AN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF BROME COUNTY: 1800-1911

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1800-1911

A Thesis

by

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Table 1.

INTRODUCTION

In establishing the range of an Historical Geography it is often wise, for the sake of clarity, to outline those things which are not within the scope of a particular work as well as its actual aim. It is not the aim of this thesis to present a complete historical geography of Brome County; nor is it intended to examine selected aspects of the history of the country, simply placing them in their geographical setting in order to show the influence of environment. Rather, its role is to reconstruct the economic landscape of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries at meaningful points of cross-section and to show how that landscape evolved in its many facets from a virgin wilderness to its present condition. Its purpose is furthermore to provide a source from which can be learned how the present-day problems which face Brome County arose and, with this knowledge as background, how these problems might be overcome.

Transportation, in its many forms, was at one and the same time both the catalyst and the inhibitor of the economic growth of Brome County and thus the reader will find that a proportionately large part of this work has been devoted to this subject.

Wherever possible an overall picture of the five southernmost counties of the Eastern Townships will be presented, and the relationship of Brome to its immediate neighbours

(the counties of Stanstead, Shefford, Missisquoi and Sherbrooke) will be examined where this is of use in clarifying the sequence and significance of events in Brome itself.

The choice of Brome County as the subject of this study was made because this county has unique historical antecedents and physiographic features which have produced a distinctive cultural and economic landscape in the county today, making this a valid unit for study. To those who would wish to see an area of study which followed more closely the bounds of physiographic homogeneity rather than merely political subdivisions, it is suggested that apart from the generalized division between the St. Lawrence Lowlands and the Appalachian Province, the variety of terrain found in the latter precludes any further subdivision except on the basis of purely local river valley or plateau areas. A study of this type would be on too small a scale to present a meaningful overall picture of the region. The historical facts of different land granting systems, field patterns and agricultural practices between the French Canadian seigneurial system and the English township pattern, as well as the cultural disparity between the two principal settling groups is of the greatest significance. Hence, as townships and counties were the original units of settlement in the region these remain the critical units for study.

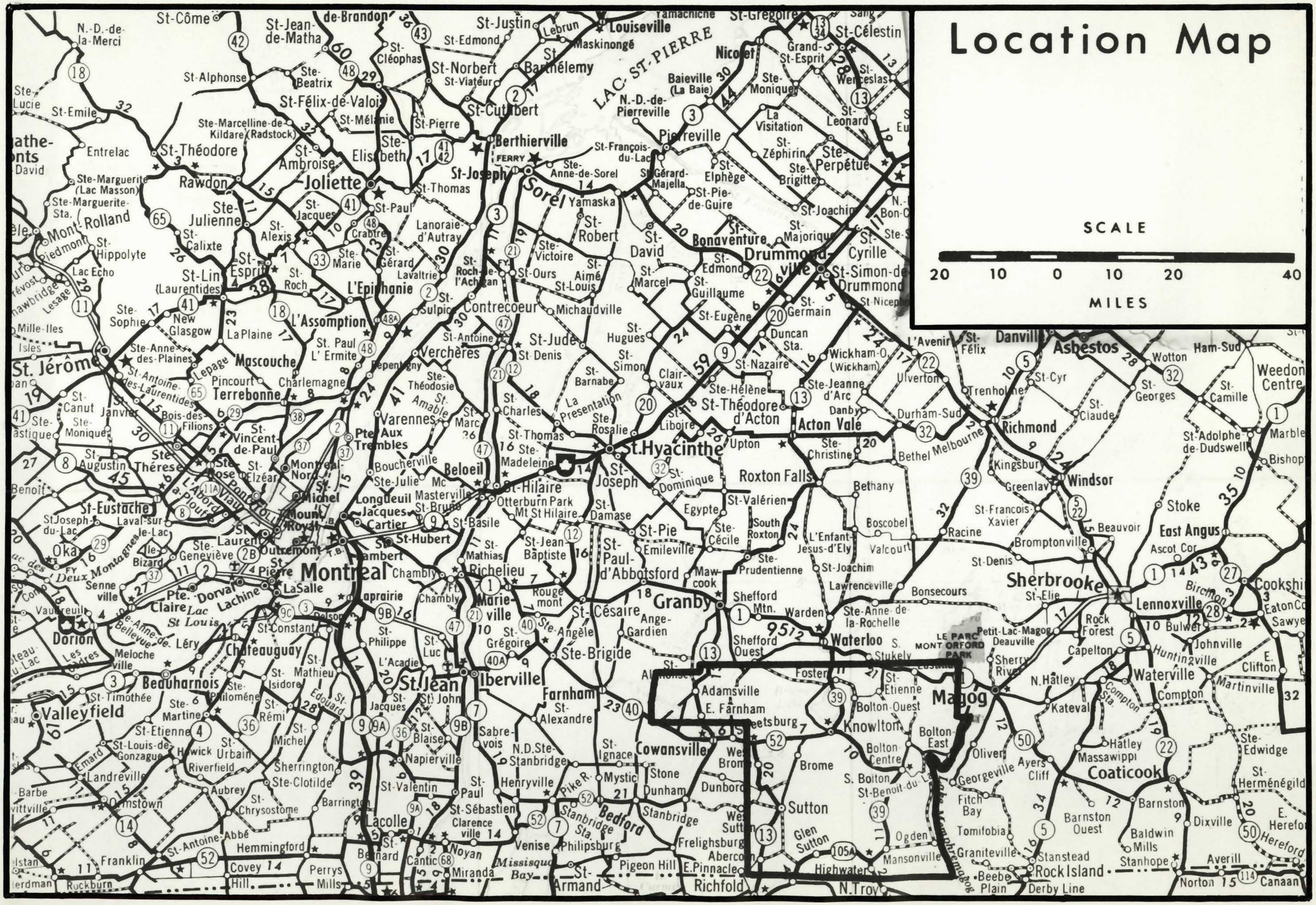
Location Map
SCALE
20 10 0 10 20 40
MILES
LAC ST-PIERRE
Louiseville
Joliette
Berthierville
Sorel
Drummondville
St. Jérôme
Mascouche
Terrebonne
Montreal
Mount Royal
Longueuil
Verchères
Beloeil
St.Hyacinthe
Acton Vale
Roxton Falls
Richmond
Windsor
Asbestos
East Angus
Sherbrooke
Lennoxville
Coaticook
Granby
Waterloo
Magog
Knowlton
Cowansville
Sutton
Bedford
Farnham
Iberville
St.Jean
Chateauguay
Beauharnois
Valleyfield
Dorion
Oka
Rock Island
LE PARC MONT ORFORD PARK

Figure 1.

Brome County is located in south-eastern Quebec on the border between that province and the state of Vermont of the United States. (See Figure 1). The county was created in 1855 from five townships. East Farnham and Brome townships, with areas of 35,021 and 62,800 acres respectively, were taken from Shefford County; Potton and Bolton townships, with areas of 64,000 and 78,203 acres respectively, were taken from Stanstead County; and Sutton township, with an area of 66,220 acres, was relinquished by Missisquoi County (Taylor, 1908a). This gave Brome County a total area of 312,422 acres (including that portion of Lake Memphremagog which lies within the county).

The term "Eastern Townships" has been greatly misconstrued in the past. In the literal sense of the words the term applies to all those townships which were granted in the region between the St. Lawrence Lowland seigneuries and the United States border subsequent to the Proclamation of 1791 which ordered surveys to be carried out in these lands. The result of the opening of this area to settlement was a large migration of New Englanders into the southernmost counties of Quebec. Previous to this time the area had been closed to settlement by a succession of British governors, including Governor Haldimand, who wished the area to remain an uninhabited buffer zone between Canada and the United States. The region includes, for practical purposes,

the counties of Arthabaska, Brome, Compton, Drummond, Megantic, Missisquoi, Richmond, Shefford, Sherbrooke, Stanstead and Wolfe. The Eastern Townships are often thought of as having been originally totally settled by English-speaking peoples but in many parts of the more northerly and westerly counties the first occupiers of the land were in fact French Canadians who migrated south from the older settled areas adjacent to the St. Lawrence. It is for this reason that Frontenac and Beauce Counties have been omitted from the definition of the Eastern Townships.

The actual terms of the granting of land are concisely outlined in K.M. Pochopien's study entitled The District of Brome.

> "The prospective settlers grouped themselves into companies, usually of 40, and selected a leader who acted in their name. He presented a petition to the Government, in which the claims of the petitioners were set forth and the tract of land was described. The grant was made only on the condition that the leader and each of the 'associates' should take the oath of allegiance to the Crown, and should make actual settlement and certain improvements in the granted township before a specified time." (Pochopien, 1952a)

Chapter I

HISTORY OF SETTLEMENT

When the first Loyalist settlers arrived during the 1780's and 1790's in the area which is now Missisquoi, Brome and Stanstead Counties, they were the first "permanent" settlers. They were, however, preceeded in the region by the Abenaki, or St. Francis Indians who used this area as a hunting ground and the St. Francis-Lake Memphremagog waterway as a route to the south to harass the English colonies.

As was typical of the North-Eastern Woodland Indian groups, however, the Abenakis had no significant impact on the landscape in terms of permanent features. Their principal village from 1700 to 1760 was at St. Francis (now Pierreville) at the mouth of the St. Francis River. Apart from this village they made no permanent settlements as their nomadic hunting existence, tempered by a very limited agriculture (Indian corn, etc.) around their principal village, precluded their remaining in one area for any lengthy period of time.

The main contribution of the Abenakis was to establish the shortest water routes from the St. Francis-Lake Memphremagog system to the headwaters of the Connecticut

system and thence south to the English colonies. The French were aware of these routes and they were later to be important in the settlement of the Eastern Townships both from the United States and from Quebec. (See Figure 2)

It is interesting to speculate on what would have happened in terms of settlement in Brome, Missisquoi, Stanstead, and Shefford Counties had the American Revolution not taken place when it did. The American Revolution was also a species of civil war with a number of the colonies not supporting the Revolution. Many citizens of the American colonies were concerned with keeping the provinces part of the British Empire and many, although not necessarily loyal to Britain, supported the ideals for which Britain stood. It was this group of people which formed the very first settlers, albeit squatters, in the Eastern Townships of Lower Canada arriving in the area around Missisquoi Bay in the 1780's. Undoubtedly occupation of the land by any permanent settlers would have been greatly retarded without the revolution as the incentive to leave the United States in order to remain under the British flag which motivated the United Empire Loyalists and some of the later emigrants would have been lacking. There would most likely have been a gradual southeastward movement of French Canadians from the seigneuries along the lower Yamaska and St. Francis rivers coupled with a later northward movement of settlers from the New England colonies seeking new land. The eastward movement of

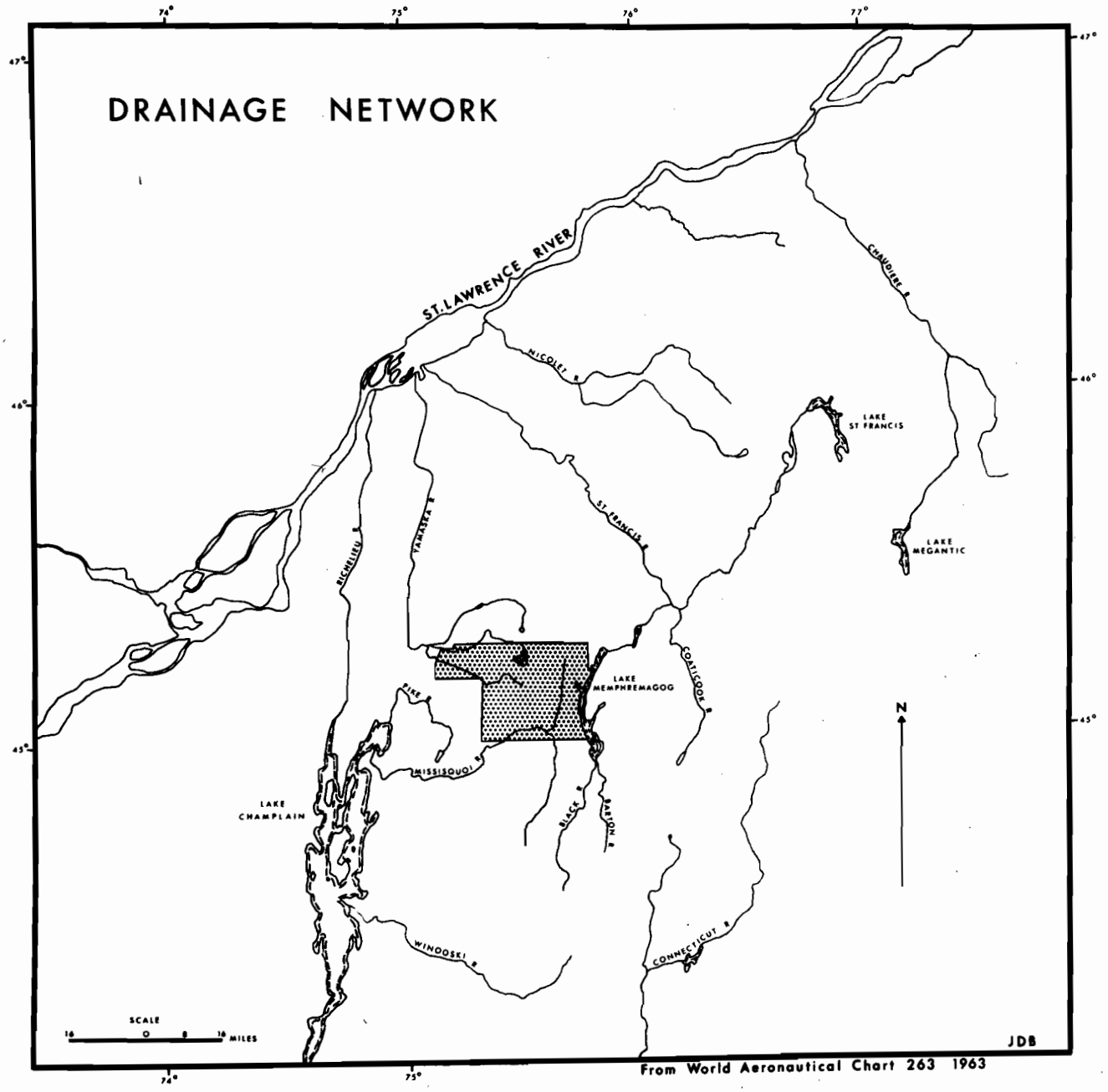
DRAINAGE NETWORK
74°
75°
76°
77°
47°
46°
45°
ST. LAWRENCE RIVER
CHAUDIERE R.
NICOLET R.
LAKE ST FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS R.
LAKE MEGANTIC
RICHELIEU R.
YAMASKA R.
LAKE MEMPHREMAGOG
COATICOOK R.
PIKE R.
MISSISQUOI R.
LAKE CHAMPLAIN
BLACK R.
BARTON R.
WINOOSKI R.
CONNECTICUT R.
N
SCALE
10 0 5 10 MILES
JDB
From World Aeronautical Chart 263 1963

Figure 2.

settlers from the seigneuries of the upper Richelieu would have been a much smaller and slower affair as the seigneuries of St. Armand, Sabrevois, Lacole, and de Lery were largely just paper seigneuries with few settlers.[1] Therefore the American Revolution looms as the most significant single factor in the settlement of the Eastern Townships before 1820.

The flow of New England settlers into southern Quebec after 1791 was related to the general spread of settlement in upper New England which was well underway by the end of the American Revolution. The period from 1783 to about 1830 was one of great expansion of the settled area of New England and adjacent southern Quebec and the so-called "late loyalists" who emigrated to Canada in this period were often no more than footloose Americans seeking new land who felt that the obligation to swear an oath of allegience to the British Crown was a small price to pay for the right to a substantial block of virgin land.

The scale of this immigration was impressive with about 20,000 Americans coming to Lower Canada in the period up to 1812. The War of 1812 marked a pause but not an end to the immigration from New England. The New Englanders

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[1] Personal Communication from Professor C. Harris

residing in the Eastern Townships remained almost wholly supine during the war (Thomas, 1866a) and history shows that the New England states were themselves, on the whole, opposed to the war and that they carried on a flourishing trade with the British garrisons in Canada. Despite the large size of the immigration to Quebec, or Lower Canada, it was smaller still than the flow from the United States to Upper Canada.

The motivations behind the emigration of the various groups of settlers from the British Isles are more complex.

The Napoleonic Wars and the Industrial Revolution were two of the principal factors which created a surplus of population in England and Scotland in the early nineteenth century. Large numbers of disbanded soldiers and sailors who had no jobs to return to in civilian life emigrated to Canada and obtained land grants in Upper and Lower Canada. The land reforms which accompanied the Industrial Revolution created a class of unemployed farm labourers who drifted from the rural areas to the cities of the British Isles and, having no industrial skills, formed a second nucleus of emigrants.

The best known single incident which precipitated a wholesale emigration to Canada was the series of potato

famines which gripped Ireland in the mid-1840's. There had indeed been a considerable number of Irish families arriving in Lower Canada and in the Eastern Townships previous to this (as early as the 1820's) but their influence in Brome and the immediate surrounding area dates from this later migration.

The emigrations from the British Isles included people from a number of ethnic groups and from all classes of society. The English and Irish formed the largest proportion but significant numbers of Scots also emigrated. The Scottish emigration took place largely before 1815 and in Brome County their numbers had reached only 150, or 1.6% of the total population in 1851[2] with the largest concentration in Farnham Township.

The Irish immigration to Upper and Lower Canada began in the 1820's. This early immigration of essentially upper class Protestant Irish was distinct from the mass migrations of the peasant class Roman Catholic Irish which began in the 1830's as a result of hard times in Ireland and continued through the potato famines of 1845-1846. Many of these later Irish immigrants settled in the towns and provided one of the pools of surplus labour which helped in the growth

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[2] Census of Canada, 1851-1852; unless otherwise specified, the subsequent figures are from this Census.

of factory industries. In the 1850's and 1860's almost all of the stevedoring in the loading of timber at Quebec City was done by the Irish. In Brome County their numbers totalled 460 or 3.9% of the total population by 1851, again with the largest concentrations in Farnham and Brome Townships. The more southerly and easterly townships of Bolton and Potton had only 32 and 4 settlers respectively from Ireland at that time.

The Roman Catholic Irish had an additional importance as well as being both rural and urban settlers. Wherever they settled in numbers they soon established their own Roman Catholic churches where there had been previously only the various Protestant denominations, brought by the American settlers, and the Church of England. This encouraged the French Canadians to leave their established parishes in the lowlands and to move to the Eastern Townships where they would still be assured of a church of their own faith among the majority of English-speaking and Protestant settlers. As will be shown, throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century the Irish tended to intermingle freely with the French Canadians.

Most of the immigration from England came spasmodically up to about 1870. Many of the English immigrants were well-to-do as the early Irish settlers had been but they nevertheless preferred to take up land and make a rural life

rather than to settle in towns. There were 247 people from England and Wales in Brome County in 1851 but with the higher concentrations this time in Brome and Sutton Townships.

In many instances the later arrivals from the British Isles bought land which had already been cleared from farmers who were moving out of the Eastern Townships to Upper Canada or elsewhere. The British American Land Company which was established in 1833, with its headquarters in Sherbrooke (Paradis, 1951a), also owned large tracts of land which it sold to the incoming settlers. This land company did not have any holdings in Brome County.

Throughout the period of immigration from 1800 onward there was present in Lower Canada the inhibiting factor of the seigneurial system which was totally foreign to the settlers both from the British Isles and the United States. The fact that the only lands open to them for settlement on a township type of land subdivision with free tenure of the land were in the Eastern Townships and in limited areas in the Ottawa River valley, prompted many to by-pass Lower Canada altogether and continue on to Upper Canada.

The strength of the French Canadian migration southwards and eastwards into the Eastern Townships can be clearly shown by the proportion of the population of Brome County which they formed in 1851. Farnham Township, which then comprised what are now the townships of East and West

Farnham, had 1,291 French Canadians (over one half of the total of 2,226 in the whole of Brome County). This is not a surprising distribution for Farnham Township was the most westerly of all of the original Eastern Townships and was adjacent to the established French Canadian settlements around Ste. Angele, Ste. Brigide and St. Cesaire. Thus, it lay directly in the path of French Canadian expansion which explains the fact that French Canadians formed such a large fraction of the total population of this township as early as 1851. There was the further factor of the growth of the town of Farnham in the western part of the township and its emergence in the latter half of the nineteenth century as a railway centre. This was a magnet to French Canadian settlement in the area (notwithstanding the fact that the town was initially founded by Quakers).

In the remaining four townships of Brome County the highest concentrations of French Canadians were in the northern part of Bolton Township around the village of St. Etienne de Bolton and in Sutton Township. The Bolton settlements were the vanguard of a southward movement through Shefford County from Bagot County.

This intermingling of French and English settlers brought about distinctive features in the landscape in terms of architectural styles and field patterns. The land subdivision system in use on the St. Lawrence plain was the long lot system based originally on the necessity of having river

frontage for transportation needs. This system was initiated under the French regime in New France and through the spread of series, or ranges, of long lots all of the St. Lawrence plain was settled. The flat land of the plain was particularly suited to this system; however, its application in other areas of greater relief such as in the Gaspe region of Quebec which is within the same Appalachian physiographic province as are the Eastern Townships led to many problems. The settlement pattern which is characterisitc of the long lots is one of elongated villages with the houses and farm buildings immediately adjacent to the roads.

The township system of land subdivision as outlined in the Introduction led to scattered settlement and irregular field patterns both of which were compounded by the broken topography of Brome County, and, on a broader scale, of the Eastern Townships in general.

Plates I and II show these strikingly different patterns in two areas of East Farnham Township and are an indication of the importance of the cultural group in the evolution of a landscape.

Plate I shows an area of long lots in the extreme north-western corner of East Farnham Township. The typical orientation of the lots back from the Yamaska River with a road paralleling the river on either side is clearly shown. The farm buildings are all located at one extremity of the

Plate I

lots and tend to form ribbons of settlement, although in this particular instance they are rather widely spaced. Also evident is the relatively large proportion of the farms which has remained in forest even on the fairly level land.

Plate II shows another area of East Farnham Township, this time in the south-western sector on the south branch of the Yamaska River. Here the settlement and field patterns are completely different from those shown in Plate I although only four miles separate these areas. Here may be seen the more rectangular road and field patterns with scattered farms which is characteristic of the township system. A number of the farms are located at a distance from the roads reflecting the English trait of location in the midst of ones' land. There is little orientation of the roads or the farms to the river, as in Plate I, and the relief is only slightly more pronounced.

Plate II

Chapter II

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

As with most areas of pioneer settlement, the physical environment of Brome County greatly affected the direction, rate and type of settlement which occurred in the last years of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth. The factors of relief, vegetation, soils, and hydrology, acting in conjunction with one another, to a large extent dictated the form of early settlement and, once established, the major pursuits of the settlers. Indeed, this influence of physical environment continued to be felt into the latter part of the nineteenth century and in the present economy of the county the physical landscape is still playing a very direct and significant role.

While it is customary to include in such a study as this an exhaustive description of the physical geography of the area in question, the examination of this field will be limited to those factors which had direct influence on (a) the settlers' choice of locations for settlement, (b) the choice of town sites, and (c) the location, nature, and growth of a transport network. It is a significant fact that in the case of most of the settlers who came to Canada from the United States between 1783 and 1820, and this was the

majority of the early pioneers of Brome County, they were not facing a totally new kind of environment. To those coming from the New England states the landscape of Brome County was little different from that of their former homeland. Although these people were moving into an area which was completely without a permanent population before 1783 they were able to bring with them the same technologies which they had developed in the United States.

Far more unfortunate were those settlers from the British Isles or elsewhere who, although they may have had a tradition of rural living had no experience as defricheurs or pioneers. To these people the environment was totally foreign and doubly hostile.

All the environmental factors of vegetation, soils, topography, geology and hydrography had an immediate and significant effect on the settlement patterns of the early pioneers. None of these acted independently of the others and their interaction to form a specific general environment brought about equally specific responses from the settlers.

In terms of topography, Brome County lies almost totally within the Appalachian physiographic province of Canada with only a few square miles in East Farnham Township lying in the St. Lawrence Plain. The relief varies from moderate in the larger river valley bottoms to rough in the

more mountainous eastern part.

It is not necessary in this work to go into an extensive listing of the many species of vegetation which are and were found in Brome County for this has been adequately done by others (Pochopien, 1952b). Some indication, however, of the state of the vegetative cover which faced the colonists is of interest. In this context it is vital to point out that over a period of approximately one hundred and fifty years, during which there was active exploitation of all of the forests of Brome, there have been many changes in the numbers and distribution of various species and the vegetation of the present bears little resemblance to that of 1800. It is not unreasonable to assume that with the relatively light hand of man in the area before settlement, the vegetation of 1800 was the climax vegetation for the region whereas that which is present in the landscape today is but a subsere or immature growth.

There are two principal broad categories of vegetation present in Brome County; the deciduous hardwoods including maple, beech and elm which are found principally on better drained soils and in upland areas and the conifers including spruce, hemlock and cedar which grow more characteristically in the poorly drained regions and in valley bottoms. Stands of spruce and hemlock did occur however on the mountainsides. (Thomas, 1866b). This basic pattern has been

greatly altered, as suggested above, following the clearing of much of the forest area and the intensive logging operations which were widespread throughout the county. When the cycle of regeneration began, different species, such as birch, occupied areas formerly under a totally different vegetative cover.

In accounts of the lives of the early pioneers it is often pointed out that the only natural clearings in the unbroken mantle of forest were the areas of beaver meadows. These formed with the breaking down of beaver dams along the streams and the subsequent drainage of the flooded areas. These areas then grew up into grass which, in many cases, provided the first natural fodder for the settlers' livestock.

Thus, the almost total forest cover must be considered in the light of the fact that its clearance was of primary importance to the pioneers in the initial period of settlement in order to have land on which to produce at least subsistence crops.

The geology of the region also played a part, to a degree, in the development of a settlement pattern in Brome County. In this county there has been extreme folding of the rocks and in many instances rivers flowed over beds of vertically tilted resistant rock producing waterfalls.

These in turn were attractive to the settlers as water power sites for saw and grist mills and the great majority of Eastern Townships towns grew up at these water power sites.

Plate III shows part of the ruins of a former grist mill at Bolton Centre built about 1860. It shows the vertically tilted rocks forming the waterfall and the cement framework which held the twin flume pipes.

The soils of Brome County per se will be treated only briefly for their influence in the choice of land upon which to settle was not great and certainly secondary to considerations of slope, drainage and vegetation. The cases of prospective land-owners choosing lot A over lot B entirely, or even partly, because of soil conditions, as opposed to the other above-mentioned factors, were few indeed. It was a much more frequent occurrence for a pioneer farmer to discover that his land was too stony or the soil too thin to support agriculture only after he had made the initial settlement. He was then faced with the prospect of trying to continue to work a marginal farm or of selling out and moving to another area. This was an important factor in the movement of population out of Brome County in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Suffice it to say that the larger part of Brome is covered by fair to poor agricultural soils, with the best of these limited to the river terraces and the recent alluvial deposits in river valley bottoms which are both relatively flat and of low stoniness. It will be shown in the next chapter that there was indeed a preference shown for lots near a watercourse, at least in Potton Township, although this is not everywhere related to the nature of the soils formed in the valleys which vary greatly with the characteristics of the valleys themselves. In general it is the patchy nature of the soils in Brome County which make extensive agriculture impossible.

The Pleistocene glaciation left many deposits of sands and gravels in Brome County and scattered gravel pits, such as that presented in Plate IV, utilizing these glacial deposits are common. The quarrying of these materials for various construction purposes is a significant industry in the county.

PLATE III

Grist Mill Ruins at Bolton Centre

PLATE IV

Small Gravel Pit at Brome

Chapter III

SETTLEMENT IN POTTON TOWNSHIP

Insofar as the combination of topography, soils and vegetation is concerned, the generalization has been made that in the Appalachian region of Quebec where there are series of roughly parallel ridges and valleys trending northeast to southwest, the early American settlers usually chose the higher ground of the ridges to clear, to settle on and on which to build their roads. There have been a number of arguments to support this hypothesis.

The general distribution of extensive stands of deciduous hardwood forests on the drier upland soils, which when felled, could be made into potash for immediate cash sale in Montreal, prompted the early clearing of many upland areas. This inherent nature of the soils and vegetation of the higher, better drained areas was likewise a factor in the physical clearing of the land. The deciduous forests had relatively little undergrowth compared with the dense tangles of conifers which thrived in the valley bottoms. These same conditions prompted the building of roads along the ridges where the dangers of flooding were reduced.

The above hypothesis, however, can be misleading and some qualification of it is necessary if it is to be valid even in the broad sense. For this reason Potton Township has been chosen as a typical area of early settlement from which to make observations and draw conclusions about the location of cleared land and settlement in relation to the above factors.

Instead of presenting a geomorphological evolution of the topography of Potton, the landscape will be treated rather in a purely descriptive manner for the early pioneers were not concerned with process but with reality in the landscape.

When discussing the location of settlement as related to topography in the Eastern Townships in general, and in Potton in particular, one must remember the relatively small percentage of the total area which is flat or even gently rolling. The greater proportion is hilly to mountainous and hence almost all settlement is on sloping land of some sort. It is then the degree of slope which becomes the determinant factor in the choice of locations for settling.

Potton Township can be subdivided into a number of broad physical regions which are to a large extent related to the distribution of population.

There are the river valleys and associated river terraces which form the core areas of Potton. The principal streams are the Missisquoi River in the south-west which has its headwaters in Vermont and which flows westward through Potton eventually emptying into Lake Champlain in the area south of Swanton, Vermont. One of its main tributaries is the North Missisquoi River which flows south through central Potton to join the mainstream at Highwater. In the western section of the township the southflowing Ruiter Brook enters the Missisquoi near Dunkin. The Missisquoi and that part of the North Missisquoi which is in Potton are both approaching grade with, in most places, a characteristic well developed flood plain and terraces. Ruiter Brook, on the other hand, is a much smaller and more youthful stream having a gradient of approximately 1 foot in 35 feet over its eight mile course and a relatively narrow valley.

The second major physical division of Potton is the large area of mountainous terrain which, for all intents and purposes, can be considered an area devoid of settlement. In western Potton are found the Sutton Mountains, heavily forested, and reaching a maximum altitude of 2700 feet within the township. The Missisquoi River, a consequent stream, cuts through these mountains in the Glen Sutton area leaving a second smaller section of them in southwest Potton. In addition to the Sutton Mountain mass there are a number of peaks

in eastern Potton which are composed of metamorphosed igneous rocks and, as such, are geologically distinct from the Sutton Range. These mountains include Pevee, Sugar Loaf, Owl's Head and Bear Mountain, all of which exceed 2000 feet in elevation as well as Hogs Back and Hawk Mountain which attain heights of 1750 feet and 925 feet respectively. These are all steep sided mountains which offer very little suitable agricultural land.

Related to the mountains of eastern Potton is the steep slope down to Lake Memphremagog, averaging one foot in five along the entire eastern side of the township, which effectively closes the lake shore to settlement except for two points of access at Knowlton's Landing and Perkins Landing.

The fourth physiographic region is comprised of the interior plateau areas. These are areas of relatively level ground found above the level of the river terraces and above the slope to Lake Memphremagog.

The area to the east and south-east of Mansonville is the fifth and last of Potton's major land classes. This is an area of relatively level land but also one in which there are widespread areas of poor drainage and swamps.

Taking each of these land classes in order, it can be shown how each attracted or repelled settlement and how their distribution produced the land use pattern which developed during the nineteenth century in Potton.

Three points must be remembered when considering the settlement of any part of the Eastern Townships. First, original clearings made in the forests were not necessarily always preserved to become permanent features of the landscape. There has been a constant decline in the area of cleared land in Brome County since 1881[1] (with minor pauses) and, not unnaturally, most of the land abandoned has been the marginal land in terms of slope and poor quality of soils.

Secondly, the location of agricultural land and the siting of farm buildings must not be confused. Although there has been extensive clearing of valley bottoms for agriculture in Potton, in the majority of cases the farm buildings associated with these lands are located fifty to one hundred feet above the level of the river on the river terraces, that is, well above the spring flood level. The limited areas of vegetation which do appear along the banks of the river are usually left on purpose by the local farmers as a method of flood control and to reduce the rate of erosion on the river banks.

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[1] Census of Canada data.

Thirdly, the soils are a factor. While each physical region does not necessarily have a particular or unique soil type there is a broad correspondence between certain physiographic areas and the soils found on them.

The map of agricultural and improved land seen in Figure 3 shows the strong orientation of this land along the river valleys of the main rivers and their tributaries. Air photographs, such as Plate V, show conclusively that there is a band of cleared land running the length of the North Missisquoi valley but that this land ends abruptly above the river terraces. There is a similar pattern for the Ruiter Brook and Missisquoi River proper in south-central Potton with this narrow, sharply defined band of cleared land following the river valley into Sutton Township to the west. At first glance the most obvious reason for the concentration of agriculture in these areas is because of relatively fertile alluvial soils which are found in the river valley flood plain and which contrast markedly with the thin, stony upland soils which are far less suited to crop raising.

The mountainous areas of Potton are, as mentioned above, almost completely devoid of settlement due to excesses of slope and lack of suitable soils. Historically their main importance to the inhabitants of the area has been in terms of their forests which have long been exploited.

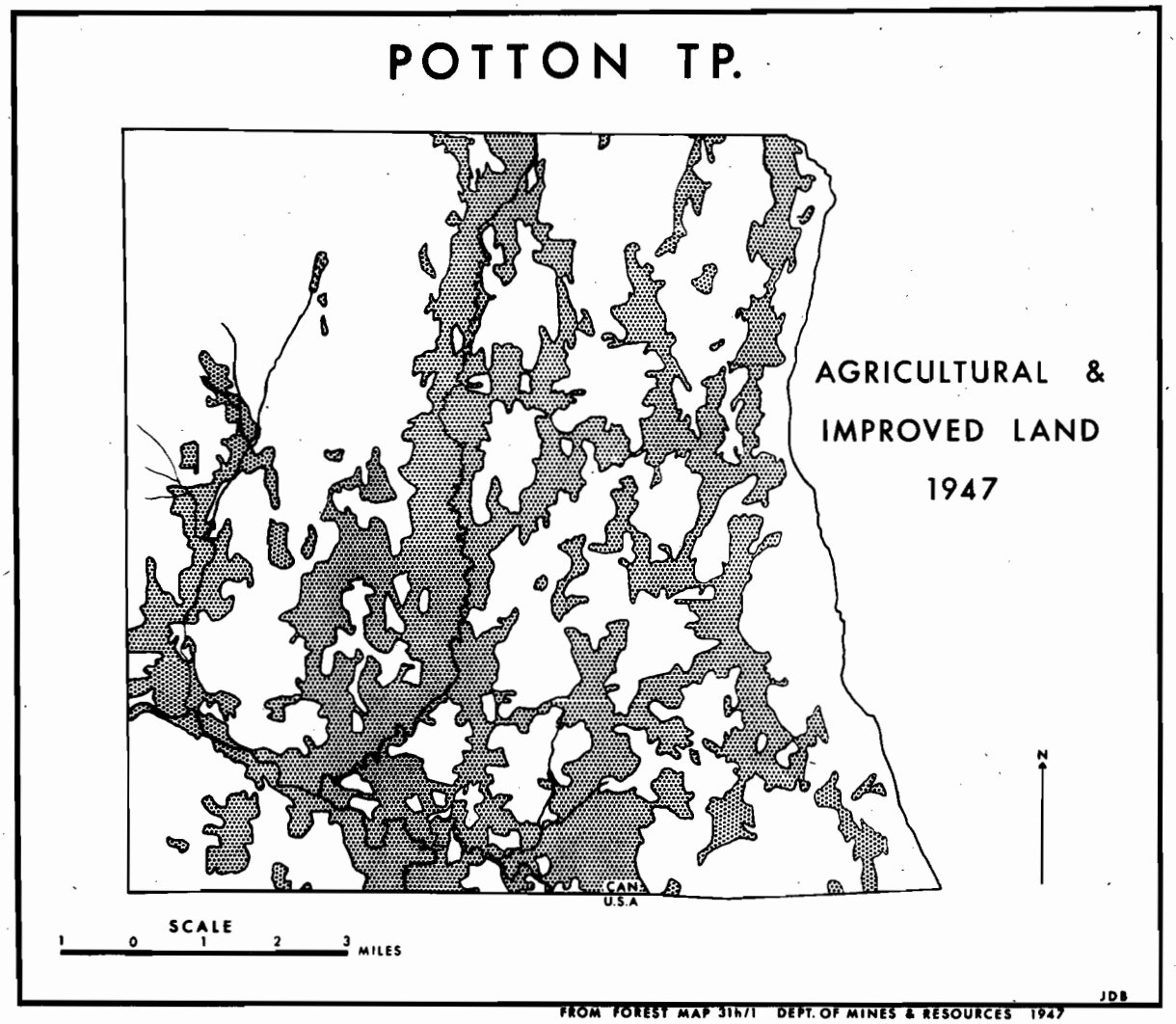

POTTON TP.
AGRICULTURAL &
IMPROVED LAND
1947
N
CAN.
U.S.A
SCALE
1 0 1 2 3 MILES
JDB
FROM FOREST MAP 31h/1 DEPT. OF MINES & RESOURCES 1947

Figure 3.

Plate V

Recently, however, much of this area has been developed as a ski resort centre and the latest hill to be opened was Owl's Head, in the fall of 1965.

The western shore of Lake Memphremagog in Potton remained unoccupied until the boom in summer cottage building which has occurred largely since the end of World War Two. Two hotels, the Revere House and the Mountain House, were located on the lakeshore (Belden, 1881a) with access to the latter only by water. The steep slope down to the lake forced settlement inland up onto the narrow strip of relatively flat land between 900 and 1000 feet elevation, and was the reason for the early building of a road connecting the line of farms parallel to the lake. Despite this connecting link, however, these farms still continued to depend on water transport through Knowlton Landing and Perkins Landing for access to outside areas, that is, to Magog. This remained the case until the coming of the railway and the growth of a complete road system connecting eastern Potton with the rest of Brome County.

Next to the mountainous regions of Potton, the least densely populated part of the township is the area in the south-east where inadequate drainage gives rise to swampy conditions over extensive areas. Here one may in fact find good examples of settlement and communication lines limited to the upland surfaces as outlined in the above mentioned

hypothesis. However, while there are scattered farms along the roads on the drier ridges between the basins of swampy land, this area remains largely unattractive for agriculture.

From Figure 4 which shows the location of the lots which were petitioned for in 1803 (Taylor, 1937a) one can see the preference which was shown for lots in or near rivers and river valleys. Some of the lots shown on the map were never occupied and, in fact, were never cleared even in later years. These appear to be generally those in the more mountainous parts of southwestern Potton. In almost all the lots which fronted on a river or stream, it was the lower land adjacent to the water which was cleared and the higher parts of the lots were left in woodland.

Settlement in Potton came early and was largely from the south, that is, from Vermont. "The Missisquoi River was the only thoroughfare at that time (1800), by which access to this howling wilderness could be gained..." (Thomas, 1866c).

The first settler in Potton was Nicholas Austin who was later to play a large part in the founding of Magog and in the development of the area around Sargent's Bay. The Austin family's stay in Potton during the winter of 1793 in the vicinity of Vale Perkins (Taylor, 1908b) was due to an error in judgement. Nicholas Austin had received

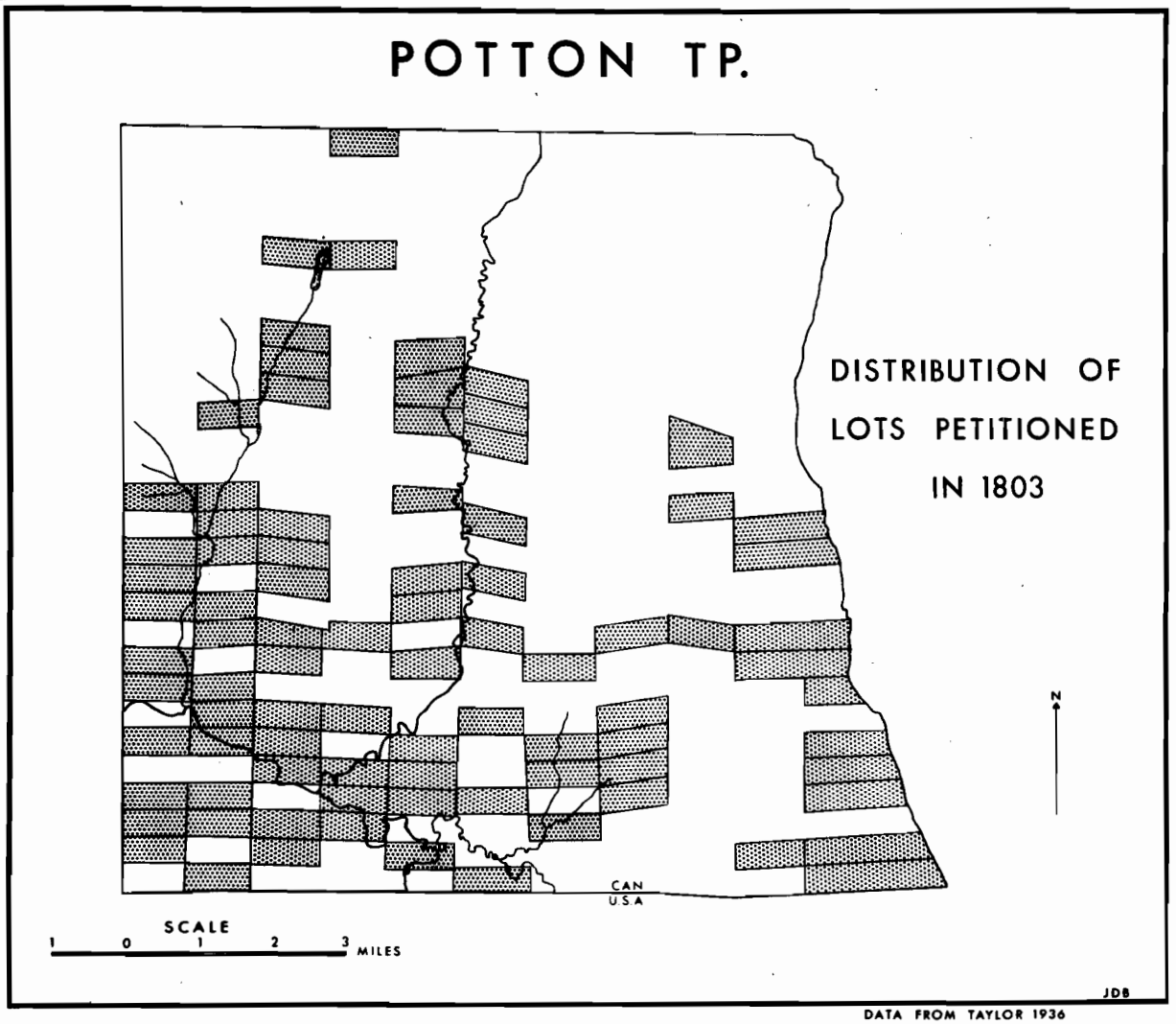

POTTON TP.
DISTRIBUTION OF LOTS PETITIONED IN 1803
N
CAN
USA
SCALE
1 0 1 2 3 MILES
JDB
DATA FROM TAYLOR 1936

Figure 4.

title to lands in Bolton Township and, when the mistake was discovered, he moved in 1794 to what subsequently became known as Austin Bay. The first permanent settlers came to Potton in 1793 (Taylor, 1937b) and from then on a steady stream arrived from New England. This movement spread first gradually northward along the Ruiter Brook, Missisquoi River and the plateau above Lake Memphremagog, with a gradual filling out of the south-central part by 1860. By 1864 virtually all of the existing and now-abandoned farms were in existence (Walling, 1864).

Thus far it has been primarily the rural settlement of Potton which has been under discussion. Although the towns of Dunkin (formerly West Potton) and Mansonville scarcely deserve the title of urban areas, their historical geographical antecedents are somewhat different from the strictly rural areas. To the pioneer entering a completely uninhabited area, what were the significant factors which prompted the growth of Dunkin and Mansonville as towns? Most simply stated, the reason for their birth and development was water power. At the site of Mansonville is one of the only significant waterfalls on either branch of the Missisquoi River which could be harnessed to run the saw and grist mills required by the settlers.

Ruins of a grist mill at Mansonville which was finally dismantled in the 1940's are seen in Plate VI. The remains of the dam across the North Missisquoi River which furnished the head of water needed to operate the mill are seen in the centre and lower right hand corner of the photograph. In the left centre is the water intake and the aperture for the water wheel while the flat circular enclosure in the centre of the photo probably housed the grinding mechanism.

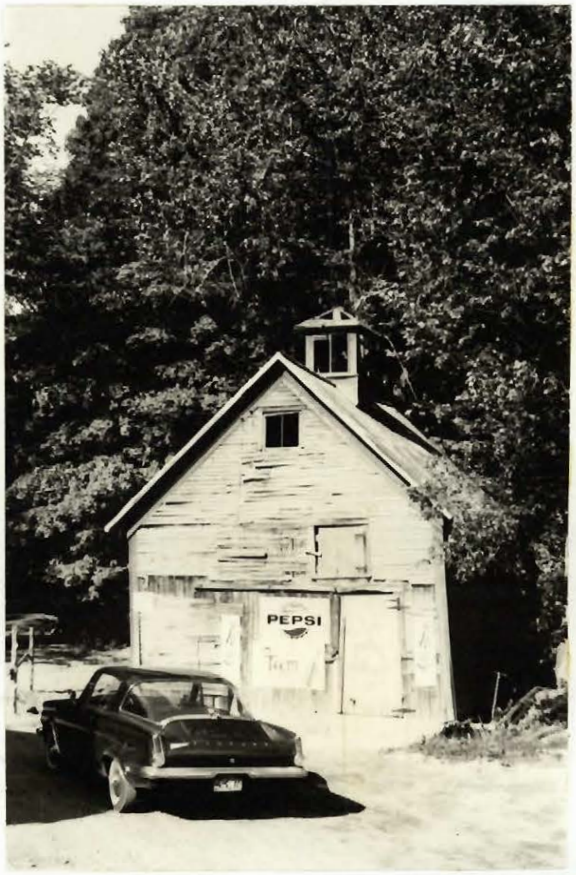
Similarly Dunkin occupies a site on Ruiter Brook where the profile of the river is steepest and the water power potential greatest. Besides the functions of the two villages as mill centres, they also evolved into local market centres. Mansonville, which was on a stage coach route to the United States, grew much more rapidly than did Dunkin and by 1858 boasted two hotels, saw and grist mills and a general store (The Canadian Directory, 1857-1858a).

Had the stream which flows into Lake Memphremagog at Vale Perkins been larger and able to support large scale mills (at one time it did have two small saw mills and a grist mill in operation on it) Vale Perkins, with its access to the lake, would probably also have developed into a sizable town.

PLATE VI

Grist Mill Ruins at Mansonville

PLATE VII



Former Grist Mill at Vale Perkins

In the light of the above account of settlement in Potton the original hypothesis that, generally speaking, settlement was on high land with the river valleys left in forest will be re-examined.

Insofar as cleared land is concerned, this is not generally true in the case of any of the larger river valleys in Potton, or in Brome as a whole. There should be no confusion about the practice of leaving a thin band of trees on either side of a river to reduce the probability of erosion and flooding. Despite the fact that this is indeed a good practice for this purpose, it has been all too infrequently carried out in Potton and seasonal floods and changes in the courses of rivers have not been uncommon in the past. (See Plate V). Figure 3 clearly shows that the valley of the North Missisquoi River largely has been cleared for agriculture. Where stream valleys have not been cleared, but left in their natural vegetation, this has been due primarily to excesses of slope in youthful valleys which renders clearing of the valley sides and agriculture impractical.

The location of a line of settlement on the relatively high and flat plateau along Lake Memphremagog in Potton is due primarily to the fact that settlement was impossible along the lake shore and that this flat land was the only alternative. This concept is supported by evidence

that in the townships of Bolton and Stanstead, where the slope of the land to the lake is much gentler, the farms were often located directly on the lake rather than on the higher land to the west which was only settled in the second half of the nineteenth century, often by French Canadians moving southward into the area (Walling, 1864).

This statement that the farm buildings and roads were situated on the higher ground can be supported much more strongly than that concerning the location of cleared land, for the first settlers did indeed locate their houses either on river terraces or on the valley sides at sufficient altitude to be above the level of the spring floods. In the case of the roads, these can be seen to follow the valleys of the Missisquoi and North Missisquoi but do so only as these valleys provide the easiest routeway across the country. It should be noted that the roads are almost without exception located on the sides of the valleys, off the valley floors. The same is true in general for railways, in particular the former Orford Mountain Railway which ran through Potton. If followed the east side of the valley of the North Missisquoi at an average of fifty to seventy-five feet above the level of the river, as may be seen in Plate V.

Certainly grants to the east, located on higher ground, on the tops of ridges and in many of the smaller

stream valleys have been cleared, but, more often than not, these were areas of later settlement, which were occupied only after the better land had been taken. Figure 4, illustrating the location of lots chosen by the first immigrants, shows a strong preference for lots with access to some form of water body. It is not unreasonable to assume, after reading the historical accounts of the area, that the majority of these petitioners had seen the country and the lots on which they wished to settle or, at the very least, the surveyors' maps of the township. Otherwise there could not have been the obvious orientation of lots along streams. This was not invariably the case, however, in the Eastern Townships, and many of the later immigrants from the British Isles and demobilized soldiers received lots of which they had no idea of the location and which often proved to be most disadvantageously situated.

Chapter IV

THE ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE OF 1851

For the purposes of this study the first fifty years of settlement in Brome County will be considered as the basis period during which the "frontier economy", in terms of agriculture and industry, was firmly established. This frontier economy will, in turn, provide the base from which any further development, or lack of development, will take place. The reason for choosing this particular date of cross-section is that it shows the development of the local economy as related to local production and consumption in an era before any significant advances in transportation, other than the stage coach, could open this region to external influences.

Brome County was by no means unique in having this type of economy for the combined factors of a lack of an adequate transportation system and a further deficiency of any surplus manpower, united to make a frontier economy general throughout the Eastern Townships.

The population of Brome County was on the rise in 1851 and reached the figure of 11,510; this was an increase of 6,724 people from 1831 when the population was

only 4,786[1]. Even at this relatively early date French Canadians accounted for almost one fifth (19.3%) of the total population although over one half of the 2,226 French Canadians lived in Farnham Township. Excluding Farnham Township, the percentage of the total population composed of French Canadians dropped to 11.3%. The influence of the French Canadians can further be shown in terms of births per thousand of population by comparing the birth rates for the whole of Brome County including all of Farnham Township with those of just the four easterly townships of Brome, Sutton, Potton and Bolton. The overall birth rate was 33.3 per 1000 while in the latter four townships, with only relatively small numbers of French Canadians in 1851, it fell to 31 per 1000.

Turning to the agricultural base of Brome County one finds that in all phases agriculture was expanding. The total occupied acreage stood at 177,641 acres of which 61,590 acres were classified as improved land. (All census data for 1851 include the Township of West Farnham, as well as East Farnham as part of Brome). These figures represent a constant expansion of the agricultural frontier from what had been a total wilderness some fifty years previously.

In terms of produce, the two staple crops of the early settlers had been corn and wheat and, even as early as

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[1] Unless otherwise noted, all figures in this chapter are derived from the Census of Canada, for the appropriate year.

1851, a clear pattern was beginning to emerge as to the whole direction which farming in Brome County was to take. Beginning in 1830, there was a marked decline in the production of wheat as may be seen in Figure 5. This was due principally to the fact that the farmers of Brome County were discovering that, in terms of yields per acre (approximately 10 bushels per acre), wheat could not profitably be grown and harvested on the relatively steep slopes and limited areas of Brome and compete with the wheat being grown on the St. Lawrence Plain, around Montreal. This particular decline in Brome County was not, as has been suggested, due to the opening of the west by the railways for it came at a much earlier time. Wheat production in Brome in 1851 was 26,823 bushels from 2,405 acres; this represented a decrease of 20,357 bushels from 1831. A further refutation of the notion that the railways' opening of the west was the cause of the decline in Brome's wheat production may be seen in Figure 5. Between 1871 and 1881 there was a slight rise in production at very nearly the same time as the completion of the transcontinental railway link.

As mentioned above, by 1851 a clear trend in the agricultural production of Brome County was emerging. It was from this time that cattle raising and dairying rose to prominence. The English American settlers who first populated parts of the Eastern Townships have generally been held

to have been cattle raisers to a much greater extent than their French Canadian counterparts in Quebec and this observation is particularly valid in Brome. A glance at the crop statistics from the Census of Canada for 1851-1852 shows an annual production of 87,693 bushels of oats, 31,876 bushels of corn, 26,421 tons of hay, and 57,410 bushels of potatoes. A large proportion of the above crops were used exclusively as cattle fodder and oats and corn, together with hay, became by far the three most important crops grown in Brome by the end of the nineteenth century. (See Figure 5)

Butter production amounted to 322,277 pounds in 1851 and cheese making was becoming increasingly widespread with the manufacture of 105,492 pounds in 1851.

Cattle were important, not only for dairy and meat production, but also in the hide trade. Leather products in the form of harnesses and other accessories for wheeled vehicles formed the basis of an extensive tanning industry within the region. After the advent of railways, Sutton and Sutton Junction became collection centres for hides. (See Plate XVI).

1851 marked the turning point in sheep raising in Brome, for it was at this time that the numbers of sheep reached its peak and began a continuous decline into the twentieth century. This decline is a reflection both of

OATS, CORN & WHEAT PRODUCTION - BROME CO. 1831 - 1911

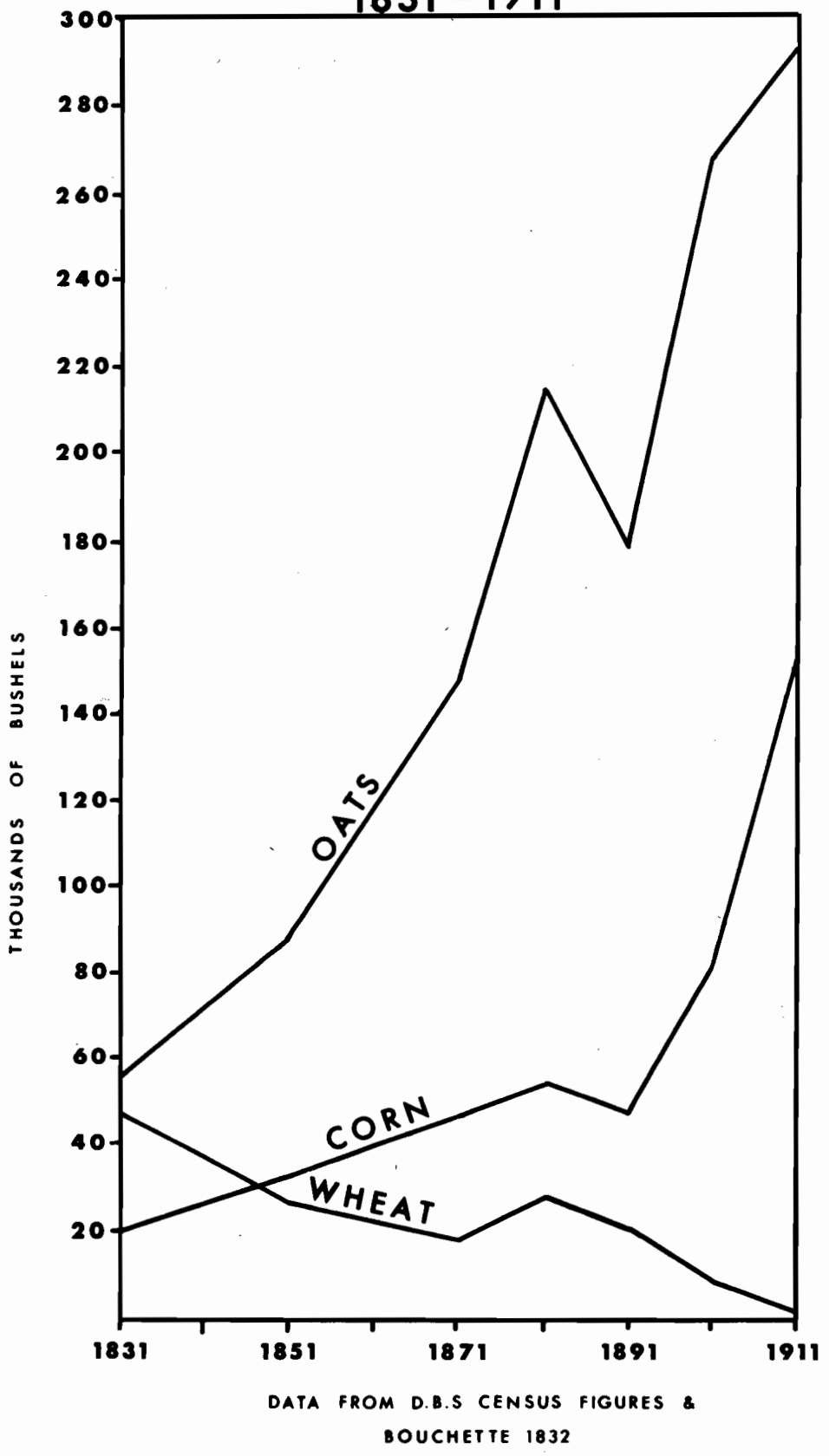

Figure 5.

competition for the Montreal mutton market from overseas competitors and a decreasing need to produce homespun garments as ready made yard goods became available.

In terms of industry, the activities in Brome revolved almost entirely around the processing of local natural and agricultural products. There were in the county in 1851, 14 grist mills, 67 saw mills, 4 tanneries, 7 carding and fulling establishments, 1 woollen factory, asheries and other small scale industries related to frontier needs. Of all these manufacturers, the only ones who sold their products outside of the immediate area were the tanneries and the asheries. The latter produced potash which was sold in Montreal and which was eventually used in bleach in the British woollen industry.

The grist mills provided facilities for the grinding of corn or wheat for local consumption by the settlers. The saw mills at this time were providing large quantities of lumber for the change-over from the original log cabins, built at the time of initial settlement, to the frame houses which are still today characteristic of much of the Eastern Townships. This change from log to timbered homes was in full swing in 1851 with 895 frame houses and 932 log dwellings in Brome County. An example of early frame farm-house construction dating from the 1860's near North Sutton is shown in Plate VIII.

Brick was not yet widely in use as a building material with only eight brick houses in existence in the whole county in 1851. Stone was a building material used primarily in public buildings before 1850 and in 1851 there were twenty-five such stone buildings in Brome. The majority of brick buildings in existence today in both the urban and rural landscapes date from the latter part of the nineteenth century or are older wooden structures which have been bricked over.

The fourteen grist mills in Brome County in 1851 represent almost the peak number and there was a gradual decline in the numbers of these towards the end of the last century and into the twentieth century. The number and location of the grist mills was in general more stable than the saw mills by the very nature of their construction. Because of the weight of the machinery involved (Day, 1869a), most of the grist mills were stone buildings involving a substantial dam across the waterway on which they were located, and a system of sluiceways to conduct the water over the driving wheel. (See Plate VI). All grist mills in Brome were located at water power sites and were originally driven by some form of water operated wheel. The ones which have survived into the twentieth century and have become animal feed manufacturers, (Abercorn and Frelighsburg), have had new gasoline or electric motor crushers installed and

water power is today nowhere a motive force in Brome.

The saw mills, however, were much smaller and, although most depended on water power and on a riverside location for the floating in of logs, few of them had many large permanent buildings and could be moved without too much difficulty. Obviously, the ones which grew up in the towns and which had the prospect of a relatively constant and permanent market developed into larger concerns but in 1850 much of the timber which was processed was still coming from newly cleared agricultural land rather than from deliberate large scale logging operations, so that the mobility of the operations was an important factor. The phase of commercial logging which reached Brome County in the latter years of the nineteenth century will be dealt with later.

The sixty-seven saw mills in Brome in 1851 were close to the maximum number. In 1831 there were thirty-two saw mills (Bouchette, 1832) and by 1864 there were 50 in Brome (Walling, 1864) excluding the township of West Farnham which was included in all 1851 and previous figures. From this period onward there was a decline in the numbers of the smaller operations which ceased to have an adequate supply of raw material in the immediate area and there occurred a general stabilizing of the wood-working industry in several main centres.

The boom in small mining concerns, mainly for copper, which gripped Brome County in the latter half of the nineteenth century had not got under way by 1851.

The towns of Brome of 1851 had almost all grown up at water power sites around saw or grist mills. Sutton, Knowlton, Mansonville, Dunkin, Millington, West Brome, Brome, South Bolton and Bolton Centre all developed as some sort of mill town in which subsequently grew up, to a greater or lesser degree, depending upon the local importance of the town, such subsidiary services as a blacksmith shop, a hotel and various retail outlets for consumer goods. In 1851 there had not been established much of a hierarchy of towns within the county and each was a central place within its own surrounding hinterland. Only a location on a trunk stage-coach route to the United States or a town's position as an administrative centre (county seat, etc.) would make one town prosper out of proportion to its neighbours.

Plate IX shows the saw mill at South Bolton on the North Missisquoi River. There has been a saw mill on this site since 1817 (Taylor, 1937c) and although the original dam and mill pond are no longer used for water power or gathering logs, there is still a small gasoline-engine operated saw mill on the site.

Plate X illustrates a typical rural general store at Vale Perkins.

PLATE VIII

North Sutton Farmhouse

PLATE IX

South Bolton Saw Mill

PLATE X

General Store at Vale Perkins

Chapter V

ROADS

As mentioned above, the first settlers in Brome County faced a literally "trackless" wilderness and much of the early transportation was by water. The nearest roads were to be found in the French seigneuries bordering the Richelieu and lower Yamaska Rivers and, to the south, the roads of southern New England.

The road network which was to develop in the Eastern Townships differed in a number of ways from that of the French seigneuries in the St. Lawrence Lowlands. In the first place, the physiography of the Townships ruled against the laying out of straight roads and imposed a system of winding, hilly ones which had to conform to the irregular topography.

Secondly, the English Township system created problems for the road builders which differed greatly from those of the seigneuries. The original seigneuries were located along river banks as the waterways were the only means of transportation before the introduction of roads. After most of the river lots were occupied a second row, or "range", of lots was begun along a range road and so on back from the rivers. The long lot pattern was main-

tained and the resulting settlement pattern was one of long street villages with the houses and barns of all the farms being located at one end of the long lot directly on the road.

Under the township system of land subdivision, an area was arbitrarily surveyed into rectangular lots of approximately two hundred acres which completely ignored the topography. In many cases the lots were held for speculation by the original grantee against the terms of settlement as outlined in the Introduction and then resold or subdivided. This led to a haphazard settlement pattern and, unlike the French Canadian tradition of locating farm houses directly on the edge of a road, the English preferred to build their dwellings in the centre of their land or at very least back some distance from the road. This resulted in the characteristic driveway up to the farm buildings which is still evident in many parts of the Eastern Townships. (See Plate I and Plate II)

The first roads in the Brome County area were little more than blazed trails intended only as footpaths or, at best, bridle paths (Taylor, 1937d). These were generally built to grist mills such as the one opened from West Shefford to St. Armand in 1793 (Day, 1863a), where settlers could have their grain crops ground. Alternately, the roads were built out from the market towns where surplus

agricultural produce, if any, or one of the by-products of land clearing such as pot and pearl ash, could be sold. Almost all the roads began from these humble post and bridle paths and were improved by degrees until they became passable for wheeled vehicles. In their early stages these roads were much more easily traversed in winter and were used more intensively in that season, and "the only modes of travelling were either in sleighs, or ox-sleds, on horseback, or on foot;..." (Day, 1863a).

The growth of a road network in Brome can be compared with that of the rail network, in that, in both cases there were trunk and subsidiary lines. In the case of roads, there seems to have been an initial building of trunk roads passing through the area from the Montreal area to the United States, and lesser trunk roads within the area. One of the earliest of these was the road joining Stanstead to Montreal via Georgeville, Bolton Pass, Brome, Cowansville, Farnham and Mont Ste. Therese (now Mt. Johnson) (Shufelt, 1965a). Stanstead was later to become the focal point for stage-coach lines radiating to Sherbrooke, Montreal, Quebec, Sorel and to points in New England. A second passed from Austin Bay through Frost Village, Granby and Abbotsford and on to St. Hyacinthe (Shufelt, 1965b) which, as of 1852, had a rail link with Montreal and was a prosperous market town in the seigneuries.

As the numbers of settlers in the counties of Stanstead, Shefford, and Brome grew, so did the demand for roads to Montreal.

Walling's Map of 1864 shows that approximately eighty percent (80%) of the roads existing today in Brome and surrounding area were in existence at that time. Belden's maps of the townships, from his Atlas published in 1881 (Belden, 1881), show a further filling-in of the secondary roads so that a comparison with twentieth century topographic maps (of 1917 and 1953), as well as 1964 air photographs of the area, shows that virtually the only roads which have been built since that time were those related to French Canadian settlement in the northern part of Brome Township following 1880 and the post-World War II roads serving the rapidly growing colonies of summer cottages along the shores of the many lakes in Brome County. In addition, in the recent past, from approximately 1960 onwards, there have been several additions to the road network in the form of access roads to skiing facilities at Mt. Orford, Sutton, Glen Mountain, Bromont, etc.

What Belden's and Walling's Maps do not show, however, is the class or conditions of the roads and this is a most vital factor in the consideration of accessability. As mentioned above, most roads began as trails connecting one settlement with another, or one farm with another. They

then were improved sufficiently that horses could negotiate them and be used to carry the produce which the colonist formerly had had to carry on his own back.

The transition from a riding trail to one passable for wheeled vehicles, usually drawn by oxen, was difficult, and usually involved some external assistance to the communities and farmers from the government of Lower Canada and, later, Quebec. By the 1830's, however, the principal trunk roads, although extremely rough and liable to turn into morasses at the slightest provocation, were fit for wagon and coach traffic and in the late 1830's a stage-coach service was established between St. John (with a connection to Montreal via the Champlain and St. Lawrence Railroad) and Troy, Vermont passing through Frelighsburg and Sutton (Shufelt, 1965c). The roads improved enough by 1858 to allow a quite extensive stage-coach network in Brome (The Canada Directory, 1857-1858) seen in Figure 6. The quality of roads, even main highways, improved only very slowly during the nineteenth century as the techniques of surfacing, particularly Macadamizing, were virtually unknown in the hither townships and the poorly drained corduroy roads continued to plague pioneer traffic.

A unique species of roads made its appearance in the mid-1800's in the form of the Colonization Roads which were built primarily to permit immigrants landing at Quebec

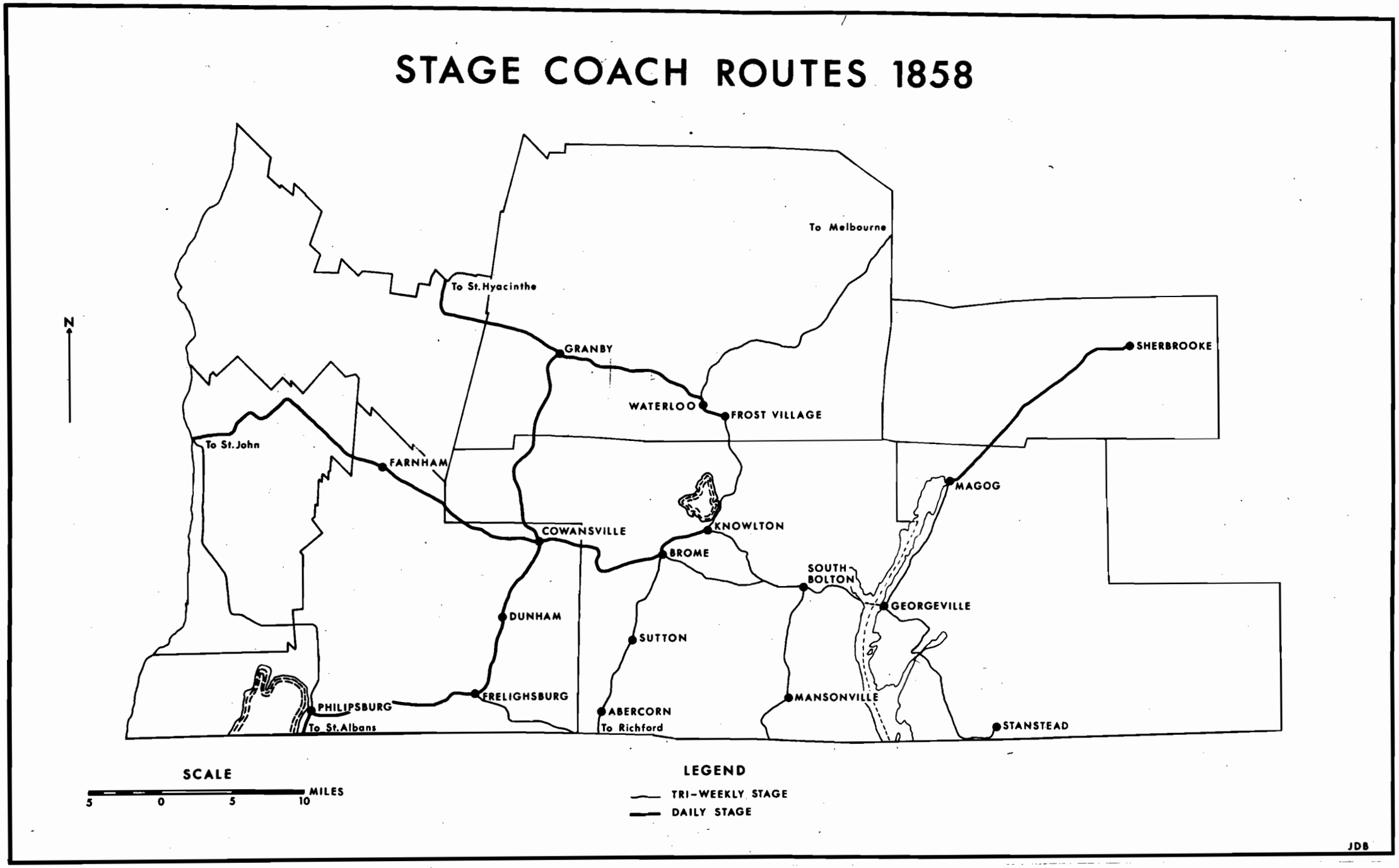
STAGE COACH ROUTES 1858
N
To Melbourne
To St. Hyacinthe
GRANBY
SHERBROOKE
WATERLOO
FROST VILLAGE
To St. John
FARNHAM
MAGOG
COWANSVILLE
KNOWLTON
BROME
SOUTH BOLTON
GEORGEVILLE
DUNHAM
SUTTON
FRELIGHSBURG
PHILIPSBURG
To St. Albans
ABERCORN
To Richford
MANSONVILLE
STANSTEAD
SCALE
MILES
5 0 5 10
LEGEND
TRI-WEEKLY STAGE
DAILY STAGE
JDB

Figure 6.

to reach the Townships. The best known of these were Craig's Road and the Gosford Road. None of the colonization roads, as such, ever penetrated Brome County. In any event, the quality of these roads was in keeping with the general poor nature of nineteenth century roads in the Eastern Townships and were often no better than a clearing through the woods.

Whereas the railroads, by and large, when they passed through a town, provided that town with an external market perhaps fifty or a hundred miles away for either agricultural or manufactured goods, the development of a road pattern radiating from a town provided it only with a means of tapping its own immediate hinterland, particularly in terms of agricultural produce. Because of the poor quality of the roads and the accompanying inefficient modes of horse or ox-drawn carts whose carrying capacity was seriously limited, the early roads were not able to provide the external connections with markets that the later railroads could, with their relatively high load capacity and much greater speed. The development of stage-coach lines through the Brome area connecting Montreal with New England should not be thought of in terms of a carrying trade for the coaches carried little besides the passengers' personal baggage and were in no way freight carriers.

It is for these reasons that we find, with the coming of railroads in the 1860's and 1870's, relatively

prosperous market towns such as Granby, Waterloo and Sutton, with a fairly well developed system of roads penetrating the surrounding countryside. Where advantageously situated with regard to water power and raw materials, many of these towns had also developed substantial (for a rural area) manufacturing establishments. It must be noted, however, that the majority of these industries were related directly to either the agricultural produce of the region or to some form of wood-working. Furthermore, the bulk of production was for local or regional consumption with a relatively small percentage going to the closest large market in Montreal. This was largely due to the poor transportation facilities available before the railroads came and these dictated that only low bulk, high value commodities such as potash could be profitably sold outside the immediate area of production. Hence, by the 1860's, there existed a relatively prosperous but closed economic system with certainly some external contacts but basically internal ones. This much could not have been brought about were it not for the growth of the road network prior to 1860.

In order to illustrate the slow improvement of roads in Brome in the next fifty years, some twentieth century illustrations will be made from various series of topographical maps.

The first classification of roads as to type of surface and width, in map form, appeared with the first series of topographical maps published by the Department of Defence between 1907-1917. The first of these, surveyed in 1907 and published at a scale of 1:126,720 shows no paved roads in the entire county of Brome. The main roads were only metalled, that is, gravelled while the bulk of the roads were unimproved dirt roads.

By 1944 the first paved roads had made their appearance in Brome County[1] with the main highways from Knowlton to Waterloo and Knowlton to Cowansville.

In the past thirty years the main emphasis has been on the improvement of the secondary roads in the county so that today Brome County possesses an extremely good network of secondary roads to complement the trunk roads passing through it.

This improvement in the roads in Brome since approximately the time of World War I has been largely a result of the rise of the trucking industry and to motor vehicles in general.

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[1] National Topographic Series

Chapter VI

WATER TRANSPORT

The second form of transportation to be considered is that of water transport which was of great significance for a period, at least in a part of Brome County. This discussion of waterways as a means of conveyance must not be confused with the use of waterways as lines of settlement, or nodes of settlement related to the availability of water power for mills along the rivers. In general, the period of actual transportation by water (or in winter on the ice) on the small rivers (for example, the Missisquoi, and Pike Rivers) was limited to the very early period of settlement from 1780-1810. After 1810 most settlers arriving from the United States came by land carrying what belongings they possessed on horse-back or on sleds in the winter. Water transport continued to be important on the larger rivers (Richelieu and St. Francis) and on Lake Memphremagog in the economic life of the area to the end of the nineteenth century. "Those coming to the townships near the north borders of Vermont, usually came by land directly to their new homes: those locating along the course of the St. Francis, came up that river: while many came in by way of Lake Memphremagog and the rivers through which it is drained" (Day, 1869b).

As can be seen from Figure 2 the region in which this county is situated is a nodal region in terms of the drainage system of the Eastern Townships and northern New England. Within a radius of thirty miles are the headwaters or connecting links of river systems flowing to the north, the north-east, and north-west and from the south.

This fact is of particular importance when one considers where the settlers of the Eastern Townships came from, that is, north from New England, south from Quebec (the immigrants from the British Isles), and east and south from the French Canadian lands along the St. Lawrence and Richelieu valleys. The waterways were the only means of transporting relatively bulky amounts of personal goods or of easy access into the densely forested countryside.

In the early settlement of Brome, Stanstead and Missisquoi Counties, two main water routes were of special significance. These were the Lake Champlain-Richelieu River system and the Lake Memphremagog - St. Francis River system, including the principal tributaries of each.

The Loyalist squatters at Missisquoi Bay in the 1780's came to Canada up the Lake Champlain-Hudson River system and the eastward spread of colonization into the townships of Dunham, Brome, East Farnham, Stanbridge, and St. Armand in the early 1800's was concentrated along the valley of the Pike River with such towns as Bedford and

Frelighsburg growing up at water power sites.

The Missisquoi River, which flows into Lake Champlain near St. Albans, Vermont, and its two northern tributaries, the Sutton and North Missisquoi Rivers, provided the means of access and the nucleus for settlement in Sutton, Potton and Bolton townships.

Lake Memphremagog, thirty-three miles long and extending south into Vermont, was the focal point for settlement in the eastern parts of Potton and Bolton as well as the sections of Stanstead County adjacent to it. Unlike many of the former river routeways, however, Lake Memphremagog continued to be a major transportation artery long after the flow of colonists into the area had ceased. It was unique in that it had, for over one hundred years, a continuous steamboat service operating between Magog and Newport during the ice-free months.

The first of the many and various forms of boats which made their appearance on the lake in the nineteenth century was a simple scow which operated a ferry service across the lake from Knowlton Landing to Copp's Ferry (now Georgeville). It was succeeded by a series of boats using various means of propulsion from horse-power to steam. This ferry crossing was a link in the main stage and mail road from Stanstead to St. Johns and Montreal and, until the

building of roads to circumvent the lake it was an important link. In addition to this ferry there was another in operation at Bryant's Landing (Shufelt, 1965d) crossing to a landing just to the south of Judd Point.

In 1851 the first of the steamboats to ply the lake was launched at Georgeville. Originally christened the "Jenny Lind", its name was later changed to the "Mountain Maid" (Paradis, 1951b). It operated until 1892, carrying both passengers and freight to the farms and communities along the lake and stopping at all wharves large enough to accommodate it. (See Figure 7). In 1867 a second, larger steamer, the "Lady of the Lake", was launched at Magog and it sailed between Magog and Newport until approximately 1920. Its successor was the "Anthemis" which was to be the last of the large steamers on the lake. It continued in service until the early 1950's although in its latter days it was used principally as a passenger carrier for day-long excursions to Newport. At present only a relatively small pleasure boat runs during the summer between Magog and Newport and is of minimal importance in the area.

Besides the large boats on the lake a number of smaller privately owned craft were built and operated either for freight hauling or for summer picnic excursions.

The importance of water transport on Lake Memphremagog can be considered from two points of view. Firstly,

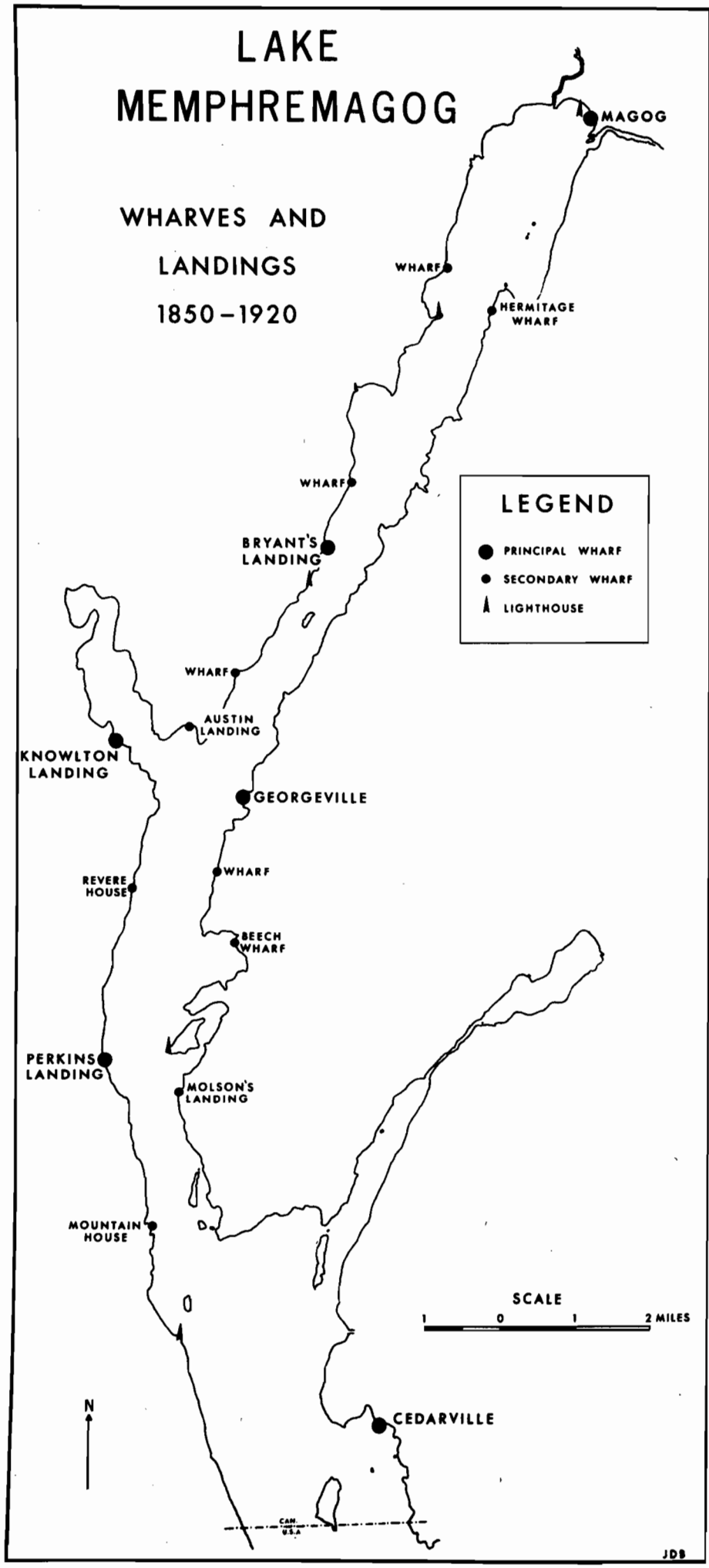
LAKE
MEMPHREMAGOG
WHARVES AND
LANDINGS
1850 – 1920
MAGOG
WHARF
HERMITAGE
WHARF
WHARF
BRYANT'S
LANDING
WHARF
AUSTIN
LANDING
KNOWLTON
LANDING
GEORGEVILLE
WHARF
REVERE
HOUSE
BEECH
WHARF
PERKINS
LANDING
MOLSON'S
LANDING
MOUNTAIN
HOUSE
CEDARVILLE
LEGEND
PRINCIPAL WHARF
SECONDARY WHARF
LIGHTHOUSE
SCALE
1 0 1 2 MILES
N
JDB

Figure 7.

as the lake and its tributaries, the Black and Barton rivers, had been a routeway for settlers arriving from New England, there developed a fairly continuous band of settlement around, although not necessarily on, the lake and for these settlers water transport provided the fastest and most economical means of obtaining consumer goods from Magog or Newport and for marketing their farm produce.

Secondly, from about 1860 onwards, the first indication of the future tourist industry in the Eastern Townships made its appearance in the form of large lakeside hotels and the summer residences of the Montreal well-to-do. The first Mountain House Hotel was built in 1851 and, despite a fire in 1853, was rebuilt and was open until 1899 when fire claimed it again for the last time.(Shufelt, 1965e). This hotel relied entirely on the lake steamers for guests and provisions. Plate XI shows that all that remains of the Mountain House wharf today is a heap of stones and rotting timber. Similar hotels were present at Magog and Georgeville in addition to a number of ephemeral ones along the lake. After the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway (C.P.R.) at Magog in 1888, it was possible to buy a ticket from Montreal directly to one of the hotels on the lake with a transfer from the train to the steamer at Magog.

This dependence on lake travel lasted until about 1925 when roads improved sufficiently and motor vehicles

became numerous enough to give the farmers of the region access to towns to sell their produce and purchase feed grains and other supplies.

Such was the importance of the steamer traffic on the lake, that the Federal Government erected a series of lighthouses along the length of the lake as seen in Figure 7 and published navigational charts. Most of these lighthouses have today been abandoned and replaced by automatic blinking marker buoys. Buoys have been added in some new locations such as those on either side of Lord's Island, principally as navigational aids for the rapidly increasing volume of pleasure boat traffic.

The "Lady of the Lake" and the "Anthemis", because of their size and draught, could only dock at facilities having the larger wharves and the deepest water. The principal stops for these two boats were Bryant's Landing, Knowlton's Landing, Georgeville, Perkins Landing, Cedarville, and, while in existence, the Mountain House Hotel. The smaller wharves served as local collecting points for merchandise carried in smaller craft.

Many of the secondary wharves were of only short duration and limited importance. An example of this was the wharf on the western side of Lake Memphremagog just to the north of Austin Wharf. This wharf served the short-lived

furniture factory at Furness Mills which was located on the land presently owned by the Benedictine monastery of St. Benoit du Lac. Furness Mills was a village of about fifty (50) inhabitants, laid out along two roads running at right angles to one another. One led down to Austin Bay, the site of the original settlement of Austin, started in the 1790's by the first settler in the area, Nicholas Austin. The second branch led eastward to the lake and along it were located the houses of the town. Air photos taken in 1933 show traces of this road and sites which appear to be foundations of former houses. The original wharf itself is invisible from the lake and only appears on the air photos as a faint submerged outline extending into the lake. There have been built on the same site smaller wharves associated with the monastery between 1933 and 1945 but at present there is no wharf in use at this place.

Wharves which were built on individual farms today have either been totally abandoned and obliterated or, in some cases where the land has been bought for summer cottages, the original landings in one form or another form the basis for the owner's own private dock. Plate XII presents a former farm house on the shores of Lake Memphremagog which has been converted into a summer residence.

The principal landings such as Bryant's Landing and Georgeville and Cedarville have all maintained their dock facilities but today are used solely by pleasure craft from neighbouring cottages.

PLATE XI

Ruins of the Mountain House Hotel Wharf

PLATE XII

Former Farmhouse on Channel Bay

Chapter VII

RAILROADS

Canada was gripped by the railway building boom somewhat later in the nineteenth century than were the United States and Great Britain who experienced this phenomenon in the 1820's, -30's and -40's. This time lag can be traced first and foremost to the lack of a sufficiently large population in Canada to support railways before mid-century. The population of the British American provinces rose notably, however, with the flood of immigration from the British Isles following the Napoleonic Wars and the previously mentioned agricultural disasters of the 1840's.

It was little wonder that the drive to build railroads across the trackless wastes of British North America would soon be felt, especially in view of the progress made by American railroads in the 1830's and 1840's. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, for example, had 133 miles of tracks in operation as early as 1833 (Glazebrook, 1964a) and the westward expansion of settlement in the United States seemed to assure the continued success of this form of transport.

The history of the development of railways in eastern Canada and in the Eastern Townships of Quebec can

be divided into a number of broad periods and substages.

In the first half of the nineteenth century the principal form of transportation of bulk commodities and large scale passenger transport was by water on both the natural waterways of Canada and the network of interconnecting canals which had been constructed. The St. Lawrence system with its canals (Lachine Canal-1825, Welland Canal-1833) provided good transportation on the lower Great Lakes and on the river but the limitations of such a canal system or any canal system are many and obvious. The first is the fact that any river system offers only limited access into the countryside beyond and between the lines of river settlements and can not be used as a means of extensively opening up interior regions away from navigable rivers. Secondly, there is the factor of winter freezing which is now, as it was then, a problem to navigation.

Nevertheless, the almost total lack in the British provinces of roads fit for any kind of vehicular traffic capable of carrying substantial loads made the water routes the only alternate means of transportation before the advent of the railway. This dependence on water transport is reflected in the nature of the first railways built in Lower Canada. These were the Champlain and St. Lawrence (1837)

and the Montreal and Lachine Railway (1847) (Stevens, 1962).[1] The former was built to provide a short overland route between the St. Lawrence and the Richelieu Rivers and to tap the trade route up the Richelieu to the United States. This shortcut obviated the long trip down the Richelieu to Sorel and then upstream on the St. Lawrence to Montreal. The Montreal and Lachine Railroad was built to circumvent the Lachine rapids and to carry passengers and goods between the ocean-going ships and those which plied the upper St. Lawrence and Great Lakes. These "Portage railways" were the first phase in the evolution of Canadian railways.

The next phase came during the 1850's when trunk lines were the railroad builders' dream. In the decade between 1850 and 1860 over 2000 miles of tracks were laid (Glazebrook, 1964b) with the overall plan being to tap the prosperous area of the mid-western United States and the ever-growing southern part of Upper Canada and to gain an outlet or outlets through Montreal as well as winter ports in the United States such as Portland, Maine.

In the 1870's and continuing through the 1890's there grew a proliferation of short feeder lines to complement the trunk lines and it was in this period that the

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[1] Unless otherwise noted all data on construction and abandonment dates of lines in this chapter are from Stevens, 1962.

Eastern Townships experienced their greatest increase in railway milage. Some of the numerous short lines were later amalgamated into trunk lines themselves. Such was the case with the Canadian Pacific Railway line from Montreal to the Maritimes through the Eastern Townships and Maine.

During the interval from approximately 1870 to the time of the Depression in 1929 railways in general experienced their most profitable period. There were inevitably exceptions to this rule but usually the lines which went bankrupt at this time were those which had never had a firm foundation in terms of capital or a profitable trade area. There was a flurry of branch line building again in the 1920's which was most strongly felt in the prairie provinces. This trend was not felt in the Eastern Townships where abandonment of lines was already taking place.

The Depression brought with it a great decline in both passenger and freight traffic for the railways and the 1930's saw the abandonment of many miles of tracks. This pattern is clearly shown for the Eastern Townships in Figures 8,9,10,11.

The steady increase in the use of trucks, busses and cars in the past thirty years as well as aviation, to

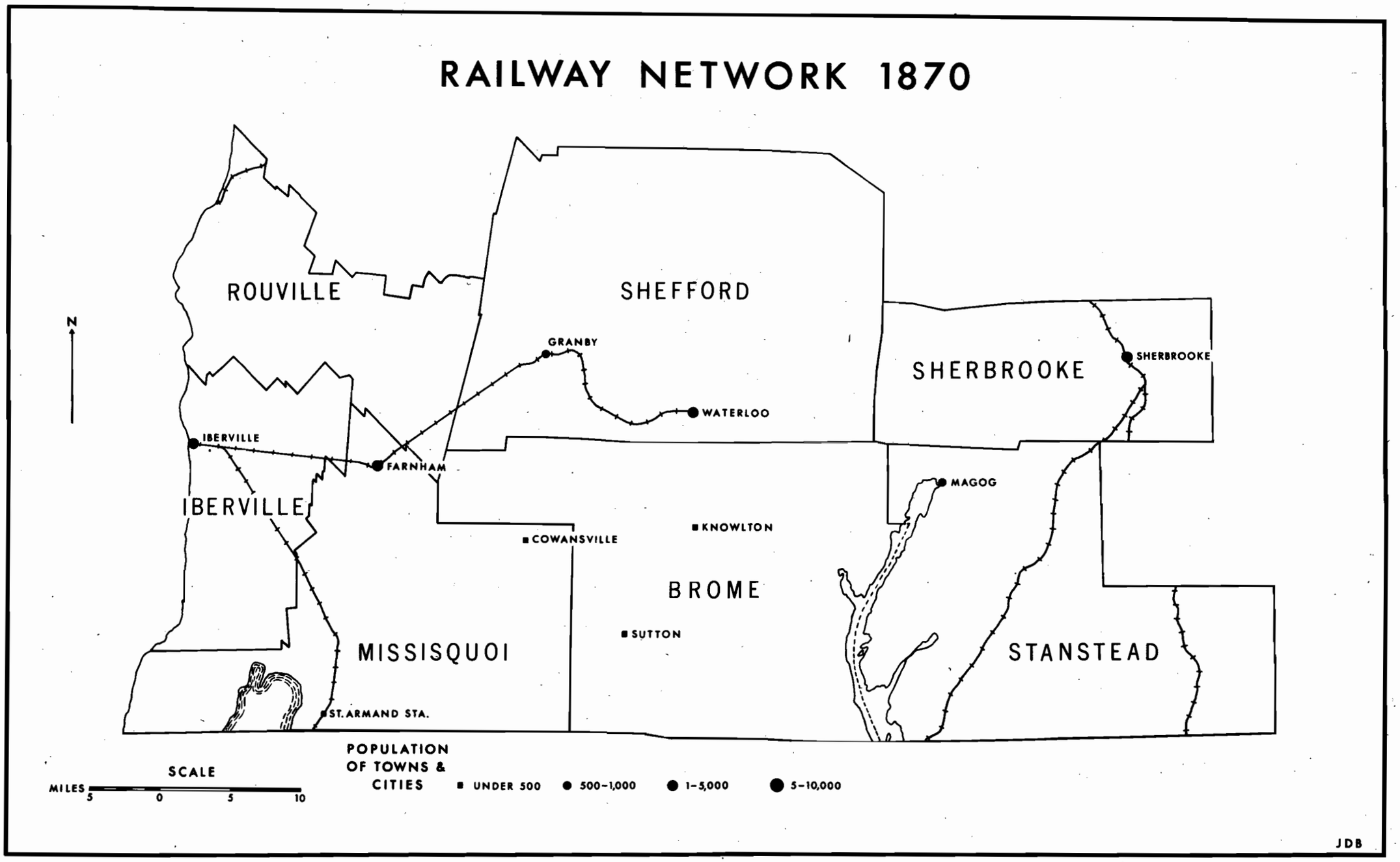
RAILWAY NETWORK 1870
N
ROUVILLE
SHEFFORD
SHERBROOKE
GRANBY
SHERBROOKE
WATERLOO
IBERVILLE
FARNHAM
IBERVILLE
MAGOG
COWANSVILLE
KNOWLTON
BROME
SUTTON
MISSISQUOI
STANSTEAD
ST. ARMAND STA.
SCALE
MILES 5 0 5 10
POPULATION OF TOWNS & CITIES
UNDER 500
500-1,000
1-5,000
5-10,000
JDB

Figure 8.

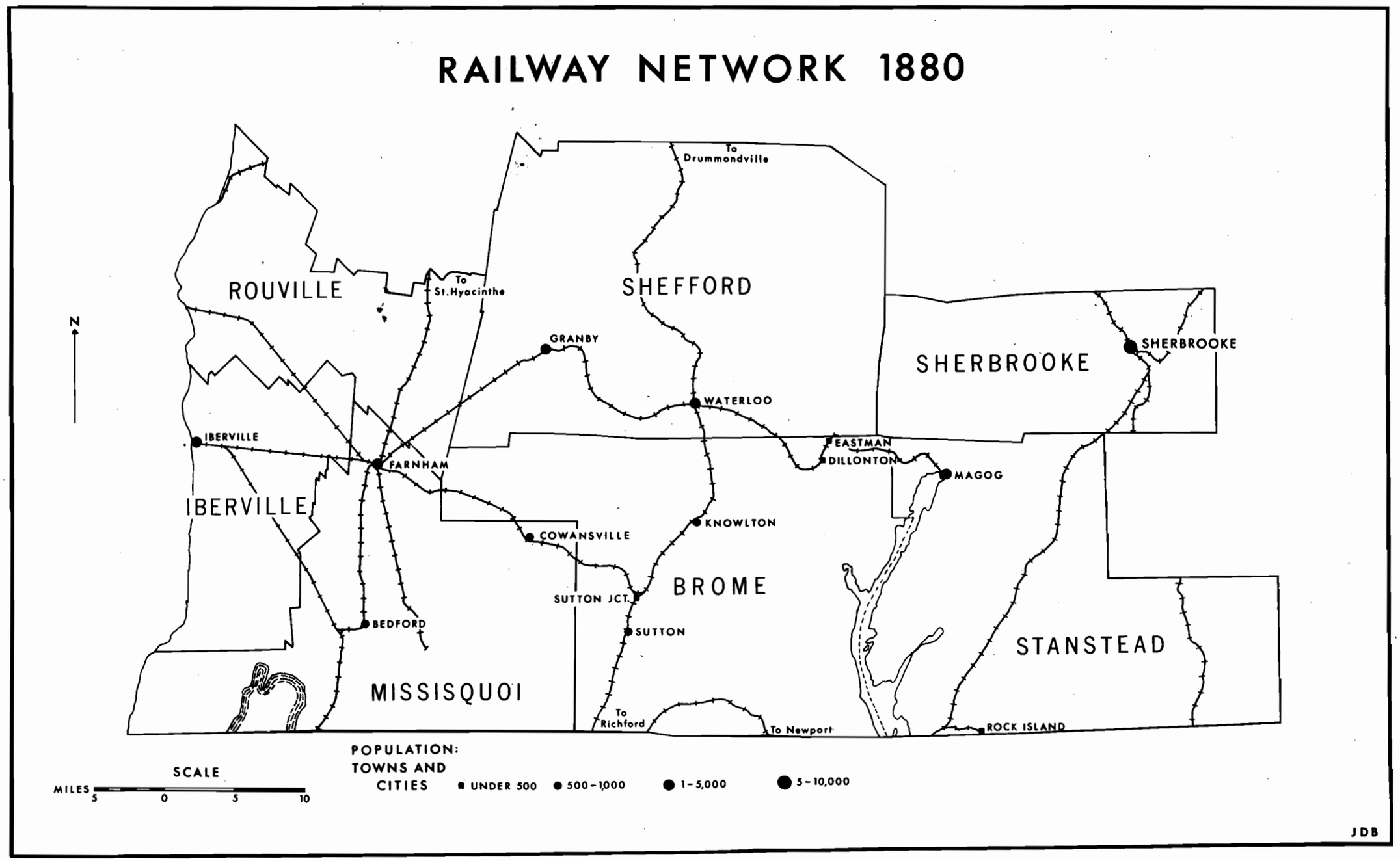
RAILWAY NETWORK 1880
N
ROUVILLE
To St.Hyacinthe
To Drummondville
SHEFFORD
SHERBROOKE
GRANBY
SHERBROOKE
WATERLOO
IBERVILLE
EASTMAN
DILLONTON
MAGOG
FARNHAM
IBERVILLE
KNOWLTON
COWANSVILLE
BROME
SUTTON JCT.
BEDFORD
SUTTON
STANSTEAD
MISSISQUOI
To Richford
To Newport
ROCK ISLAND
POPULATION: TOWNS AND CITIES
UNDER 500
500-1,000
1-5,000
5-10,000
SCALE
MILES
5 0 5 10
JDB

Figure 9.

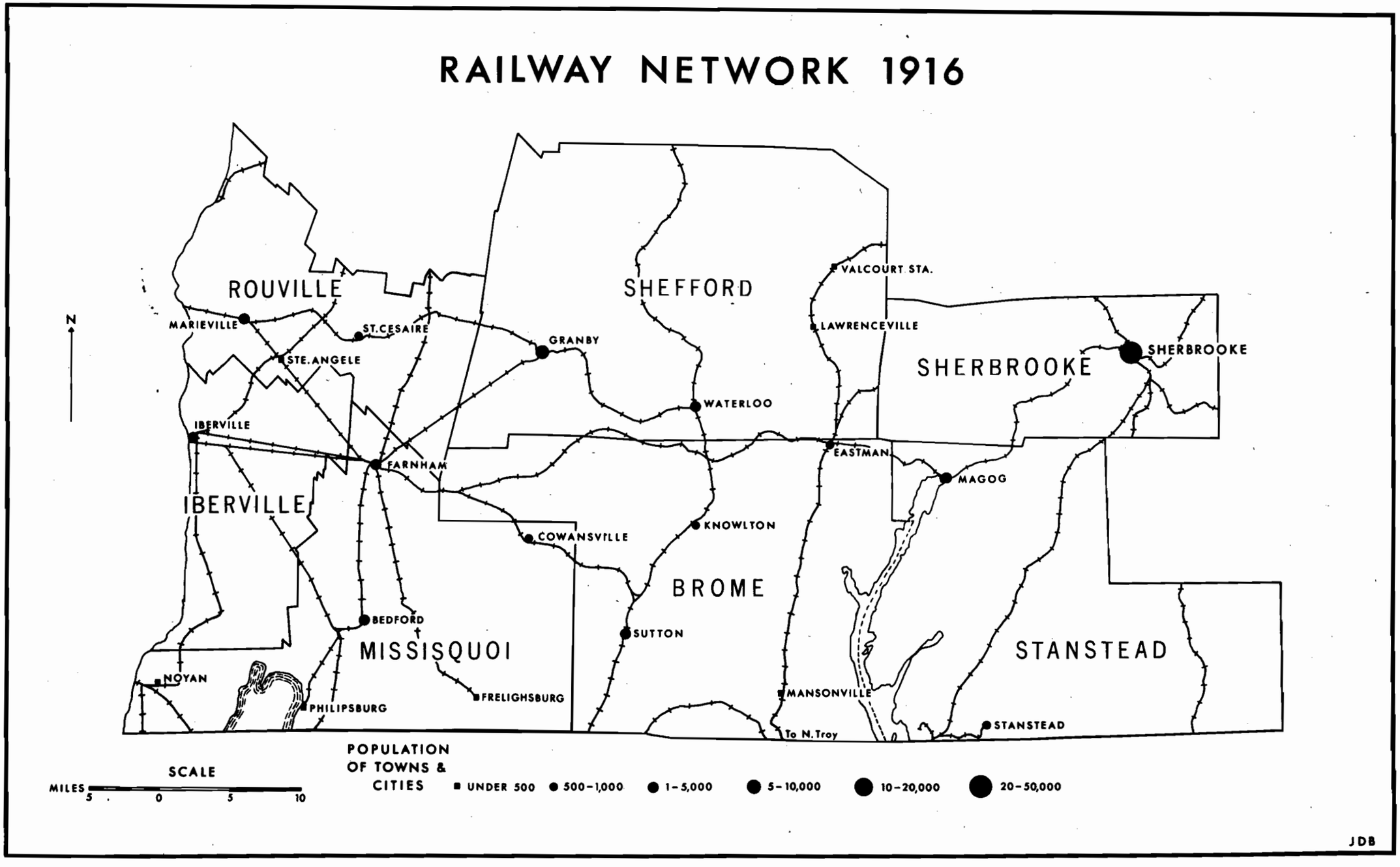
RAILWAY NETWORK 1916
N
ROUVILLE
SHEFFORD
MARIEVILLE
ST.CESAIRE
GRANBY
STE.ANGELE
WATERLOO
VALCOURT STA.
LAWRENCEVILLE
SHERBROOKE
SHERBROOKE
IBERVILLE
FARNHAM
EASTMAN
MAGOG
IBERVILLE
COWANSVILLE
KNOWLTON
BROME
BEDFORD
SUTTON
MISSISQUOI
STANSTEAD
NOYAN
FRELIGHSBURG
PHILIPSBURG
MANSONVILLE
To N. Troy
STANSTEAD
SCALE
MILES 5 0 5 10
POPULATION OF TOWNS & CITIES
UNDER 500
500-1,000
1-5,000
5-10,000
10-20,000
20-50,000
JDB

Figure 10.

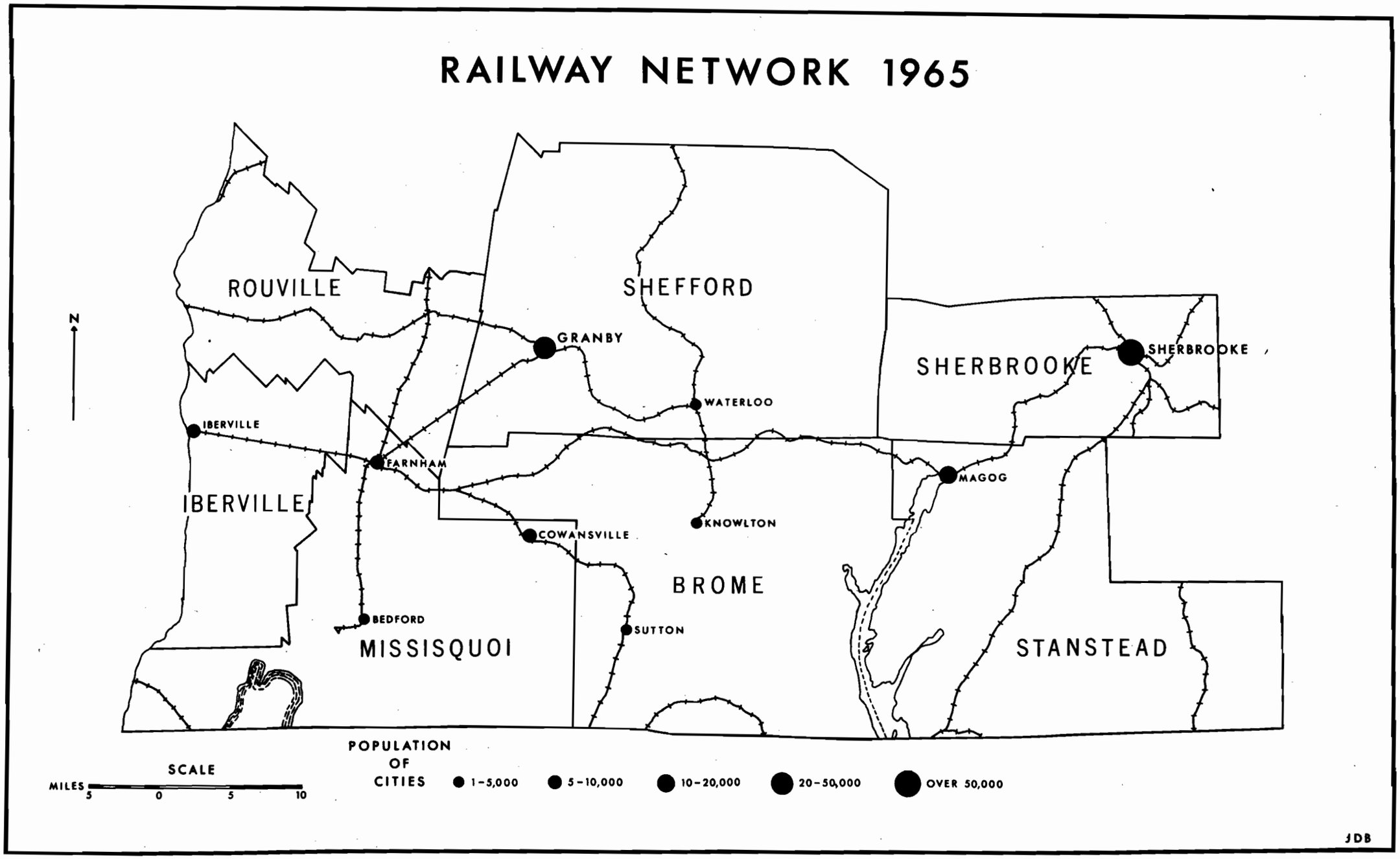
RAILWAY NETWORK 1965
ROUVILLE
SHEFFORD
SHERBROOKE
GRANBY
SHERBROOKE
WATERLOO
IBERVILLE
FARNHAM
MAGOG
IBERVILLE
KNOWLTON
COWANSVILLE
BROME
BEDFORD
SUTTON
MISSISQUOI
STANSTEAD
N
SCALE
MILES 5 0 5 10
POPULATION OF CITIES
1-5,000
5-10,000
10-20,000
20-50,000
OVER 50,000
JDB

Figure 11.

a certain extent, has meant further losses for the railways especially in terms of passengers and local short distance freight service. Today a policy of abandonment of marginal branch lines in favour of long distance shipping in both freight and passenger service is being followed by both the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways.

In dealing with the influence which the railways had upon the economy of Brome County it would be unrealistic to attempt to deal only with this county and to ignore what happened to the area as a whole. Thus, by examining the railways in the counties of Rouville, Iberville, Missisquoi, Shefford, Sherbrooke and Stanstead, as well as Brome, it will be possible to gain a better idea of the impact of the railways on Brome as compared to their effects on the whole surrounding area.

It is proposed in this chapter to give a chronological account of the building of railways in the area shown in Figures 8 to 11, the reasons behind their construction, and, subsequently, to show the impact which they had on industrial growth, changes in agricultural patterns, and on the population of Brome County and selected areas outside the county.

The first two railroads to cut across the Eastern Townships were the St. Lawrence and Atlantic and the Stanstead,

Shefford, and Chambly Railways in 1852 and 1859-1860 respectively. Both of these belong to that group of railways which were intended to be trunk lines. The St. Lawrence and Atlantic was chartered to build from Montreal to the American border near Island Pond via St. Hyacinthe, Richmond and Sherbrooke and there to connect with the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railway. Its terminal was at Portland, Maine, and this railway would provide Montreal with a winter harbour on the Atlantic coast.

The Stanstead, Shefford and Chambly Railway, as its name implies, was chartered to build from Chambly through Farnham and Granby to Waterloo and it is assumed that the line was to be continued to the town of Stanstead on the American border just to the east of Lake Memphremagog. Here a connection with the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad could have been secured and another link with the American railway system opened. The line, however, was never extended past Frost Village in Shefford County after having reached Farnham and Granby in 1859 and Waterloo in 1860. (See Figure 8).

Following the takeover of the Stanstead, Shefford and Chambly Railway, which had from the very beginnings been operated by the Central Vermont system, by the Canadian National Railways in 1923, the tracks between Stanstead, Shefford and Chambly Junction, just east of Iberville, and

Farnham were abandoned in 1936. The Canadian National Railway secured running rights over the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks which ran almost parallel to the Stanstead, Shefford and Chambly Railway tracks between these two points. (See Figure 10).

The next railroad to appear in southern Quebec, east of the Richelieu River, was the Vermont and Canada Junction Railway which was opened in 1864 and operated between Iberville and St. Albans which was on the Vermont and Canada Railway. (See Figure 8). This was an American-owned railway, again controlled by the Central Vermont Railroad, which was intended to handle traffic between Montreal and the New England network of railways which, in turn, had access to all east coast ports. This line continued to operate both freight and passenger service until approximately 1948 when it too was abandoned.

The first entirely Eastern Townships' railway was that built by L.S. Huntingdon, a prominent citizen of Waterloo, from that town to the copper mines in Bolton Township south of the present town of Eastman. By 1865 the production of copper at the Dillonton Mine had become substantial and up to that time the ore was transported by ox-carts to the nearest railhead at Waterloo (Thomas, 1877). To facilitate the transport, Huntingdon obtained in 1870 a charter to

build a species of tram line, operating on wooden rails, to the mine. This, like almost all early experiments with wooden rails, proved a failure, and he sold both the tram line and the mines. His continued pressure for a proper railroad to the mines resulted in the construction and operation of such a railway in 1872. Again the influence of the Central Vermont Railway was felt in Canada as this company operated the line.

The area of south-western Stanstead County which had not been reached by the Stanstead, Shefford and Chambly Railway was to be served instead by the Massawippi Valley Railway which ran from Newport, Vermont to Sherbrooke and which was opened in 1870 (Hubbard, 1874). This provided Sherbrooke with a second link to the United States and gave the prosperous farming region of Stanstead County outlets both north and south to markets. The line was subsequently taken over by the Boston and Maine Railroad which in turn leased it to the Quebec Central Railway in 1926. The Canadian Pacific Railway, the parent company of the Quebec Central Railway, bought the line outright in 1946 and leased it back to the Quebec Central.[2]

Again the lure of a connection with American railroads and the markets which they provided prompted the

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[2] Personal Communication - C.P.R. Files, 1961.

chartering of the South Eastern Railway and the construction of a line from Farnham to the American border at Richford, Vermont, passing through Cowansville and Sutton. Plate XIII presents a typical railway station at Abercorn on the former South Eastern Railway, now a part of the C.P.R., with accommodation for the station agent and his family. This part of the line was opened in 1871 and two years later, in 1873, the line was pushed eastward to Newport, Vermont, at the southern tip of Lake Memphremagog. This gave the South Eastern Railway two connections with American lines; one with the Missisquoi Railroad, a part of the Central Vermont complex, at Richford, and a second one with the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad at Newport.

In 1877 the Montreal, Portland and Boston Railway, an extension of the Montreal, Chambly and Sorel Railway, was opened from Chambly, on the Richelieu River, to Farnham via Marieville, Five years later, in 1882, the line was continued through Stanbridge and Frelighsburg to the United States border. In this case, however, the agreement to build a railway on the American side fell through and, in 1883, the line was abandoned from Farnham to the border, a distance of approximately 22 miles. This section of the line was reopened as far as Frelighsburg (See Figure 10) in 1901 and remained in operation until it was permanently abandoned in 1939. An additional branch line was built in

the late 1870's from Marieville, on the main line, to St. Cesaire, a distance of some 8.6 miles. This branch was later to become a part of the Montreal and Southern Counties electric railway.

The mid-section of the old Montreal, Portland and Boston Railway, from Ste. Angele to Farnham, was abandoned by the C.N.R. in 1925. This left the northern stub from Ste. Angele to Marieville in the hands of the Montreal and Southern Counties Railway which will be discussed below.

In 1876 the South Eastern Railway opened a northern extension of its line which left the main Farnham to Newport line at Sutton Junction (See Figure 9) and passed through Brome and Knowlton to Waterloo. This gave Waterloo two rail connections and made it a kind of local rail centre with railways leading south and west. Within two years it would also have northern and eastern branches radiating from it. Plate XIV shows a building at Sutton Junction which was originally a locomotive shed for the South Eastern Railway in the 1880's. It subsequently served as a storage shed for hides awaiting shipment by rail to Montreal and, at present, it is abandoned. In 1877-1878 the South Eastern line was completed northward to Drummondville and Sorel through Roxton Falls and Acton Vale. The city of Drummondville owes much of its development to this branch of the C.P.R. (The C.P.R. absorbed the South Eastern Railway into

PLATE XIII

Canadian Pacific Railway Station at Abercorn

PLATE XIV

Former Engine House at Sutton Junction

its own system in 1887)(Lavalee, 1960). This northern branch continued to operate both freight and passenger service to Drummondville (the section from Drummondville to Sorel was abandoned by 1892)[3] until 1956 when passenger service was taken off[3]. Faced with declining freight tonnages in its southern section between Knowlton and Sutton Junction, this stretch of approximately six (6) miles in length was abandoned in 1962. Plate XV shows this section of abandoned railway and presents what has become a not uncommon picture in the Eastern Townships today. Knowlton, which generates little freight traffic, is served by a tri-weekly wayfreight from Farnham via Foster as is the northern part of the line to Drummondville, likewise running from Farnham by way of Foster.

In 1878 another short line made its appearance in Brome County. This was the Waterloo and Magog Railway which was made up of the original Huntingdon Mines Railway and an extension from Dillonton to Magog via Eastman. A second extension was built from Dillonton, south to Bolton Centre, (Belden, 1881a) a distance of six miles. This branch was built primarily to gain access to the richly timbered areas of Bolton Township which had hitherto been left largely untouched due to inaccessability.

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[3] Personal Communication - C.P.R. Files, 1965.

The Waterloo and Magog Railway was largely the brainchild of A.H. Moore and C.C. Colby, two prominent citizens of Magog and Stanstead respectively (Paradis, 1951c). Mr. Colby was, for a time, the Member of Parliament representing Stanstead. The tanning industry can be said to have been the catalyst for the building of this railway. Prior to 1878 Waterloo, with its two railways, was the centre of the tanning industry in the area. The hemlock bark which was used extensively in the tanning operation grew in abundance around Magog and could be brought in from points along the whole length of Lake Memphremagog by boat; this led Moore to believe that, if Magog could gain access to markets in the Montreal area by means of a railway, the town would flourish not only in terms of tannery products but also with industries attracted by the railroad. In actual fact the railway lost money as the wood- and bark-carrying trade proved insufficient to meet costs of operation. During the search for other industries to provide the railway with business, however, the textile industry, which was to become the mainstay of Magog and remain so up to the present, made its first appearance.

In 1879 the first narrow gauge railway in southern Quebec was opened. The Lake Champlain and St. Lawrence Junction Railway ran from Stanbridge Station, on the Vermont Central (See Figure 9), northward through Bedford, Farnham,

Abbotsford, and Ste. Hyacinthe to the tiny French Canadian farming community of St. Guillaume in the lower Yamaska valley. The main purpose of this railroad was to tap the rich agricultural region of the St. Lawrence plain and provide a route for the shipment of grains and fodder crops south to the New England States. The Lake Champlain and St. Lawrence Junction Railway was controlled by the South Eastern system which was in turn a subsidiary of the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad. In 1881, however, the Canadian Pacific Railway gained control of it, at the same time converting it to the standard 4' $8\frac{1}{2}$" gauge.

During the 1880's interest grew in Brome and Shefford Counties in the Missisquoi and Black River Valley Railway. This was a line projected to run from Highwater, on the South Eastern Railway, northwards along the North Missisquoi valley to Dillonton and Eastman and thence further north to an undetermined spot in the area of the Black River in the northeastern part of Shefford County. The railway was not constructed at this time due to the withholding of government subsidies, although, as will be shown later, a railroad following a very similar route was completed in the early years of the twentieth century.

The last of the trunk lines through the Eastern Townships was the Canadian Pacific's main line from Montreal through St. John-Iberville, Farnham, Magog and Sherbrooke to

St. Johns, New Brunswick. Except for using the former South Eastern Railway's tracks between Farnham and Brookport and very short stretches of the former Waterloo and Magog Railway which the C.P.R. bought out in 1888, a completely new railway was built from Montreal to the Maritimes. (See Figure 10).

Although not in the Eastern Townships proper, two more railways which were built in the late nineteenth century deserve mention. These were the United Counties Railway operating between Sorel and Iberville (See Figure 10) and the East Richelieu Valley Railway which ran from Iberville south to a connection with the Rutland Railroad at Noyan. The former was opened in 1895 and the latter in 1898. Each company had running rights over the other's line and again these two railways show the great importance which was placed on providing a link between the Montreal area, and the trade which it brought in from the west, and the United States. Neither of these railroads, however, was very successful owing primarily to a surplus of north-south branch lines and decreasing freight and passenger tonnages. Both were taken over by the Delaware and Hudson Company and the northern section of the line between Iberville and Sorel came to rest finally in the Canadian National Railways system where it ended its life in the 1930's as a storage siding for elderly boxcars. The southern section, the former East Richelieu

Valley Railway, predeceased it by about ten years, being abandoned in the 1920's.

The year 1907 saw the final addition to the railway network in Brome County with the completion of the Orford Mountain Railway, a subsidiary of the Canadian Pacific Railway, from Windsor Mills to North Troy, Vermont, just over the international boundary. Here it joined the C.P.R. main line to Boston. The Orford Mountain Railway followed closely the route proposed for the ill-fated Missisquoi and Black River Valley Railway, of the 1880's. The railway was built piecemeal (Dorman, 1938) with some sections in operation long before the whole route was completed. As previously mentioned, the branch from Dillonton south to Bolton Centre was built by 1883 as part of the Waterloo and Magog Railway. A further extension was made in the 1880's to South Bolton (Belden, 1881b). The tracks from Dillonton to Eastman (See Figure 10) were likewise a part of the Waterloo and Magog Railway. The section north from Eastman to Lawrenceville was built in 1892 and two years later, in 1894, the line was pushed forward to Kingsbury, approximately eight miles from Windsor Mills. The southern extremity through Mansonville to North Troy was not completed until 1907.

The main function of the Orford Mountain Railway was to open up the Missisquoi valley and adjacent areas of

Bolton and Potton Townships for wood-cutting operations and to provide yet another route to the United States for the export of agricultural produce. This latter trade reached its peak in the years leading up to the First World War and declined sharply with the advent of the gasoline engine in the form of trucks, cars and tractors. The railway had, near both ends of its system, substantial woodworking establishments; there was a large lumber mill complex at Newport as well as the long standing concentration of wood consuming industries on the St. Francis River at Windsor Mills and Bromptonville. The pulp and paper plant at Windsor Mills provided an outlet for the pulp wood while the larger saw timber was taken south to Newport. As the railway depended for its livelihood mainly on an extractive development of timber, in the days prior to modern cropping techniques, and on a group of farm products (fodders) with a rapidly declining market, it is not surprising that when all adjacent accessible areas were stripped of usable timber and the fodder market in New England collapsed, the railroad would go bankrupt. This was indeed the case and, in its final years, the major commodity carried was gravel from the several gravel pits in the glacial deposits of the North Missisquoi valley through which it passed. In 1936 the section from Eastman to North Troy, roughly one half of its total milage, was abandoned. Plate XVI, the former railway station at Mansonville on the Orford Mountain Railway, shows an example of

PLATE XV

Abandoned C.P.R. Railway

PLATE XVI

Former Mansonville Station

sequent occupance as the building has been refitted as a private dwelling.

The northern section of this railway, from Eastman to Windsor Mills, remained intact for a short time and then it too was shortened by the abandonment of 20 miles of tracks from Valcourt Station to Windsor Mills. The final segment of the former Orford Mountain Railway was abandoned on May, 30th, 1965, when the weekly freight service to Valcourt Station was discontinued. At that time only two establishments were even in a position to make use of the rail facilities, a snowmobile manufacturer in Valcourt and a dairy in Lawrenceville; but the volume of trade generated by these two industries, which used trucking to supplement their distribution of products and importation of raw materials, was not sufficient to keep the line open.

The last railway to cross the plain from Montreal to the Eastern Townships was the Montreal and Southern Counties electric railway. It was chartered in 1897 to build an electric railway in the counties of Chambly, Vercheres, Rouville, St. Hyacinthe, St. Johns, Laprairie, Iberville, Missisquoi, Brome, Shefford, Sherbrooke, Stanstead, Beauharnois, Chateauguay, Napierville, and Huntingdon. The railway never took advantage of this charter to build in all these counties but it did reach Granby in 1916, passing through Chambly, Rouville and Shefford counties en route. (See Figure 10).

In 1906, two years before construction on the line was to start, the Grand Trunk Railway secured control of the Montreal and Southern Counties Railway. In 1909 the first three-mile section from its Montreal terminal at the corner of Youville and McGill streets to St. Lambert (via the Victoria Bridge) was opened. In 1913 the Montreal and Southern Counties reached Richelieu and Marieville. From Marieville to St. Cesaire a lease was obtained on the branch of the former Montreal, Portland and Boston Railway and service was extended to St. Cesaire in 1914. Abbotsford was reached the following year and Granby, the end of the line, in 1916. In addition to the main line, the Montreal and Southern Counties Railway had branch lines in Montreal South and Longueil and, in 1925, began a service from Marieville to Ste. Angele, a distance of approximately four miles, over another part of the old Montreal, Portland and Boston Railway.

At the turn of the century, considerable attention was being given to electic interurban railways in North America. Ontario, with a proliferation of intercity electric railways in the southern part of the province, was far more influenced by this trend than was Quebec with only the Montreal City streetcar system, the Quebec Railway, Light and Power Company, and the Montreal and Southern Counties electric railway in operation.

The Montreal and Southern Counties served as a link between Montreal and the many market towns of the St. Lawrence Plain through which it passed. Even though it was primarily a passenger carrier with only limited baggage facilities it provided more frequent, rapid and reliable service than did the steam passenger service which ran by way of Farnham, and was a significant factor in the growth of Granby in the first half of the twentieth century. The opening of the Montreal and Southern Counties Railway was yet another step in the growth of metropolitan Montreal's influence in the Eastern Townships which is today "suburbanizing" much of this region.

All service on the Montreal and Southern Counties Railway ended in 1956 and, from that time on, the Canadian National Railway has operated daily deisel freights to Granby, Farnham and Waterloo over the Montreal and Southern Counties tracks.

There are a number of general observations which can be made from the foregoing account of the development of a railway network in the southern part of the Eastern Townships.

Firstly, it is apparent that the Eastern Townships benefitted greatly from their position between the New England states and the most densely populated parts of Canada

in the St. Lawrence valley. The majority of the railroads shown in Figures 8-11 were, at the time of their construction, intended primarily to merely pass through the Townships carrying goods to and from markets beyond their boundaries and the benefit derived by the towns through which they passed was incidental. Some, however, such as the Waterloo and Magog, the Stanstead, Shefford and Chambly, and the Orford Mountain Railway were built more specifically for local needs and carried both manufactured and natural products which were produced within the Eastern Townships to markets either in the United States or in the Montreal area.

Here the great magnet of American markets, which prompted the chartering of many railways primarily for the export of Canadian raw materials, can be clearly seen. This phenomenon can be viewed from the other side as well, that is, from the point of view of the American railways (particularly the Central Vermont system) which were all competing for a share in the export trade funnelling through Montreal to the eastern seaboard. A look at the railway network map of 1965 (Figure 11) will show, however, that almost all of the abandonments of railways in the Eastern Townships in the twentieth century have been the north-south oriented branch lines. Greater emphasis is today being placed on long distance freight traffic over the original trunk lines with the trucking industry taking up the slack in shorter distance freight hauling.

In many cases the impetus for the building of a railway through a particular town or area was generated by the people of the region who banded together to promote such an undertaking. Such was the case with the Stanstead, Shefford and Chambly Railway where the people of Waterloo instituted the chartering of the railroad in the belief that the access it would provide to Montreal would benefit their town and the surrounding area. Similarly, in the case of the Waterloo and Magog Railway, it was largely through the efforts of two of the prominent citizens of the region that the railroad was built (Paradis, 1951d). The people of Sherbrooke lobbied successfully for the routing of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railway through their town in 1852.

These examples of public action are an indication of the general awareness of contemporary trends and events in the early frontier towns and show that, although isolated physically from the mainstream of North American life, they were by no means isolated in terms of ideas or devoid of initiative as has been attributed to rural people in other parts of Quebec.

Chapter VIII

CROSS-SECTION: 1881

Having given an account of the economic and demographic situation in Brome County in 1850, as well as the development of transportation facilities which followed in the next fifty years, a cross-section examining agriculture, manufacturing and population will be made at the year 1881. This will show what, if any, were the immediate results of the railway building boom and the general trends which were emerging in Brome County.

It is necessary first of all to examine the demographic situation of 1881 as all developments in both agriculture and manufacturing were directly related to the population structure of the county. As an introduction to the population cross-section a description of the information obtained by the author from a study of the cemeteries of Brome County will be included.

A good deal of information concerning the density, distribution and origin of the population of Brome County at various periods in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be obtained from a careful study of the cemeteries of the county. There, are, at present, approximately

forty-seven cemeteries in Brome. This relatively high number is offset by the fact that many of these are very small and a large number are no longer in use. Since about 1920 only the larger cemeteries in the towns have remained in use and, in many cases, the small rural ones which were often owned by a family or group of families have been abandoned. Plate XVII shows the cemetery and the former Congregational Church at Brome built in 1843 (Shufelt, 1965f) which is now used as a private dwelling. The cemetery is still well maintained but is no longer in use and, as can be seen, almost all of the gravestones are of the type in use in the nineteenth century. These tended to be approximately four feet high, three or four inches thick, and composed of a coarse white granite. The twentieth century gravestones are usually much more massive and made of polished red or black granites, or marble. In contrast, Plate XVIII, an abandoned cemetery near West Sutton, shows the degree of neglect which has fallen upon many of the small rural cemeteries.

By studying the dates inscribed on the gravestones it is often possible to make a rough estimate of the period of initial settlement in an area and, likewise, the period of decline of the population (if such an occurrence took place). For example, the cemeteries of Knowlton's Landing (the George Cemetery), Brome, West Brome, Dunkin and Mansonville have graves dating back to 1813, 1820, 1835, and 1841 respectively.

PLATE XVII

Cemetery at Brome

PLATE XVIII

West Sutton Cemetery

These were all areas of relatively early settlement in the first years of the 1800's and even back to the 1790's. On the other hand, areas which were settled later in the nineteenth century, such as the interior parts of Bolton Township, have correspondingly later-dated concentrations of tombstones. For example, the oldest gravestones in the Anglican cemetery at South Bolton date from 1857, those of Bolton Centre from 1882 and those of East Bolton from 1850. There appears to be a time lag of about thirty or even forty years between the period of settlement and the concentrations of gravestones in the cemeteries in a particular region. Throughout Brome County there is a preponderance of graves in the 1860's, -70's and -80's in almost all cemeteries which indicates the dying off of the initial wave of settlers of a generation before.

The study of the cemeteries in Brome County shows the high rate of infant mortality which was prevalent, not only in Brome but throughout the Eastern Townships and Quebec. A large proportion of the graves in most cemeteries are those of very young children.

The locations of abandoned cemeteries throughout the countryside can give valuable clues as to the location and density of former concentrations of settlement which have completely disappeared or are at present greatly diminished. Two prime examples are the Protestant Cemetery at East

Bolton (now Austin) and the George Cemetery near Knowlton's Landing. The former has approximately one hundred to one hundred and fifty graves in it, most of which date from the nineteenth century (although the cemetery is still in use) and which indicate a much larger population for the area than that which is at present scattered around this district. This postulated higher population is verified by the historical documentation of the region which indicates that Millington, East Bolton and the since-abandoned village of Austin on Austin Bay were prosperous towns in the second half of the nineteenth century and of considerably larger size than at present. In addition, Millington had, for a time, its own cemetery connected with the Wesleyan Methodist Church which was built in 1825. Both have since disappeared. Millington was one of the earliest milling centres of Bolton Township with both saw and grist mills and a population of between fifty and one hundred people (Dominion Business Directory, 1890a). Today there is only one small saw mill in Millington which is itself scarcely recognizable as a village with only about nine families living in the vicinity. Plate XIX shows the substantial ruins of a grist mill at Millington on a small stream, flowing into Lake Memphremagog. This mill and the nearby saw mill formed the nucleus for the community of Millington. The four walls, all approximately thirty feet high and a number of fittings for the water wheel and grinding stones are all that remain today. The contrast between the size of the mill and the mere trickle of water which at

PLATE XIX

Grist Mill Ruins at Millington

present passes it gives an indication of the changes in the hydrology of the area in the past century.

East Bolton, which in the 1890's had a population of one hundred and fifty (Dominion Business Directory, 1890b) is today little bigger than Millington and is little more than a very small scale summer service centre for the nearby cottages on Lake Memphremagog. Neither Millington nor East Bolton any longer boasts even a school. The original village of Austin which grew up on the shore of Austin Bay has today completely disappeared.

The George Cemetery near Knowlton's Landing, while to a large extent a family cemetery, is nevertheless large enough to show that there was once a greater population in the area than is presently indicated by the scattered farms and seasonal summer residences. This nineteenth century concentration was due primarily to the importance of Knowlton's Landing as one terminal of the ferry service across Lake Memphremagog which was in turn part of the stage route from Montreal, through Stanstead, to the United States. Figures from the Eastern Townships Directory of 1888-1889 show that Knowlton's Landing had a population of approximately one hundred people. It had at the time a post office as well as a nearby saw mill. With the decline in importance of the lake traffic, Knowlton's Landing likewise shrank in size

until today, with its landing facilities, it has assumed the not uncommon role of a summer cottage centre.

The movement of French Canadians into the various parts of Brome County can similarly be relatively well outlined from a study of cemeteries. As the great bulk of these people were Roman Catholics, they established separate cemeteries and the location and age of these show clearly the dates of arrival of the French Canadians and their points of concentration. While the Protestant cemeteries, as well as being found in all the major towns, were scattered across the countryside, the Roman Catholic ones were entirely located within the towns. This is not necessarily an indication that the French Canadians tended to settle more in towns than did their English counterparts, as other sources show that, at this stage in the nineteenth century migration, most of the French took up farming. What it does indicate is that communication and transportation had improved sufficiently that even rural life was becoming centred in the major towns and it was no longer necessary to have large numbers of scattered rural burial plots.

As mentioned above, the relative age of the Roman Catholic cemeteries is a significant factor. Whereas the bulk of the tombstones in the Protestant cemeteries is dated before 1890 with the concentrations of stones in the

two decades leading up to that date, the first significant period for Roman Catholic graves is the 1910-1930 period. This would indicate the dying out of the initial wave of French Canadians who moved into the area in the 1860 to 1880 period.

In some cemeteries, notably at Sutton, the intermingling of French and English names is visible and, in some cases, for example at Abercorn, it was possible to trace the place of origin of the settlers through the inscription of the tombstone. It is a sad commentary that, despite efforts at restoration, many of the abandoned rural cemeteries have become the sources of ready-made flag-stones for certain of the local inhabitants.

One facet of the French Canadian immigration into Brome County was the introduction of new architectural styles, particularly in terms of church design. As there have been upwards of fifty churches in the county one is constantly aware of their presence in the landscape and the differing building designs reflected both by the age of the building and the church denominations are striking. Below are a number of photos which point out the salient features of the principal styles of churches in Brome. Plate XX is St. Andrew's Roman Catholic Church at Sutton showing typical architectural style and brick construction which was characteristic of Roman Catholic churches built

PLATE XX

St. Andrews Roman Catholic Church-Sutton

in the Eastern Townships in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Olivet Baptist Church at Sutton, built in 1845, shown in Plate XXI, demonstrates another type of church architecture which was prevalent in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The use of stone at that time as a building material in public buildings can be seen in the Congregational Church shown in Plate XVII, in the Tibbitts Hill School in Plate XXII and also in the Anglican Church at Sutton which was built in 1846. The Tibbits Hill School, built in 1846 (Shufelt, 1965g), has been restored by the Brome County Historical Society.

Like the former Congregational Church in Plate XVII, the former Anglican Church at Dunkin in Plate XXIII shows a sequent occupance following its decline as a house of worship. This church was built between 1876 and 1881 (Taylor, 1937e) but a dwindling congregation prompted the Anglican Church to sell the building to the Potton School Board for use as a school. It still displays the No. I which was its school number but, since the amalgamation of schools in Brome, it too has become a private dwelling.

Plate XXIV, the Anglican Church at Glen Sutton which was built in 1877, displays both the typical white wood clapboard construction which is prevalent in the

PLATE XXI

Olivet Baptist Church-Sutton

Plate XXII

Tibbits Hill Schoolhouse

PLATE XXIII

Former Anglican Church at Dunkin

PLATE XXIV

Glen Sutton Anglican Church

Eastern Townships and in New England where the style originated, as well as the offset tower at the front of the church which seems to be a common trait of many Anglican churches in Brome (See Plates XXIII and XXV). Plate XXV shows the Anglican Church at Fulford further demonstrating this style of architecture although this example has only a tower, no steeple, and is constructed of brick. Plate XXVI depicts the chapel at the monastery of St. Benoit-du-Lac.

The general conclusions arrived at in the study of cemeteries are fully substantiated by the census figures for Brome County for the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[1]

There are a great many factors to be considered in the accurate reconstruction of the population structure and of the movements of peoples into and out of Brome towards the end of the last century. The date of cross-section of 1881 is significant for a number of reasons but most importantly, it marks the time of the peak population in Brome County of 15,827 persons (See Figure 12), a figure which has never since been attained. Likewise, it is a

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[1] Unless otherwise noted all figures in this chapter are derived from the Census of Canada for the appropriate year.

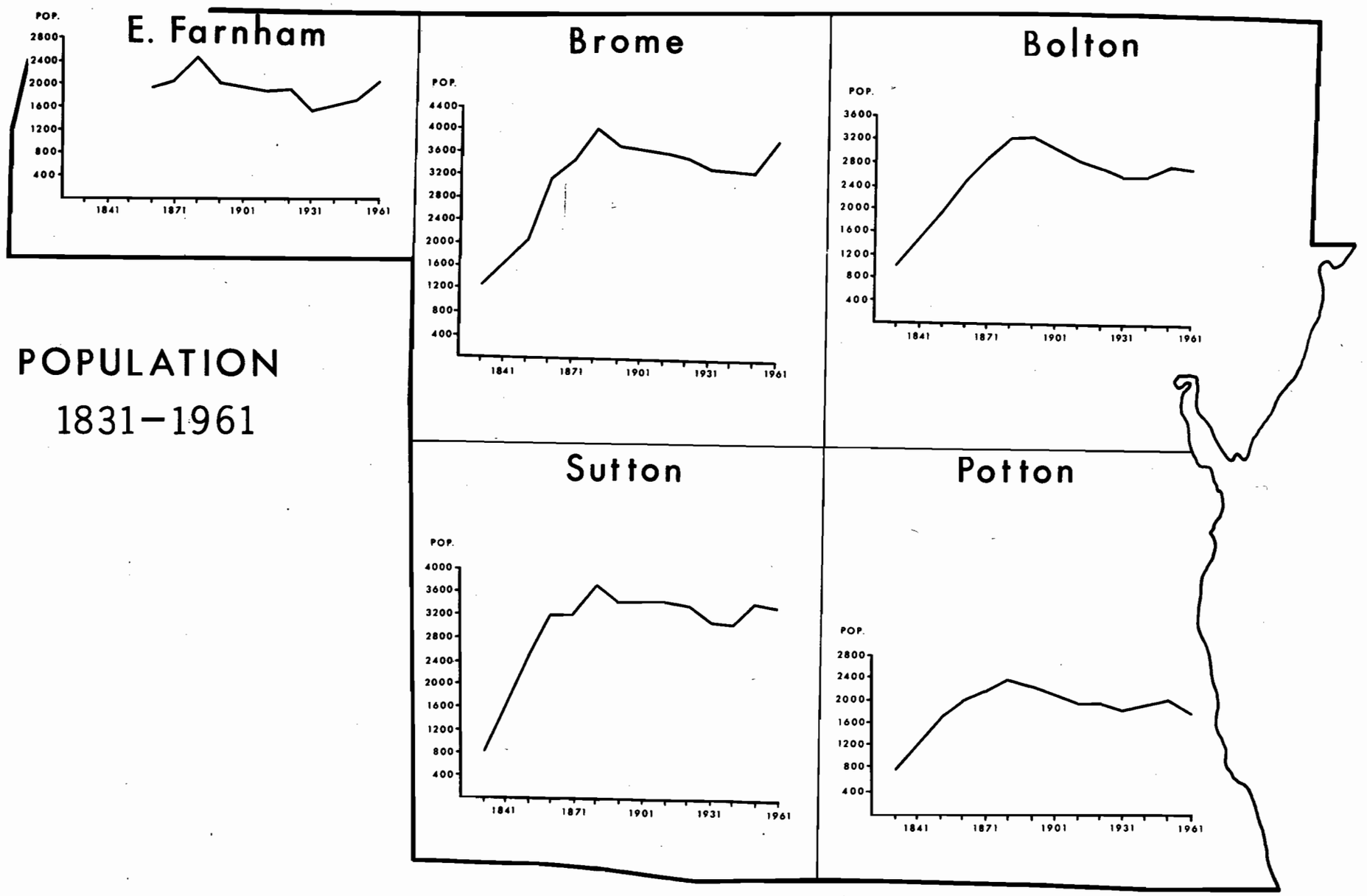
PLATE XXV

Fulford Anglican Church

PLATE XXVI

Chapel at St. Benoit du Lac.

BROME



POPULATION
1831–1961

JDB

Data From D.B.S Census Figures & Bouchette 1832

Figure 12.

turning point in both the French Canadian migration into the county and in the abandonment of the land by the English.

Looking first at the English population of Brome, a number of points stand out. The birth rate for 1881 was 30.4/1000. This compares with 38.7/1000 for Shefford County, 37.4/1000 for Sherbrooke County, 37.5/1000 for Iberville County, 36.5/1000 for Rouville County, 31.4/1000 for Missisquoi, and 30.4/1000 for Stanstead County. Although this was a lower figure than for most of the predominantly French Canadian counties of Quebec and this low birth rate has often been advanced as the main reason for the English decline in the Eastern Townships, it will be shown it was not, in fact, the principal factor in this eclipse.

What is an even more significant factor than birth rate alone, however, is the fact that in 1891 the average size of a family in Brome County was 4.7 persons - the lowest of any county in the entire province of Quebec. This figure of 4.7 persons per family was for a population which was, by that time, one third French Canadian.

If Brome County had a low birth rate, so also did it have a low death rate. This rate rose from 6.9/1000 in 1861 to 11.8/1000 in 1871 to 13.7/1000 in 1881; it then dropped to 10.5/1000 in 1891 and rose again to 12.3/1000 in

1901. While this is a high rate by present standards, it was then one of the lowest in the province with only seven counties (Argenteuil, Gaspe, Hochelaga, Huntingdon, Pontiac, Stanstead and Wright) having lower death rates in 1901.

The rise in the death rate in Brome County from 1861 to 1881 was significant and bears out the above mentioned increase in the numbers of tombstones dated in this period. Furthermore, there was a change in the age composition of those who died in the years leading up to 1901. Infant mortality has been cited as a serious problem at this time and in the 1870's there were more deaths among children under one year of age than in any other single age group. In 1871 over one half (50.6%) of all deaths in Brome County were among persons under twenty-four years old, and only 22.7% of all deaths were people over sixty-one years of age. An indication of the relative youth of the population of Brome County in the 1860's and 1870's is the fact that in 1861, out of a total of eighty-eight deaths in the county, only three people were reported to have died of old age.

From 1871 to 1901, however, the percentage of deaths among people over sixty-one years old rose from 22.7% to 38.7%, indicating the aging of the initial settlers from the United States and the British Isles. These figures are even more significant when one considers that included in

the population of Brome at this time was the relatively young French Canadian segment which formed a third of the total and which served to further accentuate the aging of the English population as a whole. Corresponding to this increase in the percentage of deaths among people over sixty-one years old was a decrease in the mortality rate of those under twenty-four years of age from 50.6% in 1871 to 36.9% in 1901.

The balance in the overall age pyramids for the four years 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891 was due to the immigration of the large numbers of French Canadians which, as a "pioneer" population in the region, must be considered to have been on the whole a young group. Their presence, and the balance of the age pyramids, further proves that the English population was on the decline.

In order to show the relative inward and outward movements of the two major ethnic groups, an analysis of the populations of 1871 and 1881 is necessary.

The total population in 1871 was 13,757. Immigration from overseas for the period 1871 to 1881 was 191 people and natural increase should have been approximately 2600 people(assuming a birth rate of 30/1000 and a death rate of 12.7/1000). Thus, considering only these two factors, the population of Brome County in 1881 should have been in

the vicinity of 16,500. It was, however, only 15,827 and consequently there must have been underway a sizable emigration from the county.

The number of English inhabitants of Brome rose by only 98 persons in the decade from 1871 to 1881 while the natural increase, again using the above birth and death rates, should have been of the order of 1900 persons. It is therefore not unreasonable to say that an emigration of 1700 to 1800 English inhabitants took place during this decade.

Hence, in 1881 there were two major forces acting on the English population of Brome. The first was an overall aging of the people and the second was a rapid emigration to other parts of Canada and the United States.

Turning to the French Canadian population of Brome, one finds a completely different picture. It rose rapidly from 1,644 in 1861 to 3,471 in 1871 and 4,910 in 1881. This represents increases of 1,827 and 1,439 respectively. The natural increase for these two decades should have been approximately 520 and 710 respectively; thus it may be seen that the French Canadian segment of the population increased much more rapidly than the natural rate (even allowing a higher birth rate for the French than the average for the whole of the county). These figures would indicate a substantial immigration from outside of Brome in the order of

1,300 people between 1861 and 1871 and a further 700 between 1871 and 1881.

Given these two major population movements of French and English settlers, the population of Brome as a whole in 1881 would have been about 15,300. The remaining five hundred needed to make up the total of 15,827 were accounted for by increases in the Irish, Scottish and German populations of Brome County at this time.

As mentioned above, 1881 was the significant point in these two migrations of peoples. It marked the end of the first phase of the French move into Brome and it was at the beginning of a growing English exodus. From 1881 to 1901 the population of Brome County as a whole declined by 2,524 to 13,303 and both the French and English numbers dipped. The year 1881 marked the beginning of a twenty year period of emigration on the part of the French Canadians which paralleled the outward movement of the English. The French population declined by 144 persons during this period and the English by 386; this represents net outward movements of approximately 1800 French Canadians and 2500 English.

During this same span of twenty years there was also an immigration of over 530 people into Brome from Europe. This addition of population from external sources

serves to re-emphasize the size of the French and English emigrations.

The reasons behind the population movements that were going on at this time are numerous and complex and no one answer is sufficient to explain them all.

Dealing first with the English emigration from Brome, it is not unfair to conclude that many of the rural families who relied on farming for their livlihood left the county because of the general unsuitability of much of the land for agriculture, either through excesses of slope and stoniness, or because of poor soils. With the prospect of new lands to be had in western Canada in the 1880's and 1890's and the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway's trans-continental line in 1885, many people from the Eastern Townships were drawn westward. It is apparent that many of the settlers in this region, both those from the United States and overseas, had not intended to remain permanently in this part of Quebec but merely made it a temporary stop on their way to Ontario or the American or Canadian west.

A factor which came to bear on both the French and the English in Brome County was the attraction of the cities and the relatively high wages to be earned in the new factories. Population figures for Granby, Magog and Sherbrooke show that between 1901 and 1911 they grew at a much

more rapid rate than did their counties as a whole. In Shefford and Stanstead Counties the urban populations rose from 7,078 to 8,608 and from 8,797 to 10,867 respectively while their rural populations declined from 16,644 to 15,368 and from 10,201 to 9,898 respectively. This was at a time when the overall populations of these two counties were increasing at the rate of 1.1% and 9.3%; thus the population increase was largely in terms of urban population. In contrast to this, Brome's total population declined from 13,303 in 1901 to 13,216 in 1911 while the rural portion of it increased from 10,667 to 10,758.

A further determinant factor which influenced the English emigration from Brome was the fear of being engulfed by a rapidly increasing French Canadian population both in the neighbouring counties and in Brome itself. It has been stated (Sellar, 1916a) that there was throughout the nineteenth century a discrimination against the English farmers of the Eastern Township in Quebec government circles. Advantages of various governmental institutions were denied to them by the French Canadian majority, and conscious efforts were made to make the English feel as though they did not belong in Quebec. In addition, the Eastern Townships were denied adequate representation in the government.

The French Canadian expansion into Brome can be viewed as part of the natural outward movement to the south and east from the St. Lawrence Lowlands which were becoming overcrowded, from an agricultural point of view, by the mid-nineteenth century. The attraction of new land and land in some cases already cleared by the English settlers in the Eastern Townships was a magnet to immigration into this region. It is furthermore not improbable that there was a degree of church inspiration behind this peaceful occupation of formerly English held lands. Again Sellar (Sellar, 1916b) states that the Roman Catholic Church in Quebec planned to place the free townships under parish law after sufficient numbers of French Canadians had been established there and in this way discourage the English from staying.

Other factors, however, seem to have prevailed, at least in the case of Brome County, and the exodus of French Canadians from Brome which occurred concurrently with that of the English Canadians from 1880 to 1900 was fostered by many of the same influences which had brought about the English emigration. Mentioned above is the lure of the cities and in this connection many French Canadians were drawn into the southward movement to the manufacturing towns of New England. In addition, the poor agricultural land of much of Brome County undoubtedly led to the abandonment by the French Canadians of much marginal farm land just

as had occurred with their predecessors, the English.

As was indicated in the cross-section for 1851, the industrial development of Brome County was at that time limited to "Frontier" industries using local natural raw materials and producing for a local market.

The situation was little altered in 1881 insofar as the types of industries involved were concerned, but the advent of the railways had brought about some production for external markets. The total value of goods produced in Brome in 1881 was approximately $650,000. Of this figure, almost one half ($316,000) was derived from the tanning industry and the production of leather goods. The next largest industry was saw milling; there were forty-four saw mills in operation in the county in 1881. The value of their produce was $96,209. This was followed by flour and grist mills with $83,963 and cheese factories with $62,031. Thus, of the $650,000 total value of produce, $558,223 were derived from industries based on local agricultural and natural raw materials. Of the total of 174 establishments employing 480 persons (an average of only 2.7 persons per establishment) only the tin and sheet-iron working shops, of which there were eight, can be said to have used raw materials imported from outside of

the county.

Thus, on the whole, industry had not made any very significant advances from 1851 to 1881. The coming of the railways had brought only an overall growth in the bulk and value of products (and not a very great one) and a slight expansion of markets for some selected commodities.

In agriculture the main trend in 1881 was the increasing importance of cattle raising and dairying. This was witnessed by the importance of the tanning industry which used local hides and by the marked increase in the number of cheese factories and the value of their produce in 1881. The large scale production of hay (57,745 tons), oats (215,919 bushels) and corn (52,711 bushels), all fodder crops, further shows the importance of cattle raising. Another significant factor was that, in the early 1880's, the acreage devoted to pasturage in Brome for the first time surpassed that devoted to crops. Also, at this time the amount of land in the county classified as improved land reached its peak of 127,726 acres. (The number of milch cows increased from 13,303 in 1871 to 16,824 in 1881).

The forest products of Brome continued to be of major importance in the economic life of the county in 1881. Approximately 181,000 cubic feet of timber were produced and although this was a drop over the 1871 figure of approximately 212,000 cubic feet, the number of logs cut rose from about 122,000 to 243,000. There was likewise a large increase in the number of cords of tan bark (mostly hemlock) produced from 6,163 cords to 13,588 cords.

By 1881 the boom in copper mining, which had gripped much of the Eastern Townships in the early 1860's as a result of high prices in the United States brought about by the Civil War, had subsided and most of the small scattered mines were abandoned. Production was a mere 1,785 tons of ore as compared with 4,900 tons ten years previously. The principal mine in the county was the Huntingdon Mine located approximately four miles south of Eastman in Bolton Township. Opened in 1865, it shipped between 2,000 and 4,500 tons of ore annually until 1872 (Cook, 1950). Plates XXVII and XXVIII show all that is now to be seen of the former Huntingdon Copper Mine. Plate XXVII shows some of the dumps of waste material and Plate XXVIII shows the remaining buildings and foundations of others since dismantled. The fence which appears in the

PLATE XXVII

Waste Material - Huntingdon Mines

PLATE XXVIII

Ruins of Buildings - Huntingdon Mines

upper right hand corner of the latter photo encloses one of the abandoned shafts of this mine.

From the above production figures one can see that mining was of little importance in the overall economy of Brome County in 1881.

Chapter IX

CROSS-SECTION: 1911

The year 1911 was chosen for the third cross-section as it provides a convenient point for examination of Brome County before World War I and the post-war influences which were to act on the county. In addition, it provides a cross-section at a time of maximum contrast between Brome County and its neighbours.

As with the 1881 cross-section the population of Brome will be dealt with first in order that the following accounts of industrial and agricultural stagnation may be seen in a clearer light.

The decline in the total population of Brome County which occurred following the 1881 peak was still proceeding in 1911, with the population standing at 13,216[1] although the rate of decline had diminished appreciably. Between 1881 and 1891 the population declined by 7.1%, between 1891 and 1901 by 9.6% and between 1901 and 1911 by only 0.7%. The year 1911 marked the end of the first large wave of emigration from Brome County. It is significant to note that none of the neighbouring counties of Shefford, Sherbrooke, Stanstead or Missisquoi experienced a drop in population

[1] Unless otherwise noted, all figures in this chapter are derived from the Census of Canada for the appropriate year.

between 1901 and 1911. Although Shefford and Missisquoi had only a very small percentage increase in population during this period, Sherbrooke and Stanstead Counties showed increases of 26.0% and 9.3% respectively, suggesting that a significant segment of Brome's emigrants were relocating in these two counties, most probably in the cities of Magog and Sherbrooke.

In terms of the ethnic composition of the population of Brome, it remained the only county in the Eastern Townships with an English majority. The margin, however, was slight with 5,886 inhabitants of English extraction as opposed to 4,977 French Canadians, and the trend was one of decline for the English (6,044 to 5,886 between 1901 and 1911) and one of increase for the French Canadians (4,766 to 4,977 in the same period.

Little mention has been made up to this point of the settlers of Irish and Scottish origin who in some areas formed a sizable proportion of the total population.

The Irish populations of the five counties of Brome, Shefford, Stanstead, Sherbrooke and Missisquoi all declined, with minor fluctuations, between 1871 and 1911 until, they represented on the average less than 8% of the populations of the counties in 1911. As many of the Irish settlers were of Roman Catholic faith, there tended to be

more intermingling between the Irish and French Canadians than between the Irish and English Canadians.

The reverse is true of the Scottish settlers who tended to identify more with the larger English group. By 1911 they formed an even smaller percentage of the population of Brome and surrounding counties than did the Irish, although their numbers had increased in Stanstead and Sherbrooke counties, reflecting late nineteenth century immigration from Scotland.

The most probable reason for the overall decline in numbers of both groups as shown in the Census of Canada figures, is their loss of identity as either Irish or Scottish. After one or two generations they became a part of the larger French-English division.

If Brome County were to have developed any form of twentieth century factory industries employing large numbers of relatively unskilled workers in the manufacture of articles on a large scale for consumers many miles away, the beginnings would have been visible by 1911.

In actual fact, the total value of goods produced in Brome had risen to $1,314,075 and the number of manufactur-

ing establishments had dropped to 89 employing a total of 512 persons (now an average of 5.7 persons per establishment). A closer look at these figures, however, and a comparison with nearby areas, will quickly show that Brome County was no further advanced industrially in 1911 than in 1881 or 1851 when compared to neighbouring counties and the rest of Quebec.

The point should be made here that although the processing of locally derived agricultural produce and other natural raw materials such as forest products can be classified as industry or manufacturing, it differs from the twentieth century concept of industry. In Brome County it did not create a large body of industrial workers who lived, for the most part, in an urban environment and who worked in large establishments. Instead, Brome maintained its essentially rural and agricultural identity with large numbers of small shops, often family concerns, each employing but a few people. Of the $1,314,075 of goods produced in the county in 1911, $1,128,290, or 85.8%, came from (a) butter and cheese, (b) flour and grist mill products, (c) leather goods, (d) log products, lumber products, and (e) maple syrup and sugar. Of the total of 512 employees 329 were employed in these industries. The remaining establishments included wood-working and turning, one coffin and casket manufacturer, and a men's clothing factory. The latter was the closest thing to a factory industry in Brome.

Although not a spreading chestnut tree, the tree in Plate XXIX once shaded the village blacksmith shop, a typical nineteenth century establishment, in Brome. As may be seen in the photograph, the building is falling into disrepair and is now used as a garage.

In addition, many of the traditional frontier industries of Brome were themselves in decline as a result of changing agricultural patterns and external competition. As may be seen from Figures 13, 14, and 15, the number of saw mills in Brome declined steadily from 1864 onwards so that by 1916 there was only a fraction of the original number left and these were tending to concentrate in towns where a relatively stable demand for timber and other wood products existed. By the first decade of the twentieth century the forests of the county had almost all been exploited by commercial logging concerns and as the forests became depleted much of the forestry industry moved elsewhere. It is significant to note the rather later exploitation of the forests of Bolton and Potton Townships, as shown in Figure 15, where the numbers of saw milling establishments remained constant, or increased, in the early years of this century while at the same time there was a sharp drop in the numbers of saw mills in the other townships of Brome County. This was largely the result of inaccessibility between the eastern and western townships

PLATE XXIX

Former Blacksmith Shop at Brome

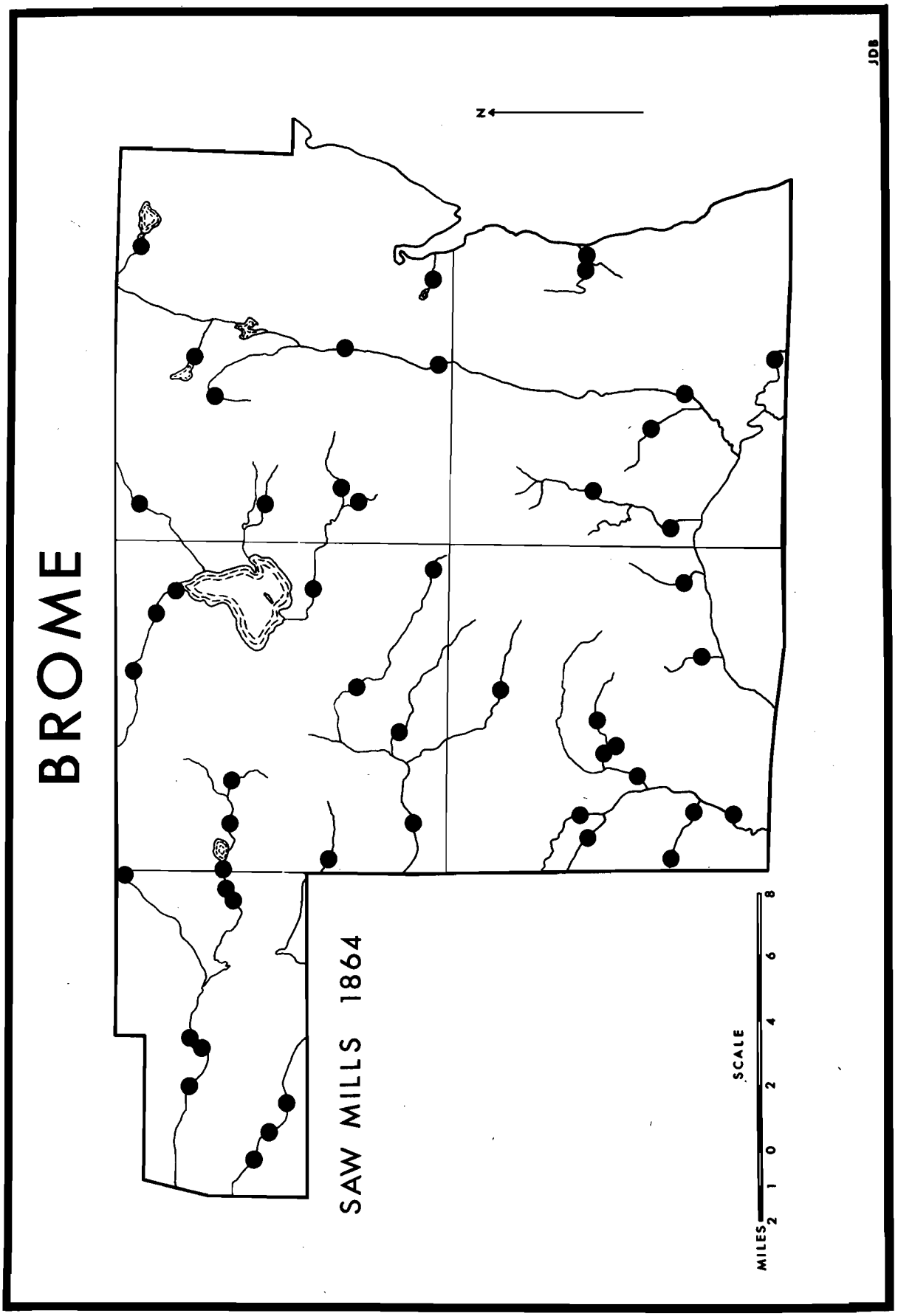


Figure 13.

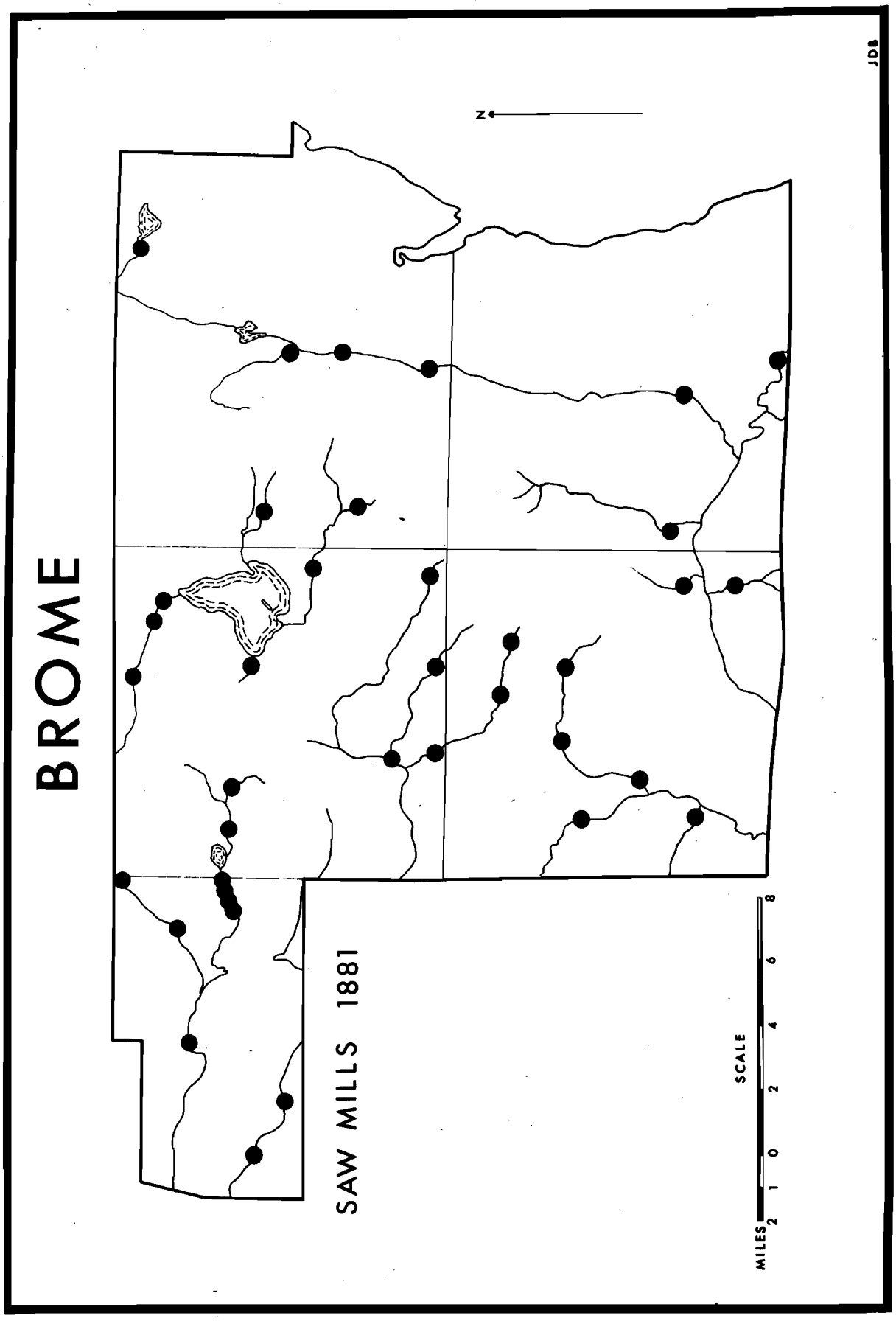


Figure 14.

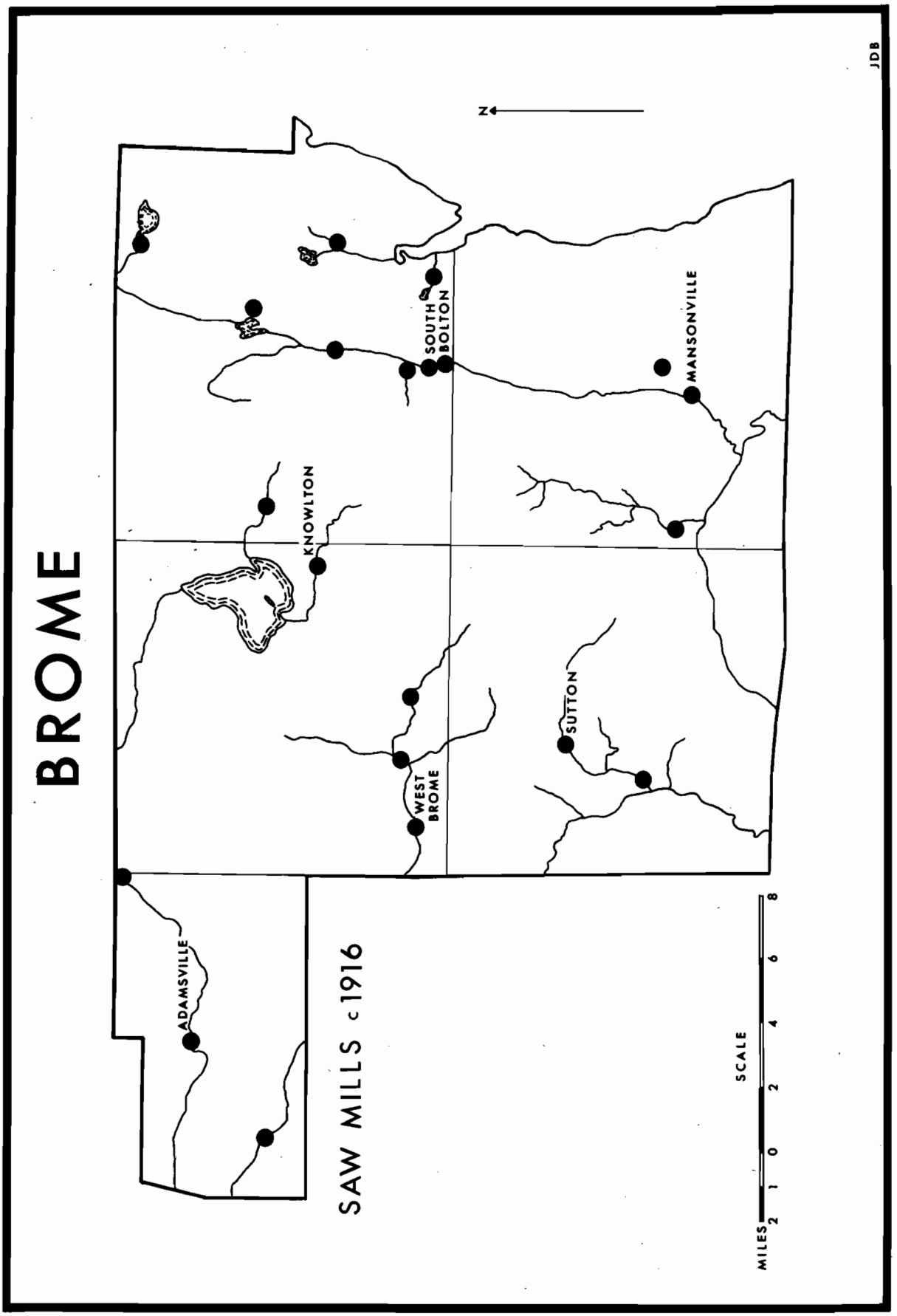

BROME
SAW MILLS c 1916
N
JDB
SOUTH BOLTON
MANSONVILLE
KNOWLTON
SUTTON
WEST BROME
ADAMSVILLE
SCALE
MILES
2 1 0 2 4 6 8

Figure 15.

of Brome as the Sutton Mountains served as a barrier to travel with only a limited number of roads crossing them. The building of the Orford Mountain Railway through Bolton and Potton was the last step in the opening up of the area to commercial logging and this accounts for the later peak in saw milling in this area.

Figures 16 and 17 show the parallel decline of grist mills in Brome between 1864 and 1916. This was the result of a combination of factors. Firstly, there was no longer the absolute need for having grain ground locally as improvements in transportation had made it possible to buy ready-milled flour. Furthermore, the fact that the original grist mills were all built on water power sites made them dependent on water levels. By as early as 1881, there were 127,726 acres of land in Brome County which were classified as improved land. This meant some form of cleared land. This figure represents well over one third of the total acreage of the county and, as a result of this large scale clearing of land, there was a corresponding increase in the rate of immediate runoff of water in the spring or immediately following a prolonged period of precipitation. With this went an overall drop in yearly mean water levels in the major streams and rivers. In the case of many of the smaller brooks which had previously flowed the year round, they now

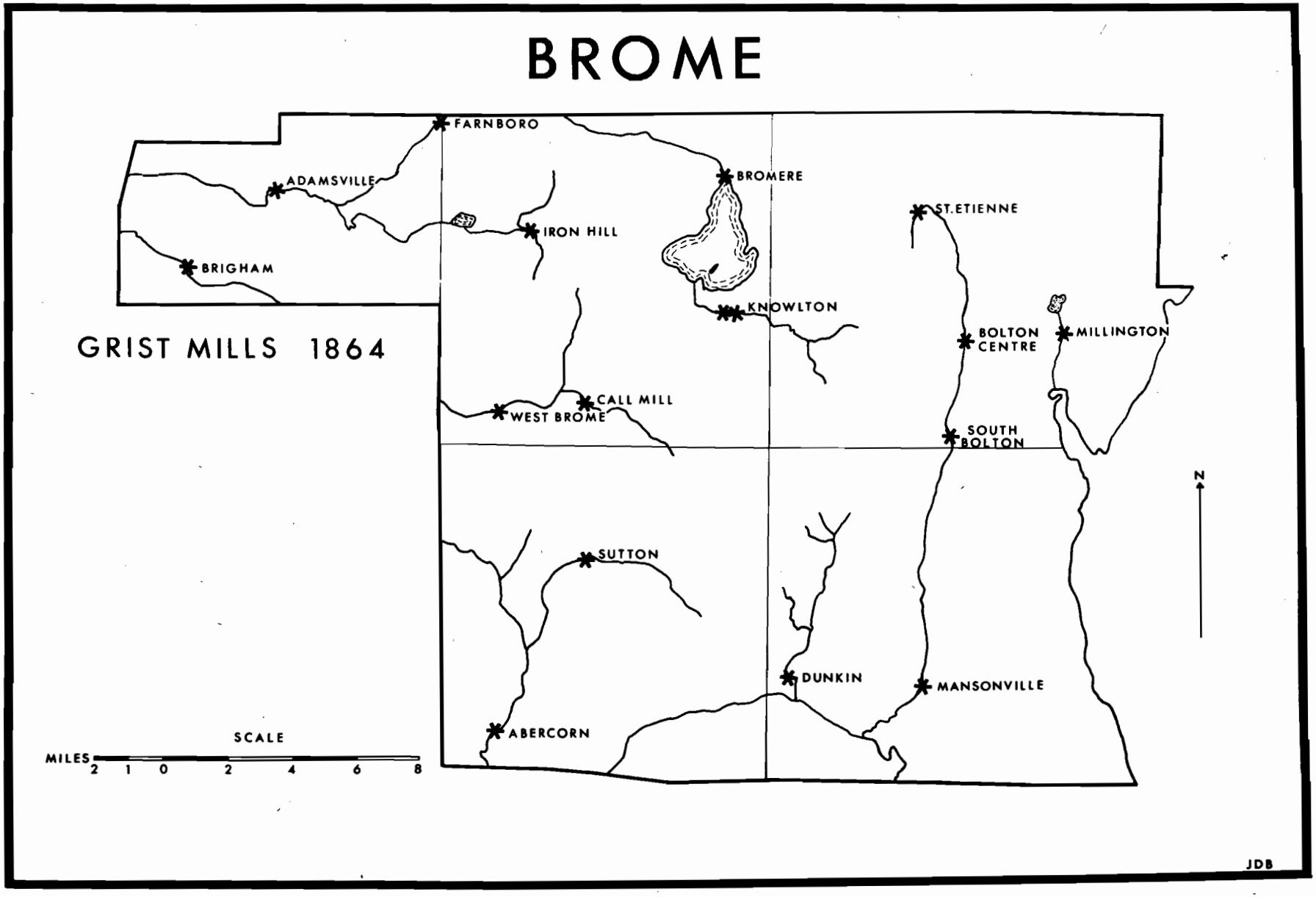

BROME
FARNBORO
ADAMSVILLE
BROMERE
ST.ETIENNE
IRON HILL
BRIGHAM
KNOWLTON
GRIST MILLS 1864
BOLTON CENTRE
MILLINGTON
CALL MILL
WEST BROME
SOUTH BOLTON
N
SUTTON
DUNKIN
MANSONVILLE
ABERCORN
SCALE
MILES 2 1 0 2 4 6 8
JDB

Figure 16.

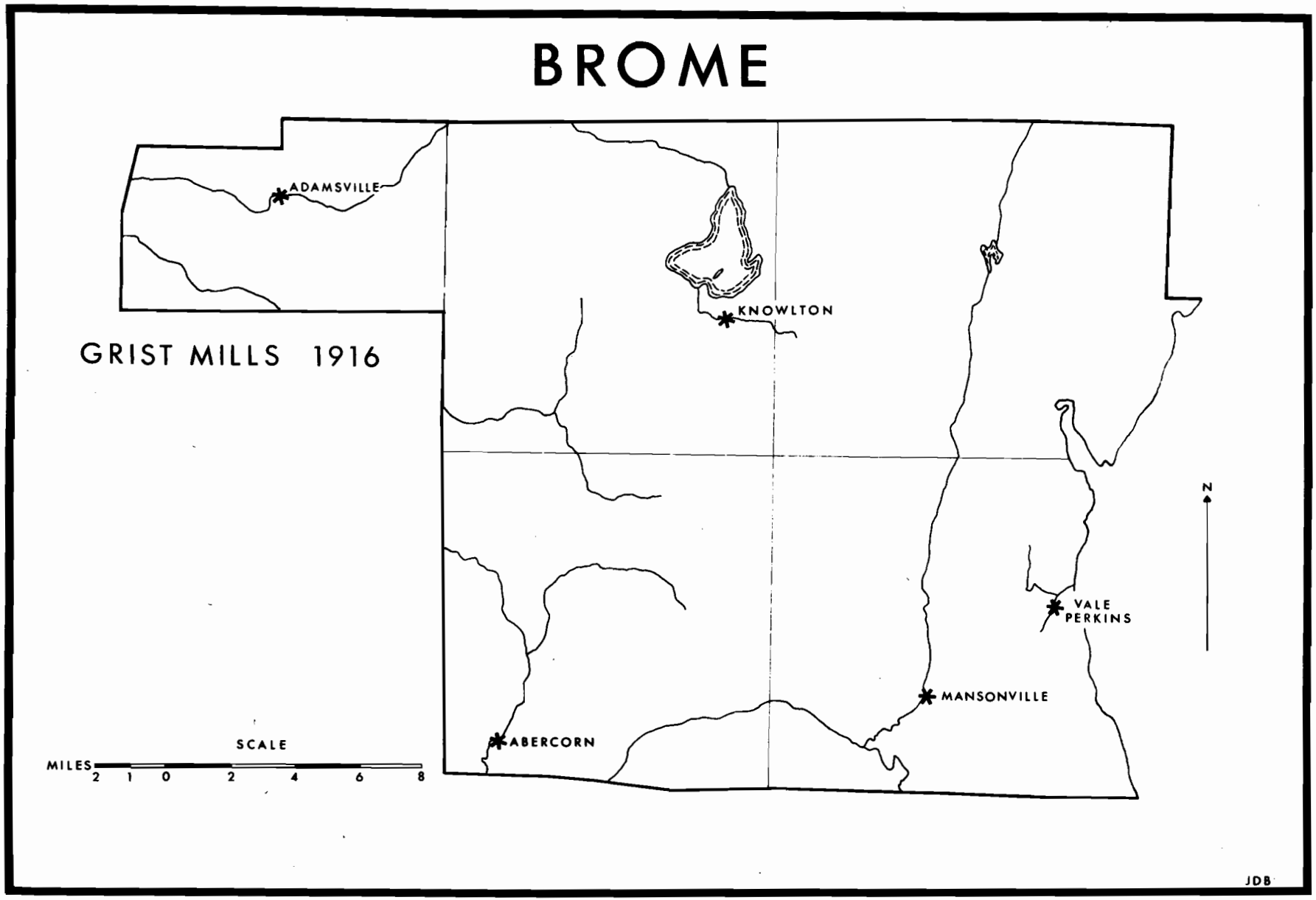

BROME
ADAMSVILLE
KNOWLTON
GRIST MILLS 1916
VALE
PERKINS
MANSONVILLE
ABERCORN
N
SCALE
MILES
2 1 0 2 4 6 8
JDB

Figure 17.

dried up in the summer as a result of too much land clearing in their watershed areas and the resulting inability of the land to retain water reserves throughout the year. This meant that many of the grist mills no longer had a dependable supply of water to drive their machinery and were forced to close down. Those shown in Figure 17 were, like the saw mills, primarily the ones located in the larger towns where it was feasible to convert the mills from water to electric or gasoline engines. At Knowlton the original grist mill has completely disappeared and the feed grain industry, which often succeeded grist milling, has been relocated to a position immediately adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Railway station where direct rail shipping is possible. At Abercorn, the old riverside mill is still in use as a feed store, with an electrically operated grinding machine.

In order to put Brome's industrial output into its proper perspective, it is necessary to compare it with the production from another similar type of area. The most striking demonstration of Brome's lack of industrialization can be made by comparing the output of the whole county of Brome with that of the town of Granby in the neighbouring county of Shefford.

Granby had, in 1911, a population of 4,750 or approximately one third of the total population of Brome.

Of these 4,750 people, however, 1,454 were salaried employees (one in every 3.2 persons) in a total of only 15 establishments. These 15 establishments in turn manufactured goods valued at $3,910,548, or almost three times the value of goods produced in the whole of Brome County. Included in the industries found in Granby at this time were two rubber factories, a comb factory, a tobacco company and a chair factory, in addition to the vestiges of the frontier industries such as a tannery, saw mill, carriage maker, box factory and a sash and door factory. The difference in the case of Granby lay in the relative importance of these two classes of industry. While the factory industries were decidedly on the increase in 1911, virtually all of the latter industries, those which were still at that time the bulwark of Brome's industry, were destined to collapse by the end of World War I. Granby was then left with the new industries firmly planted on the foundations of nineteenth century enterprise.

Granby was not alone in this position. Magog had a value of production in 1911 of $3,781,018, due mainly to the presence of the Dominion Textiles Limited plant, an industry which had its beginnings in the 1870's and used local manpower rather than local raw materials.

In agriculture the dominance of dairying and cattle raising continued to be the main feature in Brome although the actual number of milk cows declined in the ten years leading up to 1911. The manufacture of butter and cheese accounted for almost 30% of the total value of all goods produced in Brome County.

The year 1911 marked the peak in the total number of acres of occupied land in the county, although the percentage of this land classified as improved was falling rapidly and equalled only 30.2% of the total area of Brome.

Fodder crops continued to dominate the acreage under cultivation with hay accounting for 76% of the total acreage under crops, oats for 12.6% and corn for 3.2%.

The forest products of Brome County continued to play a significant role in the overall economy of the county although the total value of all such products was only $187,183. The production of tan bark declined drastically from its 1901 level, a result of competition in the tanning industry from Montreal, while the number of feet of logs cut dropped from 6,002,000 feet to 5,264,000 feet.

Chapter X

THE INFLUENCE OF TRANSPORTATION

Having outlined the demographic, industrial and agricultural conditions in Brome County in 1851, 1881, and 1911, the extent to which the transportation facilities, described in Chapters V, VI and VII, played a part in determining the development of these conditions will be examined. In this context it was primarily the railway network which was the form of transport most closely linked with the overall economy of the county rather than either the road network or water transport on Lake Memphremagog. These remained internal systems of communication at that time and were of more local significance. Their specific significance is described in Chapters V and VI.

It has already been intimated that the arrival of a railway in a town or region did not necessarily bring instant and lasting prosperity to that region. In almost all towns which had a railway link, however, both in Brome and elsewhere, there was at least a temporary rise in population and the appearance of some new frontier industries immediately following the arrival of the railway. Waterloo's population increased from 1,240 to 1,617 in the decade from

1871 to 1881 (Census of Canada)[1] when the town gained two new rail links, in addition to the one which it got in 1860. The Waterloo and Magog Railway was opened in 1878 and the northern branch of the South Eastern Railway reached Waterloo in 1876. Similarly, Marieville experienced a marked rise in population from 999 to 1,266 inhabitants following the passage of the Montreal, Portland and Boston Railway. Again, between 1891 and 1901 Magog's population jumped from 2,100 to 3,516 coinciding with the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway's main line to the Maritimes in 1889.

As mentioned above, these rises in population were sometimes merely of a temporary nature, lasting only a decade or so, as evidenced by the town of Eastman. Its population rose from 549 to 630 between 1891 and 1901, like Magog immediately following the completion of the Canadian Pacific line to the east coast. But in the next decade it declined to 607, despite the opening of the Orford Mountain Railway in 1907 which gave the town two rail connections.

A somewhat similar pattern is shown for Waterloo which, after its rapid growth from 1,240 to 1,617 between 1871 and 1881 then levelled off and grew only very slowly to 1,886 persons by 1911.

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[1] Unless otherwise noted all data for this chapter is derived from the Census of Canada for the appropriate year.

Parallel to the population figures for towns there was a correlation between population movements on a township scale and railway building. On the positive side, Brome Township experienced its greatest population increase of the latter part of the nineteenth century between 1871 and 1881. It was in this decade that the South Eastern Railway was built through Sutton and Glen Sutton with a northern branch through Knowlton and Foster. Likewise, East Farnham Township showed its greatest increase in population between 1871 and 1881 corresponding both to the building of the South Eastern Railway through it and to the growth of the town of Farnham in West Farnham Township as a rail centre. It had, at this time, no fewer than seven different railway lines radiating from it.

Sutton Township also experienced a period of rapid growth in the same decade as the completion of the railway through the township.

It should be noted that in all the townships of Brome County the greatest rate of population increase occurred in the years <u>before</u> the railroad era (before 1860). In the 1860's this increase slackened, to be followed again by a rise corresponding to the passage of a railway, or railways, through a particular township. As has been pointed out, this later wave of people which moved into Brome County

in the 1860's, -70's and -80's, were largely French Canadians and it is therefore not unfair to say that the railways did hasten the spread of the French south and east from the former seigneurial lands.

Just as in the towns there often occurred a decline in activity following the initial boom, this same phenomenon was apparent even more clearly on a township scale and illustrated that the railways provided two-way transportation. In every one of the five townships of Brome County there was a sharp decline in population in the decade immediately following the initial wave of prosperity which accompanied the railroads. In Brome Township the population, between 1881 and 1891, dropped by 272 persons, in East Farnham by 454 and in Sutton by 304 persons, all in the same decade. For Bolton and Potton Townships, as the railways had arrived later, so also did the decline come later and it was between 1891 and 1911 that these two townships lost 365 and 275 people respectively. From these figures it seems evident that, coupled with the stimuli for emigration as outlined in Chapter VIII, the railways also provided the means for the people to move out. Hitherto, the inhabitants of Brome and the Eastern Townships had been relatively immobilized by lack of transportation facilities, insofar as being able to move with all their belongings to an area outside of Quebec.

The role of rail transportation as an influence in the industrial growth of Brome and surrounding counties is a complex one. Dealing with Brome County alone, one fact emerges immediately and that is that a railway network alone was not sufficient to ensure industrial development as has often been suggested. The railroad is often depicted as the sole agent of industrialization which overnight turned sleepy rural market towns into bustling manufacturing centres. Although this may apply in some isolated cases where other factors were such that the railroad provided the last ingredient necessary to a rapid development, such as in the case of Sherbrooke, it is on the whole an oversimplification and distortion of historical fact. The fact was that Brome County had, in both 1881 and 1911, a superior railway network to Shefford County in terms of density of the pattern, and yet Shefford far outstripped Brome in terms of value of manufactured goods and overall industrialization. This shows clearly that there were other determinant factors, besides transportation, to be considered. (Brome's railway network density in 1881 was 1 mile/7.8 square miles and, in 1911, 1 mile/4.8 square miles compared to Shefford's 1 mile/11.2 square miles in 1881 and 1 mile/8.6 square miles in 1911).

For the moment, however, the role of the railway in serving an industrial town will be examined and to do so the record of the freight carried by the Stanstead, Shefford

and Chambly Railway between 1898 and 1904 will illustrate some salient features of the role of the railways. This railway served the towns of Waterloo, Granby and Farnham. (See Table 1.).

From the Table one can see the increase in the amount of manufactured goods and finished lumber carried at the expense of some agricultural products such as flour, grain and livestock. Despite fluctuations there was a steady rise in the total tonnage of merchandise carried by the railway which suggests that it was the principal means of transport of almost all goods destined for sale outside of the immediate area of production.

The railways' effect on the agricultural structure of Brome County was not immediate or drastic. Dairying had been firmly established before the penetration of the railways and their coming brought no great shifts in production. What they did do, however, was to bring the small farmers of the Eastern Townships into competition with the specialized and longer established farms of the St. Lawrence Lowlands. The resulting rise in the prices of animal feeds and other farm supplies forced many of the smaller operators out of business. Table 1 shows that the railroads were still the vital link in the marketing of agricultural produce destined for markets outside Brome County.

Table 1. Freight Carried by the Stanstead, Shefford, and Chambly Railway (In Tons) 1898-1904

YEAR	FLOUR	GRAIN	LIVE STOCK	LUMBER	MFG. GOODS	ALL OTHER ARTICLES	TOTAL WEIGHT CARRIED
1898	56,421	221,944	46,800	33,745	105,420	428,805	898,730
1899	36,552	215,553	10,289	40,748	193,024	292,952	805,147
1900	60,522	108,677	14,359	68,460	122,803	697,901	1,066,901
1901	35,194	246,529	18,425	53,806	150,765	444,807	949,922
1902	41,342	180,908	29,696	54,602	186,439	488,909	981,452
1903	45,277	195,718	27,918	56,015	187,342	503,028	1,015,765
1904	46,408	214,721	28,621	57,499	182,773	519,449	1,049,961

From The Statistical Yearbook of Canada
Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa. 1898-1904

The copper mining industry, although it was never very significant in Brome County, was dependent on rail transport for the shipping of ore. The Huntingdon Mines Tram Railway was built specifically to haul ore from the Huntingdon Mine and it was succeeded in this task by the Waterloo and Magog Railway and the Orford Mountain Railway which also served the Ives Mine south of Eastman. As production in these mines was very sporadic, ore was not one of the major commodities carried by the railroads.

Table 1 shows that the Stanstead, Shefford and Chambly Railway carried a substantial quantity of lumber between 1898 and 1904. In Brome County the Orford Mountain Railway was of prime importance as a carrier of forest products from Bolton and Potton Townships both to the north and south. As mentioned in Chapter VII, the forest products from these two townships included both saw logs and pulp wood. Elsewhere in Brome the railways served all of the major saw mills located in the towns.

From the foregoing it may be seen that it would have been almost impossible for any development, whether industrial or agricultural, to have taken place in an area which lacked a railway network of some sort. Even the population movements of the latter nineteenth century were,

to a degree, controlled by the railroads. However, despite the fact that the railroads played a vital role in all phases of the development of Brome County, they alone were not able to bring about significant changes. Only in conjunction with a population that was ready and able to make changes and advances in its own living patterns and standards could railways be a driving force. This type of population was conspicuously absent in Brome County.

Chapter XI

PROSPECTS

From the foregoing, one fact seems to emerge clearly. Despite a lack of population, historical accidents, and the other reasons which seem to lie behind Brome's lack of growth and development, there appears to be an absence, throughout the history of the county, of a conscious effort to suit the land uses to the specific environment encountered and to make use of that environment rather than always trying to overcome it. This has been done only on a limited scale in agriculture where the pasturing of dairy cattle has replaced crop raising on many of the areas of excess relief and those with poor soils. Even now, however, after fifty years of decline in the area of occupied farms, there is still marginal land in use for agriculture which could be more advantageously developed for other uses.

The following are some of the author's suggestions for increasing the future economic viability of Brome County, based both on field work and on the historical geographical information presented above.

One segment of the natural environment which could be utilized to a greater extent than is presently the case is the forest resources of Brome County. In the past they have provided a valuable source of revenue and are still a part of the economy of the county but, through poor harvesting techniques, much of the woodland area of Brome is today of poor quality. A programme of reforestation and a replanting of much of the marginal and now-abandoned agricultural land in relatively rapid growing soft-woods could be beneficial. Pulp and paper installations within the Eastern Townships or direct export of pulp logs could provide markets for these forest products. With the abandonment of much former agricultural land the regrowth of the forests is taking place naturally. The types of natural regrowth, however, which occur through the immature phases of regeneration before a climax vegetation is reached are often of limited commercial value and an overall coordinated programme to look into the possibilities of revitalizing the forestry industry in Brome County is needed. Plate XXX shows a bobbin factory near South Bolton which is typical of the small wood-working establishments in Brome using local raw materials. Shown in Plate XXXI is a small-scale saw milling operation located at West Brome. While this saw mill is now gasoline powered, it occupies the site of a series of saw mills which used water power from the Yamaska River which flows immediately behind the buildings in the plate.

PLATE XXX

Bobbin Factory Near South Bolton

PLATE XXXI

Saw Mill at West Brome

A second industry which is directly based on Brome's physical geography is recreation and tourism. This is today becoming the most important single industry in the county and in many ways the prospects for the future are bright. The past five years have seen the opening of a large number of skiing facilities, not only in Brome, but on slopes throughout the Eastern Townships. The newly completed Eastern Townships Autoroute has made access to these areas from Montreal a simple matter and these ski resorts have succeeded in drawing much of the trade which was formerly the monopoly of the Laurentian resorts. A reflection of the growing importance of skiing is seen in the proliferation of winter ski chalets which are springing up. Brome's position as the nearest to Montreal, of the significantly mountainous areas of the Eastern Townships is at last acting in its favour.

The picture with regard to summer recreation is somewhat different. In the past twenty years the summer cottage boom, centred on the many lakes, both large and small, in the county, has engulfed Brome at a very rapid and uncontrolled rate. Plate XXXII shows a summer cottage community on Lake Memphremagog. These cottages all stand on land which was formerly part of a single lakeside farm which was sold and subdivided for this purpose. In addition to the growth of summer cottages around the lakes and ponds

of the county, there has also been some orientation of these along the rivers, notably the North Missisquoi.

The rapid increase in the numbers of cottages has meant the almost complete encirclement of some of the smaller lakes and a sharp rise in the prices of the remaining lakeside lots. A single foot of lake frontage with a depth of one hundred feet can sell for as much as sixty dollars. Plate XXXIII shows a large summer residence near Lake Memphremagog which is indicative of the high cost of summer living in many parts. There are, however, few controls as to quality of cottage construction or limitations on the sizes of outboard motors on the smaller ponds. Pollution is already a problem on some lakes and, with secondary and tertiary rows of cottages growing up around the initial lakeside buildings, this problem is likely to increase greatly in the future unless some effective controls can be imposed either by municipal or provincial authority.

Amidst all this activity there have been provided virtually no public recreational facilities in the form of beaches, trails, or camping grounds. At the present rate of expansion of private facilities, unless some action is taken soon, the public will be prevented from fully enjoying one of the more picturesque parts of the province.

PLATE XXXII

Summer Cottage Community on Lake Memphremagog

PLATE XXXIII

Summer Residence Near Lake Memphremagog

Agriculture in Brome County is becoming increasingly the realm of the large operator who is able to overcome handicaps of slope, soils and high costs by volume of production. There is also a noticeable trend toward the specialized farm devoted to quality production, often of beef cattle. In many cases these represent investments on the part of gentlemen farmers and are not, strictly speaking, an integral part of the overall agricultural pattern of the county. With larger units of production and improved quality of produce, dairying will continue to be the dominant agricultural pursuit in Brome. Plate XXXIV, showing a large farm near Sutton which raises pure bred Holstein cattle, is evidence of the prominence of dairying in Brome. Ironically, since the photograph was taken in July 1965, the large barn on the right has been demolished and has been replaced by the one visible in the centre left of the picture.

An industry which is at present of only local significance and which, with proper methods, could be made into one of county-wide importance is the maple syrup industry. If modern methods of collecting and packaging were developed, as well as an overall plan to preserve and improve the extent and quality of the sugar maple forest, maple products could assume a greater role in the economy of the county as a whole than they now do.

PLATE XXXIV

Holstein Farm Near Sutton

The picture with regard to large scale manufacturing in Brome County is bleak and is likely to remain so for a number of reasons. The old problem of insufficient population is still present, with Brome having the lowest population density of any county in the region, and prospects for an immediate or substantial increase are slight. Furthermore, the presence of such established manufacturing centres as Granby, Cowansville, Magog and Sherbrooke, with their supplies of capital, labour and services is likely to attract any industry wishing to locate in this part of the Eastern Townships to these cities.

Thus, the immediate future development of Brome County seems to lie solidly with the further expansion of those activities directly related to its natural environment such as forestry, tourism, recreation and, in limited optimum areas, agriculture. These would be more advantageous than projects which might include the artificial planting of an industry in the area which would be forced to overcome limitations of location as well as both the physical and human environments of Brome County.

Chapter XII

SUMMARY

Brome County has had a relatively short history of settlement compared with the lands of the St. Lawrence Plain. It was not until the nineteenth century that active colonization of the area was begun by peoples from the United States, the British Isles and other parts of Quebec. Each of these groups brought its own individual traits which were often reflected in the landscape in terms of architectural styles or settlement patterns. Some of the early settlers were better prepared than others to deal with the environment, and the less fortunate in this respect usually left Brome, either to take up farming elsewhere or to become city dwellers. Those who remained behind, determined to create a new homeland in the wilderness, stimulated the growth of the early frontier economy and, in order to make it prosper, worked diligently to bring Brome into contact with the Montreal urban area through improvements in transportation facilities. They were fortunate in that their demands for transport links came at a time of extensive railway building. As a result, by the end of the nineteenth century Brome had developed one of the densest railway networks of any county in the Eastern Townships. The chief importance of the railways was as a means of year-round transportation of bulk commodities.

The roads of the Eastern Townships had, until the latter part of the century, been seasonally impassable, and the lack of any vehicles capable of long distance transport of large quantities of goods had reduced roads to the function of internal communication links between market towns. Taylor states that "a road from Quebec through to the Eastern Townships, suitable for wheels, did not exist in 1831" (Taylor, 1908c).

The railways were not sufficient, however, to overcome the environmental limitations of Brome County which were being increasingly felt by a population which had tried to introduce a frontier type of agriculture which was basically unsuited to the area (wheat and sheep) both in terms of environment and economic considerations. After 1850, which marked a shift to cattle raising and dairying, the railways served to bring Brome into competition with producing areas better suited to this type of agriculture and closer to markets. Thus Brome, along with many of its neighbouring counties, had little to offer the Montreal market that it could not obtain at lower prices elsewhere, and was therefore forced to continue to rely heavily on local markets within the region. The fact that many of the railways built through the Eastern Townships were so placed as to link up with American lines was often more a matter of speculation

than an indication of traffic flow, at least in terms of local produce. Any benefits derived by the towns through which these trunk lines passed were purely a result of local initiative on the part of the townspeople.

Faced with the realization that great prosperity, such as was envisioned in the early days of settlement, would not be theirs in Brome, many of the second generation settlers in the county began to look about for new lands to occupy and thus began, around 1860, the exodus of English-speaking people from Brome County which was to continue for half a century. This emigration, which was by no means limited to Brome County, came at a critical time in the history of the Eastern Townships, for it was at this time that the forerunners of industrialization were appearing in many towns and it was to be this growth of industry which saved many counties hitherto faced with a crumbling agricultural system.

In terms of industrial development the second half of the nineteenth century was a turning point for Brome. Until the 1880's this county's industries, based on small scale artisan-type establishments employing small numbers of people, compared favourably with those of its neighbouring counties which were also essentially agricultural and rural in nature and whose industries were frontier industries as opposed to factory industries. By the end of the century,

however, there was a substantial and widespread decline in the number of manufacturing establishments in all the neighbouring counties of Brome. An example of this decline can be seen from the Census of Canada figures for 1911 which show that Waterloo experienced a drop of from 42 to 9 manufacturing outlets between 1891 and 1901. There was a similar picture in Magog which had a decline from 41 to 5; Farnham dropped from 34 to 11 and Granby from 39 to 18. The most significant aspect of this decline in the numbers of establishments is the corresponding increase in the numbers of employees which occurred at the same time. Magog's working force increased from 729 to 922; Farnham's from 266 to 503; Granby's from 515 to 961 and Waterloo's from 161 to 186. This clearly shows that, although the number of manufacturers was decreasing, the size of operations were greatly increasing; it was in this period that the introduction of factory industries on a large scale (there had been scattered factories before this time) took place. These industries employed relatively large numbers of unskilled workers in contrast to the shop industries and skilled craftsmen of the frontier industries. Brome County did not keep pace with this switch to factory industries in the major towns, one of the prime reasons being that Brome did not have any urban areas approaching the size of Granby, Magog or Farnham. This lack of an urban labour force and the

depopulation of the rural areas of the county through emigration, compounded Brome's difficulties, as now numbers were the prerequisite rather than skill. Those regions having the largest supplies of available manpower, all other things being equal, were the areas which would attract industry.

After the initial colonizing zeal shown by the early settlers in Brome there seems to have developed a defeatist attitude, and the desire to leave the area and try again elsewhere was very evident. Into the vacuum left by the English exodus came the French Canadians, the first significantly large numbers of whom arrived in the 1860's and 1870's. Unfortunately, after two decades, they seem to have inherited much the same spirit as their predecessors. Most of them turned to farming, occupying for the most part lands formerly held by the English settlers, and their attraction to the towns of Brome was limited mainly to the operation of selected retail outlets. As farmers, however, they encountered the same environment as had the English and much of the land which they occupied was marginal land from an agricultural standpoint, having been the first land to be abandoned by the English. Hence it is not altogether surprising that within twenty years (by 1880) the French Canadian immigration into Brome was reversed and the French joined the English in a wholesale flight from the county.

This two-fold drain of population alone was sufficient to spell doom for any plans of industrialization of the county. This was compounded, as by the end of the nineteenth century Brome County was ringed with bustling towns all supporting thriving industries, which acted both as magnets and sponges for Brome's population.

Thus, by 1911, while Stanstead, Shefford, Sherbrooke and Missisquoi Counties had at least pockets of industry in their towns, Brome County was faced with a still-rising rural population in relation to the total and no prospects for improvement of the situation. Agriculture had not, and indeed could not, develop sufficiently to make up for the lack of industry and what increases which did occur in dairy production were largely absorbed within the general area of production.

Brome County had become stagnant and would not begin to shake out of its lethargy for another half century.

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