

A Nova Scotia-Maine Historical Correspondence, 1869

Alice R. Stewart, James B. Vickery and Edward S. Kellogg

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A Nova Scotia-Maine Historical Correspondence, 1869¹

INTRODUCTION

THE WRITING OF HISTORY in 19th and early 20th century New England and the Maritime Provinces of Canada was largely the work of dedicated amateurs. Their research was often carried out under difficulties. Especially trying was the absence until late in the period of organized libraries and archives, which limited access to those sources on which accurate reconstruction or interpretation of historical events depended. One method of overcoming this problem was the formation of local and regional historical societies; another was the exchange of books, source materials and ideas by correspondence with others interested in historical research. From time to time this correspondence crossed international boundaries in the region, an example being the discussion of Indian names and history between the New Brunswick historian W.F. Ganong and the Maine Indian specialist Fannie Hardy Eckstorm.²

An earlier and less well-known instance is the 1869 correspondence of Beamish Murdoch (1800-1876), author of *A History of Nova-Scotia or Acadie*³ and John Edwards Godfrey (1809-1884) of Bangor, author of a number of articles and papers on the history of the Penobscot area, which in the 16th and early 17th centuries also formed part of Acadia.⁴ While the Godfrey letters have apparently not survived, three of Murdoch's replies with their enclosures have recently come to light. The first letter, dated 6 February 1869, was at some point bound into Godfrey's copy of the *History of Nova Scotia*, Volume I.⁵ The letters

- 1 The editors would like to acknowledge the assistance of the staffs of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, the Fogler Library of the University of Maine at Orono, the Maine Historical Society Library, the Miller Library of Colby College in Waterville, Maine, and of Professors Kenneth G. Pryke of the University of Windsor and C. Stewart Doty of the University of Maine at Orono, and Mr. M. Brook Taylor of the University of Toronto graduate school.
- 2 See Mary E.J.E. Sanger, "William Francis Ganong, Regional Historian", M.A. thesis, University of Maine, Orono, 1980, pp. 100-10 and her article "Dr. William F. Ganong — Pursued History with an Abiding Zeal", *Saint Croix Courier* (St. Stephen), 21 July 1982. Ganong also corresponded with Maine historians Henry Burrage and James Phinney Baxter.
- 3 Beamish Murdoch, *A History of Nova-Scotia or Acadie*, 3 vols., (Halifax, 1865-1867).
- 4 James B. Vickery, ed., *The Journals of John Edwards Godfrey of Bangor, Maine*, Volume I, [1863-1869], (Rockland, Me., 1979), Introduction. Volume II of the Godfrey Journals, covering the years 1870-1877, was published in 1984.
- 5 The copy of Murdoch's *History of Nova-Scotia* in the Fogler Library of the University of Maine, Orono, is clearly Godfrey's own. In addition to the bound-in Murdoch letter of 6 February and its enclosures, it has extensive annotations both in ink and in pencil. Those in ink express Godfrey's agreement or disagreement with statements in the text. The pencilled comments were evidently made in August 1866, on a steamer trip along the western coast of

of 22 and 27 February were given to the Bangor Historical Society in 1981 by John Godfrey's granddaughters. Together they provide some interesting insights into the historical methodology and the use of sources in the period. They also present an explanation of Beamish Murdoch's reasons for writing his *History* somewhat different from that in its preface, as well as an elaboration of his views on the deportation of the Acadians.

By 1869, when the letters below were exchanged, John Godfrey was one of Bangor's leading lawyers, a judge of probate, a convinced abolitionist, briefly editor of an anti-slavery paper, a patron of music and the theatre, and an enthusiastic student of Maine history, especially of the early history of Eastern Maine and the Penobscot area. Among his friends were others who shared his historical interests. They included Hannibal Hamlin, Lincoln's first vice-president, John A. Poor, promoter of both the Atlantic and St. Lawrence and the European and North American Railways, and such leading members of the Bangor and Maine Historical Societies as Joseph Williamson of Belfast and the Reverend Edward Ballard of Brunswick.⁶

Both for historical societies and for the local press Godfrey gave or wrote papers in the period on such topics as the history of the Penobscot, and the lives of Baron de St. Castin and his son Anselme. He planned but did not complete a book on D'Aulnay and La Tour, the great antagonists of early Acadia. Then in 1869 he was asked to give the principal oration at the celebration of Bangor's centenary as a city, to be held in September of that year.⁷ Although he had a

Nova Scotia. They consist mostly of geographical or historical observations. This Nova Scotia trip is consistent with Godfrey's journeys to other historic sites, among them Mount Desert Island, Castine, and St. Croix Island: *Godfrey Journals*, I, pp. 115, 117-20, 123, 231-3, 236. *The History of Nova-Scotia* would have been included in the 1,350 volumes of Godfrey's library given in 1957 by his granddaughters, Mrs. Laura Orcutt and Mrs. Candace Sawyer, to Colby College in Waterville, Maine. The *History* was donated by Colby soon after to the University of Maine Library and catalogued at Orono in December 1961: F. Elizabeth Libby, "Library of Judge John Edwards Godfrey", *Colby Library Quarterly*, 4th ser., XII (November, 1957), pp. 225, 226.

6 In 1865 the Reverend Edward Ballard (1804-1870), recording secretary of the Maine Historical Society, sponsored Godfrey's membership in the society. In 1867 Godfrey nominated both Ballard and Joseph Williamson, noted local historian, later to become Maine's leading bibliographer, for membership in the Bangor Historical Society, of which Godfrey was a founder: *Godfrey Journals*, I, pp. 174, 297. For Ballard's life see George A. Wheeler and Henry W. Wheeler, *History of Brunswick, Topsham and Harpswell* (Boston, 1878), pp. 716-7.

7 Godfrey's papers for the Maine Historical Society at this time are somewhat difficult to date, since the society suspended publication of the *Collections* during the Civil War. It included papers given during these years in Volume VII, 1st ser., 1876. Papers in that volume for which Godfrey would have found the Murdoch enclosures useful are: "The Ancient Penobscot or Panawanskek", pp. 1-22, "The Pilgrims at Penobscot", pp. 23-37, "Jean Vincent, Baron de Castin", pp. 39-72, "Castine the Younger", pp. 73-92, and "Bashaba and the Tarratines", pp. 93-102. Godfrey's address at the Bangor centennial celebration is printed in *Centennial Celebration of the Settlement of Bangor, September 30, 1869* (Bangor, Me., 1870), pp. 17-49. Later he wrote "The Annals of Bangor, 1769-1882", in the *History of Penobscot County, Maine* (Cleveland, 1882), chs. I-XXX. He also gave Maine Historical Society papers on "Norambeaga",

substantial and growing library of his own, which included Williamson's *History of Maine*, Joseph Whipple's *Geographical View of the District of Maine...Including the History of Acadia*, and some of Parkman's works,⁸ he apparently did not then have access to a number of accounts by early writers on the region, including those by Samuel de Champlain, Marc Lescarbot and Nicolas Denys, or to some later documents. One solution was to obtain copies of those sections of their writings covering the eastern Maine coast and the Penobscot. A possible source was Beamish Murdoch, whose history Godfrey had acquired and read with much interest. On 26 January 1869 he began a correspondence with Murdoch which resulted in at least three replies designed to be of assistance to Godfrey's research.

Godfrey's decision to consult Murdoch was a natural one, in view of the substantial amount both of narrative and of sources on the Maine area of Acadia contained in Volume I of the *History of Nova-Scotia*, with some material pertinent to Maine in the later volumes. Murdoch, much better known then and today than John Godfrey, had some striking career parallels with the Bangor historian. He too was a lawyer, had been affiliated with a newspaper, the *Acadian Recorder*, had been active in philanthropic and political affairs, and, as Recorder of Halifax, had held government office.⁹ He had by the 1860s long been a member of the intellectual community centred on Halifax which helped to bring about both the formation of the Nova Scotia Historical Society and the better collection of Nova Scotia documents and the sources of its early history. This group included Thomas Chandler Haliburton, author of the first real Nova Scotia history, in the research for which Murdoch assisted, Joseph Howe, editor, politician, author, and perhaps Nova Scotia's leading political figure, Charles Tupper, one of the Fathers of Canadian Confederation, later Canadian Prime Minister, and Thomas Beamish Akins, Murdoch's cousin and friend, notable bibliophile, and Nova Scotia's first Records Commissioner.¹⁰ Murdoch

Collections, 1st. ser., IX (1887), pp. 95-113. The last article was delivered as a paper in 1879 but published posthumously in another delayed volume of the *Collections*.

- 8 Godfrey mentioned his purchase in September 1865, of Parkman's *France in the New World*. He commented "I cannot say I like it". In 1867 he acquired the *Jesuits in North America: Godfrey Journal*, I, pp. 178, 292. Joseph Whipple's history covered both Maine and Acadia. It was published in Bangor in 1816 by Peter Edes with alternate titles, one being *The History of Acadie, Penobscot Bay and River*.
- 9 For Murdoch's life see the biography by Kenneth G. Pryke in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, X, (Toronto, 1972), pp. 539-40; Carl F. Klinck, ed., *The Literary History of Canada*, I, (Toronto 1976), pp. 235-6; Daniel C. Harvey, "History and its Uses in Pre-Confederation Nova Scotia", Canadian Historical Association, *Report*, 1938, pp. 14-16. Murdoch, like Godfrey, delivered a centenary address, for the Halifax Centenary in 1849: *Morning Chronicle* (Halifax), 11 February 1876, reprinted in the *Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections*, XIX (1918), Appendix.
- 10 Murdoch was a member of the group which in 1864 incorporated the Nova Scotia Historical Society. Delayed by Confederation, the society did not formally begin until 1878, after Murdoch's death. Daniel C. Harvey, "The Intellectual Awakening of Nova Scotia", *Dalhousie*

also had made historical acquaintances beyond the Maritimes. Among those in Maine were Godfrey's friend, the Reverend Edward Ballard. While the Nova Scotia historian had not met John Godfrey, he may well have heard about him from some of his Maine Historical Society correspondents.¹¹

Most of Murdoch's enclosures in these letters came from transcripts made for the *History*. He was, in some cases, his own translator, in others he used available English translations. Some may have come from books in his own library, but many, as he told Godfrey in the letter of 6 February came from books that were borrowed, probably from the large library of T.B. Akins.¹² His generosity in responding to Godfrey's requests for assistance made possible more accurate accounts of a region whose early history was shared between Maine and the Maritimes.

ALICE R. STEWART
JAMES B. VICKERY
EDWARD S. KELLOGG

Review, XIII (April, 1933), pp. 1-22 and George A. Rawlyk, *Historical Essays on the Atlantic Provinces* (Toronto 1967), pp. 99-121; Brian C. Cuthbertson, "Thomas Beamish Akins: British North America's Pioneer Archivist", *Acadiensis*, VII, 1 (Autumn, 1977), pp. 86-102; C. Bruce Fergusson, "T.B. Akins: A Centennial Commemoration", *Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections*, XXXI (1957), pp. 97-118; M. Brook Taylor, "Thomas Chandler Haliburton as a Historian", *Acadiensis*, XIII, 2 (Spring, 1984), p. 60.

11 Murdoch was a corresponding member of the Maine Historical Association, honoured for his *History: Catalogue of the Past and Present Members, Resident and Corresponding, of the Maine Historical Society* (Brunswick, Me., 1874), [bound with the *Collections*, 1st ser., VII (1876)]. In August 1866, Murdoch wrote the Reverend Edward Ballard that he esteemed his recent election to the Society "a great honor": Murdoch to Ballard, 17 August 1866, Scrapbook I, p. 30, Maine Historical Society Archives.

12 Not only his family ties but also a long working relationship makes likely Murdoch's use of Akins' large collection of books on Nova Scotia and related history. Most of the source excerpts Murdoch enclosed in his letters to Godfrey are from books or pamphlets listed in Sheila I. Stewart, comp., *A Catalogue of the Akins Collection of Books and Pamphlets* (Halifax, 1933). See also Brian C. Cuthbertson, "Atlantic Provinces Book Collectors: Thomas Beamish Akins", *APLA Bulletin*, XLIV (March, 1981), pp. 49, 51. While on a trip to Halifax in January 1876, Godfrey called on T.B. Akins and reported that Akins had "a very valuable library containing many histories relating to the provinces" and that he was "a man of 70 perhaps, very talkative and polite": *Godfrey Journals*, II, p. 21.

Murdoch to Godfrey, 6 February 1869

Halifax, Nova Scotia
February, 6. 1869.

Dear Sir

I received your polite letter of 26 Jan^y. a few days ago, and have delayed acknowledging it, until I could in some degree meet your wishes. I now enclose you extracts from the original French text of Champlain,¹ and of governor Denys de Fronsac,² and such translations as I could make in a hurry —

As to Pentagoët, I would also refer you to the pages of my first volume noted in the Mss. enclosed, and to pages: 146. 147. 152. 154. 160. 167. 168. 171. — In preparing my work, I consulted a great number of books & Mss. chiefly lent me. — There are I think some things that concern Penobscot, but it would take much time to search for them in Mss. —

If I can find leisure I will try to send you more extracts. I should have supposed that the remarkable history of baron Castine³ would have been a subject your literary men in Maine would long since have taken up. He was the chief character in that region for half a century. I have given *all* that Champlain & Denys wrote about your river & territory. I will look at Lescarbot &c.⁴ when I can find

- 1 Samuel de Champlain (c. 1570-1635) explored the Maine coast for the company headed by Pierre du Gua, Sieur de Monts, in the fall of 1604, returning to the coast in the spring of 1605: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, I, pp. 186-99; Samuel Eliot Morison, *Samuel de Champlain: Father of New France* (Boston, 1972), ch. IV; H.P. Biggar, ed., *The Works of Samuel de Champlain* I (Toronto, 1922), Introduction. The edition from which Murdoch took his enclosed excerpt was the *Voyages du Sieur de Champlain*, tome première, (Paris, 1830), a two-volume reprint of the 1632 edition. Edmund Slafter, "Essay on Sources", in Justin Winsor, ed., *A Narrative and Critical History of America* (Boston, 1864), IV, p. 131; *Akins Collection*, p. 44; "Authorities Consulted by the Author", Murdoch, *Nova Scotia*, I, p. 533.
- 2 Nicolas Denys (1598-1688), a leading merchant, trader and colonizer in late 17th century Acadia, also served at one point as governor of the coasts and islands of the province. His *Description géographique et historique des costs de l'Amérique septentrionale*, 2 tomes, (Paris, 1672), is regarded as one of the chief sources for the history of Acadia in the period covered. The 1672 edition is cited in the "Authorities" and listed in the *Akins Collection*, p. 71: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, I, pp. 256-9; Nicolas Denys, *Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America*, ed. W.F. Ganong (Toronto, 1908), Introduction; Bernard Pothier, "Nicolas Denys: The Chronology and Historiography of an Acadian Hero", *Acadiensis*, I, 1 (Autumn 1971), pp. 54-70; Roger Comeau, "Nicolas Denys, pionnier Acadien", *Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française*, IX (June, 1955), pp. 31-54.
- 3 Jean Vincent d'Abbadie, Baron de St. Castin (1652-1707), soldier, trader, Indian raid leader, came out to New France in 1665 with the Carignan-Salières regiment, later settled at Pentagouet on the Penobscot River, traded with and raided the English settlements in the Maine area, and married a Penobscot, probably a daughter of Chief Madockawando. He returned to France in 1701 and died there in 1707: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, II, pp. 3-7; Gorham Munson, "St. Castin: A Legend Revisited", *Dalhousie Review*, XLV (Autumn, 1965), p. 339-60.
- 4 Marc Lescarbot (c. 1570-1642), a French lawyer and writer, travelled to New France in 1606,

spare time. I found Williamson's history of Maine an excellent store house of facts. I believe there is another history of Maine, but have not seen it. Williamson was lent to me and I returned it long since. I have not a page in my library respecting Maine, except a small tract about Casco bay.⁵

We Acadians feel an interest in Maine, as all of it North of the Kennebec was originally part of Acadie.

I remain

very truly yours,
Beamish Murdoch

John E. Godfrey Esq.
Bangor
Maine
U.S.

You will observe that in 1784, all that portion of Acadia lying West, was severed from us and made a distinct province, New Brunswick and that the English had long before pushed their possession during the reign of Louis XIV, from the Kenebec, the ancient & original boundary between the dominions of New France and New England, as far as the Pentagoët or Penobscot. The treaty of 1783 went further North in favor of Massachusetts and all subsequent events have cut off pieces from New Brunswick. Consequently it would have been beyond my object in writing a history of Nova Scotia, to have entered too minutely into the affairs of our *quondam* territories on the further side of the bay of Fundy, much less did the local antiquities of Maine come within the scope of my undertaking which with all restrictions has proved voluminous. So that I may have passed by many things that would be of interest to you in extracting

spending a year in Acadia. He worked with Champlain, knew the survivors of the failed St. Croix Island settlement, and talked with Port Royal residents, with fishing captains and with others who knew the coast. His *Histoire de la Nouvelle France* (1609), written after his return to France, is regarded as a major source for the history of Acadia in the period, especially on the areas which he knew personally or for which he had first-hand testimony: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, I, pp. 469-72; W.L. Grant, ed., *The History of New France by Marc Lescarbot* (Toronto, 1907), Introduction.

5 The edition listed in the *Akins Collection*, p. 41, is William D. Williamson, *The History of the State of Maine: From its First Discovery, A.D. 1602, to the Separation, A.D. 1820*, 2 vols., (Hallowell, Me., 1832). The other history which Murdoch mentioned could have been either James Sullivan, *History of the District of Maine* (Boston, 1795), or Joseph Whipple's *Geographical View of the District of Maine* (1816). The "small tract" was probably D.C. Colesworthy, *Chronicles of Casco Bay* (Portland, Me., 1850): *Akins Collection*, p. 33.

matter from many thousand pages of MSS. and print. Besides I thought Williamson very full & exact, perhaps too minute sometimes. I have in Mss. the continuation of my history from 1827. to 1842. and hope to bring it down to the Confederation of 1866. if spared.

Enclosures

For the editions from which Murdoch obtained the enclosures in the letter of 6 February see footnotes 1 and 2, above. The Champlain Society editions of the works of Champlain and Denys, cited above, have detailed notes on the sections enclosed in this letter, although they are not in each case from the edition used by Murdoch, and they remain as faithful as possible to the original spelling and capitalization. This Murdoch did not do, although he was usually careful to indicate when he paraphrased or summarized. The enclosures include the descriptions of the Penobscot area.

Murdoch to Godfrey, 22 February 1869

85 Spring garden road,
Halifax Nova Scotia, 22 Feb^y. 1869.

Dear Sir.

I received yours of the 13th instant, also a copy of Whipple's, history of Maine, and have to thank you for both. — I was led into the labor & execution of my book, by a desire to throw the light of truth, if possible, upon the merits & demerits of the expulsion of the French Acadians from this country in 1755 — ¹ The abbé Raynal, ² — Bancroft, ³ — Longfellow, ⁴ &c had given popularity to a

1 In his Preface in Volume I, Murdoch said that he was tempted to write his *History* by the "great amount of materials for history which the provincial assembly have collected" and "my prepossessions as a Novascotian making strong impressions on my mind of the value of my country and the interest of its early history...The leading idea with me has been to preserve from oblivion the past occurrences in this province". See the discussion of Murdoch's motives in Harvey, "History and its Uses in Pre-Confederation Nova Scotia", p. 14.

2 The Abbé Guillaume-Thomas de Raynal (1713-1796) was a French historian and philosophe. His *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, 6 vols., (Amsterdam, 1770) was at once controversial and popular. Raynal's view of the Acadians was romantic. He saw in them "a happy American colony" destroyed by the English government "either from policy or caprice", by an act of treachery: *A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies*, 2nd ed., (London, 1798), V, Book XVII, p. 352 [reprinted, Greenwood, 1969]. For an evaluation of Raynal as a philosophe, see Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation* (New York, 1966-1969), I, pp. 18, 19, 176, II, pp. 384, 414, 556. The *Akins Collection*, p. 101, lists a 1777 and the 1798 edition of the English translation of the *Histoire*.

3 George Bancroft (1800-1891), important mid-19th century American historian, is best known for his *History of the United States* (1834-1885). Described as militantly anti-British, he took an

view of this transaction so disgraceful to the British name and nation, that we of Nova Scotia, who knew traditionally something of the truth, were annoyed at the reiteration of such severe charges against our nation. A friend urged me to undertake the task of vindication. I replied, that the only just course to pursue, would be to write the history of Acadie from its first discovery, in order to shew the true position of these Acadians at the time of their removal — and as our government had obtained at some expense authentic copies of all official correspondence connected with this province, both under the French & English rule: and I had ready access to all our archives, I set to work at the beginning viz — 1603 — not intending at first to bring my narration down much beyond 1756, the year of this exodus: but I was tempted to go on further, and have published as far as 1827. — and I hope to bring my work down to 1867, the era of our Confederation.⁵ I think impartial readers will conclude that the expulsion of the F. Acadians was not dictated by any low motives of gain, or mere malice, but from an honest belief entertained by the authorities at Halifax in 1755 of its absolute necessity, as required to save Acadie from the French. The disaster & defeat of Braddock's army was almost simultaneous, & the English colonies were in a state of panic fear in consequence, and although the *removal* had been ordered before this disaster, yet I cannot doubt that it had effect in leading our rulers to carry out the proposed removal. It is evident that this measure did not originate in England, and that no orders from London were received to sanction it. The impulse came from Boston, to which town, Halifax at that time looked up as its metropolis, and the strong aversion the Puritans of New England had for Papists had much to do with the affair. The troops under Winslow &c. employed in the capture & removal of the French came from New England, expressly for this purpose. We Nova Scotians knew all these things, and especially that Chief

unsympathetic view of the British role in the deportation of the Acadians both in his history and in an essay, "The Exiles of Acadia", included in the Boston annual *The Token* (1842); see also Manning Hawthorne and H.W.L. Dana, *The Origin and Development of Longfellow's "Evangeline"* (Portland, Me., 1947), p. 15. See American Historical Association, *Guide to Historical Literature* (New York, 1961), AB47; *The Oxford Companion to American History* (New York, 1966), p. 59; Russel Nye, *George Bancroft* (New York, 1964).

- 4 Henry W. Longfellow (1807-1882) influenced generations of readers in many countries with his *Evangeline: A Tale of Acadia* (1847), which gave a view of the deportation favourable to the Acadians but not to the British. Longfellow himself said that in writing the poem the authorities on whom he mostly relied were Raynal and Thomas Chandler Haliburton: Hawthorne and Dana, *Longfellow's "Evangeline"*, p. 9; Naomi Griffiths, "Longfellow's 'Evangeline': The Birth and Acceptance of a Legend", *Acadiensis*, XI, 2 (Spring 1982), p. 34.
- 5 Murdoch did not complete the fourth volume of his history. Kenneth Pryke suggested (*Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, X, p. 540) that Murdoch's declining energy or "perhaps the public response to the first three volumes" was responsible for his failure to carry the *History* to 1867. The former seems more likely. As early as 1866, he wrote to the Reverend Edward Ballard "I feel almost tired of work, it has been so heavy on me latterly to keep up with the press. I have to go over a mass of newspapers to get a few lines of fact": Murdoch to Ballard, 17 August 1866, Scrapbook I, p. 30, Maine Historical Society Archives.

Justice Belcher by whose legal opinions the Halifax government was actuated in the removal, was a New England man and we thought it hard that Bancroft & Longfellow should not only blame the act, but endeavor to fix the odium of it on the British government & people. In my humble judgment this removal was excusable if not fully justified, but I am equally convinced that the mode of removal was every way *inhuman*. The parties were deprived of all their *real* and *personal* property, without compensation, and sent with their families, beggared and destitute to the other colonies, without provision for receiving, employing or maintaining them. It was a dismal affair altogether, but in reality one for which New England was more responsible than Nova Scotia. While my book was in the press, my friend, the rev.d Mr. Ballard sent me a Mss. written I think by the rev. Dr. Packard on this subject, in which he endeavored to justify the whole affair.⁶ I returned it with the request that he would await the appearance of my book, as I thought it would throw some light on the transaction. —

I have been much favored by circumstances in having access to all the old writing on Acadia, and being somewhat conversant with the French language, — also by the means of going over all the provincial archives, containing letters, orders, reports, &c. But the memory & powers of an individual are limited & therefore, there may be many errors & omissions in my book.

As to Maine, I had Williamson to consult. His book seemed to me to be the result of much labor, in great detail, & perhaps too much disposed to attend to minutiae. His plan of giving the geography, natural history, &c. of his province, I was not disposed to follow. Halliburton did so in his history of Nova Scotia, & so have some others, but I esteem Hutchinson⁷ & Belknap⁸ to have taken the wisest course. — As to *Garneau*,⁹ without denying his talents & eloquence, I

6 The rejected Acadian manuscript may have been written by Alpheus Spring Packard (1798-1884), a long-time professor at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, an early member of the Maine Historical Society, a former teacher and for some years a Bowdoin colleague of Longfellow, and a fellow townsman of the Reverend Edward Ballard. See Nehemiah Cleaveland, *History of Bowdoin College* (Boston, 1882), pp. 188-90.

7 Thomas Hutchinson, (1711-1780), pre-Revolutionary Massachusetts governor (1758-1771) who became a Loyalist refugee, scholar and historian, author of the *History of the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay*, 3 vols. (Boston, 1764-1767): *Akins Collection*, p. 34. His life and historical works are discussed in the edition of the *History of Massachusetts-Bay* by Lawrence S. Mayo (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), I, pp. ix-xxiii and in Bernard Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974).

8 Jeremy Belknap (1744-1798) is best known as the historian of early New Hampshire. His *History of New-Hampshire*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1784-1792), is regarded as objective and carefully written: *Oxford Companion to American History*, p. 72, *Akins Collection*, p. 35.

9 François-Xavier Garneau (1809-18866), outstanding historian of French Canada, whose *Histoire du Canada* (1845) is considered a major stimulus to French Canadian nationalism. It was translated into English in 1860 by Andrew Bell. It is this edition which is listed in Murdoch's "Authorities": *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, IX, pp. 297-305; Gustave Lanctot, *François-Xavier Garneau* (Toronto, 1926), pp. 1-50; National Library of Canada, *François-Xavier Garneau, 1809-1866* (Ottawa, 1977).

think his prejudices against English rule have blinded him. Have you seen Rameau's book, 'La France aux Colonies' —? It is a work of value for its facts & good sense. The author was here and is a laborious, unassuming character I have compounded with him & have his address.¹⁰

I enclose some things that you might like to have, being extracts from the materials I had collected in preparing my history.

I shall be most happy to hear from you as you have leisure, and would request you to send me your *photogram*, as when one cannot see a friend they may look at a copy.

I remain

Yours faithfully.

Beamish Murdoch

John E. Godfrey Esq.

Bangor

Maine

U.S.

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Enclosures

1. *Extracts from Baron La Hontan's work*

Louis-Armand de Lahontan (or La Hontan) (1666-1715) was a French soldier and author who came out to Canada in 1683 as a marine officer, travelled widely, and left in 1693. On his return he wrote of his travels in *Nouvelle voyages de M. le Baron de la Hontan dans l'Amérique septentrionale* (1703), which was translated into English in the same year. Murdoch did not give the edition used in his enclosure, but the excerpts are in English. The English edition is listed in the *Akins Collection*, p. 46, and in the "Authorities". *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, II, pp. 439-45; R.G. Thwaites, ed., *New Voyages to North America by Baron Louis de Lahontan* (Chicago, 1905), I, Introduction. The selections chosen covered the

10 Edmé Rameau de Saint-Père (1820-1899), French journalist and historian. The book Murdoch referred to was *La France aux colonies...Les Français en Amérique: Acadiens et Canadiens* (Paris, 1859): *Akins Collection*, p. 58; "Authorities". As a result of the research mentioned, with which Murdoch gave him some help, he wrote a second book, *Une colonie féodale en Amérique: l'Acadie, 1604-1710*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1877-89). Rameau later acknowledged Murdoch's assistance in obtaining permission for him to work in the then restricted government archives in Halifax, but he found the staff there most unhelpful: Fergusson, "Akins", p. 112. For Rameau's life see W.S. Wallace, ed., *Macmillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, 4th ed. (Toronto, 1978), p. 689.

history and geography of late 17th century Acadia, with reference to the "Baron of Saint Casteins", and his role among the Indians.

2. *Extracts from the Register Book of the Parish of St. Jean Baptiste of Port Royal*

The records of three marriages are given. The first, on 31 October 1707, was the marriage of Bernard Anselme de St. Castin, son of Jean Vincent de St. Castin and Mathilde, a Penobscot, to Charlotte d'Amours, daughter of the Sieur Louis d'Amours of Port Royal and Marguerite Guyon of Quebec. This marriage was performed by the Abbé Antoine Gaulin, missionary to the Abenakis and Micmacs and Vicar-General of Acadia. It was witnessed by a number of Acadian notables including Daniel d'Auger de Subercase, the last French governor of Acadia (1706-1710), Simon-Pierre Denys de Bonaventure, naval officer and administrator, and the bride's father, Louis d'Amours, Acadian seigneur and trader who, like Bonaventure, had led raids with the elder Baron de St. Castin against the English. The second marriage, on 4 December 1707, was that of Alexander le Borne de Belleisle, son of Alexander Belleisle and Marie de St. Etienne to Anastasie de St. Castin, daughter of Jean Vincent de St. Castin and Mathilde of Pentagouet. This marriage was also performed by the Abbé Gaulin, as was a third of the same date of Phillip Mius d'Entremont (Pobomcou) to Therese de St. Castin, another daughter of the elder Baron de St. Castin: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, I, II.

3. *British naval despatches, 1779*

- A. Sir George Collier to the Admiralty, Reasonable in Penobscot Bay, 20 August 1779.

Sir George Collier (1739-1795) was commander of the British North American Squadron. He was sent from New York with a naval expedition in August 1779, to relieve the British in Castine, besieged by a Massachusetts attacking force commanded by Commodore Richard Saltonstall and General Solomon Lovell: *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1950), IV, pp. 795-7. Recent accounts of this expedition include Peter J. Elliott, "The Penobscot Expedition, 1779: A Study in Naval Frustration", M.A. thesis, University of Maine, Orono, 1974, John D. Faibisy, "Penobscot, 1779: The Eye of a Hurricane", *Maine Historical Society Quarterly*, XIX (Fall, 1979), pp. 91-117, and John E. Cayford, *The Penobscot Expedition* (Orrington, Me., 1976).

- B. General Maclean to Lord George Germain, Camp at Majebigwaduce on the river Penobscot, 26 August 1779.

General Francis Maclean (c. 1717-1781) commanded the British expedition from Halifax which established the British fort at Castine in June 1779. He successfully defended the fort against the Massachusetts

attack, holding out until relieved by Sir George Collier. The letter enclosed, partly summarized by Murdoch, is a report of the defence sent to Lord George Germain (1716-1785), Secretary of State for the Colonies: *Dictionary of National Biography*, IV, p. 504, VII, pp. 1110-14.

- C. Lieutenant Governor Hughes to Lord George Germain, Halifax, September 1779.

Sir Richard Hughes (1729?-1812) was Resident Commissioner of the Navy in Halifax and in 1779 was Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia: *Dictionary of National Biography*, X, pp. 186, 187. This letter, another account of the Penobscot expedition, is largely paraphrased.

4. *Transcriptions from the Minutes of the Nova Scotia Council, 16 August 1780, 22 August 1780, 12 September 1780, 15 September 1780.*

These transcriptions cover a variety of subjects from provincial treasury payments to the Abbé Bourq, British-backed missionary to the Indians, to the arrival of a schooner from St. Kitts which reported the plunder of a Lunenburg vessel by a rebel privateer. The longest statement transcribed was the comment of an anonymous writer on the Abbé Raynal's account of the Acadians and their deportation. The writer made a vigorous defense of the British and attacks "the perfidy and treachery of the Acadians".

Murdoch to Godfrey, 27 February 1869

Halifax Nova Scotia.

John E. Godfrey Esq

Saturday 27 February 1869.

Dear Sir,

The extracts I sent you from governor Denys' work were copied from his original publication in France. Those from Champlain from a modern but accurate French copy.

I now enclose you some extracts from Cluverius, *Geography*,¹ also some from Lescarbot, the original French edition of 1609. — ² They have reference to

1 Philip Cluverius (1580-1622) was a Polish writer and a major figure in the early 17th century revival of geographical learning in Europe. His information on North America was obtained from the accounts of others at a time when these writings contained many inaccuracies and not much knowledge. His *Introductionis in Universam Geographiam*, 6 vols. (Leiden, 1624), went into many editions. See Robert E. Dickinson, *The Makers of Modern Geography* (London, 1969), pp. 9-10 and Margarita Bowen, *Empiricism and Geographical Thought: From Francis Bacon to Alexander Von Humboldt* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 71-2.

2 See fn. 4, letter of 6 February 1869 above.

*Norembega*³ the Armouchiquois, Etchemins &c. I think they will interest you —

I have sent you hasty translations into English of all the extracts, which I made thinking they might be useful. I am pretty familiar with old French authors and perhaps may hit off their meaning better on that account. I have long been seeking for an old French dictionary, as there are many words in old French books that are not to be found in any that I have seen. When the French Academy published their celebrated work they omitted a great many words then in common use, and unhappily most compilers of dictionaries have followed their pattern in this respect. I mention this because you may meet with some old Dictionary of the French language prior in date, that would supply my want. It is barely possible, but every time I read a French author of early days I feel the loss.

My want of local knowledge of your state is unfavorable but in any way I can contribute to the elucidation of its early annals. I shall be glad & the more so that the Historical Society of Maine honored me with election as a Corresponding Member in compliment to my history of Acadie.

I remain

Yours faithfully

Beamish Murdoch

Enclosures

1. This selection, from the 1629 edition of Cluverius, *Universal Geography*, is largely a description of what the author calls "Northern, or Mexican America", of which the sections on Canada, Nova Francia, and Virginia are included. The original Latin and an English translation are given.
2. The enclosed selections from the 1609 edition of Lescarbot's *Histoire de la Nouvelle France* include material on Norumbega, on the Maine coasts, and on the Penobscot. The original French is given, with an English translation. At the end of the translation, Murdoch included a list of what he considered possible Indian words from which the French Pentagoet or Pentagouet might be derived.

3 For a discussion of the literature on Norumbega, see Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages, A.D. 500-1600* (New York, 1971), pp. 488-91.