

unquestionably ours, must be made patent” to both foreigners and the Inuit (doc. 77).

Dawson also suggested to Davies that the Royal Navy should be asked to assist with regular patrols to the northern islands (doc. 79). Davies, who was then in London, passed the suggestion on to the Colonial Office, which in turn contacted the Admiralty. Admiralty officials, although not interested in this proposition, looked up their old files from the 1870s and produced a memo on sovereignty matters. Through a copy of this memo, the 1879 boundary proposal finally reached Ottawa (docs 80, 84). There it was forwarded to Dawson for comment (doc. 86).

Dawson immediately brushed off the Admiralty’s suggestion that Grinnell Land could not be claimed for Canada, likely because of the time that had by then elapsed since the American discoveries without any sovereignty declaration from Washington. He was, however, evidently struck by another aspect of the 1879 Admiralty proposal: that the 141st W. meridian should form the western boundary north of the continent (see map 3). The same boundary had been suggested in the 1878 joint address from the House of Commons and the Senate to Queen Victoria (doc. 24).¹⁰ This address formally requested a new transfer of territory, and Dawson had recently looked it up.

Dawson and the Surveyor General, Édouard Deville (fig. 5), soon had the go-ahead from Sifton to draft a new Order-in-Council. Deville had already concluded that “any attempt to define with more precision the boundaries and extent of the [District of Franklin] will thereby fix the limits of Canada and bar any claim which may subsequently be set up to jurisdiction outside of these limits” (doc. 68). The map accompanying the new Order (see map 5) showed Canada’s claim enclosed between the 141st meridian on the west and a line midway between the archipelago and Greenland on the east. North of Greenland, the eastern boundary followed the 60th W. meridian towards the North Pole. The Pole itself, however, was not shown on the map, so that the very northernmost limit of Franklin was still undefined. Both to the west and to the north of the known islands, there were extensive blank spaces within the new boundaries. These principles were put before Council in December 1897 and approved.

Except for the polar apex, all the essential elements of Canada’s famous sector claim were present in the 1897 Order (doc. 87).¹¹ The 1878 joint address and the 1879 Admiralty map must therefore stand as the earliest sources of the sector theory; however, there was yet another source. In 1893 Dawson had served as one of the Canadian representatives at the Bering Sea arbitration in Paris. For the purpose of enforcing restrictions on pelagic sealing, the United States had claimed that the boundary line set by its 1867 treaty with Russia was a maritime boundary.

¹⁰ No documents on the evolution of this address were found; they were probably destroyed when the Centre Block of the Parliament Buildings burned down in 1916.

¹¹ This Order was also published in the *Canada Gazette*, 14 May 1898, p. 2613.