

THE MYTH OF FEMALE EQUALITY IN PIONEER SOCIETY:  
THE RED RIVER COLONY AS A TEST CASE

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by

Linda E. Lee

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## ABSTRACT

The Western suffrage movement of the early twentieth century argued that women deserved the vote because they had worked side-by-side with the men opening up the West. But, did women and men assume equal or even comparable roles in Western Canadian pioneer society? Using the Red River Settlement during the years 1812 to 1863 as an example of a Western pioneer society the answer to this question can be explored.

A simple model is used to determine the level of women's involvement within any given aspect of society, from education to politics to economic activities. The model has four levels: non-involvement, commentator, participant, director. These stages are used to determine the degree of involvement only. The type of activity in which women participated and their level of involvement are both important when assessing the status of women within the community.

In the Red River Colony two basic changes in women's roles occurred. In the unstable pre-1820 period women were active in political and economic decision-making. When the political situation stabilized and Red River began to imitate "civilized" European society, the roles of women changed. Women moved from a participatory level in politics and economics to a limited role in the more traditionally acceptable pursuits for women, such as social and educational activities. Therefore, the first change occurred in the type of roles in which women were involved.

The second change was a change in degree. Once involved in education women increased their participation over time until in the 1840's and 1850's a few women reached the level of director. Women were also involved in the social functions of the community. However, the level of women's economic activity remained low after 1820, although there was continued participation in agricultural activities. There was no apparent increase in the economic or legal power of women over the years. Most women who acquired property did so when widowed. Social form restricted female participation in legal proceedings.

Only in a society with a very small population, engaged in extreme political crisis did pioneer women assume powerful roles in the fundamental aspects of their society. When the community was able to develop along British settlement patterns the roles of women changed abruptly. From the 1820's to the 1860's the desire of the Red River Settlement to imitate "civilized" society restricted women's activities. Only in very limited areas did women increase their influence to a level comparable to men after 1820. Therefore, the belief in pioneer egalitarianism, although it served its persuasive purposes in the twentieth century suffrage movement, can only be viewed as a myth in the context of the Red River Colony.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the early years of the twentieth century, women on the Canadian prairies used a pioneer-focused rhetoric to plead the case for women's suffrage. Nellie McClung, perhaps the best known of Western women reformers, asked the rhetorical question: "Did women ever shirk from the suffering, the care and the sacrifice which the pioneer work called for: I am glad to say they did not."<sup>1</sup> The argument was proposed that women, having worked side-by-side with the men during the pioneer era, deserved the vote.<sup>2</sup> Later historians, including Catherine L. Cleverdon, accepted the reasoning of McClung and her colleagues, developing it into a modified frontier thesis to explain early women's suffrage in both Western Canada and the Western United States:

On both sides of the border the feeling generally prevailed that the women as well as the men had opened up the country, had shared the experiences of settling a new land, and were therefore entitled to a voice in making the laws.<sup>3</sup>

This logic appealed to the Westerner. Consequently, women received full provincial suffrage first in Manitoba and almost immediately afterwards in Alberta and Saskatchewan.<sup>4</sup> The myth of prairie egalitarianism was established and has continued to persist.

To McClung, the importance of the rhetoric lay in its effectiveness not in its validity. But out of the myth of pioneer equality arises the question: Did equality between men and women really exist in early prairie society? The

Red River Settlement provides one contained example of an early agricultural society in the West. Using this community, the claim of pioneer egalitarianism can be tested. Did men and women assume equal roles in any or all aspects of pioneer life? In what activities, and to what degree, did women participate? What attitudes within the community affected their participation?

In order to answer these questions both the time period and the methodology for the study must be defined. The years to be considered range from 1812, (when the first women settlers arrived in the North West), to 1863, (when the trial of Rev. G.O. Corbett demonstrated the Colony's low regard for both women and the Hudson's Bay Company's jurisdiction.) During this fifty year period, the Colony faced a variety of problems, the most critical arising in the pre-1820 period. However, during the 1820's political and economic conditions began to stabilize and the population began to grow. The 1830's were marked by the interaction among agricultural, fur trade and English society. The 1840's saw increased concern over education; while the General Quarterly Court records, especially for the 1850's and early 1860's, indicate the important legal events within the Colony and women's roles within these proceedings. Notable during the last three decades was the unchanging nature of women's economic status.

From the early 1820's to the 1860's, the society of Red River can be characterized by its attempt to imitate English or European society. Throughout the entire period,



women's roles underwent changes which were influenced first by early crisis conditions, and later by the widespread desire to re-create familiar and "desirable" social patterns.

Besides being limited in time span, the study is also restricted to a special group within the Red River region: the agricultural community. This community originated with Lord Selkirk's desire to establish a permanent settlement in the North West which would be a suitable home for Orkney, Scottish and other immigrants. This population includes all those women who were involved in settlement, as opposed to fur trade life.

Fur trade society, (well-established before the arrival of Selkirk's first colonists), operated on a different principle from settlement society. Men involved in the fur trade did not come to the North West with the intention of creating communities in which all aspects of life, from farming to educational instruction, could be carried on. Traders and fur company personnel were in the North West temporarily, whereas the settlers came to the region in order to make a new home. However, with the establishment of the Red River Settlement men and women were able to cross from one society into the other. Certainly women, such as the wives of prominent Hudson's Bay Company officials, were deeply involved in Red River settlement society. The distinction is intended to draw a line between women, (Indian and mixed-blood), who were important to the development of the North West for their role at fur trade posts, and the

women, (Scottish, English, Canadian, mixed-blood and Indian), who instead took part in the life of the newly-established agricultural community.

In order to define the participation and/or equality of settler women within their community many aspects of society must be considered: politics and government, religion, education, economic and life-supporting activities, as well as the law and morality. Important to a discussion of equality are the type of activity in which women were involved and the level of their participation in each activity. A simple model can be established to determine degree of participation: The lowest stage is non-influence. In this case the women act only as passive recipients of the actions and decisions made by those in control. The second stage occurs when women make a conscious effort to comment on and to influence decisions which affect their lives. Following this is the stage of active participation. In this third stage the women take part directly in an activity of their community. The fourth and final stage then occurs when women become directors of the activity. In contemporary politics, for example, the process would be revealed in the transition from "pawn", to commentator, to voter, to elected official.

In this model the group concerned may have members at more than one level, while the group as a whole may not be at equal levels in all aspects of society. Also important is the fact that the model does not require that the group move from one stage to the next as outlined above. Regression

may occur in one aspect of society while the group gains influence in another area. The stages are used to classify degree of participation and to outline general trends in participation over time.

By applying this model to Red River society between 1812 and 1863 the roles of women can be determined. If women composed approximately 50% of the population, but did not assume the same roles as men, in the same proportion as did men, then men and women did not participate equally in pioneer life. The trends which emerge in a study of the Red River Settlement should have some applicability to the study of other pioneer settlements. For example, the changes in women's roles between the early crisis period and the later more stable, structured, and more highly populated decades demonstrate how societies are forced to use human resources in times of crisis. The attempt to imitate British society also indicates a frontier settlement's desire to be considered "civilized."

Therefore, both the immediate situation within the pioneer community and its interactions with other societies, (in this case the fur trade and English society), affect the social, political, economic and legal institutions which develop in the new settlement. The form of these institutions, and the attitude of the population towards them, then determine the roles which women assume in the community. Changes in these roles occur because of changes in society either caused by the immediate environment or by the community's interaction with outside forces. In the Red River Settlement

the latter factor quickly became the dominant force affecting the roles of women.

## CHAPTER I

### THE EARLY PERIOD 1812-1819: A TIME OF INSTABILITY

The boundaries of the early period of agricultural settlement are the arrival of the first women colonists in 1812 and the establishment of a legal code in 1819 designed to meet the needs of a stable, structured society. However, the settler women brought to the North West by Thomas Douglas, Earl of Selkirk, were not the first white women to attempt life in the rugged region of the fur trade. They were preceded by two other white women, Mary Fubbester and Marie-Anne Lagimodière. The roles of both these women, as well as those of the Indian and mixed-blood women of the North West, provide a contrast to the roles assumed by settler women in the turbulent early years of colonization.

The first white woman in the North West, Mary Fubbester (better known as the "Orkney Lass"), probably arrived in 1803.<sup>1</sup> Fubbester joined the fur trade disguised as a man, ostensibly in pursuit of her lover. She reputedly worked as a clerk for the Hudson's Bay Company at James Bay and Brandon House. John Scart discovered her sex when she worked at the latter post, but promised to tell no one of his discovery.<sup>2</sup> Not until 1807, while working at Pembina, was she forced to leave the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. The diary of Alexander Henry reveals the reason.

Dec. 29 1807 An extraordinary affair occurred  
this morning. One of Mr. Heney's Orkney lads,

apparently indisposed, requested me to allow him to remain in my house for a short time... I returned to my own room, where I had not been long before he sent one of my people, requesting the favor of speaking with me. Accordingly I stepped down to him, and was much surprised to find him extended on the hearth, uttering dreadful lamentations; he stretched out his hands towards me, and in piteous tones begged me to be kind to a poor, helpless, abandoned wretch, who was not of the sex I had supposed, but an unfortunate Orkney girl, pregnant, and actually in childbirth.<sup>3</sup>

After the birth of her son, Fubbester returned to the Orkneys in disgrace.

Fubbester attempted to fit into a traditionally male-dominated fur trade society. In this society she could survive only by pretending to be a man. As an Orkney woman doing a man's job she was totally unacceptable. In contrast, Marie-Anne Lagimodière (née Gaboury) chose to fit into fur trade society as a white woman, but not as a white woman in a man's participatory role. Marie-Anne Lagimodière accompanied her husband to the North West in 1806 rather than be left behind in her home near Trois Rivières. She attempted life west of the Great Lakes, following her trader husband across the prairies as far west as the present day province of Alberta. Not until the permanent development of the Red River Settlement did her nomadic way of life come to an end.

Traditionally, French-speaking wives of Canadian traders stayed in their home communities along the St. Lawrence, where the woman gained the central role in the family due to the father's absence.<sup>4</sup> Marie-Anne Lagimodière

translated this influence into the ability to convince her husband she was capable of accompanying him on his journeys. Both she and Fubbester showed a daring unconcern for traditional fur trade practices. However, by adapting to the fur trade, they did not have the opportunity to form a new type of society in the North West. Fubbester could break into the male-dominated Hudson's Bay Company structure only by masquerading as a man. Lagimodière could only be accepted as a white woman in a trading society by following her husband and assuming a subordinate role. The women of the early Selkirk Settlement had more opportunity to become involved in influential, non-traditional roles because they were part of an undeveloped, struggling society as opposed to a society, such as the fur trade, with structured social patterns.

Obviously, women besides Fubbester and Lagimodière inhabited the prairies in the years preceding the Red River Settlement.

When the first of Lord Selkirk's settlers set foot in the Red River Valley, they found there, and in the vicinity, a white or halfbreed population which far exceeded in numbers all the emigrants that the earl ever sent there.<sup>5</sup>

The people of this community lived semi-nomadic lives, trading with the fur companies and hunting buffalo. No attempt at organized agriculture existed. Included in this community were some of the other women of the North West: Indian and mixed-blood women, either Métis (French-speaking), or country-born (English-speaking).

Indian women in their tribes carried on their traditional roles in native society. However, many Indian, (and later country-born), women became permanent fixtures at the forts of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies. The accepted arrangement between trader and Indian woman took the form of marriage à la façon du pays. This system, apparently begun during the early years of the fur trade, admirably suited trading society in the North West of America.

...just about everyone, it would seem, stood to gain from a marriage à la façon du pays. The white man acquired personal security and the adherence of his wife's people, not to mention the convenient satisfaction of his sexual needs. The bride won riches, security, social position. And the girl's family benefited, too. Her father's relationship to a powerful bourgeois, if she were fortunate enough to win one, could do much to further his tribal ambitions and, for that matter, those of her brother, uncles, and numerous other male relatives.

Finally, an Indian girl, having acquired different customs and standards of family life from her bourgeois husband, and being on a higher economic level, attained a position of influence among her own people.<sup>6</sup>

The system appeared ideal.

Although widely accepted among fur traders, this scheme did not lack problems. The Hudson's Bay Company, for many years, forbade such arrangements. However, in order to compete with the North West Company in the later years of the eighteenth century, the Hudson's Bay Company had to accept this social practice.<sup>7</sup> A large number of these "marriages" lasted for many years; but, it was when they ended that the problems often began. The companies had to assume the responsibility for the wives and children of traders or clerks



once these men left the North West. As early as 1806 the proprietors of the North West Company tried to put a stop to the practice:

It was therefore resolved that every practicable means should be used throughout the Country to reduce by degrees the number of women maintained by the Company, that for this purpose, no Man what-ever, either Partner, Clerk or Engagé, belonging to the Concern shall henceforth take or suffer to be taken, under any pretence whatsoever, any woman or maid from any of the tribes of Indians now known or who may become known in this Country to live with him after the fashion of the North West, that is to say, to live with him within the Company's Houses or Forts & be maintained at the expense of the Concern.<sup>8</sup>

This resolution proved difficult to enforce, although records of men being fined do exist.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, daughters of white men were excluded from this resolution, so that Métis and country-born women could be taken as wives.

Indian and mixed-blood women undoubtedly played an important role in the pre-agricultural North West.<sup>10</sup> Their relevance as pioneer women, however, occurs only when they moved out of fur trade culture into the agricultural community. Many did participate in the Red River Colony, especially after 1821 and the union of the fur companies, for even in the original colonization plans Selkirk agreed to set aside land for retired servants and their families.<sup>11</sup> The Colony also helped to alleviate the dilemma of traders who did not wish to leave their mixed-blood families, but hesitated to chance their wives' adjustment to society far from the North West. Red River provided a convenient place in which to

retire, particularly if the trader and his wife "legalized" their union.

The settlement at Red River, however, was not guaranteed permanence and stability from its outset. Although Europeans had lived semi-permanent lives in the North West before 1811-12, no concerted attempt to establish a settlement had been made before the experiment at Red River. Forts existed to facilitate the trading of furs, not the permanent settlement of farmers and tradesmen. Because of the dominance of the fur trade, Lord Selkirk's scheme for agricultural colonization met with much opposition. Besides the hostility of the traders themselves, others believed the plan doomed to failure. John Strachan, in his rebuttal to Selkirk's prospectus on settlement, argued that a colony in the Red River Valley would be detrimental to the welfare of the proposed colonists. The isolation, insecure title, lack of markets, severe climate, "shameful" price of land, proximity to both Indians and Americans, all made the location most unfavourable.<sup>12</sup> Despite all protests, the first group of emigrants left Stornoway on July 26, 1811: destination York Factory.<sup>13</sup>

It was intended that the first group of emigrants, all men, would do the preliminary work of establishing the settlement. The second and third parties, however, included both men and women. For everyone, adjustment to the new country began immediately upon disembarking. Conditions were extremely harsh. A letter ostensibly written from the Nelson Encampment, near York Factory, described the conditions of

of one family's first winter:

an old Highlander, his wife, and five children, the youngest eight or nine years of age, poor, and consequently badly provided with clothing to encounter the rigours of a climate, where the hottest summer never thaws the ground to any considerable depth - see this family, sitting on the damp ground, freezing for want of sufficient covering, pinched and famishing for want of food; and the poor woman had to take the well-worn rug from her own miserable pallet, to sell for a little oatmeal to give her dying children, and in vain, for two of them did not survive the scene of misery.<sup>14</sup>

Added to the overwhelming problem of lack of food, scurvy, cold and internal quarreling all helped to depress conditions for each party.

The arrival of the second group of settlers illustrates the impact which severe conditions had on customs and social conventions. Two Presbyterian settlers were married by Father Bourke, a Roman Catholic priest. Describing the incident F.H. Schofield commented: "Life on the frontier has a happy way of shaking itself free from many of the unreasonable prejudices and conventions of older communities."<sup>15</sup> Certainly, conventions were ignored; but, they were disregarded only because of the limited options available. In this case the Presbyterians made use of the only religious resource available, Father Bourke.

Extremely harsh circumstances were the norm for the first groups of colonists. Women reaching the shores of Hudson Bay had little choice but to accept the situation which greeted them. When Mrs. McLean gave birth to a daughter, Keveny reported to Selkirk: "Mrs. McLean haveing [sic]

a young daughter two days before we came to anchor, both are doing well and on tomorrow will be ready to proceed inland."<sup>16</sup> Once en route overland the only concern was reaching the correct destination alive. When Jean McKay gave birth to a child on the journey from Churchill to York Factory, food supplies were so low that the rest of the party was forced to continue on:

they stopped long enough to set up a tent, bank it with snow, and gather a good supply of firewood; then, leaving some food, a musket, and ammunition, they resumed their march through the woods. As soon as the young mother was able to travel, she took the baby boy... her nineteen-year-old husband shouldered the musket and their small possessions, and they followed the rest of the party.<sup>17</sup>

Women participated in travel out of necessity. Although their physical labour on the journeys probably did not equal that of the men, women were granted no special privileges. On board ship, for example, when ship fever broke out, women helped with the nursing.<sup>18</sup> The arduous, 815 mile trek from York Factory to Red River, required women, regardless of physical condition, to share the hardships equally with all other adults.

Peter Fidler's private and post journals described the conditions prevailing at the Forks, once the colonists had begun settlement there.<sup>19</sup> Food quickly became, and remained the basic priority, as was illustrated by the imposition of Miles Macdonell's pemmican embargo in 1814; a drastic measure designed to help solve the problem of food shortage. Also because of the scarcity of food, all persons

participated in the agricultural work. Fidler's disgust at one man betrayed itself when he wrote: "Duncan McNaughton doing very little since the Captain went away, but walking about looking over a few wemen [sic] & boys hoeing Potatoes in the season."<sup>20</sup> Many references to both men and women taking part in agricultural labour exist; women had full participatory rights, at least in the business of hoeing potatoes!<sup>21</sup>

Although harsh conditions necessitated some unconventional behavior, society did try to maintain some European forms. An affidavit concerning the examination of Betty McKay recorded the birth of a bastard child and charged that "Able Edwards Esq<sup>re</sup> late Surgeon in the Settlement did get her with child."<sup>22</sup> The births of illegitimate children were recorded; but, no evidence of further legal action appears. In fact, out of necessity, marriage conventions in the early years of the Settlement largely followed fur trade patterns. In 1819, a few months after his arrival, Provencher commented:

The Scotch who are here often live together in concubinage that is often incestuous, because they are, it is said, all of the same family, and they marry among themselves without ministers.<sup>23</sup>

The problems of the years 1812-1814 necessitated women's participation in the agricultural work force, causing them to abandon the formalities connected with some social customs. However, documents, such as the aforementioned affidavit, illustrate that a form of legal procedure continued to exist in the Colony. Because of the limited number of

persons, the testimony of women in legal cases was taken as routine. In depositions taken concerning the unaccountable appearance of a silver teaspoon, (indicative of tampering with their provisions), Mrs. Christina McLean and her maid Ann MacDonald, gave the bulk of the evidence. Mr. McLean's testimony simply corroborated that of the two women. The brevity of his deposition resulted from the fact that his description of the incident was "as already stated in their Depositions."<sup>24</sup>

Both Mr. and Mrs. McLean were conspicuous figures in the early Settlement. Mr. McLean distinguished himself in the skirmishes between the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies. Mrs. McLean, on the other hand, gained notoriety in the political intrigues which went on between the two fur companies and the settlers. The earliest reference to her activities appeared in a letter from Alexander MacDonell to Captain Miles Macdonell:

Madam [Mrs. McLean] has now completed her end, in being the only person in who she would wish confidence to be put - your own officers. She played her cards well towards being and putting them at variance with you; she succeeded at length with those who once thought themselves friends.<sup>25</sup>

The exact circumstances surrounding the letter never become clear; but, added to the fact that Mrs. McLean was in contact with the North West Company, her position of influence in the Settlement caused her action to have great significance. In his journal, for September 3, 1814, Fidler noted attempts by the North West Company to win the loyalty of both Mrs. McLean and her husband: "The Canadian masters have made a considerable

present to Mr. and Mrs. McLean of Cloths, Callico, Tea Sugar Liquors &c. and many other articles."<sup>26</sup> The fact that Mrs. McLean was female did not deny her influence in the Settlement. As a strong person in a small community, she wielded significant political power. Events during the years 1815-1816 clarified her position.

As the rivalry between the two fur companies reached a crisis point all available human resources were enlisted in the dispute. During the spring of 1815 hostility increased as Duncan Cameron, (partner in the North West Company, in charge of the Red River Department), tried to persuade the settlers to move to land in Upper Canada. In May a group of colonists left for the "Canadian Settlement at the entrance of Winnipeg river especially old men, women & children."<sup>27</sup> This indicates that persons who had difficulty enduring the hardships left the Colony under the auspices of the North West Company. This group included the traditionally weaker members of society, old men, women and children. However, others from these same categories remained at the Settlement, although some, such as Mrs. McLean, spoke "very strongly of going to join the N.W. & go down to Canada."<sup>28</sup>

According to Fidler, Mrs. McLean had relatives directly involved with the North West Company. During May 1815, her nephew arrived as part of a group supposedly sent "to assist and strengthen the the Canadians here, to oppose more effectively the Colony."<sup>29</sup> Despite any familial connections, Mr. McLean continued to resist promises of gifts

made to himself, as did other influential settlers. Indeed the offers were tempting:

The Canadian Masters offered Mr. McLean £600 in money, a free passage to Canada & family a large farm given him gratis well stocked with all necessary animals if he would abandon the settlement.<sup>30</sup>

Such appealing promises finally proved effective when dealing with many settlers. Forty-two men and a few women departed on June 7, 1815 under the auspices of the North West Company.<sup>31</sup>

The month of June 1815 saw hostilities flare into small-scale battles. Although women took part in the political manoeuvrings, they were exempt from the physical conflict. On June 10, "Mrs. McLean & the rest of the women went down to the Farm yard barn [?] during the action."<sup>32</sup> Women, as a result of their cultural background, combined with a lack of fighting skills, did not participate directly in these skirmishes. Other activities, such as carrying messages, were still acceptable in times of crisis. For example, on June 13th: "Hector McLachlan's wife came down by land to embark on the Canadian Batteau, she said it was the intention of the Canadians to exterminate us."<sup>33</sup> Although women actively took part in political developments, by influencing decisions and by participating in behind-the-scenes activities, never did they officially direct the action.

Despite inequality in the area of physical conflict, women continued to be active in other aspects of life, including legal proceedings. One of the depositions taken



concerning the fighting of June 15 was given by Catherine Sutherland.<sup>34</sup> Although hers was the only deposition taken from a woman, she was the only woman on record to have been detained by the North West Company at this time. Because of the small group involved her testimony was needed as evidence.

About the same time as Sutherland's deposition, Chief Peguis paid a special visit to Mrs. McLean. His speech to her confirms that the Indian leader recognized the woman's power within the community. She was the only person to whom he directed an individual message at this time.

My sister I am glad to find you have sense,  
you did right not to listen to the people  
of the other house. I know them very well.  
They have a sugared mouth and a deceitful  
tongue. So[on] as they have got your friends  
out of the river, they will drop them like  
stones as they go along.<sup>35</sup>

Peguis' speech, although approbative in content, was persuasive in tone. He wished to convince Mrs. McLean, once and for all, to abandon contact with the North West Company. To merit this recognition from Peguis, Mrs. McLean obviously had reached the level of influential commentator in the community. The evidence also suggests that she was an active participant in the political life of the Colony, even though she was denied any official position.

By the end of June 1815, Miles Macdonell had surrendered himself to the North West Company, and only about thirty-five settlers remained.<sup>36</sup> They moved to the Winipic Settlement, where they were stationed when Colin Robertson

took charge. He realized that "something must be done to prevent the Colonists going home this year, or the Colony is completely ruined."<sup>37</sup> Therefore, in August, Robertson re-established the Colony at Red River. Accompanying him were the McLean family, the Pritchard family and the McNulty family: all composed of men, women and children.<sup>38</sup> Robertson successfully re-planted the Colony before the arrival of Governor Semple and eighty-four new settlers in November.

The small Colony, temporarily rescued by Robertson, was the ideal place for determined individuals to assert themselves. For example, during the fall of 1815, while Robertson was subduing the Nor' Westers, Mrs. McLean was writing to Lord Selkirk, advising him on the best way to govern his Colony:

I am happy to have it in my power to write to your Lordship once more from Red River settlement, indeed it is more than I expected to do in June last for it was not very likely, but I must take the liberty of telling you Lord Selkirk that he himself is greatly to blame for everything that happened for he certainly should have sent more respectable people thence.<sup>39</sup>

She also recommended a young man Selkirk should hire and concluded with: "I could say a great deal on this subject but it is unnecessary to be troubling your Lordship with it."<sup>40</sup> Indeed Mrs. McLean did attempt to direct governmental decisions. Obviously a strong-willed individual, Mrs. McLean continually found herself confronted with threatening situations. In attempting to secure safety for her family in the midst of

constant hardship she was forced to be both conniving and demanding. A sparsely-populated, unstable community, where, out of necessity, social conventions often had to be put aside, allowed Mrs. McLean the opportunity to become an influential figure in the political sphere. Robertson's opinion that Mrs. McLean bears her troubles "with an astonishing degree of fortitude," does not do justice to her determination and boldness.<sup>41</sup>

Another woman who stayed after the destruction of the Colony in June 1815 was Widow McLean.<sup>42</sup> All the settlers in the small group of survivors needed to be determined individuals. The hardships selected the strongest and most dedicated men and women, thus it is not surprising that Widow McLean represented an active, rather than a passive character. Robertson accurately described Widow McLean and her family:

This family, which consists of three Sons and a son in Law [sic], have particularly distinguished themselves by their firm attachment to the interest of the Earl of Selkirk, and the old widow diffuses those honourable principles, that they are no less remarkable for their subordination than they are for their courage.<sup>43</sup>

Widow McLean's personal difficulties began in April of 1816 when she was deprived of a small area of land.<sup>44</sup> Subsequent to this, she was unable to acquire all the livestock that she had been promised. Robertson wrote to Semple on her behalf, but Widow McLean had no qualms about taking action for herself. Robertson recorded the incident:

Widow McLean called on the Governor this morning regarding a verbal promise I made her of one of the Calves, which McDonell has refused to comply with, this will have a bad effect, as that family

is much respected among the Colonists, I am afraid Governor Semple is led wrong.<sup>45</sup>

Robertson's fear of a "bad effect" was justified. As a consequence of Widow McLean being refused the calf, the colonists visited Robertson en masse in the hope of obtaining written property guarantees.<sup>46</sup> Finally, in protest, Widow McLean and her sons prepared to leave the Colony. Not until the family was actually waiting on the shore, ready to depart, did Governor Semple relent: "The Governor appeared very much affected, he promised to do everything in his power for them, then the three sons went to the water side and brought up their baggage."<sup>47</sup> As the head of a family Widow McLean proved to be a determined and influential individual. In order to acquire property, which she felt rightfully belonged to her family, she was prepared to take forceful action. Semple's eventual response demonstrated that she was able to influence economic decisions made by the government of the Settlement. Widow McLean provides another example of a woman assuming an active and influential role in the fundamental issues of her society.

Although the family of Widow McLean remained at Red River, Colin Robertson departed as scheduled. Shortly thereafter the so-called "Battle of Seven Oaks" took place. The loss of Governor Semple, five of his staff, and fourteen colonists virtually eliminated the fighting force of the Colony. The settlers had no choice but to surrender.<sup>48</sup> Once again the colonists took refuge at the Winipic Settlement.

The Seven Oaks incident prompted the departure of even

more settlers. Mrs. McLean, her husband killed at Seven Oaks, left the Colony. She and her family travelled eastward with Robertson, who had returned to the Winipic Settlement on hearing of the tragedy. Both Robertson and the McLeans found themselves stranded at Moose Factory for the winter of 1816-1817.<sup>49</sup> There the unfortunate, (but still outspoken), Mrs. McLean had to adjust once again to shortages of food and clothing. Robertson wrote: "her situation is truly deplorable, her children have no shoes, nor there is not [sic] a piece of Leather in the Fort."<sup>50</sup>

In June 1817 Mrs. McLean asked Mr. Berioly, of Moose Factory, if Lord Selkirk had sent any instructions respecting the fate of herself and her family.<sup>51</sup> A negative response caused her to express a strong desire to visit Lord Selkirk in person. Robertson persuaded her to alter this course of action.<sup>52</sup> Robertson probably was unaware that Mrs. McLean already had written to Selkirk some two and a half months earlier. In her letter of March 12, she described her situation: "a beloved husband who endeavouring to defend us was most barbarously murdered, and I am left with a family of six children the oldest not more than Eleven years of age."<sup>53</sup> This appeal to Selkirk marked the beginning of two years of correspondence. A. Campbell wrote to A. Colvile on her behalf, while Mrs. McLean herself sent Colvile a memorial on her husband's death. The memorial ended with the observation that a pension had been settled on Governor Semple's sisters.<sup>54</sup> Although Mrs. McLean's persistence

appears somewhat obnoxious, she and her family had endured extreme physical hardships both at Red River and at Moose Factory. The final outcome of the correspondence indicates Colvile came to appreciate this argument.

However, Andrew Colvile's original reply to Campbell stated, firstly, that the proclamation granting pensions only referred to servants of the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>55</sup> Secondly, his letter went on to say that he believed Mr. McLean had been a man of honour, "but that Mrs. McLean's conduct was not always equally consistent."<sup>56</sup> Colvile had information regarding Mrs. McLean's relationship with the North West Company that indicated:

when she conceived herself treated with any neglect she immediately affected to be on good terms with the North West Company's people and observed that she could rapidly receive from them what was refused her. This had a very bad effect on the minds of the other settlers and materially assisted the North West Company in their efforts to render them dissatisfied with their situation.<sup>57</sup>

Colvile reasoned that this fact combined with the money that had been advanced to Mr. McLean denied her any legitimate claim on Selkirk "as a matter of right;" but, he did grant her £100, plus £20 per annum, due to her distressed situation."<sup>58</sup>

Besides continuing financial arrangements, the Seven Oaks affair had other ramifications. An official inquiry into the incident took place. Depositions were sworn before William Coltman concerning the fighting of 1816. Coltman, however, did not take any statements from women, although he may have consulted some taken at an earlier date by Miles

Macdonell, regarding earlier hostilities in the Red River area. A. Murray's statement mentioned the activities of himself and his wife, but she gave no corresponding evidence.<sup>59</sup> However, at the trials held in York, Upper Canada, Mrs. McNolty [McNulty?] gave testimony relating to the Seven Oaks affair. She reported comments she had heard following the incident:

I am quite sure it was Michael Heden that told me so he said. "it has been a bad business God knows but we cannot blame the Halfbreeds for it was our side who fired first at them and if we had gained the day we should have served them the same or have done as bad to them."<sup>60</sup>

Here a woman took part in legal proceedings concerning the Colony at Red River, but only when other testimony on an incident was not readily available in Upper Canada.

By the years 1818-1819, only a minimal threat of physical violence between the two fur companies at Red River existed. With an increasing population, clergymen arriving, and a legal code being proposed, the community passed out of its transient stage.

The Legal Code of 1819 represented the beginnings of an organized, permanent society. The Code was commissioned by Lord Selkirk, as comments within the document indicate.<sup>61</sup> The Legal Code, heavily based on English law, mentioned the duties of officers such as Sheriff, Constable, and Councillor. Therefore, it not only dealt with offences against the law, but also with the law's administration, including rules of arrest and trial procedures. In general terms it stood as

a guide for a stable, ordered society.

The Legal Code is also important to a discussion of the legal status of women in Red River. The officers referred to in the Legal Code were assumed to be males, but there was no actual stipulation to this effect.<sup>62</sup> Elsewhere in the Code, women and men were both discussed as possible witnesses. Husband and wife, however, could not give evidence for or against each other, with some exceptions:

A wife was permitted to be evidence agt [sic] her husband who had been accessory to her dishonour; another for assaulting her; and another to prove delivery of goods to her on her husband's credit.<sup>63</sup>

Women, although acceptable as witnesses, generally occupied an inferior, or at least a weaker position, as the section on "Assault and Battery" would indicate:

A man may justify an assault or Battery in defence of those whom he is naturally bound to protect, as a wife, Child, master, Servant or Scholar, when they are attacked by another.<sup>64</sup>

The section on civil rights of husband and wife, based in English law, reinforced this attitude. It denied the wife full legal equality; "by marriage Husband & Wife are considered as one person, and in most cases the husband represents the wife."<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the husband acquired the rights over "the real or personal property of the wife by marriage."<sup>66</sup> Therefore, under the law, the woman was placed in a subordinate economic position.

The section of the Code concerning rape included a number of sub-sections which tried to guarantee justice for all women: e.g. "No force is justified towards any woman



whatever, and a rape may be committed on a common prostitute, the proof in such a case, naturally becomes more difficult."<sup>67</sup>

The section on rape also drew on British statutes when defining the crime and describing the punishment.

By 18 Eliz. c7. rape is punished with death, without benefit of Clergy, and all present actually assisting may be punished as principal offenders whether men or women.<sup>68</sup>

Other sections of the Code dealt with crimes specifically related to women. Under the sub-section on murder a clause on abortion was included: "Admitting drugs for procuring abortion to any woman quick with child is also now reckoned murder."<sup>69</sup>

Undoubtedly in many cases the letter of the law and the law's administration did not correspond. However, the letter of the law indicates the society's ideal. Considering the fact that many sections of the Legal Code, both civil and criminal, were based on British statutes, the Code is therefore significant as it marked an early attempt to create a structured British society on the banks of the Red River.

Also in 1819 the report of the Royal Commission appointed after Seven Oaks discussed the legal situation in the North West. Therefore in 1821 the British Parliament passed the "Act for regulating the Fur Trade and establishing a Criminal and Civil Jurisdiction within certain parts of North America." It gave courts in Upper Canada the same civil and criminal jurisdiction in Indian Territories as existed in their own province. A Justice of the Peace for the Indian Territories was also authorized, but cases

concerning a felony, capital punishment, or a civil action exceeding £200 were to be remitted to Upper Canada for trial.<sup>70</sup> Both British legal precedents and the courts of Upper Canada affected the legal situation in Red River after 1819.

Predictably the attempt to re-create a British society would alter the powerful roles women assumed during the early years of settlement. Women, such as the politically influential Mrs. Christina McLean and the economically independent Widow McLean, illustrate the fact that some women influenced and participated in decision-making in the small community. Although they did not possess "official" roles in government, they were able to affect decisions, placing themselves beyond the stage of impotent commentators, at least into the level of active participants. Of course men and women did not always adopt identical roles, as evidenced by men alone taking part in the physical fighting. The fact that early Red River society was unable to operate within traditional legal and political patterns, because of the explosive nature of the times, allowed women to take on influential roles. Moreover, because hardships were great, the population small, and human resources scarce, women were forced to act on political and economic matters basic to their survival.

## CHAPTER II

### THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT IN THE 1820's: THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF STABILITY

A typical entry in the Post Journal of 1820 stated: "Men employed at fetching Hay sawing wood for Sled's [sic] , and cutting and fetching firewood."<sup>1</sup> Gone were descriptions of clashes with the North West Company. Accounts of Rev. John West's Sunday sermons took their place. Although hardships at Red River did not belong to the past - in 1820 men were forced to march 500 miles in search of seed grain - the threat of total destruction had disappeared.<sup>2</sup> The early 1820's introduced new trends into society: clergymen legalized unions that previously had existed "after the fashion of the country;" the demand for education caused the beginning of permanent schools; the Buffalo Wool Company went into operation; retired servants settled in the Colony, especially after 1821;<sup>3</sup> while a Governor and Council of Assiniboia, (a legislative, judicial and administrative body), undertook the government of the Red River area.<sup>4</sup> By 1830, the Colony had achieved permanence, stability and a measure of prosperity. Directly linked to these changes in society were changes in the role of women. In an insecure society with a small population women involved themselves in the vital issues of their community, while in a more populous, stable society they were not forced to assert themselves in order to survive. Consequently, they became involved in more traditional women's roles, particularly

in the educational and social aspects of life.

Despite indications of permanence, settlers during the 1820's had to face a variety of natural disasters. Infestations of grasshoppers began in 1818 and continued into the summer of 1821. That same year, it was feared that because of the grasshoppers; "we shall harvest scarcely over a fourth of what we had hoped."<sup>5</sup> The small harvest caused great misfortune during the following winter. Paul Reynberger's journal was filled with entries lamenting the lack of food.

Jan. 8,9,10,11. No provisions, Men, Women  
Children in great distress,  
crying, & starving. I am  
very hungry....

Feb. 1. No provisions, Swiss Settlers  
selling their Clothes for provisions.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, according to Reynberger, the misery was not universal. On making a surprise visit to the home of one prominent family he found a well-stocked dinner table.

Reynberger commented on the incident: "I made some observation about this subject to Mr. Fletcher, but Mrs. Fletcher answered me very shortly, that this [sic] provisions are bought from her own pocket."<sup>7</sup> Obviously, not all people in society experienced the same deprivation. Some remained relatively well-off. The Colony was not faced with extinction.

However, George Simpson's journal also recorded reports of starvation at the Forks and at Pembina. At the latter site: "it is not unusual to see Men Women & Children devouring the carcass of a Horse or Dog which has Died of Disease."<sup>8</sup> The Swiss and German settlers suffered greatly. In a letter to Colville, Simpson wrote that "little or no provision has

been made for them [the Swiss] "and with the combination of a poor harvest, failure of the buffalo hunt and an increased population, the Colony had become "the most distressing scene of starvation that can well be conceived."<sup>9</sup> But, at no time did Simpson suggest the desertion of the Settlement as a possible option.

The summer of 1822 brought some relief. Provencher wrote that the harvest could even be called plentiful, "if one considers the seeding that was done."<sup>10</sup> Although a section of the plains caught fire at the end of September and some hay was lost, gathering of the crops continued.<sup>11</sup> The winter of 1822-1823 did not produce the same famine conditions; but, complaints at the Fort and Settlement still occurred. Clerk J. Hargrave, writing in the Post Journal, grumbled that the women of the Fort were causing trouble as they did not want to help with the snow removal.

They are a parcel of indolent baggages and a burden to the post, however as such pieces of duty are generally performed by women in every part of the country, they must either agree to this regulation or leave the Fort.<sup>12</sup>

Women, although temporarily unpopular with Hargrave, were in demand. The De Meurons Selkirk had brought with him as a military force in 1817 discovered a shortage of marriageable women at Red River.<sup>13</sup> However, the situation had improved with the arrival of the Swiss settlers and their daughters. According to John West, the De Meurons presented themselves to the Swiss as being "in search of a wife," and when they found a suitable girl, received her family into

their homes.<sup>14</sup> Having a marriageable daughter quickly became an asset if one were a newcomer. Nicholas Garry remained unconvinced of the benefits of these arrangements: "the young Women will find Husbands, little reflecting on the Misery they will be thus exposed to in their future lives."<sup>15</sup> Obviously, women were highly desirable, but whether it was because of their ability to ease the workload, or because of their ability to give companionship and sexual gratification, remains in doubt. Nicholas Garry's opinion was that the De Meurons: "Complain that they have no Wives, want farming Utensils, but the Cause and Origin of all their complaints is the Grasshopper."<sup>16</sup> This comment indicates that Garry believed the De Meurons main interests lay in practical considerations.

Red River society in the 1820's did not concern itself solely with the practical. People of the community participated in a variety of social functions. On February 28, 1823 the Post Journal recorded: "In the evening Mr. Clarke gave a Ball and a supper to the Gentlemen of Fort Douglas, and the principal Inhabitants of the Colony."<sup>17</sup> This reference to "principal Inhabitants of the Colony" indicates an emerging, if not an already established, social structure. By this time the agricultural settlement operated under a different set of rules from that of the old North West.

For example, one complaint at Red River stemmed from damage to the potato crop of 1822. Harm resulted from several brigades passing through the area during the summer:

the men of which in general have been too long in this country to think of affixing any ideas of private property to whatever they find growing in the fields.<sup>19</sup>

The attempt at creating a "civilization" in Rupert's Land, including the concept of private property, met with many such problems.

The change in the state of society was both purposeful and recognizable. The incident of a "young half-breed, son of Mr. Pritchard" stealing gold coins from his father's workmen at the Buffalo Wool Company, precipitated a philosophical comment in the Post Journal: "So soon and the seeds of a crime almost peculiar to the civilized world beginning to shew [sic] themselves in this infant Colony!"<sup>20</sup>

The "civilized world" fostered both crime and "polite society." The growth of a social structure in Red River can be illustrated by an incident involving Captain Matthey, his wife, and the Pellys. In 1823 R.P. Pelly was Governor of the Colony. Matthey, a De Meuron captain, had arrived in the Settlement before Pelly, originally in 1816. Matthey was placed in charge of defense in 1818 and acted as European recruiting agent for Selkirk. Also in 1818, he caused the newly-arrived Roman Catholic priests some concern as he had a woman in the Colony "whom he certainly would not marry."<sup>21</sup> The woman demonstrated a "decided inclination towards righteousness" and it was feared Matthey would stifle her ambitions.<sup>22</sup> Matthey, however, won the approval of the priests by promising only his financial support to the woman:

"Captain Matthey is conducting himself like a real gentleman."<sup>23</sup>

In 1823, however, Captain Matthey and his family did not win this same measure of respect from Governor Pelly and his wife.<sup>24</sup> In October, Mrs. Pelly would not receive Mrs. Matthey at Fort Douglas. Governor Pelly wrote to Captain Matthey explaining that:

however disposed Mrs. Pelly might feel to waive personal considerations upon the subject, it would be highly inexpedient of Mrs. Pelly so to do.

Your own good sense and the knowledge of the Usages of Civilized life, will satisfy you I trust as to the propriety of Mrs. Pelly's adopting the present line of conduct.<sup>25</sup>

Matthey reacted by demanding a further explanation, saying that a "faux pas" his wife committed at sixteen while under the promise of marriage from a "Gentleman in the HBCo. service" should not be held against her. Furthermore he stated:

unless Mrs. P's objections are grounded upon events posterior to Mrs. Matthey's union with me, I am bound to take as addressed to myself any affront offered to my rib.<sup>26</sup>

Interestingly, Matthey desired entrance for his family into the society which would not receive his wife and he attempted to follow proper social behavior by writing to Mrs. Pelly's husband on behalf of his own wife. However, despite Captain Matthey's arguments, the Pellys would not receive Mrs. Matthey.

Pelly apparently acted on George Simpson's advice,



Simpson's information being:

Mattheys Woman has been and is still a common prostitute or the next thing to it, and I have every reason to believe that she was guilty of the Crime of Child Murder, the very Week that her Husband arrived, the fruits of an intrigue with Young Forrest during Matthey's absense.<sup>27</sup>

The facts of Mrs. Matthey's behavior are difficult to document; but, the attitude of Red River society is not. The Governor's wife, pillar of "polite society", could not lower herself to receive anyone of questionable reputation. Basic concerns of Red River moved quickly from survival to proper social behavior.

Two important components of any "civilized society" are formal religion and education.<sup>28</sup> Early attempts to introduce religious and educational institutions were short-lived. School was first held on board the ship carrying the fourth party of settlers. John Matheson soon replaced the first teacher, George McBeth. Matheson opened a school in the Colony on January 16, 1815.<sup>29</sup> His endeavour lasted about three months before he left for Upper Canada. In the early years most concern for education originated outside the Colony. Governor Semple received instructions in 1816 allowing him £30 for educational books. He was also consulted about his opinion "as to the prospect of success in civilisation and converting to Christianity the children of the native Indians."<sup>30</sup> Education and religion went hand-in-hand, as the Church Missionary Society and the Roman Catholic Church took

an active interest in both areas.

When Rev. John West was engaged to go to Red River in 1820 he was charged with the dual responsibility of religion and education. He was "to establish and superintend Schools at the Settlement for the education of the youth of both sexes."<sup>31</sup> Schools at Red River would serve the native and white populations; a convenience to the latter group, who then would no longer have to send their children to England for their education. In the Settlement, both boys and girls were to have equal opportunity to take advantage of education.

West's arrival was preceded by the appearance of the Roman Catholic clergy. In 1817 a petition drawn up by the Catholic residents of Red River requested the services of a priest, because then "nothing will be lacking to render the present tranquillity perfect and durable, and to preserve in the future the happiness of the country."<sup>32</sup> The priests designated to travel to Red River had a specific set of instructions to follow. They were to "substitute legitimate marriage for those irregular unions" and to "apply themselves themselves with particular care to the Christian education of the children."<sup>33</sup> Christian education encountered some difficulties. Erratic development characterized Provencher's first school in St. Boniface, which was forced to close for a short time in March 1819. The girls' school he had planned did not materialize until the later years of the 1820's.

Neither churches nor schools grew significantly until the 1820's. Even in 1822, Simpson and West had difficulty

enlisting the support of the Protestants. Simpson remarked on the problem in his journal:

the congregation consisted of part of the Establishment & a few children; the Settlers rarely attend indeed the place intended for their reception is far distant that they cannot attend. It will therefore be necessary that he [West] takes a more central [sic] situation & I will use my influence wh the Protestant part of colony to have a place of worship & School House erected without delay.<sup>35</sup>

The settlers, with much work to do for themselves, remained unenthusiastic about working six days a year in support of the Church and school. They used the argument that "they are not of the same persuasion being Presbyterians & Mr. West a Church of England Divine."<sup>36</sup>

Education, although not firmly established until the mid-1820's, included women on an almost equal footing with men. A young woman, who arrived in 1822, had been appointed by the Church Missionary Society "to assist in teaching at the Mission Establishment at Red River": a school primarily designed for the education of native children.<sup>37</sup> Miss Bowden [Boden?] married the male teacher George Harbidge, who had come to the Red River Settlement a short time before her. Their school, modelled after British parish schools, had Mrs. Harbidge teaching the girls reading, writing and household science.<sup>38</sup> Women were deemed suitable to participate in teaching equally with men, with the stipulation that the women taught the girls, while the men often taught both male and female students.

Simpson and Pelly wanted a boarding school as well as

a day school which girls could attend. They drew up a lengthy prospectus concerning the establishment of a boarding school.<sup>39</sup> Simpson hoped to persuade some of the Chief Factors, Traders and officers to support the idea. This would reduce the number of girls sent elsewhere for their education, and further, it was generally believed that female education would aid "the moral and spiritual improvement of a country."<sup>40</sup> Although Simpson did not use this argument specifically, the prospectus did refer to "occasional instructive visits of the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Jones."<sup>41</sup>

Simpson also was unhappy with George Harbidge at the Church Missionary Society School. Simpson believed Harbidge was "unfit for his situation" as well as "stupid," "ignorant," and "illiterate."<sup>42</sup> The Harbidges departed in July 1825. Not until 1828 was a school, for the daughters of both gentlemen in the Hudson's Bay Company service and prominent settlers, realized. Mrs. Cochran, who had taken over the teaching of girls at the Church Missionary Society establishment, assisted at the new school in 1828. The following year, when Mrs. Jones joined her husband, Rev. David Jones, a boarding school for girls was established on a permanent basis.

Provencher's Catholic girls' school did not come into existence until 1829, although girls had been taught weaving at the St. Boniface school in 1826.<sup>43</sup> In 1824 Provencher had attempted to enlist Angelique Nolin as schoolmistress. Angelique's father voiced opposition to the idea for he felt his daughter was needed at home.<sup>44</sup> However, in 1829, she

began teaching, assisted by one of her sisters.

Educational institutions grew in Red River once the Colony could afford the luxury.<sup>45</sup> A firm connection to religion furthered the cause of education. Although women did not come to the Red River Settlement in any official religious capacity at this time, they did come as teachers, taking an active participatory role in education. Women, such as Angelique Nolin, from the Settlement itself, also assumed teaching responsibilities. Both boys and girls were expected to attend school, even if the former often outnumbered the latter. In the 1820's women did not direct the establishment or policy of educational institutions, but their active participation was both desired and expected.

Religion was not only connected with educational development, but with social change as well. The role of Indian and country-born women began to change with the advent of missionaries and "civilized society." During the era of the fur trade these women had been indispensable, serving as guides, translators and prominent figures in fort life. Fidler noted the use of "Mr. Heney's woman" as an interpreter at Brandon House.<sup>46</sup> In fact, Indian women were "uniquely qualified" to assist the fur traders in the North West.<sup>47</sup> As the years passed, newcomers to Rupert's Land, such as Nicholas Garry, were not favourably impressed by these women. Garry noted appearance only, describing his first encounter with an Indian woman in a condescending manner:

Introduced to Mrs. Bird, an Indian Woman  
wearing a Pig Tail, as was formerly the

the Custom in England for Gentlemen.  
 Very unbecoming, to which the Fashion  
 of the Country does not reconcile the  
 Eye.<sup>48</sup>

Transplanting British customs and institutions did not include fashions of this kind.

Neither did the marriage customs of the North West meet with the approval of the newly-arrived religious leaders. Rev. John West, for example, expressed happiness that he could properly unite "respectable" settlers and their "half caste women;" as "the institution of marriage, and the security of property were the fundamental laws of society."<sup>49</sup> (Interestingly the concepts of marriage and private property were indissolubly linked.) Marriage was seen as a solution to social problems such as the orphans of non-permanent marriages à la façon du pays. These children deeply concerned the political and religious leaders of the Settlement.

"Orphans" were often a result of the "turning off" process. "Turning off" occurred in fur trade society when a trader retired from the service, thus ending his marriage à la façon du pays.<sup>50</sup> Sometimes another trader would take his place, but in other cases the woman and/or her family would be deserted. Regulations passed by the Hudson's Bay Company declared that "reasonable provision for the maintenance of women and children" had to be made; but, as with earlier regulations, they proved difficult to enforce.<sup>51</sup> Situations like the one Robertson described in 1816 continued to occur:

A Governor's wife with five small children  
 to be turned out of the Fort and obliged to  
 subsist like an Indian, after having tasted

a little of the sweets of civilized life is hard even to reflect on, and she is not the only instance of the economical barbarity, every establishment swarms with poor creatures of this description.<sup>52</sup>

"Every establishment" included Red River.

As the way of life of the agricultural settlement soon began to affect fur trade society, fur trade practices also influenced the Colony at Red River. In a society attempting to copy European civilization, something constructive had to be done with mixed-blood orphans. As early as 1822 it was suggested:

With respect to the Orphan children, there will be some expense at first in erecting the Buildings required for their Accomodation and in maintaining them the first Year, but if the elder Boys are employed in Cultivation, and the Girls and younger children in other works of Industry, the expense will not be very considerable and their religious Instruction and Education may be carried on at the same time.<sup>53</sup>

Settlement leaders, such as Simpson and Pelly, had the same objective in mind as the clergymen of the Church Missionary Society, who hoped "to have reconciled them [Indian children] to civilized life and habits of industry."<sup>54</sup> The plan for their socialization, (outlined above), included different, but equally "industrious," roles for male and female children in the hope that they would soon "fit into" civilized society.

Although a variety of problems, both social and environmental, were present in the Red River Settlement during the 1820's, the decade was marked by increasing stability.

The Post Journals recorded favourable conditions by the years 1824-1825. Major events included changes in the weather. Unfortunately all catastrophies did not belong to the past and the prosperity of 1824-1825 was short-lived, as famine conditions marked the winter months of 1825-1826. Francis Heron, writing in the Post Journal, placed much of the blame on the colonists themselves:

The time that ought to be devoted to the provision of food for themselves and livestock, is trifled away in idleness, or in sauntering from house to house, making a display of their dress, and giving and receiving news, of which the place never wants of rare stock.<sup>55</sup>

In other words, the Settlement was not well enough established to support excess socializing. However, socializing should not take all the blame for the lack of food, as the crops in 1825 had been damaged by smut, mildew and an infestation of mice.<sup>56</sup> These food shortages did not hit all levels of society with equal severity. Donations of grain were collected from the more prosperous settlers, while the De Meurons, Canadians and mixed-bloods fared the worst.<sup>57</sup> Rumours concerning these groups suggested conspiracies designed to "plunder the forts and the wind mill."<sup>58</sup> Class differences within the Settlement had become obvious. However, conditions continued to deteriorate for everyone when the harsh winter was followed by the flood of 1826 which demolished almost all the houses in the Colony. On Friday, May 5 (1826) the Red River broke up:

The houses of the Settlers were one instant seen standing, and the next not a vestage





[sic] was to be discovered, to denote their situations. Forty seven dwelling houses were thus carried off by the first rush, in the short space of half an hour, and many others afterwards from which the wretched inhabitants, barely escaped with their lives.<sup>59</sup>

The waters did not peak until Monday, May 22, but at no time was the Colony abandoned.

Disasters of this magnitude produce two basic reactions in people: flight or work. Most of the Swiss and De Meuron settlers chose the former alternative.<sup>60</sup> Because of the crisis the remaining community had to use all available persons in the agricultural work. The task became more arduous with the appearance of the grub worms in July:

Men women and children are constantly employed on the cultivated lands throughout the settlement, endeavouring to save as much of their crops as possible, by destroying these worms, but in most cases it proves a fruitless task.<sup>61</sup>

As in earlier instances, crisis conditions precipitated the utilization of all employable human resources.

The failure to secure a large crop meant another winter of near famine, relieved in the spring by successful fishing. In order to forestall such disasters, a variety of schemes to bring prosperity to the Settlement were suggested. The plan for bringing sheep to the Colony did not generate an enthusiastic response among the Scottish settlers and none would subscribe: "The Scotch to a man refused to put down their names, though from the circumstances of their having European wives, they were the most likely to turn the wool to best amount."<sup>62</sup> European wives were viewed as a possible agricult-

ural asset in comparison to Indian and mixed-blood wives. The Orkneymen and "half-breeds" who did subscribe to the scheme had "all Indian families and therefore ignorant not only of rearing sheep, but also of manufacturing the wool."<sup>63</sup>

The other agricultural proposal recommended that the colonists sow flax seed. Unfortunately the colonists had no desire to cultivate this crop, despite offers of free seed:

they say, that they can purchase cottons from the Company's stores much cheaper than they can manufacture linen. The fact is, that they do not choose to increase their labours, particularly the women, on whom this work would principally fall, who it unfortunately happens are lazy, and the husbands have no control.<sup>64</sup>

Agricultural and domestic work still fell to many of the women and these settler women did not want to do any more work than was necessary. According to this journal entry, they wielded enough power to thwart this agricultural scheme. This indicates that women of the 1820's could influence decisions if indeed it were in their own interests to do so, and if it were an aspect of society in which they retained some involvement. The crisis conditions in agriculture demanded their continued participation. Therefore, in agricultural work, the majority of women operated on participatory and even directional levels.

Although women were accepted in the agricultural aspect of Red River life in the 1820's, they had no part in the government or the politics of the Colony. No women acted as councillors or appointed governmental officials, and no

other avenues of direct political influence were open to them. Stability and social order had brought with them a structured governmental system in which there was no opportunity for female participation. There is no evidence to suggest women were legally barred from holding office; the option was simply not considered.

Women, however, were property-holders in the Settlement. Despite the fact that all women could acquire property, most received it only through the wills of their husbands or fathers; if at all.<sup>65</sup> Wills remaining from the first two decades of the Red River Settlement almost always include wives, as well as male and female children, as beneficiaries. The will of J. Edward Harrison (1816) left all his money and possessions equally to his three sons and three daughters.<sup>66</sup> This "share and share alike" principle was common. The will of William Flett (1823) left his "aforesaid reputed Wife and children, share and share alike, the interest arising from the aggregate monies above mentioned."<sup>67</sup> George Atkinson, Sr. (1829) bequeathed all his property to his Indian wife and children to "share and share alike;" the children to receive their due at age twenty-one, while until that time all lands and goods would be at his wife's "sole Disposal."<sup>68</sup> Angus MacGillis wanted all his land and possessions to be divided "share and share alike" among his wife, five sons and three daughters.<sup>69</sup> About a third of the wills exhibited this "share and share alike" principle.

Not all the wills used this principle in the same

manner, as a number of stipulations could be attached.

Alexander Kennedy's will (1831) equally divided his money among his wife and children; but, the disposal of the portions placed his wife in a subordinate position:

It is further my Will and desire that my Wife's share mentioned above be retained by my Executor hereafter named and paid by him into the hands of the Honble Hudsons Bay Company trusting that they, the said Company will have the goodness to allow my said Wife to be paid the Interest thereof only, annually during her natural life and at her decease it is my Will and desire that the principal thereof be given to my youngest surviving child... in addition to the share allotted to him or her by these presents.<sup>70</sup>

The wife received her "equal" share but gained no control even in bequeathing the money after her own death.

Not all wills operated on the "share and share alike" principle. Thomas Thomas' will (1827) gave the bulk of his money and property to his sons, only a small percentage to his daughters, and made provision for payment of 25 sterling annually to his wife for the remainder of her life.<sup>71</sup> The money from Alexander Berston's estate (1828) was to be divided into two equal portions after payment of funeral expenses and £10 to his brother. His daughter received one share and his three sons were to divide the other. His sons, although willed smaller individual portions, received the money outright when the youngest son reached age twenty-one. His daughter, however, was to receive interest payments until her marriage "and then the principal to be drawn in such portion or portions as may be deemed proper for her use by

my Executors."<sup>72</sup> Even though she received a larger share, the daughter had no power over her own property.

In many wills women received money and/or other property, but they did not always receive equal shares and few retained absolute control over their inheritance. Often the man's will would include terms for the appropriation of his wife's property after her death. This coincides with the statement in the 1819 Legal Code and with accepted British law, giving the husband rights over the real and personal property of his wife. If any wills were made by women during this period none remain. The society did recognize the woman's legal right to own property, but in daily practice the right of management was usually denied.

The 1820's brought a change in the role of settler women. In large measure this was due to increased economic prosperity and political stability. By 1827 the general economic outlook had brightened. A letter from Alexander Kennedy to his sister pointed out the resiliency of the Settlement: "I understand that the ill-fated Colony is beginning to revive again."<sup>73</sup> Apart from an outbreak of disease in the winter of 1827-1828 the fortunes of the Colony showed definite improvement. Girls in 1827 mourned the departure of Doctor Hamlyn as he had set the standard of fashion for the community: "not a handsome man, horse or carriage passes or a fine pair of garnished Leggins is seen but are compared to the Doctor's."<sup>74</sup> Other than talk of fashion and gossip, 1828 proved uneventful: "Everything in

the Settlement goes on wonderfully quiet & still, that unless a person would absolutely write nonsense or fireside gossip of the place, he has nothing else to note."<sup>75</sup> The crops of 1828-1829 yielded good harvest. The population had grown from 419 in 1821, to 1212 in 1827 and 1994 in 1830.<sup>76</sup> The Post Journal of 1829-1830 testified to prosperity by its brevity.

The decade of the 1820's promised permanence. Natural disasters had continued over the years but the Colony had never faced total annihilation. With peace and political stability came an operative, structured system of law and government as well as educational and religious institutions. With the transplanting of a stable British agricultural society came changes in women's roles. No longer forced by extreme conditions to fight for survival, they reverted to more traditional roles which corresponded to their more traditional society. No evidence exists in the 1820's of women attempting to influence political decisions, or even of women confronting the Governor over property rights. Women had no desire to increase their actual responsibilities. They retained their participation and influence in agriculture; they operated at a participatory level in education as both teachers and students; and they took part in, and influenced, the social functions of the Colony. Why should they keep political and property responsibilities for which they had no cultural training? Pioneer life required enough hard work.

Unsettled conditions had precipitated a new set of

rules, but in an ordered agricultural society the rules were long-established. Native women of the fur trade society, who had functioned within another set of conventions, found that if they were residing in the Settlement area their political, social and economic power had been greatly reduced due to the re-creation of British and European social patterns. Peace, stability, prosperity and the desire for "civilization" and "polite society" required certain traditional behavior patterns, which included specific female roles. Women adopted these roles without apparent resistance.

## CHAPTER III

### THE 1830's: THE INTERACTION AMONG THREE SOCIETIES

During the decade of the 1830's the Red River Settlement, and the roles assumed by its female inhabitants, were affected by continued contact with two other societies. This resulted from the constant desire to copy British society and thus "civilize" Red River, plus the unavoidable interaction with the Hudson's Bay Company and fur trade society which had spread across the North West of America. In fact, the personification of these interactions appears at either end of the decade with the arrival of Frances Simpson in 1830 and Isobel Finlayson and her companions in 1840.

The beginning of the 1830's saw generally prosperous conditions in the Colony. George Simpson's report to the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company stated that, in 1830: "The Colonists were happy and comfortable, their means of living were abundant, and their appearance bespoke easy circumstances... the whole settlement wore the appearance of peace and plenty."<sup>1</sup> In 1833, James McMillan, reporting on "Red River matters" to James Hargrave, declared that the Settlement was "very quiet with the exception of a few squabbles down amongst the Scotch."<sup>2</sup> The Colony appeared to be successful economically and peaceful socially, except for some "improper" conduct among the "half-breeds" in 1835.<sup>3</sup> Agriculture suffered the occasional set-back due to uncontrol-



lable conditions, such as early frosts (1836); but, food shortages were brief in duration. In 1834 Governor Simpson applauded the fact "that morality religion & education are spreading rapidly among its [the Colony's] numerous population."<sup>4</sup> By the end of the 1830's the Settlement had developed into a thriving community with a population of 4688 persons.<sup>5</sup> Isobel Finlayson's impressions of Red River in 1840 revealed the Colony as an adequate, although not an ideal, place of residence:

from the various reports I had heard of this place I came to it under very unfavorable impressions, but I am pleased to say I found it infinitely superior to the opinion I had originally entertained of it. The living is cheap and good, and one can obtain all the necessities, and many of the comforts of life, but at the same time I must candidly confess, that for many reasons, I should never like the Red River as a place of residence.<sup>6</sup>

Isobel Finlayson, like other Englishwomen before her, did not find Red River equal to European society, despite the Colony's continued efforts in that direction. Red River's physical position in Rupert's Land and its inevitable contact with the fur trade did not allow the Colony's way of life to become a carbon copy of British, European, or even Canadian civilization.<sup>7</sup> The strong link between the fur trade and the agricultural society was unavoidable. At times the interaction bred hostility. Even in 1823, John West reported:

that in consequence of an existing dispute between the parties directing the affairs of the Colony and the Company's Post very unpleasant and irritable feeling had been excited among the Colonists.<sup>8</sup>

Although at times incidents of this nature did arise, the two societies generally acted in a reciprocal, rather than a hostile, relationship. Servants retiring from Company service often settled their family responsibilities by buying land in the Settlement.<sup>9</sup> Also, from time to time, the Hudson's Bay Company hired settlers to help with the transportation of goods.<sup>10</sup> Then in 1835, with the sale of the area by Selkirk's heirs back to the Hudson's Bay Company, the Company gained direct political control over the Red River district.

Hudson's Bay Company concern with agriculture, religion and education within the Colony increased throughout the 1830's. The experimental farm established by the Company illustrated Hudson's Bay Company desire to expand agricultural operations. There was some apprehension on the part of the settlers concerning this venture and therefore, the Company took pains to assure them its chief objective was "to open an Export Trade to England principally for their [the settlers'] own benefit."<sup>11</sup> Throughout the decade, correspondence between George Simpson and the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company demonstrated constant concern for "the growing prosperity of the Colony;" "the cause of Morality and religion;" and for the development of the "Church and School establishments."<sup>12</sup> Because of the political control by the Company and the geographical situation of the Colony, a working relationship between fur trade and agricultural society was inevitable. This interaction also affected fur trade society.

Fur trade practices began to be replaced by the conventions of Red River civilization. Women were intimately connected with this process. The arrival of Frances Simpson in Rupert's Land has been viewed as a turning point in the decline of fur trade society.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, by the time of her appearance in 1830, the values of agricultural society had been firmly established. Because of the unavoidable interaction with the fur trade, these values inevitably would have affected fur trade life, with or without Frances' presence. Hudson's Bay Company officials, such as Simpson and McTavish who brought English wives to Rupert's Land, did not bring these women into a traditional fur trade environment. The forces of "civilization" and "polite society" had long been felt, beginning in the area of the Red River Settlement.<sup>14</sup>

Governor Simpson himself, before the Red River Settlement had become a permanent reality, had followed fur trade customs by taking, (and later "turning off"), at least two country-born wives, Betsey Sinclair and Margaret Taylor. Actually Simpson's relationships with these women may never have constituted true marriages à la façon du pays. Neither were his unions long-lasting nor particularly respectful, as his own comments to J.G. McTavish regarding Betsey Sinclair would indicate:

if you can dispose of the Lady it will be satisfactory as she is an unnecessary & expensive appendage. I see no fun in keeping a Woman without enjoying her charms which my present rambling Life does not enable me to do; but if she is unmarketable I have no wish that she should

be a general accomodation shop to all the young bucks at the Factory and in addition to her own chastity a padlock may be useful.<sup>15</sup>

Although the Red River Settlement provided a convenient place for retirement, men who retained their country-born wives and families still faced difficulties. Charles McKenzie could not get his mixed-blood son accepted as a Hudson's Bay Company clerk.<sup>16</sup> George Simpson refused to allow Colin Robertson's country-born wife to visit Frances at Red River in 1831.<sup>17</sup> Acceptance in the Red River region, especially if the marriage had not been legalized, was difficult to obtain, as the Colony had set up its own desired standards of behavior.

The Red River Settlement, although far removed from Britain, had tried to re-create something of the "civilized world." This does not mean that eighteen year old Frances Simpson found a duplicate of English society on the banks of the Red River. Frances discovered for herself some of the realities of life in the Hudson's Bay Company Territories by participating in an arduous canoe trip from Montreal to Red River, and then on to York Factory. Her journal described numerous long portages. One she depicted as "an operation of 6 hours, of hopping, slipping and climbing."<sup>18</sup> At the end of her journey she confessed:

Fond as I am of travelling, I own, I felt pleased at the idea of remaining quiet for two months having traversed in various ways (since the 8th of March) a distance of 8000 miles, which for a novice is no small undertaking.<sup>19</sup>

Judging by Frances' good-natured comments, she attempted

to meet the country and its people on their own terms. On her arrival at Fort Garry she wrote that although:

the Inhabitants of this remote Region were plain & homely in their manners, they did not want for kindness of heart, and the desire of making everything appear favourable, and pleasing, to the eye & mind of a stranger.<sup>20</sup>

Frances did not consider Red River an equal society to the one she had left in England, but she recognized its efforts.

Mrs. Simpson's move to Red River precipitated numerous reactions. John Stuart wrote to James Hargrave that marriage had "rendered Mr. Simpson the happiest of men!"<sup>21</sup> Some hostility was expressed, however, due to Simpson's treatment of his mixed-blood wives. In fact, John Stuart, although he had been impressed with Frances Simpson, believed in fair treatment for women "turned off" by Hudson's Bay Company officials. Stuart became champion of the "wives" cast-off by Simpson and McTavish.<sup>22</sup>

Frances definitely did create a stir in Red River. Even before her arrival Simpson had tradesmen brought from Montreal "repairing & putting into a comfortable state the house" to be occupied by himself and Frances.<sup>23</sup> Mrs. Simpson's stay at Red River reputedly gave the place "an air of high life & gaeity."<sup>24</sup> Her residence, however, did not mark the beginning of social stratification within the Colony; her presence simply added a top rung to the established social ladder. The "grandees" of the Settlement existed before her arrival.<sup>25</sup> In the agricultural settlement she provided an interesting

diversion, (for example, her health was the subject of much gossip).<sup>26</sup> To fur trade society she was more than a diversion, she became a trend-setting novelty.<sup>27</sup> As Cuthbert Cumming wrote to James Hargrave:

You say nothing of the novelty of getting HBay stocked with European Ladys - I dare say(s) Messers. A. Stewart & Clark are come down with no other view than that of getting Spliced to some fair Belinda & return with her to the HBay.<sup>28</sup>

Frances represented the three-way interaction among European civilization, Red River agricultural life and fur trade society; but, her specific role in the Red River Settlement was limited to participation in the important, and already established, social functions of the Colony.

In the 1830's the Hudson's Bay Company and its officials did much more than transport European wives to Rupert's Land. The political take-over by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1835 allowed the Company direct control over the affairs of the Settlement.<sup>29</sup> Governor Simpson's agricultural schemes, therefore carried more weight. For some time Simpson had been concerned with bringing sheep into the Settlement. He hoped that the preparation of products such as wool, tallow and flax would aid the export trade of the Colony, thereby increasing the prosperity and self-sufficiency of the Settlement.<sup>30</sup> In the 1820's the Scottish settlers had refused to subscribe to plans of this nature; in one case the women refusing the extra work. However, in the 1830's, partially due to Simpson's persistent efforts, a variety of measures were introduced including; the

importation of flax seed, an experimental farm; and various agriculturally-based companies.

Attempts at agricultural companies failed miserably. The Buffalo Wool Company of the 1820's was an economic disaster. The wool could not be sold profitably because of the incredible costs involved in its manufacture. When the Buffalo Wool Company folded a large number of people owed it money.<sup>31</sup> The thirty-one employees, twenty-seven men and only four women, quickly found themselves out of work.<sup>32</sup> The prospectus for the next company, the Assiniboine Wool Company, was drawn up in 1829. The sheep, however, did not appear until a few years later. In October of 1832, Simpson's address to the Red River settlers asked:

is it necessary for me to urge you to afford me your cordial support in another attempt to procure a flock from the United States as the most expeditious and direct means of bringing about these highly desirable ends.<sup>33</sup>

Eventually in 1832 the list of subscribers numbered 128: 123 men and five women, with most of the women's names listed directly after males of the same family name.<sup>34</sup> About this same time the Red River Tallow Company was established. George Simpson was Deputy Chairman of an all-male, six member board.<sup>35</sup> This Company, too, was short-lived. In 1834 all the cattle were sold by auction.<sup>36</sup>

Women played a very limited role as employees, subscribers and directors of these companies. They numbered a small 12.9% of the workers in the Buffalo Wool Company; an even smaller 3.9% of the subscribers to the Assiniboine Wool Company; and,

as mentioned, no women were directors of the Red River Tallow Company. Although the figures represent different types of participation within each company, they do indicate that in the business affairs of the Colony, even where agriculture was concerned, women took part only on an extremely limited basis.

Female participation remained greater in the day-to-day farm work of the Colony. Rev. William Cochran "induced" some native women to take up cultivation of potatoes, barley and wheat.<sup>37</sup> Canadian women were to be sent to the Settlement in 1838 to teach weaving:

We approve the arrangement entered into by Governor Simpson with the Bishop of Juliopolis, by which two Canadian women will this season be sent to the Settlement for the purpose of instructing the half-breed women of the Colony in weaving cloth, which will enable the people to dispense gradually with imported woollens... while it will be productive of great advantage in forming habits of industry among the rising generation of females... the wages of these women will be paid by the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>38</sup>

Again, the Hudson's Bay Company, the civilized world outside Red River, and the people within the Settlement itself, were involved in this development. Women of all classes were gaining acceptable, traditional, European (or Canadian) skills. In 1839, Simpson happily reported that Red River was a thriving community in which "as in Canada and several parts of Europe, the women not only spin, but weave their own woollens and sheeting."<sup>39</sup>

Women's participation in daily agricultural labour and related skills was highly desirable; but, their participation



in the business aspect of agriculture was minimal. Because few women were property owners, they had little opportunity to develop managerial skills, and therefore lacked the two prerequisites for involvement in agricultural business.

Like the teaching of agricultural skills, other educational instruction was carried out by women brought from outside the community. Women, such as Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Cochran who took on teaching responsibilities, were connected with the religious and educational establishments of their husbands. Religion and education remained closely related.

The Hudson's Bay Company also associated itself with the cause of education. In 1830 a grant of £100 went towards building repairs at the Catholic Church and School House;<sup>40</sup> while the Minutes of the Council of the Northern Department regularly mentioned grants for school maintenance.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps because of yearly grants to educational establishments Governor Simpson, on one occasion at least, placed students in schools at Red River against their parents' wishes. In a letter addressed to Thomas Isbister, Simpson explained:

it being our decided opinion that the change in your views which dictated that letter arose from undue influence over your then weak and wavering state of mind, we determined on following up the original plan of sending the boys to Mr. Jones's where they have accordingly been placed, and where I have the satisfaction to say they are making rapid progress.<sup>42</sup>

A number of schools were operating by the mid-1830's, many supported by the Church Missionary Society and/or the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>43</sup> Rev. David Jones' school, (later

the Red River Academy), attracted students and teachers of both sexes. The Minutes of the Council held at Red River in 1833, besides granting money to Jones' establishment, resolved "that a vote of thanks be presented to Mr. & Mrs. Jones" for their contribution to education.<sup>44</sup> Mrs. Jones gained wide recognition for her work with female students. Donald Ross called her "a most pleasant and amiable woman," and wrote that the "whole establishment is so very delightful and reminds one so strongly of the fatherland, that it is almost impossible to pass it without stepping in."<sup>45</sup> Mrs. Jones' death in 1836 prompted many tributes: a plaque was erected by her pupils in her memory;<sup>46</sup> Simpson called her death "a very great public loss;"<sup>47</sup> and Donald Ross wrote that "her loss will be severely felt in Red River and justly regretted by every one who knew her."<sup>48</sup> Two years after her death Rev. David Jones returned to England and Mr. Macallum took over management of the school, assisted by his wife as matron.

Before the death of Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Lowman had come from England to assist with the teaching duties. Opinions of Mrs. Lowman were not uniformly of the same high calibre as comments about Mrs. Jones. Thomas Simpson felt Mrs. Loman was "admirably qualified;"<sup>49</sup> but, others did not agree. When Mrs. Loman married, (an event which caused much excitement in the Colony), Donald Ross expressed relief that she had left the teaching profession and that Mr. Macallum had taken over her duties:"as for the improvement of the mind goes, the girls will gain greatly by the change."<sup>50</sup> Mrs. Lowman's former

companion, Mrs. Sarah Ingham, decided to remain in Red River and set up her own small boarding and day school.<sup>51</sup> This venture ended when Mrs. Ingham married Robert Logan, "much against the wishes of his family."<sup>52</sup>

Miss Armstrong also arrived in Red River during the 1830's to assume teaching duties at Macallum's school. Although praised as a "fearless traveller" her teaching abilities did not win comparable approval.<sup>53</sup> Donald Ross, for one, decided to withdraw his children from the school:

this [hiring of Armstrong] in my opinion will be the cause of the breaking up of his [Macallum's] whole concern... I have already given him notice that I mean to withdraw my children from his school next summer, for I have no notion of being year after year throwing away so much money for nothing.<sup>54</sup>

Simpson, too, was unhappy with the selection of Armstrong, perhaps partially because a number of people were prepared to withdraw their daughters. Simpson advised that Miss Armstrong be "convinced" to cancel her engagement.

the lady they wished to fill that situation should be qualified to teach not only the useful but the ornamental branches of education, such as music, drawing &c which they find Miss Armstrong is not qualified to do....

you will provide a more competent Governess to fill her place either from Europe or Canada. In Canada they think that a Lady might be found at a Salary from £50 to £60 per annum.<sup>55</sup>

By this time Red River required a female governess to teach not only practical and useful skills but also "ornamental" ones. Obviously women from Europe or Canada were needed, as such versatile, cultured women were still scarce in the

### Red River Settlement.

Almost all the prominent women educators in the 1830's came from outside the Colony. Angelique Nolin was the only Settlement woman to take on teaching responsibilities. Women were active participants in education, although none directed her own educational establishment for any length of time. Women were valued as governesses to teach female students. Schools existed to educate the youth of both sexes, but within the schools it was expected that women taught female students and men taught male students.

The Jones-Macallum institution, "which has been found so beneficial to the rising generation of both sexes," apparently attracted a good number of pupils in the 1830's. Thomas Simpson remarked: "I was astonished to find Mr. Jones' boarding school so full - On Sunday all the young ladies mounted their new Leghorns and cut a dash that would take captive a whole troop of dragoons."<sup>57</sup>

These "young ladies", of course, worked on a different curriculum than did their male counterparts. Female students received instruction in "reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, the use of the globe, history and catechetical information," while the young men were taught "reading, writing, arithmetic, bookkeeping, algebra, mathematics, Latin, Greek &c."<sup>58</sup> As previously mentioned the "ornamental" branches of education were included in the curriculum for girls, whenever possible.

Mrs. Lowman, at one time, received praise as some of

her students "can play several tunes on the Piano, and their manners are wonderfully altered for the better."<sup>59</sup> However, some skills did not meet with universal approval when taught as school subjects. J.D. Cameron wrote to James Hargrave that when Mr. Macallum took over teaching the girls their progress accelerated:

Too much of their time it appears was taken up with mere frivolous trifles - My Daughter told me yesterday that since mr. McAllum [sic] began to teach, none of them has been allowed the use of the needle, which I am not sorry for, as they all sew well enough - except some of the little ones.<sup>60</sup>

Whether or not this comment sprang from Cameron's general dislike of Mrs. Lowman cannot be determined. It does indicate, however, that there was not complete agreement on the subjects that girls should be taught, or on what constituted a good teacher. Nevertheless, it was generally accepted that academic and cultural activities should be included, and that girls should follow a different programme from the male students.

Of course, the schools in the Settlement varied in objective. The day school, (at Grand Rapids), which provided instruction mainly for native children, boasted thirty girls in 1833, "15 of whom are in the spinning room learning to spin."<sup>61</sup> As in many branches of Red River society, race and social class were determining factors in education. Daughters of prominent settlers and Hudson's Bay Company officers attended boarding schools, such as the Red River Academy. Children from Indian or Métis families usually were sent to more "practical" schools, where "industry" and religion provided the basis of the

curriculum.

Income, as well as background, determined educational opportunities. Some found the fees at the Red River Academy difficult to raise. In 1835, Cuthbert Cumming complained that:

the youngest girl is by arrangements made here to be placed at the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Jones' school and according to the rules of that Establishment will be supplied with all her wants and education for £30 per an<sup>m</sup> this is I must confess more than I can well afford.<sup>62</sup>

Sometimes, too, daughters of Hudson's Bay Company personnel outside the Red River area had difficulty reaching the Settlement. Besides expense, traders on the Pacific Coast were "at a loss how female children could be conveyed to Red River safely."<sup>63</sup> Often people within fur trade society who wished to take advantage of opportunities offered at the Red River Settlement were unable to do so. In contrast, some girls from Red River and other parts of Rupert's Land still journeyed to England for their education, although this was an expensive proposition. For example, Miss Jane Ross' two and a half year residence in London cost her father £500, despite the fact that her board and schooling only cost £30 per annum.<sup>64</sup> Social life at Red River was not as costly as that in England.

Teachers were not the only women to come to the Colony for employment in schools. "Respectable English Women Servants" were highly desirable in some educational establishments so "that the young Ladies should have as little intercourse with the Native Women in this Country as possible."<sup>65</sup> The upper

classes of Red River also desired English servants for their homes, again in imitation of English and Canadian society. In 1838, Mr. Bird requested that "two respectable servants a man and woman to be sent out by the York ship of next year... character and efficiency being essential requisites."<sup>66</sup> The élite of Red River society continued to concern themselves with the re-creation of traditional European role patterns in the Red River Colony.

The year 1840 saw the arrival of a group of women representative of a number of trends of the 1830's: Isobel Finlayson came as wife to Chief Factor Duncan Finlayson;<sup>67</sup> Miss Allen arrived as the new governess for the Red River Academy;<sup>68</sup> and Miss Jane Ross returned to Rupert's Land after completing her English schooling.<sup>69</sup> They personified the social and educational movements in Red River, embodying the imitation of English society and the acceptance of women who fitted these traditional role models.

The journey of these three women from York Factory to the Red River Settlement provides an interesting contrast to the situation of the early settler women. Isobel Finlayson's description included both the good and bad aspects of the trip. She commented that her only course of action during the pouring rain was "to submit with patience" to her lot.<sup>70</sup> She also appreciated "the situation of the poor men" who "must still be exposed to the heavy rain, performing the various duties of the evening."<sup>71</sup> Miss Allen apparently was neither as pleasant nor as good a travelling companion as Isobel Finlayson.

She "bemoaned her hard fate" when forced to walk through a swamp, and caused a variety of problems for the entire party.<sup>72</sup>

Duncan Finlayson wrote of Miss Allen:

In her rambles along the beach, she sometimes plunged further into the Lake & sometimes into the woods, than was consistent with her safety and desirable for our comfort and speedy travelling, so that I was glad to get clear of the charge, and deliver her over to Mr. Macallum.<sup>73</sup>

This description supplies a sharp point of contrast to stories of women travellers in the first parties of the Selkirk Settlers. They endured greater difficulties, worked harder, and accepted their lot with much less protest.

By the late 1830's, women travelled across Rupert's Land as seldom as possible. Complaints about the women who did travel became common. One man exclaimed:

by the Bee that stung Adam                       
I shall never again be persuaded [sic]  
to take in tow half naked Ladies at such  
a cold season of the year.... My Man  
Columbus being short in both strength as  
well as length, I was under the necessity  
(to prevent the fair Sex from freezing  
certain parts) to bundle both in my  
carriole and act as driver myself.<sup>74</sup>

In 1837 George Simpson ordered that, regarding the canoes leaving Lachine for the interior, "no Women or Children can be accommodated w<sup>t</sup> [sic] passages either in the Brigade or light Canoes."<sup>75</sup> In fact, in 1841, Rev. Cowley and his wife, who had been sent out by the Church Missionary Society, were advised to return to London from Canada, and then proceed by York ship to the Red River Settlement. Although Simpson had



taken his own wife to the interior by canoe, he cautioned

Rev. Cowley:

that we were not in a situation to convey a lady passenger, that if he were alone the passage might have been afforded to him, but that the danger and difficulties of the voyage to a delicate European female were such that we could not think of allowing her to be exposed to them, nor the craft to the certainty of detention if she were a passenger.<sup>76</sup>

Likely Simpson did not want the inexperienced Rev. Cowley on the journey either, and his wife provided a convenient and acceptable excuse.

In the decade of the 1830's many of the women who took an active part in Red River life were women newly-arrived from England. These women came out as wives of traders or missionaries. A number who came as school teachers married well and then retired from their profession. Most of these women took part in the social functions of the community. Social gatherings were held within all classes; but, the "nobility" of the Colony at times lived in a social whirl:

Shortly before the holidays, Mr. Logan broke the Ice, by giving a grand blow out at which all the nobility were present - and since then it has been one continued feast... and I can assure you that their tables, for abundance, variety and even elegance would do no discredit to the middle ranks of society in the civilized world.<sup>77</sup>

In these situations women played the traditional social roles found anywhere in the "civilized world."

The women who arrived, (many with their husbands, or in some way affiliated with the Church Missionary Society), did operate in the educational aspect of life at the participatory

level. However, except for a brief period of time, none managed her own school, and therefore, no woman passed beyond the participatory stage. Girls were readily accepted into the educational institutions as students, but they received a different course of instruction from their male counterparts. The "ornamental" aspects of education were emphasized in the education of daughters of "gentlemen", while the practical arts of spinning and weaving were stressed in schools designed for the native population. Boys studied more wide-ranging subject matter, aimed at helping them prepare for future careers. Although participation by women occurred in education at both the student and teacher levels, this participation fell well within the boundaries of roles assumed by women in all parts of the "civilized" world.

Women played no part in politics. They certainly were affected by political events, but nowhere is there evidence of comments or action by women pertaining to any political development. Neither their opinions nor their participation were expected in this area of life, and women seemed content to accept this status quo.

Economically some women participated marginally in Red River affairs. However, women who held land usually did so only after the death of their husbands. Of the land holders listed in 1836, 464 were males and nine were females. Of the nine females, seven were listed as "Widow."<sup>78</sup> In the agricultural businesses, such as the Assiniboine Wool Company, a few women emerged as subscribers. They composed a very small

proportion of the total number and their names generally followed their husbands'. Only in the daily agricultural work did women participate extensively. At times when all persons were needed, especially in harvest season, women were visible participants. Alexander Ross described harvest time at Red River:

all hands were at work in the fields. Men in their shirt-sleeves, women in their white jackets, and boys and girls everywhere busy in cutting and gleaning, or frightening away blackbirds and wild pigeons.<sup>79</sup>

As faithfully as possible, a traditional European agricultural society had been erected at Red River. Women coming from Europe to the Colony throughout the 1830's did not see the Settlement as a society equal to the one of their homeland; however, the roles these women assumed within the community at Red River were much like the roles women played in Britain, Europe or Canada. Certainly, some people in Rupert's Land still had to be reminded of proper social behavior, for the influence of fur trade conventions persisted.<sup>80</sup>

Morality, however, had become a definite consideration in Red River society, particularly after the missionary push of the 1820's to solemnize unions à la façon du pays. A letter from Donald Ross to James Hargrave addressed the issue of Red River morality:

My old friend Mr. Sutherland seems to meet with many sorrows - his grand Daughter - has gone wrong - has become a mother at 16 to a boy - and by a boy of 13. She is now married to an other [sic] half breed lad.<sup>81</sup>

The interaction between "civilization" and Red River

society, as well as that between the Colony and the fur trade, affected all aspects of life within the Settlement. (The process also changed life within fur trade society.) The roles of women were determined by these interactions. Often they were imitative of roles found in Britain or Europe, as this was characteristic of much of Red River society. Nevertheless, they were somewhat influenced by the physical realities of Rupert's Land, for in some areas, such as agriculture, work remained directly related to the environment. However, in the 1830's, women's roles in the Red River Settlement generally fell into traditional role patterns found in the "civilized" world.

## CHAPTER IV

### EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN AFTER 1840

In 1841, George Simpson reported all was well at Red River; "the colony was quiet & in a healthy & thriving condition, with every prospect of a good harvest."<sup>1</sup> The Settlement, now with a solid agricultural base, a constantly increasing population, and established social and political structures, had more time to devote to education and thus there was a growing demand for educational opportunity within the Colony.<sup>2</sup>

Because teaching was an acceptable career for a woman, the expansion of educational institutions promoted a growth in the number of female school teachers. With the coming of the Grey Nuns, (in 1844), and later Matilda Davis, women reached the "director" level in educational institutions. Few women, outside those involved in the management of schools, controlled their own economic situations. Occupational opportunities were limited almost exclusively to the home and/or the school. Given the social attitudes of the Red River Settlement, many of which developed from a desire to imitate civilized society, the economic dependence of women was to be expected.

The decade of the 1840's, however, cannot be characterized simply as one of peace and plenty. Crop failures occurred in 1846 and 1847, along with a serious outbreak of measles in the former year. But, by this time, the Colony was in a position to

recover quickly from hardships. In 1848 "the crops at the Settlement were more abundant than for several years past."<sup>3</sup> Dissatisfaction with the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly continued in some quarters, and this combined with the threat of American intrigues and the Oregon crisis, prompted the dispatch of the Red River Expedition in 1845. Colonel Crofton, commander of the force at the time of its arrival, described the condition of the Settlement in less than complimentary terms, calling the place "squalid" and the people "idle."<sup>4</sup> He also complained of having to associate with the "vulgar and ill-bred folk here."<sup>5</sup> Red River had yet to become a faithful replica of English society.

The self-image of the residents did not correspond with the opinion of the Colonel. These "vulgar and ill-bred folk" placed much emphasis on social niceties. Letters of introduction were considered the proper means of presenting oneself to a person of social standing. For example, Rev. Alonzo Barnard presented a letter of introduction on his arrival at Fort Garry in 1844.<sup>6</sup> Even Peter Garrioch was self-conscious enough to lament an error in etiquette which he committed when visiting Mrs. Isbister's. He described the incident in his journal:

I saw Miss Caroline in her sitting room, or parlor; but, there being no introduction on my part that manifested a desire to make any stay, she did not invite me into her parlor. I certainly made a great mistake, and I do sincerely regret it.<sup>7</sup>

In his haste to deliver a letter, Garrioch neglected to spend enough time to make his visit a proper social call. Social activities, such as formal visits and dinner parties, were

a well-established part of life in the Red River Settlement by the 1840's. Mrs. Bird became the "leader of fashion at Red River" by giving numerous dinner parties and balls.<sup>8</sup>

Society also expected women to function as wives and mothers. Alexander Ross, reporting on conditions in the Colony, stated that:

The evidence of domestic happiness everywhere meets the eye.... Everything here is exactly as it ought to be. Every man minds his own business - every woman may be found in her own kitchen. The flail and spinning wheel are ever at work.<sup>9</sup>

Women worked at home, in the kitchen, where they could also mind the children. J.D. Cameron, while congratulating James Hargrave on the birth of his child, remarked: "I am sorry Mrs. Finlayson in red river [sic] has not yet followed Mrs. Hargrave's very good example by adding some Fruit of their mutual Love to their mutual Happiness."<sup>10</sup>

The "matrimonial bond," however, was a prerequisite to a happy and proper family life. Rev. David Anderson's "Charge to the Clergy," in 1851, praised the family circumstances in Red River, especially when compared to those of thirty years previous, when neither solemnized marriages nor religious and educational institutions were present in the North West.<sup>11</sup> He too must have been pleased by the fact that by the late 1840's there was "no want of young ladies of fair education and other good qualities" who were suitable enough to marry English missionaries.<sup>12</sup> One example cited was the Rev. Mr. Macallum who had married in Rupert's Land. Participation in formal marriage, domestic work and social functions were all

accepted parts of a woman's role in Red River society.

Besides the cultivated young women raised in the Settlement, Red River society continued to include women from England. When Adam Thom, who came to Rupert's Land in the capacity of Recorder, brought with him his wife and a female servant, the actions of these two women were typical of many who came over at this time. Mrs. Thom, (as Roy St. George Stubbs points out), "lived largely in the shadow of her husband."<sup>13</sup> The only time she did come briefly into the spotlight was as a result of a quarrel with her maid. Subsequent to this incident the servant, Helen Rothnies, married an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company at the Lower Fort.<sup>14</sup> Helen changed roles by taking advantage of matrimonial opportunity, whereas Mrs. Thom's position was fixed because she was already married to a prominent man.

Virtually the only long-term role open to women, outside that of wife and mother, was the position of school teacher. With the desire to become a civilized society, plus the missionary support for religion and education, schools had become a significant part of Red River life. Settlement leaders hoped that boys and girls of all classes would be able to acquire suitable schooling within the Settlement. Nevertheless, some children still left the Colony to complete their education, and some, such as Miss Jessy Ross, went to London boarding schools "just to see the world."<sup>15</sup>

A number of problems had to be overcome before girls could be sent away to school. Going to school in Britain or



Canada was an expensive proposition. Advertisements for boarding schools outside Red River quoted fees at about £40 per annum. Often music and drawing lessons were extra.<sup>16</sup> These charges, added to the cost of transportation, kept this option out of the reach of most settlers. Governor Simpson stressed the importance of providing "a sound education at home" for all the youths of Rupert's Land, but "more especially the girls, whom it is difficult, indeed almost impossible, to send to England or elsewhere at a distance to obtain, those advantages which are not to be procured in this Colony."<sup>17</sup> Female travel across long distances was still viewed unfavourably. Therefore, female schooling within the Colony was a necessity and female teachers, especially imported ones, were desirable.

Although general agreement existed that schools were a vital part of the community, there were diverse opinions as to the type of school necessary. The Scottish Presbyterians wanted their own schools, so in 1849 they organized a school district with John Inkster as teacher.<sup>18</sup> This added a Presbyterian/Anglican split to the existing Protestant/Catholic division in education. However, despite this schism, any school expansion was accepted by the community. By 1860, James Ross noted that in the Protestant section of the Colony there were "six or seven day-schools, at which both boys and girls attend."<sup>19</sup> He complained that this was not good enough for "our schools, as a whole, have not that standing which they had three or four years ago."<sup>20</sup> Following the publication

of Ross' comments in the Nor'-Wester, many articles and letters regarding education and the annual inspection of schools appeared in the paper. This emphasizes the widespread concern for quality education.

Educational concern in the Protestant sector was aggravated by various scandals throughout the 1840's. Miss Allen, who had arrived as a governess in 1840, did not get along well with Mr. Macallum. Eventually she was asked to leave the Academy by Macallum, who told her she was "careless & lazy" and "had extraordinary peculiarities wch made her the laugh of her school girls & she was not sufficiently accomplished to carry on the education of young ladies."<sup>21</sup> Miss Allen was replaced by "a half breed girl of 19 Miss MacKenzie."<sup>22</sup> Although Miss Allen had been temporarily accepted as a participant in the teaching profession, she did not direct the management of the establishment, and therefore her teaching career in Red River easily could be terminated.

Macallum's school came under a variety of critical attacks during the decade of the 1840's. In 1843, Letitia Hargrave, in York Factory, had heard that the school was "going to wreck."<sup>23</sup>

Children who have had duck geese & venison 3 times a day are supposed to suffer from breakfasts of milk & water with dry bread, severe floggings, confinement after any fault & the total want of the following meal. The boys & girls are constantly fainting but MacCallum wont [sic] change his system. Many of the girls have got ill, and as he makes them strip off their Indian stockings & adopt English fashions it is not surprising.<sup>24</sup>

Interestingly, physical hardship for the pupils of the school came partly from punishments and partly from a desire to mimic English fashion.

The drive to copy polite society in Macallum's establishment also was evident in the treatment of some girls' mothers. If the mothers were not legally married, they were not permitted to see their children. On this Letitia commented:

This may be all very right, but it is fearfully cruel for the poor unfortunate mothers did not know that there was any distinction & it is only within the last few years that anyone was so married.<sup>25</sup>

In 1847 more scandal about the Macallum school surfaced. In a letter to Donald Ross at Norway House, John Macallum complained of reports circulating that were "prejudicial" to his establishment.<sup>26</sup> Robert Clouston's letter to Ross a few days earlier referred to the latest "Comedy" being "the expulsion of Maggie Mowat and the running away of two others."<sup>27</sup> Apparently some of the girls had written a letter complaining that the governess at Macallum's "set them a bad example." Macallum somehow obtained possession of the letter, expelled Maggie Mowat and "thrashed the poor girls with a stick."<sup>28</sup> Clouston was convinced that the girls were right and that the governess, Miss McKenzie, was "not a fit person to be trusted with the education of girls - probably she might succeed better with the boys."<sup>29</sup> Generally Clouston believed the school to be an unhealthy place, especially for young girls, as:

his governess conducts herself with impropriety - not to say - immorality - and he himself is but

a - smooth-faced tyrant! - who but a tyrannical cowardly monster would beat a poor girl with a stick?<sup>30</sup>

Apparently, Mrs. Finlayson's reports to Letitia Hargrave on Macallum's school paralleled those of Robert Clouston: "By Mrs. Finlayson's account a person had only to use her eyes to see what a very unfit place it [Macallum's] is for any one to leave a child."<sup>31</sup> Although such opinions were widespread, Macallum's only attempt at improvement was the changing of governesses.

Although women participated as teachers and students, the educational arrangements were far from satisfactory. Some female governesses were considered unsuitable and the female students at Macallum's suffered physical and emotional hardships. The female students, upon occasion, voiced their disapproval, but punishment came swiftly. Governesses faced reprimands and removal. These facts helped to negate the influence women could have had in Protestant education in the 1840's. Justification may be found for some of Macallum's actions, but, on the whole, his school did little to promote sustained and profitable female participation in education.

The Protestant community was not alone in its desire for improved educational opportunities. In the 1840's, schools expanded in the Catholic community largely due to the arrival of the Grey Nuns in 1844. Bishop Provencher had recruited the first four Sisters of Charity from Montreal. Their principal function was to instruct young people. They filled the void in Catholic female education which had been created when Angelique

Nolin left her girls' school in St. Boniface after five years of teaching.

The Grey Nuns arrived in June 1844 and by August sixty girls were enrolled in their school.<sup>33</sup> Sixteen years later, two sisters directed the academy, instructing thirty-four pupils in "the English and French languages, arithmetic, geography, &c."<sup>34</sup> Another sister assisted by teaching music. The orphan asylum was directed by two other nuns who trained twenty-three children in "different kinds of work."<sup>35</sup> Yet another sister instructed twenty-five day scholars. Therefore, in total, eighty-two girls were receiving education or training from the Grey Nuns in St. Boniface by 1860. A school for girls also existed in the Parish of St. Norbert, under the care of two "Soeurs Gris." In St. François Xavier (White Horse Plains) one school operated with thirteen boys and twenty-six girls in attendance. After the arrival of the Grey Nuns female education in Catholic schools increased sizeably.

Catholic education was not limited to the children of wealthy families, as the existence of instruction for orphans indicates. For Catholic families, as well as for Protestant, education in Red River was much cheaper than in Canada or in Europe. Governor Dallas informed Clerk William Shaw that Bishop Taché had a good school at Red River where "he will board and educate your children at the rate of £10 each per annum."<sup>37</sup>

Prior to the arrival of the Grey Nuns, women did little as directors in educational institutions. Mrs. Ingham's

school of the 1830's had been a short-lived venture. However, following the death of Macallum and a brief period when the Red River Academy was under the supervision of Bishop Anderson and his sister, Mrs. Mills established a school for young women at St. Cross (1851). This school was managed by Mrs. Mills and her two daughters. Like many women teachers before them, they had emigrated from England. Their school continued to receive the yearly grant given by the Hudson's Bay Company to the Red River Academy.<sup>38</sup> Subjects at the school included social etiquette and the teaching of music on imported pianos.<sup>39</sup>

In 1856, Mrs. Mills left for Ontario and Miss Mills married Francis Johnson, (then Recorder of Rupert's Land.) Miss Harriet Mills also retired from the school, although she resided at Red River for a short time afterwards.<sup>40</sup> Since a precedent had been established, an Englishwoman, (Miss Aldershaw), replaced Mrs. Mills as director of the St. Cross girls' school. She managed the school for only two years before the establishment was replaced, in 1858, by a new institution under the direction of Miss Matilda Davis.

Matilda Davis, the daughter of a Hudson's Bay Company officer in Rupert's Land, had been sent to England for her schooling. She returned to Red River to establish a school of her own. She based her establishment at St. Andrews in an old family home until a new building was erected and maintained with the help of a grant from the Hudson's Bay Company. The housekeeping duties were assumed by her sister Nancy and by Sarah Atkinson.<sup>41</sup> Beginning in 1862 Miss Davis was assisted

in the teaching responsibilities by Miss Lane.<sup>42</sup> The school, designed for the education of young ladies, was entirely staffed by females. In the educational aspects of society, women had reached the levels of both participant and director.

Probably because the school was intended for the education of middle and upper class girls, (ages ten to eighteen), the curriculum was academic and cultural. A list of the week's lessons included the subjects of: spelling, poetry, geography, history, English, grammar, composition, mythology, "tables", astronomy, dates and letters.<sup>43</sup> Religion and Latin were also taught.<sup>44</sup> W.J. Healy's interviews with women who attended the school indicate that music and deportment were also part of the curriculum. Miss Truthwaite related that:

We had to read very well, and Miss Davis was extremely particular about the accuracy of our spelling, and even more particular about the propriety of our behavior and our manner of walking and sitting.<sup>45</sup>

At Miss Davis' each girl was taught to sit "as though she had a basket of eggs balanced on her head."<sup>46</sup> Following the example of British education, "young ladies" were instructed in the ornamental branches of education, and the stress placed on deportment conformed with the desire of many Red River inhabitants to be considered "civilized." Pianos were imported. A public library had already been formed in 1847 with the Council granting £50 to purchase books from England.<sup>47</sup> Bishop Anderson and his sister began a reading club.<sup>48</sup> Culture had come to Red River.

From the 1830's and 1840's through to the 1860's, Red

River prided itself that it could provide useful and ornamental education. Thus it was possible to "have, in the midst of this remote wilderness of the North-West, all the elements of civilized life" and "many young persons of both sexes, well educated and accomplished, who have never seen the civilized world."<sup>49</sup>

Women who were fortunate enough to have the qualifications needed for the teaching profession had the greatest measure of financial independence. But, female teachers rarely made education a long-term profession. Often it was used as temporary employment until the opportunity to marry arose. While the Grey Nuns did not have the same social and economic concerns as the laity, they and Matilda Davis became the first women to operate their own educational establishments for an extended period of time.

For those women who were not engaged as servants or teachers, or who were socially "above" menial tasks, agricultural labour was an expected contribution to the household in the busy seasons.<sup>50</sup> During sowing and harvesting all available labour was utilized. In a letter to Donald Ross, Alexander Ross commented that although the "hay & crops, are both bad; yet both pressing on us at this moment, & every Soul, big & little, is out & busy."<sup>51</sup> On rare occasions women were hired as agricultural labourers, employed by the month and paid at a rate of ten shillings. In contrast, men were paid £20 per annum, consisting of articles and credit as well as cash.<sup>52</sup> Any hired labour, however, was used only when "absolutely



necessary," for the "bulk of the agricultural labour is performed by the members of each family."<sup>53</sup>

Salary comparisons, on the whole, are difficult to make as men and women were seldom engaged in the same occupations. In the late 1830's Simpson authorized the salary for a governess at the Red River Academy as £75 per annum for the first three years and £100 for the last two years, plus a free passage home and "bed, board, & Washing free of cost."<sup>54</sup> In the same Memorandum he placed the salary for a servant woman in the same institution at the rate of £12 per annum.<sup>55</sup> Meanwhile for a surgeon in the Northern Department the pay was £100 per annum for a five year term.<sup>56</sup> In 1840, a skilled surgeon/clerk for the Hudson's Bay Company made a salary of £150.<sup>57</sup> Recruits to the Hudson's Bay Company service earned about £20 per annum "and not exceeding £30 sterling for tradesmen."<sup>58</sup> Therefore wages for skilled female school teachers in the mid-1830's were lower than those of surgeons, but not radically so. Women servants earned less than clerks, but again neither the work nor the conditions can be equated.<sup>59</sup> Closer to the position of a servant girl was that of an apprentice cooper (over the age of fifteen) who, as late as 1853, worked for two years at £10, two years at £12, two years at £15 and one year at £20 sterling.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, considering female servants were often quite young, the wage Simpson quoted does not appear inadequate. The main problem with women's employment was not the wages, but the fact that women did not have the same opportunities to gain employment.

The teaching profession was the only area in which men and women occupied relatively equal positions. In 1836, a female teacher was engaged at £75 to £100 per annum. In 1849, over ten years later, John Inkster received a salary which varied from £65 to £150 depending on contributions to the school.<sup>61</sup> These two salaries were comparable. Miss Lane, the assistant to Matilda Davis, received an annual income of £40.<sup>62</sup> However, she was not employed in the same capacity as the sole governess at the Red River Academy or the sole teacher at the Presbyterian school. Considering the different responsibilities, men's salaries for teaching did not greatly exceed those paid to female teachers.

If women teachers had relatively the same amount of economic power as their male counterparts, this did not hold true for the average woman as compared to the average man in the Colony. Well-educated female teachers were in demand and many had to be induced to come to Red River by the promise of monetary (or matrimonial) gain. Either way, the women achieved economic security. The Settler's Account Books, (kept by the Hudson's Bay Company), indicate that only a few women had any financial independence. From the years 1833-34 to 1863-64, of the total number of accounts, the percentage of women's accounts varied from a high of 22% (in 1833-34) to a low of 10% (in 1855-56). On the average for this thirty year period women held 16% of the accounts listed.<sup>63</sup> Throughout these years adult females composed half of the total adult population.<sup>64</sup> However, their weaker economic (and social) position is only

emphasized by the example of the 1833 census, in which fifteen families of 529, (or 2.8%), had women listed independently or as heads of families.<sup>65</sup> Few women had any financial independence and fewer still retained independent status in the census listings.

Other scattered indications of women's economic status exist. For example, in the Red River Settlement Miscellaneous Papers, (HBCA), there are sixteen bills of exchange preserved for the year 1847. No woman's name appeared on any of these.<sup>66</sup>

In a few instances women's financial affairs were important enough to warrant Governor Simpson's attention. In 1842, in a letter to Duncan Finlayson, Simpson warned of two male settlers overdrawing their accounts. Simpson also informed Finlayson that the "Widow of Thomas Isbister has given a carte blanche to her son Alexander to draw all her funds in the Company's hands; you will, therefore, understand that no advances are to be made to her at Red River."<sup>67</sup> In 1856, Simpson notified John Swanston at Fort Garry of a legacy due to Madame Gervais of White Horse Plain. He enclosed a receipt with the instructions that:

you will observe it [the receipt] refers to the first instalment of her legacy which has been placed to her credit with the Company at Lachine, payable at Fort Garry, of which you will receive advice as usual by the winter packet. The amount coming to her this year is only about £16 stg. of which she received £10 while I was at the Settlement: you should not allow her to overdraw her remittance.<sup>68</sup>

The accounts of these two women are important as they

indicate how women often gained money and property: through legacies, wills or annuities, usually on the death of a male. The Council of the Northern Department bestowed annuities, if deemed necessary:

e.g. Resolved 82. That Widow Taylor the mother of the late Peter Taylor be allowed an annuity of £5 yearly; her son Peter who lost his life ... having been her principal support.<sup>69</sup>

Some annuities granted were "sold" by women for cash or credit at the Hudson's Bay Company's stores. Simpson reported, in 1847, that Mrs. Gladman and Mrs. Vincent had sold their annuities and that the money would "be deposited in the Company's hands in advance to meet their demands on our Stores."<sup>70</sup>

Problems sometimes arose from annuities; Nancy Garrioch's annuity was not paid in England in 1851 "as no intimation of it has been received at R[ed] R[iver]. She is desirous to know the reason for the stoppage."<sup>71</sup> Another instance occurred when Mary Calder contacted Simpson regarding a claim she had on Mr. Bird for an annuity. However, as she did not furnish the Governor with the means to prosecute Mr. Bird, Simpson attempted to obtain her annuity by employing others who had greater knowledge of the arrangements.<sup>72</sup> Annuities often were the only cash available to women, and as such, women took action when problems arose over payment.

Not all men in the Red River Settlement felt women were capable of handling money. Peter Garrioch, for example, was "greatly annoyed" by his mother spending money without consulting him. He complained: "she does not appear even to dream of the possibility of her riches making to themselves wings and flying

away."<sup>73</sup> The money Peter Garrioch's mother, Nancy, had received was a bequest on the death of her husband. In many cases this continued to be the means by which most women acquired money and/or property.

Approximately forty wills concerning residents of the Red River Settlement are available for the period from the early 1830's to the early 1860's.<sup>74</sup> Many of the wills were drawn up in the 1840's. Although the terms of the wills vary some general trends are apparent. As in the earlier period of the pre-1830's, women did not receive bequests on an equal basis with men. Wives who received money on their husbands' death often did not have ultimate control of the money.

In a dozen wills, dating between 1835 and 1863, (one half being from the 1840's), the wife was given money and/or property, but conditions were laid down for its distribution after her death. For example, William Hemming's will allowed his wife, Mary, the interest from £1000 during her life. After her death the principal was to be divided "share and share alike" among the children.<sup>75</sup> Rev. William Cochran's will (1847) used the same formula, as did the wills of both Kenneth and Robert Logan.<sup>76</sup> William Sinclair's will also operated on much the same principle, although he delegated exactly how much money was to be distributed to his sister, brother and his grandson after his wife's death.<sup>77</sup> A variation on this theme allowed the wife to bequeath a portion of her inheritance. The wills of Adam Thom and John Edward Harriott both allowed their wives to bequeath £500, but delegated the remaining

amounts.<sup>78</sup>

Women also received annual payments or specific sums of land or money. This restricted the woman's independence. John Rowand's will allowed his wife £100 sterling during her widowhood.<sup>79</sup> Alexander Ross allowed his wife £50 sterling, plus the interest from the remainder of his money until the principal went to his children on their age of majority.<sup>80</sup> John Macallum gave his wife one third of the estate plus the interest on other monies until payments were made to his daughters.<sup>81</sup> While land was given in wills, like cash it had certain restrictions placed upon it. William McKay's wife was given the farm, unless she remarried; while Roderick MacKenzie bequeathed his house and half his land to his wife.<sup>82</sup> However, MacKenzie stipulated what was to be done with the house and land after his wife's death.

Seldom did wives gain absolute control of their property. But, a few cases do exist. John Lee Lewes, (who bequeathed money to persons at Red River), allowed his wife her share of the estate outright on his death. This money was "to be at her own free will and disposal."<sup>83</sup> Edwin Denig also gave his wife land and goods to be "disposed by her as she pleases."<sup>84</sup> (He did, however, request the cash to be invested to support his wife.) In one instance, Robert Campbell placed all but £100 sterling in the hands of his wife and appointed her "the sole executrix of this my last Will and Testament."<sup>85</sup> There are very few surviving wills where a woman was appointed to this position.<sup>86</sup>

Division of property among children took on a variety of different forms. Sometimes money would be divided equally among them. Robert Logan bequeathed money to his children in the equal "share and share alike" principle.<sup>87</sup> Francis Whitford allowed £8 to each of his three sons and £10 to each of his two daughters, while dividing his property and live-stock at White Horse Plains "share and share alike."<sup>88</sup> James Sutherland, however, gave £700 to each son and £600 to each daughter.<sup>89</sup> As in the earlier period, daughters often received property on their marriage and sons at age twenty-one. John Rowand, in fact, divided a large portion of his estate "share and share alike," but his daughters received their portions "upon their marrying with the consent of my Executors but not otherwise."<sup>90</sup> His sons obtained their property at age twenty-one. This will of 1864, when compared to the wills of the 1820's, did not demonstrate any increased equality for women.

Two women's wills, or records of property division, have survived. Jane (Widow) Taylor's will divided her money "share and share alike" among her four daughters.<sup>91</sup> Elizabeth Bird died intestate in 1846, leaving £300 to her husband.<sup>92</sup> No other records exist of women allotting property in this manner. This is explicable by the fact that many male wills divided up a woman's property for her.

Many variations existed among the wills. Some families had only sons or daughters. Some men had neither wives nor families. The inequity of divisions also varied greatly. Some wills were extremely complex in their conditions, while

others were simple. Women sometimes had to take the initiative in order to receive their portions.<sup>93</sup> This, like demands for annuities, occurred infrequently. Mary Bird, for one, wrote to Simpson requesting the transfer of £1000 of the £2500 left to her on her husband's death.<sup>94</sup> Although there were isolated instances of women demanding their legacies, of women gaining control of their money and property, and of women acting as executors, in the vast majority of cases, from 1820-1860, women, (both wives and daughters), received only restricted financial benefits.

The wills of the Red River Settlement indicated that some women must have owned land. Unfortunately the land system at Red River was confusing.<sup>95</sup> As previously mentioned, in 1836, 464 land holders were male and nine were female.<sup>96</sup> In the Memoranda Respecting Grants of Land (no. 2), for 1831-1839, 165 purchases of land were listed; 161 were listed under male names and four were listed under female names, all widows.<sup>97</sup> In the Red River Settlement Land Register Book for 1854-1862, fifty-nine male names were recorded and no female ones.<sup>98</sup> Included in the Red River Settlement Miscellaneous Papers is a "Register of Lots sold and Payments thereon made by Sundry Settlers in the Red River District." For Outfit 1856, sixty-one purchasers were listed, including one woman. In total for the years 1856-1859 inclusive, only Widow Campbell's name (in 1856) appeared alongside the names of 148 male purchasers.<sup>99</sup>

These figures do not represent a complete picture of land records. The Land Register Book B provides the most



complete listings from 1830-1871. Using the comprehensive list provided in Archer Martin's The Hudson's Bay Company's Land Tenures, thirty-nine women, (including the Sisters of Charity), appear as land holders. The total number of land holders, (including categories such as "Indian Tenting Grounds), was 1087.<sup>100</sup> Therefore only 3.6% of land holders were women. This record, along with other available land documents, indicates that very few women owned or purchased land.

Considering the few women who earned wages, the relatively small number of women who had their own accounts, and the very small proportion of women who owned land, it can be concluded that women in the Red River Settlement had very little economic power. Only a few women voiced concern over receiving their money, and a very small number actually participated in economic activities, such as selling land or using accounts. A minimal number of women operated on the commentary or participatory levels. The vast majority of women took no part, however small, in the economic life of the Colony.

The only women in Red River who achieved long-term economic and occupational independence were those women who functioned in the role of educators. However, it was not until the mid-1840's that women directed their own educational institutions. The Grey Nuns, because of their religious position, were the first women to stay at Red River in an educational capacity over a long period of time. They did not have the opportunity of matrimony which tempted so many women teachers. Like the Grey Nuns, Mrs. Mills and Matilda Davis were single.

It would appear that married women did not work outside the home as full-time teachers; only unmarried women could gain independence in the profession.

For most female students education was not a means to their own economic and occupational independence, but merely a means by which they could acquire social and ornamental skills which would enable them to marry well. By making a "good marriage" they could acquire social status and, at least on the death of their husbands, a measure of economic independence. Women probably did not follow this path consciously. They accepted the few roles their society provided, as students or servants, and then as teachers or wives. Throughout the later decades of the Colony's history this basic pattern had undergone only small, isolated changes.

## CHAPTER V

### THE LEGAL STATUS OF WOMEN: THE INTERACTION OF SOCIAL ATTITUDES AND LEGAL PRACTICES 1850-1863

In any society, the law, or more properly the administration of the law, reflects the attitudes prevalent in the community. This fact was particularly evident in the Red River Settlement between the years 1850 and 1863. The Colony, during this period remained under the control of the Hudson's Bay Company. The position of Recorder of Rupert's Land had been established in 1839 when the Governor and Committee had made improvements in the judicial system of the Colony.<sup>1</sup>

Adam Thom, the first Recorder, proposed a supplement to the existing penal code and drew up a "temporary civil code" in 1840.<sup>2</sup> Much to Thom's dismay his reply from Secretary Smith on the matter did not even mention his civil code, and rejected his improvements to the penal code. He was instructed to "dispense the Laws of England in the very terms of the charter."<sup>3</sup> The laws were English, and capital cases were supposed to be sent to Upper Canada for trial.<sup>4</sup> However, the social and political attitudes and developments within the Colony itself played a greater role in the legal proceedings than did outside influences. The social attitudes of the community affected the legal as well as the economic and occupational aspects of Red River life.

The Foss v. Pelly trial of 1850 has been discussed from

many points of view. It has been seen as a case highlighting the difficulties of managing a trading company as well as a colony.<sup>5</sup> It has also been cited as the event which decisively split Red River society into two opposing groups "based on social status and race."<sup>6</sup> Certainly the case assumed importance for both these reasons; but, it also clearly demonstrated the legal status women held in the Settlement.

The scandal centered on a liason between Mrs. John Ballenden and Captain Christopher Vaughn Foss. As early as the fall of 1849, Letitia Hargrave had heard rumours that "the Capt's attentions to Mrs. Ballantyne [Ballenden] were of such a character as to entitle Mr. B to a divorce."<sup>7</sup> The following spring a number of women refused to visit Mrs. Ballenden because of her indiscreet behavior. Gossip accused Mrs. Ballenden of adultery. The scandal came to a head when Mrs. Pelly withdrew from the mess dining room which Captain Foss and Mrs. Ballenden attended regularly.<sup>8</sup> Foss reacted by suing the Pellys and the Davidsons, (the mess cook and his wife), for "defamatory conspiracy."

The case aroused a great deal of excitement in the community, especially since such a large portion of the inhabitants received summonses:

Knights, Squires, Judges, Sheriffs, Counsellors,  
Medical-men, all the Nabobs of the Co. the  
Clergy, Ladies & Gentlemen, down to the  
humblest pauper were summoned.<sup>9</sup>

Although no women sat on the jury, (or on any jury at this time), they were called as witnesses. Their testimony was essential as they were directly involved in spreading the gossip. Some

of the women examined included Miss Anderson, Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Black.<sup>10</sup>

Mrs. Ballenden, although the case centered on protecting her honour, did not bring the charges against the Pellys and the Davidsons. The records of the Court state:

The plaintiff stated that he [Foss] had not entered on this case on any pecuniary advantage to be gained but merely to clear the reputation of a Lady who had as he would be able to prove been grossly defamed.<sup>11</sup>

Damages were set at £200 each. The verdict, for the plaintiff, charged £300 against A.E. Pelly and his wife and £100 against John Davidson and his wife.<sup>12</sup> Foss, however, "generously declined accepting" the money from the Davidsons.<sup>13</sup> The separate action against the Blacks was withdrawn. Foss instituted the proceedings, dealt with the payments, and withdrew the other action.<sup>14</sup>

The stress on Mrs. Ballenden as a "Lady" in the statement of the charges indicated that Red River society was concerned with social form. As a "lady" she did not press the charges. Some persons in Red River believed that as a woman, or "lady", Mrs. Ballenden also should be given the benefit of the doubt. Eden Colvile, for one, chose to believe in her innocence. Mrs. Ballenden, in fact, resided with the Governor's family for a time after the trial. In 1850 Colvile wrote to Simpson that "Mrs. Ballenden has been an ill used woman."<sup>15</sup>

Eden Colvile later revised this opinion in the January of the following year. A letter written by Mrs. Ballenden to Captain Foss had come into his possession. In the letter Mrs.

Ballenden had invited her "own darling Christopher" to visit her one evening after dark, and according to Colvile's information, Foss had subsequently paid her the visit, remaining "closeted in her rooms for two days and nights."<sup>16</sup> This put Colvile in "a rather unpleasant position" as he had to "put a stop to all association with her" without divulging his reasons for so doing.<sup>17</sup> Fortunately, soon after, she drove to Foss' quarters and allegedly spent the night there. "This was, with the usual rapidity of scandal at Red River, forth with made public."<sup>18</sup>

By this time, even Mrs. Ballenden's staunch defender Adam Thom, doubted her good character. He wrote to Simpson on February 5, 1851, enclosing a letter to "our most unfortunate friend Ballenden: I send it to you, that you may read it. You will, I am sure, do everything in your power to prevent him from being ever again deceived by his unhappy wife."<sup>19</sup> Even Mr. Ballenden, by 1851, despite his earlier testimonials to Simpson regarding his wife's innocence, wrote: "she is guilty I know, from facts of which you can have no knowledge.... Her letters obviously written under the influence of strong feelings, are, to me, as clear as daylight."<sup>20</sup> Ballenden, however, remained concerned for the good name of his children, and cited this concern as a reason for wishing to believe in his wife's innocence.

The Foss/Ballenden/Pelly affair disturbed Red River society long after the court proceedings had been completed. John Black's remark in August 1850 that; "after much social

and political strife, one would fain hope that a better state of things is now dawning upon us," was overly optimistic.<sup>21</sup> The trial had many ramifications, including increased social tensions and Adam Thom's removal as Recorder in 1851. Reasons given for Thom's dismissal were his "ignorance of the French language," "unfortunate temper," and "over-bearing manner" all of which rendered him unpopular in the community.<sup>22</sup> His popularity had not been helped by his stand on the Foss v. Pelly case. The trial stood as the most important legal event of the decade.

The Foss v. Pelly trial, however, was not the only legal case at this time which involved women. The Minutes of the General Quarterly Court recorded a total number of 260 incidents brought before the Court in the period from 1844-1863; of these, thirty-one directly involved women.<sup>23</sup> Few women actually brought a case to court. In only eight instances did women act as plaintiff. One of these was a case in which a woman, Margaret Bouvette, brought a defamation of character charge against Pere Aubert. The case was "non-suited," that is, dismissed because the religious circumstances did not bring the case within the Court's jurisdiction. Women, therefore, could act as both plaintiff or defendant, but few did so. In fact, in none of the cases involving a sexual offence against a woman did the woman act as plaintiff.

In a rape case, the Public Interest v. Alex. Dahl (1846), the woman's husband made the complaint and the Court pressed charges.<sup>24</sup> Although the woman probably was not mentally

capable of pressing the charge, she did appear in court. Peter Garrioch felt that Mrs. Folster was "nothing more or less than a common whore," as well as being "a perfect idiot... yet, strange to say, the oath of the Court was administered to her."<sup>25</sup> Dahl, although found guilty, received only a month's imprisonment. In two other cases, fathers sought damages for the seduction of their daughters. The daughters did not act as plaintiffs in either the Gendron v. Hamlin or the Prelon v. Delorme trials.<sup>26</sup> As in the Ballenden case a woman's honour was at stake, but she did not press the charges herself.

The legal cases which featured women as plaintiffs usually concerned theft or debt. Only seven cases of the total (260) were actions where women were attempting to regain an economic asset. Considering the scarcity of financially independent women it is not surprising there were few cases where women were forced to take this action. One of these rare cases was Mary Bird v. Jane Clouston, May 15, 1860. This case involved rightful ownership of a heifer. Even the Nor'-Wester was interested enough to publish a detailed account of the case.<sup>27</sup> There was also one charge of assault, Mrs. Doherty v. Mrs. Anderson, but the former failed to plead her case.<sup>28</sup> Cases in which the woman acted as defendant were more common. A few of these cases involved selling liquor to the Indians; in two of these both husband and wife were cited jointly as defendants. A number of other cases concerned theft.

Great interest was sparked within the community by the



case of the Queen v. Parks, (1860): the Nor'-Wester also printed lengthy articles on this case.<sup>29</sup> Mary Parks was charged with the manslaughter of Antoine Juando. She had hit Juando with a stick, but as he was drunk at the time and had "apoplectic tendencies" she was found not guilty of manslaughter.<sup>30</sup>

In the Parks case, as in others, women participated in legal proceedings. However, they were seldom called as defendants and even more rarely acted as plaintiffs. Women did not sit on juries, although they were examined as witnesses. There were no women magistrates or Recorders. Women were participants, but not to the same extent as were men. A woman usually appeared in court when her testimony was necessary; when she had committed a crime; or when a man was defending her honour. The legal status and activities of Red River women reflected the economic and social realities of the community.

One of the social realities of the Red River Settlement was gossip, in which both men and women participated.<sup>31</sup> Governor Simpson was irritated by it. He complained that even his official correspondence became common knowledge:

I do not know how it happens: but scarcely any subject of interest, that is touched on in my correspondence to Red River, does not at once get wind, by means of conversation in the office or otherwise... let it be understood that communications from the Company in London & myself are to be considered strictly confidential.<sup>32</sup>

Simpson's correspondence certainly was not the only subject

of gossip. The social behavior of persons within the Colony was always of interest. Not only when defamation cases were brought before the Court, such as in the Foss/Ballenden/Pelly affair, but also when the scandal was simply a question of breaking social rules. When the Rev. Mr. Black announced his marriage to Miss Henrietta Ross the community began talking. James Sinclair informed Simpson of the incident.<sup>33</sup> The gossip involved a number of points. Henrietta Ross previously had been interested in John Gunn, son of Donald Gunn. Apparently an "understanding" had existed between John and Henrietta. After Rev. Black announced that he and Henrietta were to be married, Donald Gunn "sent the parson for his enlightenment, the interesting correspondence" Henrietta had carried on with John while she was also seeing Black.<sup>34</sup> Donald Gunn wrote to Mr. Ross "accusing him of duplicity and double dealing" because he knew an engagement had existed for some years between their children.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the whole affair damaged Rev. Black's popularity. The problem not only stemmed from a broken engagement, but also from the fact that the Presbyterian minister was "forming such a connection, with a native."<sup>36</sup> [Henrietta was actually country-born.] Many Presbyterians voiced disapproval. John Gunn, Jr. wrote to James Ross that all the Scotch were opposed to the match.<sup>37</sup>

Another marriage became "the topic of the day" in 1853.<sup>38</sup> Mr. Harriot became engaged to Miss Bunn, when just two weeks earlier he "had been pressing his suit to Miss Rowand to name the day for their marriage."<sup>39</sup> Mr. Rowand and the Church had

both expressed their approval which helped to complicate the situation. Minor scandals, like this one, are important because they demonstrate that social behavior was very important to the community. Most topics of interest were scandalous and many concerned women in some way. Red River society in its desire to become "civilized" ridiculed both men and women who broke the rules of propriety.

One of the most important scandals in Red River history occurred in 1862-1863. However, it changed a social and moral issue into a political one. The scandal involved a young woman and the Rev. G. O. Corbett. The Rev. Corbett was an Anglican minister who had taken up residence in the vicinity of Headingly in the early 1850's. Corbett was known originally for the amateur medical practice he carried on in his parish. In 1856-1857 he had returned to England to further his medical knowledge. During this time he testified at the hearings of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>40</sup> His testimony was critical of the Company's role in Settlement affairs.<sup>41</sup> Corbett's appearance before the Select Committee complicated the 1862-1863 scandal.

The Corbett trial of 1863 concerned the minister's five attempts to procure an abortion on his ex-servant, Maria Thomas. He was arrested on this charge in December of 1862. This followed a testimonial presentation in November at which time Corbett's service to the community had been applauded. Ironically, Corbett had been praised not only for his ministrations to the sick of his parish, but also for his

encouragement of young people "in the application of all useful knowledge, and the cultivation of good habits."<sup>42</sup>

Mr. Corbett was not universally loved, however, as evidenced by a letter in the Nor'-Wester from some of the Roman Catholics in his community. They objected to having their names included in the testimonial, for although they acknowledged his medical service, they complained of the "bitter and bigotted [sic] spirit, shown against us and our religion by the Rev. Mr. Corbett."<sup>43</sup>

Despite this anti-Corbett letter, most of the vocal opinion in the community supported the minister. After his charge and arrest the Nor'-Wester vehemently took up his cause. The preliminary hearing had been held early in December at the home of the girl's parents. The sworn testimony taken from Maria at this time, in combination with the evidence given by her sister and her father, (Simon Thomas), were extremely damaging to Corbett's case.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, the Nor'-Wester sided with Rev. Corbett. The paper, and its editor, James Ross, were dedicated to political change for Red River. The Nor'-Wester therefore supported Corbett, claiming that:

Just as the Company are pouncing down upon all and sundry who dare oppose them, Mr. Corbett, who has always been a consistent opponent of theirs is warned to fly the country and told that if he does not, he will be called on to answer publicly a foul charge.<sup>45</sup>

Each issue of the newspaper devoted extensive space to the Corbett affair. The problems of Corbett's bail and the convening of a special court were discussed at length. Letters

were printed to and from Corbett, Governor Dallas and Recorder Black.

In the paper the case had become a political issue. Maria Thomas and the legal charge were rarely mentioned. Only in the February issue was it reported that a special court could not be held because "the girl" was too ill and could not attend a trial until after her confinement. A public meeting, (sympathetically reported in the Nor'-Wester), was critical of "an over-scrupulous tenderness - an apparent leaning - on the part of the authorities towards the unhappy woman who has brought this charge against the Rev. G.O. Corbett."<sup>47</sup>

The trial began on February 19, 1863: the Queen v. Griffith Owen Corbett. Although Maria took the stand as the first (and primary) witness, she did not act as plaintiff. In fact, as in other cases involving seduction, it was her father who had instigated the proceedings.<sup>48</sup> The evidence given at the trial pointed to Corbett's guilt. The five attempts to induce an abortion included two where Corbett administered "a certain poison or other noxious thing;" two where Corbett inserted his finger or hand into her vagina towards the womb; and one where he used:

a certain instrument or piece of wire, tied with tape to the fore finger of his right hand and with the point of the wire projecting about half an inch or three quarters of an inch beyond the point of his said finger... he used by inserting it into her Vagina... and towards and in the direction of os uteri or mouth of the womb.<sup>49</sup>

Maria testified that the attempt using the piece of wire was extremely painful.<sup>50</sup>

Maria's descriptions of the drugs administered to her when Corbett originally seduced her, and later when he tried to induce the abortions, were believable according to the two doctors examined at the trial. Doctor Cowan declared: "I do not think that a person in her position in society could have invented all the descriptions she has given of the operations."<sup>51</sup> Maria was a young servant girl, aged sixteen at the time of the trial and fifteen at the time of the abortion attempts.<sup>52</sup> Testimony of her mother and sister closely corroborated Maria's story. In contrast, testimony in defense of Corbett centered on attempts to slander Maria's character and to prove Corbett's good name.<sup>53</sup>

The Rev. G.O. Corbett was found guilty, but the jury "recommended him to the Mercy of the Court."<sup>54</sup> He was sentenced to six months imprisonment "without Labour or Confiscation of Property."<sup>55</sup> Therefore, Maria received no money in damages or child support. The sentence was lenient because of Corbett's past record of community service. The sentence was indeed light considering that in May of the same year Catherine Daniel received three months for burglary and larceny; while the charge of killing an ox brought one man twenty lashes in public followed by two months in gaol.

The aftermath of the Corbett trial reinforced its political as opposed to its moral nature. In April 1863, a petition was drawn up appealing for Corbett's release on the grounds of his past record, on the fact that there had been indecision among the jurors, on the consideration that the

operations had not been successful (for both Maria and her child were alive and well), and on concern for Corbett's mental health.<sup>57</sup> The petition was denied. Therefore, on April 20, a group of men, under the direction of James Stewart, broke the lock on Corbett's cell and released the prisoner. Warrants were issued for Stewart and twelve others. Stewart was arrested and imprisoned. His friends appealed to the Governor for his release, but again all such requests were denied. On April 22, Stewart's comrades re-enacted the earlier gaol break without any resistance from the authorities. No attempts were made to recapture Corbett or his friends.<sup>58</sup>

A letter from the four magistrates to Governor Dallas described the ensuing difficulties:

with a large degree of reluctance amounting to pain, we have come to the conclusion that it is advisable to suspend at least for a time, any further efforts for the apprehension of these men.

But, while this is permitted, can we... hope to carry on the general administration of justice in the Settlement.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, the magistrates requested "the speedy adoption of some means of strengthening the hands of public justice."<sup>60</sup> At this point, no channel existed through which the law could be upheld. The administration lacked the power to enforce its authority. Although the magistrates called Corbett's crime "revolting" and wanted justice to be done, they realized that, because of the Colony's political state, this was impossible.<sup>61</sup> As Roy St. George Stubbs observed, the Corbett case marked the point from which the Company's government and authority "was

to run downhill all the way to its complete collapse in 1870."<sup>62</sup>

The Corbett scandal is important as it marks the breakdown of law and authority in Red River. It is also significant to the legal status of women because it illustrates their inconsequential position within the Settlement. Although Corbett's actions were at best undesirable, in the reality of Red River the seduction and subsequent abortion attempts concerning fifteen year old Maria Thomas were not the important issues. Maria's persecution was not the rallying cry of the Nor'-Wester; Corbett's "martyrdom" was. Rev. G.O. Corbett, an upstanding citizen, a philanthropic member of the community, was being victimized by the Hudson's Bay Company for his political beliefs. Although the court decision supported Maria, the realities of society did not. Legally, Maria had her rights, but these took second place to the vocal political feelings of the community. In this case, the woman did not experience legal discrimination, but neither did she receive any justice or compensation. Clearly a sixteen year old servant girl, although badly used, was not considered as important as an Anglican minister or the forces which supported him for their own political motives.

Politics were understandably of great concern to Red River during the 1850's and 1860's. The Hudson's Bay Company remained disturbed by the interaction between the Settlement and the United States, largely due to continued fur trafficking.<sup>63</sup>



The cry was raised by Alexander Ross, and later carried on by his son James in the Nor'-Wester, for "more equitable and liberal principles" in government.<sup>64</sup> The Corbett affair demonstrated the strength of these political feelings in the Colony.

Economically the Settlement continued to have minor troubles. Some hardships recurred, despite Alexander Ross' boast that:

No farmers in the world, on a small scale, no settlement or colony of agriculturalists, can be pronounced so happy, independent, and comfortable as those in Red River.<sup>65</sup>

Flooding in 1852 damaged the Settlement. The crop of 1857 pointed to future food shortages; but, by 1858, Simpson was able to write to William MacTavish congratulating him on the "abundance of the harvest at Red River."<sup>66</sup> Flood waters rose again in 1861, but large-scale disaster failed to materialize. Improvements to Red River were listed in 1861 by the Nor'-Wester. These included: the betterment of postal communication; the beginning of a local newspaper, (high on the list); the development of special trades, such as booksellers and watch-makers; and the existence of a steamboat connection to the United States.<sup>67</sup> The 1860's also saw the beginning of immigration from Ontario to Red River.<sup>68</sup> This complicated the society of Red River and eventually, along with a variety of other factors, aided the breaking down of the old order.<sup>69</sup>

The desire for "civilization" had begun decades before any large-scale immigration from Canada. The settlers, especially

those originally from Britain, wished to create a copy of British society at Red River. The trend continued into the 1860's as evidenced by social functions, such as military balls. The Nor'-Wester reported:

Among the many balls given in the Settlement during the festive season which marks the close of the old year and the commencement of the new, this [ball] occupied a very prominent place.<sup>70</sup>

In 1864, Alexander W. Ross complained of a very dull winter, "no balls or weddings - nothing but sermons and lectures."<sup>71</sup> Fashion was also a topic of interest. The Nor'-Wester published letters, (if somewhat light-hearted), on the problem of hoop skirts and whiskers;<sup>72</sup> as well as a letter "lamenting" the fact that fashion news reached Red River more quickly than did "our importations from the civilised world."<sup>73</sup> Despite the facetious tone of some fashion articles, they did indicate that persons in the Settlement were concerned with the styles of the outside world.

The duties of women in the community were not strictly social ones in the 1850's and early 1860's. Besides continuing in the educational profession, most women were still busy in the home. Jemima Ross wrote that "with Hay and harvest all are busy and I am no less busy baking and cooking for those out of doors."<sup>74</sup> In 1861, Governor MacTavish rejoiced that the fiancée of Angus McKay, (a Hudson's Bay Company servant destined for Rupert's Land), was a "thorough dairymaid" and therefore "it would be advantageous to have her at one of the Farms."<sup>75</sup> Some women were still sought for agricultural work.

As in education, many gained their skills in England before coming to Red River. Reportedly, a few women also possessed minimal medical skills. A Mrs. Spence, of the Portage la Prairie area, was known for providing "simple operations" which would give relief from headaches.<sup>76</sup> Most of these skills, however, were used in the home. Women, except in education, did not take on full-time occupational responsibilities.

One notable exception was Mrs. Eleanor Kennedy. Her venture into business, however, was regarded as socially acceptable because her husband had become an invalid. Mrs. Kennedy previously had been active teaching music at Miss Davis' school and acting as organist at St. Andrews. When the family needed money she went into business.<sup>77</sup> She opened a shop specializing in women's and children's wear. She imported clothing and accessories from London and later from Paris.<sup>78</sup> Undoubtedly this added to the acceptability of her business. Apparently she was moderately successful at least. One letter to Matilda Davis reported: "I am indeed happy to hear of Mrs. Kennedy's prosperity. She is an excellent manager."<sup>78</sup>

Generally attitudes towards women did not indicate that women were considered equals of men in any aspect of life.<sup>80</sup> Country-born women held a slightly lower status than did English or white women, with Métis and Indian women occupying still lower social positions. Although some native women were involved in agriculture, as were a few white women settlers, this

did not elevate their social standing.<sup>81</sup> James Ross' letter to his brothers and sisters revealed one of the problems of country-born families:

Perhaps halfbreed children are not respectful enough towards their Indian mothers! Let us be however. What if Mama is an Indian! Does that detract from her rights and claims as a mother? Does that free us from the duty of loving, obeying & respecting her? Nothing of the kind.<sup>82</sup>

Even within country-born families, whose members were generally accepted into "society", there could be discrimination against the Indian mother. The status of all women was lower than that of men, but the social status of women also varied, depending on their racial origin.

It was often believed that men knew what was best for women. In 1854, the daughters of the late Chief Factor Rowand were removed from the convent at Red River and sent East. Simpson wrote to the girls that their father's wishes had been "that you should, as soon as possible leave the Indian country & spend the remainder of your lives in the civilized world."<sup>83</sup> In 1859, Governor MacTavish informed Miss McKenzie that on her arrival at the Settlement she certainly could reside with the Logans. However, Mr. Logan wished her to be aware that if she came to live there she would be required "to conform to the same regulations as his own daughters."<sup>84</sup>

Occasionally a woman asserted herself. Simpson reported an incident to John MacKenzie in 1859. Apparently, on MacKenzie's request, an effort had been made to take a child away from the "so-called Mrs. Maxwell." MacTavish, acting on behalf of

MacKenzie, went to see her.

[MacTavish] explained your wishes as quietly as possible, whereupon she became so violent that Mr. Mactavish beat a hasty retreat from her house & says he will never venture on such a dangerous expedition again.<sup>85</sup>

In personal matters women sometimes went against the wishes of men. Regarding marriage Miss Christina Ross, for one, had "opinions of her own in the matter."<sup>86</sup> Simpson, therefore, recommended other acceptable young women to the prospective suitor. Although women may have had their own ideas as to whom they would marry, most married young, before they knew "the pleasure of being a girl for a year or two."<sup>87</sup>

Girls married young because marriage was one of the few options open to them. Their society lauded the institution of marriage and the woman's role within it. One short article in the Nor'-Wester entitled "A Happy Woman," advised that "the sweetest wives are those who possess the magic secret of being happy under any and every circumstance."<sup>88</sup> It went on to state:

how we look forward through the weary day to their fire-side smiles.... No one knows - no one will ever know - until the day of judgement, how much we owe to those helpful, uncomplaining women.<sup>89</sup>

Articles such as this one helped to perpetuate the role of women as happy, uncomplaining wives. In his journal Palm Sanders, too, described how his wife "patiently bore the effects of my folly.... I would come home to my wife in a state of intoxication so helpless that I would have to be put to bed."<sup>90</sup>

Ideally, women were patient, happy and uncomplaining, as well as educated and accomplished. J.W. Bond reported favourably of Red River women on his visit to the Settlement in 1851, for he met "ladies of much beauty, educated and accomplished, and of some fortune."<sup>91</sup> One "accomplishment" was the skill of needlework. W.G. Smith wrote to Robert Logan in 1859 thanking him for "the handsome piece of needlework.... It does much credit to the worker, & shows the march of improvement which has taken place among the female portion of your community."<sup>92</sup>

Women were expected to possess the qualities of "ladies" while men were to act as "gentlemen." The Nor'-Wester even ran an article on the "Character of a Gentleman." A "gentleman," although he had power over his wife and other "weaker" members of society, was to use this power or authority inoffensively, sparingly, and only when specific instances required him to do so. This would "show the gentleman in a plain light."<sup>93</sup> The Nor'-Wester constantly published poems and articles reinforcing proper social attitudes for men and women. In 1861, the front page of the newspaper displayed a poem entitled "To Woman." The poem ended with the lines:

When God the universe did plan  
 Thou wert his first best gift to man!  
 Earth were a round of joyless years  
 Without thy smiles, without thy tears.  
 Thou art the source of every pleasure-  
 Man's all, his only earthly treasure-  
 The harmony of all his ways  
 The sceptre that his bosom sways.<sup>94</sup>

Women were portrayed as fair and gentle, God's "best gift to man", and gentlemen were to cherish them as such.

Red River society of the 1850's and 1860's, although a more physically comfortable one than in the 1820's, had changed little regarding the status of women in the community. The desire to copy an English or "civilized" society was as strong, or stronger, than it had ever been. The legal status of women reflected their social and economic positions. They had legal rights, but little economic power. Therefore, few women had any cause to take a case dealing with financial matters to court. Socially they were expected to act as good wives and mothers, subordinate to the male of the house. Thus, in legal cases involving sexual offences, the woman's "guardian" pressed charges or instigated proceedings. The attitudes of both men and women in the Red River Settlement, largely because of the desire to be viewed as a "civilized" community, were imitative of British society. Teaching was virtually the only acceptable full-time occupation available to women. Therefore, socially acceptable roles for women were restricted, as was their economic, social and legal power.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Contrary to the popular belief that women and men shared the tasks of pioneer existence, the men and women of the Red River Settlement rarely assumed equal, or even comparable roles. Throughout the period from 1812 to 1863 women's roles underwent two basic changes: the first was a change in the type of role; the second was a more gradual change in the degree of influence women had in certain activities.

In the early unstable period women took part in political and economic decision-making. Under these extreme conditions, the myth of pioneer egalitarianism has a limited application. A society, any society, will use all its available human resources in a crisis situation, especially when the population is small. At Red River in 1815 the population dropped from 228 to thirty-five or forty persons.<sup>1</sup> All adults were forced to become active in the community. Constant physical hardship also caused a selection process to take place, whereby only strong, determined individuals remained in the Colony. Although women could never abandon completely their cultural background, they did assume influential roles under these conditions.

The first change occurred quickly when women abdicated these roles as their community stabilized and began to imitate



"civilized" European society. Female roles changed as women apparently had no desire to retain extra responsibilities for which they had no cultural training. Unsettled conditions had precipitated new standards of behavior, but in an ordered agricultural society behavior patterns were long established. No longer did women approach those in charge of government for economic justice, nor did they attempt to be politically influential. Women moved from a participatory level in the fundamental aspects of their society, (both political and economic), to a limited role in the more traditionally acceptable pursuits for women, such as social and educational activities.

In the 1820's women influenced decisions concerning who was to be considered "respectable." The desire to copy civilized society, plus the arrival of missionaries and the beginning of religious and educational institutions facilitated the change in women's roles. In the decade of the 1820's women began to participate in education as teacher and students. They also continued their participation in agricultural work, which remained greatest during times of environmental crisis.

The second change occurred more gradually. The Settlement of the 1830's, now permanently established, interacted both with the fur trade society, (which dominated the rest of Rupert's Land), and with English society, (which it desired to emulate). Consequently, Red River emerged as a separate entity, but one always struggling to have within it the amenities of civilization. Women continued to arrive from

England both as persons of social prominence, (gained from the status of their husbands), and as female teachers. In education female instructors were desirable. Gradually, by the mid-1840's and early 1850's, women directed their own educational establishments. Therefore, in the traditionally accepted roles women increased their power, moving from participants to directors.

However, even when women, such as Matilda Davis, reached the level of director, certain restrictions remained. Female teachers taught only female students, while in some schools male teachers instructed children of both sexes. Middle or upper class girls were taught "ornamental" subjects, and the girls from poorer or native families were often trained in basic household skills. In both cases, the curriculum was designed to make them better wives. As a wife a woman could gain economic security, for school teachers were among the very few women who were occupationally and economically independent. Female servants, like the governesses of the 1830's, often sought employment only long enough to find a husband. On the death of her husband, the woman might achieve a small measure of personal, economic independence.

When a woman was widowed it usually increased her economic status. Women who owned land generally did so through bequests of husbands or fathers. Women also acquired capital in this manner. But, in most instances any asset a woman received from a legacy had restrictions placed upon its use. Fixed annual payments were common, and quite frequently the

woman did not have ultimate control over her money. The final division of property often was stipulated in the husband's will, to be effected after his wife's death. Endowments were made to women at the time of marriage, an undertaking which occasionally required the consent of the father's executors. After marriage, the money immediately came under the control of the husband. Therefore, few women had economic power, and few took part in the economic business of the community.

Being a widow placed a woman on the census lists as the head of a family. Of the few women listed by name on the census, most were widows.<sup>2</sup> As a widow a woman was forced, as she had been in the pre-1820 period, to act more independently.

It was women with property to protect who often became involved in legal proceedings, and property came from the death of a male. If a woman had a husband or father to protect her, the man would press charges or instigate proceedings on her behalf. This was particularly common in cases involving seduction or, as in the Foss v. Pelly case, defamation of character. Women had the right to participate to a limited extent in legal proceedings, but few did so. Social form dictated that men looked after women, and this attitude affected both economic and legal realities. The Corbett case illustrates how justice for a woman, (especially one of low social standing), could be submerged by the social and political priorities of the community.

Social class also affected a woman's position. A woman

of a well-to-do family obviously had more opportunity to gain great amounts of money or property. Women in farming families, as opposed to wives of church ministers and the Colony's officials, continued to assist in agricultural work. In the difficult conditions of the early years, women actively worked on the land and as late as 1827 retained enough influence to thwart agricultural schemes. However, by the 1850's many women served the family by working in the kitchen while the men were planting or harvesting. Women still worked in the fields under certain conditions, but rarely was every hand needed in order to harvest an adequate crop.

In the Red River Settlement some patterns were consistent over many years. For example, the Pelly/Matthey incident of the early 1820's and the case of women refusing to visit Mrs. Ballenden thirty years later, indicate that the attitude towards social respectability changed little once the Colony had opted for "civilized" behavior. The only difference was that in the former case the social ground rules at Red River had not been long established, while by the 1850's the women themselves knew they were "in the right" and could shun Mrs. Ballenden without acting through their husbands.

After the change from the influential roles of the pre-1820's the status of women remained fairly static. For example, the wills of the 1820's treated women in the same manner as did those thirty or forty years later. The amount of land held by women did not increase over the years, nor did the number of women considered as heads of families. Only

in education and social functions, both traditionally acceptable realms for women's involvement, did women move from commentators and participants to directors. Their numbers, however, were very few.

Only in a society with a small population engaged in extreme political crisis did women assume powerful roles in economics or politics. They adopted these roles in order to ensure the survival of themselves and their families. Once conditions stabilized and the community was able to develop along British settlement patterns, women's roles changed abruptly. From the 1820's to the 1860's women's roles and the social and moral attitudes of Red River society, revealed a strong desire to imitate "civilized" society. Only in limited areas did women increase their influence to a level comparable to men after 1820. Therefore, the belief in pioneer egalitarianism, which served its persuasive purposes in the suffrage movement, can only be viewed as a myth in the context of the Red River Settlement.

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

- 1 Manitoba Free Press, Jan. 28, 1914, p. 5.
- 2 The other major argument used by the reformers articulated the belief that having women involved in the political process would help to "clean up" the country.
- 3 Catherine L. Cleverdon, The Woman Suffrage Movement (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), p. 46.
- 4 Third reading of the bills to permit women full provincial suffrage occurred in: Manitoba on Jan. 27, 1916; Saskatchewan on Mar. 14, 1916 (received Royal Assent); Alberta on April 19, 1916.
- 5 Virtually all material used falls within these boundaries. However, in order to make clearer comparisons some events preceding 1812 will be discussed. In the final chapter, one or two quotations come from the later 1860's, but are directly applicable to the early years of the decade as well.

### CHAPTER I

- 1 Linda Rasmussen et al, A Harvest Yet to Reap (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1976), p. 226. This seems to be the only book that gives Fubbester's name. She is usually referred to as the "Orkney Lass." Rasmussen gives the date of her arrival as 1803, but other estimates range as late as 1806.
- 2 Lillian Beynon Thomas, "Some Manitoba Women Who did First Things," Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, III, 4 (1947-48), 13.
- 3 Elliot Coues, ed., The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson, 1799-1814 (Minneapolis, Minn.: Ross and Haines, 1897), I, 426.
- 4 Gérald Fortin, "Woman's Role in the Evolution of Agriculture in Quebec," The Family in the Evolution of Agriculture (Ottawa: The Vanier Institute of the Family, 1968), p. 27.
- 5 A.G. Morice, History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada (Toronto: The Mission Book Co., 1910), p. 72. The people to whom Morice refers are the Métis population.

- 6 Walter O'Meara, Daughters of the Country (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), p. 190.
- 7 Sylvia Van Kirk, "The Impact of White Women on Fur Trade Society," The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History, ed. by Susan Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1977), p. 28.
- 8 W.S. Wallace, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Company (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1934), p. 211. Minutes of the Meeting of Proprietors of the North West Co. at Kamanistiquia, July 14, 1806.
- 9 Ibid., p. 262. Minutes of the North West Co. at Fort William, July 1809: "the Parties so transgressing paid each One Hundred Pounds Currency as a Fine."
- 10 Both Sylvia Van Kirk and Walter O'Meara have done work on the social customs and practices involving these women and the fur trade.
- 11 E.E. Rich, The History of the Hudson's Bay Company (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1959), II, 301.
- 12 John Strachan, A Letter to the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Selkirk on his Settlement at the Red River Near Hudson's Bay (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1816), pp. 50-51. No doubt Strachan's objections partially stemmed from the fact that Strachan's personal friends included directors of the North West Company in Montreal.
- 13 A.C. Garrioch, First Furrows (Winnipeg: Stovel Printing Co., 1923), p. 25.
- 14 A Narrative of Occurrences in the Indian Countries of North America (London: B. McMillan, 1817), pp. 17-18. This narrative was based, according to A.S. Morton, (A History of the Canadian West, p. 598), on the North West Company's report to the Coltman Commission. Anti-Selkirk and anti-Colony it claimed the quote as an extract from a letter written "on the spot." Although biased, the tract gives an idea of the conditions in the York Factory area.
- 15 F.H. Schofield, The Story of Manitoba (Winnipeg: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1913), I, 110.
- 16 Chester Martin, ed., Red River Settlement Papers in the Canadian Archives (Ottawa: Archives Branch, 1910), p. 14. Letter from O. Keveny to the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Selkirk, York Fort, Sept. 8, 1812.
- 17 Schofield, The Story of Manitoba, I, 118.

18 Ross Mitchell, Medicine in Manitoba (Winnipeg: Stovel-Advocate Press, n.d.), p. 28. The third group of settlers experienced ship fever, and a young woman named Kate McPherson nursed the sick.

19 When discussing the Red River Colony not all the details of the Settlement's development will be related. The purpose of this paper is not to re-tell the factual history of the Colony.

20 Public Archives of Manitoba, MG1 D3, Peter Fidler's Journal, Sept. 17, 1814, p. 12. This entry is almost identical to Fidler's entry in the Winnipeg Post Journal of the same date. See: Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B.235/a/3, fo.8, Sept. 17, 1814. Hereafter the Public Archives of Manitoba will be cited as PAM, and the Hudson's Bay Company Archives as HBCA.

21 HBCA, B.235/a/3, fo.9(d), Winnipeg Post Journal, Sept. 29, 1814: "10 men & 10 women taking up Potatoes."

22 PAM, MG2 A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 49, p. 13384. District of Assiniboia; Dec. 17, 1814.

23 Grace Lee Nute, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Missions 1815-1827 (Saint Paul, Minn.: Clarence Alvord Memorial Commission, 1942), p. 193. Provencher to Plessis; Jan. 15, 1819. Marriages often occurred after the birth of children as indicated by the following entry in the Winnipeg Post Journal for June 22, 1815: HBCA, B.235/a/3, fo.26: "Yesterday Mr. And. McDonald married John McIntyre & Catherine Sutherland - who was delivered of a Bastard child a girl by him this winter & soon afterward died."

24 PAM, MG2 A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 3, pp. 900-903. Red River; Oct. 19, 1813.

25 Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 595-596. Alex. MacDonell to Captain Miles Macdonell; Pembina River Fort, April 27, 1813.

26 PAM, MG1 D3, Fidler's Journal, Sept. 3, 1814, p. 8.

27 HBCA, B.235/a/3, fo.14(d), Winnipeg Post Journal 1814-1815, May 19, 1815.

28 PAM, MG1 D3, Fidler's Journal, May 24, 1815, p. 24.

29 Ibid., May 29, 1815, p. 25.

30 Ibid., June 6, 1815, p. 27.

31 A.S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71 (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, n.d.), p. 570.



- 32 HBCA, B.235/a/3, fo.19, Winnipeg Post Journal 1814-1815, June 10, 1815.
- 33 PAM, MGI D3, Fidler's Journal, June 13, 1815, p. 36.
- 34 HBCA, E.8/6, fo.67, Red River Settlement Papers Relating to the Disturbances 1814-1820. #37. Information of C. Sutherland.
- 35 PAM, MGI D3, Fidler's Journal, June 24, 1815, p. 47.
- 36 Ibid., June 28, 1815, p. 50.
- 37 HBCA, E.10/1, fo.83(d), Colin Robertson's Diary, vol. 2; Winipic Settlement, July 24, 1815.
- 38 Ibid., fo.91, Aug. 7, 1815.
- 39 PAM, MG2 A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 77, p. 20258. Mrs. Christina McLean to Lord Selkirk; Fort Douglas, Oct. 15, 1815.
- 40 Ibid., p. 20260.
- 41 HBCA, E.10/1, fo.148(d), Robertson's Diary, vol.3; Fort Douglas, Dec. 31, 1815. Robertson seems to have had a high opinion of Mrs. McLean's character.
- 42 She is commonly referred to as Widow McLean, whereas Christina McLean is known as Mrs. McLean. Therefore it is not difficult to distinguish between the two.
- 43 HBCA, E.10/1, fo.156(d), Robertson's Diary, vol. 3; Fort Douglas, Jan. 23, 1816.
- 44 Ibid., fo.182; Gibraltar, Apr. 23, 1816.
- 45 Ibid., fo.204, vol. 4; Gibraltar, June 2, 1816.
- 46 Ibid., fo.205; Gibraltar, June 4, 1816.
- 47 Ibid., fo.208; Red River, June 11, 1816.
- 48 Ibid., fo.245(d); Winipic Settlement, Aug. 9, 1816. Robertson felt the surrendering of the fort was justifiable because of the combination of difficult circumstances.
- 49 In his journal, while at Moose, Robertson relates a number of stories concerning women travelling great over-land distances. e.g. HBCA, E.10/1, fo.298(d), vol. 5; Feb. 7, 1817:"A woman and her child arrived this evening from Keenogamise." The women of Robertson's examples must be Indian or country-born and therefore this type of travel was not foreign to them as it would have been to European women.

50 HBCA, E.10/1, fo.338, Robertson's Diary, vol. 6; Moose, June 2, 1817.

51 Ibid., fo.338(d); June 3, 1817.

52 Ibid., fo.339.

53 PAM, MG2 A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 9, p. 3262. Christina McLean to Selkirk; Moose Factory, March 12, 1817.

54 Ibid., vol. 18, pp. 6045-6047. Memorial from Mrs. McLean, March 1819.

55 The Selkirk Papers also include a claim from a Mrs. Stewart of Prince Edward Island. Although the details of her situation were different from Mrs. McLean's, in the case of the former Colville suggested: "any reasonable or fair claim should be settled rather liberally than otherwise, and I would not be too precise in requiring minute particulars." PAM, MG2 A1, vol. 73, p. 19167. Andrew Colville to Wm. Johnson; London, May 4, 1822.

In light of this example it seems that Colville's earlier hesitation in granting Mrs. McLean's request stemmed primarily from her questionable loyalty.

56 PAM, MG2 A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 18, p. 6051. A. Colville to A. Campbell; London, Apr. 6, 1819.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid., p. 6053. Governor Simpson's Correspondence Book Outward for 1827 indicates that Mrs. McLean continued to receive her £20 per annum. In fact, she made certain of its continuation. See: HBCA, D.4/15, fo.71. George Simpson to Mrs. McLean; Lachine, Oct. 17, 1827: "I am favored with your communication of 12th Inst.... On this Subject [yearly allowance] I have received no instructions or information from Mr. Colville, nor was I ever aware that such allowance was made by the Executors until recpt. [sic] of your favor. Yet as I feel satisfied that you would not have made the application without Mr. Colville's authority I beg to hand enclosed draft for the amount in Halifax Currency say £22.4.5."

59 HBCA, E.8/6, fos.115-116, Red River Settlement Papers Relating to the Disturbances, 1814-1820. Statement of A. Murray, Aug. 21, 1817.

60 PAM, MG2 A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 42, p. 11832. Transcript of a narrative of proceedings at York, Upper Canada; Trial prosecutions for crimes in the Indian Territories. Oct. 1818.

61 The Legal Code of 1819 is found in HBCA, E.8/8,

fos. 116-168, Red River Settlement Miscellaneous Papers, 1813-1890. Comments within the document indicate that the Legal Code was commissioned by Lord Selkirk. On fo.163(d), a comment on the issue of what constitutes a marriage reads: "Lord Selkirk says it would be desirable to legalize the cohabitation that frequently takes place between Settlers & Indians. In that case habit & repute may better answer the purpose, because marriages may thus be established which the husband would be unwilling to contract by any positive Ceremony." This is followed by a statement which may have been written by Selkirk, as it appears to be signed with an "S." It reads: "I do not approve of marriage being constituted except by express consent- Habit & repute can only be resorted to as evidence of such consent having been given at some previous time."

62 For example, when discussing the duties of Constable the Code states: "He also has charge of the prison." HBCA, E.8/8, fo.119, Red River Settlement Miscellaneous Papers, Legal Code.

63 Ibid., fo.128, "Procedure as to Witnesses."

64 Ibid., fo.136, "Crimes: Assault & Battery."

65 Ibid., fo.164, "Civil Rights 1. Husband and Wife." Exceptions are if they are living separately; or if the husband gives notice to a tradesman, he is not required to pay for subsequent items bought by his wife.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid., fo.151, "Rape." This provides an interesting contrast to the section on rape in the 1974 Criminal Code. In 1819 the maximum sentence upon conviction was death, in 1974, life imprisonment. The section of the 1974 Criminal Code states:

- "143. A male person commits a rape when he has sexual intercourse with a female who is not his wife
- a) without her consent, or
  - b) with her consent if the consent
    - (i) is extorted by threats of fear or bodily harm
    - (ii) is obtained by personating her husband, or
    - (iii) is obtained by false and fraudulent representations as to the nature and quality of the act."

The conditions of consent closely correspond to those outlined in the 1819 Legal Code; but, the earlier code makes no specific exception concerning a man's wife. It states force towards "any woman" as a condition of the offence. With the proposed 1978 amendments the term "rape" would be replaced with "sexual assault." The provision that a wife cannot be raped by her husband remains a debatable point on which the Law Reform Commission has not reached a decision.

68 HBCA, E.8/8, fo.151, Red River Settlement Miscellaneous Papers, 1813-1890, Legal Code, "Rape."

69 Ibid., fo.157, "Homicide 3. Murder."

70 See: Roy St. George Stubbs, Four Recorders of Rupert's Land: A Brief Survey of the Hudson's Bay Company Courts of Rupert's Land (Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers, 1967), pp. 3-4. Stubbs gives a brief legal history of Rupert's Land, but does not mention the proposed Legal Code of 1819.

## CHAPTER II

1 HBCA, B.235/a/4, fo.3(d), Winnipeg Post Journal 1820-1821, Nov. 18, 1820.

2 W.S. Herrington, The Evolution of the Prairie Provinces (Toronto: William Briggs, 1911), p. 113.

3 HBCA, B.235/a/5, p. 3, Winnipeg Post Journal 1822-1823, Sept. 18, 1822. This refers to a number of retired servants who settled in the Colony.

4 George Stanley, The Birth Of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1936), p. 16. Stanley describes the area as lying within a fifty mile radius around the Forks.

Note: The Council had actually been established prior to 1822, but its only previous meeting had been on June 24, 1815. Judicially, Miles Macdonell and the Council had been given instructions in 1814, but there was little opportunity for any systematic law enforcement. See: E.H. Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West: Its Early Development and Legislative Records (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1914), I, pp. 33-34 and pp. 186-188 respectively.

5 Nute, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Missions, p. 328. Destroismaisons to Bishop Plessis, Aug. 30, 1821.

6 HBCA, E.8/9, fo.1(d) and fo.2, Red River Settlement Journal ascribed to Paul Reynberger.

7 Ibid., fo.3, Feb. 18, 1822.

8 HBCA, D.3/3. fo.36, Governor George Simpson's Journal 1821-1822, Mar. 14, 1822. Also see Feb. 25 and Mar. 6, 1822, fos. 28 and 32(d) respectively.

9 Frederick Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1968), p. 179, Appendix A. Governor Simpson to A. Colville; Fort Garry, May 20, 1822.

- 10 Nute, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Missions, p. 374. Bishop Provencher to Bishop Plessis, Sept. 1, 1822.
- 11 HBCA, B.235/a/5, p. 5, Winnipeg Post Journal 1822-1823, Sept. 23, 1822. For another reference see p. 8, Sept. 30, 1822: "Five men and the women of the Fort employed in taking up Potatoes."
- 12 Ibid., p. 31, Jan. 10, 1823. These women were probably Indian or mixed-blood and not white settler women. However, there is no direct indication as to their status, and they could have been settler women staying inside the bounds of the Fort for the winter. Because the Forks area contained a fur post, interaction between the Hudson's Bay Company and the settlers obviously did take place. (For further comments on this relationship, see Chapter III.)
- 13 George Bryce, The Romantic Settlement of Lord Selkirk's Colonists (Winnipeg: Clark Bros. and Co., 1909), p. 153. Bryce comments: "It was a mistake to settle some hundred or so single men as these soldiers without a woman among them."
- 14 John West, The Substance of a Journal During a Residence at the Red River Colony, British North America (London: L.B. Seely and Son, 1824), p. 69.
- 15 The Diary of Nicholas Garry (Royal Society of Canada, 1900), p. 163; Sept. 6, 1821.
- 16 Ibid., p. 139; Aug. 4, 1821.
- 17 HBCA, B.235/a/5, p. 41, Winnipeg Post Journal 1822-1823, Feb. 28, 1823.
- 18 Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71, p. 623. Morton suggests that the term "North West" gradually disappeared after the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies in 1821. He states that the terms "Rupert's Land" and "Hudson's Bay Company Territories" took its place.
- 19 HBCA, B.235/a/5, p. 2, Winnipeg Post Journal 1822-1823, Sept. 14, 1822.
- 20 Ibid., p. 27, Dec. 21, 1822. See Chapter III for further references to the Buffalo Wool Company.
- 21 Nute, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Missions, p. 131. Provencher to Bishop Plessis, July 21, 1818.
- 22 Ibid., p. 147. Dumoulin to Bishop Plessis, Aug. 30, 1818.
- 23 Ibid., p. 157. Dumoulin to Bishop Plessis, Sept. 10, 1818.

24 I can discover no evidence to indicate whether or not this "Mrs. Matthey" is the same woman mentioned in Provencher's and Dumoulin's correspondence. Van Kirk, (note #45, "The Impact of White Women on Fur Trade Society", p. 162), states that Mrs. Matthey was not the Captain's legal wife; but, Matthey's letter cited here in note #26, suggests that the union was legal. It is possible that the woman the Pellys would not receive was a different person from Matthey's previous woman, to whom he was not legally married.

25 PAM, MG2 A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 25, p. 8085. Pelly to Captain Matthey; Fort Douglas, Oct. 25, 1823.

26 Ibid., p. 8086. Matthey to Pelly; Point Douglas, Oct. 26, 1823.

27 Ibid., vol. 26, p. 8224. Simpson to A. Colville; Red River, May 31, 1824.

28 A "civilized" society is a society which can afford the luxuries of structured educational and religious training, cultural activities and social life. In order to attain a state of civilization a society first requires a surplus of food, a division of labour and permanent settlements or cities.

29 PAM, MG9 A78, George H. Gunn Papers, Box 5, Article 55.

30 Archives of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land, MG7 A1, Extract and Letters Regarding Education in the Red River Settlement 1816-1828. Letter to R. Semple, May 8, 1816. (typed copy) Hereafter the Archives of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land, found in the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, will be cited as ARL.

31 Ibid., Letter to William Williams, May 25, 1820.

32 Nute, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Missions, p. 17. Petition of the Residents of the Red River Colony to the Bishop of Quebec, 1817.

33 Ibid., p. 60. Instructions to the Priests of the Red River Mission from the Bishop of Quebec; Apr. 20, 1818.

34 George Melvin Newfield, "The Development of Manitoba Schools Prior to 1870" (unpublished Master of Education thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, 1937), p. 17.

35 HBCA, D.3/3, fo.44, George Simpson's Journal 1821-1822, Mar. 31, 1822.

36 Ibid., fo.47(d), May 2, 1822.

37 West, Substance of a Journal, p. 100.

38 Newfield, "The Development of Manitoba Schools Prior to 1870," p. 43. Also see Chapters III and IV of this thesis for further discussion of education, including, in Chapter IV, salary comparisons.

39 HBCA, E.8/8, fos.33-34, Red River Settlement Miscellaneous Papers, Re: Church and School, 1823-1844. Circular and Prospectus, Dec. 1, 1823.

40 Church Missionary Society Archives, A77, C1/M1, North West America Mission, Mission Books, p. 235. Rev. D.T. Jones to the Secretaries, July 1827. Hereafter the Church Missionary Society Archives, found in the Public Archives of Manitoba, will be cited CMSA.

41 HBCA, E.8/8, fo.33, Red River Settlement Miscellaneous Papers, Re: Church and School, 1823-1844. Circular and Prospectus, Dec. 1, 1823.

42 PAM, MG2 A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 26, p. 8246. Simpson to A. Colvile; Red River, May 31, 1824.

The Church Missionary Society Records indicate that the Church Missionary Society was pleased with Harbidge's initial performance. In "Minute of Benjamin Harrison" on the formation of a mission in the Hudson's Bay Company Territories, Jan. 28, 1822, Harbidge was said to be "well qualified for the charge of the school." (CMSA, A77, C1/M1, Mission Books, p. 3) However, in 1824 Harbidge wrote to Rev. J. Pratt in defense of himself and his wife. Harbidge spoke of a "general prejudice in the Colony against me.... Mr. Jones also tells me that Mr. West told him, that I was proud and flippant, and that since my marriage I have been led astray, and not behaved in a manner at all becoming to my station." Ibid., pp. 131-132.

It is difficult to determine whether the charges against Harbidge were legitimate or if Simpson's personal opinions were behind the complaints. It is possible that Simpson disliked the Church Missionary Society establishment and wanted more Company input in school management.

43 Morice, History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada, p. 130.

44 Nute, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Missions, p. 422. Bishop Provencher to Bishop Plessis, July 13, 1824.

45 Apparently, even in the 1820's, many of the Scottish settlers considered education too much of a luxury. The Church Missionary Society "Report on Schools 1822-23" complained that day school attendance was too small, "chiefly because the moderate sum of 20/0 per annum for each child, is charged, which they are unwilling to pay (this is spoken of the Scotch settlers).: CMSA, A77, C1/M1, Mission Books, p. 74. "Memorandum

respecting the Settlement at Red River."

- 46 PAM, MG1 D3, Fidler's Journal, Sept. 1, 1814, p. 7.
- 47 Sylvia Van Kirk, "Women and the Fur Trade," The Beaver, 303, 4 (Winter 1972), 4. Also see: Marjorie W. Campbell, "Her Ladyship, My Squaw," The Beaver, 285, 3 (Sept. 1954), 14-17.
- 48 Diary of Nicholas Garry, p. 141, Aug. 5, 1821.
- 49 West, Substance of a Journal, p. 26.
- 50 Van Kirk, "Impact of White Women on Fur Trade Society," p. 29.
- 51 R. Harvey Fleming, ed., Minutes of the Council of Northern Department of Rupert's Land (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1940), p. 129. Resolution #124, Minutes at York Factory, July 2, 1825.
- Even in 1836 such regulations continued. The "Standing Rules and Regulations" for the Northern and Southern Departments, (June 23, 1836), stated that officers and servants of the Company on their retirement were required to make provisions for the future maintenance of their families, "more particularly for that of the Children." Quoted in: Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, II, 755. Also found in HBCA, D.4/102, fo.76, Simpson's Official Correspondence.
- 52 HBCA, E.10/1, fo.286(d), Robertson's Diary, vol. 5, Nov. 25, 1816.
- 53 PAM, MG2 A5, Pelly Documents 1816-1823, pp. 17-18. Extract of a letter to George Simpson, dated March 8, 1822.
- 54 CMSA, A77, C1/M1, Mission Books, p. 3. Minute of Benjamin Harrison, Jan. 28, 1822.
- 55 HBCA, B.235/a/7, fo.20, Winnipeg Post Journal 1825-1826, Jan. 30, 1826. Heron's complaint originated because the settlers were applying to the Company for food, clothing and fodder.
- 56 Ibid., fo.7, Aug. 20, 1825 and fo.10, Oct. 3, 1825.
- 57 Ibid., fo.25, Mar. 23, 1826.
- 58 Ibid., fo.29, April 8, 1826.
- 59 Ibid., fo.32(d), May 5, 1826.
- 60 The De Meurons usually have been described as undesirable, useless farmers, and therefore, their departure seen as a blessing. However, an excerpt from a letter written by Robertson to Selkirk questions the validity of this belief. Although, the De Meurons may have been guilty of petty crimes,



they were not shiftless. See: Nute, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Missions, p. 130. Robertson to Selkirk, July 18, 1818:

"The Missioners are charmed with the fine appearance [of] the crops and the industry of the colonists in particular the MEURONS these men have raised houses and cultivated land as it were by magic; German Street appears to have been settled there ten years in place of ten months."

61 HBCA, B.235/a/7, fo.44(d), Winnipeg Post Journal 1825-1826, July 10, 1826.

62 HBCA, B.235/a/8, fo.16(d), Winnipeg Post Journal 1826-1827, Feb. 9, 1827.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid., fo.26(d), May 30, 1827.

65 Just over a dozen wills survive for the 1816 to early 1830 period in the PAM and HBCA, (many wills are found in both). Because of their limited number it is difficult to be sure they are representative of the entire population. In order to make the sample as broad as possible, not only settlers' wills are included. Officers and servants wills, (HBCA, A.36/1a-15), have been used if the person was residing in the Red River Settlement at the time of making his will, or if the provisions of the will directly affected people settled in the Red River Colony.

66 PAM, MG2 A6, Red River Settlement, Copies of Misc. Letters and Documents 1823-1836, pp. 19-20. Will of J. Edward Harrison, Aug. 1, 1816. The Winnipeg Post Journal of 1822-1823, (HBCA, B.235/a/5, p. 29, Dec. 30, 1822), reports the death of a Mr. Harrison, also an employee of the North West Company, who wished his money to be "equally divided among his surviving family." These probably refer to the same man.

67 PAM, MG2 A6, Red River Settlement, Copies of Misc. Letters and Documents 1823-1836, pp. 1-2. Will of Wm. Flett, Nov. 9, 1823.

68 Ibid., pp. 17-19. Will of George Atkinson, Sr., Apr. 11, 1829.

69 HBCA, A.36/9, fo.66, Officers and Servants' Wills. Will of Angus MacGillis, June 1, 1829.

70 PAM, MG2 A6, Red River Settlement, Copies of Misc. Letters and Documents 1823-1836, pp. 15-16. Will of Alex. Kennedy, Sept. 15, 1831.

71 Ibid., p. 4. Will of Thomas Thomas, Nov. 13, 1827.

72 Ibid., pp. 10-12. Will of Alex. Berston, Nov. 26, 1828.

73 PAM, MG1 D1, Alexander Kennedy Correspondence. #3. Alex. Kennedy to his sister, Sept. 1, 1827.

74 G.P. Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1938), p. 23. #9. Duncan Finlayson to James Hargrave; Fort Garry, Dec. 10, 1827.

75 HBCA, B.235/a/9, fo.15(d), Winnipeg Post Journal 1827-1828, Feb. 29, 1828.

76 Diary of Nicholas Garry, p. 193, Appendix C. Also: HBCA, E.5/1 and E.5/4, Red River Census Returns, 1827 and 1830 respectively. For further census figures see Appendix, Table I.

### CHAPTER III

1 HBCA, D.4/97, fo.2(d), Governor Simpson, Official Reports to the Governor and Committee. York Factory, Aug. 26, 1830.

2 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 122. #52. James McMillan to James Hargrave; Forks, Dec. 17, 1833.

3 HBCA, D.4/102, fo.23(d), Governor Simpson, Official Reports. Red River Settlement, June 10, 1835.

4 HBCA, D.4/20, fos.27(d)-28, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward 1834. Simpson to J.G. McTavish; York Factory, Aug. 8, 1834.

5 HBCA, E.5/10, Red River Census Returns 1840.

6 Isobel Finlayson, "York Boat Journal," The Beaver, 282, 3-4 (Sept. and Dec. 1951), Dec., 37.

7 Numerous instances in the correspondence of the 1830's indicate that civilization still lay beyond the bounds of the Red River Settlement. See: HBCA, D.4/125, fo.79, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward 1831. John McLoughlin to George Simpson; Fort Vancouver, Mar. 16, 1831. This letter referred to a trader who wanted a year's leave of absence to visit Britain in order to "pay a visit to the civilized world." See; HBCA, D.4/104, fo.3, Governor Simpson, Official Reports. Moose Factory, Aug. 16, 1836. This report refers to Temiscamingue as "on the very threshold of the civilized world."

8 CMSA, A77, C1/M1, Mission Books, p. 38. John West,

Journal, Oct. 1822.

- 9 By the regulations of the 1830's retiring servants were required to purchase land in advance, generally at least fifty acres. See: HBCA, D.4/20, fo.17(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward. Simpson to Donald Ross; York Factory, July 7, 1834.
- 10 HBCA, D.4/17, fo.16, Governor Simpson Correspondence Books Outward. Simpson to Edward Smith; Norway House, June 16, 1830:"two of the Boats to be sent next year will be manned by Settlers... but if they cannot get to their homes by open water I fear we cannot depend on them in future."
- 11 HBCA, D.4/23, fo.124, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward. Simpson to George Cary; London, Feb. 28, 1838.
- 12 HBCA, D.5/4, fo.69(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Inward. Governor and Committee to George Simpson; London, March 5, 1834.
- 13 Van Kirk, "The Impact of White Women on Fur Trade Society," p. 45. Van Kirk states:"The arrival of the white woman can be seen as symbolic of a new era: the old fur trade order was gradually giving way to agrarian settlement which was unquestionably equated with civilization." (p. 48). Although symbolic of a "new era", the move towards civilization in Rupert's Land had begun approximately ten years prior to the arrival of Frances Simpson.
- 14 This corresponds to Van Kirk's comment in her article, "Women and the Fur Trade," The Beaver, p. 8:"Although the social and religious conventions of European society were undoubtedly taking hold in the basically agrarian settlement of Red River, the old norms of the fur trade society persisted, especially in isolated areas."
- 15 Fleming, ed., Minutes of the Council, p. 424, Appendix. George Simpson to J.G. McTavish, Nov. 12, 1822.
- 16 O'Meara, Daughters of the Country, p. 273.
- 17 Van Kirk, "The Impact of White Women on Fur Trade Society," p. 45.
- 18 HBCA, D.6/4,p. 91, Journal of Frances Simpson, May 28, 1830.
- 19 Ibid., p. 143, June 26, 1830.
- 20 Ibid., p. 118, June 6, 1830.
- 21 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 57. #21. John Stuart to James Hargrave; Bas de La Riviere, Dec. 12, 1830.

22 Van Kirk, "The Impact of White Women on Fur Trade Society," pp. 42-43.

23 HBCA, D.4/17, fo.22(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward. Simpson to Donald McKenzie; York Factory, July 6, 1830.

24 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 61. #23. Alexander Ross to James Hargrave; Red River Settlement, Dec. 18, 1830.

25 Ibid., p. 85. #34. James McMillan to James Hargrave; Farm [at the Red River Settlement]; Dec. 12, 1831.

26 For example see: Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 68. #26. John Stuart to James Hargrave; Bas de la Riviere, March 15, 1831; and p. 115. #48. J.D. Cameron to James Hargrave; Fort Alexander, Dec. 2, 1833.

27 See: Van Kirk, "The Impact of White Women on Fur Trade Society."

28 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 66. #25. Cuthbert Cumming to James Hargrave; St. Maurice, March 1, 1831.

29 Regarding the transfer Simpson wrote to the Governor Committee: "the Council consider [sic] the arrangement Your Honors have entered into with the Earl of Selkirk, by which the proprietorship and entire management of the Settlement revert to the Company, to have been highly desirable and expedient." HBCA, D.4/103, fo.1(d), Governor Simpson, Official Reports; Norway House, July 6, 1836.

30 For example see: HBCA, D.4/97, fos.2(d)-3, Governor Simpson, Official Reports; York Factory, Aug. 26, 1830.

31 HBCA, F.34/1, fos.14-15, Buffalo Wool Company Miscellaneous Papers, 1822-1824. There were ninety-six debtors listed: eighty-seven men and nine women.

32 Ibid., fo.15.

33 HBCA, F.30/1, fos.1-4, Assiniboine Wool Company Deed of Partnership etc. Governor George Simpson to Red River Settlers; Oct. 25, 1832. Simpson had been involved in continuous correspondence with the object of importing sheep into the Settlement. For example see: HBCA, D.4/18, fos.4(d)-5, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward 1830-1831. Simpson to William Price Hunt of St. Louis; Red River Settlement, Nov. 24, 1830, re: delivery of sheep.

34 HBCA, F.30/1, fo.30, Assiniboine Wool Company.

- 35 HBCA, F.31/1, fo.2(d), Red River Tallow Company, Minutes.
- 36 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 159.  
#64. John Charles to James Hargrave: "the Tallow Concern is at an End and all the Cattle sold by auction."
- 37 CMSA, A77, C1/M1, Mission Books, p. 475. Rev. Cochran's Journal, June 14, 1832.
- 38 HBCA, D.5/5, fo.12, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward. Governor and Committee to the Chief Factors and Traders of the Northern Department; London, March 7, 1838.
- 39 HBCA, D.4/106, fo.33(d), Governor Simpson, Official Reports; Red River Settlement, July 8, 1839.
- 40 HBCA, D.4/97, fos.4-4(d), Governor Simpson, Official Reports; York Factory, Aug. 26, 1830.
- 41 Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West. e.g. Minutes of the Council at Red River, June 1, 1833, II, 697: "the sum of £25 per annum be allowed to Mr. Pritchard." Also, Minutes of the Council at Norway House, June 27, 1837, II, 769: "an allowance to be made to the Revd Mr. Jones in aid of the Boarding Schools under his management."
- 42 HBCA, D.4/21, fo.15, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward, 1834-1835. George Simpson to Thomas Isbister; Red River Settlement, Dec. 1, 1834.
- 43 Early education in Manitoba has been dealt with at length in various published works as well as in Newfield's "The Development of Manitoba Schools Prior to 1870." Therefore, no inclusive study on education will be attempted in this paper. References will be made to the status of women within the educational system.
- 44 Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, II, 722. Minutes of the Council at Red River, June 5, 1833.
- 45 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 228.  
#88. Donald Ross to James Hargrave; Norway House, Feb. 22, 1836.
- 46 See: A.C. Garrioch, The Correction Line (Winnipeg: Stovel Co. Ltd., 1933), p.98 supplies the inscription.
- 47 HBCA, D.4/23, fo.60, Simpson Correspondence Books Outward 1837-1838. Simpson to Rev. D.T. Jones; Norway House, July 10, 1837.
- 48 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 251.  
#98. Donald Ross to James Hargrave; Norway House, Dec. 30, 1836.

- 49 PAM, MG1 D20, Donald Ross Collection, File 200, p. 25. Thomas Simpson to Donald Ross; Dec. 13, 1833.
- 50 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 189.  
#75. Donald Ross to James Hargrave; Norway House, March 13, 1835.
- 51 Ibid., p. 241. #94. Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave; New Fort Garry, Aug. 11, 1836.
- 52 Ibid., p. 305. #120. John Ballenden to James Hargrave; Fort Garry, Aug. 12, 1839.
- 53 Ibid., p. 206. #81. Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave; Red River, Dec. 9, 1835: "I found Miss Armstrong a pious, unaffected, well read, lady and a fearless traveller.... I almost regretted her being a French Scholar, from the broad language which is constantly in the mouths of our voyagers."
- 54 Ibid., p. 264. # 104. Donald Ross to James Hargrave; Norway House, July 31, 1838.
- 55 HBCA, D.4/22, fos.47-47(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward. Simpson to Rev. Jones; Norway House, June 24, 1836.
- 56 HBCA, D.5/5, fo.13(d), Governor Simpson Correspondence Inward. Governor and Committee to the Chief Factors and Traders of the Northern Department; London, March 7, 1838.
- 57 PAM, MG1 D20, Donald Ross Collection, File 200, p. 24. Thomas Simpson to Donald Ross; Sept. 4, 1833.
- 58 CMSA, A77, C1/M2, Mission Books, p. 68. "Report on the state of Religion, Morality and Education, at the Red River Settlement and Grand Rapids, by the Revd Messrs Jones and Cochran, 1835."
- 59 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 143.  
#58. James McMillan to James Hargrave; Forks, June 19, 1834.
- 60 Ibid., p. 181. #71. J.D. Cameron to James Hargrave; Forks, Red River, Feb. 1, 1835.
- 61 CMSA, A77, C1/M1, Mission Books, p. 530. Rev. W. Cochran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833.
- 62 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 219.  
#85. Cuthbert Cumming to James Hargrave; Mingan, 1835.
- 63 HBCA, D.4/127, fo.26(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward. J.G. McTavish to George Simpson; Sept. 18, 1834.

- 64 Margaret Arnett MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1947), p. 80. #25. To Dugald MacTavish, Senior; York Factory, Sept. 2, 1840.
- 65 CMSA, A77, C1/M1, Mission Books, p. 447. Governor George Simpson to Rev. D.T. Jones; July 14, 1832.
- 66 HBCA, D.4/25, fo.11(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward 1838-1841. Simpson to Edward Clouston; London, Nov. 9, 1838.
- 67 See: HBCA, E.12/1 for a draft of a marriage settlement between Duncan Finlayson and Isobel Graham Simpson. Isobel Finlayson arrived at the same time as Letitia Hargrave, who came as the wife of James Hargrave of York Factory. Letitia's letters provide many interesting comments on Red River events.
- 68 See: MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, p. 47. #18. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; on board the Prince Rupert, June 7-10, 1840. Letitia described Miss Allen as "a regular old maid" but "not entirely a vulgar woman... a good natured ignorant woman."
- 69 Ibid., p. 45. #17. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; Gravesend, June 6, 1840. Letitia described Miss Ross as "rather fierce altho' good looking."
- 70 Finlayson, "York Boat Journal," Dec., p. 34.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Ibid., p. 33.
- 73 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 330. #128. Duncan Finlayson to James Hargrave; Fort Garry, Dec. 18, 1840.
- 74 Ibid., pp. 334-335. #130. Richard Grant to James Hargrave; Oxford House, Feb. 1, 1841.
- 75 HBCA, D.4/22, fo.92(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward 1836-1837. Simpson to John Siveright; London, Jan. 25, 1837.
- 76 Glyndwr Williams, ed., London Correspondence Inward from George Simpson 1841-42 (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1973), p. 13. #1. Simpson to the Governor and Committee of the HBC; Lachine, April 20, 1841.
- 77 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 228. #88. Donald Ross to James Hargrave; Norway House, Feb. 22, 1836.

78 HBCA, E.6/13, Red River Settlement, Holders of Land 1836. For a more detailed discussion of women as land holders see Chapter IV.

79 Alexander Ross, The Red River Settlement: Its Rise, Progress and Present State (London: Smith Elder and Co., 1856), p. 200.

80 See: MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, p. 73. #24. To Mary MacTavish; York Factory, Sept. 1, 1840. Letitia described her meeting with Mrs. Gladman. The latter woman had to be informed by Mr. and Mrs. Finlayson that it was her social responsibility to call first on Letitia: "it was not customary in Engl<sup>d</sup> for the lady newly arrived to call on the old settler."

81 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, P. 102. #41. Donald Ross to James Hargrave; Norway House, Dec. 30, 1832.

#### CHAPTER IV

1 HBCA, D.4/109, fo.10(d), Governor George Simpson, Official Reports 1841. To the Governor and Committee of the HBC; June 20, 1841.

2 Because the demand for increased educational opportunities for women continued into the 1860's, this chapter will not be limited to the educational developments of a single decade. Therefore, in order to discuss the trend as a whole, the chapter will include events stretching into the early 1860's.

3 HBCA, D.4/38, fo.67(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward. 1st Series. 1848. Simpson to Major Caldwell; Lachine, Nov. 21, 1848.

4 John F. Crofton, "Winnipeg in 1846," copy of a diary of the late Colonel J.F. Crofton, Commander of the first Red River Expedition 1846-47, (copy in the Winnipeg Public Library), p. 10, Sept. 15, 1846.

5 Ibid., p. 12, Oct. 29, 1846.

6 PAM, MG1 B3, n.p. Rev. Alonzo Barnard. Account of a Trip from Red Lake, Minn. to Red River, 1843-44.

7 PAM, MG9 A78-3, p. 322, George H. Gunn Papers. Peter Garrioch's Journal, Part V, Feb. 20, 1847.

8 MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, p. 218. #54. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; York Factory, Feb. 25, 1846.



- 9 Alexander Ross, The Red River Settlement, p. 207. The description Ross presents refers to Red River in the late 1830's, but is equally applicable to the 1840's.
- 10 Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence, p. 395. #151. J.D. Cameron to James Hargrave; La Cloche, April 26, 1842.
- 11 David Anderson, A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Rupert's Land at his Primary Visitation (London: T. Hatchard, 1851), p. 35.
- 12 HBCA, D.4/38, fo.90, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward. 1st Series. 1848. Simpson to Rev. Dr. Alder; Lachine, Dec. 4, 1848.
- 13 Roy St. George Stubbs, Four Recorders of Rupert's Land, p. 10.
- 14 Mrs. W.C. Pinkham, "Selections from the Unpublished Recollections of Mrs. W.C. Pinkham, An Early Manitoban," Manitoba Pageant, XIX, 2 (Winter 1974), 22.
- 15 MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, p. 185. #47. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; York Factory, Sept. 9, 1844.
- 16 PAM, MG1 D20, Donald Ross Collection, File 185. Pages 13 and 14 of this file show advertisements for Boarding Schools: Miss Carnaby's Boarding School in Inverness at £40 per annum (under twelve years, £35); and Mrs. Renaud's establishment in Montreal at £40 per annum, plus additional charges, such as £3 for drawing lessons.
- 17 HBCA, D.4/46, fo.81(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward. 1st Series. 1853. Simpson to the Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Rupert's Land; Fort Garry, June 30, 1853.
- 18 Newfield, "The Development of Manitoba Schools Prior to 1870," p. 59.
- 19 James Ross, "Education in Red River," Nor'-Wester, Jan. 28, 1860, p. 3.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, p. 206. #52. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; York Factory, Sept. 5, 1845. Letitia's general opinion of Miss Allen was almost as critical as Macallum's. Letitia called Miss Allen "really very queer & foolish."
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Ibid., p. 177. #44. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; York Factory, Sept. 14-17, 1843.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 PAM, MG1 D20, Donald Ross Collection, File 93, p. 1. John Macallum to Donald Ross; Red River, Dec. 4, 1847. Apparently Miss Ross was involved in spreading the gossip which was derogatory to Macallum's establishment.

27 Ibid., File 27, p. 1. Robert Clouston to Donald Ross; Fort Garry, Nov. 30, 1849.

28 Ibid., p. 2.

29 Ibid. A letter which Miss McKenzie was writing had been sent accidentally to James Sinclair's house in a music book. The letter supposedly revealed evidence of Miss McKenzie's improper behavior.

30 Ibid., p. 3.

31 MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, p. 242. #63. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; York Factory, March 29, 1849.

32 Newfield, "The Development of Manitoba Schools Prior to 1870," p. 22.

33 Ibid., p. 23.

34 Nor'-Wester, June 28, 1860, p. 4.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., April 28, 1860, p. 4.

37 HBCA, B.235/b/10, fo.625, Winnipeg Correspondence Books 1861-64. Governor A.G. Dallas to Mr. William Shaw; Fort Garry, Dec. 10, 1862.

38 The Hudson's Bay Company assisted the school with provisions. See: ARL, MG7 A1, David Anderson #1504. To the Governor and Council of Rupert's Land; Jan. 12, 1852.

The school also continued to receive a grant of £100. See: Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, II, 1311-1312. "Memorial of Bishop Anderson to the Hudson's Bay Company, 1856.

39 George Hasted Dowker, "Life and Letters in Red River 1812-1863" (unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, 1923), p. 76.

40 Mrs. George Bryce, "Early Red River Culture," The Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, 57 (1901), 14.

- 41 Lillian Gibbons, "Early Red River Homes," Papers of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, 3, 2 (1946), 28. Included in this article is a description of the stone house erected for Miss Davis' Boarding School; see pp. 28-30.
- 42 The record of Miss Lane's passage and salary begins in 1862. See: PAM, MG2 C24, Matilda Davis School Collection, Box 2, Notebook #11.
- 43 Ibid., Box 1, #133.
- 44 Ibid., #142 and 143, plus notebook of exercises.
- 45 W.J. Healy, Women of Red River (Winnipeg: Russell, Lang & Co., 1923), p. 135.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, I, 336. Minutes of the Council, held at Fort Garry; June 28, 1847.
- 48 Schofield, The Story of Manitoba, I, 177.
- 49 W.S. Wallace, ed., John McLean's Notes of a Twenty-Five Year's Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1932), p. 380.
- 50 Nancy Garrioch, Peter Garrioch's mother, was licensed to trade "in English goods within the limits of the Red River Settlement;" although the licence would be declared null and void if she traded in furs or usurped "the privileges [sic] of the Hudson's Bay Company." See: PAM, MG9 A78-3, p. 239, George H. Gunn Papers, Peter Garrioch's Journal, Part V. "Declaration," signed by Alexander Christie; Dec. 7, 1844. Although Nancy Garrioch was licensed to trade, there is no indication that women took part in trading on a large scale as independent parties.
- 51 PAM, MG1 D20, Donald Ross Collection, File 161, p. 6. Alexander Ross to Donald Ross: Red River Settlement, Aug. 9, 1847.
- 52 Ross, The Red River Settlement, p. 394. Daily labourers were also hired during hay and harvest season at 2s6d per day, and in the "dead" season at 1s6d per day, plus food and blanket.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 HBCA, D.4/22, fo.90(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Books Outward 1836-1837. "Memorandum for A. Colvile," 1836.

55 Ibid.

56 HBCA, D.5/4, fo.69, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward 1831-1837. Governor and Committee to Simpson; March 5, 1834.

57 Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, II, 831. Minutes of the Council held at Red River; June 14, 1841.

58 HBCA, D.4/25, fo.130, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward 1838-1841. Simpson to James Keith; London, Nov. 18, 1840.

59 A variety of salaries is included to give a picture of the usual wages paid by the Hudson's Bay Company during this period.

60 HBCA, D.4/46, fo.54, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1853. Simpson to Robert Miles; Michipicoton, May 24, 1853.

61 Newfield, "The Development of Manitoba Schools Prior to 1870," p. 59.

62 PAM, MG2 C24, Matilda Davis School Collection, Box 2, Notebook #11.

63 See: Table II listing Settlers' Account statistics in Appendix.

64 See: Table I, Census Figures, in Appendix.

65 See: Table I, Census Figures, in Appendix.

66 HBCA, E.8/10, Red River Settlement, Miscellaneous Accounts 1811-1854. Bills of Exchange, 1847. This is not an inclusive list of bills of exchange issued in 1847, but if these have been preserved in a random manner, they should be indicative of a general trend.

67 HBCA, D.4/27, fo.65(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1842-1843. Simpson to Duncan Finlayson; London, Dec. 1, 1842.

68 HBCA, D.4/52, fos.21(d)-22, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1856-1857. Simpson to John Swanston; Lachine, Sept. 6, 1856.

69 Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, II, 787. Minutes of the Council held at Red River; June 6, 1839.

70 HBCA, D.4/36, fo.16(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1847. Simpson to Robert S.

Miles; Montreal Island, May 24, 1847.

71 HBCA, B.235/b/6, fo.34(d), Winnipeg Correspondence Books. "Memorandum from Red River for York Factory, 1853."

72 See; HBCA, D.4/35, fo.33(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1846-1847. Simpson to Peter Skeen Ogden and James Douglas; Red River Settlement, July 8, 1846.

73 PAM, MG9 A78-1, pp. 301-302, George H. Gunn Papers, Journal of Peter Garrioch, Part V, March 17, 1846. Apparently there was some criticism of Garrioch "squandering" the money his mother had received. See same: p. 307, April 25, 1846.

74 These wills exist mainly in the HBCA collection of Officers' and Servants' Wills, (A.36/1a-15). Some wills are also found in PAM collections, such as MG2 C23, The Robert Logan Family Collection. The wills used are chosen using the same criteria as those in Chapter II. See: Note #65, Chapter II.

75 HBCA, A.36/lb, p. 34, Officers' and Servants' Wills. Will of William Hemmings; Feb. 1, 1845.

76 HBCA, A.36/4, fo.196. Will of Rev. Cochran; July 1, 1847; A.36/8, fo.249. Will of Kenneth Logan; Feb. 14, 1849; A.36/8, fo.271. Will of Robert Logan; March 31, 1858.

77 HBCA, A.36/12, fo.189. Will of William Sinclair; Aug. 17, 1863.

78 HBCA, A.36/13, fo.66(d). Will of Adam Thom; Sept. 1, 1852; A.36/7, fo.130. Will of John Edward Harriott; June 25, 1858.

79 HBCA, A.36/11, fo.233. Will of John Rowand, Jr.; 1862.

80 HBCA, A.36/11, fo.215. Will of Alexander Ross; Probate, April 1, 1858.

81 PAM, MG2 C23, p. 97, Robert Logan Family Collection. Will of John Macallum; Sept.21, 1849.

82 HBCA, A.36/9, fo.178(d). Will of William McKay; July 22, 1851; A.36/10, fo.3. Will of Roderick MacKenzie; June 27, 1855.

83 HBCA, A.36/8, fo.229. Will of John Lee Lewes; March 21, 1849.

84 HBCA, A.36/6, fo.28. Will of Edward T. Denig; Sept. 12, 1856.

85 HBCA, A.36/4, fo. 93. Will of Robert Campbell; July 22, 1863.

86 In a few other cases women were appointed as executors. Robert Clouston appointed his daughter, Jane Ballenden, one of the four executors of his will. The other three were male. The will of Joseph Cook named his wife and son as executors. HBCA, A.36/4, fo.188. Will of Robert Clouston; (died) July 14, 1850; and HBCA, A.36/15, fo.1. Will of Joseph Cook; 1847.

87 HBCA, A.36/8, fo.271. Will of Robert Logan; March 31, 1858.

88 HBCA, A.36/15, fo.5. Will of Francis Whitford; Feb. 1843.

89 HBCA, A.36/12, see fos. 255-269. Will of James Sutherland; Dec. 7, 1835.

90 HBCA, A.36/11, fo.233(d). Will of John Rowand, Jr; 1862.

91 HBCA, A.36/13, fo.70. Will of Jane Taylor; June 26, 1844.

92 HBCA, A.36/3, fo.64. Elizabeth Bird, died intestate; April 18, 1846.

93 William Hemmings Cook's daughter had difficulty retaining her legacy although she and her husband, (James Lyon), were separated by mutual consent when she received the money. When James died his father claimed half of Kitty's legacy, arguing that since it all should have passed to his son and since his son had died intestate, the money should be divided between himself and Kitty. His claim was not upheld. HBCA, A.36/5, see fos.37-40. Will of William Hemmings Cook; 1847.

94 HBCA, D.5/44, fo6, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1857(2). Mary Bird to George Simpson; Red River, July 2, 1857. See: HBCA, A.36/lb, fos.43-44 for the Will of the late Chief Factor James Bird.

95 See: Archer E. Martin, ed., The Hudson's Bay Company's Land Tenures (London: William Clowes & Sons, 1898).

96 See: Chapter III and HBCA, E.6/13, Red River Settlement, Plans of Settlement and Particulars of Holders of Land, 1836.

97 HBCA, E.6/8, Red River Settlement, Memoranda respecting Grants of Land, no. 2. Also, one lot, listed under the male name of Baptiste Parisien, has in the "Remarks" column: "In the possession of Widow and Children." see fo.5.

98 HBCA, E.6/6, Red River Settlement, Land Register Book, 1854-1862.

99 HBCA, E.8/8, fo.106, Red River Settlement, Miscellaneous Papers, 1813-1890. "Register of Lots Sold and Payments Made; Outfits 1856-1859."

100 Martin, ed., The Hudson's Bay Company's Land Tenures, pp. 135-161. Also see: HBCA, E.6/2, Red River Settlement, Land Register Book B, 1830-1871 and undated.

## CHAPTER V

1 For a more detailed explanation of the judicial system and for descriptions of the Recorders, see: Stubbs, Four Recorders of Rupert's Land.

2 HBCA, D.5/5, fo. 327, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1838-1840. Adam Thom to Simpson; Red River, Oct. 30, 1840. The civil code is included in this correspondence, fos. 329-354.

3 HBCA, D.5/7, fo.158(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1842. Adam Thom to Simpson; Lower Fort Garry, Aug. 4, 1842.

4 Stubbs, Four Recorders of Rupert's Land, p. 5.

5 Rich, History of the Hudson's Bay Company, II, 555-556.

6 Frits Pannekoek, "The Anglican Church and the Disintegration of Red River Society, 1818-1870," The West and the Nation, ed. by Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1976), p. 79.

7 MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, p. 247. #64. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; York Factory, Oct. 30, 1849.

8 PAM, MG2 D20, Donald Ross Collection, File 148, p. 1. A.E. Pelly to Donald Ross; Lower Fort Garry, Aug. 1, 1850. Pelly maintained in this letter that Mrs. Pelly had been "ridiculed" at the Company's Mess table by Captain Foss and had also been continually annoyed by remarks made by him and the Ballendens. Therefore, Mrs. Pelly did not wish to attend the Mess.

9 PAM, MG2 D20, Donald Ross Collection, File 161, pp. 12-13. Alex. Ross to Donald Ross; Red River Settlement, Aug. 7, 1850.

10 These women were all anti-Mrs. Ballenden. Adam Thom,

who consistently defended Mrs. Ballenden's honour, felt that Mrs. Cochran's testimony at the trial was composed of "a great many insinuations but very few facts." See: HBCA, D.5/28, fo.437(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1850(2). Adam Thom to Simpson; Red River Settlement, Aug. 15, 1850.

Mrs. Cochran's testimony did indeed state that: "I have charged my Daughters never to visit there again." She did not want her daughters coming in contact with a woman of Mrs. Ballenden's reputation. See: PAM, MG2 B4-1, District of Assiniboia, Minutes of the General Quarterly Court, Book 1, p. 187. Foss v. Pelly; July 16, 1850.

11 Ibid., p. 181.

12 Ibid., p. 221.

13 MacLeod, ed., The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, p. 256. #66. To Mrs. Dugald MacTavish; York Factory, Aug. 27-29, 1850. Letitia also speculated that Pelly must have borrowed the money to pay Foss.

14 In a letter to A.E. Pelly, Simpson commiserated with Pelly, stating that a counter trial might be a possibility in order to get Foss to give up the "£300 he so shamefully or shamelessly, took out of your pocket." HBCA, D.4/43, fo.59(d), Governor Simpson Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1851. Simpson to A.E. Pelly; Lachine, April 20, 1851.

Some months earlier Simpson had advised John Black that "bygones should be bygones." His revised opinion may be because he was later convinced of Mrs. Ballenden's guilt. HBCA, D.4/42, fo.80, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Outward. 1st Series. 1850-1851. Simpson to John Black; Lachine, Dec. 18, 1850.

15 HBCA, D.5/28, fo.618, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1850(2). E. Colvile to Simpson; Lower Fort Garry, Sept. 19, 1850.

16 HBCA, D.5/30, fo.31, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1851(1). E. Colvile to Simpson; Lower Fort Garry, Jan. 4, 1851.

17 Ibid., fo.31(d).

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid., fo.203. Adam Thom to Simpson; Red River Settlement, Feb. 5, 1851.

20 Ibid., fo.540. John Ballenden to Simpson; London, April 4, 1851. John Ballenden also cited evidence of Mrs. Ballenden's nephew as cause for his revised opinion. Ballenden, however, still felt no facts were available to the general



community which would condemn his wife. Also see: fo.539.

21 HBCA, D.5/28, fo.481(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1850(2). John Black to Simpson; Fort Garry, Aug. 24, 1850.

22 HBCA, D.4/44, fo.80, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1851-1852. Simpson to Adam Thom; Lachine, Dec. 10, 1851.

23 See Table III, drawn up from the Minutes of the General Quarterly Court (PAM, MG2 D4-1), Appendix.

24 According to a letter copied in the Minutes of the General Quarterly Court, Mrs. Folester, (the woman who was raped), was "of the very lowest grade of human intelligence," with little or no reasoning faculty and very little memory. This would have prevented her from acting as plaintiff. PAM, MG2 D4-1, District of Assiniboia, Minutes of the General Quarterly Court, Book 1, p. 51. Public Interest v. Alex. Dahl; May 21, 1846.

25 PAM, MG9 A78-3, p. 311, George H. Gunn Papers, Journal of Peter Garrioch, Part V; May 21, 1846.

26 PAM, MG2 D4-1, Minutes of the General Quarterly Court, Book 1, p. 131, Gendron v. Hamblin and p. 170, Prelon v. Delorme; Feb. 15 and Nov. 15, 1849 respectively.

27 Nor'-Wester, Dec. 28, 1859, p. 4; and March 28, 1860, p. 3.

28 PAM, MG2 D4-1, Minutes of the General Quarterly Court, Book 1, p. 163, Mrs. Doherty v. Mrs. Anderson; Aug. 16, 1849.

29 Nor'-Wester, Sept. 28, 1860, p. 1; and Feb. 1, 1861, p. 3.

30 Ibid., Feb. 1, 1861, p. 3.

31 Pannekoek, "The Anglican Church and the Disintegration of Red River Society," p. 78. Pannekoek observes that an increase in gossip demonstrated a tendency towards increased social exclusiveness.

32 HBCA, D.4/52, fo.70(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1856-1857. Simpson to John Swanston; Lachine, Dec. 5, 1856.

33 HBCA, D.5/38, fo.342, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1853(3). James Sinclair to Simpson; Red River Settlement, Dec. 11, 1853.

- 34 HBCA, D.4/82, fo.633, Governor Simpson, Private Correspondence Book Outward, 1853-1854. Simpson to E. Colville; Lachine, Feb. 25, 1854.
- 35 HBCA, D.5/38, fo.342, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1853(3). James Sinclair to Simpson; Red River Settlement, Dec. 11, 1853.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 PAM, MG2 C14, Alexander Ross Papers, #60. John Gunn, Jr. to James Ross; Dec. 13, 1853.
- 38 HBCA, D.5/38, fo.172, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Inward, 1853(3). James Sinclair to Simpson; Red River Settlement, Nov. 4, 1853.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 The Select Committee of the British House of Commons held an inquiry into whether or not the Hudson's Bay Company licence of exclusive trade would be renewed. Originally it had been granted in 1821, and then renewed in 1838 for twenty-one years. The licence was not renewed again after the review of 1857, although the Company justified its management of the Red River area. It was recommended, however, that other governmental possibilities for the Settlement should be studied. See: Great Britain. Parliament. Report of the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company, 1857.
- 41 See: HBCA, D.4/52, fos.128-130(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1856-1857. Simpson to Rev. Cochran; London, March 12, 1857. In this letter Simpson complained to Rev. Cochran of Rev. Corbett's unfair testimony. A copy of the testimony was included.
- 42 Nor'-Wester, Nov. 17, 1862, p. 3.
- 43 Ibid., Dec. 12, 1862, p. 3.
- 44 See: Joseph James Hargrave, Red River (Montreal: printed for the author by John Lovell, 1871). Hargrave gives a complete account of the Corbett affair in Chapters XIX and XX.
- 45 Nor'-Wester, Dec. 12, 1862, p. 2.
- 46 Ibid., see Dec. 24, 1862, p. 3.
- 47 Ibid., Feb. 9, 1863, p. 2.
- 48 Hargrave, Red River, p. 262.
- 49 PAM, MG2 D4-1, Minutes of the General Quarterly Court, Book 2, pp. 241-243. The five attempts took place on different occasions between April 26, 1862 and June 25, 1862.

- 50 Ibid., p. 246.
- 51 Ibid., p. 260. Hargrave confirms this opinion, stating that even the questions designed to entrap her "only confirmed the truth of her story by precluding all possibility of her having been prompted in her replies." Hargrave, Red River, p. 270.
- 52 PAM, MG2 D4-1, Minutes of the General Quarterly Court, Book 2, p. 259. "Maria is now about 16 Years of Age she was not 15 till the May following that she went to Mr. Ct's."
- 53 Ibid., Book 3, pp. 5-6.
- 54 Ibid., p. 10.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Ibid., Book 3, Queen v. Catherine Daniel; May 19, 1863 and Book 1, Public Interest v. Neganecapo; May 15, 1851.
- 57 Hargrave, Red River, p. 281.
- 58 Ibid., p. 287.
- 59 Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, I, 525-526. Included in the Minutes of the Governor and Council for April 28, 1863: Letter from Robert McBeath, J.P., Francois Bruneau, J.P., Thomas Sinclair, J.P., and William Cowan, J.P. to Governor Dallas.
- 60 Ibid., p. 526.
- 61 Ibid., pp. 524-525.
- 62 Stubbs, Four Recorders of Rupert's Land, p. 154.
- 63 See: HBCA, D.4/82, fo.452, Governor Simpson, Private Correspondence Book, 1853-1854. Simpson to John Ballenden; Dec. 24, 1853.
- 64 Ross, Red River Settlement, p. 408.
- 65 Ibid., p. 361.
- 66 HBCA, D.4/55, fo.21, Governor Simpson, Correspondence Book Outward. 1st Series. 1858-1859. Simpson to William MacTavish; Lachine, Oct. 22, 1858.
- 67 Nor'-Wester, April 1, 1861, p. 3.
- 68 For a continuing picture of immigration to Manitoba, see: Hertha E. Jahn, "Immigration and Settlement in Manitoba,

1870-1881: The Beginnings of a Pattern" (unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, 1968).

69 See; Pannekoek, "The Anglican Church and the Disintegration of Red River Society," pp. 85-87. Also see: W.L. Morton, "Agriculture in the Red River Colony," Canadian Historical Review, XXX, 4 (1949), 321.

70 Nor'-Wester, Jan. 14, 1860, p. 2.

71 PAM, MG2 C14, Alexander Ross Papers, #274. Alex. W. Ross to James Ross; Dec. 27, 1864,

72 See; Nor'-Wester, Sept. 14, 1861, p. 3, and Oct. 5, 1861, p. 2. Also reprinted in Manitoba Pageant, 7,2 (Jan. 1962), 9-11.

73 Nor'-Wester, Feb. 14, 1860, p. 4.

74 PAM, MG2 C14, Alexander Ross Papers, #101. Jemima Ross to James Ross; Aug. 25, 1854.

75 HBCA, B.235/b/8, fo.20(d), Winnipeg Correspondence Books, 1860-1861. Governor MacTavish to Thomas Fraser; Fort Garry, Jan 21, 1861.

76 Garrioch, First Furrows, p. 155.

77 For assorted letters and the account of her trip to Red River see: PAM, MG2 C2, Eleanor E. Kennedy Correspondence, 1854-1904.

78 Thomas, "Some Manitoba Women Who did First Things," p. 15.

79 PAM, MG2 C24, Matilda Davis School Collection, Box 1, #56. C. Christie to Miss Davis; Fort Chipewyan, Dec. 14, 1864.

80 Attitudes of any society are difficult to document from qualitative evidence. However, some general characteristics of the attitudes regarding women can be gained by using newspapers and personal letters.

81 J.W. Bond, Minnesota: Its Resources (New York: Redfield, 1853), p. 287. Bond described a scene of "men, squaws and children - all reaping, binding and stocking the golden grain."

82 PAM, MG2 C14, Alexander Ross Papers, #200. James Ross to Isabella, Mary, Sally, Henrietta, Jemima and Alex. W. Ross; Dec. 24, 1856.

83 HBCA, D.4/83, fo.191, Governor Simpson, Private

Correspondence Book, 1854-1856. Simpson to Misses Rowand; Lachine, Nov. 3, 1854.

84 HBCA, B.235/b/7, fo.11, Winnipeg Correspondence Books, 1859-1860. Governor MacTavish to Miss McKenzie; Fort Garry, Nov. 21, 1859.

85 HBCA, D.4/84a, fo.209(d), Governor Simpson, Correspondence Outward, Private, 1856-1860. Simpson to John MacKenzie; Lachine, Dec. 28, 1859.

86 HBCA, D.4/84b, fo.78, Governor Simpson Correspondence Outward etc. 1824-1860. Simpson to Bernard R. Ross; Norway House, June 15, 1859.

87 This comment was made in 1867 but can be applied to Red River society during the early years of the decade. PAM, MG2 C24, Matilda Davis School Collection, Box 1, #63. A.B. Bannatyne to Miss Davis; Jan. 21, 1867.

88 Nor'-Wester, Feb. 15, 1861, p. 1.

89 Ibid.

90 PAM, MG2 C34, n.p., Palm Sanders Collection, circa 1850.

91 Bond, Minnesota, p. 289. Any "fortune" would pass into the husband's hands upon marriage. No doubt this added the the attractiveness of the women Bond encountered.

92 PAM, MG2 C23, Robert Logan Family Papers, #131. W.G. Smith to Robert Logan; London, March 26, 1859.

93 Nor'-Wester, March 19, 1862, p. 4.

94 Ibid., Oct. 15, 1861, p. 1.

## CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

1 HBCA, B.235/a/3, fos.30-31, Winnipeg Post Journal 1814-1815, June 27 and June 28, 1815.

2 See; HBCA, E.5/6, Red River Census 1832. In 1832 out of 502 families, fifteen were listed under women's names. Seven of these were listed as "Widow;" (e.g. Widow Flett); three were listed by the man's name followed by "wife;" (e.g. Legros, Antoine's wife); one was "Mrs. John Bunn;" four were listed under their own names. But, at least one of these four was also a widow, as Angelique Larance had been listed in the 1830 census as "Widow Larance." See; HBCA, E.5/4, Red River Census 1830.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

Research into this topic, where specific information on women is scarce, necessitates the use of all available primary and secondary sources. Collections of documents, letters, diaries, contemporary accounts, as well as later histories all become important. Because information written by, or concerning women, remains scanty throughout the period 1812 to 1863 some specific problems arise. Literate women leave a more complete record of themselves than do illiterate women. Hopefully the use of dictated depositions which women signed with an "X" will help balance this inequality in the early period. Also, anecdotes concerning women, written in men's journals, help to equalize the imbalance. The fact that often more determined and strong-willed women have their actions noted may affect the general tone of the evidence. However, the size of the entire population will be recorded in conjunction with the number of prominent women.

Primary sources relevant to this topic include both published and unpublished material. Collections of published documents are useful: Fleming, ed., Minutes of Council of Northern Department of Rupert's Land; Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West: Its Early Development and Legislative Records; Wallace, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Company. Contemporary diaries and correspondence collections are also available in published form: The Diary of Nicholas Garry; Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence; MacLeod, ed.,

The Letters of Letitia Hargrave. (See bibliography for complete citations.)

Although many primary sources exist in published form, the Public Archives of Manitoba and the Hudson's Bay Company Archives furnish the bulk of the primary material. The Public Archives of Manitoba provides family papers, correspondence collections and documents, such as those of Alexander Ross and Robert Logan, as well as the massive collection of the Selkirk Papers, (on microfilm). The Hudson's Bay Company Archives yield even more information in the form of Post Journals, miscellaneous papers, personal diaries and correspondence. Census records for Red River are found in both the Hudson's Bay Company Archives and the Public Archives of Manitoba.

On the general subject of the Red River Settlement much secondary work exists. However, description and narration characterize much of the early work. Recently, dissertations, such as John Elgin Foster's "The Country-Born in the Red River Settlement," and Frits Pannekoek's work on Red River society have analyzed different aspects of Red River and early Western settlement.

W.J. Healy's book Women of Red River (1923) specifically concerns women of that community. Composed of a series of interviews his book recalls something of the flavour of the "early days;" but, it does not provide any substantial basis for an analysis of the interaction between women and their society. Other secondary articles by authors such as Lillian Beynon Thomas and Margaret Arnett MacLeod are also available:

e.g. Thomas', "Some Manitoba Women Who Did First Things," (1948).

More recently, Sylvia Van Kirk's work on women and the fur trade discusses the role of Indian and country-born women in the period before, and immediately after, the arrival of white women. She examines marriage practices and the impact of white women on the lifestyle of the fur trade. Her work has direct relevance to any discussion of the changing role of Indian and mixed-blood women in the settlement period.

Using a wide variety of primary sources, from land records to the Matilda Davis School Collection, as well as the available secondary works, an overall picture of the role of pioneer women in the Red River Settlement can be established...



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**APPENDIX**

TABLE I  
CENSUS FIGURES

Year	Men			Women			Servants		Total Adult Pop.	% m	% f	Sons	Daughters	Total Pop.	No. of fam.	Women as fam. head
	M	S	total	M	S	total	m	f								
June 1815	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	-	-
1822	-	-	234	-	-	161	-	-	395	59%	41%	443?	443?	1281?	-	-
1827	200	44	244	-	-	210	-	-	454	54%	46%	411	347	1212	233	5=2.1%
1828	241	53	294	-	-	241	-	-	535	55%	45%	459	380	1374	247	3=1.2%
1829	348	0	348	-	-	310	-	-	658	53%	47%	597	521	1776	359	8=2.2%
1830	329	93	422	-	-	369	-	-	791	53%	47%	615	588	1994	351	5=1.4%
1831	398	113	511	401	82	483	-	-	994	51%	49%	740	683	2417	460	14=3.0
1832	448	108	556	452	91	543	-	-	1099	51%	49%	873	779	2751	502	15=2.9
1833	482	94	576	480	74	554	-	-	1130	51%	49%	985	867	2982	529	15=2.8
1834	557	132	689	567	89	656	-	-	1345	51%	49%	1065	950	3360	-	-
1835	589	78	667	597	56	653	40	45	1405	50%	50%	1251	1078	3649	664	22=3.3
1838	630	53	683	630	52	682	43	46	1454	50%	50%	1342	1176	3972	720	39=5.4
1840	710	49	759	710	48	758	147	161	1825	50%	50%	1529	1334	4688	805	42=5.2
1843	780	44	824	780	47	827	-	-	1651	50%	50%	1787	1705	5143	871	44=5.0
1846	691	86	777	691	79	770	-	-	1547	50%	50%	1492	1420	4459	947	70=7.4
1849	873	145	1018	877	135	1012	-	-	2030	50%	50%	1697	1668	5391	1052	75=7.1
1856	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6532	1082	-

## KEY to TABLE I

Symbols: M = married  
 S = single  
 m = male  
 f = female

% m = percentage of males in  
 total adult population  
 % f = percentage of females in  
 total adult population  
 No. of fam. = total number of  
 families  
 Women as fam. head = number and  
 percentage of  
 families listed  
 under a woman's  
 name

Sources: June 1815 - HBCA, B.235/a/3, fo.31, Winnipeg Post  
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- : 1822 - Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, I, 73.
- : 1827-1833 - HBCA, E.5/1-7, Red River Settlement -  
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- : 1834 - Oliver, ed., The Canadian North-West, I, 74.
- : 1835, 1838, 1840, 1843 - HBCA, E.5/8-11, Red River  
 Settlement - Census Records.
- : 1846, 1849 - PAM, MG2 B3, District of Assiniboia -  
 Census Records.
- : 1856 - Irene M. Spry, "The Transition from a Nomadic  
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 1896," Transactions of the Royal Society of  
 Canada, ser.IV, v.vi, sec.2 (June 1968), 189.

TABLE II

SETTLER'S ACCOUNTS  
Found in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives

HBCA Number	Year	Total Number of Accounts	Number of Women's Accounts	Per cent of Women's Accounts
B.235/d/56	1833-1834	141	31	22.0%
B.235/d/60	1834-1835	188	33	17.5%
B.235/d/63	1835-1836	173	31	18.0%
B.235/d/65	1836-1837	156	31	20.0%
B.235/d/68a	1837-1838	127	26	20.5%
B.235/d/71	1838-1839	112	22	19.5%
B.235/d/73	1839-1840	110	21	19.0%
B.235/d/80	1840-1841	110	18	16.5%
B.235/d/83	1841-1842	105	17	16.0%
B.235/d/88a	1842-1843	104	18	17.5%
B.235/d/91	1843-1844	105	18	17.0%
B.235/d/92	1844-1845	120	20	16.5%
B.235/d/96	1845-1846	116	23	20.0%
B.235/d/101	1846-1847	110	15	13.5%
B.235/d/102	1847-1848	135	19	14.0%
B.235/d/111	1848-1849	129	21	16.0%
B.235/d/114	1849-1850	132	20	15.0%
B.235/d/120	1850-1851	127	21	16.5%
B.235/d/129	1851-1852	145	20	13.5%
B.235/d/133	1852-1853	153	17	11.0%
B.235/d/139	1853-1854	148	17	11.5%
B.235/d/147	1854-1855	176	19	11.0%
B.235/d/151	1855-1856	158	16	10.0%
B.235/d/158	1856-1857	150	30	20.0%
B.235/d/163	1857-1858	195	27	14.0%
B.235/d/168	1858-1859	201	30	15.0%
B.235/d/175	1859-1860	213	28	13.0%
B.235/d/183	1860-1861	176	30	17.0%
B.235/d/191	1861-1862	190	35	18.5%
B.235/d/198	1862-1863	168	31	18.5%
B.235/d/206	1863-1864	174	34	19.5%

NOTE: These figures include all accounts relating to the Red River Settlers: e.g. Estate accounts, Sisters of Charity and accounts of Church Missionary Society establishments. They do not include those accounts relating specifically to the Hudson's Bay Company: e.g. accounts labelled "Northern or Southern Department Servants."

TABLE III  
 LEGAL CASES INVOLVING WOMEN  
 from the Minutes of the General Quarterly Court  
 (PAM, MG2 B4-1)

Year	Total no. of cases	Woman as Principal Character	Charge	Action
1844	1	none	-	-
1845	8	none	-	-
1846	13	-Public Interest v. Alex. Dahl	Rape	Guilty - one month imprisonment
		-Public Interest v. Catherine Norn	Selling Liquor to Indians	Guilty - fined \$5 and to return money to Indians
		-Public Interest v. Mr.&Mrs. N. McDonald	"	Guilty on 2 counts-\$5 and restitution
		-Public Interest v. Mr.&Mrs. Cyr	"	same
1847	20	-James Bird v. Jane Mowat	damages from defendant for deserting his service	defendant found liable for damages & court costs
		-Public Interest v. Catherine Parisien	Theft	Guilty- two months in gaol
1848	9	none	-	-
1849	24	-Gendron v. F. Hamblin	damages for seduction of daughter and breach of promise	Guilty - \$5 and costs
		-Madame La Lond v. Thomas Pixley	damages for timber taken from land	Guilty- damages & costs
		-Mrs. Doherty v. Mrs. Anderson	assault	plaintiff failed to prove case



TABLE III (con't)

Year	Total no. of cases	Woman as Principal Character	Charge	Action
1849 (con't)		-Prelon v. Delorme	damages for seduction and pregnancy of daughter	Guilty - damages assessed
1850	5	-Foss v. Pellys and Davidsons	damages for defamation of Mrs. Ballenden's character	Guilty- Pelly £300 and Davidson £100 (£100 waived)
		-Regina v. Magdelaine Parenteau	Theft	Guilty - three months in gaol
1851	17	-Coroner's inquest on the death of Catherine Murphy		frozen to death while intoxicated, husband negligent
1852	11	-Jane & Margaret Heckenberger, Bill of Indictment for murder of an infant		
		-Public Interest v. Jane Heckenberger	Murder	Guilty- death sentence commuted to two years imprisonment
		-Public Interest v. Mrs. Shepherd	Selling liquor to Indians	Guilty- fined £5 plus £3 restitution to Indians
		-Public Interest v. Mrs. Shepherd	"	case dropped
1853	14	-Public Interest v. Susan Pheasant	Stealing	Guilty - three months imprisonment
		-Coroner's Inquest into death of a newborn infant		culpable negligence on part of mother, Eliza Duncan
1854	8	-Public Interest v. Eliza Duncan	Neglect of infant	Guilty of concealing birth of infant- six months imprisonment

TABLE III (con't)

Year	Total no. of cases	Woman as Principal Character	Charge	Action
1854 (con't)		-Margaret Bouvette v. Pere Aubert	Defamation of character	Case non-suited
		-Nicholas Courtelle v. Madame La Superieuse	Plaintiff seeks return of property	Verdict for defendant
1855	11	none	-	-
1856	3	none	-	-
1857	5	none	-	-
1858	16	-Mrs. Bird v. H. Favel	Horse-taking	Guilty- fined \$200
1859	23	-Mrs. LaMalice v. James Mulligan	Occupancy of house	Verdict for plaintiff, defendant to return house & money
		-Queen v. Catherine and Mary Daniel	Theft	Catherine guilty- two months imprisonment; Mary not guilty
1860	21	-Mary Bird v. James Clouston	Possession of heifer	Verdict for plaintiff
		-Public Interest v. Mary Parks	Manslaughter	Not guilty
1861	16	-Angelique Bourassa v. Jollibois	damages for four buffalo & loss of blanket	Verdict for plaintiff
		-Mrs. Doolan v. Baptiste Caplette	Debt	Verdict for plaintiff
1862	21	none	-	-
1863	14	-Queen v G.O. Corbett	Intent to procure an abortion	Guilty - six months imprisonment
		-Queen v. Catherine Daniel	Burglary & Larceny	Guilty -three months in gaol