

Relations between Fraser Companies Limited and the City of Edmundston (1918-1974)

By Nicole Lang

In April 1920, an article published in the local newspaper created consternation in the community. It alluded to the possibility that *Fraser Companies Limited* would build their paper mill elsewhere than in Edmundston. It insisted that the company had helped the town prosper and that the town should treat it with fairness. However, the article also affirmed that:

(...) It must not be forgotten, however, that this company did not come to Edmundston to please us. It looked first and foremost after its own interests (...) the town gave Fraser a wide range of favours. All considered, this company obtained all it asked for from the town (...) In return, and there is a contract to that effect, the company committed to building a pulp and paper mill here. Edmundston fulfilled its obligations but even before a single piece of paper has been produced here a rumour is circulating that it will build the paper mill elsewhere (...)ⁱ.

A few years later the question comes up again. On January 19 1925, the company submits a request to the town council entitled "Petition of Fraser Companies Limited asking permission from the Town Council of the Town of Edmundston to lay and maintain a pipeline under the streets of the Town for the conveyance of pulp from their mills to a mill at Madawaskaⁱⁱ". The company wants to dig to install a pipeline that would transport pulp produced in Edmundston to a paper mill that the company will build on the right bank of the Saint John River, in Madawaska, Maine.

In an issue of *Le Madawaska*, newspaper, Gaspard Boucher gives some advice to the town councillors who will have to decide on the petition. He reminds them of agreements that were signed between the two parties when the pulp mill in Edmundston was built in 1917. The company was then exempted from paying municipal taxes in exchange for a promise to build a paper mill in the next few years. The town respected its engagements in the contract but the company now plans to build its paper mill in Madawaska, on American soil. Boucher seems to be convinced that the construction of a paper mill in Madawaska will hurt the town of Edmundston. He writes:

(...) the construction of a paper mill a few acres from us, by being on the American side, will be harmful to us. (...) Many machines will be removed from the Edmundston mill and transported to the other side of the river. Persons who are making the best salaries will also leave. Unless the company guarantees to increase its pulp production, the number of persons who are now working at the mill will be considerably reduced.ⁱⁱⁱ.

Boucher is wondering if the town councillors must refuse or accept the company petition. If the petition is granted, then part of the Edmundston population will move to the other side of the border, "(...) which would mean the end of our businesses^{iv}". If the town refuses permission, will the company find other means to transport its pulp? "We dare say, continues Boucher, that never, since the incorporation of our town, has our administration been in such a crucial predicament.^v".

In February, the municipal council decides to form a committee to study the issue. This committee includes the mayor and three council members who are mandated to present a report to the general committee of the municipal council and then send the decision to the company^{vi}. The following month, representatives of the company meet the council to get a definite answer to their petition.

...Mr. Stevens speaking for the Fraser Companies says that the Company sent a demand on January 19 asking authorization to pass pipes under the town streets and that the town responded on March 20 and that the town has had sufficient time to consider the request of the company and should be able to give its answer (...) he says that the town can always allow the Company to pass the pipes and at the same time protect its rights as to the past contracts of 1912 and 1917. He says that the company would be glad to build a paper mill in Edmundston but that the paper that can be produced with the pulp from the existing mill cannot be sold in Canada and that if the Company cannot build in Madawaska, Me., it would not build at all. (...) The other reason to build in Madawaska is to create a nearby market for the product from the existing mill which saves on transportation costs and guarantees that the mill stays in operation (...) Mr. Stevens says that he has the support of Mr. Fraser in that the construction of the Madawaska mill would not change the number of employees at the existing mill and that the number of employees in the office would increase rather than decrease (...) His Honor asks Mr. Fraser until what date can he wait for a final decision from the town. Mr. Fraser answers that May 1st would be fine but work will start now in Madawaska. He says that the town has nothing to lose and all to gain by granting them the right of passage^{vii}.

The council prefers not to take a final decision at that time. The discussion of the

issue is tabled, to be discussed at a later date. Meanwhile, Gaspard Boucher addresses the subject in a new issue of *Le Madawaska* on April 2, 1925^{viii}. He does not see things in the same light. First, he notes that in 1917, when the agreement between the town and the company was signed, Fraser promised to build a paper mill in Edmundston when circumstances would be favourable. "Some alleged that Fraser Company had to tool up to print paper within a five-year period. We don't think that there was a specific period in the contract.^{ix}". Furthermore, he realizes that the Company has started mill construction in Madawaska, even if our town has not yet reached a decision on the pipeline issue. So, "(...) all things considered, will the construction of such a mill in Madawaska be such a disadvantage for the growth our town? We don't believe it would. We even believe that we can take advantage of this^x".

He then presents the positive elements that will affect the community. First of all, it will be easy for a citizen of Edmundston to go work at the Madawaska mill in Maine. Therefore, *(...)rather than reducing jobs in our town, our population will increase by the number of employees who will work at that mill and reside in our town. These will certainly find an advantage to live here, as they will benefit from our modern schools, our churches, our water utilities, sewage treatment, and electric services enhanced by the utilization of our clean sidewalks and streets. (...) ^{xi}*.

The Edmundston merchants will reap the benefits, another factor to be considered, according to Boucher. The Madawaska mill will not make newsprint but only special paper products for which there is no market in Canada. He ends his article by declaring that he favours the setting up of a mill in Madawaska. "It is therefore our opinion that the construction of the paper mil in Madawaska will not hinder the progress of our town, and trying to block Fraser Companies in their undertaking would be quite to our detriment^{xii}".

The town council comes to the same conclusions and signs an agreement with the company in June of the same year after many months of indecision. The motion reads as follows:

Whereas the Board of Trade of the Town of Edmundston by petition to the Town Council has requested that "lease & license" be granted to Fraser Companies Limited to lay a pipe line under the streets of said Town for the purpose of carrying pulp from Edmundston pulp mill to Madawaska, Maine (...) Be It Therefore Resolved that the Town Council of the Town of Edmundston grant said lease and license subject to Fraser Companies Limited entering into a contract with the said Town guaranteeing and safe guarding the interests of both the Town and its citizens. Carried^{xiii}.

Thus ends the debate on this controversial issue that created unease in the community and confirmed the great influence of Fraser on this town. The town council was hesitant for a long time and took many months to grant Fraser Limited's request. The Company started work on the pipeline even before a favourable decision was reached. This forced the hand of the councillors who finally acquiesced to the demand of the company.

This article will demonstrate that the town and its succeeding councils could not influence Fraser policies with regards to its economic strategies for the mill in Edmundston. As was the case for the construction of the Madawaska paper mill, Fraser did not consult or, even inform the town council before deciding to go ahead with its plans. Also, we will try to determine if it interfered in municipal affairs and if it received favours from the town. In other words, did the company benefit from special privileges due to the fact that, during all that period, it was the major employer in the community?

The first part of the study will deal with contracts and agreements that were negotiated throughout the years. We shall attempt to see if

and for how long Fraser was able to obtain special privileges. We will examine all the contracts related to property taxes as well as all special requests for construction and the major agreements concerning the sale and rent of lands between the two parties.

In a second section, we will examine the relations between the town and the company. First we will study the composition of the municipal councils and then analyse the nature of relations between it and Fraser Board of Directors. Afterwards, we will address another controversial issue: the School Tax in 1919. This last issue resulted in a public debate and it shows, as in the case of the Madawaska mill, the overwhelming influence the company had on the town. To conclude this section, we will discuss Fraser involvement in municipal affairs. We will conclude that there was no direct control contrary to what existed in certain Quebec towns^{xiv}. However, the company did exert pressure in order to get ahead with its strategies and to obtain certain fiscal privileges.

I. Contracts and Agreements (1918-1974)

Contracts Pertaining to Taxation of Fraser Properties.

The first contract between the two partners was signed in 1912. Fraser Limited asks for a partial exemption from municipal taxes on most of its properties^{xv}. After examining the issue, the town council decides to grant the request. The agreement is ratified by an Act of the Provincial Legislature.^{xvi} The preamble for the law states the main content of the accord: the property taxes for Fraser Limited will be evaluated on the basis that cannot exceed \$200,000 and this, for a period of twenty-five years. This clause does not apply to dwellings owned by the company in the town.

Four years later, on December 22, 1916, Mr. J.M. Stevens presents to the town council a request from Fraser Limited for a permit to build a pulp and paper mill in

Edmundston. After consideration, the request is placed on the agenda of the January 15th meeting of the town council. The two partners then conclude an agreement that will be ratified in 1917 by a Provincial Act^{xvii}. It affects the lands of the company, the supply of water and electricity, and the land assessment for tax purposes and states that: (...) *consideration that Fraser Limited will erect or cause to be erected in the Town of Edmundston, Madawaska County, N.B., one or more mills for the manufacture of pulp and paper, to the said town does hereby agree, subject to the terms and conditions here after mentioned to do for and grant to Fraser Limited, its successors and assigns, the following namely -1- To sell to Fraser Limited, its successors and assigns, any idle or unused horse power now or at any future time to be developed by the said Town (...) 3- The said Town agrees to supply sufficient water through said main pipe for use in said mill buildings (...) 6- Fraser Limited shall have the right and privilege of laying and maintaining and repairing all necessary pipes in connection with its plant (...) 9- The valuation for assessment purpose as provided for under Chapter 104 of 2 George V of the Acts of the Legislature of the Province of New Brunswick; shall be fixed at the sum of one hundred thousand dollars, with the exception as provided for in section 5 of the said Act, of dwelling houses and lands(...)*^{xviii}.

The town thereby agreed to supply water and electricity to the company. In addition, taxes on the Fraser Limited properties will be assessed on a fixed base of \$100,000 and this for a period of 25 years. Fraser Limited, which was then the only industrial employer in the town, will become the biggest tax revenue provider and this, despite the exemptions.

In 1917, a federal charter combines all the Fraser interests under the name, Fraser Companies Limited. The Law 8 George V 1917 amends the Acts of 1912 and 1917^{xix}. The latter does not modify the clauses that existed before. It only says that the interests of Fraser Limited,

Fraser Lumber Company, and Baker Brook Manufacturing Company Limited are sold to *Fraser Companies Limited*. The agreements of 1912 and 1917 with the town of Edmundston are maintained.

Another contract between the company and the town is signed in 1940. It is ratified, in the same year, by an Act of the Legislative Assembly^{xx}. The local media pays much attention to the new contract that will come into effect in 1943 for a period of 15 years. The company promises to pay taxes on a valuation base of \$4,250,000. An exemption of one million dollars is granted for expansions or the construction of a new mill. In addition, Fraser Companies, Limited pledges to disburse a sum of \$50,000 to be transferred to the sinking fund of the town^{xxi}.

The amount of \$4,250,000 mentioned in the agreement includes all the properties owned by the company inside the town: mills, dwellings, etc. This guarantees the town from 1943 on an annual sum of \$42,000. Furthermore, the company accepts to disburse the sum of \$50,000 what will be paid in three equal payments in 1940, 1941, and 1942. As was mentioned already, this amount will be allotted to the sinking funds.

The members of the town council are elated with this last clause since the sinking funds had a deficit of \$250,000, at the end of 1939. With the investment of \$50,000, the financial situation of the town improved considerably and the town would more easily issue bond certificates.

This contract also includes certain amendments added by the members of the advisory committee^{xxii} selected by taxpayers at a special meeting held in February. One of the amendments, related to the initial proposition of the company, deals with buildings or new additions that the company could bring to the mill following the date of the signature of the contract. As a consequence of this amendment, the company gets a tax concession of one

million dollars only on all future expansions or constructions. The overage will be taxed on the same basis as the property of other taxpayers. This clause was effective upon the signing of the agreement. It does not include the building of new dwellings. Therefore, any new house built by Fraser Companies Limited will be taxed in the same way as any other property in town. There is an exception for houses that the company will buy but will not use as dwellings. These will be exempted from taxes.

In his editorial of April 18, 1940, Lucien Fortin, a journalist at *Le Madawaska*, maintains that the 1917 contract did not favour the town since it guaranteed Fraser Limited an almost total tax exemption. He therefore congratulates the negotiators (this time) who represented the Edmundston town council: "(...) the members of the town council, wanting to expedite a deal where the interests of the town would be taken into consideration, wanted to do things right and came up with good provisions^{xxiii}", he affirmed.

The town council and the advisory committee did a thorough study of this project before approving it. Lucien Fortin firmly believes that the town came out a winner in this agreement.

(...) Some would have liked to tax the Company on a higher valuation base than \$4,250,000 and even on the full value of the properties of said company. According to those who studied the issue, it would have been impossible to obtain (...). The town council, in agreement with the members of the advisory committee, have examined the issue so that the town would be most advantaged. It seems that, in the actual circumstances, the conditions of the new contract which will become effective in 1943 represent "the best that could be obtained" and that the town made a good deal^{xxiv}.

That agreement will be effective until 1958. Afterwards, the amount of taxes paid by the company will increase considerably. The exemptions period is over. In fact, in 1957, the

city of Edmundston did not think appropriate to renew the agreement or to negotiate a new one. xxv. Henceforth, the company's properties will be assessed based on their real value. These valuations represent about 50% of the total assessment of the town properties for the period covering 1958 to 1966. Being the only major industrial employee in the community, Fraser is also the biggest taxpayer. So, in 1958, its properties were assessed at \$11,500,000^{xxvi}. The following year, the valuation increased to \$11,717,350 and the tax paid amounted to \$234 347^{xxvii}. In the 1960s, property appraisals did not vary much. In 1962, for example, the amount is set at \$11,738,400 and the company pays \$528,000 in municipal and school taxes whereas in 1966, the properties are assessed at \$11,303,600 ^{xxviii}.

Fraser Companies and the Byrne Commission

We can retrace Fraser Companies' position with respect to tax assessments in a memorandum it presented before the Byrne Commission In 1963^{xxix}. In this memorandum, representatives of the company made many recommendations regarding taxes Fraser Companies must pay on its woodlots, Crown lands, properties other than its lands, private properties, cars, etc. Two sections of the memorandum are of particular interest here, that is, taxes on real estate property other than woodlands and the fiscal agreements^{xxx}.

As to real estate taxes, Fraser Companies regrets the lack of uniformity in the province. To attain this uniformity, the company recommends that a Provincial Office of Equalization and Appeal, as allowed by Article 85 of the Municipalities Act, be created. The Office would be responsible to see to it that local assessments be uniform and applied according to provincial standards. Also, there should be only one Assessment Law in New Brunswick, that binds all cities, towns, villages, counties and districts, and that the old Assessment Acts be revoked. Fraser adds that

the definition of “real estate property” should exclude machinery and equipment. Finally qualified municipal assessors should be hired and given guaranteed job security^{xxxii}.

Fraser Companies recommends the abolishment of taxes on personal ownership and that a graduated business tax be created based on a percentage of the assessed value of real estate; this percentage should be set by legislation and be the same for similar businesses throughout the province. Next, the company concentrates on fiscal agreements. Fraser Companies Limited owns and operates three major manufacturing establishments in New Brunswick. Prior to the beginning of each company, fiscal agreements were negotiated with municipalities where they were located. In 1962, two of those agreements were still in force. The agreement with the town of Edmundston ended in 1957 and this city refused to renew it or even to re-open negotiation for a new agreement^{xxxiii}.

As stated by Fraser- based on the present taxation system (which is not uniform), it is essential that all industry requiring huge capital investments should have the possibility to negotiate a fiscal agreement. Without those agreements, the industry would be placed in a position of uncertainty as to the amount of taxes it should pay annually. Furthermore, there is a serious possibility, and, in fact a probability, that a business would bear a heavier tax burden than its competitors since the system is not uniform.

Fraser Companies Limited holds that, following the creation of a uniform and equal system of assessment as recommended by their memorandum, the fiscal agreements will not longer be required since the industry will be able to forecast with reasonable precision the exact valuation of buildings before their construction. By virtue of such an assessment system, fiscal agreements should not be allowed either by general or special legislation except as indicated hereinafter. The presence of existing fiscal agreements creates a problem but the partners in those agreements should be

encouraged to terminate their agreements within a period not exceeding five years after the adoption of a new tax assessment system^{xxxiii}.

While favouring the abolition of long-term fiscal agreements, Fraser Company leaves the door open for short-term tax exemptions. So, the new industry, whether by way of new installations or an expansion of existing installations, is very important and necessary for the future well being of the province and of its people. It could be appropriate to alleviate taxes in these cases. Fraser's experience in Edmundston is the basis of this position. The municipalities, therefore, should have the authority to negotiate non-renewable fiscal agreements for such installations or for the expansion of existing facilities for periods of up to five years and not more. Such an authorization must be defined by legislation that is applicable to all municipalities in the province. This legislation should also make provisions for a progression in the amount of taxes due based on a graduated scale over the period and that entire taxes be charged afterwards.^{xxxiv}

The final report of the Byrne Commission reveals that some recommendations reflect those proposed by Fraser Company Limited. The members of the Commission underline the lack of uniformity in the present system and the numerous injustices that ensue. Some individuals and companies often pay more compared to others located in other municipalities. They recommend the abolition of the existing legislation and the adoption of a new Municipalities Act, which would be implemented throughout the province. Municipal taxation would then be uniform and the basis of the property tax would exclude machinery.^{xxxv}

As in the case of Fraser, the members of the Commission recognized the lack of training for tax assessors in office.

(...) uniformity depends in large measure on the quality of the assessments and, for that reason, we are seriously aware of the qualifications and

training of the assessors now working...What must be done is to add to the system a comparatively large number of better qualified assessors^{xxxvi}.

All property and business tax assessments in the province must be done by a qualified personnel recommended by the Municipal Affairs Commission. To insure that good candidates are recruited, not only should qualifications be raised but also their salaries so as to make the profession of assessor more attractive.

With regards to fiscal agreements, the Byrne Commission has a different opinion from that of Fraser. The members of the Commission uphold that: (...) *There is no doubt that the main reason municipalities allow these concessions is that otherwise, companies would be inclined to build elsewhere and, by so doing, reduce jobs opportunities. But the competition between municipalities on this point makes them pay dearly for this objective... All municipalities would like to see that competition come to an end and be relieved of the necessity of granting local concessions by private or special Acts...*^{xxxvii}.

They consider that only the province, and not the municipalities, should undertake measures to attract and keep industries in New Brunswick. According to them, municipalities agree since they awarded large exemptions that did not always bring the expected benefits. The members of the Commission continue by stating that all provinces west of Quebec have eliminated or are in the process of eliminating municipal tax concessions or restrict them considerably. Quebec is also going that way.

In Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, provincial governments take the initiative to encourage new industries to set up operations in less developed municipalities. A similar program is in place in Nova Scotia and is very successful. New Brunswick must follow their example and adopt a new type of assistance program for the industry. However, the nature of the concessions and assistance

packages should be decided in advance and that information should be made public. Also, assistance granted to the industry should be on a limited time basis^{xxxviii}.

According to the Commission, considering the dismal condition of the system, many industries are over-taxed as are certain taxpayers. The proposed reforms, according to the Commission, remove all justification for any future fiscal concessions. In the future to protect industrial and commercial property from over taxation, members of the Commission ask that a new law guarantee that the rate of municipal taxation on all business properties established inside towns, cities, and villages be 1/2% of the assessed value. If these properties are located outside the limits of cities, towns, villages or local service districts, companies shall pay only the school tax^{xxxix}.

Faced with a uniform tax system throughout the province, new businesses will not have to worry about the municipality offering bigger concessions and will be able to choose freely the ideal site for their installations. Consequently, fiscal agreements should be terminated by a provincial act. So that no adjustment problem affects the businesses, the Commission suggests that the amendment be applied over a period of 5 years. The fiscal agreements will be completely abolished at the start of the sixth year following the adoption of the new Act^{xl}.

In 1965-66 and 1967, Acts on assessment, municipalities and real estate taxation would be amended^{xli}. These reforms arise from the Byrne Commission Report and take into consideration some recommendations of the Commission. As to the aspects that are of interest to us, that is a uniform system, the training of the assessors, and the fiscal agreements, we note certain changes. First of all, a uniform system of taxation is established throughout the province. Also it is indicated that the Minister of Municipal Affairs is responsible for keeping the assessment lists of all personal and business properties in the province.

Individuals and companies can ask for a revision of their assessments if they think they are not evaluated fairly. There is no further precision on the salaries or qualifications of the assessors. Fiscal agreements will be abolished in 1965. Agreements reached before November 1, 1965 will not be affected by the law. They will remain valid and respected until their date of expiration. Section 18 (2) of the Act stipulates that: *Notwithstanding the provisions of any other public or private Act, where, before November 19, 1965, a person was entitled to a tax concession under any public or private Act or any agreement entered into with or granted by a municipality under the provisions of such Act, that person is not required to pay by way of taxes on real property, including business assessment, in any year any sum or sums greater in the aggregate than would have been payable to a municipality for such year under such public or private Act or agreement during the term specified there in and any extension of such term provided for therein under the law as it existed on November 19, 1965*^{xlii}.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs will establish the amount of taxes to be paid annually by those who are eligible for fiscal arrangements as defined by section 18(2) of the Assessment Act^{xliii}. Furthermore, section 19 of the Act stipulates that the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick shall name a president and four other persons to sit on a Tax Agreement Board. These persons will confirm the amount of taxes to be paid already established by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and shall proceed to make adjustments if necessary^{xliiv}.

If we look over the assessments of the Fraser properties for the years 1968 to 1974, we notice important reductions. The 1967 reforms are certainly responsible for these changes. However, another factor can explain these changes. At the end of the 1960s, *Fraser Companies* sells most of its houses, lots, its hotel, its farm and adjacent buildings. It keeps only the dwellings belonging to its senior executive officers. The assessment of its properties in Edmundston therefore includes

several houses, the lots it kept, the hydroelectric plant and the groundwood and chemical pulp mills.

In 1968, the property assessment rates are fixed at 2.57% and Fraser properties in Edmundston are valued at \$5,516,380. It will then pay \$141,770.96 in municipal taxes, including \$122,427.09 for its mills.^{xliv} The following year, it will pay nearly the same amount, that is \$141,857.57^{xlvi}. During the 1970s, the amount of taxes to be paid will gradually increase. In 1970, Fraser Company properties in Edmundston are assessed at \$6,192,900 and its taxes amount to \$158,538.24^{xlvii}. In 1971, the company pays \$202,137.60 in municipal taxes of which \$182,195.20 represent the pulp mill taxes^{xlviii}. Two years later, its properties are assessed at \$7,949,160 and it pays \$213,037.48 in taxes. The rate of assessment is then fixed at 2.68%^{xlix}. Finally, in 1974, Fraser Company pays \$213,699.53 in taxes on all its Edmundston properties¹.

Agreements on the Sale and Rental of Lands

Apart from the assessment of its properties, Fraser Companies and the city of Edmundston signed numerous agreements during the period covered by this study. As we mentioned in the introduction of this article, we limited ourselves to the principal agreements concerning the sale and rent of lands between the two said partners. Numerous contracts involved with right of way on properties or right to dig on properties were put aside. To examine agreements signed between the town and the company we have researched the *Madawaska Books of Records*, which are kept at the Edmundston deeds office.

As to the sale and rental of lands, the first agreement was signed at the end of 1922. The company then transfers a lot to the town for the symbolic sum of \$1. The president of Fraser, Archibald Fraser, and his secretary,

William Matheson, signed the document^{li}. In 1925, after a long debate, the town grants permission to Fraser Company to dig and pass pipes under the town streets for the transport of pulp from the Edmundston pulp mill to the Madwaska, Maine mill. The Company then agrees to complete the works in the shortest time and to resurface the streets^{lii}.

In December 1942, the company submits a demand for the rental of lots on Lawson Street and on 19th Avenue. The town grants the request. The following year, the town and the company negotiate a lease that will be renewed for a period of 99 years^{liii}. In 1944, they negotiate the sale of lots located on Rice Street, Church Street, 19th Avenue and Lawson Street^{liv}. In 1949, 1950, 1956, 1957 and 1959, the two partners sign a contract concerning the sale of lots on the following streets; Matheson, 31st Avenue, 34th Avenue, 19th Avenue, Fraser, Lilly, 17th avenue, Church, Park, and Squateck. In a few instances, *Fraser's* keeps a right of way on land sold to the town^{lv}.

For the period of the 1960s, we found about ten contracts related to the sale and rent of lots between the two partners. Those lots are located inside the city limits^{lvi}. From 1970 to 1975, we found few transactions between Fraser and the city of Edmundston. Land sales were negotiated three times in that period^{lvii}.

II. Town-Company Relations

Composition of Municipal Councils

Researched documents give very little information on the relations between the two

1 partners from 1917 to 1974. It is therefore difficult to grasp the nature of those relations during negotiations. Media is not concerned by this, except on two occasions: the question of the schools tax in 1919 and the construction of the paper mill in Madawaska, Maine in 1925. Even in the *Minute Books* of the town council meetings, very few propositions or comments

enlighten us on this important factor. This tells us that relations were generally good during those years. If problems existed, they are well hidden.

The composition of successive municipal councils in Edmundston between 1918 and 1974 can give hints on the behaviour and attitude of council members in relation to Fraser Limited. The company did not name representatives/councillors during that period. There is no question of any direct interference by the company as was the case in certain Quebec municipalities. However, the company engaged in a type of indirect interference on the municipal administration. To assess the fact, we have tried to identify mayors and councilmen along with their trade or profession. We have also tried to determine how their education and their personal interests could have bearing on their decisions.

Eleven mayors succeeded each other from 1918 to 1974. Certain mayors held the position for many years. H.E.Marmen was mayor for 15 years, J.H. Proulx for 10 years, Max D. Cormier for 9 years and B.F. Nadeau during 6 years^{lviii}. Table 1 indicates the trade and profession of the Edmundston mayors.

Table 1 Trades or Professions of Edmundston Mayors (1918-1974)

Trade/Profession	
Number	
Lawyers	2
Accountant	1
Customs Officer	1
Businessmen//Merchants	4
Doctors	2
Fraser Employee	1

Sources: *Annuaire de la cité d'Edmundston*, 1938-1959; City of Edmundston, *Liste des maires et conseillers (1905-1989)*; Interviews; *Le Madawaska* (1918-1974).

We soon realize that most mayors had a liberal arts education or are businessmen/merchants. Only one was an employee of Fraser. Roger E. Morin, who was mayor in 1969, was a foreman at the Edmundston mill.

Many persons were councilmen during that period. Two representatives were elected in each of the four wards^{lix}. We could not retrace the trade and profession of all those councillors. However, even with this limited data, trends appear. Many councillors are businessmen /merchants. We note the presence of general stores owners, grocers, barbers, a dairy owner, bakers, plumbers, innkeepers, etc.

Some councilmen exercise a profession (lawyer, dentist, medical doctor, etc.) whereas others work for the Canadian National Railways or are customs officers. Among the individuals that were identified, eight work for Fraser. Two are managers, one is director, one is administrator, two are foremen, and two are mill workers^{lx}.

A substantial number of mayors and councilmen are merchants or professionals. But they all have to gain from the existence and growth of Fraser Companies. In addition to being a taxpayer and a purchaser of goods and services, Fraser Company creates jobs, and pays salaries that increase the purchasing power of local costumers. Fraser employees buy in the local stores and pay for professional services. In a period of expansion and prosperity, more jobs are created and more people can be hired. The town then undergoes a demographic expansion and the economy prospers. But in a crisis period, Fraser workers, the townspeople, and merchants are subjected to the consequences of reduced paid time, lost salaries and jobs. The purchasing power of workers declines and they spend less. The small businesses experience a decline in their business income.

The councillors and mayor who work at Fraser also have much to gain from the company's prosperity. First of all, their jobs are secured^{lxi}. Also, if the company prospers, workers can negotiate better working conditions and increased salaries.

We could not detect any sign that Fraser exerted pressure on its workers occupying positions on the municipal council during the period covered by this study. However, the presence of workers and especially of managers could have been beneficial to the company. F.X. Bélanger, for example, who was member of the council from 1938 to 1940, is there during the negotiations of a new contract related to the taxation of the company's properties in 1940. We remember that the company obtained then certain tax concessions. The presence of Mr.Bélanger could have been beneficial.

Another manager, Marcel Barsalou, is also member of the city council in 1964. During his mandate there were no major negotiations with the company. However, we note that strong relations between the town council and the company are favoured by the town council. In March 1964, for example, we point out that the city council holds a supper with the Fraser Executive Board. It was then said: (...) *The Council of the City of Edmundston hoped to maintain good relations and collaboration between Fraser Company and the City by hosting a private supper with the Executive Board members, Tuesday night in the Prussian room of the New Royal Hotel*^{lxii}.

We can imagine the nature of discussions and the cosy atmosphere that prevailed at such meetings. Therefore, mayors and councillors of the city of Edmundston are very dependent on the Company, having everything to gain if the company produces good financial results. This being said, it seems that, generally, the city and the company are on good terms.

Usually, the company submits its requests to the council who then proceeds to study the request or name a committee responsible for coming up with recommendations. Subsequently, agreements are concluded. Most of the time, the city accepts the requests with very few modifications. Sometimes, a few amendments are inserted. It does not seem that a cold or an open war existed between the negotiators during the period covered by this study. Fraser Company generally obtains what it asks for. For succeeding councils, the presence of the pulp and paper company in town has great benefits. The town is, therefore, very conciliatory towards the company.

A Controversial Issue: the School Tax

Even if, generally, the climate is quiet, disagreements between the city and Fraser Company need to be underlined. We already mentioned the controversy of 1925 at the beginning of the article. Another controversial issue was the schools tax that the company refused to pay in 1919. Our main resource on this question is the local media since very little information is provided by the official documents of the company or of the town council. In 1912 and 1917, *Fraser Limited* negotiated contracts with the Edmundston town council and obtained certain concessions such as an exemption on municipal taxes for nearly all its properties in town. The agreements between the two partners, as we have seen above, are ratified by an Act of the Provincial Legislature^{lxiii}. During the negotiations, neither the School Board nor the taxpayers were consulted to signify their agreement to concessions granted by the agreement.

In 1919, the company contends that it is exempt of school taxes on the same assessment basis as for the municipal taxes. It refuses to pay taxes on a higher valuation^{lxiv}. For its part, the School Board contends, based on facts and its lawyer's advice, that the company is not exempt of one cent from paying

school taxes and that two corporations cannot legally bind, by contract or otherwise, a third corporation without its consent. Furthermore, the intent and the writings of the Acts passed in the Legislature at the request of the town and company do not prescribe exemption from school taxes on the company's properties located in the school district of Edmundston^{lxv}.

The case is brought before the courts of New Brunswick. After deliberation, a judgement is rendered by the Appeals Court of the province. The court's decision favours the School Board. It is foreseen that the case will be contested by the company and brought before the Supreme Court of Canada.

According to the regional weekly paper, this judgment is very important since Fraser Companies Limited own large properties in Edmundston which would have been nearly all exempted from school taxes for a period of 25 years if the Court of Appeals' decision would have been different. " If we consider also the urgent need to build, in Edmundston, a public school with 14 departments, it is easy to understand what this favourable decision means for our children »^{lxvi}.

We are left to understand, without giving too many details that some people tried to dissuade several supporters of the School Board such as doctors Albert-M. Sormany and J.-Emile Simard and also their lawyer Mr. Max Cormier, from presenting their case in front of the tribunals.

All means were taken to convince the town's tax assessors, the town council, the citizens, and even the members of the Legislative Assembly, to discourage the three persons named above, and to win, by indirect means without having to appeal to the tribunals, for a decision in this^{lxvii}.

Also, we add that the success of this case represents an important sum for the town taxpayers in the school district of Edmundston. They are encouraged to thank those who,

“without failing, have led successfully a difficult battle, against a millionaire company”.^{lxviii}

Fraser Companies, Limited, disagreeing with the New Brunswick Court of Appeals’ decision, brings its case to the Supreme Court of Canada. The decision is rendered in 1920 and, again the judgment is favourable to the Edmundston School Board^{lxix}. The latter had to fight the case for nearly two years. Following the decision of the highest court of the land, the company must then pay its school taxes in Edmundston. “This fair decision will delight the friends of education in our school district. We absolutely need a new school in Edmundston and if Fraser properties would have been exempted from the school taxes, a heavy burden would have rested on the shoulders of the taxpayers”.^{lxx}

After this article of May 6, 1920, there is complete silence from the media on this topic. It seems, therefore, that the company surrender to the verdict no longer having a choice. For once it had to admit defeat.

It is interesting to emphasize the role played by Mr. Max Cormier in both of the important courts actions that opposed the taxpayer’s representatives to Fraser Companies. A lawyer by trade, Max Cormier would not hesitate to defend the interests of the citizens of his town. In the case of the school taxes, he is the School Board’s attorney. At the same time, he is also editor of the weekly *Le Madawaska*, a newspaper that supported the School Board in this matter and which was elated with its victory. Lawyer Cormier, in spite of all the pressure exerted on him, never let go until the case was resolved..

He will also be involved in the matter of the construction of the paper mill in 1925. As of 1920, the newspaper that he publishes is concerned about the possibility that Fraser is planning to build a paper mill outside Edmundston. Five years later, when he is mayor of Edmundston, Fraser requests

authorization to dig and install a pipeline to transport pulp produced in the Edmundston mill to a paper mill that Fraser plans to build in Madawaska, Maine. Cormier and his municipal council will hesitate for a long time before granting the authorization. Incidentally, Max Cormier sits on the committee assigned to study the company’s request. This time, the company will come out a clear winner.

In addition to these controversial questions, the media reports another incident that irritated some taxpayers in 1930. In June of that year, it is learned that the Vice-President of the Canadian National Railways, Mr. R. L. Burnap, will be passing through Edmundston. The local Chamber of Commerce is anxious to meet with him and prepares a Memoir to draw Mr. Burnap’s attention to certain facts justifying numerous and urgent improvements to the Canadian National Railway in Edmundston^{lxxi}.

The meeting is granted but the mayor, the president and other officers of the Chamber of Commerce are informed that Mr. Burnap and his colleagues had already planned a meeting with the executives of Fraser Limited for the same hour. Therefore, “(...) the meeting with the officers of the Chamber of Commerce was very brief; it was held in haste, while standing with hat in hand, with just enough time for presentations and customary greetings”.^{lxxii} The president of the Chamber of Commerce briefly explains the improvements brought to the Canadian National service in the preceding years and adds that other improvements are now needed.

The author of the article in the local newspaper, Gaspard Boucher, maintains that he does not contest Mr. Fraser and Fraser Company’s right to meet with the authorities of the Canadian National Railways. He also does not reproach Mr. Burnap and his companions from meeting with the administrators of the company. On the other hand, with some resentment, he reminds Fraser Company that although it is Canadian National Railways

biggest customer in Edmundston, it is not the only one.

The Chamber of Commerce, affirms Boucher, represents all the businessmen of the town; it works for the development of our town and for the best interests of a population of six thousand souls. As such, its officers should receive a bit more consideration when they meet with the authorities of the railroads of the country, without mentioning the actual services that this organization had rendered to the national railroads in the past, and other services it could provide in the future^{lxxiii}.

We find no comments regarding this incident in the minutes of the municipal council meetings. The councillors seem to forget quickly the problems that can surface with the presence of such an business in Edmundston.

Fraser Company's Interference in Municipal Affairs

After examining the controversial issues and the agreements concluded between Fraser Company and the town of Edmundston, and after having reviewed the minutes of the meetings of the various municipal councils as well as their composition, we cannot say that the company intervened directly in municipal affairs during the years covered by this study. No council/manager system or any other form of direct control by the company existed as it did in the Mauricie at that time^{lxxiv}. The town of Edmundston was incorporated in 1905. Therefore, municipal institutions were in place before the arrival of Fraser^{lxxv}. Moreover, we did not find any indication demonstrating that the company was involved in municipal elections.

On the other hand, as Serge Côté takes notice of in Bathurst, several elements allow us to believe that Fraser could have exercised an indirect control or at least some influence on successive municipal councils^{lxxvi}. First of all, this company wields much power in the

community since it is, during our period of survey, the main employer in town. It holds an advantageous position during negotiations. We cannot forget that many businessmen, many merchants sat at the municipal council table. Therefore, they all have to gain by the presence of that business.

In the minutes of the municipal council meetings, the influence of Fraser Company is often not noticed. However, when we examine the contracts negotiated between the two parties in 1912, 1917 and 1940, the power wielded by company in Edmundston is obvious. In fact, the company succeeds in getting substantial taxes concessions. In 1912 and 1917, the taxpayers were not consulted during the negotiations. In 1940, a committee is created to examine the question of influence and to protect the town interests but, even then, Fraser can negotiate a favourable contract. an interesting fact is worth noticing for the year 1940. A company official, Mr. F.X. Bélanger, is a member of the municipal council; in fact, he sits at the council table since 1938. He is present during the negotiations that lead to the agreement of 1940. He can defend the interests of the company. In the same period, a letter addressed to the council leads us to believe that the company has hired men recommended by the town council. We can read:

Reading a letter from Mr. V. H. Emory, Superintendent of the Fraser CIEs Ltd. addressed to His Worship Mayor Proulx covering the employment of men recommended by the Town Council and the co-operation of the Company is very much appreciated by the Council^{lxxvii}.

That letter was received two months after the agreement was signed. One can wonder if this demand was part of the negotiations or if Fraser Companies complies with a demand from the town following the obtaining of favourable tax concessions for a period of 25 years. When the contract expires,

in 1958, the town will refuse to negotiate or renew such a contract.

The school tax issue can give us a clue on the influence exerted by the company on the town and the community. As we saw above, in 1919, Fraser Company refused to pay the school taxes on a valuation higher than that fixed in the contract signed by the town and the company in 1917. According to the company, the contract of 1917 covers all municipal taxes including the school taxes. The town does not question the company's position but the School Board brings the matter in front of the courts^{lxxviii}. It should be noted that the School Board's advice was never sought during the negotiations of 1912, 1916, and 1917. Before the final decision is reached, a press release appears and infers that certain individuals attempted to dissuade the representatives of the School Board from proceeding in front of the courts. The physicians and the School Board lawyer do not give in to pressures and Fraser Company loses its case.

The issue of the construction of a mill in Madawaska, Maine, in 1925, illustrates clearly the influence exerted by the company, how little the advice of the town and its citizens is taken into account, and the inability of the taxpayers' representatives to affect Fraser strategies. When Fraser seeks permission to dig to install a pipeline that will transport pulp produced in Edmundston to a mill it intends to build on the American side, the councilmen are confounded. There were rumours that the company planned the construction of a mill elsewhere but those rumours had never been confirmed.. The council was not consulted or alerted of the company's plan. Faced with this demand, the members of the town council are placed in a dilemma and delay their authorization hoping that Fraser will reconsider and build its mill in Edmundston. That would not happen. Backed to the wall, the municipal councillors have no recourse and must grant the permission. In fact, Fraser declares it will go ahead with the construction in Madawaska with or without their permission. Boucher, the journalist who was at first against the project then in favour

exemplifies the position of the elected councilmen. At first he fears the loss of jobs for the citizens of Edmundston and then, following the company's ultimatum, he climbs in the bandwagon and supports the project.

After the famous debate of 1925, we did not uncover other controversial dossiers that would have caused a confrontation between the elected officials and the representatives of the company. There was a campaign, in the 1940s and 50s, aimed at ceasing operations on Sundays. However it involved clergymen rather than the town. Anyway, the company wins its cause and continues its operations seven days a week. It seems that in the course of years covered by the survey, the company could adopt its development strategies without too much trouble,. Even when the planning would imply laying off employees, town and media stayed mute. At the end of the 1960s, for example, following threats of a take-over, Fraser Company does go ahead with a new development strategy and lay-offs. It builds a new mechanical pulp mill and a new wood room. To make its operations profitable, the company will modernize and automate its equipment. That will entail displacements of workers and some lay-offs at its Edmundston mills. But again, there is no reaction coming from the elected officials or the local media.

Conclusion

From 1918 to 1974, the city of Edmundston and the members of the municipal council were not able to influence the policies and strategies drawn-up by Fraser Company. The Company, because of the weight it carried in the community, obtained what it wanted, including substantial tax concessions for more than forty years. The elected officials and the taxpayers are not consulted or even alerted to changes introduced by the company. They must follow suit and often remain quiet when those changes occur. When they intervene, as they did in 1925, their efforts have no bearing.

Fraser Company wields an important control, however indirect, upon the municipal apparatus. We did not uncover examples of direct involvement by the company in municipal affairs or in the electoral process. Edmundston's institutions are already well established before the arrival of the company. However, as in the case of Quebec (noted by Jean-Pierre Charland) and of Bathurst (noted by Serge Côté), we believe that influences behind the scene allowed the company to implement its strategies. Serge Côté goes further and infers that the administrators and owners of Consolidated Bathurst developed alliances with the local elite to attain its objectives. In Edmundston, there were surely influential factors since mayors and councillors benefited from the presence of the company in the community. In fact, for most of the leaders of the small business community, salaries paid by Fraser Companies allowed them to have good business.

Like Serge Côté, we can also conclude that the elected municipal officials, the citizens of Edmundston and its workers had little impact on Fraser decisions. Its important hold on the community, has, in a certain way, facilitated its operations during the period covered by the survey.

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- i. «Sur nos gardes», *Le Madawaska*, April 8 1920, p. 1.
 - ii. City of Edmundston, *Minute Books*, box A1230 (1923-1937), meeting of January 19, 1925, p. 58.
 - iii. Gaspard Boucher, « Nos échevins sont pris dans un dilemme », *Le Madawaska*, January 22, 1925, p. 1.
 - iv. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - v. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - vi. City of Edmundston, *Minute Books*, box A1230 (1923-1937), meeting of February 18, 1925, p. 62.
 - vii. *Ibid.* meeting of March 26, 1925, p. 69. The text is faithfully reproduced.
 - viii. Gaspard Boucher, « Cette permission », *Le Madawaska*, April 2, 1925, p. 1.
 - ix. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - x. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - xi. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - xii. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - xiii. City of Edmundston, *Minute Books*, box A1230 (1923-1937), meeting of June 1st, 1925, p. 83-84.
 - xiv. See L. Jackson, *L'enjeu municipal des villes mono-*

industrielles isolées; Schefferville 1956-1980, Montréal, McGill Subartic Research Papers, 1981, 27 pages; Claude Bellavance, « Patronat et entreprise au 20^e siècle: l'exemple mauricien », *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, vol. 38, no 2, fall of 1984, p. 181-201 and Jean-Pierre Charland, *Les pâtes et papiers au Québec 1880-1980: Technologies, travail et travailleurs*, Québec, Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, document de recherche no 23, 1990, 447 pages.

xv. About taxes concessions, Jean-Pierre Charland and Alain Dion notice the same phenomenon for the paper mills of the Mauricie. Instead of municipal taxes, the big companies obtain either total exemptions or pay fixed amounts. Jean-Pierre Charland, *op.cit.*, p. 70 and Alain Dion, *L'industrie des pâtes et papiers en Mauricie 1887-1929*, thèse de maîtrise en études québécoises, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, 1981, p. 40 et 145.

xvi.2 George V, Chap. 104, 1912, p. 464, « Assessment of Fraser Limited ».

xvii.8 George V, Chap. 65, 1917, p. 177, « Contract to amend 2 George V. 104 ».

xviii. *Ibid.*, p. 177-183.

xix.8 George V, Chap. 65, 1918, p. 376-382, « An Act to Amend Chapter 104 of 2 George V, 1912, as amended by Chapter 65 of 8 George V, 1917, relating to Fraser Limited and the Town of Edmundston. All provisions of said Chapter and amending Act to ensure to benefit Fraser Companies, Limited ».

xx.4 George VI, Chap. 50, 1940, *op.cit.*

xxi. « Le contrat a été signé lundi », *Le Madawaska*, April 18, 1940, p. 1 et 9.

xxii. *Fraser Companies Limited* presented a proposition of agreement for approbation by the town council. The council studied the proposition and, in order to obtain their input, called a special meeting in early February, of representatives of all local organisations and of the principal businessmen to present them with the main points of the project. An advisory committee was formed to make an exhaustive study of the proposition, along with the town council.

xxiii. Lucien Fortin, « Le nouveau contrat », *Le Madawaska*, April 18, 1940, p. 3.

xxiv. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

xxv. *Mémoire de la compagnie Fraser à la Commission Royale sur la finance et la taxation municipale au Nouveau-Brunswick*, Fredericton, novembre 1963.

xxvi. *Assessment for the City of Edmundston*, 1958, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, A2891, film F10431.

xxvii. *Assessment for the City of Edmundston*, 1959, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, A2891, film F10431. We notice that the company sold its dwellings during that year.

xxviii. *Assessment for the City of Edmundston*, 1962 and 1966, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, A2891, films F10431 and F10433. In 1961, properties are assessed at \$ 11,762,450, in 1963 at \$ 11,723,700, in 1964 at \$ 11,720,700 and in 1965, at \$ 11,690,600. In this assessment document we find few details on the first

years. We are shown only the amount of the total valuation of the company's properties without any description of those properties. See: *Assessment for the City of Edmundston*, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965, Provincial Archives of New-Brunswick, A2891, films F10431 and F10432 as well as the *Mémoire de la compagnie Fraser...*, *op.cit.*

xxix. This commission was named by the provincial government to inquire into the finance and municipal taxation system of New Brunswick. The memoir of the *Fraser* company was presented by M.K.W. Matheson, vice-president, M.F.B. Richards, controller, and M.H.M. Logan, associate controller.

xxx. We retained the two aspects related to the Edmundston operation, such as taxes paid by the *Fraser Companies* on its properties in the town and the fiscal contracts negotiated with the town. Like *Fraser*, many other organisations and companies believed that the municipalities were in disarray and that the tax assessment system should get a complete overhaul. The Byrne Commission therefore was mandated to research the pertinence of maintaining the actual tax system or to increase the municipal revenues. It also aimed to lighten the municipal tax burden imposed on citizens and industries by substituting or creating new or different sources of income, or to elaborate a new taxation structure.

xxxi. *Mémoire de la Compagnie Fraser...*, *op.cit.*, p. 10 to 12.

xxxii. *Ibid.*, p. 15-16. En 1962, *Fraser* still has fiscal agreements with the town of Newcastle and the County of Restigouche.

xxxiii. *Ibid.*, p. 15-16.

xxxiv. *Ibid.*, p. 15-16.

xxxv. *Rapport de la Commission royale sur la finance et la taxation municipales au Nouveau-Brunswick*, Fredericton, 1963, p. 13, 14, 40 et 202. The commissioners were then: Edward G. Byrne (president), Arthur E. Andrews, Alexandre J. Boudreau, Uldéric Nadeau and Charles N. Wilson.

xxxvi. *Ibid.*, p. 239-240.

xxxvii. *Ibid.*, p. 314. In annex of the report, we find a list of municipalities and counties of New-Brunswick who had signed such agreements. Many pulp and paper companies still profit, in 1962, from tax exemption. Among those are: *Irving Pulp & Paper Ltd*, in Lancaster, *Bathurst Power & Paper Co*, *George Eddy Co Ltd* in Bathurst, *NB International Paper Co* in Dalhousie, *Bathurst Power & Paper Co Ltd*, in the County of Gloucester, *J.D. Irving*, in Queens County, *NB International Paper Co*, in the County of Restigouche.

xxxviii. *Rapport de la Commission...*, *op.cit.*, p. 334-335.

xxxix. *Ibid.*, p. 315. The commissioners foresee that all business properties in the province shall pay a uniform school tax of 1,5% on the double market value of the real estate.

xl. *Ibid.*, p. 315-316. According to the commissioners, those measures will protect businesses against the

tendency to overtax. This is necessary in regions where few businesses are established since the latter provide a large amount of tax revenue.

xli. 14-15 *Elizabeth II*, 1965-1966, Chap. 110, «Assessment Act (Bill 118)», New Brunswick Acts, Fredericton, 1965-1966, p. 1-15; 16 *Elizabeth II*, 1967, Chap. 25, «An Act to Amend the Assessment Act (Bill 8)», New Brunswick Acts, Fredericton, May 1967, p. 226-233; 16 *Elizabeth II*, 1967, Chap. 56, «An Act to Amend the Municipalities Act (Bill 38)», New Brunswick Acts, Fredericton, May 1967, p. 315-324; 16 *Elizabeth II*, 1967, «An Act to Amend the Real Property Tax Act (Bill 65)», New Brunswick Acts, Fredericton, May 1967, p. 329-330. xlii. 14-15 *Elizabeth II*, *op.cit.*, section 18(2).

xliii. *Ibid.*, section 18(3).

xliv. *Ibid.*, section 19. Sections 18 and 19 of the Assessment Act will be revoked in 1982. One can conclude that all tax concessions are then expired. Such articles are not needed.

xlv. *Assessment Roll for Taxation Year 1968*, p. 1147-1387, Corporation d'information géographique du Nouveau-Brunswick, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fredericton, N.-B.

xlvi. *Assessment Roll for Taxation Year 1969*, p. 1155-1398, Corporation d'information géographique du Nouveau-Brunswick, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fredericton, N.-B.

xlvi. *Assessment and Tax Roll for Taxation Year 1970*, p. 922-1090, Corporation d'information géographique du Nouveau-Brunswick, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fredericton, N.-B.

xlvi. *Rôle d'évaluation et d'impôt pour l'année fiscale 1971, Cité d'Edmundston*, p. 969-1151, Corporation d'information géographique du Nouveau-Brunswick, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fredericton, N.-B.

xlix. *Rôle d'évaluation et d'impôt pour l'année fiscale 1973, Cité d'Edmundston*, p. 987-1173, Corporation d'information géographique du Nouveau-Brunswick, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fredericton, N.-B.

l. *Rôle d'évaluation et d'impôt pour l'année fiscale 1974, Cité d'Edmundston*, p. 988-1181, Corporation d'information géographique du Nouveau-Brunswick, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fredericton, N.-B.

li. In this document, the location of the lot is not indicated. *Madawaska Book of Records*, vol. 6, O-3, p. 217, no 23837: «Deed Dated Nov. 30th 1922, Fraser Co. Ltd (Grantor), Town of Edmundston (Grantee), Received June 14, A.D., 1923».

lii. Max D. Cormier (mayor) and Thomas Guerrette (secretary) are the signatories for the town whereas Archibald Fraser (president) and William Matheson (secretary) are the signatories for *Fraser. Madawaska Book of Records*, vol. 6, W-3, p. 480, no 25509, «Pipeline License Fraser Companies, Limited and the Town of Edmundston», 15 August, 1925.

liii. *Fraser* pays ten dollars in rent to the town for those lots. *Madawaska Book of Records*, vol. 8, K-5, p. 321, no 39846, «Lease Dated May 10th A.D. 1943, The Town of Edmundston to Fraser Co. Ltd».

liv. *Madawaska Book of Records*, vol. 9, M-5, p. 92, no 40935, «Deed Dated May 1st, A.D. 1944, Town of Edmundston to Fraser Co. Ltd»; vol. 9, M-5, p. 102, no 40945, «Deed Dated May 2, A.D., 1944, Fraser Co. Ltd to the Town of Edmundston»; vol. 9, P-5, p. 115, no 42791, «Deed Dated July 19, A.D., 1945, Fraser Co. Ltd to the Town of Edmundston».

lv. *Madawaska Book of Records*, vol. 10, Y-5, p. 21, no 48072, «Deed Dated January 18th A.D., 1949, Fraser Co. Ltd Unto the Town of Edmundston»; vol. 10, Z-5, p. 2, no 48665, «Deed Dated June 17th A.D., 1949, Fraser Co. Ltd to the Town of Edmundston»; vol. 10, C-6, p. 40, no 50446, «Deed Dated August 29, A.D., 1950, The Town of Edmundston to Fraser Co. Ltd»; vol. 10, C-6, p. 35, no 50444, «Easement Dated August 29 A.D., 1950, Fraser Co. Ltd and the Town of Edmundston»; vol. 10, C-6, p. 95, no 50498, «Deed Dated August 29 A.D., 1950, Fraser Co. Ltd to Town of Edmundston»; vol. 10, I-6, p. 442, no 54654, «Deed Dated September 3rd A.D., 1953, Fraser Co. Ltd to the City of Edmundston»; vol. 11, Q-6, p. 228, no 59418, «Deed Dated October 31 A.D., 1956, Fraser Co. Ltd to the City of Edmundston»; vol. 11, S-6, p. 505, no 60893, «Deed Dated November 14 A.D., 1957, Fraser Co. Ltd to the City of Edmundston»; vol. 11, S-6, p. 506, no 60894, «Deed Dated November 14 A.D., 1957, Fraser Co. Ltd to the City of Edmundston»; vol. 12, Y-6, p. 133-134, no 64353, «Deed Dated December 3rd A.D., 1959, Fraser Co. Ltd to the City of Edmundston».

lvi. *Madawaska Book of Records*, vol. 13, M-7, p. 326, no 73007, «Easement Dated September 2nd 1964, Fraser Co. Ltd and the City of Edmundston» (lots 23e Avenue); vol. 13, M-7, p. 677, no 73295, «Lease Dated October 14th, 1964, Fraser Co. Ltd to the City of Edmundston» (lots 31e Avenue and Boulevard Hébert); vol. 13, Q-7, no 75472, «Deed Dated December 20th 1965, Fraser Co. Ltd (Grantor) and the City of Edmundston (Grantee)» (lots Burpee Street); vol. 13, T-7, p. 429, no 77011, «Deed Dated Sept. 20th, 1966, Fraser Co. Ltd (Grantor) and the City of Edmundston (Grantee)», (lots Boulevard Hébert and Martin Street); vol. 14, V-7, p. 451, no 78154, «Deed Dated April 27th 1967, Fraser Co. Ltd (Grantor) to the City of Edmundston (Grantee)» (lots Irene Street, Lilly, Vimy and Squatteck); vol. 14, W-7, p. 322, no 78593, «Easement Dated April 27th, 1967, Fraser Co. Ltd (Grantor) to the City of Edmundston (Grantee)» (lots Fraser Park); vol. 14, X-7, p. 472, no 79307, «Deed Dated November 23rd, 1967, Fraser Co. Ltd (Grantor) to the City of Edmundston (Grantee)» (lots Burpee Street); vol. 14, C-8, p. 339, no 82070, «Deed Dated July 6, 1967, City of Edmundston (Grantor) to Fraser Co. Ltd (Grantee)» (lots Carrier Street); vol. 14, E-8, p. 323, no 83189, «Deed Dated December 16, 1969, Fraser Co. Ltd (Grantor) to the City of Edmundston (Grantee)» (lost Centenaire and Ouellette streets).

lvii. *Madawaska Book of Records*, vol. 16, R-8, p. 8, no 86357, «This Indenture Made this 1st Day of April in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy One, Grantor: Fraser Co. Ltd, Grantee: City of

Edmundston» (lots Boulevard Hébert); vol. 16, T-8, p. 792, no 87048, «This Indenture Made this 6th Day of October A.D., 1971, Grantor: City of Edmundston, Grantee: Fraser Co. Ltd» (lots Vimy and Lilly streets); vol. 18, C-10, p. 613, no 97005, «This Indenture Made this 11th Day of February in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Five, Grantor: Fraser Co. Ltd, Grantee: City of Edmundston» (lots along the Madawaska River).

lviii. H.E. Marmen, an electrician and merchant, is mayor from 1948 to 1962. J.H. Proulx, a baker, occupies the position from 1936 to 1945. Lawyer Max D. Cormier is mayor from 1922 to 1930 and the accountant B.F. Nadeau, from 1963 to 1968. Cité d'Edmundston, *Liste des maires et conseillers (1905-1989)*.

lix. During the 1974 election, a councillor is elected in ward 5. However, in the next election there is a return to the four wards formula.

lx.F.X. Bélanger, freight and shipping manager, is councillor from 1938 to 1940. Marcel Barsalou, chemist and afterwards manager of the mill is councillor in 1964. J. Adrien Pelletier, personnel director, is councillor in 1974. Léo Rioux, an office worker, is councilor from 1941 to 1945. In regards to foremen, Oneil Couturier is councillor in 1960 and 1961 while Roger E. Morin is councillor from 1961 to 1968. In 1969, the latter is elected mayor. Mill workers, Rolland Blanchette is councillor in 1962 and 1963, and Ernest Ritchie sits in that position in 1967-1968 and also from 1971 to 1974.

lxi. Since family recruitment is a traditional practice, it is probable that some councillors have one or more members of their family working at the Fraser mill in Edmundston. The company's prosperity can therefore secure jobs not only to councillors but also to their brothers, uncles, cousins, friends, etc.

lxii. *Procès-verbal de la réunion du Conseil municipal d'Edmundston*, March 26, 1964, p. 1, Book kept at the Edmundston City Hall.

lxiii. 2 *George V*, Chap. 104, *op.cit.*, and 8 *George V*, Chap. 65, *op.cit.*

lxiv. «La Compagnie Fraser perd sa cause», *Le Madawaska*, September 25, 1919, p. 4.

lxv. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

lxvi. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

lxvii. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

lxviii. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

lxix. «La Compagnie Fraser perd sa cause à Ottawa», *Le Madawaska*, May 6 1920, p. 1.

lxx. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

lxxi. Gaspard Boucher, «Une entrevue écourtée», *Le Madawaska*, June 12 1930, p. 3.

lxxii. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

lxxiii. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

lxxiv. Claude Bellavance observes that kind of system (councillor/manager) in the Mauricie during the 1920s. After 1945, this kind of system disappears gradually. Claude Bellavance, *op.cit.*

lxxv. Jean-Pierre Charland observes the same situation in Quebec. He maintains that, in town where municipal

institutions are well established and where inhabitants have more jobs possibilities, this interference cannot exist. Jean-Pierre Charland, *op.cit.*, p. 228.

lxxvi. Our findings are similar to those of Serge Côté who studied the situation in Bathurst. Serge Côté, *Les voies de la monopolisation: le cas de l'usine de Bathurst*, thèse de Ph.D., Université de Montréal, 1978.

lxxvii. Cité d'Edmundston, *Minute Books*, box A1231 (1938-1945), meeting of July 19, 1940, p. 221.

lxxviii. However, the town is indirectly involved since one of the representatives of the School Board, Dr J.-Émile Simard is a municipal council member in 1919 and will be mayor in 1920 and 1921. Another representative of the School Board, the lawyer Max D. Cormier, will be mayor from 1922 to 1930. A third representative of the School Board, Dr Albert Sormany was a member of the Council in 1917 and 1918 and mayor in 1914. Cité d'Edmundston, *Minute Books*, box A1229 (1909-1923) and box A1230 (1923-1937).