

Secord Papers

These were kindly given by Mrs. Orlando Dunn, granddaughter of Stephen Secord, copied from the original documents, letters and accounts of Hon. Robert Hamilton, Stephen Secord, Thomas Dickson, Joseph Edwards, William and James Crooks, from 1790 to 1815. From early records in the Archives of the census taken by Col. John Bntler of settlers at Niagara in 1782-1784 we learn that there were eight Secords, Peter, John, James, Thomas, John jr., Silas, Solomon and Stephen. The number of acres cleared by each is given, and in the account of the Gilbert Captivity it is mentioned that one of the children was sheltered at the home of John Secord in 1782, so that it is thus shown that the Secords were among the earliest settlers of the United Empire Loyalists.

These letters show the immense business done in Queenston and St. Davids, give us the price of groceries and other articles, show also the interchange of goods, the Secord mill furnishing the flour and Robert Hamilton providing the wheat purchased by him from the farmers. They show also the good feeling existing and the confidence in one another. The large amounts give us pause, the account of Thomas Dickson to Stephen Secord is £483 13s 2d, but there is a contra account of £874 17 9d, leaving a balance due Mr. Secord of £391 4s 7d. It must be noted here however, that these sums are not so large as at first they seem, being in N. Y. Cy. (New York currency); instead of four dollars to the pound read two dollars and a half, eight shillings of twelve and a half cents to the dollar. In only one place is what was called Halifax currency used and in only two places does the word dollar occur. The Robert Hamilton mentioned was the principal man of the district, the Lieutenant of the county. At his fine mansion he entertained Governor Simcoe and all the principal persons visiting the Falls. He was noted for his liberality and hospitality. James Secord was the husband of the famous Laura Ingersoll Secord and the brother of Stephen. James Crooks was the first person to export wheat and flour to Montreal, and was a member of the Legislature.