

# A note on a cedar post found at Grand-Pré, Nova Scotia



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## Introduction

In 2009, two aboiteaux and a few wood artefacts were found in the Grand-Pré marsh (Robichaud *et al.*, 2009). Among the artefacts there was a cedar post (Figure 1) found near the road bed running over Ransom Creek by Robert Ferguson, Parks Canada archaeologist at the Atlantic Service Centre. The archaeological context was considered poor but gave the possibility to confirm the road is originally built by the Acadians. A dendroarchaeological analysis was performed on it and the results are presented in this small report.

## Results

The post was sampled the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2009. A section was cut with a hand saw (Figure 2) and brought to the MAD Lab (Mount Allison Dendrochronology Laboratory) to be processed. It was labelled 09JS005. The disk was progressively sanded with sandpaper of increasingly fine grain to expose the annual ring-growth patterns. The cross section was then view under a dissecting microscope and revealed it had 152 rings, including the last growth ring essential to date wood. The annual rings were measured using a 24 inch movable Velmex stage hooked up to a digital encoder to an accuracy of a 1/1000 mm. Raw data were captured by J2X software and put into standard tree-ring decadal format and then standardized with the use of ARSTAN software (Holmes *et al.*, 1986).



Figure 1: The cedar post found near Ransom Creek in the Grand-Pré marsh.



Figure 2: Robert Fergusson cuts a cookie from the post (left). Numerous rings are visible on the cross section (right).

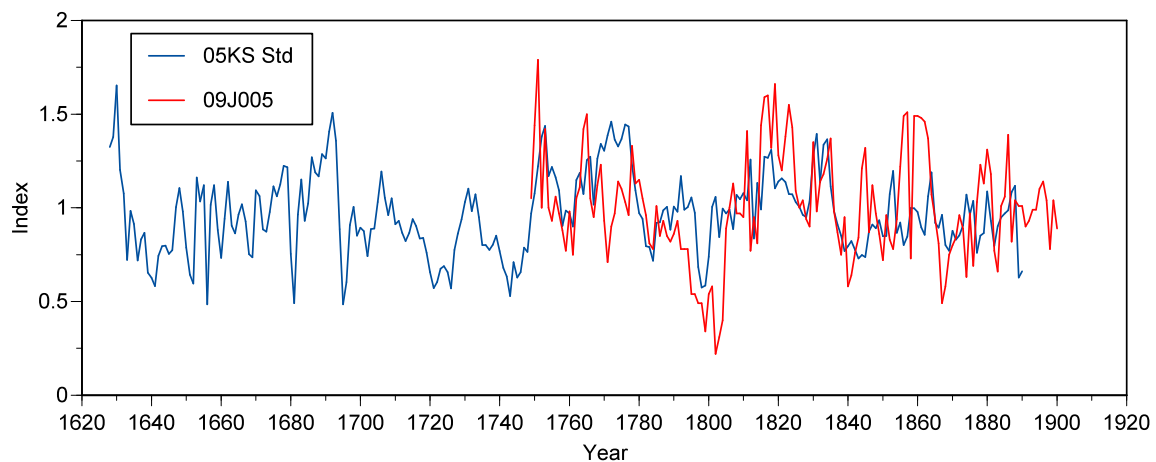


Figure 3: Mean standardized ring-width curve of the cedar post (in red) compared to a cedar master chronology (in blue). The cutting date of the sample is 1900.

By comparing the cedar post measurement data with several cedar reference chronologies using COFECHA (Grissino-Mayer, 2001) and graphs, it was found that the post is relatively recent with a cut date of 1900 (Figure 3).

### Conclusion

The dendroarchaeological analysis of the Ransom Creek cedar post demonstrates it was cut in 1900. Therefore, it cannot prove that the road was of Acadian origin.

### References

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- Holmes, R. L., «Computer assisted quality control in tree-ring dating and measurement», *Tree-Ring Bulletin*, 43, 1983, p. 69-78.
- Robichaud, A., A. Young and C.P. Laroque (2009). *The Grand-Pré – UNESCO World heritage proposal: dendroarchaeological survey of two aboiteaux and a wharf*, MAD Lab Report 2009-16, 19 pp.