

At the first division of the province in 1785, eight counties were established with the lines shown on Map No. 35, and to these seven have since been added. Though at first sight the reason for their peculiar arrangement may not be obvious, a closer inspection shows that they are correlated in a general way with the topography of the province. The county lines are evidently so drawn as to make the navigable waters of the province the centres of the counties, for which purpose the lines of separation must follow approximately the watersheds. This was, of course, by far the best arrangement in a new, rough, and heavily-forested country like New Brunswick, where at first all travel was necessarily by water, and all settlements were beside and centered in navigable waters. The very topography of New Brunswick divided its population naturally into communities, centering about the principal waterways and more or less isolated from one another, and the county divisions are simply a formal expression of this condition. That this is the general principle on which the county boundaries were established is rendered still more plain as we trace the formation of the later counties down to the present, and especially as we note the rearrangements of the county lines as the topography of the province became better known. The fact that the county lines do not correspond exactly with the watersheds (see Map No. 36), is no objection to this view, for it is obvious that three minor causes have operated to prevent such a correspondence. First, owing to the fact that most of the surface of New Brunswick is of the character known to physiographers as peneplained (that is composed of fragments of ancient plateaus), the watersheds are rarely pronounced ranges of hills easily seen, but are more frequently in a flat county and are very winding and difficult to follow or recognize. Hence, boundaries must be marked by artificial lines, which, for convenience of running and marking, are best made straight. While following, however, the general courses of the watersheds, the lines must often deviate, sometimes considerably, from the details of their wanderings. Second, many of our rivers head far back into the natural basins of others, even to an extreme degree, in which cases it is more convenient to include their heads with the rivers they approach. This has been the case with the South-West Miramichi, the Restigouche and some others. Third, the imperfect topographical knowledge of the time, reflected as it was in the imperfect maps, led to the establishment of some lines along supposed watersheds, which later were found to lie elsewhere; in some such cases the lines were afterwards altered, but in others, where the discrepancy was not serious (or as in the case of the St. Croix, was actually advantageous), they were allowed to remain. Thus the Kings-