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It will be interesting to state briefly the circumstances under which James Simonds and his partners became possessed of an estate at St. John which laid the foundation of the fortunes of their respective families in later times.

A great impetus was given to the settlement of the wilderness parts of Nova Scotia by the royal proclamation issued at the Court of St. James on the 7th October, 1763, offering free grants of land to the disbanded officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers, who had served in North America in the late French war, as a token of his majesty's approval of their conduct and bravery. The lands were to be subject at the expiration of ten years to the usual quit rents and to the usual conditions of cultivation and improvement, and were to be allotted in the following proportions:—To every field officer 5,000 acres; to every captain 3,000 acres; to every subaltern or staff officer 2,000 acres; to every non-commissioned officer 200 acres; to every private 50 acres.

One of the immediate consequences of the king's proclamation was a general scramble for unappropriated