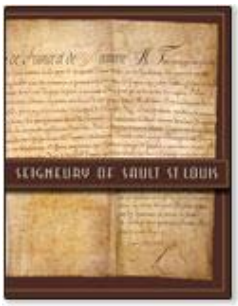
Chief & Council

- Chief and Council
- Office of the Council of Chiefs
- Council Communique
- Seigneury of Sault St.Louis
- Laws
- Dreams Take Flight Project

PRINT

ONKWAHÓNTSA TSI KAHNAWÁHERE

Seigneury of Sault St.Louis



The Seigneury of Sault St.Louis (SSSL) Historical pamphlet was published and distributed within Kahnawá:ke in November 2004. The SSSL pamphlet was designed to inform Kahnawakehró:non on the facts behind our long-standing land grievance.

The Pamphlet contains information on the various regimes and their impacts on our land and our people. The facts in this publication are taken from a joint (Kahnawá:ke-Canada) historical report, which took several years to compile.

After being published, the Mohawk Council of Kahnawá:ke entered preliminary negotiations with Canada on the Seigneury of Sault St. Louis grievance. This phase is on-going.

To view the pamphlet, click here.

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Recent Press Releases

- Seigneury Community Group Receives Contract Extension - **02/12/2008**
- Quebec Agrees to Participate in Seigneury Negotiations - **02/07/2008**
- MCK to Begin Seigneury Dialogue with Community - **10/11/2007**

loading

SEIGNEURY OF SAULT ST. LOUIS

de France et de Navarre. A Tous ceux qui ces presentes

de Jesus rendans au nre pays de la nouvelle France Nous ont tres humblement fait remonstrer que les

trop humides pour estre ensemencez a pouvoir a la subsistance des Iroquois qui y sont establis, ils savoit a environ

une lieue dux lieux de pays de trois a commencer a une pointe qui est vis a vis les rapides St. Louis

se trouvant au dessus, a joignant aux terres de lad. Seigneurie de la Magdelaine, Ce qui leur pourroit fournir

estendre par ce moyen les limites de la foy et de l'Evangile. A ces causes desirans contribuer a la conversion

a faveur de quoy par ces presentes signees de nre main de lad. terre nommee le Sault contenant deux lieues de pays

du Lac sur parallele profondeur aux deux Isles, Isles et battures qui se trouvent au dessus, a joignant aux terres de

appartiendra toutes defrichees lorsque lesd. Iroquois l'abandonneront. Prohibitions a tous ceux qui voudront porter aud. Iroquois

de expresses inhibitions a defenses aux francois qui s'habituront parmy lesd. Iroquois, a autres nations sauvages qui

d'establir aucun cabaret dans le bourg desd. Iroquois qui sera basty dans lad. terre. Si donnons en mandement

ent etre registrees au greffe du Conseil Souverain

suivant son Arrest de ce jour, pour joüir et user

par les Impetrans du contenu en icelles,

Quebec le vingt quatriesme Octobre Mil

six cent quatre vingt

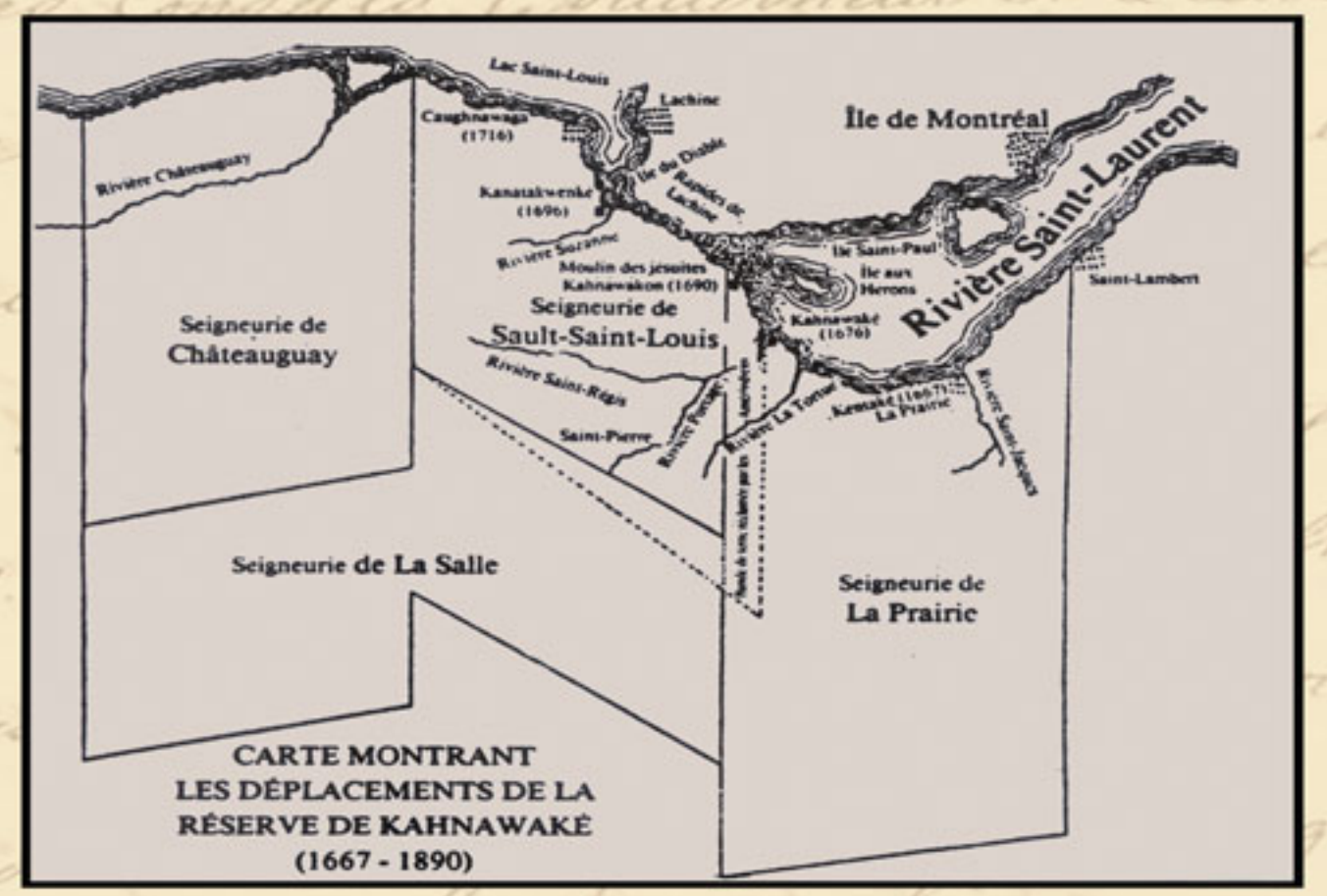
Peuvret

SEIGNEURY OF SAULT ST. LOUIS

The Seigneury of Sault St. Louis gives rise to a historic grievance involving lands granted by the French Crown in 1680 to the Jesuits for setting up a mission and for the use, occupation and enjoyment of the Iroquois of the Sault (now the Mohawks of Kahnawá:ke).

On May 29, 1680, King Louis XIV granted the first concession of land. On October 31, 1680, a second concession was made. The two grants consisted of approximately 45 thousand acres and included 2 islands, islets and shoals.

When the land grants were made in 1680, other seigneuries had already been granted; the Seigneury of La Prairie de la Madeleine in 1647 and the Seigneury of Chateauguay in 1673, the Seigneury of Sault of St. Louis was situated between these two existing seigneuries.

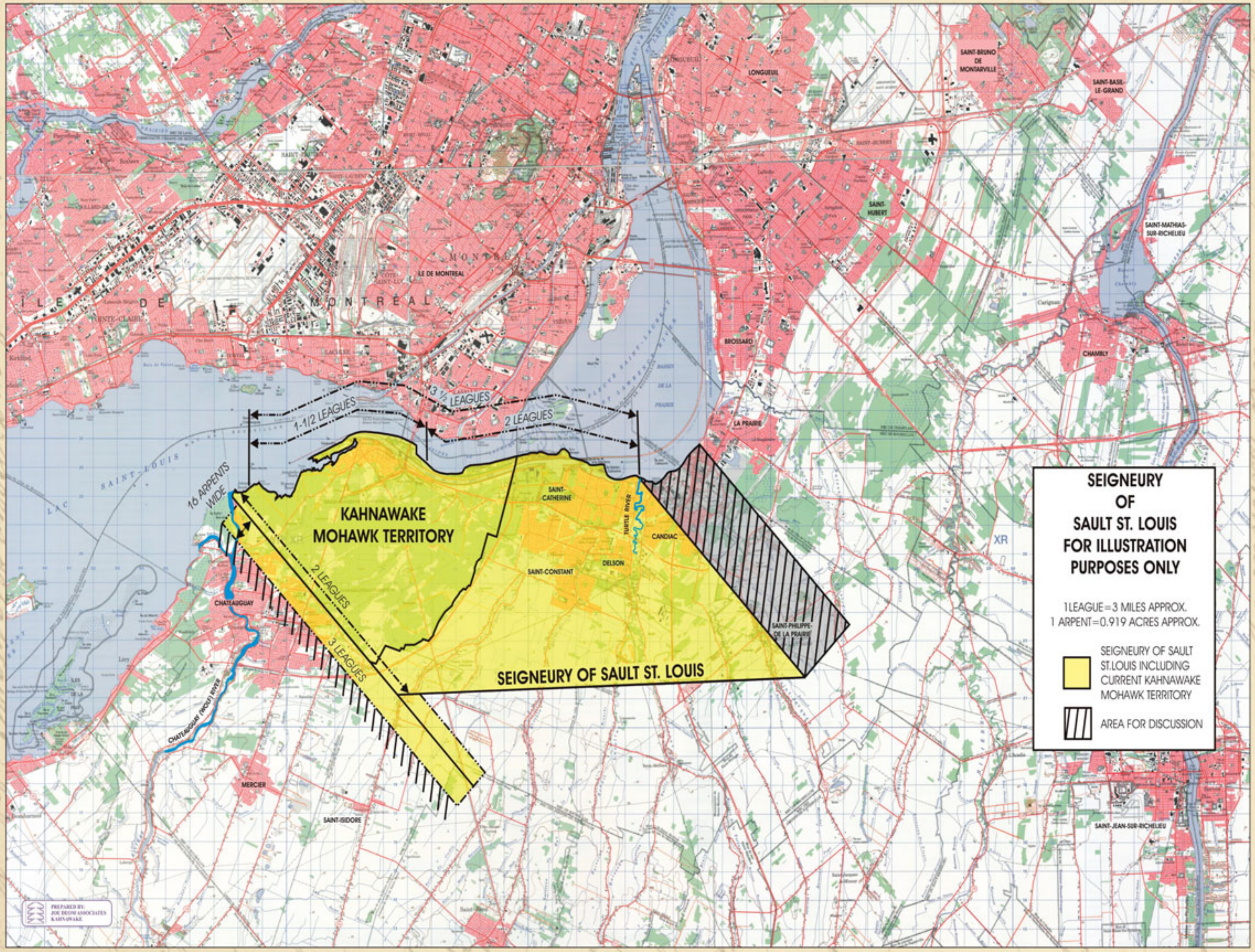


Map from " History of Delson "

A "seigneury" was a land tenure system that was used by the French Crown. Under this system, a Lord (or Seigneur) was granted land by the Crown and in turn conceded lands to settlers, who worked the land and were obliged to pay the Seigneur a yearly form of dues known as "rentes seigneuriales."

While most seigneurial grants provided the Seigneur with the right to concede land to settlers, the Sault St. Louis grant was unique from other grants in that it was: set aside for the exclusive use and occupation of the Iroquois of the Sault; the French could not settle within the boundaries and if the land was abandoned it would revert back to the Crown.

Despite these special conditions, the Jesuits began conceding lands around 1703. Over time, two-thirds of the land originally granted was either conceded or lost through inaccurate boundary lines and seigneurial dues were not properly collected. Today, the land base of Kahnawá:ke encompasses less than 13,000 acres.


ILE DE MONTREAL
MONTREAL
ILE DE MONTREAL
LONGUEUIL
SAINT-BRUNO DE MONTARVILLE
SAINT-BASILE-GRAND
SAINT-HUBERT
SAINT-MATHIAS-SUR-RICHELIEU
BROSSARD
CHAMBLY
LA PRAIRIE
1-1/2 LEAGUES
3 1/2 LEAGUES
2 LEAGUES
16 ARPENTS WIDE
KAHNAWAKE MOHAWK TERRITORY
SAINT-CATHERINE
TURTLE RIVER
CANDIAC
DELSON
SAINT-CONSTANT
2 LEAGUES
3 LEAGUES
SAINT-PHILIPPE-DE LA PRAIRIE
SEIGNEURY OF SAULT ST. LOUIS
CHATEAUGUAY
CHATEAUGUAY (NICOLET) RIVER
MERCIER
SAINT-ISIDORE
SAINT-JEAN-SUR-RICHELIEU
SAINT LOUIS
LAC
XR
SEIGNEURY OF SAULT ST. LOUIS FOR ILLUSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY
1 LEAGUE = 3 MILES APPROX.
1 ARPENT = 0.919 ACRES APPROX.
SEIGNEURY OF SAULT ST.LOUIS INCLUDING CURRENT KAHNAWAKE MOHAWK TERRITORY
AREA FOR DISCUSSION
PREPARED BY:
JOE DEOM ASSOCIATES
KAHNAWAKE

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Kanienkeh - The Land of the Flint - 1500-1650

The traditional lands of the Kanien'kehaka or "the people of the Flint" cover a vast territory ranging from north of the Island of Montreal to the Mohawk River Valley in the South. This vast tract of land was accessible through a wide ring of rivers, known today as the St. Lawrence, the Richelieu, the Hudson, and the Mohawk, and acknowledged by early explorers as the great rivers of the Iroquois. The Richelieu River, Lake Champlain, and the Hudson River bound its eastern border, while on the west it is bordered by the territory of the Oneida people.

The Kanien'kehá:ka controlled and occupied their territory throughout history. Their wide-ranging and diverse land base allowed the people to grow crops, hunt, fish, trap and gather and the communities prospered greatly from the vast resources.

After European contact, the Kanien'kehá:ka formed alliances and signed peace and trade treaties with the Dutch, English and the French based on the Two Row Wampum principles of respect, sharing, partnership and peaceful co-existence.

Kanienkeh Territory
Map from Historic Kahnawake Series #6
Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitiohkwa
Cultural Center

Evolution of the Seigneury of Sault St. Louis Land Grievance

French Regime - 1647-1760

- 1647 - The Jesuits missionaries were granted the Seigneury of La Prairie for the purposes of starting a Catholic mission in the area. It was built as a place of rest for the Jesuit missionaries and "to attract the Indians". La Prairie, however, was not settled for another twenty years (1667) due to the ongoing conflict between the Iroquois and the French.

- 1666-1667 - After almost sixty years of conflict between the French and its Native Allies and the Five Nations, a Treaty of Peace between the Iroquois and the French is signed. The Seigneury of La Prairie and areas westward are opened to settlement. Increasing numbers of Iroquoian peoples along with people from other Nations moved to the Northern part of the Kanien'kehá:ka territory. They settled at Kentake and over the next several decades moved four times to the present day site of Kahnawá:ke in 1716.

- 1680 - The Seigneury of Sault St. Louis (SSSL) is granted by King Louis XIV on May 29, 1680. The second grant by Governor Frontenac and Intendant Duchesneau is granted on October 21, 1680.

- 1701 - The Great Peace of Montreal is signed in August. The treaty ended almost a century of warfare between the French and their Native Allies on one side and the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) on the other. Thirty-nine Aboriginal Nations sent representatives to Montreal. The treaty brought peace to a vast territory, opened up trade and diplomatic ties and allowed for the development of the French colony.

- 1703-1762 - The Jesuits conceded Seigneury of Sault St. Louis (SSSL) lands to French settlers - deeds were issued.

- 1717 - The Jesuits asked the French Crown to unify the two deeds of the SSSL and that it be granted to them in perpetuity. In February 1718, the Regent's Council (French Crown) decreed that the SSSL Lands were not to be granted in perpetuity to the Jesuits and united the two grants into one with the same conditions as the original grants in 1680.

- 1750 - In July, the Mohawks of Kahnawá:ke lodged a formal complaint against the Jesuits and the Marquis De La Jonquiere, then Governor of New France sent the matter to the French King. In 1754, the new Governor Duquesne came to Kahnawá:ke to give the Crown's response. He reaffirmed that the lands were not to be conceded by the Jesuits, since they could not concede what they did not own.

British Regime - 1760-1867

- 1760 - In August, the Treaty of Oswegatchie was signed at Kahnawá:ke between the British and the Indian Nations in the vicinity of Montreal, including Kahnawá:ke. Historically, the treaty refers to Seven Nations, sometimes referred to as nine nations (communities), who promised to remain neutral through the end of the war between France and Britain. One Treaty promise made to the Seven Nations was that they were to be protected in their lands.

- 1760 - At the conclusion of the Seven Years' War between the French and the British, Article 40 of the Capitulation at Montreal signed in September, stated that the "Indian allies of His Most Christian Majesty (King of France) shall be maintained in the lands they inhabit."

- 1762 - On March 22, 1762, the Mohawks of Kahnawá:ke brought the matter of the Jesuits illegally conceding their lands to a military tribunal. General Gage, Governor of Montreal, heard the case. In his judgment, Gage dispossessed the Jesuits and put the Mohawks of Kahnawá:ke in full possession of the Seigneury; ordered that deeds be reissued to non-natives in possession of lands before 1760; appointed a Receiver of Rents and ordered that the boundaries between the Seigneuries of La Prairie and Sault St. Louis be surveyed.

  Gage said..."we order that the said Indians of the Sault be put in possession of and do enjoy peaceably for themselves, their heirs and other Indians who would like to join them, the whole land and revenue which the said concession can produce."

- 1763 - The Royal Proclamation signed October 7, 1763, states the lands of Indian Nations are reserved for the Indians; colonial governors are forbidden to make grants of Indian lands; the Crown's consent is required prior to purchasing lands; settlers are ordered to vacate.

- 1807 and 1830 - The Chiefs of Kahnawá:ke made representations to the British Crown to seek redress for the Seigneury lands.

- 1854 - A Seigneurial Act is passed abolishing the seigneurial system in Quebec. The Act is applied to the conceded SSSL lands.The Act eroded Mohawk interest in the land and size of the Seigneury.

Canadian Regime - 1867- Present

- 1867 - The British North America Act is passed on July1,1867. Section 91(24) gives the Parliament of Canada exclusive jurisdiction to make laws concerning Indians and lands reserved for Indians.

- 1876 - The Indian Act is passed April 12, 1876.

- 1890 - On March 10, 1890, Mr. Doyon, Member of Parliament, brought the matter of an indemnity for the Iroquois of Caughnawaga before the House of Commons. Mr. Doyon asserted that the Iroquois had been dispossessed of their lands. He addressed the issue of legitimate title to the seigneury, loss of lands and lost revenues suffered by the Iroquois.

- 1935 - Seigneurial Rent Abolition Act is applied to conceded SSSL lands.

- 1948 - The Band Council of Caughnawaga passed two Resolutions stating that the matter of the Seigneury "rent" collection be dealt with.

- 1955 - The Band Council votes against the acceptance of $3,000.00 from the Seaway Project for payment of arrears and actual rent for a portion of the SSSL lands. Despite the negative vote, the Federal Government passed an Order-in-Council on June 2, 1955 approving the payment.

- 1974 - Minister of the Department of Indian Affairs, the Honourable Jean Chretien replies to a letter from Chief Ron Kirby concerning the Seigneury ..."the Department concluded that the amount of revenue involved (rents) would not justify the cost of recreating records and collecting dues..." The Band Council disagreed with the Department's conclusion and continued to pursue the claim.

- 1988 - The Mohawk Council of Kahnawá:ke (MCK) issues a notice to the surrounding municipalities of Kahnawá:ke's ownership of SSSL Lands. Indian Affairs responds to Mayors of the municipalities that there was no claim filed by Kahnawá:ke.

A Fair and Just Settlement

In 1994, a joint process between the Federal Government and the Mohawk Council of Kahnawá:ke (MCK) was established to clarify and resolve the historic land dispute. On June 16, 2003, the Government sent a lettter of offer to negotiate the SSSL to the MCK. On June 24, 2003, the MCK accepted the offer to negotiate. Since that time, Canada and Kahnawá:ke have met and will decide, at a later date, when to begin the negotiation process.

Lettres patentes portant concession
de la terre du Sault St Louis
aux Religieux de la Comp.ie de
Jesus Rendens en
Canada.

29. may 1680.

Louis par la grace de Dieu Roy

lettres verront. Salut. Nos chers a bien amez les Religieux de la Compagnie
fores de la prairie de la Magdelaine qui Nous ont tres humblement remonstré
que pour les retirer du Sault St Louis ou ils estoient auparavant ils auroient
cy montant le long du Lac sur un vaisseau profondeur avec deux glaces, glaiere, a battures qui
non seulement de retirer les dits Iroquois, mais mesme d'y augmenter le nombre, a d
a instruction des dits Iroquois, a trouvé favorable Nous leur ayons fait
de faire a commencer a Lachine qui est vis a vis les rapides de Lachine cy montant le long
lad. prairie de la Magdelaine. A la charge que lad. terre nommée le Sault nous appar
des bagues, couteaux, et autres marchandises a choses semblables de leur faire, faisons tres

Par le Roy
Colbert