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THE CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY

Journal of a Voyage
on the
North West Coast of
North America during the Years
1811, 1812, 1813 and 1814

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On the morning of the 28th of August we ate a meal on the banks of the Ottawa River, which we began to descend, and camped at Des Joachims Portage.¹

On the 29th of August we passed Fort Coulonge where a Mr Goddin resides² and after crossing many portages caused by the rapids and waterfalls which obstruct navigation in this river, we arrived on the evening of the 31st at the Chaudière Rapids³ (otherwise known as Hull) where a Mr Wright⁴ makes his home, having a magnificent establishment and a large number of employees in his service to cultivate the land and cut the square timber in which he deals on a large scale.

The rock that closes the river at this spot is cut perpendicularly and from one water level to the other there might be a drop of about 50 feet. The water held back above it forms a handsome sheet, which instead of falling over the rock, makes its way through subterranean channels and comes boiling out below in seven or eight different places⁵ and the river goes once more on its way.

We left the Chaudière Rapids (after making a portage) towards sundown and soon passed the mouth of the Rideau River to the south. This river flows over a rock from 25 to 30 feet high in the form of a curtain divided in the middle of its fall by a small island.⁶ The sight is truly picturesque, the rays of the

¹ This and almost all the other rapids on the Ottawa River have now disappeared in storage lakes behind a series of hydro-electric power dams.

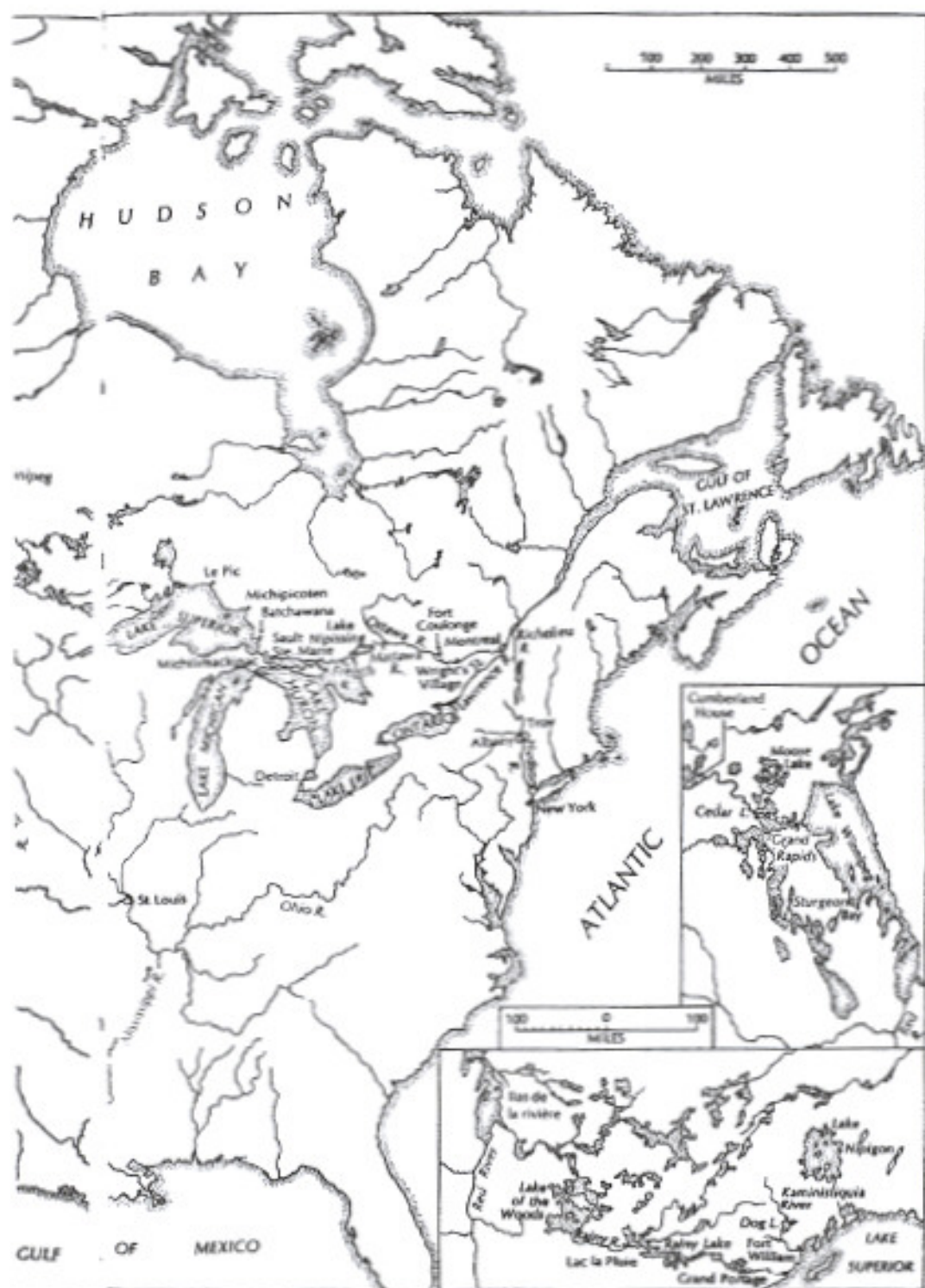
² At the mouth of the Coulonge River, a tributary of the Ottawa. Joseph Godin was in charge of the post until 1823. See C. C. J. Bond, "The Hudson's Bay Company in the Ottawa Valley", *The Beaver*, Outfit 296, Spring 1966, p. 9.

³ "Kettle Falls" in the Thwaites ed., p. 398.

⁴ Philemon Wright, who arrived in Hull with a founding colony of 30 people in 1800.

⁵ The printed text adds details: "... seven or eight different openings, not unlike water in a huge cauldron, whence the first explorers of the country gave it the name of *Chaudière* or Caldron falls." Thwaites ed., p. 398. In 1613 Champlain visited the falls, which he described as follows: "At one place the water falls with such force upon a rock that with the lapse of time it has hollowed out a wide, deep basin. Herein the water whirls around to such an extent, and in the middle sends up such big swirls, that the Indians call it *Atiscou*, which means 'boiler'." H. P. Bigger (ed.), *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*, Toronto, 1922-36, II, p. 268.

⁶ The Rideau River flows into the Ottawa within the present city of Ottawa, and the Ottawa city hall stands on the "small island" mentioned by Franchère.



ourney from Oregon to Montreal