

**THE REV. OLIVER ARNOLD, FIRST  
RECTOR OF SUSSEX, N.B., WITH  
SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE, HIS  
PARISH AND HIS SUCCESSORS  
AND THE OLD INDIAN COLLEGE**

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The Rev. Oliver Arnold, First Rector of Sussex, N.B., with Some Account of his life, his parish and his successors and the old Indian College by Leonard Allison

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## OLD INDIAN COLLEGE.

BY LEONARD ALLISON, B. A.,  
BARRISTER, &c., SUSSEX, N. B.

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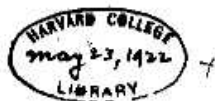
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**REV. OLIVER ARNOLD.**

# REV. OLIVER ARNOLD,

The First Rector of The Parish of Sussex, with Some Account of His Life, His Successors, &c.

BY LEONARD ALLISON, B. A., SUSSEX, N. B.

No excuse need in these days be offered for the study of history. In all ages of the world and in all departments of human activity some knowledge of the past has proved requisite to a correct apprehension and full enjoyment of the present, as well as to a sagacious forecast of and a wise provision for the future; and none of the sisters nine has now more votaries than Clio. Not only are the great heroes who lived before Agamemnon forever lost to us because they lacked a sacred bard to sing their story, but the genius of the historian has frequently won more lasting renown than the greatest exploits of those he celebrated. Homer, who sang of heroes, Thucydides the philosophical, Livy with his "pictured page," Tacitus with his terse and thrilling tales, Gibbon the great, and Macaulay the many-sided have thus secured fame that shall perish only with the languages in which they wrote.

The historical picture, however, like any other, requires both proportion and perspective, and background as well as foreground. In some degree the importance of an event varies directly with the length of time since it occurred. The happenings of yesterday are no less history than those of a hundred years ago; but we cannot always get up high enough above the bustle and routine of every day life to estimate aright the relative value of things, or distinguish the wholly transient from the comparatively eternal. The fellow footing on the fence sees straighter sometimes than the farmer following the furrow. Thus is it that the greatest writers have rarely been the first deliverers in their particular field. Generalization and analysis and philosophical deduction imply facts and premises, to gather and arrange which is the humbler office of the oft-forgotten toiler.

But though the time has not yet come for

writing a history of Sussex, or perhaps of this Province; while it is not proposed to trace, much less philosophize upon, the causes of the American revolution, or to assign the exact proportions in which a few shortsighted old men in England and a few hot-headed young men in America were respectively responsible for that event of far-reaching and daily increasing importance; it is considered to be time, and high time, to collect some materials from which the history of this locality may hereafter be constructed; to gather from provincial archives and county records, from family Bibles and tombstones, from crumpled letters and time-stained journals, and by the fitful and uncertain light of local tradition, who and what manner of men they were that, having rebelled, often unto blood, striving against what they considered sin, abandoned both friends and property to hew out for themselves a home in a howling and desolate wilderness. Many causes have combined to render their memorials few and scanty. But a small proportion of them had what we would call an education; they had just parted in anger from kith and kin, the population was sparse, the roads were mere bridle paths, and travelling on them wholly by horseback; there were no newspapers or book stores of any account, and no mails, railroads, steamers, telegraphs or telephones at all. Is it not well that men should occasionally turn from the farm, the factory, the forum, to survey the sacrifices, the sufferings and the successes of these stalwart, spirited and self-respecting grandfathers?

When the Revolutionary war began in 1776, the whole of what is now the province of New Brunswick was included in the province of Nova Scotia. The inhabitants of English descent in all this territory



probably did not then number more than 1500, and were chiefly settled around St. John, Manguerville and Sackville. There were also some scattered Acadian refugees along the north shore and around the headwaters of the St. John river; besides which were the Indians, whose number cannot be accurately stated and who probably had no settlements at which they sojourned for more than a few months at a time. There was, however, a large Indian village of some description and of more or less permanent character on the land now owned by J. Alfred Campbell, at the junction of the Millstream with the Kennebecoasis; and from the nature of that locality, as well as the large burying ground known to have existed there, and the remains of Indian arrow-heads and other implements found there, it can hardly be doubted that the Indians frequently resorted thither. When the Loyalists landed at St. John in 1783 the only people of European descent settled in territory now included in Kings county were a few on the Hammond River at the place still called from them French Village. Captain Munro says there were fifteen families of these Acadians, and that they had then been there about fifteen years. Several of them took out grants in 1787, from which their names seem to have been principally Blanchard, Robichau, Terlo, Tertand Thibaudan. This would, according to Mr. Haenay, indicate that they were descendants of the Acadians who were a hundred years before settled around Port Royal; but just how and when they reached their home on the Hammond River is not very clear. They may have taken refuge there from the Petitcodiac or the St. John, or quite possibly they had sought safety in this secluded settlement when furtively returning after the great expulsion. They all sold out, however, soon after obtaining their grants. Perhaps they did not feel at home with their new neighbors; at all events, they seem to have preferred to join their kindred in Miramichi or Madawaska. Among those who purchased from them was John Pugsley, the great-grandfather of the Hon. William Pugsley, D C L., the present solicitor-general of New Brunswick.

Much of the highlands had been lately overrun by fires. The early reports of the crown land surveyors frequently mention low round Sussex and the Millstream as "burnt land," or as covered with a young growth of wood not yet fit for timber or firewood; and blackened stumps of huge pines and other monarchs of the forest

have been found when tracing lines even in comparatively recent times. It has been suggested that the Indians had purposely set such fires to deter the loyalists from settling; but though the Indians have a tradition that a great fire occurred not long before the white man came, the accounts of its origin and date are so vague and indefinite that it seems fairer to conclude that the fire occurred accidentally or through an attempt by the natives to clear their hunting grounds after the great gale of November 3rd, 1769. Fortunately game was abundant, and for many years the settlers added largely to their larders from moose and partridge, salmon and trout. The stories told of the plentifulness of game in those days would be the despair of sportsmen of the present time. It was a quite ordinary matter then to shoot two or three moose of a morning at the salt springs in Penobscot, and the Kennebecoasis was at times so choked up with salmon that one might almost cross upon their backs at the rapids and rocky shoals above Norton. The very names of Salmon river and Trout creek are memorials to this day of the chief characteristics of these streams in early times, and the sport had upon them by men yet living is ample proof that but for deleterious sawdust and murderous saw logs Sussex would not now be dependent for its reputation as a fishing resort upon Dick's lake and Squirrel Cove.

But though there were then probably no inhabitants settled along its banks, the Kennebecoasis, connecting, as it does, with the Petitcodiac by a short portage of only about a mile and a half, had, no doubt, long formed one of the chief highways across the province. Indeed, the very name "Anagance" is said to signify a portage or carrying place. Early reports speak of both the Indians and the French having repeatedly followed this route between the St. John river and the villages at the head of the Bay of Fundy. The portage from the North river to the Casseau river was probably used in going to the upper St. John; but there is little doubt that the route through Sussex was ordinarily preferred to the bold shores and turbulent tides of the bay. For more than 40 years after the settlement of Sussex the Kennebecoasis continued the chief means of transport for heavy freight both to and from the sea. It was in this connection that the famous "Durham boats" were mostly used. They were about 30 or 40 feet in length, and about 8 feet in width; not decked over, except for a small space at the stern;

provided with a keel, though flatter in the bottom than ordinary craft, and furnished with oars, and also with a mast, which supported a sail, where the wind or current would propel the boat, but which, in the upper and shallower waters, upheld above the bushes on the bank a stout tow-ropes, whereby the crew of four or five dragged the boat to its destination.

Before 1783 the governor of Nova Scotia had issued a few grants of land now included in Kings county. Of these the earliest of importance was the so-called township of Amesbury, which took its name from the chief grantee, James Amesbury, a merchant of Halifax. It extended from the lower side line of the "Studholm-Barter" grant westward and northward to the St. John and Washademoak. Sir Andrew Baine Hammond, lieutenant governor of Nova Scotia in 1781 and 1782, obtained Dec. 23rd, 1782, the grant of a tract of land situate on the River St. John and bounded as follows:

Beginning on the southern boundary line of the township granted to James Amesbury and others, and on the eastern side of the River Kennebecasis opposite the portage, thence running east 320 chains on said southern boundary line, thence south 320 chains, thence west 320 chains, or till it comes to the river Kennebecasis, and thence up stream to the first bend.

This was a block of about 10,000 acres, described by Captain Munro as being chiefly indifferent land covered with birch, but comprising some good intervals and upland, which included the French village above referred to. He also described the township of Amesbury as consisting of low sunken intervals and large meadows in the southern portion. The upper part was chiefly burnt land, but about Belleisle the land was tolerably good, though without timber.

The grant known as the "Studholm-Barter grant" was dated the 15th day of August, 1782. It was made to Gilfred Studholme, Simon Baxter, William Baxter, Benjamin Baxter, Dunkin Campbell, Benjamin Snow and John Hassen; and comprised 9,500 acres (with the usual allowance), extending from Norton Station to Passakeag. This and the Studville grant to Major Studholme (dated June 10th, 1784,) were the only Nova Scotia grants of land in Kings county that were not afterwards escheated. No settlement seems to have been made by either Amesbury or Sir Andrew. They probably obtained their grants in the first place for speculative purposes only; and, as they failed to comply with the conditions on which the grants

were issued, the land was escheated to the crown and re-granted to bona fide settlers. Amesbury is traced now only by a few references in early documents; but the parish of Hammond, and that beautiful stream, the Hammond river, perpetuate the memory of the speculative governor of Nova Scotia.

The first grant of land comprised in the present parish of Sussex was to Gilfred Studholme, Thomas Harper, James Hayes, John Burgee and William McLeod. It was dated the 10th day of June, 1784, and comprised about 8,000 acres in a block nearly three miles square, and extending from below Aponaqui Station to the farm of Michael Orelighton at Lower Cove. A deed to Major Studholme by the other grantees shows that the names of the latter were inserted solely for and on the behalf of the said Gilfred Studholme, with intent that they should convey to him whenever required. The Major evidently was not then strictly entitled to so large a tract. By grant dated the 6th day of July, 1784, a block of 14,000 acres, also known as Capt. Hauser's fourth survey, was granted by the Nova Scotia government to Colonel Isaac Allen and others. This extended from Sandville nearly to the salt works on the Salmon river and to the Parise brook on the Trout Creek, and so included the whole of the village of Sussex. Colonel Allen, however, as well as many of his associates, preferred to settle above Fredericton on the St. John river, and so relinquished this grant in Sussex. This was one of the last of the grants made by the Nova Scotia government of land in this vicinity, for on the 16th of August, 1784, New Brunswick was erected into a separate province.

By grant dated the 19th day of May, 1786, the "Island," comprising the farms of William Orelighton, Sheriff Freese, Col. Beer and the late William Morrison, was granted to the Hon. George Leonard; and subsequently, by grant dated the 18th day of July, 1794, three lots to the eastward of the "Island" and six lots to the northward of Salmon River were granted to Mr. Leonard and John and Peter Cangle; and lots 48 and 50, south of the Trout Creek, were also given to Mr. Leonard. Lot 50 is that on which the present rectory stands; and lot 48 is bounded eastwardly by the farm of Nelson Arnold, Esq., and westwardly by the Ward's Creek road, and includes to the northward of the Post road the lands of William McLeod and John Whalen.

The remainder of the land originally

assigned to Col. Allen and his associates was included in another grant of the same date, July 18th, 1734, which is known as the grant to John Ross and others. Most of the early grants were of large tracts of land, and took their names from the grantees who happened to be first mentioned therein. Thus the grant of the land at Penobscot, which is dated the 23rd day of June, 1736, and includes all the territory from Plumwaseep to the old gravel pit above "the lane" is known as the grant to John Farnis and others. Almost nothing is known of either Ross or Farnis, and probably neither would now be remembered at all but for the accident which placed their names first in their respective grants. On such a slender thread hangs human fame. By these grants, or by purchase shortly afterward, became settled in Sussex the Barberies, Couples, Doyals, Fairweathers, Halleats, Heines, Leonards, McLans, McLeods, Parless, Roaches, Shoaks, Sniders, Stocktons, Valls, and others whose names remain unto this day. They had nearly all served the crown in the Revolutionary war, and were chiefly from the states of Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Oliver Arnold was one of those who came to Sussex as a purchaser, and not as an original grantee. He was born at Mansfield, in the state of Connecticut, on Wednesday the 15th day of October, 1755; the eldest child of Nathan Arnold and his wife Prudence, who was the daughter of Nathan Denison of the neighboring town of Windham. Nathan Arnold was a native of Mansfield and a reputable physician of that place; but his ancestry is not known with certainty. He is thought to have been a grandson of John Arnold, who was one of the first settlers of Mansfield and a proprietor and large land owner of that town. The latter is supposed to have been descended in the 5th or 6th degree from William Arnold, who was born on the 24th day of June, 1687, at Cheshelbourne, in the county of Dorset, England, settled at Providence, R. I., in 1638, and died at Warwick, R. I., in 1676 or 1677. His family had for several generations been living in England, and numbered among their ancestors diverse and sundry Welsh knights, as well as Cadwallader, the last king of the Britons. Oliver was a name of frequent recurrence among the posterity of William Arnold; which fact, together with the failure of diligent inquiry to elicit any mention of more than the one Arnold family in New

England, seems to make it reasonably certain that the subject of this sketch was a lineal descendant of William Arnold, above mentioned.

Dr. Nathan Arnold and his lady had the following family, viz:

Oliver, born the 15th day of October, 1755.  
 Mary, born the 12th day of October, 1757.  
 Amos, born the 4th day of October, 1759.  
 Denison, born the 16th day of September, 1761; died the 5th day of November, 1761.  
 Lucretia, born the 16th day of November, 1762.  
 Nathan, born the 2nd day of March, 1765.  
 Roswell, born the 19th day of February, 1767.  
 Prudence, born the 18th day of November, 1768.  
 Fidelia, born the 27th day of November, 1770.

Of these at least Amos and Roswell came to New Brunswick with Oliver, but whether they died here while young men or returned to Connecticut, is not now known. No positive information has been gathered respecting any other of Mr. Arnold's brothers and sisters.

Oliver Arnold graduated at Yale college, New Haven, Conn., in 1776; but nothing further can be learned of him from the records of that institution, and no more is known of him until after his arrival at St. John with the other Loyalists in 1783. He first appears as secretary to the Rev. John Bayre, George Leonard, William Tyng, James Peters and Gilfred Stedholme, who had the supervision of the new city. Their designation was "The Directors of the Town at the Entrance of the River Saint John." The original plan of the city was made by Paul Badell, as deputy surveyor, under the superintendence of Major Stedholme, and bears date the 17th day of December, 1783, and during that winter the lots were distributed. A dozen or more of the certificates signed by Oliver Arnold as secretary are registered in the St. John Record Office as the first link in the paper title to the several lots. These certificates or tickets were in the following form, viz:

This may certify that Dorothea Kingston is the rightful owner of Lot No. 844 in Duke street, being forty feet by one hundred, having complied with the terms of receiving it.

By order of the Directors of the Town at the Entrance of the River Saint John.

OLIVER ARNOLD.

This Dorothea (Dorothy?) Kingston was one of the original grantees of lot 47 in Sussex, extending from the Ward's Creek road westwards along the Post road, as far as Henry Golding's blacksmith shop, and from the late Isaac Bunnell's northwardly to the Trout Creek,