

however becomes very difficult to trace, as it is lost in a maze of lakes and marshes, nor was it easy to determine from what point the line from its head was to run. Accordingly, in 1836 a commission was appointed which later agreed upon the present compromise line, which follows the Misseguash to Black Island whence a surveyed line runs to the head of the Misseguash, whence a due east line runs to the Tidnish River.

Very different has been the history of our county lines, though proposals have more than once been made to change even these. When one looks first at the map of New Brunswick, the counties seem to have no relation to any natural features of the country. But a closer inspection shows that they do follow a definite system, namely, the natural grouping of the rivers. Thus Charlotte includes the basins of the several rivers falling into Passamaquoddy Bay. A row of eight counties follows the St. John, with their intermediate lines usually crossing that river at right angles, whence it comes to pass that the great curve of the St. John in its lower course makes five of these counties radiate from Charlotte. Westmorland and Albert include the Petitcodiac system; Kent includes the several small rivers, of which the Richibucto is the chief; Northumberland covers the Miramichi basin, Gloucester the Nepisiguit and smaller streams of the northeast corner, while Restigouche includes the river of the same name with its chief branches.

Thus our chief county lines (excepting the cross lines along the St. John, and the Petitcodiac) were obviously intended to follow the watersheds, and that they do not do so more closely is due to three causes: first, for convenience sake the lines are best made straight, and hence they cannot follow exactly the crooked watersheds; second, in some cases (as the Miramichi) some of our rivers head so far across the province towards the valleys of others that it is more convenient to include their sources in other counties; third, in many cases the geography of the province was very imperfectly known when the lines were established by law, so that when they came to be actually surveyed they often ran very differently from what was expected, and in some cases they were later changed. Allowing for these causes of confusion, we must admit that our counties, as a whole, do follow admirably the natural river systems of the province. Why, now, was this system adopted? Why were the boundaries made to run along the watersheds, where they are