceding years. It can be seen that settlement was pushing north following the road network, particularly the Maitland-Merrickville Road. Eight Clergy Reserves were settled in concession 9. A report from the Surveyor General's office states that by 1825, 25 leases had been granted for Clergy Reserves ³⁰. The Land Registry Index records only 3 leases before 1825 and one between 1825 and 1840 which would appear to be erroneous as 17 persons were assessed on the Clergy Reserves in 1825 ³¹.

Again, the 1825 map shows that the low lying swamp land was avoided in the sixth and seventh concessions and pockets of well drained soils were attracting settlers. This had been a persistent feature in the occupation of land. Since 1815 a few settlers had moved on to the clay plain in concession 4 between lots 10 and 17 but these lots contained at least some well drained loams. The sandy soils along the western boundary between concessions 4 and 6 still remained largely unoccupied. Although it would appear that there were many unoccupied lots along the St. Lawrence it was seen that in 1815 there were houses concentrated all along the waterfront. This was found to be a common problem with the assessment returns. Some lots were simply not assessed. A large percentage of cultivated land in a lot previously not assessed would indicate that it had in fact been occupied.

Between 1825 and 1830 the population increased by 900 persons, again due to British immigration. Figure 5.13 shows a very

Source: PA0, Assessment Return

Source: PAO, Assessment Return

Figure 5.14
Percentage of Assessed Land Cultivated
1821-1840

(Source: PAO, Assessment Returns)

noticeable infilling in the western half of concessions 8 and 9 and movement on to the reserved lots 33 to 37 in the tenth concessions. This movement on to new land explains the decline in the absolute percentage cultivated for the township as shown in Figure 5.14, as more land was assessed. For example, in 1825, 39,994 acres were assessed of which 8,129 were under cultivation. In 1830, 44,503 acres were assessed of which 9,740 acres were cultivated. It will also be remembered that during this time period the Bellamy brothers were building mills on the Kemptville Creek adjacent to the Maitland-Merrickville Road in concession 8. This marked the beginning of a small village which grew up around the mill site. This was also the period of canal construction on the Rideau and the Maitland-Merrickville Road was used for transporting supplies to the construction camps. Still, by 1830 the northeast quarter of the township was not attracting settlers. Referring back to the drainage map, Figure 5.9, one can see that this northeast section was largely excessively drained sands and swamp. There was however a relatively large area of well and imperfectly drained loams but these lots were inaccessible. The Rottenburg map, Figure 4.3, shows that by as late as 1850 the road network had not extended into this area. The extension of roads was obstructed by absentee ownership and land speculators. The first four cross sections showed that the lots in this area which were granted to the large patentees were either retained by them or purchased by other large landowners who were apparently speculating in land. The sales of land by these same landowners elsewhere in the township but the retention of lots in this area indicates that incoming settlers were not willing to buy lots of predominantly sandy soils. Consequently, roads were not built and the good soils remained inaccessible.

Figure 5.15 maps the location of lots, or parts of lots, sold for arrears in taxes in 1830³². These lots are seen to be concentrated in the northeast quarter of the township and show no activity on the Abstract Index to Deeds after the registration of patent. Lots 5 in concessions 8 and 9 had not even been patented.

Figure 5.15 Location of Land Sold for Tax Arrears in 1830

Source: PAO, Assessment Return

Figure 5.17 Assessment of 1840

Table 5.2

St. Lawrence TownshipsPopulation and Assessment Figures, 1826 and 1839

Township	Population in 1826	Population in 1839	% Increase	Total Acreage Assessed	
				1826	1839
				% cult.	% cult.
<u>Eastern District</u>					
Charlottenburg	3629	4507	24.2	71024	76695
Cornwall	3335 ¹	4575 ¹	37.2	57691 ¹	66700 ¹
Osnabrock	1871 ²	3776 ²	101.8	42362 ²	55515 ²
Williamsburgh	1517 ³	3330 ³	119.5	33873 ³	50627 ³
Matilda	1358	2246	65.4	28043	35077
<u>Johnstown District</u>					
Edwardsburgh	1371	2130	55.4	n.a	34139
Augusta	2340	4302	83.9	42321	52213
Elizabethtown	3187	5244	64.5	n.a	66327

1. Includes Roxborough Township

2. Includes Finch Township

3. Includes Winchester Township.

Source: Journals of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada 1828 and 1839/40.

Of the 4,205 acres sold, 1,222 were purchased by William Wells and 1,262 were purchased by George Longley, both lumber merchants and no doubt interested only in the timber on the property.

Figures 5.16 and 5.17 show that in 1835 and 1840 the north-east section remained unoccupied as well as the swamp land and poorly drained sandy loams in concessions 6 and 7. The north-east section continued to attract settlers and more reserved lands were leased and improved.

How did the general progress of Augusta compare with the other St. Lawrence townships allotted to Loyalists and disbanded troops? Population and assessment figures for these townships are readily available for the years 1826 through to 1839. The 1840 assessment returns were apparently not printed. The figures for the years 1826 and 1839 are tabulated in Table 5.2. The assessment returns for the Johnstown District were not broken down into townships until 1834 and so the figures for Edwardsburgh and Elizabethtown were not available for 1826. Population figures show that Augusta was the fourth most populous township in both 1826 and 1839 but experienced a much higher percentage population increase than five of the seven other townships. Even with a smaller population the percentage of land cultivated in 1826 was higher than those townships for which figures are available and second only to Elizabethtown in 1839, a difference of only 1.4 per cent.

5.6 Summary and Conclusions

The first eight concessions and part of the ninth concession were completely located by 1787. When policies concerning the reservation of two-sevenths of all land granted for the use of the Crown and the Clergy were adopted in 1791, they were necessarily located in blocks at the rear of the township in the 9th and 10th Concessions. The allotment of land preceded the survey. Location tickets were issued but quickly changed hands to the tune of almost 50 per cent. A few individuals were actively buying up these

location tickets.

Settlement did not immediately follow land alienation, many persons receiving excess acreage as military claimants and Loyalists, others acquiring land for speculative purposes. Few of the persons patenting over 400 acres were non-residents, the majority being former soldiers and officers attached to Jessup's Loyal Rangers and settling in the township. The biographical information provided by R. Stuart and T. Leavitt suggests that most of the men in Jessup's Corps were former farmers from the State of New York, Vermont and Connecticut³³. The Haldimand Papers included petitions signed by many of them requesting an inland settlement as their intention was to re-establish themselves as farmers. This would explain why there were few non-resident landowners in the adjacent township of Elizabethtown, a point made by Widdis³⁴. Furthermore, the Johnstown District did not have an early fur trading post or forwarding centre and so there were no merchants amongst the large patentees. Merchants at Niagara and Cataraqui settlements have been found to be large land speculators as pointed out by Bruce Wilson³⁵ and Brian Osborne³⁶.

It has been shown that both accessibility and the physical environment were significant factors influencing the settlement pattern. The location of roads and houses deviated from the linear pattern laid out by the survey. Settlers built roads with consideration accorded the physical irregularities in the landscape. The early roads connected up with pockets of well drained loams and the settlers farms were oriented according to the soils. It was found that lots containing a relatively small acreage of well drained soils were sought after. This observation suggests that an oversimplification of a varied physical environment and complex drainage pattern could very well lend itself to misleading interpretations.

The majority of the lots occupied in 1815 contained at least some well or imperfectly drained soils. The poorly drained soils on the clay plain were avoided. The excessively drained sands along the eastern township line were not settled by 1825 and only

slowly attracted settlers. These settlers were probably more influenced by the location of the property rather than its agricultural potential. Likewise, the sandy soils in the northeast quarter of the township were not settled except for those lots containing some well or imperfectly drained loams. The shallow Farmington loams are the most common soil group in the northwest quarter of the township and were settled as population increased and the Maitland-Merrickville Road was completed through this section.

Land speculation and absentee ownership played only a minor role in the settlement pattern. As the population of the township increased the large patentees sold off property allowing for more compact settlement. By following the sales of these properties and mapping the percentage of cultivated land there were indications that there was a stronger land market in the front concessions of the township in the early years which were settled and steadily improved. This market expanded and pushed north following the road network, avoiding the sandy soils in the northeast, most of which were consequently retained by these landowners and subsequently purchased by lumber merchants.

In comparison to the other eight St. Lawrence Townships, Augusta Township was well settled and improved in 1826 and underwent a greater percentage increase in population and improved acreage in the following years up to 1839.

Endnotes--Chapter Five

1. Public Archives of Canada (PAC), Haldimand Papers, MS 14.
2. Public Archives of Ontario (PAO), Map Collection, A7, "Roads in Augusta", c1815.
3. Abstract Index to Deeds for Augusta Township, Genealogical Society of Utah, Mfm Reel # 201679-201681; copy also available at Public Archives of Ontario.
4. PAO, RG 1, A-IV, Vol. 32, "Crown and Clergy Reserves Purchased by the Canada Company, 1824"; RG 1, A-VI-5, Vol. 7, "Clergy Reserves, 1844"; PAC, RG 1, L7, Vol. 31, "Statement of Clergy Reserves Sold...1841"; Ontario Archives Land Record Index, Township Listing #008.
5. PAO, RG 1, MS 262, Municipal Records, Section A, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Assessment Rolls.
6. Ministry of Natural Resources, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, copy available at MacOdrum Library, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario; Field Notes and Reports, Surveys, Town Plans, Mfm Reel #15, "Plan of the Township of Augusta, Survey 1785 and 1787".
7. PAO, F. D. Smith Papers, Package #23.
8. PAC, MG 9, D8-8 and D8-1, Census Returns, Mfm Reel # C-1345.
9. PAC, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada, 1828-1842.
10. PAC, Haldimand Papers, B. 168, 42.
11. Ibid., B. 162, 329.
12. Ibid., 339.
13. Ibid., 385.
14. Lillian Gates, Land Policies in Upper Canada, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Ontario, 1968, pp. 43-58.
15. Total acreages patented calculated by author from Abstract Index to Deeds, PAO, Mfm Reel # 201679-201681.
16. PAC, RG 5, A1, Vol. 40, p. 18859, "Thomas Ridout to Sir Peregrine Maitland", York 22nd August, 1818. This letter describes the process of land granting and patenting.
17. Gates, op. cit., p. 73.

18. Randy Widdis, "A Perspective on Land Tenure in Upper Canada: A Study of Elizabethtown Township, 1790-1840", unpublished M. A. thesis, Department of Geography, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, 1977, pp. 46-47.
19. Brian Osborne, "The Settlement of Kingston's Hinterland", in Gerald Tulchinsky (ed), To Preserve and Defend, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal & London, 1976, p. 67.
20. Jessie Weldon, "The Salient Factors Contributing to the Earliest Settlement Patterns in East and West Hawkesbury Townships Upper Canada 1788-1846", unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, 1980, p. 101.
21. John Clarke, "Aspects of Land Acquisition in Essex County, Ontario, 1790-1900", Histoire Sociale-Social History, Vol. II, No. 21, May 1978, pp. 105-110.
22. Ibid., p. 109.
23. Leo Johnson, "Land Policy, Population Growth and Social Structure in the Home District, 1793-1851", in J. K. Johnson (ed), Historical Essays on Upper Canada, McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto, Ontario, 1975, pp. 36-40.
24. Ibid., p. 40.
25. Clarke, op. cit., p. 107.
26. Johnson, op. cit., p. 40.
27. Weldon, op. cit., p. 103.
28. Ministry of Natural Resources, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, Field Notes and Reports, Books #1-88, Mfm Reel #7, "Reuben Sherwood, No. 27, Field Book No. 1".
29. The actual number of houses located in each of the soil groups is: 64 on well drained loams, 6 on imperfectly drained loams, 30 on shallow soils/variable drainage, 16 on excessively drained sands and sandy loams, and 9 on poorly drained clays and sandy loams underlain with clay. The surveyor, Reuben Sherwood, described the Farmington loams, being the shallow soils/variable drainage group, as good land. If the houses located on these soils are grouped with those on the well drained loams a total of 94, or 75 per cent of the houses, are located on good land.

30. PAO, RG 1, A-IV, Vols 1-81, Schedules and Land Rolls, 1784-1922, Fol. #21, Mfm Reel #11, "Report from Surveyor General's Office, 27 October, 1825.
31. PAO, Ontario Land Registry Index, Township Listing #008.
32. PAC, Appendix to the Journal of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada, 1831, p. 62.
33. E. Rae Stuart, "Jessup's Rangers as a factor in Loyalist Settlement", in Three History Theses, Ontario Department of Public Records and Archives, Toronto, 1961, passim; Thad Leavitt, History of Leeds and Grenville, Mika Silk Screening Limited, Belleville, Ontario, 1972, passim.
34. Widdis, op. cit., p. 49.
35. Bruce Wilson, "The Enterprises of Robert Hamilton: A Study of Wealth and Influence in Early Upper Canada: 1776-1812", unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Department of History, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, 1978, Chapter. VII.
36. Osborne, op.cit., pp. 67-68.

Chapter Six

Land Speculation

6.1 Introduction

The spread of settlement and the development of Augusta Township appears to have occurred in an orderly fashion, beginning near the St. Lawrence and progressively moving north. While land speculation does not seem to have hindered this process, it may have been going on at any rate. The purpose of this chapter is to explore this theme in more detail.

At this point the reader might wonder what is meant by a speculator: how can they be identified? There are no rigid guidelines for identifying speculators. The literature offers various methods over which there is some controversy. The authors do agree that a speculator acquires property for the express purpose of profiting from the sale of that property at some later date. This of course begs the question of motivation. However, how does one determine motivation when in the vast majority of cases the only information available on landowners are the land records which, while they yield detail on owners' names, prices paid, and acreage involved are understandably mute on the issue of motivation?

The problem has been tackled in various ways. John Clarke¹, Leo Johnson², Jessie Weldon³, and A. G. Brunger⁴ for example have used an acreage delimitation; Clarke and Weldon using 400 acres and Johnson and Brunger 500 acres. The assumption is made that this was more property than could be cleared in a lifetime. Clarke also points out that the 400 acre delimitation would allow for the possibility of a father and son of the same name each patenting 200 acres, the common size of grant⁵. Although even 400 acres may have been more than adequate, Clarke points out that if Upper Canadians who acquired more land than they could expect to develop were considered land speculators,

speculation would be "as Canadian as maple sugar".⁶ While the 400 acre criterion can be criticised on the basis that it omits the small scale speculator, or settler-speculator, Clarke notes that the social consequences of the large scale speculator may well have been greater than that of the small⁷. In the final analysis some criteria must be adopted for work to proceed.

Randy Widdis proposes and uses a method which not only includes those persons owning over 400 acres but also the small scale speculator⁸. Speculators are identified by Widdis according to the amount of acreage held, the frequency of land acquisitions and transfers and the use of the property, expressed in terms of acreage cleared. According to Widdis speculative activity is most often associated with large amounts of land, a low level of clearance as the speculator does not spend much time or money in improving the land as he intends to sell it, and either the retention of property for a long period of time before selling or an active involvement in both buying and selling parcels of land⁹. Three variables, acreage held, acreage cleared, and participation in land sales were plotted by Widdis in a series of time continuums in order to examine how individual holding sizes and levels of clearance change over time. While all landowners are reviewed by this method, those owning over 400 acres are automatically included as land speculators regardless of their meeting with the criteria set out above; scale being the most important factor.

Widdis himself notes that there are shortcomings to this method. In the Widdis scheme, speculators are associated with a small amount of acreage cleared. While this may be indicative in some circumstances it need not be in all. It was often to the speculator's advantage to rent out his property as the improvements made by the tenants would raise the value of that property¹⁰, an issue also raised by Clarke¹¹. Also, the speculator could have purchased property which was already cleared to some extent. In either case, the improvements are not made by the efforts of the speculator. Widdis therefore links the Abstract Index to Deeds with the Assessment Returns in order to see how much

of the property that each person accumulated was cleared and to measure how much additional acreage was improved by either the owner or the tenants. For such a method to work one would need very detailed records. The property would of course have to be assessed. The location of the lots assessed would have to be recorded. If the lot was subdivided the exact location of the property owned by the speculator would have to be recorded on both the Assessment Returns and the Abstract Index to Deeds. The frequency of these omissions in the records for Augusta Township does not allow such a linkage.

By examining a list of potential speculators provided by this method, four types of speculators were identified by Widdis¹². The Corporate Speculator is one category which includes the Canada Company. A second category in the Widdis typology is the Classical Speculator. This includes those individuals who held on to their more than adequate acreage for a number of years and then sold parts of it at different times or all of it at one time without putting much effort into clearing the land. Widdis' third category is the Land Banker, one who is involved in the buying and selling of land much like "stocks and bonds". The fourth type of speculator is referred to as the Investing Farmer, one who acquired more land than needed in hopes of selling parts of it in order to make money to improve his farming effort.

There are certain aspects of this method which are particularly useful in any study on land speculation. By tracing the land dealings of owners through time it allows one to more accurately assess their impact on the settlement process. It also includes persons coming into the land market over time, not just the patentees. This could provide valuable insights into the study area, especially if accompanied by biographical data. Biographical information is doubly important. It helps elucidate the complexity of the land speculation process and forges a link to an important theme in the literature, namely the relationship of land speculation to the power structure of the society. Studies by John Clarke¹³, Bruce Wilson¹⁴, David

Gagan ¹⁵, and Jessie Weldon ¹⁶ have identified several members of the ruling elite as land speculators in other parts of Ontario; a sub-theme of this chapter is to investigate this theme in Augusta.

6.2 Method

Speculators are defined as persons patenting or acquiring over 400 acres. A list was compiled using the Abstract Index to Deeds. Biographical information on each landowner was gathered to see if they held positions in the power structure or were inter-related one with another (Table 6.1). This information was largely gleaned from the Upper Canada Land Petitions and State Books ¹⁷ at the Public Archives of Canada as well as the major secondary works by Thad Leavitt ¹⁸, J.F. Pringle ¹⁹, Ruth McKenzie ²⁰, and Rae Stuart ²¹. Frederick Armstrong's compilation of Upper Canadian officials ²² and a U.E.L. list included in the Loyalist Centennial publication of 1885 ²³ was also used. The land holdings of these individuals were traced through time and charted in Table 6.2. While the reader should use these two tables in conjunction with one another, they have been included separately due to constraints of size. Following this step particular individuals were assigned to each of the groups in the Widdis typology and the aggregated acreages of each group were then tabulated (Table 6.3).

Several problems were encountered in using this typology. Some landowners were not residents in the township and consistently sold off their property without replenishing their assets in land. This suggested that they had been granted land in a township where they did not wish to reside or perhaps they did not intend to establish themselves as farmers. It could simply be that these patentees merely exercised their rights under the existing land granting system. In such cases, the persons do not fit either of the four categories so defined by Widdis. They might be more aptly considered part of a fifth group which enjoyed the bounty of the state. For this reason they have been labelled Official Grantees. Five individuals shown

on Table 6.2 were included in this category: Benoni Wilsea, Moses Hurlburt, John Jones, James Walker and Henry Cross. In other cases some smaller landowners purchased an additional one or two lots which they subsequently sold. With inadequate amounts of land to be considered Lank Bankers, this group it was felt could best be described as Investing Farmers. Additional evidence of the suitability of this label for this particular group of individuals was found independently by an examination of the pattern of the individual holdings. All holdings were mapped, the pattern of each examined and obvious attempts to consolidate holdings used to assign individuals to the potential group of Investing Farmers. Pattern was particularly useful in the case of the last named group; not nearly as useful in distinguishing between Classical Speculators and Land Bankers. Here the prime distinction is the frequency of land transactions but in particular instances assignment to a particular group was a matter of personal discretion.

Two maps were prepared which locate the speculative holdings over time in an effort to investigate the pattern of speculative holdings (Figures 6.1 and 6.2). These are discussed later in the text.

6.3 Identification of Land Speculators

Table 6.2 tabulates the acreages held by individuals acquiring over 400 acres between 1796 and 1840. As noted in Chapter Five, 36 persons patented over 400 acres throughout the study period. Of the original patentees 24 were military claimants, 6 were United Empire Loyalists, 4 were American settlers and 2 could not be identified (Table 6.1). One third of the military claimants were appointed to official positions, all serving as magistrates. Two were appointed to the District Land Board and four served as representatives in the Legislative Assembly. The appointment of members of the officer class to government offices reflects the attitudes shared by the officials presiding over the government of Upper Canada which was both authoritarian and paternalistic ²⁴. H.V. Nelles has shown

Table 6.1Biographical Sketch of Land Speculators

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Joseph Bass	American settler
Abraham Bettrides	no information
David Bissell	Ensign (Loyal Rangers); magistrate; member of the council of Augusta, later of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Elijah Bottom	Ensign (Loyal Rangers); Town and Church Warden; married daughter of Justus Sherwood
David Breakenridge	Ensign (Loyal Rangers); Chairman of Court of Quarter Sessions; daughter Sarah married Paul Glassford, Brockville merchant, magistrate, frequently Chairman of the Court of Quarter Sessions; daughter Eliza married Samuel Thomas, Maitland merchant; Charlotte married Augusta Schofield, merchant; Janet married John Read, merchant in Merrickville
James Campbell	Subaltern (Loyal Rangers)
Alexander Campbell	Captain (Loyal Rangers); Justice of the Peace; Registrar of the Counties of Dundas, Leeds and Grenville; lived in Brockville
James Chambers	Soldier (Loyal Rangers)
Caleb Clawson	Sergeant (Loyal Rangers)
Stephen Collins	American settler from Vermont; Lieutenant in militia; married daughter of Samuel Landon
Henry Cross	no information; non-resident
Oliver Everts	Inspector of Engineers Accounts; storekeeper; Town and Church Warden
Frederick Fell	U.E.L.
Lyttle Glassford	son of Paul Glassford (U.E.L.)
George Haley	came from England as British soldier under Burgoyne; settled in Augusta
John Heck	son of Paul and Barbara Heck, American settlers; Barbara is credited with being the 'mother' of Methodism in Upper Canada; absentee owner

Table 6.1 continued

Samuel Heck	brother of John; Town Clerk (1813)
Rice Honeywell	U.E.L.
Rosetor Hoyle	U.E.L.; lived in Montreal
Jehiel Hurd	Sergeant (King's Royal Regiment of New York)
Moses Hurlburt	U.E.L.
Edward Jackson	Soldier (8th Regiment of Foot); Sergeant in 2nd Regiment of Grenville Militia
Edward Jessup	Captain (Loyal Rangers); Justice of the Peace; Commissioner of Court of Requests; Lt. Col.; Commandant of militia; Grenville representative in 2nd Parliament; daughter Elisha married son of Charles Jones, -grandson of Ephraim; son Edward Jessup Junior appointed Justice of Peace; Lt. Col. in 1st Regiment of Leeds militia; Collector of Customs at Prescott
Charles Jones	son of Ephraim Jones; Treasurer of Eastern District; Legislative Councillor (1829-1840); representative for Leeds in Legislative Assembly (1820-1828); member of Land Board for Johnstown District (1819); merchant in Brockville; land speculator in Elizabethtown Township; married Mary Stuart, daughter of Dr. John Stuart of Kingston
Ephraim Jones	Commissary of supplies; magistrate; Commissioner of Court of Requests; Surrogate Court Judge; representative in 1st Parliament; daughters Charlotte married Levius Sherwood, son of Justus Sherwood; Sophia married John Stuart, Sheriff of the Johnstown District, father-in-law of David Archibald MacNab and Sir Allan Napier MacNab and Mary Hamilton of Queenston; Eliza married H.J. Boulton, barrister in Toronto and later Chief Justice of Newfoundland; sons Charles married Mary Stuart, daughter of Dr. John Stuart of Kingston, "father" of the Church of England in Upper Canada; Charles was appointed to the Land Board for the Johnstown District in 1819; became a leading merchant in Brockville; later appointed a Legislative Councillor; Alpheus appointed Collector of Customs at Prescott and Postmaster; Jonas, student of Bishop Strachan; also was Lieutenant in Leeds militia; Judge of District Court for Bathurst and Johnstown District; Brockville lawyer, partners with George Jarvis (1820); member of Legislative Assembly (1817); Chief Justice appointed to King's Bench; William, merchant and miller; Collector of Customs at Brockville

Table 6.1 continued

John Jones	Captain (Loyal Rangers); brother of Solomon
Solomon Jones	Surgeon's mate (Loyal Rangers); Commissioner in Court of Requests; Judge of Johnstown District Court (1800-1821); representative for Leeds and Grenville in 2nd Parliament; member of the Land Board (1819); brother of John Jones; son Dunham Justice of the Peace and Collector of Customs for the port at Maitland; nephews David and Daniel became lawyers and played an important role in Brockville's commercial development; Daniel Jones later became judge
Joseph Knapp	Sergeant (Loyal Rangers)
Thomas Lake	Soldier (Loyal Rangers); settled in Ernestown Township
Samuel Landon	American settler
John Lawrence	American settler; came to Canada with Heck family
George Longley	lumber merchant, miller, farmer and forwarder; Justice of the Peace; representative in Legislative Assembly for Grenville (1828); married Ruth Wells, daughter of William Wells
Allan N. MacNab	attorney, called to bar in 1825; representative in Legislative Assembly (1830-1841), for Wentworth and town of Hamilton; Legislative Councillor (1860); married Mary Stuart of Brockville, daughter of John Stuart, Sheriff of Johnstown District; John Stuart married Sophia Jones, daughter of Ephraim Jones; their son, Andrew, married Mary Hamilton of Queenston
Angus McDonnell	no information*
Peter McGill	Montreal merchant and head of Peter McGill and Company; President of Bank of Montreal (1834-1860); Legislative Councillor and Speaker (1847-1848) with a seat on the Executive Council; land speculator in Hawkesbury Township ²⁷ and Peel County ²⁸
Justus Merwin	came with Sherwoods to Elizabethtown; by 1812 a prominent business man in Prescott
George Moffatt	non-resident merchant; senior partner in the firm of Gillespie, Moffatt and Company ²⁹
Nicholas Mosher	Corporal (Loyal Rangers)
John Ogilvy	Montreal merchant

Table 6.1 continued

Ziba Phillips	attorney; settled in Maitland, actually founded the village
Obadiah Reed	U.E.L.
Neil Robertson	Lieutenant (Sir John Johnson's Royal Regiment of New York); seems to have settled at Cornwall but petitioned his friend, Major Drummond, for land on the Rideau adjoining Jessup's Corps (1792); brothers and father apparently officials in Montreal
Francis Scott	Sergeant (Loyal Rangers); brother of John
John Scott	Soldier (Loyal Rangers)
Levius Sherwood	Captain (Loyal Rangers); son of Justus Sherwood; Justice of the Peace; member of the Land Board; lawyer in Brockville; representative for Leeds County (1812-1816) and (1820-1824); Registrar for the Counties of Carleton, Grenville and Leeds (1795-1827); Surrogate Court Judge (1821-1824); Collector of Customs at Brockville (1821-1825); Judge of the Court of King's Bench (1825-1859); married daughter of Ephraim Jones
Samuel Sherwood	Soldier (Loyal Rangers); brother of Levius; magistrate; appointed barrister; Registrar of Surrogate Court; Judge of District Court; representative for Grenville County (1800-1808)
Thomas Sherwood	Ensign (Loyal Rangers); cousin to Captain Justus Sherwood and father of Sheriff Adiel Sherwood of Augusta; Judge in Court of Requests (1810); land speculator in Elizabethtown Township but later settled in Augusta
David Spicer	no information
James Walker	Surgeon (Loyal Rangers); non-resident
John Walter	no information
William Wells	carried on an extensive lumber business along the St. Lawrence, Rideau and Bonnechere Rivers; Commissioner of the Peace for the Johnstown District; son, William B., representative in Legislative Assembly ((1836-1841); daughter Ruth married George Longley

Table 6.1 continued

Benoni Wilsea	Sergeant (Loyal Rangers); moved out of Augusta in 1792
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* Two Angus McDonnells were identified by Jessie Weldon as land speculators in Hawkesbury, however, neither appear to be this man as both died early, one in 1804 and the other prior to 1832. Their land was then transferred to a John McDonnell whereas this person transferred his to Isabella McDonnell and by Quit Claim, not by will.

Table 6.2 Land Held By Speculators 1796 - 1840

NAME	Acreage Patented				1796-1805		1806-1810			1811-1815			1816-1820			1821-1825			1826-1830			1831-1835			1836-1840		
	1796-1805	1806-1810	1811-1815	1816-1820	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T		
Joseph Knapp IF						100	700																				
Jamea Chambers IF							500																				
Edward Jackson IF							600																				
John Lawrence IF							1050																				
Francis Scott IF							600																				
John Scott IF							600																				
Benoni Wilsea NR, OG							913																				
Moses Hurlburt IF							800																				
John Jones NR, OG							1043																				
Thomas Lakes NR, OG							450																				
Samuel Landon IF							400																				
James Walker NR, OG							600																				
Henry Cross NR, OG							504																				

Abbreviations Used
P - Acreage Purchased
S - Acreage Sold
T - Total Acreage Owned at end of time period
NR - Non-Resident
IF - Investing Farmer
LB - Land Banker
CS - Classical Speculator
OG - Official Grantee

Table 6.2 (cont'd)

NAME	Acreage Patented			1796-1805		1806-1810		1811-1815		1816-1820		1821-1825		1826-1830		1831-1835		1836-1840	
	1796-1805	1806-1810	1811-1815	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
David Bissell IF	800	100			800		800		550		50	500			354		50	304	304
Caleb Clawson IF	710			302	408		408		408		408								
Nicholas Mosher LB	410	200		200	610														
David Spicer IF	300	200			300		500		500		500		500		500	496	90	406	
Oliver Everts IF	500			240	200	540			380		380	100	480		480				480
Lyttle Gloseford IF	567	100			567		600	717	550		550		500		500				500
Ephroim Jones CS	1530			1800	3330		200	3130	430	2700	300	2400		200	2200	400	1800		1800
Levius Sherwood NR, LB	1200			200	300	1100	800	200	1700		1700	325	1775		1825		1825	300	1525
Joseph Bass LB	1000				200	800	400	200	1000	162	350	812	166	646	50	100	596	225	146
James Campbell CS	1506			400		1906	100	150	1856		250	1606		100	375	200	175	50	125
Rice Honeywell LB	800	200		650	500	950	1000	100	2050	100	300	1850	100	1750	50	1300	150	1150	200
Rosetor Hoyle NR, CS	600					600			600			600		600		600			600
Frederick Fell IF	500					500			500			400		200	200	200			

Abbreviations Used

P - Acreage Purchased
S - Acreage Sold
T - Total Acreage Owned at end of time period
NR - Non-Resident

IF - Investing Farmer
LB - Land Banker
CS - Classical Speculator
OG - Official Grantee

Table 6.2 (cont'd)

NAME	Acreage Patented				1796-1805			1806-1810			1811-1815			1816-1820			1821-1825			1826-1830			1831-1835			1836-1840		
	1796-1805	1806-1810	1811-1815	1816-1820	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T
Edward Jessup CS	1200				800		2000		400	1600		272	1328															
Soloman Jones CS	980						980			980			903															
Alexander Campbell NR,CS	1439				130	100	1469			1469		400	1069															
John Heck NR,CS	800						800			800			800															
Samuel Heck IF	650						650	118		768		131	631															
Elijah Bottom IF	830				104	9	925		300	625			625															
David Breakenridge IF	674	114			50	156	568			682			682															
Jehiel Hurd IF	200	100	300				200	50	50	300		150	450															
Obadiah Reid IF	300	500					300	80	200	680		100	580															
Samuel Sherwood IF	700				200	400	500	100	250	350			350															
Abraham Rettrides NR, LB																												
Allan MacNab NR, LB																												
Peter McGill NR, LB																												

Abbreviations Used

P - Acreage Purchased IF - Investing Farmer
 S - Acreage Sold LB - Land Banker
 T - Total Acreage Owned at CS - Classical Speculator
 end of time period OG - Official Grantee
 NR - Non-Resident

Table 6.2 (cont'd)

NAME	Acreage Patented			1796-1805		1806-1810		1811-1815		1816-1820		1821-1825		1826-1830		1831-1835		1836-1840						
	1796-1805	1806-1810	1811-1815	1816-1820	1821-1825	1826-1830	1831-1835	1836-1840																
Angus McDonnell	NR, LB																							
John Walter	IF	200																						
Thomas Sherwood	IF																							
William Wells	LB	109	144		9	117	500	761	651	1412	310	506	1216	300	10	1506	342	642	1206	867	550	1523	900	623
George Longley	LB																							
Charles Jones	NR, CS	200																						
Neil Robertson	NR, CS																							
Stephen Collins	CS	100																						
John Ogilvy	NR, CS																							
Justus Merwin	LB																							
Ziba Phillips	LB																							
George Moffat	NR, LB																							
George Haley	LB	200																						

Abbreviations Used

P - Acreage Purchased
S - Acreage Sold
T - Total Acreage Owned at end of time period
NR - Non-Resident

IF - Investing Farmer
LB - Land Banker
CS - Classical Speculator
OG - Official Grantee

that similar appointments were made in the Niagara District ²⁵.

Of the 17 persons purchasing land, as opposed to patenting, seven were merchants, four had served in the army, one was an attorney, two were American settlers and three have not been identified. The presence of merchants amongst the landowners suggests that they were later attracted to the area because of the forwarding business and industry developed at Prescott and Maitland. They may also have acquired land in the township as compensation for indebtedness. Four of the merchants held government positions, two as Legislative Councillors and two as magistrates. In a very detailed study of commercial and political power in the Niagara Peninsula, Bruce Wilson concludes that the merchant class increasingly obtained representation in the power structure, replacing the loyalist officers as the leaders and dominant figures in local society ²⁶.

Eight of the identified land speculators were inter-related by marital ties and all but one were awarded government office, several serving in various official capacities. Six were magistrates, two were members of the Land Board, two were Legislative Councillors, six were representatives in the Legislative Assembly, four were lawyers of which two were appointed Judges in the Court of the King's Bench. Professor Frederick Armstrong has suggested that the holders of these positions were almost always men who belonged to the district elite, the Legislative and Executive Councillors being the "elite of power" ³⁰. The list substantiates his statement that members of the local oligarchies normally held the office of justice of the peace, or magistrate ³¹.

Members of this group can be linked to the Family Compact and with members of other local oligarchies. The families of Ephraim and Solomon Jones for example were in competition with each other for official favour ³². Solomon Jones sought favour through his alliances with Richard Cartwright of Kingston and William D. Powell, both prominent government officials and land speculators. Richard Cartwright had been in partnership with Robert Hamilton of Niagara and

both men had made important contacts with the influential Montreal trading houses and the military power structure before the province had been established. Bruce Wilson has shown that these contacts served to promote their commercial and political careers to the point where these two men became the most powerful and influential members of their respective communities ³⁴. Wielding a considerable amount of influence, they were called upon to act on behalf of others ³⁵.

Cartwright for example acted as an intermediary on behalf of Solomon Jones recommending to Powell that members of Solomon's family be appointed to office ³⁶. By such manoeuvres Solomon's family "outpoliticked" Ephraim's. However, Richard Cartwright died in 1815 and in 1820 Powell was ousted from power by Strachan who was to become the most important single figure in the provincial administration ³⁷. This was followed by a turnover in the membership of the ruling elite. Several of Strachan's pupils were to come to power among whom were John Beverly Robinson, John Macauley, George Markland, Jonas Jones and the future Bishop Bethune ³⁸. In Leeds and Grenville Ephraim Jone's family came to power in the 1820s and 30s enlisting the aid of both Strachan and John Beverly Robinson ³⁹.

Such conditions were not unique to Augusta. Members of both Jones families, the Sherwood and Jessup families have been identified as land speculators in the adjacent township of Elizabethtown ⁴⁰. David Gagan has identified two of Strachan's pupils as well as other members of the Family Compact as land speculators in Peel County ⁴¹. In the Western District, John Clarke argues that two major groups, the Askins and Babys were closely linked with circles of ~~land speculators~~ and that land speculators were "bound increasingly into a nexus of tight financial and marital ties" ⁴². Similarly, in the Home District, Leo Johnson has unveiled "a parade of famous names" ⁴³. The growing literature on land speculation is revealing a province wide network of political figures linked to one another either by political and/or economic interests, often strengthened by marital ties.

Table 6.2 shows that the land speculators identified in Augusta

Township reacted differently in the land market. By using the method outlined above, they have been classified as either Investing Farmers (IF), Classical Speculators (CS), Land Bankers (LB) or Official Grantees (OG). Table 6.2 also indicates non-residents in the township (NR). The aggregated acreages are tabulated in Table 6.3.

The Investing Farmers were the largest group of owners varying in number from 18 to 21. Throughout the time period, however, only in 1805 did they own the largest percentage of land alienated. From the outset this group continued to sell off excess acreage and purchased very little. Throughout the period they sold 11,628 acres and purchased only 2,662 acres. An example of an Investing Farmer is Elijah Bottom. Bottom patented land in lots 26 and 27 in Concessions 1 and 2. He also received lot 3 in Concession 8 as part of his entitlement as a military claimant. In the same period, 1796 to 1805, he purchased the west half of lot 25 in Concession 1 and between 1806 and 1810 sold his property in Concession 2. Bottom retained his compact holdings until his death around 1825 after which his heirs sold off some of the property. It appears that they were unable to sell the 200 acre lot in Concession 8 as part was sold in 1832 for tax arrears.

The largest percentage of alienated land owned by speculators in 1810 was by the Classical Speculators. Ten individuals owned 11,935 acres or 23.1 per cent of the total patented. Most of the Classical Speculators had acquired a considerable amount of land as free grants but up until 1815 some enlarged their holdings by purchases. Ephraim Jones for example had patented 1,530 acres between 1796 and 1805. During the same time period he purchased an additional 1,800 acres. Except for four lots patented in Concessions 1 and 2 the remaining acreage was scattered throughout the township between Concessions 3 and 9.

Between 1816 and 1840 only 450 acres were purchased by the Classical Speculators whereas 5,336 had been purchased prior to 1815. A noticeable reduction in the percentage of land held by

Table 6.3 Aggregated Acres by Group Typology

Speculative Group	Acres Patented			1796-1805			1806-1810			1811-1815			1816-1820			1821-1825			1826-1830			1831-1835			1836-1840		
	1796-1805	1806-1810	1811-1815	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T
Investing Farmers	11,641	1,144	306	594	1061	11,814	798	3197	10,489	1831	9366	211	3012	7176	100	1218	6578	470	917	6231	1004	5227	274	2811	345	4819	18
Number of Landowners								21	306		17.6			19.1			12		11.3			9.4				9.7	
Percentage of Total Land Patented								24.7																			
Classical Speculators	8355		120	3330	100	11,585	1000	750	11,935	1427	11,539	11	1334	10,200	200	237	9561	250	1437	6550	1230	5610			450	5160	8
Number of Landowners								10	23.1		21.6			11			11		10			10				8	
Percentage of Total Land Patented								24.4						13.7			14.3		12.5			10.1				9.2	
Land Bankers	5719	544		4159	1610	3568	2817	800	6127	656	6512	7	1047	7037	2165	960	8332	1589	1334	9387	5445	4000	9912	1112	2061	5167	14
Number of Landowners								7	7		12.9		8				9		10			13				14	
Percentage of Total Land Patented								11.3						12.9			15.3		15.6			17.8				14.5	
Official Grantees	3060	456			713	2342		1664	1193	1079	100		100														
Number of Landowners								3	3																		
Percentage of Total Land Patented								2.3			2																
Totals	14,815	3104	420	9867	3484	29209	4765	6391	29746	5537	23591	182	5128	21608	2465	4577	22671	2495	3432	21658	3445	4154	2689	1112	2615	15456	

them occurs between 1820 and 1835, a decrease of 8.8 per cent. Many of the sales made during this time period can be attributed to death of the owner and the lack of interest by the heirs in retaining the additional property. This was also a period of rapid population growth (Figure 5.10) which may have influenced speculators to sell. Another factor which may have precipitated sales was the distressed state of the economy between the years 1819 and 1821, 1826 and 1828 and the financial collapse of 1837⁴⁴.

There was a corresponding decrease in the percentage of land retained by the Investing Farmers but a 4.9 per cent increase by the Land Bankers as five new speculators acquired land in the township. The actual increase in acreage was 7,019 acres but at the same time they sold 3,824 acres. The volume of sales and purchases by this particular group shows their active involvement in the market. Between 1796 and 1840 11,898 acres were sold and 15,802 acres were purchased. Only 4,263 acres were actually patented. Whereas the total amount of land owned by the Investing Farmers and Classical Speculators declined over time, that owned by the Land Bankers doubled as did the number of Land Bankers. One such person is Levius Sherwood. Sherwood had patented 1,200 acres by 1805 but throughout the study period he bought another 1,425 acres and sold 1,100 acres, still retaining 1,525 by 1840. Sherwood's holdings were spread throughout the township. They included a parcel in lot 15, Concession 1, lots 7, 8 and 20 in Concession 2, lots 9 and 19 in Concession 3, lot 25 and 26 in Concession 4, lot 12 in Concession 5, lots 22 and 32 in Concession 6, lots 8, 14, 17 and 24 in Concession 7 and lot 7 in Concession 8. The scattered nature of his holdings is perhaps evidence of his opportunism. Sherwood was not a resident of Augusta Township and his property was not assessed. Being that he was an important political figure, having represented Leeds in the House of Assembly between 1812 and 1816 and again between 1820 and 1824, as well as serving as magistrate, lawyer, Judge, Collector of Customs and member of the Land Board throughout his career, it sheds some

Figure 6.1
Location of Speculative Holdings 1796-1820

Location of Speculative Holdings 1821-1840

Source: PAQ, Abstract Index to Deeds

suspicion on the possible link between political position and tax evasion. A much more detailed study would however be needed to prove such a case ⁴⁵.

The Official Grantees had little effect on the township. They had patented 3,510 acres but by 1805 only three retained holdings in the township totalling 2,342 acres. Another 1,149 acres were sold by 1810 and only 100 acres remained to be sold by 1815.

Figures 6.1 and 6.2 map all the speculative holdings through time. Two maps have been included for cartographic ease, not because of any particular importance attached to the time periods. The pattern in 1805 is quite similar to Figure 5.4 which maps the location of lots patented by persons acquiring over 400 acres. This was to be expected as only four new speculators took up land and only 3,484 acres were sold. Speculative activity was spread throughout the entire township with the exception of the Crown and the Clergy Reserves in Concessions 9 and 10 (Figure 5.5) and Concession 11 which was isolated by the Reserves.

There are few changes in this pattern up to 1820. Whereas 15,837 acres were sold, 18,133 were bought. Several speculators purchased land from others classified as Investing Farmers and Official Grantees who sold 11,621 acres in the same time period. In some instances parcels of land were picked up by speculators in the same lot as another selling in which case the change is not detected. However, this would not change the general pattern of speculative activity. The most noticeable changes which did occur are in Concession 1 where several sales were made between 1815 and 1820 and in Concession 3 where lots were being purchased between 1805 and 1815. Several lots were sold in the eastern part of Concession 8 and a couple of purchases made. Between 1820 and 1825 there was a concentration of purchases made in the middle section of Concession 4 and sales in Concessions 1 and 3 as well as the eastern part of Concessions 4 and 5. Between 1820 and 1835 there is more noticeable speculative activity in the eighth Concession. Between 1830 and 1840 there are scattered

sales in the front concessions. In short, it was the most accessible front concessions that were in greatest demand by settlers and speculators alike.

Throughout the study period the pattern of speculative activity remains quite constant with the exception of the eastern portion of the township and the area around Prescott. This is rather surprising considering the fact that a total of 35,587 acres had been sold and 24,150 acres purchased. However, as already mentioned, speculators purchased from other speculators. Furthermore, of the 53 speculators only 17 were non-residents which means some 36 lots, perhaps more, may have been occupied by their owners. In itself this is an interesting finding which may eventually qualify our image of speculators. The lots resided on by these speculators were likely located in the front concessions where land, transportation and services were better.

The maps of assessed land in Chapter Five show the front of the township well improved which indicates that speculators either farmed themselves, rented out their land to tenants who improved it or held only small parcels which did not hinder the development of the surrounding area. The pockets of speculative activity in Concessions 6 and 8 were areas of unimproved land even as late as 1840. These were areas of swampy and sandy soils which apparently attracted only the land speculator. Speculators it would seem can behave in different ways in order to maximize profit. Because speculators held land in practically all areas of the township no conclusion can be made as to the role of accessibility and the physical environment in their selection of land.

6.4 Summary and Conclusions

Land speculation was indeed a common characteristic of settlement in Augusta Township. The majority of speculators had received grants of land at a very early date, either as military claimants or Loyalists. Several of the officers were

appointed to official positions and families like the Joneses, Sherwoods and Jessups comprised a local elite. These families were inter-related with each other, with other large landowners and were associated with members of other local oligarchies across the province. Ephraim Jones, Charles Jones, Edward Jessup and Levius Sherwood were four of the largest speculators in Augusta Township.

By tracing the holdings of individuals through time it was shown that speculators reacted differently in the land market. The Investing Farmers purchased very little land and that which was bought and retained was generally a compact holding. They consistently sold off property and by 1840 the average size of holding was 242 acres, considerably smaller than the Land Bankers and Classical Speculators.

The Classical Speculators were a small group with large holdings which were not necessarily consolidated as was the case with Ephraim Jones. This group retained their property longer than either the Investing Farmers or Land Bankers. They too purchased land but generally less than the Land Bankers and largely within the early period of settlement. By 1840 they owned only half of what they had patented and purchased, the average size of holding still being large at 664.4 acres. Six of the ten members of this group were disbanded military personnel of which five were to serve as magistrates in the Johnstown District. Three took an active interest in politics and obtained seats in the First and Second Parliaments of Upper Canada. These were Ephraim Jones, Edward Jessup and Solomon Jones, community leaders and members of the local elite. Also included in this group was Charles Jones, son of Ephraim, who in 1829 joined the "elite of power" when appointed to the Legislative Council. As Elva Richards states, the families of Ephraim and Solomon Jones were "to dominate Leeds and Grenville Torydom into the mid 1830's"⁴⁶. Several members of these two families have been identified as land speculators in neighbouring Elizabethtown Township.

The Land Bankers were consistent speculators. They patented less land yet bought and sold almost the same amount of land as the Investing Farmers and Classical Speculators combined, the difference being only 1,202 acres. Several members of this group were merchants, bankers, and lawyers. Of the 15 identified Land Bankers, only five held some government position. Three were magistrates. These three persons were also merchants and two, namely William Wells and George Longley, were related to each other (Table 6.1). The third, Levius Sherwood, was the son-in-law of Ephraim Jones. Both Longley and Sherwood held seats in the Legislative Assembly as did Well's son William Benjamin. These Land Bankers were the most active throughout the study period. Two other Land Bankers were members of the provincial elite, both serving as Legislative Councillors, Peter McGill also holding a seat on the Executive Council. McGill was a prominent Montreal merchant. The second, Allan MacNab was married to a daughter of Ephraim Jones.

Consolidated holdings were not an important consideration to this group. It would appear that as the township developed both commercially and agriculturally the number of the Land Bankers increased. One could "speculate" and say that there is a trend away from Classical Speculation to Land Banking. The first tends to be characteristic of the early period, the members receiving large tracts of land as a government reward. The second seems to go hand in hand with the commercial development of the township, and perhaps the province at large. It appears that land becomes less of a status symbol attached to a landed aristocracy and more of a commodity used to procure personal wealth.

The geographical pattern of speculative activity remained fairly consistent even though a large volume of land changed hands. Perhaps the Land Bankers, dealing in scattered parcels of land were active in the more attractive areas of settlement and unable to sell the undesirable land. It is possible that land speculation retarded the development of certain parts of the township as settlement

proceeded north along the Maitland-Merrickville Road where there was less speculative activity. However, their apparent willingness to sell as the market expanded, as indicated in Table 6.2 and the maps of assessed land in Chapter Five, suggests that the physical environment and road network played a more important role than did speculation. Lands that were accessible or well endowed were no doubt the first to pass from the hand of the speculator to the farmer. Given the operation of capitalism this is only to be expected.

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35. For example, David Gagan states that William Proudfoot enjoyed the patronage of the Boultons and through them rose to become the President of the Bank of Upper Canada. Proudfoot was also a land speculator in Peel County. Gagan, 1981, op. cit., p. 28.
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45. In his study of Essex County John Clarke has disclosed an apparent association between land speculation and tax evasion. Clarke, 1982, op. cit., pp. 24-25.
46. Richards, op. cit., p. 175.

Chapter Seven
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The area comprising Augusta Township was known by the Indians and French Canadians prior to its occupation by British colonists. Settlement by these two culture groups was limited and short-lived. Visible remains of this occupation were left on the landscape but their impact on the natural environment was minimal. There were no records found to suggest that trails had been made by either group which could have subsequently been used by settlers moving into the area.

The exploratory surveys carried out prior to settlement indicated that the land was considered quite favourable for agriculture. In 1784, actual surveys on the ground were commenced and eight townships fronting the St. Lawrence River were laid out. These townships were allotted to Sir John Johnson's Regiment and Major Edward Jessup's Corp. The latter were the first settlers to arrive in Augusta Township. Lots of 100 and 200 acres were quickly granted, locations were made on paper prior to the completion of the survey. Several officers received large blocks of land along the river front. Concessions 9 and 10 were surveyed years later and were reserved for the Crown and the Clergy.

The first years of settlement were characterized by an active trade in location tickets; almost half of the property granted had changed hands by the time it was patented, a condition permitted if discouraged by government land policy. The pattern of exchange revealed no apparent associations with factors of accessibility and soils as the lots were scattered throughout the township. Most lots were patented prior to the War of 1812, a pattern which appears to be typical of several other townships in Upper Canada. Several individuals

patented large holdings of over 400 acres, most of whom were military claimants and Loyalists. Of these persons, only eight were identified as non-residents.

All of these factors pointed out that the alienation of land was not an accurate indication of the occupation or actual settlement on the land. An attempt was made to locate those lots which were probably occupied. By comparing the assessment returns with the Abstract Index to Deeds it was found that a considerable amount of alienated land was in fact not assessed suggesting that it was not occupied, at least by the legal owner. These properties were mapped as well as those held by large landowners as it was considered quite probable that their holdings would for the most part be unoccupied. Crown and Clergy Reserves and unpatented lots were mapped in order to more closely identify those lots potentially occupied.

Limitations to such a method were noted. The early assessment returns do not record the location of persons assessed. In a period when the assessor was not required to visit the property and when as now people sought to avoid taxation, some lots may simply not have been assessed. The large resident landowners would have occupied at least some of their holdings but only an assumption as to where they would have settled can be made.

The maps produced in this way suggested that only a small percentage of the lots were occupied, being concentrated in the front concessions. A map compiled around 1815 showing the actual location of houses and roads confirmed such a pattern. This particular map, used in conjunction with the drainage map revealed many interesting aspects about the settlement process. First of all, the roads were built with consideration accorded to the irregularities and constraints of the physical environment. The main road was built along the high ground forming the drainage divide between the Ottawa and St. Lawrence drainage systems. The roads skirted the swamp land the the poorly drained clays which would have rendered them useless for many months of the year. Roads were built to areas of well drained soils.

Houses were concentrated along the waterfront, main roads, and on pockets of well drained soils. The excessively drained sands and low lying clays were avoided except when the advantages to be derived from proximity to the St. Lawrence outweighed these considerations. It was noted that the earliest milling facilities available to settlers were located along the river. Produce was also shipped via the St. Lawrence thus offering another advantage to such a location.

After 1820, the assessment returns record the location of the property. Maps of assessed land and percentage cultivated were mapped at five year intervals. These four cross sections showed that settlement progressed along the lines laid out by 1815. The lots showing the highest percentage of improved land were those settled first and thus concentrated in the front of the township. Settlement spread north along the Maitland-Merrickville Road extending on to the sandy soils along the western boundary and on to the clay plain. The swamp land remained unoccupied as did the sandy soils in the north-east section of the township. Several of the lots in this area were expropriated from absentee owners and sold for tax arrears; however, they were purchased by lumber merchants obviously speculating in land.

The Crown and Clergy Reserves did not hinder settlement being as they were located in the rear of the township. As the population pushed north an increasing number of leases were taken out and improvements made. Those located east of the main road remained unoccupied.

In comparing the development of the township with other townships along the St. Lawrence settled under similar circumstances it was found that Augusta Township had progressed favourably. In fact, between 1826 and 1839 the township underwent the third largest percentage increase in population and the greatest increase in improved land. This growth was attributed to the commercial activity surrounding the ports of Prescott and Maitland and to a lesser extent the construction of the Rideau Canal which created another market for local produce.

Land speculation was a factor in settlement but one which did not significantly impede the progress of settlement. One could however argue that because large grants were made to a few individuals at the outset as well as to persons not intending to settle or improve their holdings, actual settlements tended to be thin and scattered throughout a much larger area than had need be. As the population of the township increased the large landowners sold property.

Individual land speculators were divided into four categories according to their behaviour in the land market. This typology included Classical Speculators, Land Bankers, Investing Farmers and Official Grantees. It was found that the dividing line between these groups was occasionally thin and at times it was necessary to rely upon one's own discretion. A landowner could react differently in the land market at different times, appearing as a Classical Speculator and then as a Land Banker for example. There is always the question of timing and scale. It was found useful to map the individual holdings to more clearly observe the speculative behavior. Widdis has pointed out the usefulness of the Assessment Returns in identifying land speculators which are associated with low levels of clearance. However, the inconsistencies in the historical records for Augusta, and probably other areas as well, would not permit an accurate linkage to the particular speculator. Furthermore, it was noted that speculators often rented out property to tenants in which case the lot could be shown to have been improved. Regardless of these limitations, the method provided some interesting insights into speculative activity.

It was found that the Investing Farmers and Official Grantees consistently sold off land throughout the study period and purchased very little. The Classical Speculators tended to both patent and purchase large amounts of land in the early period which they retained for a long period of time before selling. The Land Bankers were the smallest group at the outset, next to the Official Grantees, but their numbers increased over time as did the acreage owned. These speculators bought and sold land more frequently than did the other groups and their holdings were more scattered throughout the township.

More representatives of the merchant class were found amongst this group which corresponds to the growing importance of Prescott as a forwarding center, as well as Maitland but to a lesser extent.

As has been shown elsewhere in the Province, several land speculators were inter-related and connected to the ruling elite. At the level of analysis chosen it would seem that the pattern of speculative activity did not change much over the years. A more indepth study of parcelization might modify this conclusion. At this time the most important comment upon the occurrence of land speculation is that in Augusta Township it was ubiquitous.

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