

Text written by Pascal Binet, historian.



Craig and Gosford Roads Epic

Long time ago, as the King's Road on the North Shore, the Kennebec road in Beauce, or more recently, the Quebec Central Railway and Highway 20, Craig and Gosford roads had the same important political, social and economic for our region and that of the Eastern Townships.

In the early 19th century, the lack of communication channels was a major hindrance to the development of colonization. After facing the red tape of the land allocation system, settlers wishing to settle in the Eastern Townships found no road to access land that had been assigned. In addition to facing the harsh reality of their way, they had to cut down trees, through swamps and cross streams in order to settle. The French Canadians did not move because they understood that the "townships" with their English names were to be colonized by Loyalists or American subjects. Indeed, the Quebec Act of 1774 recognized many French Canadians' right to keep and enjoy the free exercise of religion and the Church of Rome (Article 5), "but on condition that" nothing that is contained in this Act does not extend or not extend to any of the lands that were granted in free and common socage by her Majesty or will be hereinafter said Majesty, her heirs and successors (Article 9). " In addition, priests lordships meticulously warned their parishioners wishing to settle in the Eastern Townships that they risked losing their jobs, their property, but above all their soul. This is why the Eastern Townships have long remained unoccupied. To overcome this gap and meet numerous requests to that effect, Sir James Henry Craig, appointed governor in chief of British North America in 1807, is to undertake in 1810 the construction of a road between St-Gilles and Richmond. It thus provided connections to Quebec Eastern Townships and beyond the Canadian border. Texts clearly show that there was already a road between St Gilles and St Nicolas from 1792. This road was built at the request of residents of St. Gilles in the summer of 1791. According to some historians, authors parish of Lotbinière monographs, the road began to dock Basil Demers (where now the Quebec Bridge) and went to St. Gilles, a length of about 15 miles. It was officially inaugurated August 7, 1792 by the chief surveyor Jean Renaud. Henry Caldwell, owner of the Seigneurie de Lauzon, allowed the lord Arthur Davidson St-Gilles to visit his lands and choose the best land to develop a path there and levy the wood needed to build bridges, without any commitment on its part. In 1800, the provincial surveyor Joseph Kilborne provides an initial layout. Starting from the lordship of St-Gilles to the townships of Inverness and Ireland, it is marked and surveyed by Kilborne to Joseph Frobisher fees associated leader Township Ireland. Five years later, the project to build a road linking the Eastern Townships resurfaced. In 1805, newly arrived Americans in the Richmond-Danville area carry a petition to the government calling for the construction of a road. The petition was filed in the Lower Canadian House of Assembly September 6, 1806 and it receives it favorably. The project is however stopped and postponed for lack of money. The same year, John Caldwell and some other English Canadians of Montreal and Quebec, interested in the political and commercial benefits that such a road could provide, launched a new project of a road linking the lordships of the boiler, or New Beauce (Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce), in the valley of the St. Francis river in the Township of Shipton. Caldwell offers to build this road in two years provided the government gives him 400 acres of Crown land

by road mile built in the townships of Leeds, Inverness, of Ireland, of Chester, Tingwick and Shipton. His request was denied and the construction of a road project in the Eastern Townships is again abandoned. William Hall of Quebec (the same who probably owned land in the township of Broughton), even advanced 130 pounds in 1805 to finance the construction, but that amount would have been enough for some of the way. It seems that the route of this road has been entrusted to the Surveyor General of the province, Joseph Bouchette. To date, no road was not built yet ...

WHO IS HE ?

James Henry Craig was born in Gibraltar in 1748 and comes from a respectable Scottish family. He entered the army at the age of 15 years and is found in America in 1774. He participated in the War of Independence of the United States and help repel the invasion of Canada by the Americans. He fought on many fronts and injured at least two occasions. It noted and in rank, becoming major general in 1794. Between then and his arrival in Canada, he held commands in Cape Town, India and the Mediterranean. Despite his poor health (chronic dropsy), but feeling better, he accepted the position of governor general of British North America and lieutenant governor of Lower Canada in 1807. However, upon his arrival in Quebec So he often bedridden and can not directly take notice of the situation of the colony. However, attempts to put the province on the defensive since a war with the United States seems imminent. Since 1810, feeling his health fail, Craig asked his replacement. It was not until June 1811 he sailed to Britain where he died in January 1812.

Governor Sir James Henry Craig knew early on his arrival in Quebec, as setting the political crisis in Lower Canada, had to encourage the establishment of English-speaking settlers. Early in his administration, Craig wants to drown the French-speaking population by the arrival of new English Protestant settlers and even offers the union of the two Canadas (well before Lord Durham's report in 1840). It is also certainly behind the political crisis of the time. After taking office, Craig tends to favor the party of the British against the Canadian Party. It endorses the measures proposed by his advisers, including his secretary Witsius Herman Ryland and the Anglican Bishop Jacob Mountain: British domination in key positions in the administration and the judiciary, construction of Anglo-Protestant schools, guardianship of the Catholic clergy and population of newly opened land for settlement by British or American loyalists. At that time, the political debate revolves around the eligibility of judges in the House and the expulsion of Ezekiel Hart Jewish MP. The confrontation is tough between the governor and the majority of French deputies. Craig dissolves the House twice in the hope that the British victor Party so new elections. In 1810, he even imprison the leaders of the Canadian party and officials of Le Canadien without trial on trumped-up charges of sedition and treason. Determined to crush the democratic aspirations and French Canadian nationalism and the responsible government requests, Craig considers all kinds of measures: union of two Canadian Parliamentary overrepresentation of Eastern Townships, removal of the House of Assembly and the establishment of new English settlers in the province.

The governor considers the French Canadians as a threat to the British Empire because, according to him, they remained deeply from the French conquest, disgusting British rule. To help increase the development of English-speaking settlers, Craig asks the Government to build a road linking the capital to the border, through the Eastern Townships, to facilitate access to these lands. Other economic reasons, social and military are also pushing to undertake this project. Indeed, the way would also allow citizens of Quebec to source more easily in commodities of all kinds, what was missing at that time, and linking this part of the province (Eastern Townships) to the city of Quebec to better defend its neighbors (the United States). However, the House of Assembly, French-speaking majority, dismissed the motion Craig, adding to the political crisis raging already. As noted earlier, Craig's solution was to dissolve the House of Assembly, but in vain, because French Canadians are re-elected and will remain the majority in Parliament of Lower Canada, to his despair.

We will return in the context for understanding the non-progress of the project, this is due to the refusal of the Legislative Assembly Chamber to finance construction. First, you should know that the majority of members of the House is in French. In addition, as the project aimed to increase immigration Anglo-Saxon and to promote thereby the assimilation of French Canadians, it is easy to understand that the French-Canadian members do not want to acquiesce to the demands of the governor and English MPs. That's why they never gave their consent to the project of a road colonizing the Eastern Townships even if the settlers demanded the cantons. A man named Elmer Cushing, Richmond, presented a recent petitions to the House. It was filed April 13, 1810 and requested that the route traced by Joseph Kilborne on behalf of John Caldwell is built. However, it seems that this petition, as in previous, did not influence in the legislative process. But as the governor has a kind of absolute power (the executive), he finally proceed without asking their opinion. The tone of relations between the latter and the predominantly French House of Assembly remained tinged with animosity until he left for London in June 1811.

To carry out his project, Craig turned to the army. It uses from nearly 180 soldiers from different regiments of the Quebec Garrison. It is thus a healthy occupation soldiers and hopes to make savings by using their services rather than those of people who were almost absent from the townships anyway. In late July 1810, Craig says the execution of works to Major Robinson and inspection work at Quartermaster General James Kempt, the very one who will become governor between 1828 and 1830. Craig was inspired by that route John Caldwell ordered in 1806 (reference part 1), except that instead of starting in the manor of St. Mary, the route runs along the Beaurivage river at the back of the seigneurie de Lauzon, in the lordship of Saint-Gilles . It's Benjamin Ecuyer that will bring this correction to the path. It read the following news in the Quebec Gazette of August 2, 1810:

"On Monday morning, parts of the different regiments of the garrison, numbering about 200 men, crossed the river to go and open a path from St-Gilles through the townships of Leeds, Inverness, Halifax, Chester, Tingwick to Shipton on the St. Francis river. The road Shipton communicates with other roads of the United States, and we learn that this road trip to Boston will be done in much less time than before. This path will also provide facilities on the St. Francis River and the neighboring townships easy communication with the Québec market. "

A few days later, August 10, 1810, Craig wrote the following words to his secretary and right arm, Herman Ryland Witsius:

"We started the way for us to make the cantons; This has become necessary and indispensable, because we were almost starved. In truth, I believe that this business is of utmost importance in the interest of the colony and to all points of view. Now all this part of the country is so in touch with us it's like she did not belong to us. We needed a communication channel, not only in order to provide us the necessary provisions, but to bring these people to our doors, so to speak, and to prove that she belongs to the country and it must take part in its development. There was no hope of completing the work to completion unless put extraordinary courage. Major Robinson is working now with 180 soldiers, and the quartermaster general Kempt, who went on a tour of inspection reports that they are going beautifully. I hope to see the path completed by the middle of October. George Hamilton advanced the sum of 1000 pounds we reimburse him by giving him land. " We have enough money, because we hope to work with a third cheaper than if we had used the inhabitants of the country. The scoundrels of the Lower Town [French Canadian MPs] have already begun to stir, and I would not be surprised, when the House of Assembly will be held, they ask under what authority I have cut this way without their permission. "

Specify the context of construction. In all, there would have been nearly 400 soldiers who worked on the construction of this road. They cut down trees, dug ditches, built bridges, drained swamps, short, they rounded the floor so as to make a clean and passable road to the passage of the diligence. And despite the unexpected difficulties and inclement weather, the work is done swiftly, in just three months. Thus, one could read in the Quebec Gazette of November 1, 1810

"A way of 75 miles was cut through ancient forests, making a beautiful Quebec car way Shipton, in the district of Trois-Rivières. It usually has 15 feet wide, free of all strains and other embarrassments, and bound and embellished by 120 bridges of various sizes including 24 cross large streams, and one that is built on a branch of the river Bécancour (Palmer) bridge is named Craig and is very well done. This great passage to the cantons give Quebec City a few expectations of independence, providing the needs of a growing population. Confined so far to the product of an ungrateful neighborhood and a disqualified agriculture, we have always been forced to resort to higher districts for our support. Now we have other more resources open suddenly, and the first step towards the formation of a productive neighborhood is faithfully executed. The path of Craig leads to a richer soil and each step forward is even closer to the sun. The universe does not contain a pleasantly diverse country extended by hills, valleys and plains, or more preferably watered by streams, rivers and lakes often enough. Ordinary boundaries of land include almost all cases a part of a stream, and it would be difficult to find a party unable to produce regular grain and useful. Several hundred cattle have arrived here by road and desperate small, but avid sold oxen and sheep that we have kept in occasional state of famine. There will be new facilities for trade and fertile land are offered the choice of all those who appreciate the noble independence and the benefits of the life of the farmer. We do not hesitate to call this book the most important local event since this province has become British. If Rome conferred on military roads, construction less difficult, securities Emilian or flaminienes ways, in honor of their contractors, we can, with less pride, albeit more reason to honor this new and beautiful Avenue named after the great benefactor who projected and ordered the execution. "" It is only fair to say that the troops, officers and soldiers, numbering 400, committed to this work met the expectations we entertained. They

accomplished their task with courage, despite all the hardships they had to endure in a still wild country. It is no less worthy of notice that the detachment under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Robinson, we came back without losing a man either by illness or accident. "

The road is finished and it only remains to organize a coaching service. A notice in the Quebec Mercury of December 31, 1810 announced that a regular stagecoach service between Quebec and Boston will be introduced as of January 10, 1811. Persons wishing to reserve seats should go to the office of Josiah Stiles, near the St-Jean gate. Other historians speak of the January 14, 1811 as the official date of establishment of the stagecoach service, probably because of the official notice of the Quebec Gazette which mentioned the date of 14 January. Diligence line carries the line name-Stanstead Quebec Boston.

The diligence service runs regularly in winter, but in spring, the ride becomes especially painful because of the rocks, debris, trees and stumps that litter the road and swampy areas after flood waters. Punctuality of the first audit is very random. On March 28, 1811, the Quebec Gazette reported that the coach from Boston, who had expected the previous Saturday's arrival to that Tuesday, delayed by an early thaw, flooding rivers, flooding and trees blocking the road. The diligence of March 28 is the last of the season, and it contains the 30 December (documentation only mentions a winter service). A story about Josiah Stiles who owned an inn and trading horses for transportation, reveals that he has abandoned the field of audit in 1815 by the profit motive, and it's not for lack of trying. Despite these difficulties, the way Craig has established a stagecoach service between Quebec City and Boston and it is also the first track on open lands of Eastern Townships to settlement. Despite the expectations of the government and settlers on this road, it becomes even controversial. In the first year following its construction, many settlers are unhappy because they are still isolated and far from everything. Many live in poverty and many children are not yet baptized. It is a poor farmer who Shipton book testimony Dec. 4, 1811.

Craig Road, newly built, thus became a process of rapid invasion to the United States, thus jeopardizing the security and territorial integrity of Canada. That's why the British army stationed scouts on Craig Road to monitor the possible advancement of US troops. Archibald MacLean, the leading Leeds, was hired as a scout and his mission was to encourage farmers to drive their herds in Quebec and slow the Americans burning and demolishing all the bridges on the road. Since the major battles took place in Upper Canada, MacLean had no need to execute such orders. But, the fact remained that way, less than two years after its construction, was in bad shape. In addition, maintenance was poor, so the stagecoach service could hardly function. The general direction of the path, by descending steep slopes before crossing numerous streams and rivers, led repeatedly interrupting the stagecoach service, and not to mention the absence of inn over great distances along the way. In 1814, the surveyor Joseph Bouchette saw that the road was deteriorating again: "In the beginning of the last war [of 1812], we had still made little progress, and since then, it has taken no way to preserve the decay portion of the road was completed, so that now it is blocked by falling trees and other obstacles that make it almost as impractical as if it was still a desert ... Such communication would probably be of immense benefit to this part of the province. It is hoped that despite previous bad results, it will make further efforts in the immediate sanction of the government. Craig route is intended, and soon to be direct communication between the capital of Canada and the United States. "Despite the hope that caress Bouchette, we will know in the next chronicle what fate was reserved for Craig Road.

In his topographical description of the Lower Canada, published in 1815 in London, Joseph Bouchette describes the state of colonization like this: *"The culture is still that very little progress, though it has begun to form some establishments, especially along the path of Craig, where one could reasonably assume that one might have more success. This road was originally planned to open a direct communication between Quebec townships border, and adjacent American states; but its completion was delayed by several difficulties rather came from a default resolution that natural impediments. [...] At the bridge of Craig Palmer inn was opened some time, but she did not answer the expectations of the public, and did not produce profit point to the owner. Despite the encouragement given to the settlers by granting them a license for the lots they occupy, provided to clear a certain portion of land and build a wooden house on the data size, from the road, these conditions have not been accepted by two or three people, and even that was of no use to advance the work, or any benefit to individuals who formed the company. In the beginning of the last war, we had still made little progress, and since then it has taken no way to preserve the decay portion of the road was completed, so that now she is obstructed by falling trees and other obstacles that make it almost as impractical as if it was still a desert. The various bridges over rivers bear the names of military officers commanding staff secondments to the service: they also obtained land from the road; but soldiers rarely have the luxury or the resources to become happy farmers. Such communication would probably be of immense benefit to this part of the province, and it is hoped that despite previous bad results, it will make further efforts in the immediate sanction of government. [...]."*

In 1817, petitioners near Quebec City still wonder that one maintains better this way in order to maintain trade with the Eastern Townships. Good maintenance of the road would provide the Pointe Levis sellers of business opportunities; they buy the products of the settlers at low prices and are eager to sell them at a higher price to the people of Quebec. In the early 1820s, it was the turn of former officers and soldiers set along the way to show their discontent. This kind of problem is certainly not likely to encourage new settlers to settle. In 1831, there are only 2,118 settlers here and there in the vast region (corresponding to the old Megantic County). This is two to three times less than in other regions of the Eastern Townships. Although the government spends money for the maintenance and repair of the road, it's always too little and never enough. Through a special committee of the House of Assembly, the government funds several times (in 1817, 1825 and 1829), the rehabilitation of the road in sections. In 1829 Craig Road is declared impassable. It is described as a muddy stream, particularly the section between Danville and Leeds which is described as a "disaster." We must face the facts: the settlers are too poor to maintain the road and you cannot count on help from the government (that is also what will bring the government to create a few decades later, Act municipalities and roads in Lower Canada in 1855). Commissioners consider road to huge cost repair and maintenance of Craig Road into a main artery. Their report also concludes that St. Nicolas in Leeds, the road is good, but it is very rough Leeds to Ireland, and that at least 2,700 pounds (\$ 10,800) to repair it. The government decided to grant only 1600 pounds (\$ 6 400). In the 1830s, the government is considering changing the route, particularly because of the steep slopes and bridges between the cantons of Ireland and Leeds.

The governor of the time, the Earl of Gosford, retains the route of Jesse Pennoyer having found what was missing for the completion of the road network. The Pennoyer plan, which dates from 1807, is planning a river route to Connecticut to Ireland Township. But we should mention that this is not really the state of colonization or the path that attention will Governor Gosford ... And, strangely, as in the days of Governor Craig is in a context of political crisis s 'carry out its mandate.

WHO IS HE ?

Archibald Acheson was in 1776 in Ireland. Born into a Protestant family of Scottish origin, he is the eldest son of Arthur Acheson, 1st Earl of Gosford. At the latter's death in 1807, he acquired the title of Earl of Gosford. He married Mary Sparrow in London with whom he had a son and two daughters. He died March 27, 1849, in its area of Markethill (Northern Ireland). His political career began in 1798 when he was elected to the House of Commons. It will also be elected before the House of Lords and appointed Crown Privy Council. And that's after being recognized as a competent administrator and a good negotiator (he notably promote reconciliation with Catholics in his county) he served as lieutenant governor of Lower Canada and the Governor-General the British North America from 1835 to 1838, a period of more unrest in our history. However, unlike his predecessors, he was not appointed commander of the troops of Canada since Gosford was a civilian, but was assigned a unique authority.

The political situation in Lower Canada in 1835, Gosford chairs a Commission of Inquiry into the political problems of Lower Canada. It aims to find a solution to the conflict between the representatives of the Crown and the reformists, led by Louis-Joseph Papineau. Gosford tries to play the role of conciliator deal with Francophone leaders and thus attracts the hostility of some British. We are one year after the deposit of the Ninety-Two Resolutions. London's response to the report tabled by Gosford take the form of the 10 resolutions of Lord Russell, leader of the House of Commons and future Prime Minister. These proposals reject the most important demands of the patriots. Gosford preaches moderation face growing radicalism of Louis-Joseph Papineau. But in November, Gosford notes that the Lower Canada Rebellion is in preparation and arrested several supporters. Although he perseveres in its conciliation efforts, Gosford resigned in November 1837, having just launched 26 arrest warrants against the patriots. His resignation was not as accepted in January 1838. He returned to the UK in March, isolated and suffering from gout. The powers are then assumed by Major General John Colborne, commander of the troops in Canada. Made in his field, Gosford continued interest in Canada and even opposed the 1840 Union project of Lord Durham.

To return to our story, work officially began in 1838 a few months after the departure of the governor. This work consists of first to join existing roads is an open path in 1815 (between Ireland and Wolfestown) and Dudswell road, opened in 1822 (between the townships of Dudswell and Ham). The new road, which was given the name of Gosford Road, is completed along its length in

1843, either St-Gilles Sherbrooke. The young men in the region are hiring which are fed, housed and paid 50 cents a day. Unfortunately, Craig Road, Gosford Road quickly became a quagmire. And we will see the details in the next column. The young men in the region are hiring which are fed, housed and paid 50 cents a day. Unfortunately, Craig Road, Gosford Road quickly became a quagmire. And we will see the details in the next column. The young men in the region are hiring which are fed, housed and paid 50 cents a day. Unfortunately, Craig Road, Gosford Road quickly became a quagmire. And we will see the details in the next column.

Unfortunately, Gosford Road became in the space of a few years another quagmire, so that it is strongly criticized by Catholic missionaries. They circulate with difficulty on the way to visit their parish to parish faithful.

Although from 1841 to 1846, a sum of \$ 300 000 was passed for roads in the Eastern Townships, the situation is not improving. In their Manifesto of twelve missionaries published in March 1851 and entitled *The Canadian emigrant or Why the French Canadian left there Lower Canada ?*, Catholic missionaries say: *"The Gosford Road, which cost very expensive in the province, is now in a dangerous state, from Lake Nicolet, in the township of Ham to St-Gilles. There have even been two years, hundreds of people destitute away from Quebec after spending several days in twenty leagues in Gosford Road hoping to settle on the land in townships Garthby, Stratford Winslow, were so discouraged by the poor condition of this path, made on the shores of Lake William, they have given up enjoying the benefits offered by the government. "*

This manifesto, written between other by the vicar of Leeds, Father James Nelligan, well analyzes the barriers to the access to land cantons and awards including the cause weaknesses in the municipal system in terms of road maintenance. This is probably what explains the different modifications of the Municipal Code of Lower Canada between 1840 and 1860. The signatories of the manifesto are therefore state the reasons for the lack of French Canadians in the Eastern Townships and the issue of their exile to the United States. We know that at the time, thousands of them have defected to find a job in textile companies and aspire to a better life in the city, rather than in crowded landed estates. Indeed, in 1840 there were only 850 communicants Canadian Catholics in all the Eastern Townships; they were concentrated particularly in the townships who will take the region name of Bois-francs. As there was more arable land to concede in the lordships, nearly 20,000 French Canadians left the country since 1848. It is in these circumstances that the Manifesto was written. It sparked an investigation by a special committee appointed by the government to inquire into the causes which prevent or delay the establishment of the Eastern Townships, in the districts of Three Rivers, St. Francis and Quebec. Finally, although Craig and Gosford roads aroused controversy and do not had the immediate effect of promoting such colonization than expected initially, they nevertheless allow an early penetration in Eastern Townships and contribute to the development of several of these cantons, including those of our region. Aimed primarily at the British settlement, the cantons of land were invaded later by French Canadians. These are the first major projects to the colonization of the region and still today, the heritage traces are visible. Browse the site www.craig-gosford.ca for details. Good visit!

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