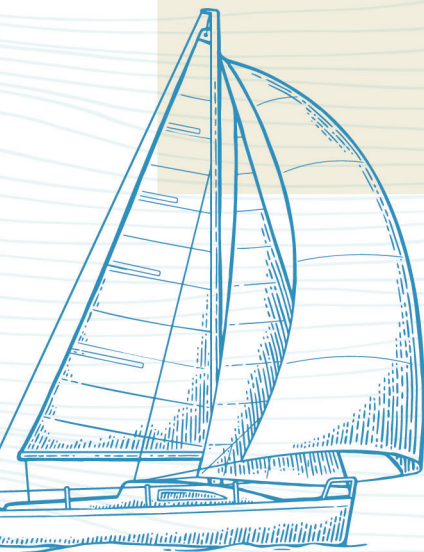


—
EXHIBITION

TRACES AND ANCHORS OF MARITIME QUÉBEC



—
EXHIBITION

TRACES AND ANCHORS OF MARITIME QUÉBEC

NOTE REGARDING HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Certain ancient documents presented in this exposition reflect a period of history during which the terms used to designate the First Nations of North America were different than those in use today. For instance, the word *sauvages* (“savages”) used by the early European settlers was possibly meant, in certain contexts, to refer to the forests (from the Latin word *sy/va*) and their inhabitants, the Indigenous peoples. This word later took on a clearly negative and colonialist meaning—a source of inappropriate stereotypes—which justified its discontinued use. From the 1960s onward, the term was replaced by others such as *autochtones*, on the initiative of the First Nations, among others. In English, the term “Indigenous” is the most widely accepted term in use today.

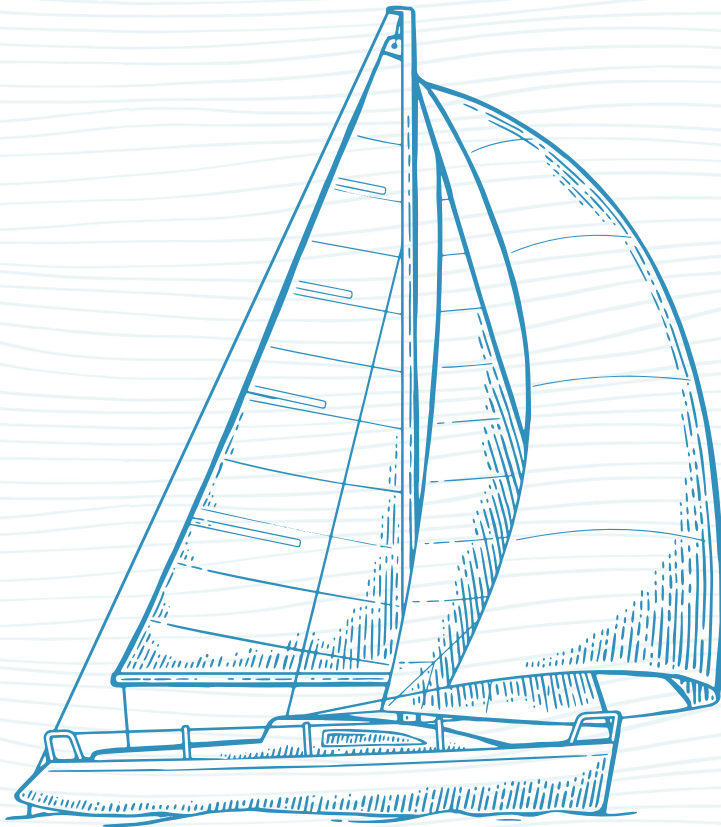
The Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec (the library) invites you on a historical voyage on the Fleuve Saint-Laurent, main structuring axis of the territory of Québec. *Traces and Anchors of Maritime Québec* features documents from the library's collections and reveals, albeit through fragments, the role played by the Fleuve Saint-Laurent and its estuary and gulf in the development of Québec's transportation networks and the evolution of its political, economic and environmental trajectories.

The exhibition showcases artifacts that illustrate major events, often turning points, which are a testament to the river's evolution from the ancient occupation of its shores to its strategic role in the economic development of modern Québec. These documents provide traces of a past marked by navigation, industrial and regional development, tourism and recreation, and international commerce, and also by legislative initiatives taken at the National Assembly.

The exhibition also presents a number of milestones in the transformation of Québec's maritime space, from fishing to scientific research on marine ecosystems. The Fleuve Saint-Laurent is shown to be a driving force for development, with crucial governance challenges.

Enjoy your visit!

THE FLEUVE SAINT-LAURENT, A VITAL FORCE



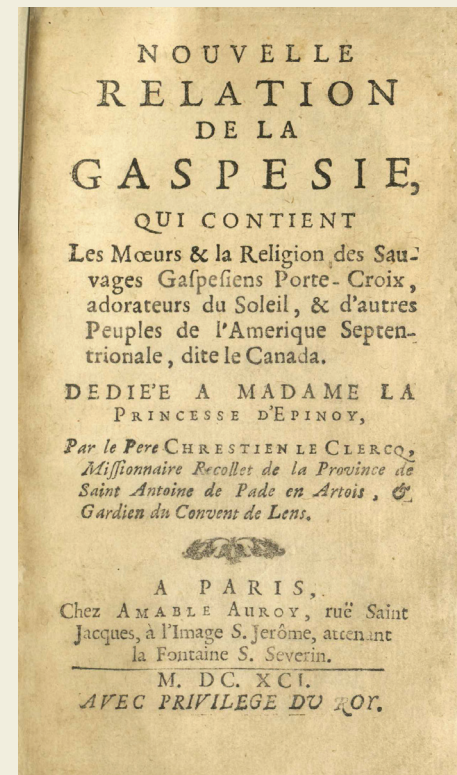
The arrival of French explorers in the Golfe du Saint-Laurent occurred both in the broader context of world history and in the more local context of the history of the occupation of the river's shores by Indigenous peoples and by fishermen from Europe. In the 19th century, advances in river transportation stimulated the colony's international economic exchanges. The river's shores also became popular destinations for holidays and tourism, which would have a lasting impact on the region's development.

8



Paris: Jean Berjon, 1613, 402 p.
Collection of historical books, Bibliothèque et Archives
nationales du Québec.

In his book *Nouvelle relation de la Gaspésie*, Récollet priest Chrestien Le Clercq described the everyday life, beliefs and colonial interactions between the European settlers and the Mi'kmaq, who formed the largest group of Indigenous people of the Gaspésie and Acadie regions. He brought to light the evangelization efforts as well as the trade and cultural exchanges that took place in Gaspésie.

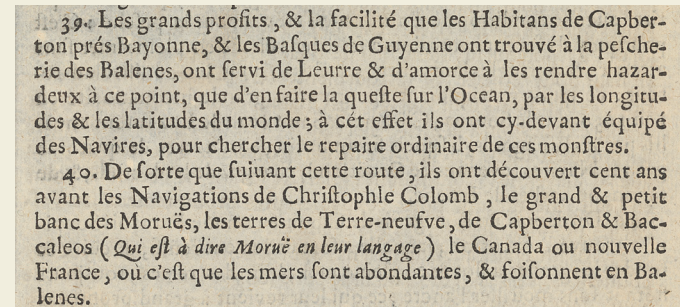


CHRESTIEN LE CLERCQ

Nouvelle relation de la Gaspésie, qui contient les mœurs & la religion des sauvages gaspésiens Porte-Croix, adoreurs du soleil, & d'autres peuples de l'Amérique septentrionale, dite le Canada : dédiée à Madame la princesse d'Épinoy

Paris: Amable Auroy, 1691, 600 p.
Bibliothèque de livres rares et anciens, Musée de la civilisation du Québec.

In his book *Les us et coutumes de la mer*, Bordeaux lawyer Estienne Cleirac wrote that the Basques were already present in Newfoundland a century before Christopher Columbus. He noted their expertise in transatlantic navigation and in cod fishing and whaling in the Golfe du Saint-Laurent. His book presents a compilation of French maritime practices and laws, prefiguring Louis XIV's Great Ordinance of Marine of 1681.

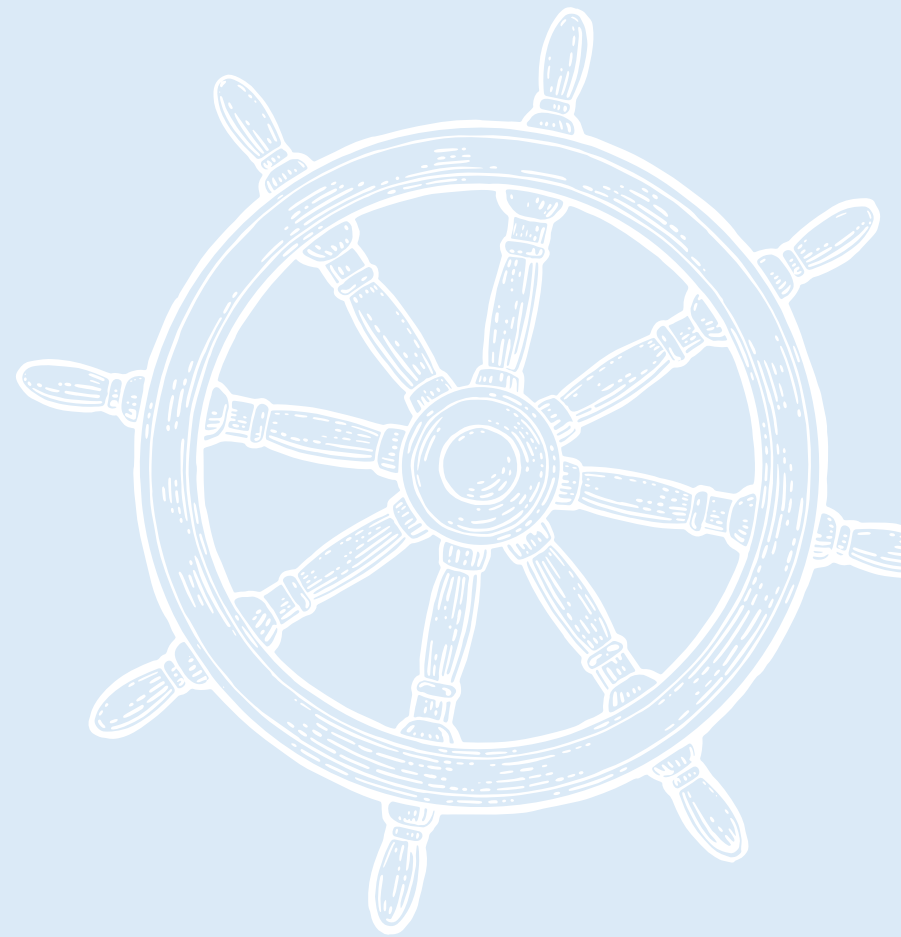


ESTIENNE CLEIRAC

*Les us, et coutumes de la mer : divisées en trois parties :
I de la navigation : II du commerce naval et contrats
maritimes : III de la jurisdiction de la marine*

Rouen: Jean Viret, ordinary printer to the King, top of palace stairs, 1671, p. 129.
Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

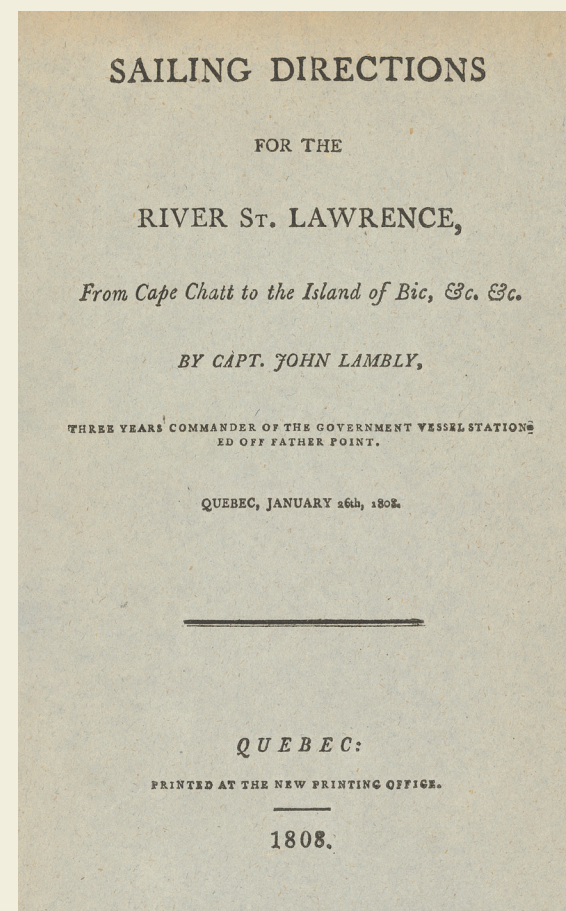
Louis XIV's ordinance established a legal framework for the entire kingdom of France that would govern the rights and duties of shipowners, captains and sailors. It regulated fisheries and oversaw every type of fishing, in particular with a view to the conservation of species, for instance by setting out standards relating to the mesh size of fishing nets. Many principles put forth in the ordinance form the basis of modern maritime law.¹



¹ Chadelat, Jean. "L'élaboration de l'Ordonnance de la marine d'août 1681". *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 31, 1954, pp. 74-98.

As navigation conditions on the Fleuve Saint-Laurent were perilous, pilots were needed to guide the ships. In 1762, Governor James Murray enacted an ordinance requiring pilots to station themselves at Île-du-Bic to accompany ships on their way to the city of Québec. A pilot station was also established at Île-aux-Coudres to extend the navigation season.² The Napoleonic wars led to an increase in the timber trade with Great Britain. A navigation guide published in 1808, the oldest in the library's collections, provided indications on how to reach the Bic station from Cap-Chat, situated further downstream.

² Fortin, Jean-Charles. "Le pilotage en aval de Québec". *Revue d'histoire du Bas-Saint-Laurent*, 8 (3), 1982, pp. 71-79.



JOHN LAMBLY

Sailing directions for the River St. Lawrence, from Cape Chatt to the Island of Bic, &c., &c.

Québec: Printed at Nouvelle imprimerie, 1808. 28 p.
Pierre-Joseph-Olivier-Chauveau Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

The Royal William, a steamship built at the Campbell and Black shipyard in the city of Québec thanks to an undertaking that was bold for that time, became in 1833 the first steamer to cross the Atlantic.³



« Vente par le shérif »

La Gazette de Québec/Quebec Gazette, March 19, 1833, p. 3.

Microform Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

³ Reid Marcil, Eileen; Courteau Louis (trad.). *Le Royal William de Québec : le véritable premier bateau à vapeur transatlantique*. Québec: Septentrion, 2022, 122 p.

Transatlantic voyages allowed European emigrants to reach North American shores in search of a better life. These journeys were, however, often fraught with infectious diseases. In 1832, when a first cholera epidemic broke out, the House of Assembly of Lower Canada passed legislation to create a quarantine station on the island of Grosse-Île, downstream from the city of Québec. Marked by tragic episodes, particularly for Irish emigrants fleeing famine, this island would become Canada's main immigration gateway for several decades.

During the first half of the 19th century, the number of pilots on the Fleuve Saint-Laurent who were posted downstream from the city of Québec increased significantly. Strong competition led them to commit excesses when boarding ships, putting their lives in danger and compromising the safety of navigation activities. In 1860, after numerous drownings, the pilots formed a corporation to better regulate the trade and to pool their earnings.⁴

In the 19th century, timber was the main export transiting through the Fleuve Saint-Laurent. This essay, written in 1855 for the Exposition universelle de Paris by Hector Langevin, one of the future Fathers of the Canadian Confederation, was the result of a remarkable work of statistical review.⁵

4 Fortin, Jean-Charles. "Le pilotage en aval de Québec". *Revue d'histoire du Bas Saint-Laurent*, 8 (3), 1982, pp. 71-79.

5 Désilets, Andrée. "LANGEVIN, sir HECTOR", in *Dictionnaire biographique du Canada*, 13, Université Laval; University of Toronto, 1994.

Plus bas, en descendant le St. Laurent, se trouve le Saguenay, autre grande rivière tributaire du St. Laurent et possédant elle-même de nombreux tributaires. C'est encore là une grande route pour le produit des forêts, et il en sort annuellement une quantité considérable de bois, qui du reste abonde sur toute la surface non-cultivée du territoire canadien et est exploité par des compagnies et des particuliers.

Ne connaissant pas le quantité exacte de bois qui a pu être coupée sur les rivières que nous venons d'énumérer, et comme d'ailleurs l'exploitation s'en fait aussi sur plusieurs autres rivières, nous avons cru que pour donner une idée de cette industrie, nous ferions bien d'insérer ici le tableau suivant de la quantité de certains articles de bois qui formaient l'approvisionnement du Port de Québec dans les années qui se sont écoulées de 1844 à 1854 :

Années.	Épinette rouge.	Merisier.	Frêne.	Orme.	Chêne.	Pin rouge.	Pin blanc.
1844	18660	73688	136490	670176	681820	4191654	12067426
1845	200766	101115	412096	1667951	1834446	4441516	19141455
1846	593584	241683	260432	3472309	2750754	5276600	24765287
1847	590419	92357	122716	2085541	2181469	6516922	12926294
1848	407398	28190	56583	1064750	1133159	4228952	7132127
1849	183417	193176	68357	975369	864487	3797584	11916430
1850	256414	69761	82797	1504650	1088854	2121316	14388593
1851	490909	74659	174157	2068727	1569932	3189387	15417815
1852	465482	49880	236312	2404616	1650973	2405644	27551239
1853	718130	70616	159020	711239	1853431	2060659	17487016
1854	2649759	45652	221446	1927365	2176071	2756848	19648606

Ce tableau fait voir que la quantité de pieds cubes de ces articles de bois pendant cette période a été comme suit, au port de Québec :

Années.	Nombre de pieds cubes.
1844	17,839,914
1845	27,702,344
1846	37,300,643
1847	23,868,897
1848	14,027,859
1849	17,987,820
1850	19,506,385
1851	17,987,820
1852	34,842,246
1853	22,460,111
1854	30,425,047

On voit par ces chiffres l'effet de la crise commerciale de 1847, qui a si profondément affecté le Canada. Aujourd'hui la Province passe

HECTOR L. LANGEVIN

« *Statistiques concernant le commerce du bois, principal bien de commerce du port de Québec* »

Le Canada, ses institutions, ressources, produits, manufactures, etc., etc., etc.

Québec: Printed by Lovell et Lamoureux, 1855, p. 54.
Pierre-Joseph-Olivier-Chauveau Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

The Montreal Ocean Steamship Company, incorporated by the famous Allan Line (*Ligne Allan*), which was based originally in Scotland and then in Montréal, became the main transatlantic line in the second half of the 19th century.⁶ Its ships transported both passengers and manufactured products from the British Isles to North America and returned carrying timber and grain.

6 John Henry Wye Fonds. McGill Library.

LIGNE ALLAN.
SERVICE D'ÉTÉ.
Ligne de Glasgow



LA LIGNE DE GLASGOW DE CETTE COMPAGNIE se compose des steamers de première classe suivants :

CORINTHIAN....	2400 tonx....	Capt. J. Scott.
OTTAWA.....	1831 ".....	Lt. Archer, RNR
ST. DAVID.....	1650 ".....	Capt. E. Scott.
ST. ANDREW....	1432 ".....	" Hugh Wylie
ST. PATRICK....	1207 ".....	" Stephen.

Partant de Glasgow tous les MARDIS, et de QUÉBEC, pour GLASGOW, tous les JEUDIS.

Voici les dates de départ :

CORINTHIAN, le ou environ le.....	12 Octobre
OTTAWA, do.....	19 "
ST. DAVID, do.....	26 "
ST. ANDREW do.....	2 Nov.
ST. PATRICK, do.....	9 "

PRIX DU PASSAGE DE QUÉBEC A GLASGOW.

Cabine.....	\$60.00
Ports intermédiaires.....	40.00
Entrepont.....	24.00

Les passagers des ports intermédiaires de cette ligne sont fournis de lits, etc.

Il y aura dans chaque navire un médecin expérimenté.

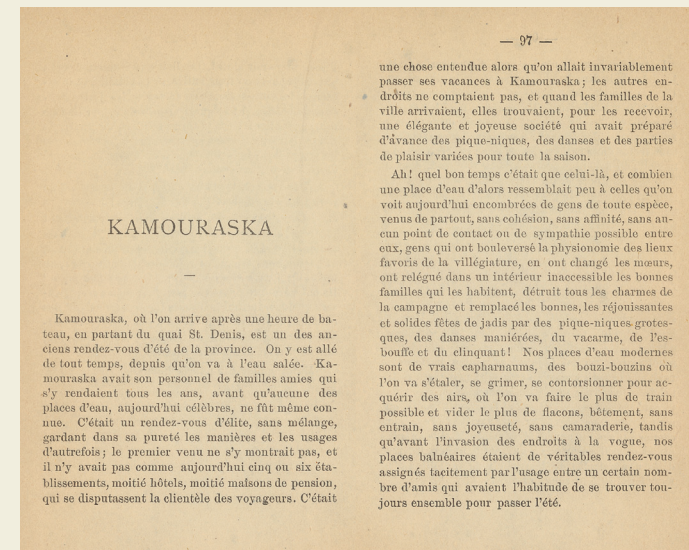
Pour plus amples informations s'adresser à
ALLANS, RAE et CIE,
Agents.
Québec, 27 sept., 1871. 1230

« Ligne Allan - Service d'été - Ligne de Glasgow »

Le Courrier du Canada : journal des intérêts canadiens,
September 27, 1871, p. 3.

Microform Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale
du Québec.

The shores of the Fleuve Saint-Laurent are dotted with sites that inspire contemplation and promise lovely holiday moments. In 1877, Arthur Buies wrote a column in which he described the tranquility of Kamouraska, evoking the bygone effervescence of that village as a holiday destination where the French-Canadian elite used to meet at the beginning of the 19th century.



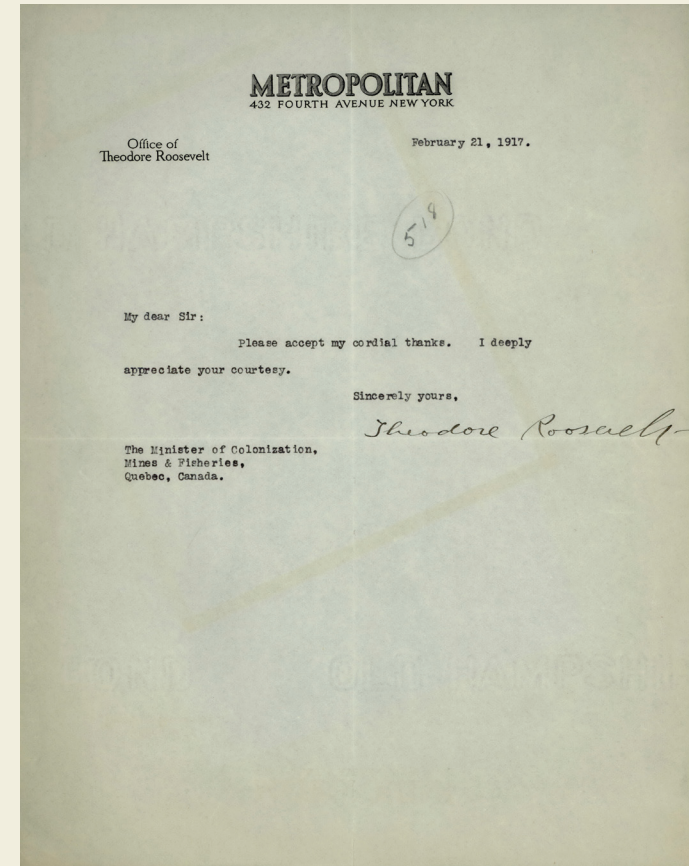
ARTHUR BUIES

Petites chroniques pour 1877

Québec: C. Darveau, printer, 1878, pp. 96–97.
Canadian Pamphlet Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée
nationale du Québec.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Charlevoix coast welcomed a couple of former American presidents seeking calm and crisp air. They spent their summer vacations in Murray Bay, now called La Malbaie. Like Theodore Roosevelt before him, William Taft was a frequent visitor. He even became the president of the Murray Bay Golf Club.⁷

⁷ Duchesne, André. "Des visites « de la plus haute importance », selon l'ex-PM Brian Mulroney". *La Presse*, March 23, 2023.



***Thank you letter from President Theodore Roosevelt,
February 21, 1917***

Fonds Lucien Lemieux, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale
du Québec.

As of the 19th century, holiday tourism started to develop in Gaspésie thanks to wealthy anglophone summer visitors attracted by romantic sceneries and salmon rivers. However, it was only in 1929, following substantial government investment, that the belt route around Gaspésie (Boulevard Perron, future Route 132) was completed, opening the region to mass tourism, which was amplified by the development of the automotive industry.⁸

8 Fallu, Jean-Marie. "Le fameux Tour de la Gaspésie". *Magazine Gaspésie*, 54 (3), 2017, pp. 3-7.



La Gaspésie : histoire, légendes, ressources, beautés

Québec: Ministère de la Voirie (Bureau provincial du tourisme), 1930.

Government Publications Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

Just before being elected as Member for Charlevoix-Saguenay, Edgar Rochette wrote a book in which he stressed the urgency of developing the road along the Fleuve Saint-Laurent in the Côte-Nord region, the future Route 138. In the end, the road was indeed extended because of pressure from the industry. Rochette would later take on numerous roles, including becoming the father of the Labour Relations Act, passed in 1944.⁹

Thanks to the industrial boom, in 1948 the region obtained its first provincial electoral division, Saguenay, when the Charlevoix-Saguenay division was split in two. The export of iron ore, mined in more northern parts, would require a new deep-water port that was accessible year-round. Several ports would later allow the region to export mineral resources as well as grain harvested in more southern parts.¹⁰



FRANÇOIS RAYMOND

« *Le premier chargement de fer quitte Sept-Îles* »

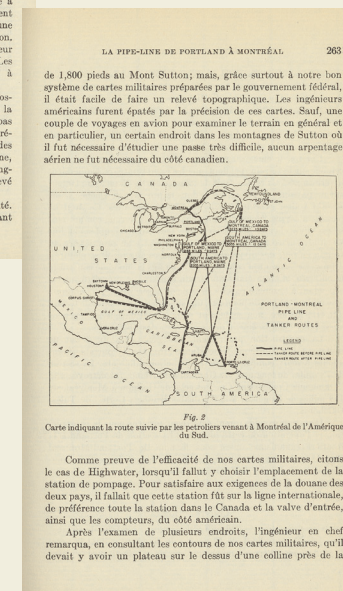
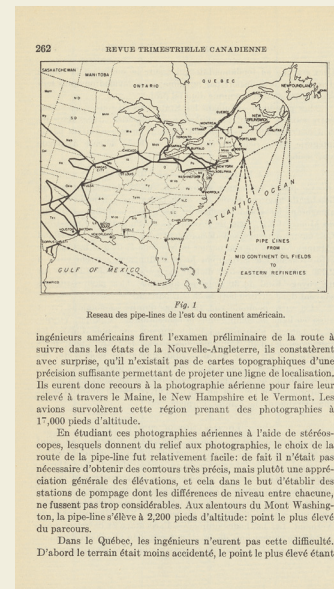
Le progrès du Golfe, August 6, 1954, p. 1.

Microform Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

9 Bordeleau, Jean-Louis. "La sinieuse histoire de la route 138". *Ici Radio-Canada*, January 11, 2019.

10 Lasserre, Jean-Claude. "Le complexe portuaire de la Côte-Nord et son rôle dans la navigation sur le Saint-Laurent". *Cahiers de géographie du Québec*, 17 (40), 1973, pp. 155-169.

The Fleuve Saint-Laurent is a maritime route that links the interior of the continent to the Atlantic. This article describes the project to build an oil pipeline that would enable ships to avoid navigating the river in winter conditions and oil to be piped from Portland to Montréal. The article's illustrations show the logistics flows for the oil arriving from South America at that time.



PAUL LEBEL

« La Pipe-Line de Portland à Montréal »

Revue trimestrielle canadienne, September 1943, pp. 263-264.

Collection of periodicals, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

The seaway known as the Voie maritime du Saint-Laurent was inaugurated at the St. Lambert lock on June 26, 1959, in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II, American President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker. The seaway, with its locks and canals, linked the Atlantic to the Great Lakes, allowing transatlantic ships to reach the heart of the North American continent. The five-year project was a major binational undertaking and cost over one billion dollars.¹¹

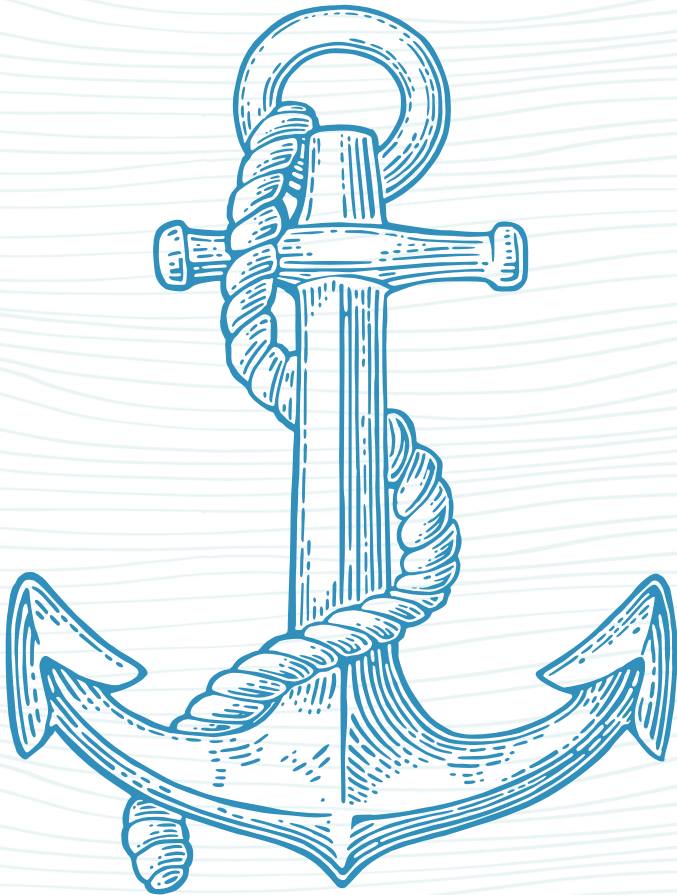
¹¹ "Archives - L'ouverture royale de la Voie maritime du Saint-Laurent". *Ici Radio-Canada*, June 19, 2019.



Commemorative plate for the opening of the Voie maritime du Saint-Laurent

Richard G. Gervais Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

FISHING TALES



Fishing plays an essential role in the Golfe du Saint-Laurent, for those whose livelihood depends on it as well as for people who fish for pleasure. Regulated by various laws and government decisions, fishing has been greatly transformed over time. In the 20th century, fishermen gained greater autonomy, while new initiatives were implemented to structure the industry and redefine relations between the various levels of government.

During the British colonial period, several English laws and customs applied in Canada. A 1788 ordinance granted every British subject free access to the resources of the sea. Several laws were subsequently passed by the House of Assembly of Lower Canada to regulate fishing activities, such as an 1807 law addressing the quality of fish intended for export and imposing strict salmon protection measures. In 1829, *the Act towards encouraging the Fisheries* designated as a preferred creditor any shipowner having extended credit for equipment (“outfits”) for a voyage or a fishing season in the Golfe du Saint-Laurent.¹² Such laws opened the way for the development of large companies’ economic control over the fisheries and general economy of Gaspésie.¹³

¹² Daneau, Marcel. *Les pêches maritimes au Québec : Enjeux économiques et intervention de l'État*. Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1991, pp. 9-10.

¹³ Grandbois, Maryse. « Le développement des disparités régionales en Gaspésie 1760-1960 ». *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 36(4), mars 1983, pp. 483-506.



THOMAS PYE

Chas. Robin & Cos. Establishment

Le Boutillier Bros Establishment

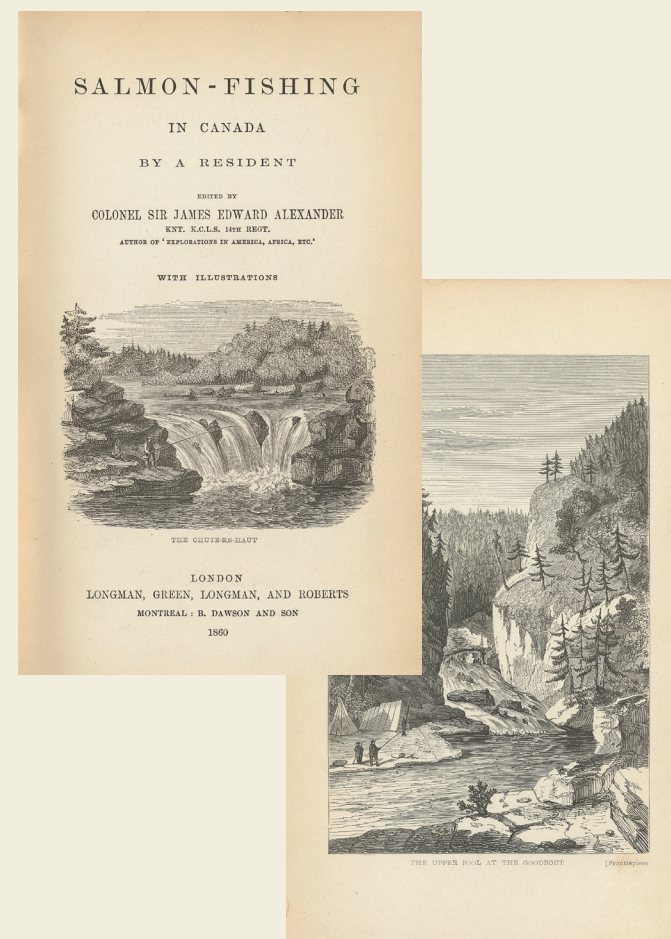
Canadian scenery : district of Gaspé

Montréal: John Lovell, 1866, 55 p.

Special Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

The 19th century saw the development of fishing activities on the north shore of the Golfe du Saint-Laurent. From the middle of the century onwards, the establishment of fishermen led to the creation of several villages, while numerous salmon rivers attracted wealthy sport fishers from the cities and abroad. From 1843 to 1853, Innu from the Haute-Côte-Nord and Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean regions submitted several petitions to government authorities. With the opening of the territory and development of the logging industry, the Innu expressed their concerns regarding their traditional access to salmon rivers and claimed recognition of their rights, including allotment of land, exclusive access to certain hunting and fishing sites, and monetary compensation.¹⁴

14 Frenette, Jacques. "L'original de la pétition montagnaise du 8 avril 1847 : un document inédit". *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*, 43 (2-3), 2013, pp. 77-91; Innu First Nation of Essipit v. Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017 SCTC 1.

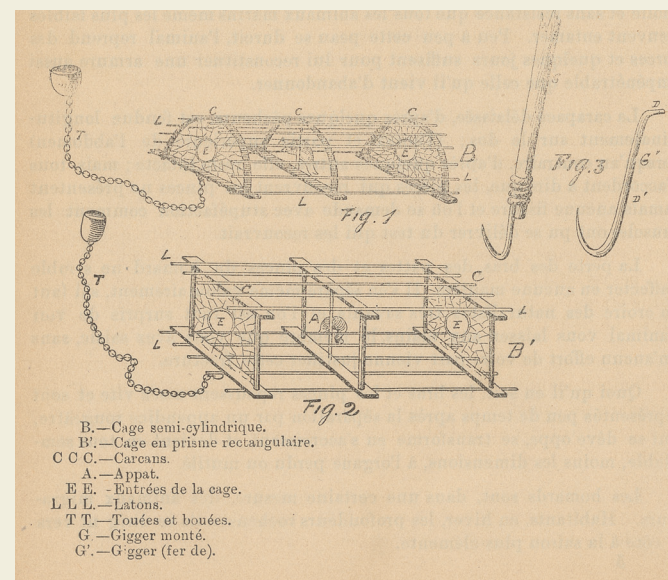


WILLIAM AGAR ADAMSON

Salmon-fishing in Canada

London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860, p. 350.
Pierre-Joseph-Olivier-Chauveau Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

On Îles-de-la-Madeleine, in the southern part of the Golfe du Saint-Laurent, lobster fishing made progress due to the use of cages in the surrounding waters. The first lobster cannery in the archipelago opened in 1875, and there were 63 such canneries by 1897. The fishing and processing of lobster, a product mostly intended for export, became a profession for inhabitants of Îles-de-la-Madeleine.¹⁵



**QUÉBEC (PROVINCE). DÉPARTEMENT DES TERRES,
FORÊTS ET PÊCHERIES**

***Rapport du commissaire des terres, forêts et pêcheries
de la province de Québec pour les douze mois expirés
le 30 juin 1900***

Québec: C. Pageau, 1897-1901.
 Government Publications Collection, Bibliothèque
 de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

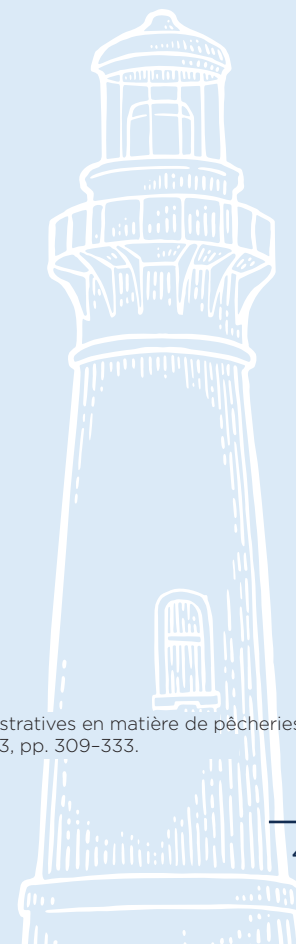
¹⁵ Fortin, Jean-Charles. *Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine*. Sainte-Foy: Éditions de l'IQRC: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2004, pp. 64-73.

The Constitution Act, 1867 gave the Canadian parliament responsibility for legislating with regard to fisheries in Canada. In 1882, the Privy Council in London ruled that Canadian provinces maintained proprietary rights in relation to fisheries as far as civil rights were concerned, despite the Parliament of Canada's legislative powers over that jurisdiction. Then, in 1883, Québec adopted an Act regulating fishing on public lands, concerning non-navigable water-courses and lakes. This Act allowed, in particular, the granting of exclusive fishing rights, which resulted in the proliferation of private fishing clubs on various spawning rivers, and restriction of access for residents and for members of Indigenous communities, unless they worked as guides.¹⁶

16 Daneau, Marcel. *Les pêches maritimes au Québec : Enjeux économiques et intervention de l'État*. Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1991, p. 13.

In the first two decades of the 20th century, there were intergovernmental negotiations, along with appeals to the Privy Council in London, to determine jurisdictional powers with regard to fisheries. In February 1922, an agreement was signed between Québec and Ottawa, granting Québec the delegation of this responsibility across its territory, with the exception of Îles-de-la-Madeleine. This exception was later lifted in 1943.¹⁷

17 Braën, André. "Les ententes administratives en matière de pêcheries". *Revue générale de droit*, 14 (2), 1983, pp. 309-333.



In Rivière-Ouelle, beluga whales were traditionally trapped in nets between the beaches and the Kamouraska islands when the tide ebbed. They were hunted for their hides and their blubber, which was turned into oil. The fishing carried out by the Lizotte family in 1929 can be qualified as a war on the beluga.¹⁸ Debates held in the Legislative Assembly reveal the measures taken by the Québec government to reduce the beluga population, which was held responsible for the diminishing codfish population in the Fleuve Saint-Laurent. These measures included generous bonuses for the killing of whales as well as the provision of rifles and ammunition for fishermen.¹⁹

¹⁸ "Pêche miraculeuse à Rivière-Ouelle". *Infodimanche.com*, May 19, 2024.

¹⁹ *Débats de l'Assemblée législative*, January 28, 1930, pp. 221–222.



21 mai 1929

Archives de la Côte-du-Sud et du Collège de
Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière

In 1938, Onésime Gagnon, Member for Matane and Minister of Fisheries, created a post-secondary school of fisheries that would later be integrated into the École d'agriculture de Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière. The institution's first mandate was to establish a federative cooperative model for the fisheries sector. In 1939, following the passage of a new Act, Pêcheurs-Unis du Québec, a federation bringing together several local cooperatives, was created. By mobilizing the cooperative movement into a federation, fishermen freed themselves from big business interests through the mutualization of marketing infrastructure for fishery products.²⁰

Later, the provincial department of fisheries entrusted the Davie shipyard in Lévis with the construction of a new model of longliners for trawling, which involved pulling a net behind the fishing vessel. The first longliner, called La Gaspésienne, set sail in 1955. Over the years, fifty boats of its kind would be made in Québec, each one bearing a number and intended for fishermen, mostly from the Gaspésie and Côte-Nord regions.²¹

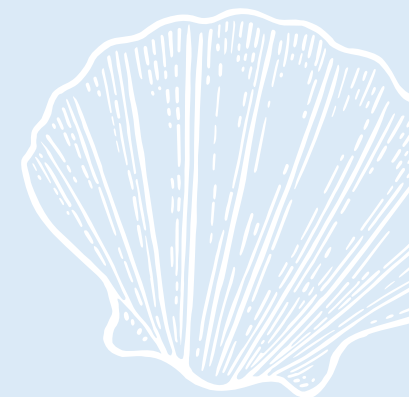
20 Bourgault-Faucher, Gabriel. "Les coopératives de pêcheurs au Québec : un précédent inspirant pour ouvrir les perspectives (partie 1/2)". *Mange ton Saint-Laurent*; Daneau, Marcel. *Les pêches maritimes au Québec : Enjeux économiques et intervention de l'État*. Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1991, pp. 165-198.

21 Bourdages, Jeannot. "Tous à bord de la « Gaspésienne no. 20 » !". *Magazine Gaspésie*, 52(2), 2015, pp. 47-49.



La Gaspésienne, Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé, 1959

Photograph: G. Giguère, 101481.
Fonds ministère de la Culture et des Communications,
Archives nationales à Québec.



Paving the way for modern-day fisheries

A bill was introduced in 1977 to restore the Québec population's access to the hunting and fishing sectors, though numerous barriers prevented the resolution of the issue of salmon rivers. On April 10, 1980, Minister Lucien Lessard presented in the Assembly the approach chosen to abolish a number of private clubs, which held exclusive fishing rights on salmon rivers in the Gaspésie and Côte-Nord regions, and to manage these rivers that were highly valued by the local communities.²² Thereafter, certain private clubs would continue to exist, and painful events would occur in connection with the assertion of the ancestral rights of Indigenous communities, revealing the importance attached to this type of fishing.²³

In the mid-1970s, the Québec fishery sector entered a pivotal period marked by the increasing scarcity of certain resources and the intensification of jurisdictional conflicts with Ottawa regarding the regulation of maritime fisheries. In the summer of 1983, the federal government announced that it

would be reclaiming the jurisdiction over fisheries that it had delegated to Québec in 1922. Québec very quickly enacted legislation and focused government action on areas related to the marketing of fishery products.²⁴

At that time, the cooperative movement was in decline, which led to the sector re-organizing itself into a number of small- and medium-sized businesses. In the early 1990s, the declining stocks of certain species, in particular codfish, led to an important moratorium, which resulted in a difficult period for the Québec marine sector. Fishing businesses took this opportunity to further diversify, in particular by shifting to shellfish.²⁵

22 Beaulieu-Claveau, Antoine. *Le crépuscule des clubs privés, une histoire de contestation : la prise de parole et l'impact des pressions manifestantes sur l'abolition des clubs privés de chasse et de pêche au Québec (1966-1980)*. Master's thesis. Montréal: Université du Québec à Montréal, 2018, 174 p.

23 "Crise du saumon : 40 ans plus tard, Listuguj se souvient". *Ici Radio-Canada*, June 9, 2021.

24 Daneau, Marcel. *Les pêches maritimes au Québec : Enjeux économiques et intervention de l'État*. Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1991, pp. 30–31.

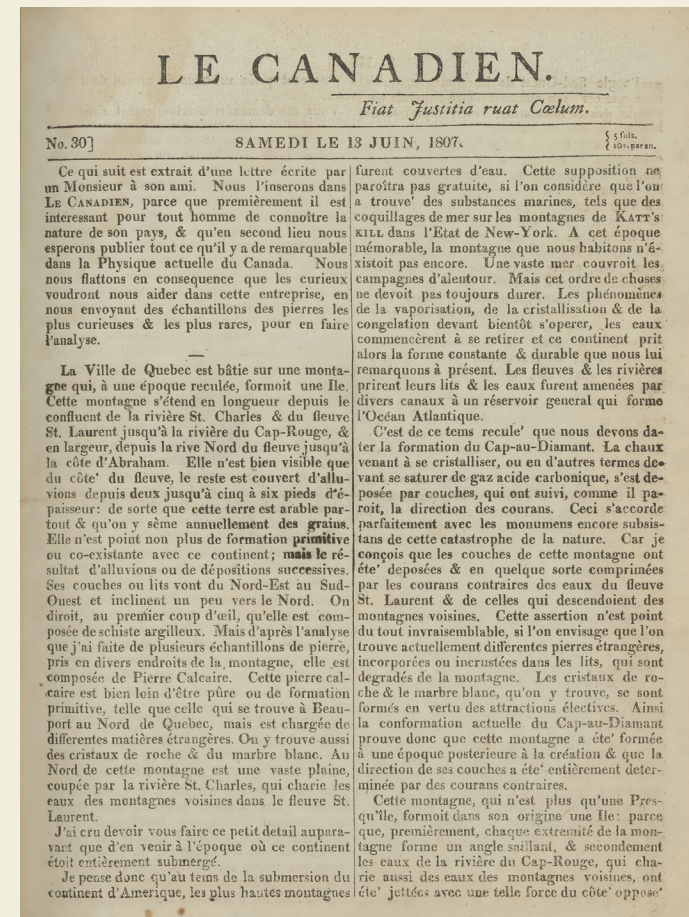
25 Hardy, Magalie; Brêthes, Jean-Claude; Tita, Guglielmo, et autres. *Portrait de la filière halieutique régionale : Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine*. Îles-de-la-Madeleine: Centre de recherche sur les milieux insulaires et maritimes. 2008, 154 p.

KNOWLEDGE AND PROTECTION OF ECOSYSTEMS



Although the Fleuve Saint-Laurent and its shores had long been popular for their resources, they also garnered the attention of scientists. Mesmerized by the biodiversity present in the estuary, researchers conducted studies that revealed the exhaustive richness of this unique ecosystem. Their findings contributed to raising ecological awareness and inspiring initiatives to better protect and promote the river.

Under the French regime, the Jesuits were interested in the natural sciences, and their observations were communicated by way of an international collaboration network. Their observations on fauna and flora were based on individual contributions, for example those of the *médecins du roy*, who sent specimens to the Académie royale des sciences in Paris. An article published in the newspaper *Le Canadien* in 1807 is attributed to Doctor François Blanchet.²⁶ The text revealed interest in the ancient evolution of the once-submerged valley of the Fleuve Saint-Laurent and foreshadowed the interest in paleontology that would arise in the 19th century.



« La ville de Québec est bâtie sur une montagne qui, à une époque reculée, formait une île. [...] »

Le Canadien, June 13, 1807, p. 1.

Pierre-Joseph-Olivier-Chauveau Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

26 Castonguay, Stéphane; Limoges, Camille. *François Blanchet*. Montréal: VLB éditeur, 2004, p. 347.

In 1842, the government of the Province of Canada established the Geological Survey of Canada for the purpose of expanding knowledge on natural resources and of promoting industrial development. British scientists, often based in Montréal, carried out numerous geological and paleontological studies in the territory bordering the Golfe du Saint-Laurent. This field work contributed to the first extensive knowledge regarding the history of the country's physical geography, serving as a prelude to the industrial developments of regions such as those of the Côte-Nord and Gaspésie.²⁷

27 Chartrand, Luc; Duchesne, Raymond; Gingras, Yves. *Histoire des sciences au Québec : de la Nouvelle-France à nos jours*. Montréal: Boréal, 2008, pp. 136-140.



GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CANADA

Report of progress / Geological Survey of Canada, 1853-1856

Montréal: John Lovell, 1856.

General Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

The last quarter of the 19th century saw growing interest in the field of natural sciences in French Canada as well, in particular for fauna and flora, thanks to various initiatives often by members of the clergy. Though the practice of such naturalists was barely institutionalized at the time, it sometimes occurred through North American knowledge-sharing networks.²⁸ There were also other contributors to the still amateur science, such as journalist André-Napoléon Montpetit. Inspired by his passion for fishing, he wrote an excellent book based on his field observations and his frequent consultation of American and French scholarly works, such as Cuvier's *Histoire naturelle des poissons*, which spans 22 volumes and was available at the time in certain libraries across the country, including that of the Parlement de Québec, now known as the Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale.

28 Chartrand, Luc; Duchesne, Raymond; Gingras, Yves. *Histoire des sciences au Québec : de la Nouvelle-France à nos jours*. Montréal: Boréal, 2008, pp. 163–206.



ANDRÉ-NAPOLÉON MONTPETIT

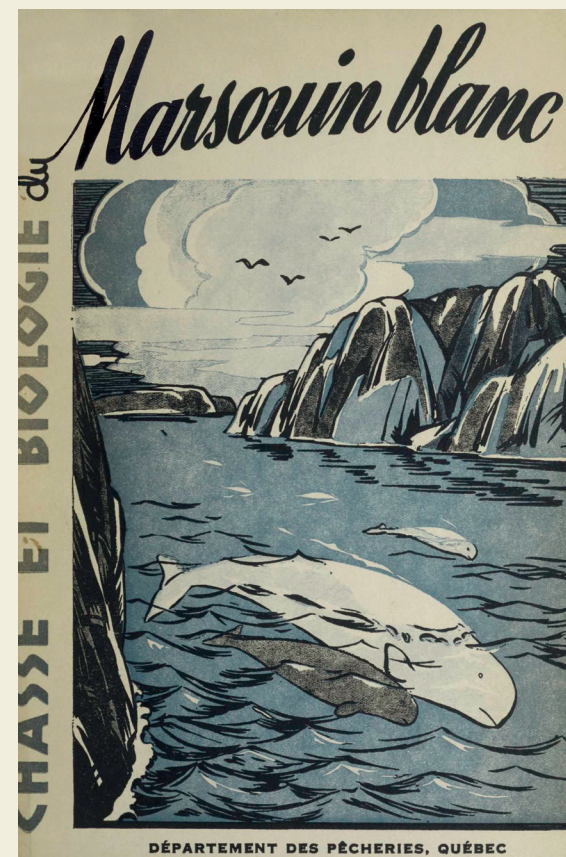
Les poissons d'eau douce du Canada

Montréal: C.-O. Beauchemin & Fils, 1897.
Special Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale
du Québec.

The 1930s brought increased development of oceanographic and marine biology knowledge in Québec. A research station was established in Trois-Pistoles, born of a Université Laval initiative to inaugurate research on marine ecosystems in the Golfe du Saint-Laurent. The station was moved to Grande-Rivière a few years later and long continued to play an important role in training Québec biologists.²⁹ The department of fisheries would also include a biology section, helmed by Vadim Vladikov. This eminent biologist, born in Ukraine, greatly contributed to the advancement of knowledge on many species living in the estuary, including the beluga whale.³⁰

29 Préfontaine, Georges. "La nouvelle station biologique du Saint-Laurent et l'étude de l'estuaire laurentien". *Revue trimestrielle canadienne*, June 1932, pp. 174-187.

30 "The Vadim-D Vladikov Prize". *Beluga*, 1 (4), June 1990.



VADIM-D. VLADIKOV

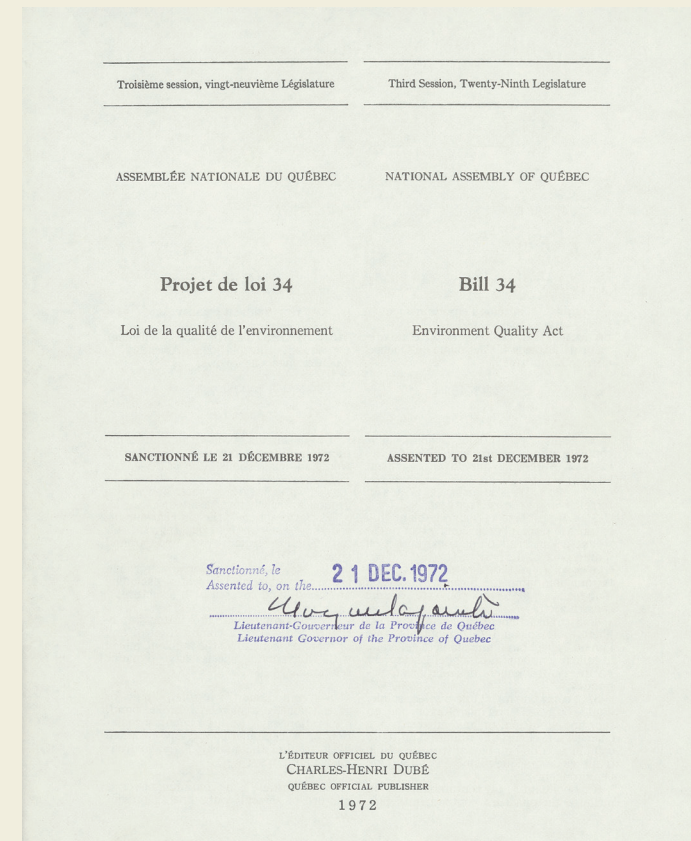
Études sur les mammifères aquatiques : III - Chasse, biologie et valeur économique du marsouin blanc ou béluga (Delphinapterus leucas) du fleuve et du golfe Saint-Laurent

Québec: Département des pêcheries, 1943.
Government Publications Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec.

In the 1950s, the pollution of the tributaries of the Fleuve Saint-Laurent by human activity became a concern. At the beginning of the 1960s, an extensive province-wide initiative was launched to build a large number of municipal water purification treatment plants.

This led to increased international awareness regarding the protection of ecosystems. Pierre Dansereau, a leading figure in the development of Québec's ecological approach, developed ties with prominent American universities.³¹ Association movements, which would include researchers, were organized, and Québec followed other Western countries in adopting a framework Act in 1972 concerning the quality of the environment.

31 Vaillancourt, Jean-Guy. "Pierre Dansereau, écologue, écosociologue et écologiste". *Sociologie et sociétés*, 31 (2), 1999, pp. 191-193.

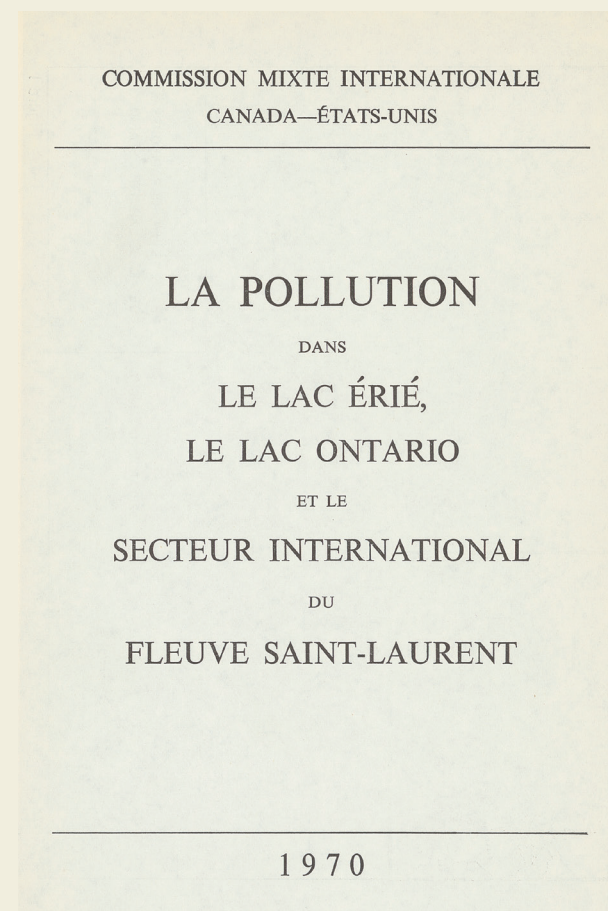


Bill 34 – *Environment Quality Act*, 1972.

Fonds Assemblée nationale du Québec.

In the early 1970s, Canada and the United States became aware of the environmental crisis affecting the Great Lakes, which feed the Fleuve Saint-Laurent. In 1972, the two countries signed the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, under which a framework was established to improve water quality by focusing on reducing phosphorus supplies and fighting industrial and domestic pollution.³²

32 "History of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement". International Joint Commission.



INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

*Pollution of Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the
International Section of the St. Lawrence River*

Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970, 116 p.
General Collection, Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée nationale
du Québec.

Following significant mobilization from regional groups, the governments of Québec and Canada signed an agreement in 1990 that led to the creation of the marine park called Parc marin du Saguenay-Saint-Laurent. The park is dedicated to protecting marine ecosystems, in particular marine mammals such as the beluga whale. After a lengthy process, the creation of the marine park was made official by the introduction of mirror legislation passed by Québec and Canada that respects their respective fields of jurisdiction.³³

In the mid-1990s, new public awareness of the decline of the American eel population in the Fleuve Saint-Laurent brought to light the obstacle that hydroelectric dams presented for eel migration. Although the creation of fishways yielded mixed results, consideration of ecological corridors, which are the norm nowadays, earned recognition.³⁴

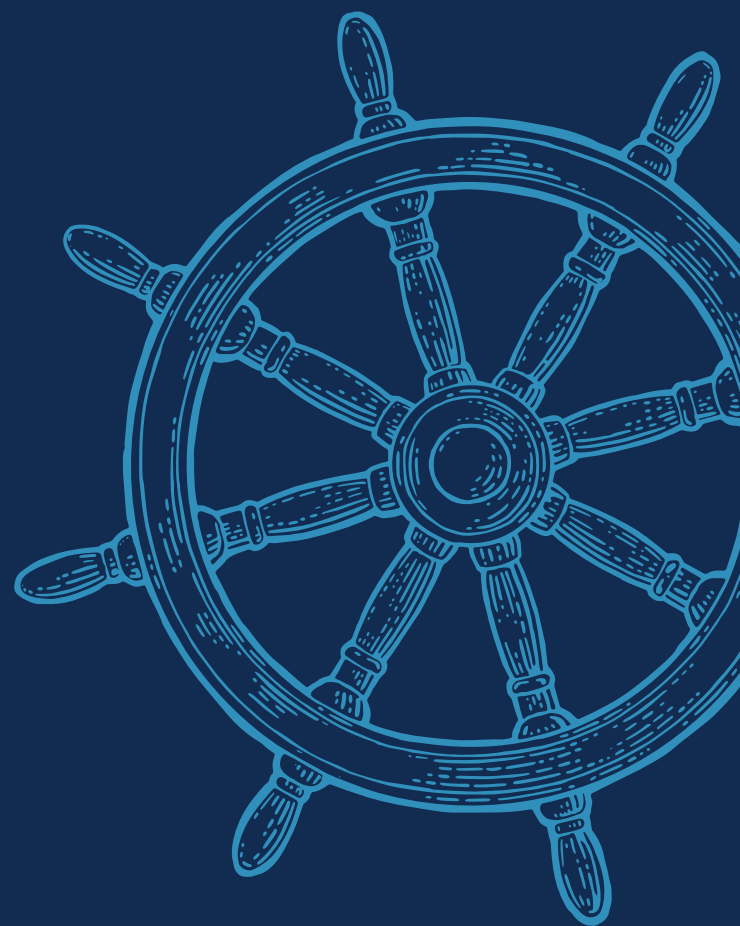


33 Maltais, Bernard; Pelletier, Émilien. "Le parc marin du Saguenay-Saint-Laurent : création et gestion participative inédite au Canada". *Le Naturaliste canadien*, 142 (2), 2018, pp. 4-17.

34 « Hydro-Québec et la protection de l'anguille d'Amérique ». Hydro-Québec.

CONCLUSION

This exhibition invites you to adopt a fresh perspective on the Fleuve Saint-Laurent, not only as a navigable waterway, but also as a living reflection of Québec's collective history. The documents and objects presented in this brochure are a testimony to the river's sustainable imprint on human practices, political choices and territorial dynamics. The river connects eras just as it physically connects shores, and it continues to shape Québec's identity. By exploring the river's multiple economic and environmental aspects, the exhibition also recalls its central role in the debates of the future.



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