

CONSTRUCTING CORPORATE IMAGES OF THE FUR TRADE:

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, PUBLIC RELATIONS

AND THE BEAVER MAGAZINE, 1920-1945

By

Peter G. Geller, B.A.

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History
University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg
Winnipeg, Manitoba

(c)

May 15, 1990



National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-76634-4

Canada

CONSTRUCTING CORPORATE IMAGES OF THE FUR TRADE:
THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, PUBLIC RELATIONS
AND THE BEAVER MAGAZINE, 1920-1945

BY

PETER G. GELLER

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

© 1990

Permission has been granted to the LIBRARY OF THE UNIVER-
SITY OF MANITOBA to lend or sell copies of this thesis, to
the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this
thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film, and UNIVERSITY
MICROFILMS to publish an abstract of this thesis.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the
thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or other-
wise reproduced without the author's written permission.

ABSTRACT

The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) has long held a fascination for those interested in the history of Canada, and has formed a subject of both popular and academic discourse. Less readily recognized, however, is the HBC's own contribution to the public perception of its image. In a variety of forums, the Hudson's Bay Company itself carried on a campaign to influence the interpretation of the company and its role in Canadian (and British) history and contemporary society.

The commencement in 1920 of the publication of the company's magazine, The Beaver, offers an opportunity to explore the various images that the Hudson's Bay Company developed of itself, of its history, and of its relationship with native peoples. The "fur trade" was embraced as a convenient and salient symbol, in both words and pictures, becoming a focus for building up a glorious "official" history, as well as exemplifying the company's "progress" in the present. Although there was an ongoing fascination with forms of visual representation among company management, evident in the photographic documentation of the company's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebrations in 1920, the written text was the dominant mode of expression during the magazine's early years. Beginning in 1933, however, The Beaver began to exploit the possibilities of the visual

record. These attempts to compose and maintain a company identity were related to expectations of the mass media in an increasingly visual culture, and reflected popular attitudes to the role of photography in the construction of meaning.

Originally created as a staff journal, The Beaver's format and content were altered to appeal to non-company readers, forming part of a larger project of public relations. In the making of the company's magazine, the interaction between management, company policy and the editors and contributors allows for an examination of the ways in which corporate images were constructed, manipulated and transmitted, both to employees and to the public.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT i

TABLE OF CONTENTS iii

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS v

CHAPTER I: Constructing a Company History in 1920: Sir
 William Schooling's "Anniversary Brochure" and The
 Red River Pageant Album 1

CHAPTER II: "A Magazine of Progress": The Beaver and Its
 Editors, 1920-1933 30

CHAPTER III: Images of "Others": Portrayals of Native People in
 The Beaver, 1920-1933 55

CHAPTER IV: Creating an "Official History": The Hudson's Bay
 Company and Public Relations in the 1930s . . . 78

CHAPTER V: "A Magazine of the North": Photography and
 Conceptualizations of the Canadian
 Arctic 111

CHAPTER VI: Conclusion: The Image and the Word in the "New
 North" 158

AFTERWORD 179

BIBLIOGRAPHY 182

List of Figures

| | | |
|------------|--|---------|
| Figure 1: | "The Pipe of Peace" | 26 |
| Figure 2: | "Types of Canadian Eskimos" | 57 |
| Figure 3: | "Chief Peguis" | 65 |
| Figure 4: | "Fur Trade Department" | 68 |
| Figure 5: | "A Summer Trip to the Arctic" | 115 |
| Figure 6: | "To the Arctic and Back" | 116 |
| Figure 7: | "Dogs of the North" | 120 |
| Figure 8: | "Happy Huskies" | 121 |
| Figures | | |
| 9-13: | "Four Arctic Photographs by Max Sauer, Jr." | 134-138 |
| Figure 14: | "Landing Party" | 152 |

List of Tables

| | | |
|----------|---|-----|
| Table 1: | <u>The Beaver</u> Circulation, 1925-1952 | 91 |
| Table 2: | <u>The Beaver</u> Distribution: September, 1938 | 94 |
| Table 3: | Distribution of <u>A Brief History</u> , Fall, 1935 | 103 |

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the mid-1920s, the Hudson's Bay Company's handling of its affairs in the western arctic was questioned by officials of the Canadian government's Department of the Interior. Edward FitzGerald, the company's secretary, assured the government that there was no

cause for anxiety on the part of the Department as to the Company's treatment of these native races. In this respect the Company's strongest argument is the history of its dealings with them through 250 years and it would be strange indeed if the Company should now prove false to its history, traditions and principles.¹

FitzGerald's appeal to "principles" was not unique, but formed an integral component of the HBC's directors' and employees' views of the company. "Tradition" and "history," as the interpretation of the company's past (and present), and involving an "honourable" relationship with natives, were accorded a central role in the self-definition of the Hudson's Bay Company of the twentieth century.

To write of a company's "self-definition" implies that it has an identity, perhaps a life of its own. What is implied in this instance, however, is the construction of that "identity," as developed through the representation of a distinct entity, the "Hudson's Bay Company." This

¹ Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba (hereafter HBCA), A.1/167, f. 211, copy of a letter from FitzGerald to W.W. Cory, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, 10 April 1925.

construction is evident in the brief quote from FitzGerald's letter; in his argument, the idea of "the Company" (always demarcated by the capital "C") embodies "its" own history, traditions and principles. In the following chapters, I wish to explore the contours of this representation, of the meanings and interpretations underlying the public presentations of images of the Hudson's Bay Company from 1920 to 1945. And, as indicated in the preoccupation with defining the Hudson's Bay Company in relationship with native people, I will also examine the images of these "others." Beginning with the historical pageantry of the HBC's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebrations in May of 1920, I trace the company's changing public relations initiatives in the following decades, portrayed most extensively in the pages of the company's magazine, The Beaver.

Given the central role assigned to the fur trade, and to the Hudson's Bay Company in particular, as a factor in Canadian historical development in both popular and academic discourse, it is essential to examine the ways in which the officials of the Hudson's Bay Company itself influenced the contours and definitions of this role.² Authorized official

² For an introduction to the Canadian fur trade and the role of the HBC as an academic concern, see Glyndwr Williams, "The Hudson's Bay Company and the Fur Trade: 1670-1870," The Beaver, Autumn 1983 (reprinted 1987). The HBC also figures predominantly in the first comprehensive review of the fur trade in the post-1870 period, Arthur J. Ray's The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age (Toronto:

histories were issued in 1920 and 1934, establishing the company's present (and future) in a framework of orderly development.³ Yet the HBC of the twentieth century was a vastly different enterprise than its fur trading predecessor of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the 1869 Deed of Surrender, the company transferred control of Rupert's Land, through the Crown, to the new Dominion of Canada. In exchange, the HBC retained title to over seven million acres of land, the selling of which formed the basis of an active land department under the management of Donald A. Smith (later governor of the company, and Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal). Beginning in the second decade of the twentieth century, a newly constituted board directed the company's resources towards the building of its retail business.⁴ By the outbreak of the war in 1914, fur trading

University of Toronto Press, 1990). Peter C. Newman has enjoyed tremendous sales and publicity for his popular histories of the HBC, The Company of Adventurers (Markham: Penguin, 1985), Caesars of the Wilderness (Markham: Penguin, 1987) and Empire of the Bay: An Illustrated History of the Hudson's Bay Company (Toronto: Viking Studio/Madison Press, 1989). Newman's work has sparked a lively debate over the domains of fur trade discourse; see, for example, Jennifer S.H. Brown, "Newman's Company of Adventurers in Two Solitudes: A Look at Reviews and Responses," Canadian Historical Review, LXVII, 4 (1986), 562-71, and Peter C. Newman's "Response" in the same issue, 572-78.

³ Sir William Schooling, K.B.E. The Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1920 (London: Hudson's Bay House, 1920) and The Hudson's Bay Company: A Brief History (London: Hudson's Bay House, 1934).

⁴ Alex Ross and Anne Morton, "The Hudson's Bay Company and Its Archives," Business Archives, No. 51 (November 1985), 18-19; David Monod, "Bay Days: The Managerial

operations ranked behind those of land and retail sales in terms of gross income.⁵ Yet despite this increasingly diversified field of operations, governors and officials of the company continued to build on the images of the HBC's fur trading past. The company's representations of the fur trade, however, were not only based on an interpretation of past achievements. As the HBC expanded into the arctic in pursuit of the profitable white fox, the company projected an increasingly northern presence.⁶

The company's public image, then, was in some ways tied to the circumstances of the HBC's actual operations. At the same time, it was also engaged in the larger world of corporate public relations of which it was a part. In this interplay between the company's activities and the construction and maintenance of the company's image(s), "texts" were created, weaving fabrics that took on their own patterns and colours.

Keith Walden, in his cultural analysis of the grocery store trade in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, addresses the recognition among historians of the complexity of meaning, and of the agents which embody

Revolution and the Hudson's Bay Company Department Stores, 1912-1939," Historical Papers (1986), 173-196.

⁵ Ray, The Canadian Fur Trade, 99.

⁶ Ray, *ibid.*, unfortunately excludes a consideration of the arctic fur trade, which was an important feature of the company's fur trade operations; see below, Chapter V, on the HBC in the Canadian arctic.

meaning. Meaning "is never self-evident. It is an ideological construct continually debated by different groups, each striving to impose a mental attitude towards the world by shaping and inventing appropriate texts." In Walden's "reading" of grocery store window displays, as in my reading of "Hudson's Bay Company texts" that unfolds in the following pages, "texts encompass many things besides words... [as] many different media can contribute to the same discourse."⁷

Reading representations as texts is an enterprise that crosses disciplinary boundaries. Michael J. Shapiro, in The Politics of Representation, considers social theorists, policy analysts and biographers as "writers who participate in representational practices" whose "texts impose meanings...."⁸ In Shapiro's analysis, the "real" is "always mediated through some representational practice." To "read the 'real' as a text that has been produced (written) is to disclose an aspect of human conduct that is fugitive in approaches that collapse the process of inscription into a static reality."⁹ By reading the historical pageants of 1920, the articles and photographs in The Beaver, and the

⁷ Keith Walden, "Speaking Modern: Language, Culture, and Grocery Store Window Displays, 1887-1920," Canadian Historical Review, LXX, 3 (1989), 285.

⁸ Michael J. Shapiro, The Politics of Representation: Writing Practices in Biography, Photography and Policy Analysis (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 72.

⁹ Ibid., ii.

company-sponsored histories as texts, I propose to uncover the implied assumptions and ideological motivations behind these representations of (and by) the Hudson's Bay Company.

James Clifford, a historian of anthropology (and an anthropologist of histories), has turned this critical reading to an examination of "strategies of writing and representation" in ethnographic texts.¹⁰ Clifford's deconstruction of "ethnographic authority," which exposes the ethnographer as enmeshed in writing, has relevance to my attempts to deconstruct the "authority" of the texts that I address. His concern with contesting "the prevailing narratives of western identity" (which is often defined in opposition to an "other"), is one theme of my project.¹¹ Like Clifford, I am intrigued by the "subjectivities" produced, the "constructed domains of truth, serious fictions."¹² I am particularly concerned with examining how "the serious fictions" of individual writers, photographers and editors became appropriated into a larger project of "constructed truth" that constituted the representations of the Hudson's Bay Company to the public (a public of both its staff and those outside the company).

¹⁰ James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1988), 10; see especially "Part One: Discourses," 19-113.

¹¹ Ibid., 7.

¹² Ibid., 10.

Another impetus behind this study has been a captivation with the varied dimensions of the photographic image as historical source. The photograph, in particular, is assumed to be an "accurate" representation of the "real," yet it too is more fruitfully comprehended as a mediated text.¹³ John A. Kouwenhoven describes the photograph as historical document as "uniquely non-narrative... it is 'a window into the past' that is open for only a fossilized, unstoried instant...." Kouwenhoven is referring to the instantaneous quality of the "snapshot," the way in which it can only achieve a two-dimensional version of its subject that is frozen in time and motion.¹⁴ But if its very conventions subvert naive notions of the photograph as a representation of "reality," they also serve as a gateway to otherwise unavailable "traces" of past scenes and relationships, preserved through the chemical interaction of reflected light and silver nitrate.¹⁵ Alan Trachtenberg, in Reading American Photographs, ranges over a hundred years of American photographic practice in his analysis of photographs as "cultural texts." According to Trachtenberg,

¹³ Shapiro, Politics of Representation, 124-26.

¹⁴ John A. Kouwenhoven, "Photographs as Historical Documents", Half a Truth is Better Than None (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 199.

¹⁵ Susan Sontag, On Photography (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1977) 154, likens the photographic image to "a trace, something directly stencilled off the real, like a footprint or a death mask."

"what empowers an image to represent history is not just what it shows but the struggle for meaning we undergo before it, a struggle analogous to the historian's effort to shape an intelligible and usable past."¹⁶

The vast quantity and popularity of photographic images since the late nineteenth century have led many present-day observers to suggest that a "revolution in seeing" resulted.¹⁷ Clearly, photographs enabled a growing number of people to record their own experiences and those of others on film, and to organize these visual representations of their lives in a variety of personal and public ways. In a previous study I concentrated on the personal uses of family photographs, and their relationship to constructions of family identity and memory.¹⁸ In this project, I turn to the photograph as mass communication, and to the ways in which images are manipulated and reproduced for public

¹⁶ Alan Trachtenberg, Reading American Photographs: Images as History: Mathew Brady to Walker Evans (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), xvi-xvii.

¹⁷ See Sontag, On Photography, for a pessimistic account of photography's effects, and John Berger, "Uses of Photography", About Looking (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 48-63 for comments on Sontag; Kouwenhoven, "Living in a Snapshot World", in Half a Truth, 176, on the other hand, points out the way in which photographs reveal "an amazing amount of significance, historical and otherwise, in a great many things that were deemed unimportant until snapshots began forcing people to see them."

¹⁸ Peter Geller, "Family Memory, Photography and the Fur Trade: The Sinclairs at Norway House, 1902-1911," paper presented at the 1990 Western Canadian Studies Conference, Banff, Alberta.

consumption. I leave for further study the synthesis of these two ways of photographic seeing, of the interplay between the public and private uses and meanings of the reproducible visual image.

The use of visual images (or "texts") by the Hudson's Bay Company, particularly as displayed in the pages of The Beaver, allows for an investigation of the meanings of photography as a cultural form. In its concentration on images of the exotic, in the currency of images of the "other," photography reveals a good deal about the cultural assumptions and concerns of the photographer, of the editor who frames the image, provides captions and creates the published text, and of the viewer who participates in this shared visual experience. In sponsoring a particular set of images, both visual and verbal, the Hudson's Bay Company capitalized on, and attempted to influence, if not control, representations of the HBC and interpretations of its (employees') actions. An examination of The Beaver, in the context of other HBC publications and public displays, allows for an examination of the constructions of changing corporate "identities," enacted in a era of increasing corporate awareness of and attention to the techniques of mass media.

The past two years have offered the experiences and assistance of many people whose efforts are reflected in my

text. In particular, I wish to express my appreciation for Professor Jennifer Brown's intellectual encouragement throughout the project. The Department of History and the Rupert's Land Research Centre at the University of Winnipeg, and the Department of History, University of Manitoba have provided considerable support.

The staff of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, deserve recognition for the hours of tolerance to my endless research requests. Mrs. Shirlee Anne Smith, Keeper, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, was particularly helpful, especially in facilitating access to the files of the collection, and to her own personal storehouse of Company history.

I also wish to acknowledge the Hudson's Bay Company for permission to use and quote its archives and to reproduce material from The Beaver. Christopher Dafoe, editor and Carol Preston, managing editor, offered their insights into The Beaver's history and present operations, and allowed me to examine the magazine's research files.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their support. And Pam Logan, who is always there, caring and inspiring.

CHAPTER I
CONSTRUCTING A COMPANY HISTORY IN 1920:
SIR WILLIAM SCHOOLING'S "ANNIVERSARY BROCHURE"
AND THE RED RIVER PAGEANT ALBUM

These celebrations remind us of the high traditions set by our predecessors in the service and should help us in striving to emulate their loyalty and devotion to the interests of our great and glorious Company.

-Deputy Governor, Committee and members
of London Staff to Governor, Canadian
Advisory Committee and members of
Canadian staff¹

The summer of 1920 witnessed an unprecedented public display by one of the major corporations doing business in western Canada.² In recognition of the two-hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its incorporation (May 2, 1670), the Hudson's Bay Company initiated a variety of activities to celebrate this event. While the Company's headquarters and major shareholders resided in England, the majority of its employees and an increasingly influential executive committee were based in Canada. Thus a majority of the activities took place in Canada, although ostensibly

¹ HBCA, RG2/1/127, cablegram to Sir Robert Kindersley, 30 April [1920].

² The cost of the anniversary celebrations to the Canadian office was \$333,545.00 Ibid., RG2/74/1, Hughes to Harman, 11 February 1921.

directed by the London-based Governor and Committee. The general advertising of the celebration was prepared in London, as was one of the major publicity ventures, a brief history of the company, authored by Sir William Schooling³. Yet the elaborate historical pageants, coinciding with Governor Robert Molesworth Kindersley's visits to the major cities in western Canada, where the company operated its department stores, and the smaller festivities at the fur trade posts, required considerable on-the-spot planning and initiative. In a manner similar to the day-to-day business of the HBC of the early twentieth century, the directives from London were largely mediated and implemented by employees operating in Canada. Just as the long distance trade of this commercial enterprise generated a wealth of records, so too were the celebrations of 1920 marked by the creation of a body of documentation gathered for the benefit of the London proprietors.

The modes of representation employed in the celebrations of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the HBC have interest for the cultural historian. The events and activities of 1920 expose an intriguing and persuasive image of the Hudson's Bay Company and its history, and furthermore, the various ways in which this image was manipulated and conveyed to HBC employees and the wider

³ Ibid., RG2/2/127, "Recommendations For 250th Anniversary; Schooling, The Hudson's Bay Company."

public. Schooling's account of the Hudson's Bay Company, as the major written work commemorating the anniversary of incorporation and the first official history published and distributed (mainly free of charge) by the company, provides an evocative departure into an examination of the perspectives underlying the company's public depiction.⁴

This one hundred and twenty-nine page book (referred to in official correspondence as the "Anniversary Brochure") was intended to rehearse, "in a series of incidents, each illustrated, dealing with the principal landmarks...", a brief history of the company and an outline of its present-day activities.⁵ Although Schooling directed his writing to a British upper and middle class audience,⁶ the publication received wide distribution in Canada as well as in England.

The presentational style of The Hudson's Bay Company signalled its tone of reverence towards the HBC and its activities. From the gold embossed company coat of arms on its cover and the colour reproductions of the first and present governors, to the fold-out facsimile of the first sheet of the Company's royal charter and the accompanying

⁴ 1,159 copies were distributed free of charge in 1920, and another 579 copies were given away in the next eight years by the London office. This total includes distribution to libraries, schools and public repositories; HBCA, A.102/53, Anniversary Brochures.

⁵ Ibid., RG2/2/127, "Recommendations for the 250th Anniversary".

⁶ Schooling, Hudson's Bay Company, 32, analogies of distance to Great Britain, for example.

map of Canada "showing the establishments of the Hudson's Bay Company" attached to the inside back cover, the book was designed to impress.⁷ Collectively, the pictorial material created a sense of lavishness that reinforced Schooling's interpretation of the Hudson's Bay Company as a glorious and magnificent enterprise. Yet the emphasis of the "brochure" was on its written expression of the HBC's history, the accompanying illustrations remaining subordinate to the text.⁸

The introductory remarks by Governor Kindersley set out the main themes pursued in the body of the work, while at the same time granting Schooling's account the authority and power associated with the company. Kindersley's apology for the briefness (and implied inadequacy) of the history was countered by the professed desire to present a popular account with a wide appeal. Accordingly, he outlined the topics to follow: the fur trade as "the precursor of the opening up of great areas for farming and industry" in North America, as directed by the proprietors in London; the relationship between the company (and its servants) and the Indians, marked by an "unbroken peace" between them and a

⁷ In addition to the regular run several hundred leather-bound "De Luxe Brochures" were printed. Recipients of these special editions included the British royal family; HBCA, A.102/53, Anniversary Brochures.

⁸ Schooling later stated: "I had really nothing to do with the choice of illustrations for the Anniversary Brochure." Ibid., A.92/167/2, Schooling to Chadwick Brooks, 2 July, 1923.

beneficial imparting of civilization's advantages to the Indian; and, in the company's diversified activities of the present, a continuity of tradition, the London Committee acting as "the custodians of a great inheritance."⁹

These three major themes all implied a forward and progressive movement of a single entity, a concept upon which Schooling elaborated. Drawing an analogy with the chapter on the natural history of Canada's fur-bearers, he linked an animal's adjustment to its environment to the "continual modifications made by the Hudson's Bay Company to meet the constant changes, so largely of its own creation, which have taken place in the territories and in the Dominion of Canada during the last two hundred and fifty years."¹⁰ The HBC is thus described in organic terms, as Schooling sketched "the life of the Company rather than the individuals associated with it."¹¹

In building up the "persona" of this great enterprise, however, Schooling did stress the individual accomplishments and the explorations and discoveries of heroic, predominately British, males. Even in their mighty individual endeavours, these men were inextricably linked with the grander designs of the great enterprise of the

⁹ Schooling, Hudson's Bay Company, xi-xiii.

¹⁰ Ibid., 100.

¹¹ Ibid., 85; see also 118.

Hudson's Bay Company:

[Rupert's Land was] the scene of adventure and exploration by men who faced difficulties, hardships and death, sometimes for mere love of discovery and adventure, but always consciously or unconsciously, making their contribution towards the foundation of a mighty empire.¹²

The participation in this extension of empire touched not only the heroes of exploration and discovery (Radisson and Groseilliers, Henry Kelsey, the La Verendryes, Samuel Hearne, Alexander Mackenzie, George Vancouver and Simon Fraser) but also the lives of all who served the company, stamping a distinctive "dominating influence upon their character and future."¹³ The Indians, as essential elements in the fur trade which attracted the white men to their country, were also drawn into this web of empire, as "unconscious agents" in the spread of "civilization" and settlement.¹⁴

The Indian as inferior to the white man, as implied in Kindersley's introductory remarks, was elaborated upon in the chapter, "Indians." Setting out the association of the word "Indian" with adventure and romance, Schooling proceeded to confirm this perception. Initially identifying the differences between the many different Indian "stocks," and the differences of character and disposition between

¹² Ibid., 9.

¹³ Ibid., 16-24; 25.

¹⁴ Ibid., 35.

individual natives, the following pages plunge headlong into generalizations about Indian lifeways and the "native mind," with little attention to the complexities of describing the diversity of the aboriginal societies, both in the past and present.¹⁵ Individual natives are neither named nor their activities described. While there is a brief recognition that the interaction between Indians and the HBC influenced both parties, the focus is on the natives as the dependent recipients of the advantages of the white man's "civilization," many obtaining comfort and affluence as a result of this contact. Particularly influential was "white man's justice" ("stern when necessary, but always fair") which "had the power of superstition over the Indian mind."¹⁶

After an appraisal of the positive and negative characteristics of the Indian, the reader is assured that the balance between the races is clearly drawn: "it is gradually borne in upon the Indians that the white men are the superior race."¹⁷ Schooling informs us of the proud claim of many natives of the title of "Hudson's Bay Company Indian." The perception of the "dependence" of natives on the HBC, and the company's duty to "manage" the inferior

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 37.

¹⁷ Ibid., 42.

Indian tribes, finds expression in this rhetorical description.¹⁸

Throughout the "Anniversary Brochure" there is an underlying continuity and merging of past and present. This is graphically realized by the placement of the lists, "Committee in 1670" and "Committee in 1920," in a single page; visually represented by the juxtaposition of the early nineteenth century print, "Dog Cariole" and the modern photograph, "Dog Sleigh;" and asserted in the text by such statements as that describing "Life in the Service" as possessing a "large measure of similarity between the conditions of to-day and those of a long time back."¹⁹ Exemplified by the movement from fur trade fort to department store, this view of historical time is considered teleologically. The status of the contemporary Hudson's Bay Company is presented as a rational mid-point in the progress of past to future: "The trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company initiated in the north of the American continent the great commerce of today and the still greater business of the future."²⁰ The key to this ever forward development was found in the "spirit" with which the anonymous servants of the HBC pursued their duties, as "the navigation of rapids in a birch bark canoe was conducted in the same spirit as

¹⁸ Ibid., 45.

¹⁹ Ibid., xvi, facing 18, 25.

²⁰ Ibid., 101.

the contest between the [HBC supply ship] Nascopie and the modern submarine."²¹

The Hudson's Bay Company's lack of acknowledgement of sources was, in one sense, part of the attempt to appeal to a wide audience. Unencumbered by the paraphernalia of academic discourse, the book appears readable and accessible, the authoritative prose style engaging the reader in an uncomplicated journey through two hundred and fifty-years of "history." Conflicting viewpoints are avoided as Schooling selects the events which provide the appropriate messages about "progress," "empire" and "civilization." The authority underlying this presentation is that of the Hudson's Bay Company itself, keeper of its records and holder of its history. The quotations from the company's charter, committee meetings, and company servants, woven into Schooling's text without specific reference to dates or sources, function to legitimize his account.²² Schooling's description of the charter as "the symbol and the formal instrument of a history full of great

²¹ Ibid., 127. A popular incident in the illustrious history of the Nascopie concerned her sinking of a German submarine during shipping duties for the French government during The Great War. See The Beaver, June 1939, "Nascopie Downs Submarine," G.E. Mack, 18-21.

²² Schooling, Hudson's Bay Company, 5-6, 27-28, 75, 83, 94, 115. Non-company sources named by Schooling are the influential nineteenth century American social evolutionist Lewis H. Morgan and nineteenth century ethnologist, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in the "Indian" chapter (36, 41, and 42), popular Victorian novelist Robert Ballantyne's Hudson Bay (33) and several lines of a Dryden poem (68).

consequences" demonstrates the near-sacred qualities attached to the company's documents, an association which the Hudson's Bay Company capitalized on and manipulated to enhance its authority and prestige.²³

The romanticization of the heroic deeds of explorers, discoverers and fur traders as integral to the development of Canada not only paid tribute to the past and justified the company's activities in "history," but also served a pragmatic task in the present. The propagation of the belief that "a long history and a great tradition give a power and momentum not easily stayed" was not only a central component of the "Anniversary Brochure," but also an ongoing theme of the HBC's publicity and promotional material.²⁴ As will be seen in the discussion of the early history of the company's magazine, an identification with this long and glorious tradition was fostered to instill a sense of loyalty and pride among employees. And by attempting to widely transmit a positive view of the "history" of the HBC, through publications such as the "Anniversary Brochure" and public events such as the historical pageants of the 1920 anniversary celebrations, the company's decision-makers could more effectively base the justification of their actions and policies on the appeal to "history and tradition."

²³ Ibid., 5.

²⁴ Ibid., 129.

A further articulation of the "history of the Hudson's Bay Company" and its relations to the present, especially in its dealings with native people through the ongoing activities of the fur trade, was presented in the Red River Pageant held at Lower Fort Garry on May 3, 1920, and in an accompanying documentary photograph album.²⁵ Opening this weighty volume, the viewer is presented with a likeness of "'Kinnewakan' / Chief of Sioux Tribe or Plains Cree." Seated on a wicker chair, the "Chief," attired in feather headdress and ornately beaded and decorated buckskin jacket, stares gravely into the distance. Kinnewakan strikes a similar pose in the photograph on the following page. The viewer is then introduced to P.H. Godsell, HBC post manager,²⁶ who stands, hands on hips, beside "'Ben Charles' Chief of Wood Cree Indians, Athabasca District."²⁷

Following this introduction to Kinnewakan and Godsell, who figure as central characters in the pageant as it unfolds in the succeeding photographs, the formal portraits and accompanying captions next highlight the "tribes" and

²⁵ HBCA, Album No. 35, The Red River Pageant May 3rd, 1920, Commemorating the Hudson's Bay Company's 250th Anniversary.

²⁶ Godsell was an apprentice clerk from 1906-1911, left the company due to ill-health, and then rejoined the service in 1913 as a post manager in the Lake Superior District; see *ibid.*, Records of Service, P.H. Godsell.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Album 35, 1; 2; 3 (references are to individual photographs in the album, numbered by the archivist).

individual natives participating in the pageant.²⁸ The empty grounds of the ex-Hudson's Bay Company post of Lower Fort Garry function as a pictorial backdrop for the native men in their ceremonial dress. A further two pages of group portraits and a page of miscellaneous views of the Lower Fort Garry grounds, Red River carts, and a boat with Godsell and various unnamed natives as passengers take the viewer a third of the way into this commemorative volume. The images then shift to the portrayal of the events of the pageant itself: the York boat and canoe brigades, manned by the colourfully dressed Indians, proceed from their starting point in Winnipeg down the Red River to Lower Fort Garry; disembarking at the Fort, they are joined by Red River carts and pack ponies. The ceremony begins: Godsell, on behalf of the assembled tribes, addresses the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company and the party of HBC officials and friends. Governor Kindersley then accepts the "Pipe of Peace" from Kinnewakan. He distributes medals to the Indians, speeches are exchanged and translated, and Indian dances presented. Following the formal portion of the ceremony, the Indians partake in a feast prepared for them, all the while observed by the throngs of spectators gathered to witness this staged event.

²⁸ Ibid., pages 8-11 for group portraits; pages 12-25 for portraits of individuals.

This photographic record of the Red River Pageant constitutes the most imposing and impressive surviving artifact of the commemorative material prepared by the Hudson's Bay Company on the occasion of its anniversary. The photographs, collected from the Winnipeg firms of British and Colonial Press, Foote and James, and the Rembrandt Studio, were mounted on thick cardboard, and bound by T.W. Taylor Co. Ltd., Bookbinders and Printers. This massive album, measuring over 48 centimetres by 30.5 centimetres by 8.9 centimetres thick (1 1/2' x 1' x 3 1/2") along with lantern slides, scrapbooks of newspaper clippings and other photograph albums documenting the varied ceremonies held in Canada, was conveyed to the company's headquarters in London.²⁹ The importance attached to the photographic image as an information source for chronicling the events of 1920 calls for a particularly close reading of the Red River Pageant Album.

In fact, part of the pageant's attraction to HBC officials related to its visual appeal and its capacity to be captured by the camera's eye. The initial proposal by Land and Fur Trade Commissioner James Thomson to hold a central gathering of Indians in Winnipeg in October of 1919, which played up the publicity value of such an event, proved

²⁹ Ibid., Albums 57 and 67 of photographs; RG2/13/2 and 5, scrapbooks of newspaper clippings. Although not found in the HBCA, FitzGerald to C.M. Thomas, 17 September 1920, mentions 100 lantern slides sent to London.

attractive to celebration organizers. As Thomson foresaw: "...what an opportunity for films! As an object lesson, and an attraction for the public, it would be a superb show."³⁰ F.C. Ingrams, the London Secretary, similarly stressed the importance of "a complete and careful film record" under the company's auspices.³¹ Ingrams, however, added a note of urgency both to the enactment and documentation of the presentation, as "in a few short years the opportunities for such a reconstruction of the costumes, manners and customs of former days will have passed away."³²

As a visual representation of a staged version of the continuing history of Hudson's Bay Company - native relations, the album provides a commentary on, and a counterpoint to, Schooling's written text. In an echo of The Hudson's Bay Company, the elaborate presentation of the

³⁰ Ibid., RG2/2/127, Thomson to FitzGerald, 3 October 1919.

³¹ Ibid., RG2/3/1, Ingrams to Secretary, Canadian Advisory Committee, 2 December 1919. Educational Film Corporation of New York, under the auspices of the HBC, did film the Red River Pageant and the other celebrations across western Canada, and distributed them, through Pathe Weekly, in the United States and Canada. See RG2/3/5, FitzGerald to H.E. Burbridge (store commissioner), 14 December 1920. Unfortunately the original films no longer exist in the HBCA, although publicity director Douglas MacKay mentions viewing 14 reels in Winnipeg in The Beaver, March 1934, 7. A Pathescope of Canada newsreel, "Hudson's Bay Company Celebrates Its Birth," held by the National Archives of Canada, Moving Images and Sound, OMPB 4118, may contain shots of the Red River Pageant.

³² Ibid., RG2/3/1, Ingrams to Secretary, Canadian Advisory Committee, 2 December 1919.

Red River Pageant, both in its making and in its presentation as a documentary photograph album, illustrates and brings into focus two interwoven themes which were a keynote of the various celebrations sponsored and staged by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1920, and which were elaborated upon and manipulated in a variety of ways in the following decades. The emphases of The Red River Pageant Album bring into relief the official Hudson's Bay Company view of and glorification of its history, as well as the way in which, in the context of this glorious past, the Hudson's Bay Company perceived its relationship with native people.

Clearly the aboriginal presence added an essential element to a successful exhibition of "a two hundred and fifty year old friendship" between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Indians, as represented by the exchange of speeches and gifts between Governor Kindersley and the assembled natives.³³ But the nature and contours of this "friendship" and the native role in this relationship were visualized in specific terms by the organizers and documenters of the pageant. Natives were not only identified and categorized according to tribal groupings ("Wood Cree Indians,"

³³ The undated brochure The Fort Garry Historical Pageant, subtitled "Celebrating a Friendship 250 Years Old!" in RG2/74/3, and "Renewing Pledges of Friendship", Winnipeg Tribune, May 4, 1920 (in the scrapbook of newspaper clippings, RG2/13/5) emphasize this theme of Indian-HBC "friendship," as did later commentators. See, for example, Robert Watson in Lower Fort Garry: A History of the Stone Fort (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Company, 1928), 51.

"Siwash," "Sioux or Plains Cree," "Swampy Cree Indians")³⁴ but also by "District" categories constructed by the Hudson's Bay Company for the administration of its Fur Trade Department. The captions accompanying the photographs in the Red River Pageant Album highlighted this assumed identification of the Indians with the HBC, as both groups and individuals were described according to District affiliation. The Fur Trade District association as an organizing principle was further enhanced by the District buttons worn by the pageant participants.³⁵ And in the organization of the pageant itself, the Indians were seated separately by District, each with an appointed headman acting as that group's spokesperson.³⁶

Such categorizations, which are prominent in the Pageant Album, point to the ongoing project of perceiving the native in terms classifiable and manageable by the administrative structures of the HBC. Defined according to the mental constructs of Anglo-Canadians, these roles, like the more general "Hudson's Bay Company Indian," implied a dependence and reliance on white institutions.

Physical appearances tend to affirm, and conform to, perceived roles. In the Pageant Album, elaborate dress was

³⁴ HBCA, Album No. 35, 8, 9, 10, 11. Note also "halfbreed" categorization.

³⁵ Ibid., 92 for a clear view of these buttons.

³⁶ RG2/3/2, Programme of Red River Brigade and Indian Reception (by P.H. Godsell), April 1920.

the keynote of this physical identification, for both natives and whites. The photograph of P.H. Godsell displays an attention to detail in his dress that surpasses even that of Chief Ben Charles, with whom he poses.³⁷ Charles' lack of footwear calls attention to the totality of Godsell's costume, the former's woollen socks contrasting with the latter's outfit, complete from his fur cap down to his leggings and moccasins.

A similar incongruence is created by the image of "Wood Cree Indians, Athabasca district" in comparison with the individual portraits.³⁸ Several of the men in the former picture are dressed in plain suits and hats. In their absence of formal tribal attire, they call attention to the "dressing up" and artifice of the pageant. The instances of ill-fitting buckskin shirts and feather headdresses in the following pages raise the question of the extent to which the natives themselves participated in the preparation of the pageant. Godsell, in addition to having responsibility for the Indians during their stay at Lower Fort Garry, also assisted in the development of the programme, which included supervising "the assembling of the necessary material and equipment," such as teepees, canoes, and costumes.³⁹

³⁷ HBCA, Album 35, 3.

³⁸ Ibid., 8.

³⁹ Ibid., RG2/3/1, Thomson to FitzGerald, 29 January 1920.

The relationship between dress and identity is further highlighted by the photograph of "Louis E. Wilson / Director of pageant / (in Sioux costume)."⁴⁰ With only the image itself to ponder, Wilson, an Englishman brought to Canada to superintend the anniversary celebrations, appears as "Indian" as the portraits that surround him. The accompanying caption removes the ambiguity and establishes Wilson as a non-native employed by the Hudson's Bay Company. Yet to what extent were the natives also in "costume," dressing up for the occasion?

An article in the Winnipeg Bulletin acknowledged that the native participants dressed for comfort rather than style, wearing "ordinary 'hand-me-down' suits," when the press paid a visit to Lower Fort Garry several days before the pageant. Yet the photographs accompanying the article portrayed "Indians" in ceremonial attire, striking noble poses.⁴¹ Virtually all of the visual images that survive of the Red River Pageant, in fact, reproduce this idealized view of the "real Indian" in "traditional" dress.⁴² The costumes were worn not only when paddling the canoes and

⁴⁰ Ibid., Album 35, 76. On Wilson, see RG2/74/1, enclosure in W.N. Burns to FitzGerald, 16 April 1920.

⁴¹ "Smoke of Teepees Once More Arises at Historic Fort," 1 May 1920 (in HBCA, RG2/13/2).

⁴² See Fraser J. Pakes, "Seeing with the Stereotypic Eye: The Visual Image of the Plains Indian," Native Studies Review, Vol. 1, No. 2, (1985), 15 for the way in which movies and wild west shows portrayed the 'real' pre-reservation Indian in the early twentieth century.

York boats in the Fur Brigade down the Red River and participating in the Indian Reception at Lower Fort Garry, but also during an automobile tour to various sites in Winnipeg the following day.⁴³ Thus the dimension of role-playing and dressing up was carried beyond the historical reconstruction of the pageant into more public and less formal settings, where the confusion between representations of an idealized past and present became more pronounced than in the ceremony itself.

If the images discussed convey certain distinct perceptions about "Indians," what does the Red River Pageant Album reveal of the relationship between "Indians" and the Hudson's Bay Company? Given the concept of a "pageant," with its implications of spectacle and effect, artifice and historical allegory, the focus on the exchanges between Hudson's Bay Company Governor Sir Robert Kindersley and the Indian representatives calls attention to the manner and form of their depiction. The captions in the pageant album single out Kindersley as the embodiment of the "Company," introducing only him by name, and referring to the other assembled officials, relatives, and friends collectively as his "party."⁴⁴ The images in the album accentuate

⁴³ HBCA, Album 35, 217, "Indians in Automobiles at Winnipeg on Sight Seeing Trip," 220, "Indians' Amazement at White Man's Giant Bird" at St. Charles airfield and 1987/363/a/15/120, native pageant participants with crowd at the Allen Theatre.

⁴⁴ Album 35, 132.

Kindersley as figurehead, capturing his distinctive formal dress of black suit and black silk hat and his literally elevated position over the assembled officials, natives and spectators. As representative of the Hudson's Bay Company, he was to incorporate the admirable characteristics of previous governors, and stand for the company's rich and colourful past.

A number of panoramic views of the "Indian Reception," folded over in the album to accommodate their large size of reproduction, capture the sweep of the ceremony and the orderly nature of its presentation.⁴⁵ The Governor and party occupy the left side of the photograph, raised above the ground on a wooden stage, the HBC flag hanging behind them. The Indians, seated on the ground in a semi-circle to the right, are separated from the Hudson's Bay Company party by a large empty space which occupies a considerable portion of the photograph's area. This spatial separation reproduces the social distance between the two groups, while the levels on which they sit indicate the differences in status as envisioned by the organizers of the pageant. The spectators remain on the periphery, cordoned off from the scene of action by a rope barrier, while Royal Canadian Mounted Police, spaced at intervals on the edge of the crowd, enforce the orderly division between the public and the pageant participants.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 145 to 150; see also 177.

Two figures occupy the space between Kindersley and the natives, befitting their roles as intermediaries. W.C. McKay, an HBC employee, is depicted interpreting the Governor's address to the various tribes.⁴⁶ Godsell, the local organizer of the pageant and the officer in charge of the Indian delegates, appears as "director," surveying the events and occupying the central space between the Indians and the Governor.⁴⁷

Godsell's impression of "Indian behaviour" and of the importance of his own role in monitoring and directing such behaviour is evident in his later depiction of the pageant:

One by one I introduced the Indians [to Kindersley], each chief being permitted to make a little speech. I had warned McKay beforehand that if any of them talked foolishly, as they are sometimes apt to do, he was to substitute words of his own more suited to the occasion.⁴⁸

The captions and photographs reinforce this image of the native as passive participant. While the native people seemed willing to participate, their appearance and actions

⁴⁶ Ibid., 145, 147, 148, 149, 150, 158, 159.

⁴⁷ Ibid., RG2/3/2, Programme. In the album Godsell was described as leading the "Vanguard of the Red River Fur Brigade" from his passenger seat, while a native at bow and stern provided the labour; at the reception he "address[ed] the Governor on behalf of the Indian tribes." Album 35, 121 and 131. See Godsell, Arctic Trader: The Account of Twenty Years With the Hudson's Bay Company (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1934), 165-73, for his retrospective views of the event. He assigns himself the key role in the pageant, leaving out the work of other organizers.

⁴⁸ Inevitably, one of the Indian speakers confirms Godsell's stereotype, and McKay substitutes a more appropriate, "flowery address." Godsell, Arctic Trader, 171.

as "Indians" were clearly defined and limited by the pageant. Summoned to Winnipeg, they were provided with food, shelter and clothing in exchange for their participation in the planned events of the anniversary celebrations.⁴⁹ In the show of the pageant, and in its related activities of the picture-taking session beforehand and the tour of Winnipeg afterward, a particular vision of the "Indian" was created for the Indians to enact. The ceremonial regalia of the pageant "Indian" carried over into other public displays and performances, extending a unified concept of Indianness beyond the immediate environment of the historical enactment of the Lower Fort Garry display. Behaviourally, the "HBC Indian" was directed through the pageant itself, and his impressions and reactions described according to the role he was to play. Thus a photograph of a man in headdress, seated in the cockpit of a stationary airplane, is entitled "Indians' amazement at White Man's Giant Bird," despite the absence of any signs of amazement on the face of this man or the native and non-natives who watch him.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The notion of the Indian's lack of autonomy was reinforced by the actions of the Federal Government's Department of Indian Affairs, which initially refused to sanction the Indians' participation in the Pageant. It was only after a personal visit to Ottawa that pageant organizers obtained the necessary permission. HBCA, RG2/3/6, Report of 250th Anniversary Celebration; RG2/3/2, Duncan E. Scott (Deputy Superintendent General, Department of Indian Affairs) to J. Thomson, 8 April 1920.

⁵⁰ Ibid., Album 35, 220.

This aspect of native people "playing Indian," of conforming to the expectations and role models of Europeans and North Americans, can be considered as part of a larger complex of expressive forms of North American popular culture. These cultural expressions, as delineated by Rayna Green, include orally transmitted and formal literary texts, artifacts, dramatic performances, and as found in the Red River Pageant, ritual reenactments.⁵¹ Rooted in the forced display of "savageness" by early Indian and Inuit visitors to Europe, playing Indian underwent a variety of transformations and refinements, incorporating non-natives into the role of Indian, while at the same time developing a unique vocabulary and costume: "The performers speak in a measured speech... of 'The Great Spirit,' 'the big water,' the 'happy hunting ground' and so on, complete with the raised arm gestures, and often accoutrements of Plains Indians costume and behaviour."⁵² While the Red River Pageant allowed for (and encouraged) a portrayal of several types of "Indian," the central non-white role was played by the Sioux Warrior Kinnewakan, who incorporated those

⁵¹ Rayna Green, "The Tribe Called Wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe," Folklore, Vol. 99(i), 1988, 30; see also R. Green, "The Indian in Popular American Culture," in Wilcomb E. Washburn, editor, History of Indian-White Relations, 587-606.

⁵² Green, "Playing Indian," 33, 36, 39.

elements described by Green as the "definitively male and be-feathered 'Lord of the Plains.'"⁵³

This popular image of the "Indian," finding expression in Kinnewakan's offering of the peace pipe to Governor Kindersley, was further translated by contemporary newspaper and magazine reports, as revealed in the following account from the Winnipeg Tribune:

The old chief, with the classic, furrowed features, body and head arranged in a brilliancy of colours, the pens, beads, furs and leathers making a graceful and striking combination, approached the stately Governor, pipe of peace in hand, and looking heavenwards, called upon the Great Spirit to witness the compact of confidence about to be sealed afresh between their White Father and the Indians of all the Canadian Tribes.⁵⁴

The HBC's reports and publicity of the 250th anniversary did not contain the religious tone of the above newspaper article. They did, however highlight the symbolism of the smoking of the calumet, extending it towards a general state of goodwill between all Indians with associations with the company, a state of "friendship," moreover, which was perceived as both historically based and as existing (and being renewed) in the present.⁵⁵

⁵³ Ibid., 41, in Green's discussion of the Boy Scouts' reification of the "Indian."

⁵⁴ "A Day of Days," 4 May 1920 (in HBCA, RG2/13/5).

⁵⁵ HBCA, RG2/3/6, Report on 250th Anniversary Celebrations; Robert Watson, Lower Fort Garry, 51 and The Beaver, May 1922, front cover.

Visually, this theme of the HBC-Indian friendship found one of its most salient images in the photograph of Chief Kinnewakan presenting the "pipe of peace" to Governor Kindersley; both men, in full profile, are frozen in the solemnity of the moment.⁵⁶ Although not singled out in the Pageant Album, this photograph was widely reproduced in the press.⁵⁷ As the cover of the "Two Hundred Fifty-Second Anniversary Number" of the company's staff magazine, The Beaver, it stood for not only the Red River Pageant but the whole of the anniversary celebrations (see Figure 1).⁵⁸

The Governor dominates the scene, towering over Kinnewakan and interpreter McKay (whose back is toward the camera); Kindersley's own chair is elevated on a podium above the wooden stage, while his top hat adds further height to his imposing frame. He leans slightly forward to accept the pipe from Kinnewakan, who holds the offering up to Kindersley. In addition to the height difference, the two men are separated by a table; Kinnewakan can only come so close to Kindersley before encountering this physical

⁵⁶ Ibid., Album 35, 136.

⁵⁷ This (and other pageant photos) were not only reproduced locally (see The Winnipeg Tribune, 4 May 1920) but received a distribution outside of Winnipeg and Canada; see for example "An Outpost of Empire: The 250th Anniversary of the Hudson's Bay Company," The Graphic [London], 5 June 1920, 904-905 (in A.102/51). In a recent incarnation, this image illustrates A.J. Ray's "The Hudson's Bay Company and Native People," in History of Indian-White Relations, 349.

⁵⁸ The Beaver, May 1922, cover.

II MAY 1922 No. 8




The PIPE OF PEACE

SIR ROBERT KINDERSLEY, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, at Lower Fort Garry, May 3rd, 1920, participating in the ceremony of the Pipe of Peace with Chief Kinnewakan of the Wapeton Sioux at the Red River Pageant, 250th Anniversary of H.B.C.

**Two Hundred Fifty-Second
Anniversary Number**

dedicated to The Interests of Those  *Who Serve The Hudson's Bay Company*

Source: The Beaver, May 1922, cover.

barrier. Their dress also accentuates their differences, Kindersley's sharply defined black formal attire contrasting with the loose-flowing, brightly coloured outfit worn by Kinnewakan. This photograph highlights the distance between the HBC and its Indian "friends," reinforcing the separation of the key participants at the same time as it celebrates their joining together in a communal ritual.

Like the other photographs of the pageant, this image provides visual clues in which to unravel the meanings of this public ceremony, which was conceived and presented as a spectacle to be "seen."⁵⁹ The Red River Pageant Album, in its individual images and in its general organization, presents a way of viewing the pageant that incorporates the viewpoints and choices of the individuals who photographed the event into the emphases of the pageant organizers and HBC officials who constructed the event and directed its documentation.

The Red River Pageant was only one of several Hudson's Bay Company historical pageants held in Canada in May of 1920.⁶⁰ Although unique in the extent of its portrayal of

⁵⁹ HBCA, A.102/47, See the Red River Pageant, poster advertising the pageant. A map of the procession of the Indian Fur Brigade guided viewers, while special street cars to Lower Fort Garry were provided for spectators.

⁶⁰ Major pageants were also held in Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver and Victoria. Other events, both public and for HBC employees, included the showing of the moving picture "The Romance of the Far Fur Country" (produced by a New York film company for the occasion), luncheons and dinners honouring the Governor, written competitions for both HBC

the HBC-Indian relationship, and in the participation of "real Indians" (non-natives played "Indian" more extensively in the other pageants), the "friendship" of the company and its native hunters was replayed throughout the anniversary celebrations. The focus on the "historical significance of the occasion" sprang from quite pragmatic concerns, as the direction of the celebrations along the lines of a commercial advertising project would have discouraged press and public support.⁶¹ By building on a perception of the company as a progressive force in the development of Canada, however, the celebrations capitalized on the Anglo-Canadian enthusiasm for the colonization of the west and the extension of Empire.⁶² The "peaceful" nature of the conquering of the Canadian wilderness (and its inhabitants) constituted a major theme of this view, and thus the cooperation of the "Indians" and their continued friendship with the Hudson's Bay Company occupied a central place in this popular recounting of the past.

staff and school children, and small celebrations at most fur trading posts. Ibid., RG2/3/127, Governor's Itinerary, provides a brief synopsis, as does the first issue of The Beaver, October 1920, 2-5, 7-9.

⁶¹ HBCA, RG2/3/6, Report on 250th Anniversary.

⁶² Paul Rutherford, The Making of the Canadian Media. (Toronto: McGraw Hill Ryerson Limited, 1978), 121 discusses the widespread view, amongst the readers and publishers of the press, of Canada "as a British Dominion in an imperial family of nations" in the period previous to World War Two.

In the visual emphasis of the commemorative album, and in the written expression of The Hudson's Bay Company, two unique yet complementary modes of representation of the "history of the HBC" were developed. In words and pictures, the themes and images provide a basis for viewing the company's conceptualizations of itself, its history, and its relationships with natives, the deliberate and very public nature of these conceptualizations marking a starting point for the further elaboration of these images beyond the formulations of 1920.

While the Red River Pageant and the other celebrations of 1920 were special events expressing the Hudson's Bay Company's attempt to present an image of itself to its employees, to its customers, and to outside observers, the themes were to be developed and elaborated upon, as was the means of transmitting these messages. The most visible and ambitious of the company's public relations enterprises, The Beaver magazine, provides a rich source for a study of continuity and change in Hudson's Bay Company corporate myth-making. An examination of the activities and viewpoints of The Beaver's editors and of their relationship to HBC officials and policies reveals the extent of the company's concern for and attempts to control its image.

CHAPTER II

"A MAGAZINE OF PROGRESS": THE BEAVER AND ITS EDITORS, 1920-1933

"I love to follow the History the Hudson's Bay Company continues to make..."

-S.M. Parrish, Beaver reader,
Victoria, B.C. to Beaver editor
Robert Watson¹

While not quite an outgrowth of the "historical" awareness of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebrations, The Beaver magazine's beginning was linked to the events of that year. Clifton Moore Thomas, an advertising agent from Chicago, had been imported to run the Hudson's Bay Company's Publicity Office in Winnipeg, established to manage the publicity related to the celebrations of 1920. In closing up the office's business, Thomas proposed a permanent "Centralized Publicity and Advertising control at Winnipeg," and thus an extension of his employment. In addition to "the standardization and harmonizing" of the company's advertising and the "dissemination of propaganda to meet exigencies of trade and encroachment of opposition" in the various departments, Thomas's proposal included a consideration of

¹ HBCA, RG2/72/1, 14 October, 1931.

"interdepartmental cohesion and co-operation through a Company House Organ or Institutional Magazine."² Thus The Beaver originated as part of a larger scheme of advertising and public relations, as part of an attempt to draw together the varied interests of the company in a unified way.

The idea of an institutional journal was not a particularly unique one, as other companies and organizations sponsored magazines directed at their staffs. The Imperial Oil Review had been established in Canada in 1917, and in the United States, company journals included the Ford Motor Company's Ford Times (1908), the Pennsylvania Railroad's Information for Employees and the Public (1913), and Standard Oil Company's The Lamp (1918). By 1925, more than half of the U.S. companies engaged in manufacturing published employee magazines.³

In fact, the recommendation that the HBC distribute literature to its staff, and particularly to the dispersed employees of the fur trade, was voiced even before Thomas's

² Ibid., RG2/3/12, Thomas to Edward FitzGerald, 22 May 1920.

³ Noel Robert Barbour, Those Amazing People: The Story of the Canadian Magazine Industry, 1778-1967 (Toronto: The Crucible Press, 1982), 131; Alan R. Raucher, Public Relations and Business, 1900-1929 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1968), x, 37, 69, 97. Donna Guglielmin, "The Overlooked World of House Magazines: 100 Million Strong U.S. and Canada Circulation," Content, July 1976, 26, notes that one of the earliest house journals was the Independent Forester (1908), for the members and employees of the fraternal benefit society, The Independent Order of Foresters.

initiative. Several entries in a fur trade staff competition (undertaken as part of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary) which made this point were singled out as "worthwhile suggestions." Miss F.A. Haldane, stenographer at the Prince Albert District Office, suggested the company issue a small monthly, containing items of interest to the fur trade.⁴ Although C.H. Clarke, an accountant in the western arctic district, did not advocate a company-published magazine, he pointed out, "books, current magazines and papers could be shipped annually to those employees isolated in the northern regions, where mail and news arrives but once or twice a year ... inexpensive pleasures could be thought of which would make the employee far removed from everywhere feel that he was part of the general scheme, and not a dependent of the scheme itself...."⁵ These two entries suggest that in the Fur Trade Department, at least, the distribution of a company publication might meet with a fair welcome.

The new magazine's general layout and format remained relatively unaltered until 1933, reflecting The Beaver's function, until that time, as an in-house journal "devoted to the interests of those who serve the Hudson's Bay

⁴ HBCA, RG2/3/11, Paper No. 4.

⁵ Ibid., Paper No. 26.

Company."⁶ Within its 16 by 25 cm. (6.5" x 9.75") pages, the monthly Beaver presented a combination of staff news from the stores and departments, biographical profiles, and personal reminiscences of Hudson's Bay Company current and former employees. This core of material was accompanied by poetry and fiction, usually on a company theme, articles on historical subjects and excerpts from documents relating to the HBC, "humorous" anecdotes, brief inspirational essays on service and loyalty, and the occasional contest or puzzle.⁷ Varying in length from issue to issue, the thirty-plus pages were sparsely illustrated with grainy half-tone reproductions of black and white photographs and the occasional line drawing. Photographs often accompanied the staff notes, portraying a sports team or social club, while formal portraits, in distinctive oval frames, set the tone for the laudatory biographical sketches. The front cover, either a reproduction of a photograph, a painting, or an engraving, usually depicted an HBC activity or personality, although a scenic view or native portrait might make an appearance. On the back cover, and in a page or two inside

⁶ This statement appeared on The Beaver covers until June 1926.

⁷ See, for example, the serialized adventure romance, "The Land of Silence: A Novel of the Great Northland" by George Ray of Moose Factory, The Beaver, August/September 1921 to June 1923; December 1921, Robert Campbell's letters, 15-17; December 1921, "How I Earned my First Dollar," 23.

the magazine, advertisements for the HBC and a few other companies were published.⁸

The Beaver occasionally printed contributions from people outside the HBC organization.⁹ The majority of material, however, was actively solicited from company employees. Department representatives, called "Editorial Associates" in Beaver parlance, were appointed to assist Thomas in his editorial capacity.¹⁰ And in The Beaver he regularly requested its readers to send in items. Thomas's editorial agenda and the role of staff contributions were summed up in his initial appeal "To Our Readers": "Do not hesitate because you think you are not a writer. Send us the FACTS and PICTURES. We will write up your offering."¹¹

In the same appeal, Thomas also recognized the varied nature of his audience. "Whether you are a trader, clerk, inspector, ship captain, post manager, stenographer, salesperson, buyer, accountant, department manager," he exhorted, you can help make The Beaver "as newsy and interesting as a HBC magazine should be." One of The

⁸ Great West Life Assurance Company advertised regularly in The Beaver beginning in the second issue. George Allen, Chairman of the Canadian Committee, was also president of Great West Life.

⁹ The Beaver, January 1921, "How the Eskimo Hunt the Musk-Ox," RNWMP Captain French, 9; March 1921, passages from Colonel Butler's The Great Lone Land, edited by W.E. Anderson, 17.

¹⁰ HBCA, RG2/3/12, Thomas file.

¹¹ The Beaver, Oct. 1920, 5.

Beaver's goals was to assist in fostering a sense of loyalty amongst the staff of a company that was occupationally and geographically diverse.

Given the absence of published contributions from the staff of the Fur Trade Department, however, it appears that The Beaver, in its early years, held little interest for this section of the company. Although Angus Brabant, the Fur Trade Commissioner, had directed the district managers to have a man at each post collect and forward material "of an interesting nature suitable for publication in the Company's magazine," there was a dearth of material from the fur trade.¹² Thomas appealed specifically for contributions from this department in March of 1921, noting that its members appeared diffident about writing. Almost two years later Thomas again addressed the fur trade staff, suggesting they make better use of the magazine. He pointed out that other departments had "Beaver" organizations, and that the company's journal did belong to fur trade employees, even if they were greatly outnumbered by the stores' staff.¹³ Yet its monthly publication schedule was not attuned to the needs of the company's fur traders, who had infrequent (and in the more northerly districts, once yearly) communication with the outside world. It was impossible for many of the

¹² HBCA, RG2/3/12, Brabant to Secretary, Canadian Committee, 24 July 1920.

¹³ The Beaver, March 1921, 9, January 1923, 158.

clerks and post managers to meet the deadlines for the various competitions announced in the magazine's pages.

The content also tended to be directed towards those involved in the retail side of the company's business, and towards the pursuit of decidedly commercial goals. Although Thomas realized the advantage of promoting the fur trade as part of the HBC's history and tradition, he tended to frame such appeals in terms of the modern marketplace. His publicity goals, formulated prior to The Beaver's creation, recognized the utility of building on the image of the Hudson's Bay Company as historical entity:

Atmosphere Advertising in the year of Celebration - and afterwards - to obtain national and international circulation of material dealing with the Company's Great Past (stimulation of all classes of the press by guarded means is considered advisable and can be accomplished as long as the romance of Company's accomplishments is kept alive).¹⁴

Thomas did present articles in The Beaver that exalted the past endeavours of the HBC, describing the company and its officers as maintaining "Christianity and the institutions of the British empire in the face of blizzard and ice and savage tribes and all the other barriers of the north country."¹⁵ Yet he did not write such pieces himself.

¹⁴ HBCA, RG2/3/12, Thomas to FitzGerald, 22 May 1920.

¹⁵ The Beaver, December 1921, "HBC Officers Once Controlled a Northern Empire," J. Brown, 2.

As the new magazine's subtitle, "A Journal of Progress," indicated, The Beaver was dedicated to reporting, or more accurately, celebrating, the ever-forward development of the Hudson's Bay Company. Thomas, as an American advertising executive, envisioned the new company journal in terms consistent with the burgeoning North American culture of consumption.¹⁶ Accordingly, the articles and illustrations exalted the individual "model" employee. Profiles of both fur traders and store clerks were framed in the rhetoric of commercial success.¹⁷ A staff member reading the first issue was introduced to a number of successful HBC employees. Fletcher Sparling's career with the company was summarized in the article "How Winnipeg Store Manager, Once Farm Boy, Trained Himself to Be Master Mechanic." Even the Governor, Sir Robert Kindersley, the introductory issue proclaimed, was "A SELF-MADE MAN."¹⁸

¹⁶ Stuart Ewen, Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of the Consumer Culture (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976) examines the relationship between the advertising industry and the ideology of consumerism in the context of American culture and society; Warren I. Susman, Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), xix-xxx, posits 1920s and 1930s America as a site of battle between "Puritan-republican, producer-capitalist culture" and the emergent "culture of abundance."

¹⁷ See James Playsted Wood, Magazines in the United States: Their Social and Economic Influence (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1949), 282-3 for a discussion of the success story as a feature of American magazines.

¹⁸ The Beaver, October 1920, 12-13; 30, 10.

Perhaps the article on Angus Brabant, Fur Trade Commissioner, by W.M. Conn, "Associate Editor" (and also Assistant Fur Trade Commissioner), best captured this spirit of the early Beaver. "By Placing the Interests of the Company always Above Personal Comfort or Profit..." the headline announced, "...Brabant Won the Fur Trade Commissionership." Such a position required extreme hard work and dedication ("No Holiday in 25 Years"), and the surmounting of many obstacles. Yet such demands on one's character carried their own rewards. Early in his career, at Fort Smith:

...[Brabant's] perseverance and unique ability as a trader, organizer and civilizer underwent their rigorous tests.... The Indians were lazy; they were not hunting and trapping beyond the meagre requirements of a bare existence. They had no property.... Mr. Brabant taught the lazy ones the satisfaction and the benefits of WORK.

While caught up in an ethic which related work to morality, and thus considered a "civilized Indian" a productive worker, the ideal of the self-made man tended to glorify the material results associated with success. In this version of the company man, the "one undivided and sleepless determination was to show profit." Showing profits not only benefited the company as a whole, but had direct personal advantages. In Brabant's case, his "lifelong faithfulness"

resulted in his directing "the destinies of a department whose activities cover half a continent."¹⁹

A note by Thomas several months after the Brabant article appeared warned, however, that "sudden successes seldom are real." To move upward in the HBC hierarchy was within reach but required a measure of selfless dedication coupled with patience, such as "the twenty-four years of ungrudging service given to HBC by George Bayne, a man who went to the utter-most parts of the northern continent at the company's command...."²⁰

If not every fur trader could become an Angus Brabant and every sales clerk a store manager, then what could he (female employees were only temporarily working until they married)²¹ hope for? In tandem with the emphasis on individual achievement and the possibility of personal gain, Thomas's Beaver also conveyed a sense of the staff as family and community. By soliciting and publishing material from the employees, including news of the company, fiction, jokes, poems and photographs, The Beaver was itself an attempt to build up an esprit de corps amongst a large and

¹⁹ Ibid., November 1920, "New Fur Commissioner Famed as Trader and Organizer," W.E. Conn, 2-4. See also January 1921, 19 to September 1923, inside front cover, "The Men of the Hudson's Bay" series.

²⁰ Ibid., April 1921, "Promotion," 10.

²¹ Ibid., October 1920, "To HBC Girls," 11: "The ambition of every business girl is to find a husband that will tally to the measure of her ideal, provide a home for her and make her life really complete."

geographically dispersed staff. One Winnipeg contributor cleverly described the magazine's function:

Bright, breezy little Beaver.
 Ever works for H.B.C.,
 Advertising our endeavour,
 Vitalizing every member,
 E'en to those across the sea
 Rendering cheer to the "Big Family."²²

Contributing to the company magazine became a tangible way of expressing loyalty to the company. Announcing the end of his editorship in the Winnipeg Staff News Notes in 1923, Thomas acknowledged that perhaps some sort of editorial was called for, "but it is the least part of our ambition to expatiate on the editor himself.... We have been inspired to do our best because it was for the Company." Playing down his presence and voice as editor, Thomas attempted to create a publication that was of the company and its employees.²³

Overall, The Beaver under Clifton Thomas based its appeal to staff cohesion and loyalty on present-day example. Individual accomplishments were held up as attainable goals for the patient and determined, while a sense of identity within the corporate structure was promoted through the reporting of HBC recreational clubs, social events, and general staff news. In form and content, the magazine

²² Ibid., November 1922, "An Acrostic," by Miss Boake, 77.

²³ Ibid., August 1923, 403. See also October 1920, "To Our Readers," 5.

catered and appealed to the interests of those employees involved in the more centralized and urban operations of the company's business, particularly in Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria.

Thomas's involvement with the Hudson's Bay Company was to be short-lived. Despite an initial interest in the idea of a centralized Publicity Advisory Board, which, under Thomas's direction, controlled general press publicity, standardization of general advertising, "atmosphere" advertising and propaganda, employees' welfare (including sports, entertainment and social activities), and The Beaver, subsequent administrative reorganizations rendered this publicity function obsolete.²⁴ The division of the Stores Department into three zones, in July of 1923, effectively brought "matters of advertising and local publicity regarding stores department operations within the jurisdiction of the zone managers...."²⁵ Thomas's American notions of public relations, of a controlled and sustained representation of the company to its public, were not in step with the management priorities of the HBC of the 1920s.²⁶ The concept of a centralized publicity department,

²⁴ HBCA, RG2/3/12, FitzGerald to Burbidge (stores manager), 12 July 1920.

²⁵ Ibid., RG2/3/12, 3 July 1923 and RG2/3/111, MS. by R. Watson, "Modern Progress," 4.

²⁶ Thomas saw The Beaver as part of an overall publicity project. The magazine's Bookman type, used until the August 1923 issue, was chosen "to demonstrate the effectiveness of

although gaining acceptance among American corporations at this time, was not to find permanent support within the HBC until ten years later, with the hiring of Douglas MacKay.²⁷

The benefit of a staff magazine, however, had impressed itself upon HBC management, and The Beaver continued publication after Thomas's departure. The correspondence surrounding the selection of his replacement reveals the perceived role of a house journal within the company, and by implication, the unsuitability of Thomas as its editor. The new editor was to be unaffiliated with publicity or advertising, as the major value of The Beaver was considered to be its usefulness in promoting morale amongst employees. Whereas Thomas was an outsider to the HBC and its traditions, his replacement was actively solicited from within the company.²⁸

Robert Watson, the successful candidate, clearly fit more neatly into the company hierarchy and traditions than did his predecessor. Born in Glasgow in 1882, Watson moved

this type as general advertising...." The Beaver, August 1923, 403.

²⁷ Richard S. Tedlow, Keeping the Corporate Image: Public Relations and Business, 1900-1950 (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press Inc., 1979), 17-19, 25-50; Alan Raucher, Public Relations and Business, 66-74. On Douglas Mackay and his public relations work with the HBC from 1933-1938 see Chapters IV and V.

²⁸ HBCA, RG2/3/12, FitzGerald to Brabant, 4 July 1923. The search did extend beyond the company into the realm of academia. The first head of the University of Manitoba history department, Chester Martin, was contacted for his advice. Ibid., FitzGerald to Martin, 10 July, 1923.

to Canada in 1908, and joined the Hudson's Bay Company in 1917 as an accountant at the Vernon branch, later transferring to the Saskatoon store. As a transplanted Scot, Watson followed a long line of expatriate Scots, Irish and English, whose lives in Canada were firmly rooted in their involvement with the Hudson's Bay Company. Part of his desirability apparently rested with his identification as "one of the Company's own people," as H.T. Lockyer, the General Manager of the B.C. Stores, phrased it. It appears that Lockyer viewed Watson's background and familiarity with the company as a benefit in overcoming what he saw as a lukewarm response to The Beaver that existed in his department, a result of personal antagonism towards Thomas.²⁹

Watson's other main qualification was "his experience in literary work."³⁰ A contributor to the American World's Work and the British Punch as well as The Beaver, Watson had also authored a number of published fictional works, including My Brave and Gallant Gentleman, Girl of O.K. Valley and Stranger Than His Sea, by the time he became editor in October of 1923.³¹ While Thomas's general format

²⁹ HBCA, RG2/3/12, General Manager, B.C. Stores to reporting Chairman, 10 October, 1923; The Beaver Office Research Files: Watson, Robert; The Beaver, December 1920, "H.B.C. Vernon Accountant Winning Fame as an Author," 51.

³⁰ HBCA, RG2/3/12, FitzGerald to Brabant, 10 August 1923.

³¹ The Beaver, December 1920, 51; October 1923, "Our New Editor," 3.

was continued throughout Watson's editorship, the latter was to leave his own distinctive mark on The Beaver. In contrast to Thomas's inspirational consumerism and advertising rhetoric, Watson capitalized on his own skills as a writer, and encouraged the talents of HBC staff, developing the "Journal of Progress" into a more self-consciously literary publication.³²

While maintaining The Beaver's general format and function, Robert Watson more overtly inserted his presence as editor into the magazine. In the December 1923 issue, Watson was named on the masthead as editor, a recognition that Thomas was not allowed (or that he declined to take). He also appeared as a frequent contributor of poetry and prose throughout his ten-year involvement with The Beaver, in addition to his unsigned editorial copy. On several occasions he centred articles around his activities and illustrated them with his photographs.³³

At the same time, he actively encouraged other HBC staff in their literary endeavours. Watson carried on the

³² Compare, for example, Thomas's message on the back cover of the August/ September 1921 Beaver ("Why Are You Waiting?/ ...This reluctant buyer is your friend, your neighbour - yourself./ Let us begin today by buying the things we need.") with Watson's series on "Little Hints on How To Write," December 1923, 89 ("Do not try to draw pictures of objects, for that is simply reporting but try rather, to depict your feelings about these objects - which is art.").

³³ On his trips to Hawaii and Scotland see *ibid.*, June 1930, "HBC in the Hawaiian Islands," 6-8; September 1932, "A Glimpse of Two Cities," 72-73.

system of associate editors, who acted as local collectors of Beaver copy.³⁴ This system acted as a means of controlling the content of information, as associate editors, usually in management positions, checked the articles and news that crossed their desks. Under Watson's direction, it also effectively generated material throughout the various departments of the HBC.³⁵

The switch from monthly to quarterly publication with the December 1924 issue allowed Watson a greater control over the magazine's content. Although each issue was some ten to twenty pages larger, The Beaver's total yearly content was almost halved. This fact, coupled with less frequent publication deadlines, permitted Watson to be more selective in his choice of material, and to edit more carefully the material chosen.

Watson went beyond Thomas's general appeals to employees to send in their work, publicizing "Our Contributors" in a series of profiles that ran from September 1924 until March of 1928. In keeping with Watson's professed desire to represent every branch of the service in some way in every issue, "Our Contributors"

³⁴ Ibid., March 1926, 75 lists the associate editors from the Stores, Wholesale Department, Depot, Fur Trade Districts, Land Department, and Executive Office.

³⁵ Watson was himself instructed to enforce the appropriate flow of information, and to ensure that articles received approval before publication. HBCA, RG2/3/12, Fitzgerald to Brabant, 27 November 1923.

featured, among others, a fur trade district manager; a woman cartoonist, versifier and humorous prose writing member of the Winnipeg Land Department; a chief engineer who chronicled his seafaring experiences in the arctic; and an overseas correspondent with the London office.³⁶ In Watson's conception, The Beaver's goal of "strengthening the bond of unity and good fellowship which exists among those who serve the Hudson's Bay Company" rested in part on the successful recruitment of contributions from the diversity of its readership.³⁷

Yet in addition to "providing entertainment, amusement, instruction and newsy information regarding staff interests at the various local branches....," The Beaver was intended to supply a context in which the reader/employee could locate this information. Underlying the magazine's content, from the amateur poetry to the reporting of staff picnics, was the intention "of acquainting the members of the staff with the Company's glorious history, [and] its present-day vast and varied operations...."³⁸ In focusing on the its "history" and "traditions," Watson built on the image of the

³⁶ The Beaver, September 1924, "No. 1: C.H. French," 459 ("whose illustrated articles on native life and customs, animals, hunting, trapping and places of interest, on which he is an authority, have done much to enhance the instructive value of our magazine"); December 1924, "No. 2: Jimmie [Evelyn Arkless]," 46; September 1928, "No. 9: J. Ledingham," 182; March 1928, "No. 14: S. Hopfenkopf," 182.

³⁷ Ibid., November 1923, 39.

³⁸ Ibid., March 1929, 154.

Hudson's Bay Company as the instrument of Empire in a manner that owed more to the impulses of the celebrations of 1920 than to The Beaver under C.M. Thomas.

In this glorification of the HBC's past, Lower Fort Garry became a central symbol of the physical and moral power of the great company. As Watson wrote: "The old fort... is a 'sermon in stone' of the traditions and spirit of a company whose two and half centuries of life midst savage races have been forceful, peaceful and honourable."³⁹ Interestingly, Lower Fort Garry had been abandoned by the HBC as a practical part of its enterprise some seventy-five years after its construction in 1839. In 1913 the Fort was leased to the Winnipeg Automobile Club (later the Motor Country Club), an arrangement that continued even after the transfer of the buildings and property to the federal government in 1951.⁴⁰ Yet if Lower Fort Garry was no longer of use as a depot and administrative centre for the Hudson's Bay Company, it could be exploited for its symbolic value. As in the "Indian Reception" of the celebrations of 1920, the Fort could serve as a living legacy of a romanticized past.

³⁹ Ibid., June 1925, "The Stone Fort: A Visit to Lower Fort Garry," 128.

⁴⁰ HBCA, RG2/8/1051. The Manitoba provincial government approached the HBC in 1920 with a proposal to transform the Fort into a museum and transfer it to the province, but Governor Kindersley rejected the offer, preferring to hold on to the property.

In December of 1927, in a revival of tradition, a Fur Trade Council was held at this virtually abandoned fort some twenty miles north of the company's Canadian headquarters in Winnipeg. In Robert Watson's Beaver account of the proceedings, the setting was decidedly "historic and picturesque." Watson highlighted the speech of George Allan (long-time member of the company's Canadian Committee) and its lessons to be learned from the company's past. According to The Beaver, Allan stressed the necessity of the just and honest treatment of the company's aboriginal customers

...feeling assured that the high qualities of the fur traders of old in the matter of courage, integrity, strength of character and ability were inherited by the fur traders of today....[They] had held the northern portion of the continent of America for the British Empire, and ...the history of the company all through had been a great adventure as well as a great romance.⁴¹

By situating Lower Fort Garry as a progressive site of company power and influence that transcended its actual lack of function in the HBC's operations, The Beaver served to authenticate Allen's speech to the assembled fur trade managers. Accompanying photographs of the fort's surviving buildings, its surroundings, and the "H.B.C. Fur Trade Council" taken on the grounds of the fort, focused attention on the council meeting as a historic occasion, set in a milieu rich with historical implications.

⁴¹ The Beaver, March 1928, 167.

Watson further developed Lower Fort Garry as the symbol of a benevolent and controlling company in Lower Fort Garry: A History of the Stone Fort, published in Winnipeg by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1928. This work reinforced the conceptualizations formulated in the company's staff magazine, of the fort as a place where "far-sighted fur traders would determine the welfare of a race, the destinies of a nation in embryo, the business of half a continent...."⁴² The daily life of the fort in both past and present became embalmed in a mythical (and mystifying) ever-present aura of British progress:

[the] old 'sound of revelry' is gone, the song of the voyageur, the yap and snarling of the sled-dogs, the guttural of the Indian are no longer to be heard about its walls... the Red river flows on, and from the flagstaff the Union Jack floats buoyantly on the breeze over the peaceful scene, just as it has done for over two and a half centuries in every known part of this vast land.⁴³

Here, the HBC was tied not only to the expansion of empire, but to the very forces of nature. As long as the rivers flow and the winds blow, according to Watson's version, the Empire, and its omnipotent agent, the Hudson's Bay Company, will triumph.

The emphasis on Lower Fort Garry can be considered as part of a more widespread revival of "the old and worthy customs and traditions of the company." This period which

⁴² Watson, Lower Fort Garry, 15.

⁴³ Ibid., 52.

saw the re-establishment of the Fur Trade Council also witnessed the re-instatement of the commissioning of officers, the reintroduction of uniforms (including caps and badges), and the redesigning of the company's posts in the architecture and colour scheme of the eighteenth century.⁴⁴ Some of the credit for this stress on ceremonies and symbols must be given to Charles V. Sale, who as Deputy Governor (1915-1925) and Governor and Managing Director (1915-1931) of the company, displayed a dramatic flair for playing these roles.⁴⁵

Sale's penchant for "making history" was a familiar feature in The Beaver. An article on the launching of the company's S.S. Bayrupert is typical of Sale's style and of the way in which the HBC's journal reported such events. The opening photograph of the Bayrupert sets out the tone of this piece as reportage, as does the detailed description of its size, dimensions, tonnage, materials and technical apparatus. But then the reader learns that this was not merely a ship launching, but an occasion. It was a "repetition of an interesting old-time ceremony" in which the Governor and Committee went aboard to wish the captain

⁴⁴ Ibid., 169; Ray, The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age, 183-84.

⁴⁵ Anne Morton, "The Looking-Glass Vision: The Minute Books of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1914-1931" (Winnipeg: unpublished paper presented to The Rupert's Land Research Centre Colloquium, 1988), 10. Morton insightfully discusses the company's Minute Books as a reflection of Sale's vision of the HBC as a noble and patriotic enterprise.

and crew a safe and prosperous voyage and hand over "The Gravesend Box" containing the papers and dispatches for the company's posts. This exchange is illustrated by a ceremonial photograph, the serious Governor displaying the oak dispatch box ("in use for many generations") while the solemn Captain Smellie, holding the dispatches in his arms, focuses his attention on Sale and the honoured item.

The remaining three-quarters of the article quotes Sale's toast to a successful voyage. As he dramatically began: "It is frequently said that we live in troublous times, but some encouragement may be derived from a comparison with the early years of the reign of Charles II...." Sale's speech (and thus the article) becomes a history lesson - a reiteration of the greatness and founding of the Hudson's Bay Company: "...thus was the British flag carried to the shores of Hudson Bay and thus was the origin of the great Dominion of Canada, the keystone of empire, stretching from sea to sea."⁴⁶ Here, then, the reporting of an event merged with the Governor's historic discourse, tying the present to the past in an (apparently) seamless whole. The illustration of Sale and Smellie was the visual equivalent of this speech, as their presence with the "historic Gravesend box" wedded their present destiny with the glorious deeds of past Governors and ships' captains.

⁴⁶ The Beaver, September 1926, "S.S. Bayrupert," 144-147. Ironically the Bayrupert ran aground and went under on her maiden voyage to Hudson Bay.

In drawing on the company's history to build up an aura of romance and adventure, Watson (and The Beaver) reified not only fur trading posts and sailing vessels, but also the exploits of past Hudson's Bay Company officers and servants as explorers and discoverers. At times, this entailed the retelling or even "rescuing from practical obscurity" the stories of "daring fur traders" and their "exploratory endeavours."⁴⁷ The emphasis on the heroism of fur traders, however, also carried over into contemporary accounts, creating a central role for the modern fur trader in the mythology of the company.

A report on the welcome home dinner in honour of General Inspector Hugh Conn in March of 1929 portrayed him as a modern day adventurer, undergoing "remarkable feats of northern travel... in the course of his everyday work." Ignoring the differences of purpose and conditions between Conn's extensive travels and those of his predecessors, this account assured readers that Conn's accomplishments would go down in history and rank with the journeys of the earlier fur traders and explorers.⁴⁸ Several issues later an article described Chief Factors C.H. French, the retiring Fur Trade Commissioner, and Ralph Parsons, his successor, as

⁴⁷ The Beaver, June 1928, "HBC Explorers: Chief Factor Samuel Black," R. Watson, 10-12; see also June 1929, "Chief Trader Alexander Hunter Murray and Fort Youcan," R. Watson, 211-214.

⁴⁸ Ibid., June 1929, "Welcome to General Inspector Hugh Conn," 216-217.

"Two Distinguished Fur Traders," who "will stand shoulder to shoulder with other great men of the Fur Trade when time reveals the full significance of their work in its true perspective."⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, the article avoided evaluating the nature or details of "their work," given the boardroom decision to replace the "incompetent" French with Parsons.⁵⁰

The ready (and uncritical) identification of past triumphs with present personalities and their endeavours worked towards the continuing glorification of the HBC enterprise in past and present tense. While the caps, badges and long service medals carried the "traditions" of the company into the field, The Beaver disseminated a steady flow of positive corporate images to its employees, attempts to encourage staff loyalty and pride in the company.

In its role as reporter of the company's activities, The Beaver also played an important part in announcing and interpreting these events to HBC employees. Appearing alongside contributions selected from the staff throughout the occupational structure of the service, the speeches of the Governor and Committee members reached an audience far beyond their original utterance. The Beaver also served to validate the policies and pronouncements of management through its presentation of textual and visual emphases.

⁴⁹ Ibid., December 1930, 99-101.

⁵⁰ Ray, The Canadian Fur Trade, 173-174.

At the same time, the emphasis on continuing tradition tended to highlight the role of native peoples in company affairs. Native labourers and customers, along with fur traders and explorers, were the objects of reinterpretation and reconstruction. Turning from the self-glorification of the company's past to this preoccupation with images of the "other" provides insightful commentary on attitudes toward native people as reflected in HBC official policy and among the company's staff.

CHAPTER III
IMAGES OF "OTHERS": THE PORTRAYAL OF NATIVE PEOPLE
IN THE BEAVER, 1920-1933

The Beaver's preoccupation with the theme of the Hudson's Bay Company's role in expanding empire and in the heroic deeds of fur traders in the 1920s and early 1930s was accompanied by another interest. While Robert Watson's "Gentlemen Adventurers" exclusively celebrated the daring men who came "To blaze the trail, with pride of race;/ Give Canada her rightful place...", Beaver contributors were constantly encountering aboriginals along the trail.¹ A focus on the fur trade as a site of inspiration and of historical lessons, coupled with the intention of including the offerings of members of the Fur Trade Department, led to the inclusion of frequent references to the native peoples who figured so prominently in the activities of the fur trade as labourers, interpreters, technological advisors, companions, producers and consumers. Yet despite the variety of native roles and the diversity of cultural groups and individuals encountered, the articles, poems and pictorial representations that appeared in The Beaver tended to convey an overriding interest in native people as types.

¹ The Beaver, November 1923, 71.

The tendency of white observers to view natives "as a separate and single other," as Robert Berkhofer Jr. commented, was continually reproduced in the contributions that appeared in the HBC's magazine, and in the presentation of this material.² A full page in the June 1931 issue displayed five photographs, three portraits of Inuit women (one with a child tucked into the back of her artiggi, or parka) and two of Inuit men.³ The accompanying caption identified the photographers as the "late Chief Factor James C. Cotter, R.H.G. Bonnycastle and Wm. Gibson, Hudson's Bay Company," but did not identify the subjects of these portraits, except as "Types of Canadian Eskimos" (see Figure 2). While these unnamed people were photographed at different times (Cotter's images date to the late nineteenth century; Bonnycastle's and Gibson's were contemporary) and probably widely different geographic locales, the encompassing title imposes a common identity on five unique portraits. Although an entire page devoted to photography was not a predominant feature during Watson's (and Thomas's) involvement with The Beaver, the native as a simultaneously anonymous and ideal cultural representation was a common image.

² The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), xv; see also Berkhofer, "White Conceptions of Indians," History of Indian-White Relations, 522-47.

³ The Beaver, June 1931, 216.

Types of Canadian Eskimos



*Lower pictures show natives wearing labrets (bone ornaments thrust through sides of lower lip) and snow goggles
(Photos by late Chief Factor James L. Colter, R. H. G. Bonycastle and Wm. Gibson, Hudson's Bay Company)*

From its first year of publication, illustrations were reproduced in The Beaver in a way that drew attention to the "otherness" of the native, both "Indian" and "Eskimo." The amateur photographs of Fur Trade Department staff in the field were often used, one of the continuities that characterized The Beaver of the 1920s (and that would carry on into the 1950s). Labrador District Manager (and later Fur Trade Commissioner) Ralph Parsons's head and shoulder portraits were organized as "a galaxy of Baffin Land types," while P.H. Godsell's three pictures were entitled "Types of Western Arctic Eskimos."⁴ Other unattributed images appeared, such as the three full length views of "Blackfoot," "Stonies," and "Sarcee" accompanying an article on "Alberta's Indians." In this instance, individuals, identified as Indians by their distinctive dress and elaborate hair styles in a manner similar to the native participants of the 1920 Red River Pageant, represented the larger tribal group. In turn, the placement of the three

⁴ Ibid., June 1921, 32 (here, however, names were given); May 1924, 297; and also September 1931, "Victoria Land Eskimos," 288. See Melissa Banta and Curtis M. Hindley, From Site to Sight: Anthropology, Photography and the Power of Imagery (Cambridge: Peabody Museum Press, 1986), 102-104, on the individual photograph standing for the "race" of which it is a part.

photographs side by side served to represent the larger entity of "Alberta's Indians".⁵

It seems accurate to group the images of natives or non-whites together as a conceptual category in the minds of Beaver editors Thomas and Watson, and of their contributors and readers. The exoticism of the native (what Margaret B. Blackman refers to as the "genre of curiosities" in the realm of photography) leapt onto and out of the "Journal of Progress."⁶ As well as visual images, written texts communicated a way of seeing the native. Coloured by the conventions of ethnographic discourse, explicated as travel narrative, and appropriated to the HBC version of history-as-progress, white images of natives exercised a steady appeal. Yet just as the framing of these images varied within the magazine's pages, so too was there a variety of attitudes towards the "native."⁷

⁵ Ibid., January 1922, "Alberta's Indians," J. Prest, 5-6; and August 1923, 412, photograph captioned "Maquachoo a Nascopie Indian at Ungava. These natives are today the most primitive people in North America it is said."

⁶ Margaret B. Blackman, "Visual Ethnohistory: Photographs in the Study of Culture History" in Dennis Weidman, ed., Ethnohistory: A Researcher's Guide (Williamsburg, College of William and Mary, 1986), 152.

⁷ Clifford, The Predicament of Culture, especially 21-113, explores the ways in which ethnographers and travellers write about other cultures. For examples of the ethnographic approach in The Beaver see August/September 1921, "The Indians of British Columbia," by an HBC Fur Trade Officer, 50-51; June 1929, "Eskimo Kayaks," E. Renouf, 209; September 1931, "Who Are the Eskimos?" D. Jenness, 267-270. For the travel narrative see December 1925, "Experiences in the Arctic," Chris Harding, 22; September 1929, "With the

P.H. Godsell, in "Our Aboriginal Customers," prefaced his discussion by crediting the company and its policies for the peaceful relationship between these "people of suspicious and varied temperaments" and the HBC. He then went on to review the different "Indian stocks," concluding with his assessment of the "Eskimos" as a good natured people, "who are easily dealt with." Both the "sophisticated Eskimo" (who had contact with the American whalers) and their more "primitive" brothers lived "a fairly happy and contented existence."⁸

This distinction between "Indian" and "Eskimo" in the 1920s was confirmed by a piece written by Chief Factor James L. Cotter some 30 years earlier, "rescued" by his son H.M.S. Cotter (also employed by the HBC), and published in The Beaver in 1929 and 1930. The elder Cotter described the "Eskimos of Eastmain" as very different in character from the Indian: "He [the Eskimo] is so easy to deal with, so readily satisfied and all believes what is said to him, a state of things that an Indian never arrives at."⁹ While

Eskimo of Ungava," Rev. S.M. Stewart, 253-254. For examples of the historical approach see December 1927, cover (Kelsey and Indians view the buffalo, painting by C.W. Jefferys); June 1931, "A Company Indian," Robert Watson, 220-222.

⁸ Ibid., June 1924, 328-330.

⁹ Ibid., December 1929, 301-306, and March 1930, 362-365; quoted from March 1930, 365; see also D. Jenness's assessment of the Eskimo as "for more cheerful and reliable" than the Indian, September 1931, "Who Are the Eskimos?" 267. Morris Zaslow, The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988), 156, differentiates

all aborigines were considered "primitives," inferior to the white observers, the two indigenous "races" were assigned different mental and physical attributes.

Ronald G. Haycock's The Images of the Indian, which assessed popular magazines available to Canadians from 1900 to 1970, characterized the period from 1900 to 1930 as that of the "poor doomed savage," followed by a period of "humanitarian awareness and guilt."¹⁰ Haycock's survey bypassed The Beaver, and his conclusions offer some contrast with the images of Indians that appeared within the Hudson's Bay Company's publication. In the view of "Darwinistic paternalism," the first of three common conceptions that Haycock detailed, the Indian was doomed to assimilation into Anglo-Saxon society, while the sympathetic whites' role was to make this death struggle as painless as possible. The "Indian as Noble Savage" posited a cunning and dignified child of nature, who also tended to be ignorant and indolent. The third image viewed the Indian as corrupted by degenerate whites, although salvation was seen to be possible.¹¹

Haycock's analysis is useful in drawing attention to the way in which these images were formulated and sustained

between the RCMP's attitudes to Inuit and Indian during this period.

¹⁰ WLU Monograph Series, No. 1 (Waterloo: Waterloo Lutheran University, 1971).

¹¹ Ibid., 1-3.

by viewing native Canadians only in comparison to Euro-Canadian values.¹² In The Beaver of the 1920s and early 1930s, however, another kind of "Indian" appeared as the predominant image. The "Indian" might appear as an object of ridicule, his lower status serving as a source of humour in stories and poems.¹³ He was also portrayed as a source of mystery and supernatural power.¹⁴ Yet as either conjurers or fools, "Indians" were described in comparison to white standards, as opposed to being considered within their own cultural frameworks.¹⁵

Rarely, however, did Beaver articles endorse the view of the vanishing Indian, or portray the Indian as debauched by the effects of white contact.¹⁶ As the fur trade was

¹² Ibid., 22. See also R.G. Moyles and Doug Ogram, Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 166-185; R. Berkhofer, The White Man's Indian, 28-30.

¹³ For example The Beaver, June 1930, "Lac Seul Indians," F.L.C., 20-21, and December 1930, "An Indian Prayer," George Third, 11. Other groups appeared as the butt of the jokes scattered as filler throughout The Beaver of this period, and in the short-lived humour column, "Beaver Chips." The most obvious and racist example was the page of "Nigger Humour," March 1926, 74.

¹⁴ Especially in the writings of C.H.M. Gordon; see *ibid.*, March 1925, "Cree Indian Legends," 83-85; September 1925, "The Conjuror's Revenge," 7, and December 1930, "The Fraternity of Medicine Men," 107-108.

¹⁵ Berkhofer, "White Conceptions of Indians," 526-527. He terms this persistent theme in the history of white attitudes toward native peoples as the "deficiency image."

¹⁶ The Beaver, January 1922, "Alberta's Indians," J. Prest, 5 is one such exception.

still a viable component of the Hudson's Bay Company's business (and a salient image of the expansion of Empire) the "Indian" remained an integral part of the reality and myth of the corporate repertoire. Since Indians could not disappear, their contacts with whites, and especially fur traders, were consequently portrayed in mutually beneficial terms.

Robert Watson distilled these various attributes of the "Indian" into his essay on "A Company Indian," perpetuating a term that had achieved a currency of use amongst company historians.¹⁷ He portrayed not only the ideal Indian, but also the ideal HBC-Indian relationship. A "Company Indian" was:

an Indian who had proven himself loyal to the Company and to whom the Company had become a kind of father-mother entity, whose word was law... and who was considered all powerful and almost infallible.

If this ideal type was seen as a figure of the past, perhaps it was more a reflection of changing white expectations than native attitudes. With the diminishing role of the HBC in the lives of Indians due to the advent of greater government involvement in Indian affairs a new paradigm was needed, one that also reflected the increasing consumerization of Canadian society. The updated "Company Indian," then, must be like the members of the Hobbema Reserve who faithfully

¹⁷ Ibid., June 1931, 220-222. See also Schooling's use of the term in The Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1920, 45.

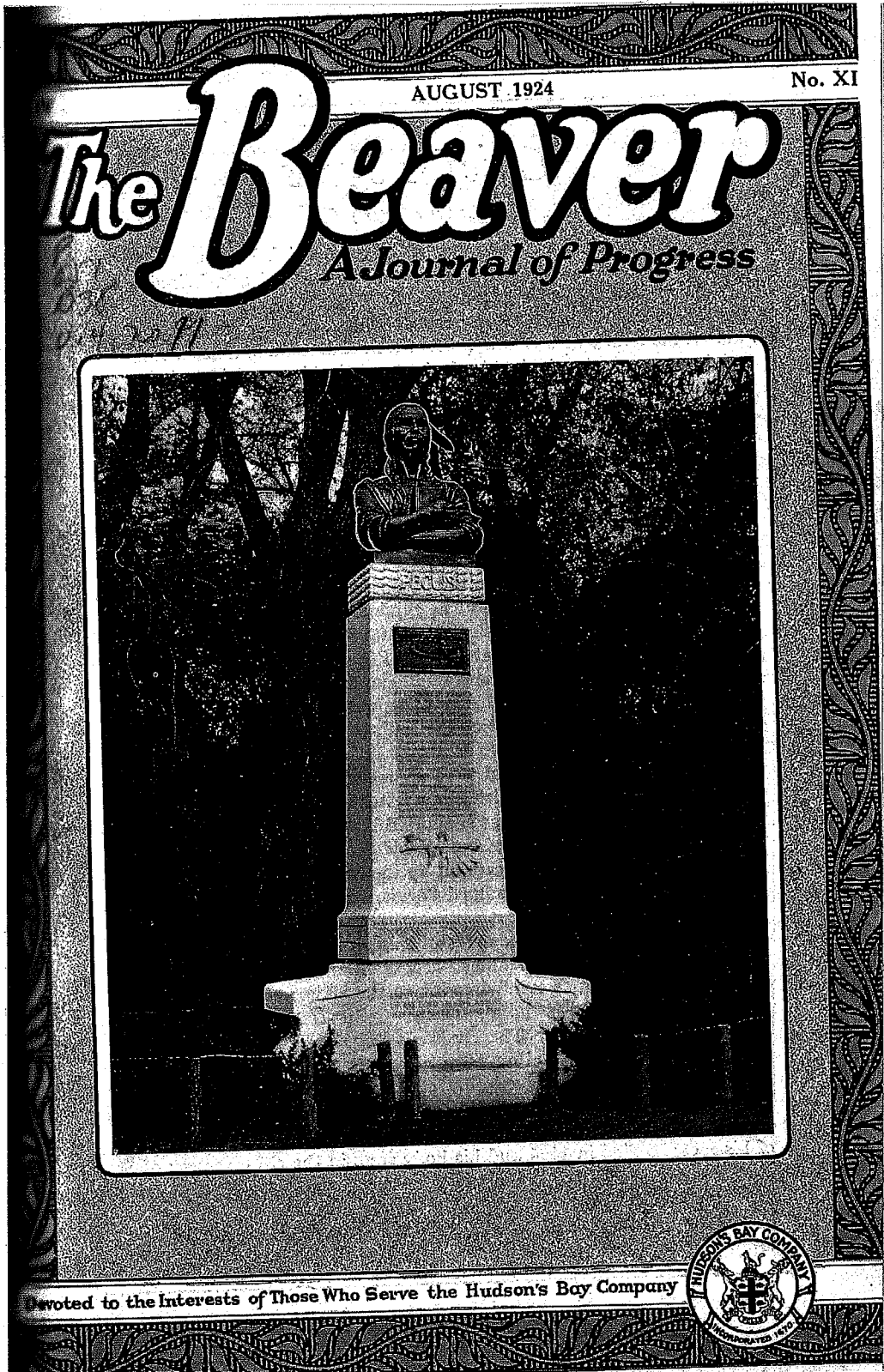
spent money (acquired from "selling" a portion of their reserve to the government) at the HBC store in Edmonton.¹⁸

Watson cited examples of several outstanding "Company Indians," including Moses Norton ("though not a full-blooded Indian"), Mattonabee, who rendered valuable services to Samuel Hearne, William Wasteestecoot, a hunter at York Factory, and finally, Chief Peguis. The paragraph on Peguis was borrowed from an earlier piece published on the occasion of the unveiling of a monument of Peguis at Kildonan Park, Winnipeg in May of 1924. The cover of that issue reproduced a photograph of the statue, a bust of Peguis nobly looking down from his perch, arms folded over a Holy Bible in stoic concentration (see Figure 3). The reader is instructed that Peguis was "noted for his friendship to the whites, particularly to the Selkirk colonists," and that the HBC donated funds for the erection of the monument.¹⁹

The representation of Peguis as the intersection of The Beaver (and HBC) version of the good (or "company") Indian and more widespread popular beliefs was also illustrated in Empire Day, issued by the Manitoba Department of Education

¹⁸ Ibid., June 1925, "Indians and Edmonton," J. Prest, 144. In Watson's version, "today's Company Indians" trade their fur with the HBC, "proud of their privilege of a credit of food, clothing, traps and ammunition, which they pay off in springtime from the results of their winter hunt."

¹⁹ Ibid., August 1924, 394.



Source: The Beaver, August 1924, cover.

in 1931.²⁰ Significantly, this government-produced booklet honoured the monument to Peguis on its cover. Dedicated to "our" Manitoba Indians, "who once held sway over hills and plains," this manual provided an Empire Day programme for schools that would "appeal to our boys and girls for whom the story of the Indian has a romance which never dies."²¹ The centrepiece of this programme was a one-act play for children, "The Work of Peguis." Challenged by some rebellious younger Red Men who refuse to accept the Treaty with the White Men, Peguis insists that White and Red must live together and be good friends, respecting the knowledge and foresight of the Queen.²²

Following this moral allegory which provided children with an opportunity to act out the roles of both good and bad Indians, Robert Watson presented information on "Manitoba's Indians! Lords of the Lakes and Forests! The Noble Red Men! Who were they?... And what of them now?"²³ Through his career as Beaver editor, Watson became an authority on the "Indian," spreading his "knowledge" of

²⁰ Empire Day, May the Twenty-Third, Nineteen Hundred and Thirty-One (Winnipeg: Department of Education, 1931), held in the University of Manitoba Elizabeth Dafoe Library Archives/ Special Collections.

²¹ "Introduction to Teachers," n.p.

²² Ibid., 6-8. In the play's climax Peguis becomes "fierce and warlike," whips his scalping knife out of his belt, and chases the trouble makers away. Here the image of the savageness of the Indian was harnessed to positive aims.

²³ Ibid., "The Indians of Manitoba," 9-31.

their traits, habits and customs beyond the audience of the Hudson's Bay Company staff.

The image of the Indian, then, had a history and popular appeal that found refinement and nuance within The Beaver. A "good Indian" like Peguis, who was commemorated for his acceptance of white values and institutions (in the eyes of white observers), became, in Watson's text, a "Company Indian," lauded for his loyalty to the men and aims of the HBC.²⁴

A similar process occurred in the depiction of Inuit within The Beaver. The elements that constituted the good "Eskimo" became identified with an acceptance of the HBC-native relationship, envisioned in HBC terms. In a promotion for the company's Fur Trade Department, in the September 1930 Beaver, three unattributed and unidentified photographs stood for "Eskimo," considered within their relationship to the Hudson's Bay Company (see Figure 4).²⁵ A picture of an Inuk man's head, looking out at the viewer, occupied the centre of the page. This image merged with that of a man, woman and two children aboard a ship above,

²⁴ Laura L. Peers, "Rich Man, Poor Man, Beggarman, Chief: Saulteaux in the Red River Settlement," in William Cowan, editor, Papers of the Eighteenth Algonquian Conference (Ottawa: Carleton University, 1987), 261-270, offers an alternative interpretation to the "good Indian" version, arguing that Peguis's actions reflected a different motivation, that of securing access to European material goods and military power through alliances with the Red River colony's political and religious leaders.

²⁵ The Beaver, September 1930, 66.

Hudson's Bay Company

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670.



There are about 3000 Eskimos, comfortable, happy and contented, scattered across Canada's Arctic regions.



Practically all of them do their fur trading with the Hudson's Bay Company.



FUR TRADE DEPARTMENT

and of a woman seated with a child on her knee below. The advertisement's text provided a prescription for reading the emotional tone of the subjects photographed:

There are 3000 Eskimos, comfortable, happy and contented, scattered across Canada's Arctic regions. / Practically all of them do their fur trading with the Hudson's Bay Company.

Taken together with this statement, the slight part in the lips of the central figure seems a happy expression; the group portrait appears as a happy family, despite the ambiguity of their situation. The association between the positive state of "Eskimo" life and involvement with the HBC was reiterated by the layout of the page, the photos and their two-sentence moral unified by their placement within a square black border. The classically lettered Hudson's Bay Company logo at the top of the page and the words "FUR TRADE DEPARTMENT" on its bottom further framed the images within the given interpretation.

The "cheerful Eskimos," as a dominant stereotype of northern natives, achieved a wide distribution within The Beaver. While a few observers wrote of them with a measure of revulsion,²⁶ the Beaver reader of the 1920s and early 1930s was left with an overwhelmingly positive image of the

²⁶ The Beaver, November 1921, "Salvage," E. Renouf, 16-21, and May 1924, "A Woman's Arctic Log: No. 3 - Arctic Flora and a Strange People," Gladys O'Kelly, 296-98.

"Eskimo."²⁷ Many of these uplifting articles were written by the modern heroes discussed in Chapter II. By the late 1920s, the fur trade was more concentrated in the far north than in the early part of the decade.²⁸ For The Beaver, this guaranteed a growing corps of first-hand observers of Inuit life.

William Gibson, Inspector for the Western Arctic, wrote of the Netchilingmuit natives of the Boothia peninsula as "a very interesting and intensely human people" in 1929. Two years later, The Beaver published his story, "The Seal Hunters," in which he related not the hunters' activities, but rather life at the camp while the men were absent. Gibson's story draws a romantic comparison between the Eskimo and the land/nature that was part of their appeal to him: "...in this land where the harsh realities of life are unmitigated, the mere joy of living is a keen experience."²⁹

²⁷ Hugh Brody, The People's Land: Whites and the Eastern Arctic (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1975 [rpt, 1983]), 75-102, analyzes the native-white relationship from a structuralist perspective. He discusses the "...curious blend of approval and revulsion - approval because he [the Eskimo] had triumphed over nature (thereby achieving the essentially human), but revulsion because he is still part of nature (thereby remaining less than human)." Interestingly, this chapter is introduced by a quote from The Beaver, as an example of "White Attitudes to the Eskimo."

²⁸ There were some 250 HBC posts in the Arctic and Sub-arctic in the mid-1920s. Zaslow, Northward Expansion, 135.

²⁹ The Beaver, December 1929, "The Victory Relics," 311-312; December 1931, 347-48.

Norman Irwin of the Wager Inlet Post felt moved to record "A Story of Eskimo Courage" published in the same issue. After the death of her husband, a mother, her young son and her baby journey a hundred miles to the post in the depths of winter. Irwin underscores the women's strength and courage in adversity through understatement: "Such is this simple unvarnished story of pluck, endurance and resource, nothing in the telling, nothing spectacular in the performance...." An accompanying photograph, while not illustrating the story, reinforces its themes of the superhuman accomplishments of this northern people. A man or woman (the identity is unclear) stands with several dogs against a white background, the division between the snow and sky indistinct. The title, "Desolation," evokes a sense of human being against the elements, the figure dwarfed by the immensity of the whiteness of the foreground and backgrounds. Irwin's tale, like this photograph and Gibson's "Seal Hunters," was framed as "the determined continuous battle in the north between primitive human and the exactions of the Arctic winter....," the humanity of the Eskimos found in their opposition to the forces of nature.³⁰

An article by trader R.H.G. Bonnycastle in the March 1931 Beaver offers further insight into the attitudes that HBC fur traders had toward the Inuit. In recording his experiences with an Inuit family in "An Igloo Night" he

³⁰ Ibid., December 1931, 351-352.

displayed a frank appreciation of Inuit technology:

"Scarcely anything civilization produces can compete with these three phenomena [snowhouses, seal oil lamps and sleds with mud runners] in their own field." Bonnycastle's (like Gibson's and Irwin's) appreciation of Inuit ways was largely a result of reliance on Inuit hospitality and technology, evident in his description of his Igloo night.³¹

These published personal accounts and evaluations of the "Eskimo" appear to offer an optimistic, if romanticized, view of native life and culture. Not surprisingly, as Beaver articles were channelled through their respective departments, these articles represent not just the personal views of their writers, but reflect the policies of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Beaver's promotion of the Fur Trade Department as a beneficial influence on Inuit life must be considered in the light of increasing corporate and government activity in the Canadian north.

Throughout the 1920s, the HBC found its own expanding activities in the region challenged. The North West Territories Yukon Branch, headed by O.S. Finnie from 1922 to 1931, directed an active policy that contrasted with the lack of earlier government initiatives (and the later inactivity of the 1930s and 1940s).³² The posts and patrols

³¹ Ibid., March 1931, 163-65.

³² Philip Goldring, "Canadian Problems and Foreign Models: O.S. Finnie's Inuit Policy, 1922-1931" (Ottawa: unpublished paper, 1988), 44-47.

of the RCMP (notably Staff Sergeant A.H. Joy's journeys of 1926, 1927 and 1929), the annual Eastern Arctic Patrol undertaken by the CGS Arctic from 1922 to 1925 and succeeded by the SS Beothic from 1926 to 1930, and the creation of game reserves under the North West Game Act in 1926 asserted Ottawa's presence in a region that had been dominated by British and other foreign-based companies since 1820.³³

In addition to an increased government presence, the Hudson's Bay Company was also subject to outright criticisms. In a 1924 letter to Hudson's Bay Company Secretary Edward FitzGerald, Finnie's deputy minister, William Wallace Cory, accused HBC post managers of exploiting the Inuit, and cast doubt on whether the company could reform its trading system to prevent such abuses. The counter-argument of senior British and Canadian company officials claimed that reports of exploitation were untrue or exaggerated and that the HBC was exempt from federal restrictions on trading posts due to certain clauses of the 1670 Royal Charter that had not been surrendered in 1870. Furthermore, they argued, HBC officials knew the Inuit and their needs better than the government.³⁴ In light of this conflict with federal policy makers, the transmission of a

³³ Ibid., 32, 45; Zaslow, Northward Expansion, 188-202.

³⁴ Cited in Goldring, "Inuit Policy," 35-36; HBCA, A.1/167, f. 211, for FitzGerald's reply of 10 April 1925.

positive view of the Inuit as a healthy and happy people took on an added importance.

George Watson, Ungava District Manager, reporting to Fur Trade Commissioner Parsons, contrasted Hudson's Bay Company treatment of the Inuit to the policy of the Danish in Greenland and the Moravian missionaries in Labrador.³⁵ Watson asserted that the aim of HBC policy was to "preserve the Eskimo, and to keep him as long as possible apart from undesirable influences of civilization, free to follow his natural instinct for the hunt, not merely from the selfish motive of immediate profit, but also because we feel the Eskimo is a better man thereby." Some contact, of course, was beneficial; after all, a truly "primitive" man who did not trap furs or buy some manufactured goods was hardly an asset to a business enterprise. Presenting the approved report to the Canadian Committee, Parsons summed up the official view of the HBC-Eskimo relationship: "keep the Eskimos to their natural mode of life."³⁶ In this view the trapping economy was portrayed as "traditional" and "natural," the mode of life best suited to the native.³⁷

³⁵ HBCA, RG2/8/902, George Watson to Fur Trade Commissioner, 8 September 1932.

³⁶ Ibid., Fur Trade Commissioner to General Manager [P.A. Chester], 28 September 1932.

³⁷ Goldring, "Inuit Policy," 20-22, discusses the "Inuk as trapper" as the dominant paradigm in the 1930s, not only among the HBC, but also "tolerated by the churches and approved by Finnie's successors," notably David McKeand, superintendent of the Eastern Arctic. According to George

In both official correspondence and The Beaver, members of the HBC portrayed the Inuit as ideally suited to the demands of the northern fur trade (white fox) economy. The explanation of the opening images of the March 1928 Beaver, a portrait of an Inuk women and her baby photographed by fur trader Gaston Herodier at Port Harrison, Quebec, is instructive about this way of imagining the native. After viewing this cover picture, the reader turns the page to find five small reproductions of photographs of the heads and shoulders of five Inuit men, "Types of Port Harrison Eskimo." Introducing, separately, the men and women and children of Port Harrison through these anonymous "types," the editorial copy provided a telling context:

By kind and just treatment the Eskimo hunters have grown to be good friends of the company as the Indians have been for generations. Every year, on the company's supply ships, medical doctors are carried, also an abundance of medical supplies, for the safe-guarding of the health of the northern natives, a welfare work which is carried on at the company's expense.³⁸

Taken along with this pronouncement on the benevolence of company policies and "Eskimo" loyalty to the company, the subjects of the accompanying photographs were transformed into "good friends of the Company," visual proof of The Beaver's assertions. Rebutting the criticisms and challenges of government administrators, company writers in

Watson's 1932 report, McKeand was in accord with HBC policy (HBCA, RG2/8/902).

³⁸ The Beaver, March 1928, 112.

its quarterly publication dispelled ambiguities with what appeared to be straightforward assertions and illustrations of corporate compassion and native compliance.³⁹ That the story of the woman and child who posed for the fur trader's camera remained untold was of no concern. In the pages of The Beaver, the humanity of natives rested on the representations offered by non-natives. Subject to the interpretative framework of the observers, these visual and verbal texts owed little to the actual concerns or conditions of the observed.

While the trading of furs remained an interest of the HBC throughout the first half of this century, its place in the overall scheme of the corporation had greatly shifted. The fur trade itself was undergoing significant change. As its arena pushed steadily northward, the advent of the airplane and the radio altered transportation and

³⁹ In the September 1931 Beaver (302) a full page "ad" endorsed the London office response as articulated in the book by Development Officer George Binney. His The Eskimo Book of Knowledge (London: Hudson's Bay Company, 1931) is a bilingual manual on morals, health and history: "there are many different rulers, but the greatest ruler of all, who governs with justice White Men, Brown Men and Black Men in very many countries, is KING GEORGE the ruler of the British Empire" (18). In English and syllabics of the Labrador Inuit dialect, available to interested Britons, southern Canadians and Inuit for a fee (8/-, \$2.00, and a few ermine skins respectively), it is difficult to know whether this book was written for Inuit instruction or as publicity of HBC good intentions. In a particularly bizarre advertising manoeuvre, a pamphlet selling the book in Britain quotes, amongst rave reviews, this pithy assessment of The Daily Worker: "Can you beat this for crude imperialist propaganda?" HBCA, A.102/816.

communications systems. Rather than de-romanticizing the image of the fur trader, these developments further entrenched him as the purveyor of civilization in an untamed wilderness (along with his ever more visible counterparts, the representatives of church and state). During Watson's editorship The Beaver began to reflect the newfound possibilities of building up the fur trade and its northern setting as a popular image. After 1933, however, The Beaver, redesigned both in format and purpose, seized the opportunities offered by these communications technologies to exploit HBC involvement in the Canadian north in a vivid and visual way. In the "new" Beaver, directed to a broader audience, the old fascinations with the expanding British empire, heroic male exploits, and the strange and exotic "other" merged with the sophisticated selling techniques and idioms of the world of corporate public relations in a manner that would have made Clifton Thomas envious.

CHAPTER IV

CREATING AN "OFFICIAL HISTORY":

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE 1930S

The Hudson's Bay Company has seldom entered the field of publishing. The old Fur Trade surrounded its operations with a veil of secrecy and was inclined to resist any public interest in its affairs. In our own times widespread interest in the Company's history, and the Company's intimate association with the development of Western Canada, have made it our duty to tell our story.

-Patrick Ashley Cooper, Governor,
Hudson's Bay Company (1934)¹

...in retailing we can quite easily be impatient with the historical and romantic background of our Company. All the same, I think we all agree our history, etc., has an indefinable value and that it is something that must be fostered and kept alive and not allowed to die.

-Philip A. Chester, General Manager,
Hudson's Bay Company (1938)²

The fortunes of the Hudson's Bay Company rose and then fell between the two World Wars. Profits from the financial success of the "French government business," its wartime operations as chief shipping and purchasing agent for the French and other allied governments from 1915 to 1922, were supplemented by the company's land sales in western Canada. Led by the energetic Charles V. Sale, who replaced Robert

¹ Foreword, Hudson's Bay Company: A Brief History, v.

² HBCA, RG2/8/1116, Chester to Managers of Retail Stores, 3 March 1938, on The Beaver's "public relations value."

Kindersley as Governor and Managing Director in 1925 (after a ten-year stint as Deputy Governor), the company undertook an overseas settlement program (Hudson's Bay Overseas Settlement Ltd.), opened offices in Paris and New York, and expanded its retail store operations. The company's building program, which included the stately retail store in Winnipeg (1926), and in London, Beaver House (1925), its warehouse and auction hall, and Hudson's Bay House (1928), the company's head office, was symbolic of Sale's contribution to the HBC vision of itself and its future.

The economic downswing of 1929 hit the company hard, however, and following a scrutiny of a committee of shareholders and outside advisors, Sale resigned on 16 January 1931. He was replaced by Patrick Ashley Cooper, one of the directors of the Bank of the England, who remained as Governor until 1952. In addition to this change of directorship, the Governor and Committee in London, while retaining control of finance and general policy, delegated greater authority over the company's Canadian affairs to the Canadian Committee, and designated a chief executive officer, based in Winnipeg. The Canadian board, originally created as the Canadian Advisory Committee in 1911, had been

renamed the Canadian Committee in 1923, in recognition of its growing responsibilities.³

One of the Canadian directors' new measures was a review of all staff in Canada. When Robert Watson's contract came up for renewal on January 31, 1931, the Committee retained him as editor of The Beaver, but with some reservations. As General Manager of Canadian operations Philip A. Chester noted, "The Committee expressed, with considerable regret, their growing dissatisfaction with what they feared was a deterioration in the standard of The Beaver Magazine." Expressing the view that Watson had ample time to make each issue "attractive and interesting," the Committee informed him that they "feared that your primary duties have possibly been neglected for other literary work, possibly that of your own." It was a clear message that unless there was a marked improvement in The Beaver, Watson's contract would not be renewed the following year.⁴

³ Douglas MacKay, The Honourable Company: A History of the Hudson's Bay Company (McClelland and Stewart, 1949 [revised by Alice MacKay]), 304-320; 348; Anne Morton, "The Old Company in a New Age: The Hudson's Bay Company in the Twentieth Century North" (unpublished paper presented to the Winnipeg Northern Studies Group, 1989) and "The Looking-Glass Vision;" Zaslow, Northward Expansion, 136-39; The Beaver, September 1931, "HBC General Court," 320-323; Arthur Ray, The Canadian Fur Trade, 172-173.

⁴ Chester, initially hired as an assistant accountant in the London office in 1923, was transferred to Canada in 1924. He became Chief Accountant a year later. Appointed General Manager in 1931, Chester held this position until his retirement in 1959. HBCA, Search file, P.A. Chester,

A report on the "Special Work of Robert Watson" during 1929 and 1930 indicated the extent of his duties.⁵ In addition to producing The Beaver,⁶ Watson sorted and shipped costumes for a pageant in New Westminster, British Columbia; assisted in the preparation of a booklet and catalogue for the Fur Trade department; revised a guide for the Winnipeg store's historical exhibit; wrote a number of articles for trade and service journals and newspapers; gave several talks, both to Hudson's Bay Company gatherings and outside groups; assisted with various advertising ventures for the retail stores; and researched material for the HBC calendar. It is difficult to assess how much (or whether) these activities detracted from Watson's primary responsibility as editor of the company's magazine. They clearly indicate, however, that while Watson's position formally remained that of "Beaver Editor" throughout his employment, by 1930 he was engaged in a good deal of other public relations work.⁷ Located in the company's head office in Winnipeg, which was increasingly becoming the centre of all Canadian

cited in Ray, Canadian Fur Trade, 174. HBCA, RG2/38/123, Robert Watson personnel files, P.A. Chester, Memo of Conversation with Robert Watson, 10 February 1931.

⁵ Ibid., Special Work of Robert Watson, August 1st, 1929 to July 31st, 1930.

⁶ A handwritten note on the report questioned the inclusion of Watson's Beaver duties as "special."

⁷ Ibid., Service Record. Watson was also in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company radio broadcasts to the Fur Trade Department in 1932; The Beaver, March 1932, 435.

operations,⁸ the Beaver editor was well situated to be drawn into various projects that represented the Company to the public.

Although Watson's contract was renewed for another year in January of 1932, the Canadian Committee's criticisms continued. Watson succeeded in making a few changes to The Beaver's appearance, introducing a table of contents in the March 1931 issue, and renaming the magazine's departments in that year's June and September issues (the "Staff Supplement" was rearranged into "Beaver Club Notes" and "Fur Trade Supplement" became the "Fur Trade Causerie"). Watson's 1925 pronouncement, however, that "Fur Trade historical features, stories, biographies etc.... [were]...the carrying medium..." remained, leaving content and basic presentation unaltered.⁹

Reviewing The Beaver in June of 1932, the Canadian board members considered it of "little, if any, value to the Retail Stores Department, which absorbed approximately 90% of the circulation." Citing a yearly expenditure of nine thousand dollars and an unsatisfactory editor, the committee

⁸ Ray, The Canadian Fur Trade, notes Fur Trade Commissioner Parson's centralizing tendencies in the 1930s and Monod, "Bay Days," traces a development of centralization in the stores department in the 1920s, followed by decentralization in the 1930s. Both studies, however, point to an increasing control by the Canadian Committee and by senior management based in Winnipeg.

⁹ HBCA, RG2/38/123, enclosure, Brooks to Governor and Committee, 22 December 1925.

suspended publication after the September issue, while recommending discussion of the matter with Governor Cooper.¹⁰ The Governor, however, extended The Beaver's lease on life. Echoing the magazine's original purpose, he recommended that a new Beaver, with a new editor, be tried for another year, in order to address the important problem of "welding together... the present somewhat loose and far-flung organization and creation of a better corporate spirit."¹¹

Cooper's instructions to P.A. Chester, to seek an editor with experience in publicity, suggested that Watson's "literary" background, while sufficient to secure him the position in 1923, was not an adequate qualification in 1933.¹² Consequently, Chester wrote to a Montreal associate, Charles Vining, of Cockfield Brown Ltd. (Advertising, Merchandising and Commercial Research), to solicit "a man to edit our Beaver magazine, to run the general publicity of our Company's activities, and in connection therewith to study and take full advantage of our long historical background, and to advise and make

¹⁰ Ibid., RG2/10/8, Canadian Committee Reviews, Minute 6052, 14 June 1932.

¹¹ Ibid., Minute 6145, 8 August 1932; see also A.102/269, Brooks, 16 November 1932.

¹² Ibid., RG2/38/71, MacKay personnel file, Memorandum for file, 23 December 1932.

suggestions in connection with general advertising, etc."¹³

Chester, although carrying out Cooper's recommendations, was sceptical about this new direction in company policy:

Personally I incline to the point of view that this publicity racket was a creation of the U.S.A. which has had an increasing vogue during the past ten years. Whether it can be sustained and support itself under the conditions that are likely to prevail in the future, is to my mind doubtful, because I venture to think it is one of those frills or luxuries which will have to be dispensed with under hard, grilling conditions...¹⁴

This conservative attitude to business management, with its distrust of the new techniques of public relations, had marked the company's approach throughout the previous decade. While the 1920 celebration of the HBC's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary had exhibited an unprecedented public display, the impulse to systematically cultivate its popular image faded with the pageants, competitions and parades. The termination of Clifton Thomas's short-lived experiment as "Publicity Agent" in 1923 reflected this conservative approach.

Although Chester was convinced that no amount of publicity could counteract the detrimental effects of a "bad Manager," he did concede that a "good Manager might be materially assisted by this Head Office work and

¹³ Ibid., Chester to Vining, 3 October 1932.

¹⁴ Ibid., Memorandum for file. Robert J. Gourley, Canadian Committee member, also questioned the new appointment.

propaganda."¹⁵ Interestingly, Chester used the term "propaganda" as nearly synonymous with publicity and public relations. Unassociated with its later connotations of misrepresented and misleading information, "propaganda" indicated the communication of news and details about the company, both internally and externally. The goal of this controlled communication was to influence and direct opinion, and thus promote action in the interests of the Hudson's Bay Company.¹⁶

The hiring of Douglas MacKay, on Charles Vining's recommendation, was part of an effort by HBC management to undertake a project of company promotion and image-making. Harking back to Clifton Thomas's role from 1920 to 1923, MacKay, the new Beaver editor, was also in charge of publicity.¹⁷ Born in 1900 in Woodstock, Ontario, MacKay had attended Columbia University's School of Journalism, worked for newspapers in Toronto and New York, and joined the

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Terence H. Qualter, "Propaganda in Canadian Society," in Benjamin D. Singer, editor, Communications in Canadian Society (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1982 [revised edition]), 267, states that propaganda as a negative term has its origins in its association with German activities in World War One. From the word's usage in the HBCA documents of the 1920s and 1930s it appears that the word was not pejorative until a later date. I have drawn on Qualter's definition of propaganda, as "...the deliberate manipulation of symbols, with the intention of arousing attitudes which will result in behaviour desired by the propagandist" (270-71).

¹⁷ HBCA, RG2/38/71, D. MacKay Staff Record. Vining to Chester, 19 October 1932.

Parliamentary Staff of the Canadian Press Association in 1924. In 1928 he became the publicity manager of Canada Steamship Lines, and then publicity director of the Seignury Club, Montreal.¹⁸ MacKay's newspaper experience was a common factor among those employed in corporate publicity at this time, reflecting the close relationship between the worlds of public relations and journalism. Although radio was beginning as a mass communication medium in Canada, it was the printed media (with their accompanying visual material) that dominated these overlapping fields.¹⁹

The HBC was required to pay for MacKay's experience. His salary, at eight thousand dollars a year, was over twice that of his predecessor.²⁰ Chester believed, however, that "it is quite likely MacKay will prove to be a good investment."²¹ Was this criterion of financial accountability met? Although, as the Canadian Committee later acknowledged, it was difficult to assess the "real value" of The Beaver, MacKay effected substantial changes to

¹⁸ Ibid., Staff Record; E.95/78, newspaper clipping on MacKay's death.

¹⁹ Raucher, Public Relations, 84, 94, 112, on public relations agents who had newspaper experience. Rutherford, Canadian Media, 79-81, and W.H. Kesterton, A History of Journalism in Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), 210-214, on the introduction of radio in Canada.

²⁰ HBCA, RG2/38/71, Staff Record; RG2/38/123, Service Record. Watson received \$3800 per annum in 1931, which was reduced several hundred dollars in his last year of employment.

²¹ Ibid., RG2/38/71, Memorandum for file.

the magazine which justified its continued existence to the Hudson's Bay Company's directors.²² Before examining the new Beaver's content, it is useful to investigate MacKay's public relations strategy in regard to the company's journal.

P.A. Cooper's commitment to the production of a house magazine was based on his insistence on its usefulness as "a definite link between the many members of the staff who are scattered over the length and breadth of the Dominion."²³ MacKay, however, had more far-reaching objectives. He intended The Beaver to be a major component of his publicity program. As MacKay explained to J. Chadwick Brooks, the London Secretary of the HBC:

It will circulate to senior employees throughout the company; will be sent free to people who have business associations with the company or business interests in the north, to persons actively interested in Canadian historical matters and to official lists, such as members of parliament, senators, etc., etc. In other words, it will become a means of consolidating our friendship with many people and will give persons in important positions in the life of this country correct glimpses into the nature of the Company's operations.²⁴

While it was still to be a source of inspiration and loyalty within the HBC, it was, more importantly, directed to an outside readership. These readers, targeted because of

²² Ibid., RG2/10/8, Canadian Committee Reviews, Minute 5404, 5 April 1956; A.102/272, Allan to the Governor and Committee, 27 October 1938.

²³ Ibid., A.102/269, Brooks, 16 November 1932; see also Memo, 13 December 1932.

²⁴ Ibid., MacKay to Brooks, 1 August 1933.

their positions of economic and political power, were to receive, four times a year, an entertaining and professionally presented information package on the activities and history on the Hudson's Bay Company, from the "correct," that is, company, perspective.

MacKay selected several hundred people "who have affiliations with or interests in the Company," in each of Canada's major cities, and appealed to Brooks to forward a list of appropriate names from England.²⁵ For its part, the London office solicited a number of transatlantic steamship companies to carry The Beaver for the benefit of their passengers, including the White Star Line, Cunard Steamship Company and Furness, Withy and Company. Fifty-five free copies of each issue were distributed from 1934 until the middle of the Second World War.²⁶ When Newfoundland's Job Brothers and Company became a subsidiary of the HBC in March of 1934, Brooks informed Job's managing director that each of his staff would receive a copy of the Beaver. As Brooks stated: "We think it would stimulate increased interest and enthusiasm in the activities of the two concerns."²⁷ By July of 1935, nearly 1500 complimentary issues of The Beaver

²⁵ Ibid. The Canadian list did not surface in a search of The Beaver records in the HBCA; for the London list see *ibid.*, Brooks to MacKay, 14 September 1933.

²⁶ Ibid., A.102/271, Canadian Committee to Governor and Committee, 3 January 1934; A.102/278.

²⁷ Ibid., A.102/271, 22 March 1934.

were being distributed to the senior executives of Canadian companies, senior government officials, club reading rooms, and newspaper and magazine editors.²⁸

In addition to this distribution to well-placed members of the community and representatives of the press, MacKay also sought to foster good-will by distributing The Beaver to the company's customers. Among the ten retail stores in western Canada (with Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Winnipeg constituting the major outlets), over 3500 copies were circulated to charge account customers as of the summer of 1935. Including the 371 paid subscribers, sixty percent of the Beaver's total distribution was outside the company.²⁹

Using the number of copies printed as a guide to The Beaver's circulation, the impact of this appeal to an outside readership can be measured (see Table 1). In September 1926, 4,350 copies of the September Beaver were printed in Winnipeg by Saults and Pollard (The Beaver's printers until 1982). By the end of Robert Watson's tenure as editor, this figure had increased very minimally, to just

²⁸ Ibid., RG2/8/1116, MacKay to Allan, 3 July 1935. According to a 1939 estimate 500 complimentary copies were sent to newspapers, magazines and government libraries. Ibid., Address given by Mrs. MacKay, 16 May 1939.

²⁹ Ibid., Mackay to Allan, 3 July 1935. Monod, "Bay Days," 191 briefly alludes to The Beaver as part of a "general effort to establish stronger links between the community and the HBC," without tying in the stores' image-making strategies with MacKay's company-wide public relations project.

over 5,000 copies. The first issue of the larger sized Beaver (28 cm X 20 cm), September 1933, had a printing of 8,000, an increase of over fifty percent from the previous year. The circulation of the company's journal steadily rose, reaching over 10,000 copies of each quarterly issue before MacKay's death in an airplane accident on 10 January 1938 while on company business.³⁰

Circulation is an important measure of a magazine's success, and a wider readership was an integral component of MacKay's plan. In comparing The Beaver to the nationally circulated consumer magazines, however, it is useful to draw a few distinctions. The consumer magazine, directed to a buying public, was more susceptible to market forces. While The Beaver maintained a steady sponsorship from the HBC, commercial magazines were in a more precarious position, depending on wide circulations to attract magazine advertisers. Magazine publishers were required to not only sell the reader an editorial product, but to sell the advertiser an audience of consumers.³¹ The Beaver, on the

³⁰ Given the frequent editorial requests for back copies of The Beaver in the magazine's pages, one can safely assume that virtually all copies printed were distributed. Circulation, however, is an underestimate of readers, as magazines have multiple readers. Ibid., RG2/47/1; RG2/47/12; RG2/8/1116, MacKay to Store Managers, 27 September 1935.

³¹ Theodore Peterson, Magazines in the Twentieth Century (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), 31.

Table 1
The Beaver Circulation, 1925-1952

| Year | Issue | Paid Subscribers | | | Total Printed |
|------|--------|------------------|-------|--------|---------------------|
| | | Canada | U.S. | Total | |
| 1925 | June | | | | 4,000 ^a |
| 1926 | Sept | | | | 4,350 ^b |
| 1927 | March | | | | 6,075 ^c |
| 1928 | March | | | | 6,250 ^d |
| 1929 | Sept | | | | 5,150 ^e |
| 1930 | Sept | | | | 5,725 ^f |
| 1931 | Sept | | | | 5,650 ^g |
| 1932 | Sept | | | | 5,070 ^h |
| 1933 | Sept | | | | 8,000 ⁱ |
| 1934 | Sept | | | | 8,500 ^j |
| 1935 | [June] | | | 371 | 8,900 ^k |
| 1936 | Dec | | | | 10,450 ^k |
| 1937 | Dec | | | 1,529 | 11,750 ^k |
| 1938 | Dec | | | 2,506 | 10,790 |
| 1939 | Dec | 2,542 | 1,378 | 3,920 | 11,000 |
| 1940 | Dec | 2,262 | 1,465 | 3,727 | 10,600 |
| 1941 | Dec | 2,161 | 1,586 | 3,747 | 12,500 |
| 1942 | Dec | 2,029 | 1,578 | 3,607 | 11,950 |
| 1943 | Dec | 2,575 | 1,901 | 4,476 | 13,170 |
| 1944 | Dec | 3,032 | 1,914 | 4,946 | 14,000 |
| 1945 | March | 3,604 | 2,537 | 6,141 | 14,500 |
| 1946 | Sept | 4,089 | 3,106 | 7,195 | 15,700 |
| 1947 | Sept | 4,532 | 3,536 | 8,068 | 17,380 |
| 1948 | Sept | 4,468 | 3,538 | 8,006 | 17,600 |
| 1949 | Sept | 4,572 | 3,705 | 8,277 | 19,050 |
| 1950 | Sept | 4,671 | 3,928 | 8,599 | 20,660 |
| 1951 | Sept | 5,046 | 4,063 | 9,109 | 21,000 |
| 1952 | Sept | 6,335 | 5,153 | 11,488 | 26,675 |

Source: HBCA, RG2/10/8, except as noted. No information available prior to 1925.

^a RG2/47/2
^b RG2/47/1
^c RG2/47/3
^d RG2/47/4
^e RG2/47/5
^f RG2/47/8

^g RG2/47/10
^h RG2/47/12
ⁱ RG2/47/14
^j RG2/47/16
^k RG2/8/1116

other hand, was mainly in the business of selling the image of the Hudson's Bay Company.

In 1931, two years before The Beaver was to be repackaged for a wider audience, Maclean's Magazine had a national circulation of over 160,000; by 1938, it had risen to 275,000. Chatelaine and The National Home Monthly, directed to women and families, all numbered over a hundred thousand circulation in 1931. Other Canadian magazines survived with smaller distributions, notably Saturday Night (started in 1888 as Toronto Saturday Night) with 30,507 in 1931.³² Although The Beaver was not in the same league as these magazines, it did succeed in attracting a growing, paying audience, achieving a measure of popular appeal. In addition, it is important to assess the role of "influence," independent from absolute numbers printed or read.³³ The complimentary lists of prominent citizens and the British and Canadian press, crucial to MacKay's program, targeted The Beaver to a select and influential audience.

A report prepared by Alice MacKay, who succeeded her late husband as Beaver editor for a year and a half before leaving the company to take up a position with James Richardson and Sons, indicated the status of the magazine's

³² Rutherford, Canadian Media, 46-47; Barbour, Canadian Magazine Industry, 108.

³³ Fraser Sutherland, The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines, 1789-1989 (Markham: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1989), 2, on "influence" in evaluating a magazine's performance.

distribution in the late 1930s (see Table 2). Paid subscribers, charged one dollar a year, numbered over two thousand. Since 1935, a special edition for American liquor agents, with special liquor advertisements, had been produced for distribution by the HBC's Wine and Spirits Department. The Beaver was still distributed free of charge to staff and to the stores. Alice MacKay had no intention, however, of actively promoting the distribution of The Beaver to company staff. In a letter to the retail stores managers she described the magazine as "essentially a public relations publication and is not to be regarded as a house organ, forming part of our personnel programme." While The Beaver continued to be circulated to interested employees, the transformation begun by Douglas MacKay, from an almost exclusively in-house journal to a publicity medium that was also directed to those outside the company, was complete.³⁴

In an effort to minimize The Beaver's apparent costs the various departments (stores, wholesales, fur trade, Canadian Committee, and London) were required to maintain their own complimentary lists, paying a rate of sixty cents per subscription. In addition, there was a sustained effort to substantially reduce the number of complimentary copies given to the retail store customers. While this

³⁴ HBCA, RG2/38/71, A. MacKay Staff Record; RG2/8/1116, The Beaver Distribution - September 1938; D. MacKay to Store Managers, 27 September 1935; A. MacKay to Store Managers, 16 February, 1939.

Table 2

The Beaver Distribution: September, 1938

| | | |
|--|-----------|--------|
| Stores | | |
| Customers | | 1,890 |
| Employees | | 2,024 |
| Managers | | 196 |
| Wholesales | | |
| Staff | Winnipeg | 40 |
| | Vancouver | 40 |
| Customers | | 27 |
| Fur Trade Department | | 838 |
| Job Bros. and Company | | 45 |
| Land Department | | |
| Winnipeg | | 65 |
| Edmonton | | 3 |
| Canadian Committee Office | | |
| Staff | | 30 |
| Complimentary | | 800 |
| London (staff and complimentary) | | 450 |
| Pensioners | | 98 |
| Toronto Mailing List | | 44 |
| Landau and Cormack | | |
| Staff | Toronto | 6 |
| | Montreal | 8 |
| Customers | | 58 |
| <u>The Beaver</u> Office | | 1,060 |
| Paid Subscribers | | 2,139 |
| Buying Offices | | |
| Montreal | | 25 |
| Toronto | | 25 |
| Retail Stores Department | | 9 |
| Wine and Spirits Department (U.S. edition) | | 1,810 |
| Stores Newsstands | | 150 |
| Devonshire Hotel, Vancouver | | 15 |
| Historical Exhibit, Winnipeg | | 15 |
| <u>Total</u> | | 11,910 |

Source: HBCA, RG2/8/1116

constituency was initially cultivated by Douglas MacKay, by 1935 he considered the free distribution to store customers too costly for the return in publicity value.³⁵

These efforts to reduce The Beaver's operating expenses by minimizing free distribution and passing along costs to other departments were not, however, required to justify the magazine's existence. During MacKay's term with the HBC, The Beaver was well-supported in both London and Canada, and MacKay himself made a positive impression on the company's directors. Chester, in particular, had a close business and personal relationship with MacKay. By 1938, George Allen reported to London that despite the magazine's costs of twenty thousand dollars a year, the Canadian Committee never seriously considered discontinuing The Beaver.³⁶

There was, however, a measure of conflict between the London and Winnipeg offices over control of The Beaver's content. Although MacKay printed the first of two articles on Governor Cooper's trip to South America in the June 1933 issue, he declined to publish the second article. J. Chadwick Brooks took exception to MacKay's explanation that

³⁵ Ibid., RG2/8/1116, Address by Mrs. Mackay, 16 May 1939; D. MacKay to Stores Managers, 18 June 1936; A.102/272, Canadian Committee to Governor and Committee, 7 September 1938.

³⁶ See, for example, *ibid.*, RG2/38/71, Chester to Cooper, 11 January 1938, on the loss he felt over MacKay's death. A.102/271, Brooks to I. Napier (London director), 28 February 1935, on "propaganda" value of The Beaver; A.102/272, Allan to Governor and Committee, 27 October 1938.

the publication of the second piece, as a departure from "Our field of the North... the one essential feature which gives character to our magazine...", would be a surrender of this "exclusive" field. Brooks's harshly worded reply noted that it would embarrass the company not to print the article, as copies had been promised to people who had loaned photographic material. More importantly, Brooks continued, "we should have thought that any subject matter with which the Governor had been personally and intimately connected... would have been of interest to staff and other readers." Accordingly, he returned the manuscript and photographs to MacKay, "in the hope that ...[he would] be able to proceed with publication."³⁷

Disturbed by Brook's letter, MacKay approached Chester, who passed the issue along to George Allan, the Canadian Committee Chairman. Allan subsequently took up the matter in a letter to Cooper, defending MacKay's editorial decision:

You will remember that the first half of the article covering your trip in South America was published in the last copy of the old type of Beaver magazine, and before we had determined upon the present policy of confining the magazine to the northlands.... With regard to the second half of the article, I feel sure it is unnecessary to assure you it was not left out of The Beaver without very careful and proper

³⁷ "Down South With the Governor: The Narrative of a South American Trip," Mark Denne, 12-17; HBCA, A.102/271, MacKay to Brooks, 28 March 1934; Brooks to MacKay, 19 April 1934. The lenders of photographic cuts included Antofagasta (Chile) and Bolivar Railway Co. Ltd., London. A.102/269, Cooper to A.W. Bolden, 9 May 1933.

consideration, but having determined upon a policy I know you are completely in agreement with us in believing it should be strictly followed, particularly within the company, as otherwise we might get into difficulties with contributors, etc., and with our public.³⁸

This incident illustrates not only the ongoing tensions between the British and Canadian directors over matters of policy,³⁹ but also the seriousness with which the company regarded The Beaver's new direction in publicity. The issue was not just whether the governor's trip fit into the theme of the magazine's content (as will be seen, MacKay liberally stretched the concept of "the North"), but of to what extent MacKay would be given control over The Beaver's development. MacKay appears to have quickly won the trust of both Chester and Allan, and thus received the support to pursue vigorously his public relations objectives.

Although the London Committee conceded that decisions regarding publication resided with The Beaver editor and his advisors in Canada, they pursued a guarded policy towards certain aspects of the company's public representation, particularly of its past. The HBC's extensive records, which it had saved but long ignored, were stored in packing cases in a London warehouse until 1923. The first efforts to arrange this material into a useable archives were a

³⁸ Ibid., A.102/271, 30 May 1934.

³⁹ Ray, Canadian Fur Trade, and Monod, "Bay Days," extensively discuss the friction between the Canadian and London Committees in regard to the management of the fur trade and the retail stores in this period.

result of Sir William Schooling's requests to study the company's records for his commissioned history, designed to be a comprehensive and authoritative follow-up to his brief history of 1920.⁴⁰ The London board agreed to his request to provide him with a house in which to live and work, and transferred material there. Conditions were established, however, that all documents be "kept strictly private, no one being allowed access thereto other than Sir William Schooling and his assistants, except by formal consent of the Board."⁴¹ Although Schooling became overwhelmed by the mass of material, and his contract was terminated in June 1926 without any published results, the cataloguing of the company's archives had commenced.⁴²

The London board, however, moved cautiously in allowing access to the newly organized archives. Frederick Merk's 1929 introduction to his edited volume of George Simpson's Journal, 1824-25, noted that "I did not have access to the Company's archives themselves, the documents being selected by me from a manuscript catalogue and brought for transcription to an outside office....My transcripts were

⁴⁰ The Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1920.

⁴¹ HBCA, RG2/71/11, R.H.G. Leveson Gower, "The Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company," enclosure in Brooks to Canadian Committee, 2 August 1933 (published in The Beaver, December 1933, 40-42; 64); A.92/167/2; A.1/167, f. 30, f. 144.

⁴² Ibid., A.1/168, f. 117.

censored...."⁴³ Despite the lack of cooperation from the company, as Merk described it, Simpson's journal was published in 1931. In September 1932, Brooks informed the Canadian Committee that "...our records are not, at any rate for the present, available to the general public."⁴⁴ Some accredited researchers, such as Arthur S. Morton, University of Saskatchewan, Charles Elton, University Museum, Oxford, and Marcel Giraud, University of Paris, were given access to the company's archives in the 1930s.⁴⁵ Yet the company discouraged "casual enquiries," and in fact, guidelines drawn up in 1937 and 1938 to regulate users by requiring "the definite subject of the proposed research" and two letters of recommendation remained in force into the 1970s.⁴⁶ In the late 1950s, a policy excluded M.A. students from using the microfilmed material held in Ottawa, in order

⁴³ Fur Trade and Empire: George Simpson's Journal, 1824-25 (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1968, revised edition), lxi-lxii.

⁴⁴ Ibid., RG2/8/1013.

⁴⁵ Ibid., A.113/1, Archives visitors book, October 1933 to December 1950.

⁴⁶ Ibid., RG2/8/1013, Brooks to Canadian Committee, 28 October 1937; Rules made by the Governor and Committee concerning information from the Archives [c. 1938]; Rules and Regulations governing research, 1 January 1951; Rules and Regulations governing admission to research, 17 June 1957; and Jennifer S.H. Brown, personal collection, Winnipeg, Rules and regulations governing admission to research, 1971. The regulations dating from 1951 also cover the microfilms in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

"to prevent dissipation of the Archives in fruitless and rather unimportant research."⁴⁷

Part of the concern over the use of the archives related to a sensitivity about the unauthorized reproduction of any documents or extracts, due, in part, to the company's new publication program. The Hudson's Bay Record Society (HBRS) was initiated in 1938 with Simpson's Athabasca Journal, edited by Cambridge historian E.E. Rich. Although announced with great fanfare in the pages of The Beaver,⁴⁸ the publication of archival material by the London-based HBRS set some new limits on the magazine's activities. As the preparation of The Beaver involved background research, and the editor's duties also involved responding to historical enquiries from the general public, a steady correspondence between the London archives staff and The Beaver office developed, often containing, from the London side, quoted archival material. As the HBRS was getting under way, the Canadian Committee received a list of information which was not to be published, and a directive that "no archival data which may be regarded as of value in connection with our own scheme [of publication] should be

⁴⁷ HBCA, RG2/8/1013, F.B. Walker to R.A. Reynolds, 15 October 1958, on the recommendations of W.L. Morton and W. Kaye Lamb. The policy was rescinded two years later.

⁴⁸ March 1938, 6-13.

issued in future."⁴⁹ As late as 1946, Clifford Wilson, who succeeded Alice MacKay as Beaver editor in September 1939, was applying to the London Committee for permission to publish letters and reports from the company's archives.⁵⁰

Prior to the official launching of the HBRS, there was a renewed interest among both the Canadian and London Committees to produce a readable and abridged history of the HBC for public consumption.⁵¹ Although Robert Watson had prepared a pamphlet relating incidents "from the voyage of the NONSUCH to the Company's operations in the Great War..." in 1929, it was viewed as an inadequate representation of the HBC's past, and "lacked any advertising feature...." The London board considered that this new history would need to be suitable for distribution to British schools "in connection with the teaching of Canadian history," to others interested in the Canadian and American past, and as an "advertising feature," referring to merchandise and services offered by the Canadian retail stores and by the company's London fur trading activities. The nature of this advertising was to be in the form of what Brooks referred to

⁴⁹ HBCA, RG2/8/1013, 28 October 1937. This was amended to allow for the issuing of information provided it "is conveyed in phraseology other than that used in the Archives themselves...." Ibid., 4 November 1938.

⁵⁰ Ibid., Wilson to Governor and Committee, 14 February 1946; see also Wilson to Governor and Committee, 17 November 1943.

⁵¹ Ibid., A.102, Box 104, Brooks to F.C. Livingstone, 16 August 1933.

as "'atmosphere' propaganda." The selling would be indirect, made without reference to any specific product.⁵² In addition to this desired promotion of external public relations, the Canadian Committee wanted to distribute the publication to fur trade personnel, "with a view to inculcating Hudson's Bay Company traditions...."⁵³

After a series of communications between Winnipeg and London, Douglas MacKay undertook the task of revising the final manuscript.⁵⁴ Hudson's Bay Company: A Brief History, published by the company in London in 1934, was, according to MacKay's review in The Beaver, "a closely knit narrative answering the questions most generally asked by those who approach the Company's history seeking facts and guidance....[Its subject is] one of the most stirring stories of commerce and adventure ever known...." Declining to mention his own involvement in A Brief History's creation, MacKay denied the book was published as "propaganda."⁵⁵

While MacKay probably deserves much of the credit for the finished form of this sixty-eight page history, it is difficult to ascertain authorship. Arthur S. Morton,

⁵² Ibid., Brooks, Memorandum, 7 March 1934.

⁵³ Ibid., Notes of Meeting, 31 October 1934. For the distribution of A Brief History see Table 3.

⁵⁴ Ibid.,. This included a meeting in London attended by MacKay.

⁵⁵ June 1935, 55-56.

Table 3
Distribution of A Brief History
 Fall, 1935

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| <u>London Committee</u> | |
| Libraries | 398 |
| Newspapers | 41 |
| Schools | 955 |
| Staff | 300 |
| General Distribution | 73 |
| Shipping Companies | 32 |
| Sales | 35 |
| <u>Canadian Committee</u> | |
| Fur Trade | 1,500 |
| Sold | 145 |
| Store Libraries | 6 |
| For review | 3 |
| Complimentary and libraries | 70 |
| On hand | 226 |
| Total | 3,784 |

Source: HBCA, A.102, Box 104, History of HBC, 1935-37.

professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan, who was researching in the company's archives at the time, was prevailed upon to edit the historical section.⁵⁶ A Brief History also included material from Schooling's History of the Hudson's Bay Company, "A Chapter of Natural History" being condensed and revised into "Chief Fur Bearing Animals," the final section of the 1934 volume.⁵⁷ Although the book lists no author (the authority resides with the Hudson's Bay Company), MacKay and Morton, along with archivist Leveson Gower and secretary Brooks, are acknowledged for their "assistance in the compilation of this brief history of the Company."⁵⁸

While Mackay succeeded in his assigned task of rendering the manuscript into a popular and easy-reading style, one of his main recommendations was curiously absent from the published work.⁵⁹ In order to make A Brief History valuable for use in Canadian schools, Mackay suggested a paragraph on the "contributions of the Company to Canada's

⁵⁶ HBCA, A.102, Box 104, Brooks to Sir Campbell Stuart, 12 April 1934.

⁵⁷ Schooling, History, 46-66; Brief History, 53-67: for the borrowing of sentences see Brief History, 6-7, 15, from Schooling, 6, 21.

⁵⁸ Brief History, x.

⁵⁹ HBCA, A.102, Box 104, Notes of Meeting, 31 October 1934.

progress," incorporating:

- i. The maintenance of peace and harmony in a frontier land and the saving of the country from Indian wars
- ii. the administration of British justice
- iii. wiping out of extravagance and the bringing of economy to the business of fur trading under the monopoly
- iv. The creation of a loyalty and esprit de corps unique to a commercial enterprise
- v. Exploration and surveying of great value to a later civil government
- vi. Commencement of animal conservation.⁶⁰

Although missing from A Brief History, this platform was to form the basis of Mackay's approach to the interpretation of the company past as a positive force in Canada. In his last speech, to a convention of HBC wholesale travellers in Vancouver, posthumously printed in The Beaver, MacKay reiterated this basic argument of the Hudson's Bay Company's presence in Canada. Entreating the assembled staff to take the company's history seriously, and to be prepared to defend it if criticized, MacKay provided some guidance: "You will hear men say: 'What did the Hudson's Bay Company ever do to earn that [seven million acres of Western Canadian] land...?' [T]he answer is that the... men of the Fur Trade lived and starved and worked for two hundred years maintaining law and order and British justice in the wilderness." He then proceeded to elaborate the company's "peaceful" policies towards native people and the unique HBC esprit de corps. For MacKay, a proper understanding of the

⁶⁰ Ibid., Canadian Committee to Governor and Committee, 22 June 1934; Mackay's comments, n.d.

company's history held a practical value, to be impressed upon employee and general public alike. As he concluded his speech, "Never forget that to your customers you are the Hudson's Bay Company."⁶¹

The interplay between the "life" of the company and the lives of its employees was an integral theme of A Brief History. Beginning with the "Foreword" by Governor Cooper, the volume highlighted individuals and their heroic (and aggressive) achievements, and held them out as examples to the employees of the day:

Prominent in the lists of Company's servants are the names of some of the greatest pioneers and explorers in Canadian history....It may be thought that under modern conditions there is no longer scope for great deeds: but the exploits of the Company's servants of to-day in every field of its activity prove that, given the necessary courage and imagination, the road to fresh conquests is still wide open.

Although the governor went on to acknowledge "the continuous background to our story" of "all those whose work, while not spectacular, has contributed steadily and faithfully to the progress of our Company....," the text of A Brief History proceeded to completely submerge this "rank and file."⁶² While Schooling had devoted an entire chapter to "Indians" and another to "Life In the Service," A Brief History chose to almost totally ignore these subjects of HBC history. Instead, it concentrated on the actions of the "lean

⁶¹ The Beaver, March 1938, "They Shall Grow Not Old," 32.

⁶² A Brief History, vi.

leathery men of the fur trade" as they vigorously "thrust" and "penetrated" their way into the Canadian west.⁶³

This foregrounding of the lives and adventures of individual fur traders was, in fact, a hallmark of MacKay's later work, and of his The Honourable Company: A History of the Hudson's Bay Company, in particular. In its foreword, MacKay stated that he chose to tell the story of "men and events" over "capital investment and management." As an example of this organizing principle, the book's structural and thematic centre is two chapters on George Simpson: "In the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, he is the central figure not only in his own time but in the whole long story." As the "perfect combination of the man and the moment," Simpson epitomizes, in MacKay's account, the progressive influence of great men in the development of the HBC, the Empire and Canada.⁶⁴

The controversy surrounding the publication of MacKay's book in 1936 provides an example of, and a reason for, a protectiveness towards the company's documentary past. Despite MacKay's assertion that the book was, in part, a result of "the generous and liberal attitude of the Company

⁶³ Ibid., 13, 14, 15, 18, 47.

⁶⁴ (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1936), xii, 175, 179; Chapters xii and xiii, "George Simpson," 175-97 and "The Little Emperor," 198-218. The Honourable Company was published in Canada in 1938 (Toronto: The Musson Book Company), revised in 1949 by Alice MacKay and in 1966 by Douglas and Alice's son, Shane MacKay, an executive editor at The Winnipeg Free Press.

today toward the interpretation of its own story," there was an element within the company's management opposed to The Honourable Company.⁶⁵ Written in MacKay's spare time with the consent and encouragement of his employers in Winnipeg (and most likely in collaboration with his wife, Alice),⁶⁶ this popular history made extensive use of archival material extracted in London and forwarded to the Canadian Committee for MacKay's publicity work. George Allan considered the book a "personal matter between himself [MacKay] and his Publishers and that the Company could not enter into the picture....," although he also believed that it would indirectly benefit the HBC, given MacKay's "sound sense and discretion."⁶⁷

The London board, on the other hand, when they heard news of the book's upcoming publication, expressed

surprise and disappointment that the Committee should have permitted a history of the Company to be written and published in the United States by a member of the Company's staff without the knowledge of the Board, especially in view of the author's published acknowledgement that he was indebted to the Governor

⁶⁵ Ibid., xi.

⁶⁶ In the forward to the 1949 edition Alice MacKay refers to her writing partnership with her late husband, and in a statement in her personnel file extends this collaboration to The Honourable Company. HBCA, RG2/38/71, History of Alice MacKay.

⁶⁷ Ibid., RG2/8/1243, Allan to Governor and Committee, 4 September 1936.

and Committee for the use of much original matter from the Company's archives in London.⁶⁸

Furthermore, Brooks contacted the potential publishers in England to "unofficially" inform them that the Hudson's Bay Company would not support an English edition.⁶⁹ When The Honourable Company was printed in England by another firm, the London directors again chastised the Canadian Committee for the "embarrassment" of this "unauthorized" publication and for their "failure... adequately to control the action of their officers in this matter."⁷⁰ Given The Honourable Company's laudatory appraisal of the Hudson's Bay Company, the London board's reaction may seem extreme. In fact, with MacKay's death in 1938, The Honourable Company became a symbol of his loyalty to the company.⁷¹ Fur Trade Commissioner Ralph Parsons sent a copy to each post as a source of inspiration. And when the second edition was published in 1949, Governor Cooper ordered a hundred copies.⁷²

⁶⁸ Ibid., Brooks to Allan, 8 October, 1936 (extracts from Minutes of the Board).

⁶⁹ Ibid., A.102, Box 104, Memo, 24 October 1936.

⁷⁰ Brooks telephoned Lovat Dickson Ltd., although it was Cassel and Company that published the book. Ibid., A.102, Box 104, extract from Board meeting, 9 February 1937.

⁷¹ See P.A. Chester's memorial in The Beaver, March 1938, 3; draft in HBCA, RG2/38/71.

⁷² Ibid., RG2/8/1243, "R.P." to all posts, 4 August 1938; C. Wilson to McClelland and Stewart, 13 May 1949. Under Chester's direction, Clifford Wilson solicited information from the HBC's various departments to assist

The London board, then, was not as concerned with the book's content as with its "unauthorized" production. The distress over the publication of MacKay's work, like the restrictions regarding the archives, reflected the desire of the London Committee, as overall makers of company policy, to control the HBC's "official history."⁷³ In the meantime, Douglas MacKay, with the support of the Canadian Committee and managing director Chester, set out to actively interpret and promote that history, both to company members and to a wider public.

Alice MacKay's revised edition, and also provided pictorial matter to the publisher.

⁷³ Ibid., A.102, Box 104, HBC History, n.d. mentions the board's January 1935 decision to publish an official history of the company in connection with the publication of the company's archives.

CHAPTER V

"A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH": PHOTOGRAPHY AND CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF THE CANADIAN ARCTIC

There are almost twenty tourists aboard the Nascopie and each one is a camera enthusiast. The arrival at any post is the signal for everybody to go ashore and as the stay at these northern posts is as short as possible it means that every tourist starts photographing anything and everything as soon as they reach shore. This would be especially true at Arctic Bay and the fact that [the post manager's wife] Mrs. Scott is the most northerly white woman would only add to their interest.

-R.M. Turner, Publicity
Department, Hudson's Bay Company¹

My favourites among the magazines [in the Nascopie's dining saloon] were back numbers of The Beaver, the official publication of the Hudson's Bay Company. Their copiously illustrated pages I scanned eagerly for any pictures or stories, or for that matter any mention at all, of my Baffin Island home-to-be.

-Elsie McCall Gillis, en route
to Arctic Bay²

In the five years that Douglas MacKay directed the publicity of the Hudson's Bay Company, he succeeded in transforming the company's magazine from a nondescript house organ into a profusely illustrated and usually entertaining

¹ HBCA, RG2/8/1100, Turner to W. Price, Photographic Editor, The American Magazine (New York), 12 August 1939.

² Gillis, as told to Eugenie Myles, North Pole Boarding House (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1951), 25. Gillis was the cook for the government weather station at Arctic Bay, accompanying her meteorologist husband, John.

journal, appealing to both company and non-company readers. The subsequent rise in the magazine's circulation was not solely a result of distributing complimentary copies, but was also a reflection of an ability to attract and hold a loyal readership. An appropriate introduction to an examination of MacKay's work, and of his role in transforming The Beaver's form and content, is found in the public appraisal of his career in the magazine which he edited. As Philip Chester wrote in his memorial appreciation to MacKay, published in the March 1938 Beaver:

he made The Beaver "the Magazine of the North" as well as of the Hudson's Bay Company, and gave it a reputation which extended far beyond the limits of our own organization....

But The Beaver was only one part of his work, yet it reflected his amazing capacity for interpreting the tradition and history of the company, a capacity which showed itself more clearly in his book The Honourable Company.... He was steeped in the company and its history, but he related that history always to the present and to its modern activities.³

The Beaver, under MacKay's editorial guidance, and his other publicity work, as Chester acknowledged, constituted an interpretation of the Hudson's Bay Company as both an historical and contemporary entity. This interpretation formed the core of MacKay's program to present a coherent and inspiring image of the HBC to staff and public alike.

Although MacKay's efforts substantially altered The Beaver both graphically and thematically, changes were made within a framework of possibilities that were already

³ The Beaver, March 1938, 3.

present within the journal's pages. As the new editor, MacKay reworked the popular Beaver subjects of the 1920s and early 1930s, of fur traders, natives, exploration, and the history and present activities of the HBC, presenting them, often visually, under a common theme: a "Magazine of the North."⁴

The "North" had formed a background for a portion of the material published in The Beaver before 1933. Although in 1929 The Beaver quoted one reader's enthusiastic response for the magazine's "northern point of view," complimenting its ability to bring "a breath of the North Country to our home without its accompanying low temperature or insect pest...", it was rarely foregrounded as a subject in its own right.⁵

Yet if editor Robert Watson had not seized on the "North" as a central motif, he did recognize something of its attraction. In the 1925 article, "A Summer Trip to the Arctic," he guided the reader on a "picturesque" thirty-

⁴ As stated in The Beaver's content's page, beginning with the September 1933 issue: "Its editorial interests include the whole field of travel, exploration and trade in the Canadian North as well as the current activities and historical background of the Hudson's Bay Company in all its departments throughout Canada."

⁵ The Beaver, March 1929, J.W. Pierce, President of the Association of Dominion Land Surveyors, 159; for examples of northern material see *ibid.*, December 1925, "Experiences in the Arctic," Chris Harding, 22; September 1928, "The North A-Calling," G.W.S., 88; December 1928, "Thomas Simpson, Explorer of the Western Arctic Coast," 107; May 1924, "The Lone Northland," J.S. Mooney, 299; June 1927, "The Strange North," Chris Harding, 15.

five day trip from Edmonton to the Arctic and back: "In commodious and up-to-date steamers we may travel in absolute comfort to the very rim of the world, the home of the Eskimo, to the Land of the Midnight Sun."⁶ Watson's prose picture, and the accompanying inset portrait of a tattooed "Eskimo Belle," beckoned the reader to join in this journey to "an entirely new and different world" (see Figure 5).

The following year, this article was transformed into a more direct appeal, a single-page advertisement selling the trip through the Alberta Arctic Transportation Co. Ltd., which was acquired by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1924 (see Figure 6). A poem, by "R.W.", encapsulated the romantic attraction of northern travel:

Let us forget awhile the city's noise and seethe
 Take us where forest sighs and water races;
 New scenes, strange sights, the Midnight Sun, where we
 may breathe.
 The Freedom of God's Northern open spaces.⁷

In the article and advertisement, as in the actual trip, the people and landscape of the north were offered as "sights," an exotic escape for the world-weary tourist.⁸ With the increasing accessibility of the region due to improved

⁶ Ibid., June 1925, 120.

⁷ Ibid., June 1926, 123; see also March 1926, 91; Zaslow, Northward Expansion, 136.

⁸ For a later expression, see *ibid.*, June 1941, 55, ad for the western arctic trip: "If you're looking for new travel thrills... new scenery... new camera subjects...."

A Summer Trip to the Arctic

TO travel the great Northland rivers and lakes through to the Arctic no longer means arduous journeying, danger, privation, and unlimited time. In commodious and up-to-date steamers we may travel in absolute comfort to the very rim of the world, the home

of the Eskimo, to the Land of the Midnight Sun.



An Eskimo Belle

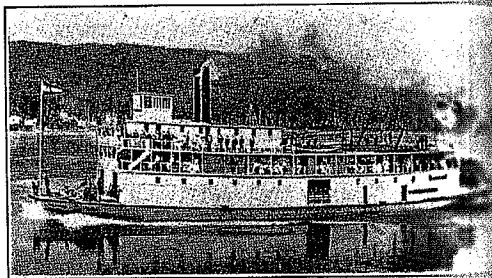
This picturesque trip, along mighty rivers, through vast lakes, gorges and rapids to the Arctic, commences from Edmonton, the capital city of the Province of Alberta. It can be made—Edmonton to the Arctic and back—in thirty-five days.

The train leaves Edmonton every Tuesday morning for Waterways, the Gateway to the North. We board the S.S. Athabasca River, which plies between Waterways and Fort Fitzgerald, a distance of 200 miles. All along this part of the

journey can be seen many of the bountiful gifts nature has bestowed upon this immense and almost virgin country. We steam along the Athabasca river, through beautiful Lake Athabasca and down the Upper Slave river, touching at the famous Hudson's Bay trading posts, Fort McMurray, Fort McKay, and Fort Chipewyan (on Lake Athabasca) and Fort Fitzgerald.

At Fort Fitzgerald, one of the oldest and most important fur trading posts in the North and the starting point of Mackenzie's historic trip of discovery in 1789, we disembark in order to make a portage past a series of fast, unnavigable rapids which extend for sixteen miles and of which a splendid view can be had. The portage is made in comfort by auto-mobile—passengers and baggage—to Fort Smith. Fort Smith is the summer rendezvous for fur traders, miners, surveyors and tourists.

We are now in the Northwest Territories. At Fort Smith we board the S.S. Distributor or S.S. Mackenzie River, which ply on this run



S.S. D. A. Thomas

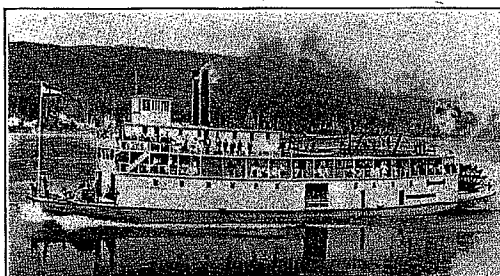
Hudson's Bay Company

123

TO THE ARCTIC AND BACK

A Summer Trip Through Canada's Northwestern Waterways

In
35
Days



In
35
Days

S.S. D. A. Thomas

*Let us forget awhile the city's noise and seethe.
Take us where forest sighs and water races;
New scenes, strange sights, the Midnight Sun, where we may breathe
The freedom of God's Northern open spaces.—R.W.*

MAKE your summer vacation this year one of education and uplift, as well as one of health-giving and pleasure. See Canada's Northland in thirty-five days' comfortable travelling from Edmonton to Aklavik and back, by modern and well-equipped steamboats. Shorter trips if your holiday time is more limited.

S.S. D. A. Thomas—Plies on Peace River between Peace River Crossing and Hudson's Hope; also Peace River Crossing and Vermilion Chutes.

S.S. Athabasca River—Plies between Waterways and Fort Fitzgerald on the Athabasca River, Lake Athabasca and Slave River.

S.S. Distributor—Plies between Fort Smith, N.W.T., and Aklavik, within fifty miles of the Arctic Ocean, on the Slave River, Great Slave Lake and Mackenzie River.

For rates, sailing dates and all other information in connection with the above trips, wire or write:

ALBERTA & ARCTIC TRANSPORTATION CO. LTD.

10054 100th Street, Edmonton, Alberta.

transportation systems, the HBC attempted to take advantage of the growing tourist market.⁹

A component of the "North's" attraction, however, was its relative inaccessibility. As Watson's article concluded: "In our trip to the Arctic we have passed through a country which few indeed have had the privilege of seeing." If a summer cruise to the arctic was restricted to those who could afford to pay, The Beaver was to extend this "privilege of seeing" through its representation of the north in words and pictures. Although this representation was produced by a variety of voices and seen through many different eyes (and camera lenses) they tended to conform to a common perspective. Based in southern realities and practice, The Beaver's discourse on the "North" privileged the company's position and policies, reproducing and reinforcing the Hudson's Bay Company's power and authority.¹⁰

⁹ This excursion was later supplemented by the eastern arctic cruise offered by the HBC aboard the Nascopie beginning in 1933.

¹⁰ Michael J. Shapiro, The Politics of Representation, xii, differentiates between "pious" and "impious" modes of representation, as either reinforcing or challenging the prevailing modes of power and authority. Douglas A. West, "The Imagined Reality of the Canadian North," in W.P. Adams and P.G. Johnson, editors, Student Research in Canada's North/Les Recherches des étudiants dans le nord Canadian (Ottawa: Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 1988), 590-96, discusses the "North" as an "other" to southern culture.

The changing emphasis on the modes of representation employed in the Hudson's Bay Company's journal reflected its changing functions. As a in-house publication, The Beaver, under Thomas's and Watson's editorships, consisted of written text, haphazardly interspersed with pictorial matter. Once Douglas MacKay began to solicit an outside readership, however, he considerably revised not only the material printed, but the manner in which it was presented.

In the 1920s and early 1930s, while it was still a journal devoted solely to staff interests, the use of visual material often reinforced the magazine's objective of furthering staff unity. The two pages on "Bonnie Babies," of the offspring of HBC employees, conveyed the results of a baby photograph competition. But as well as announcing the winners, the pictures of twenty smiling infants displayed together created an effect of one big happy family. The commentary preceding the pictorial spread assured the proud parents (and all staff) that there were no losers in this group: "There is no sign of race suicide here...weaklings are notably absent amongst Hudson's Bay Company children...."¹¹ Over ten years later, editor Robert Watson was captioning photographs of employees as "Our Family Album."¹²

¹¹ The Beaver, February 1921, 17-19.

¹² Ibid., December 1932, 150.

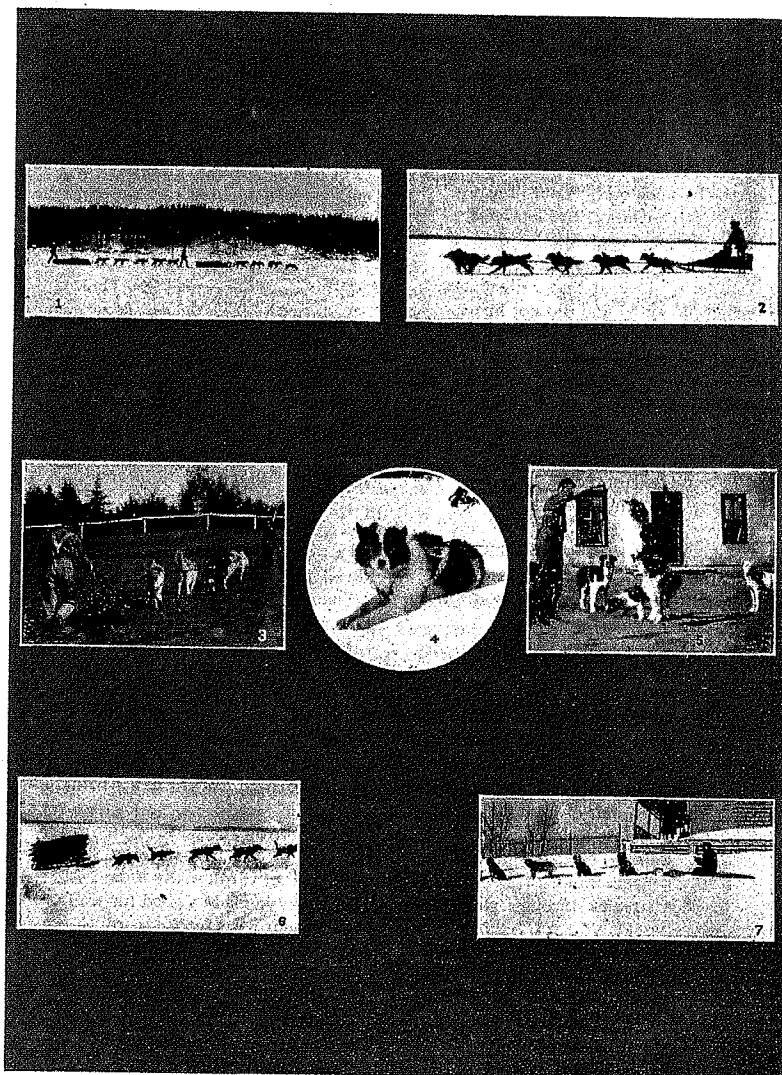
Inside The Beaver's pages in the 1920s, the small size and poor quality of reproduction of the illustrations diminished much of their impact. "Dogs of the North," for example, consisted of seven small photographs arranged on the page, opposite an article of the same title (see Figure 7). In several of the pictures portraying dog teams against washed out vistas of snow and sky, details, both of the subject and background, were totally obscured. The positioning of photographs and captions, which required the viewer to match the brief descriptions at the bottom of the page with the correspondingly numbered picture, did not facilitate a ready appreciation of image and text as a single-line caption underneath each photograph would have done. Thus the layout, combined with the technical constraints of the magazine's production, devalued the interest of this page of potentially intriguing images.¹³

Such examples of whole pages devoted to visual material were, however, rare, photographs usually accompanying articles as illustrations, or appearing on their own as "filler."¹⁴ Many of these were photographs of aboriginal people, an indication of the interest in the native as the

¹³ Ibid., June 1925, 134-135. See also September 1924, "Guns, Girls and Geography," 442 for a similar layout.

¹⁴ For example, the photograph of an Inuk and walrus in the June 1930 Beaver, 4, appeared on a page containing an article about the new HBC store in Calgary, and opposite photos and text on the "certified seed" used by farmer clients from the HBC's overseas settlement program.

Dogs of the North



1, Dog teams near Churchill
 3, Ploughing with dogs
 5, Feeding dogs at Grassy Narrows

2, Speeding home to Trout Lake
 4, Leader of Rupert's House team
 6, Dogs hauling wood at Churchill

7, Mail team

Ju
 [Decorative initial]
 par
 dog
 for
 wo
 tige

 the
 dog
 sno
 ont
 dog
 sing
 his l
 and
 an t
 sled,
 The
 leath
 recog
 near
 to th
 load

 T
 How
 the c
 dogs
 of a t
 and h
 cooke
 driver
 lation
 frozen
 added
 drink.
 Lil
 and tl
 They
 wishes
 dogs o
 in the

JUNE, 1931

The Beaver

231

"What was desired was a tobacco that would take the place, and prove in every way the equal, of the splendid tobaccos which could at times be obtained from England and Scotland, but which they had so often to do without, owing to the uncertainty of freight and the long intervals between arrivals at the lonely outposts of the North.

"Many samples of varying blends and mixtures were tried, and finally one was chosen by those seasoned smokers as being in every way equal to, if not the superior of, the best imported varieties.

"Those Hudson's Bay officers included pioneers of vast experience of life in all its phases—wilderness, country and city—and qualified, if ever any men were, to sit in judgment and to make a sure choice of a perfect tobacco best suited to meet men's needs as well as desires.

"Being officers of a British company which operated over tremendous areas of Canadian territory, and all of them Empire builders, they adopted the word 'Imperial' for their discovery, and 'Imperial Mixture' is the name by which this tobacco became known and is now famous."

"Imperial Mixture" today is made in the same factory as that which has produced the blend for many years past, and the chief thereof is the same man who created the mixture first adopted by the Company's officers in 1892. Its preparation is a matter of just as much care and skilful manufacture now, as it was then. Naturally, the formulae are unique, though the various types of leaf utilized are public knowledge. The same expert knowledge of the highest grades of tobacco still guides the workers in the selection of the leaf and in the various processes by which the final result is obtained.

Those men of the Hudson's Bay Company who met together in 1892 to choose the tobacco they would smoke may not have had all the modern scientific inventions to assist them in their task, but their palates told them when they had found the best, and only at a later day was science able to prove how superb was their choice.



A Pair of Happy Huskies

exotic "other," as discussed in Chapter III. The accompanying headings sometimes provided the name of the image-maker and details of the people, place and date photographed, and sometimes offered curt statements of interpretation.

Two oval-shaped head and shoulder portraits, of an Inuk man and a panting dog, were placed side by side, connected by their placement in a lined backdrop, and entitled "A Pair of Happy Huskies" (see Figure 8).¹⁵ This ethnocentric equation of "primitive man" with domesticated animal, playing on the colloquialism for Inuit and the stereotypical view of them as inherently cheerful people, points to the manipulative possibilities of combining word and picture. Photographs, in combination with their written descriptions, can serve to debase the humanity of the people portrayed, as in this example, or reinforce stereotypical attitudes about race, behaviour and appearance by offering up individuals as cultural "types." The interaction of image and accompanying interpretation can express a particular meaning, removed from the intention of the subject (and perhaps, the photographer): an open-mouthed dog, captured by the camera's eye, at an unknown moment, is elevated to a state of "happiness," a plane of emotion usually reserved for human

¹⁵ Ibid., June 1931, 231. Curiously, the unnamed man looks far from "happy," at least in terms of commonly accepted Euro-American expectations of facial gestures. As for the dog's expression....

consciousness. This simultaneous dehumanizing of the human subject and anthropomorphizing of the animal subject suggests the complex interplay of meaning that accompanies the juxtaposition of one image with another, and of images with a written text.

In The Beaver of the 1920s and early 1930s, however, this power of the visual image to impart meaning and interpretation remained, for the most part, latent. Although "A Pair of Happy Huskies" and similar constructions can be read for their underlying significance, it must also be recognized that Thomas's and Watson's approach was, in this regard, rather haphazard and ill-defined. Douglas MacKay, on the other hand, fully exploited the possibilities offered by the visual image. With the larger page size and higher quality paper, the half-tone reproductions of photographs in The Beaver were able to more adequately transmit "accurate messages" about the things they pictured.¹⁶ The clarity of the images, coupled with MacKay's graphic presentation of pictorial and written material, completely transformed the look and status of the magazine. In its new size and radically altered appearance,

¹⁶ Estelle Jussim, Visual Communication and the Graphic Arts: Photographic Technologies in the Nineteenth Century (New York and London: R.R. Bowker Company, 1974), 21, breaks the message up into four areas 1) texture gradients; 2) chiaroscuro (variations in light and shade); 3) undulations of both surface and contour; and 4) colour (which, in black and white photographs, is indicated by variation of tone).

The Beaver departed from its origins as a cheaply produced in-house publication. Its new heavily illustrated and slickly produced format announced The Beaver's definition of itself as a magazine for consumption beyond the confines of the company's staff. Like the hiring of Douglas MacKay and the willingness to increase The Beaver's budget, the magazine's changed appearance signalled the Hudson's Bay Company's intention to treat its public image seriously.¹⁷

MacKay recognized the value of the photograph, in particular, as a conveyor of salient images of the company's presence. As he stated in his letter to Brooks regarding his plans for the enlarged Beaver: "I am particularly anxious to use photographs wherever possible...."¹⁸ At the same time as he was restructuring the company magazine with an emphasis on visual images, MacKay's other publicity work demonstrated a similar preoccupation. His "Report on Trademarks and Labels," prepared in the summer of 1933, relied extensively on magazine photographs (most likely from advertising trade journals) to demonstrate approaches to

¹⁷ Total costs of printing, engraving and photo work for the 5,650 copies of the September 1931 issue were \$1,195.17. The September 1934 issue, with the new format and size, cost \$2425.65 for 8,500 copies. To this latter figure should be added MacKay's greater salary (although he had other responsibilities than Beaver editor) and the new policy for paying for contributions (Clifford Wilson, for example, received \$104.85 for two articles) and commissioning photographers. HBCA, RG2/47/12 and 16, General Ledgers, The Beaver.

¹⁸ HBCA, A.102/269, 1 August 1933.

labelling and packaging.¹⁹ The section on HBC merchandise, a critical review of the lack of continuity in the design of the company's products, was profusely illustrated with photographs of the company's in-house brands. MacKay's aesthetic sensibilities were attuned to the demands of mass selling and advertising, as seen in his approval of "the simple clarity of the Imperial Mixture tin."²⁰ As well, the very presentation of the report underscored his belief in the utility of the photograph as a singularly effective means of communication.

In the 1930s, the mass media were becoming increasingly sophisticated in the use of the visual image. Warren I. Susman, in his analysis of "The Culture of the Thirties" in the United States, noted "the stunning techniques and effects developed" in the realm of radio, moving pictures and the photograph.²¹ Another observer of this era of American culture placed the emphasis on the media of sight and sound within the context of an interest in the "documentary" mode of expression, a fascination with the human and social "facts" of American experiences. The camera, in particular, was the crucial reporting tool of the

¹⁹ Ibid., RG2/7/707, Report on Trademarks and Labels, 16 June 1933.

²⁰ Ibid.; The Beaver office received subscriptions to the advertising trade journals McGraw-Hill Trade Magazine, Consumers Research Inc., and Printers Ink beginning in 1933; Ibid., RG2/47/14.

²¹ In Culture as History, 160-1.

1930s, the photograph imparting a quality of authenticity, of direct and immediate experience, to its subjects.²²

In the world of journalism, photo-magazines, using related photographs in sequence to tell a story, were well established in Europe by the end of the 1920s, with Germany at the forefront of this movement.²³ An important component of the success of mass-media illustrated magazines was the improvement of camera technology, the smaller 35mm Leica and Ermanox cameras replacing the cumbersome and intricate plate cameras previously used by press photographers. Photo-agencies in the 1920s began to produce multi-image "photo-reportages" in addition to distributing single pictures.²⁴ In North America, the business-oriented Fortune, published by Time owner Henry Luce, ran photo-essays in the mid-1930s. But it was the success of Luce's weekly, Life, launched in 1937 and selling a million copies within its first weeks, which proved the enormous popularity that illustrated magazines could have.²⁵

²² William Stott, Documentary Expression and Thirties America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 76-77.

²³ Ibid., 129; Tim N. Gidal, Modern Photojournalism: Origin and Evolution, 1910-1933 (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co. Ltd., 1973), 14.

²⁴ Ibid., 13, 18-19.

²⁵ Stott, Documentary Expression, 129; Peterson, Magazines in the Twentieth Century, 311-320 on Life and other picture magazines.

MacKay's emphasis on the photographic image in The Beaver, then, reflected a widespread and increasing preoccupation among media producers and the consuming public for different ways of communicating information. While the promotion of the Hudson's Bay Company occasionally exploited radio and motion pictures, the still photograph proved to be the most viable and accessible medium.²⁶ Radio and film required extensive distribution systems, while photographs could be printed in the company's magazine and in other company publications.²⁷

MacKay's experimentation with layout and graphic design were evident in three photo-essays on retail operations. "This Exciting Business of Selling in the Big Bazaars" used brief captions to tie together a series of photographs into "a day in the life" theme, portraying activities in a modern department store from opening until closing, from selling to customers ("My Husband Prefers...") to mopping up at the end of the day ("A Toiler in the Night"). In "Merchant to Millions," a photograph of a woman having her eyes tested at one of the store's optical departments was meant to suggest,

²⁶ MacKay delivered a series of radio broadcasts on the CBC (reprinted in The Beaver, June 1938, 7-9, September 1938, 26-31 and December 1938, 26-28); a film was made of Governor Cooper's 1934 trip on the Nascopie; see below, 155.

²⁷ Reproductions could also be distributed to individuals and groups outside the Hudson's Bay Company. See HBCA, A.102, Box 149a, Photos, Blocks, 1937-1938 for a sense of those (publishers, writers, lecturers) requesting photographs from the London office.

according to the accompanying text, "the orderly blending of minds, hands and machines into performances of speed, accuracy and precision," while the key words of this statement were printed on the top and bottom borders of the page. The following photo-montage of spinning presses, a telephone switchboard, a hand writing, and a man at a control panel projected a visual statement of MacKay's thesis. In "Swift and Candid," the contributions solicited from store employees were woven into a "picture story," the "reporting camera" recreating the "tempo of department store life and work."²⁸ Aware that these pieces on the retail side of the company's business were more in the nature of institutional advertising than might befit a "Magazine of the North," MacKay clarified his expansive use of the "northern" concept:

We are a northern people, living on the north half of the North American continent.... By way of emphasizing that being a Northern people does not mean an Arctic people, we include in this issue some pages of pictures illustrating life in our stores....²⁹

Although The Beaver continued to cover the varied aspects of the company's affairs, there was a tendency to place even these efforts within the framework of the "North."

The activities and personalities of the Fur Trade Department, however, provided a more readily identifiable

²⁸ The Beaver, December 1933, 33-36; March 1935, 15-18; December 1937, 5, 27-45.

²⁹ Ibid., December 1933, "The HBC Packet," 6; see also December 1937, 5, for a similar rationalization.

connection between the Hudson's Bay Company and the "North." Thus The Beaver cultivated an affinity with the members and image of the fur trade. No Canadian staff news was published in the magazine except for that of the fur trade. And MacKay explained the significance of referring to each volume as an "outfit," a practice dating back to 1926. The fur trade term for a trading year was used because of The Beaver's "close association with... the senior branch of the service...."³⁰

The June 1937 Beaver was, in fact, an "all-fur-trade number." In a brief foreword, Fur Trade Commissioner Ralph Parsons took the opportunity to express his view that

Rightly or wrongly, we are inclined to look on The Beaver as predominately a Fur Trade publication, but sometimes recently I have felt our men were losing their rightful place as the principal contributors. It is very gratifying for me to see the Fur Trade men once more to the fore and all I want all Fur Traders to remember that we want more articles for future issues.³¹

This issue included R.H.G. Bonnycastle's account of the repair of the HBC schooner Fort James at Tuktuk in the western arctic; J.S.C. Watt's reminiscences of his life as a young clerk for the company in Labrador; R.H. Chessire's report on the newly established fur trade training school in Winnipeg; William "Paddy" Gibson's comprehensive history of the last Franklin expedition; and J.W. Anderson's

³⁰ Ibid., September 1933, 7.

³¹ Ibid., June 1937, 3.

description of the HBC's beaver conservation projects in the James Bay area.³²

In their varied styles and subjects, the articles of these fur traders-cum-writers articulated a positive and progressive vision of the HBC in the north and of their own association with the company. Chessire wrote of the fur trade as poised on "a new era" of improved communications and transportation. Anderson's article, although admitting the risk involved in setting up beaver conservation programs, concluded: "We may or may not succeed, but nevertheless, as many times in the past, the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay are again pioneering in the North."³³ In these articles, as in Anderson's use of the pronoun "we," associating himself with the "Company of Adventurers," fur traders were featured as embodying the traditions of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Fur traders were also expert sources of knowledge on the company and the north. The editor's introduction to "the major feature of this Fur Trade Number," Gibson's "Sir John Franklin's Last Voyage," proclaimed that "there is no one today better equipped to write on the Franklin tragedy than Mr. Gibson." He had studied the subject in depth,

³² Ibid., "Salvage by the Midnight Sun," 12-16; "Labrador Year," 20-29; "Apprentice Training," 33-35; "Sir John Franklin's Last Voyage," 44-75; and "Beaver Sanctuary," 6-11.

³³ Ibid., 33; 11.

testified to by the bibliographical references supplied (itself a rare but not unknown feature in The Beaver; Douglas MacKay and Alice Mackay occasionally used footnotes in articles on historical topics, Clifford Wilson did not). But, more importantly, Gibson "lived twelve years in the Arctic and travelled over those reaches of Arctic coastline along which the Franklin men perished."³⁴ Gibson's words, like the photographic document, carried the authority of the eye-witness report. Accordingly, his exhaustive 32 page account (the longest article to appear in The Beaver) ended on a dramatic note of unqualified certainty. Although the men of the expedition "embarked upon an unknown journey in a strange unreal land; they died summarily, pathetically; but nobly in the cause of science and discovery, and for the honour of their country's name.... What more is there to seek to tell?" Gibson's rhetorical question put an end to questioning; there is no Franklin "mystery." Gibson's definitive history epitomized the authority attributed to the men of the fur trade in the company's quarterly publication.³⁵

Photographs of the fur trade and by fur traders graced the pages of this special issue. As a pictorial magazine, The Beaver capitalized on the interest in photography by the company's staff, which provided a steady and inexpensive

³⁴ Ibid., 44.

³⁵ Ibid., 75.

source of material. This intention was publicized in the June 1933 Beaver, with a call for "clear, sharp, action photographs of life and activities in the Company's service."³⁶ With the intention of improving the quality of submissions, MacKay printed an article on the technical and aesthetic aspects of camera work, "with the Hope of Securing More and Better Photographs from the North" and continued to appeal for "good pictures":

pictures of men at work, hauling ropes, portaging, gardening, trading, trapping or repairing the roof; pictures of boats in action; pictures of distinguished visitors (with the names from left to right); pictures of intelligent and interesting natives [with no names sought]; pictures of celebrated pilots; action pictures of dog teams....³⁷

But a magazine based on the contributions of amateurs could not attain the standard and quality that MacKay and later editors wished to achieve. In the June 1937 fur trade issue of The Beaver, which highlighted staff writings, the cover picture and three photo-features were the work of professional photographers.³⁸

³⁶ Ibid., June 1933, 81.

³⁷ Ibid., December 1934, "Comments on Common Errors in Photography," C.P. Dettloff (of the Winnipeg Tribune), 40-41; see also March 1942, "Photographing the Northland," Ormal Sprungman (of Sports Afield), 34-38; September 1934, "The HBC Packet," 5-6.

³⁸ Ibid., June 1937, cover, "Three Pictures of Eskimo Life," 18-19, and "Fifty Years of Steam on the Mackenzie River," 42-43, all by Richard Hourde; "Three Company Posts," Hourde and Harvey Bassett, 40-41.

Max Sauer, Jr., was the first professional especially commissioned to take pictures for the company's magazine.³⁹ From his vantage point as passenger on the company's eastern arctic supply ship, the Nascopie, Sauer recorded the scenes and people encountered en route. Four of these photographs, reproduced one image to a page, appeared in the 1934 Beaver (see Figures 9 to 13).⁴⁰ In "Four Arctic Photographs," editor MacKay first presented, on a single page, the four numbered captions which described the images to follow. Proceeding along, the viewer is confronted by four imposing photographs that bleed off the page, unimpeded by any distracting text: a waist-up profile of a man in a fur parka; a shot of several boats tied up beside a large ship; three men assisting as a pulley lowers a load of goods; and, finally, two men and a boy seated, smiling at the camera. Although these pictures can stand on their own, and be interpreted as single images, they are more fruitfully understood in terms of the implied narrative structure of their placement.⁴¹ They are presented as a group of photographs "authored" by a single maker, given an order

³⁹ HBCA, RG2/8/1158, Clifford Wilson to P. Inglis, (editor, Canadian Photography), 27 August 1954.

⁴⁰ "Four Arctic Photographs," by Max Sauer, Jr., 15-19.

⁴¹ See Trachtenberg, Reading American Photographs, xiv-xv, on reading groups of photographs as "an ensemble of interactive images" which construct and express meaning; and his readings of Civil War albums (93-111) and Walker Evans's American Photographs (250-285).

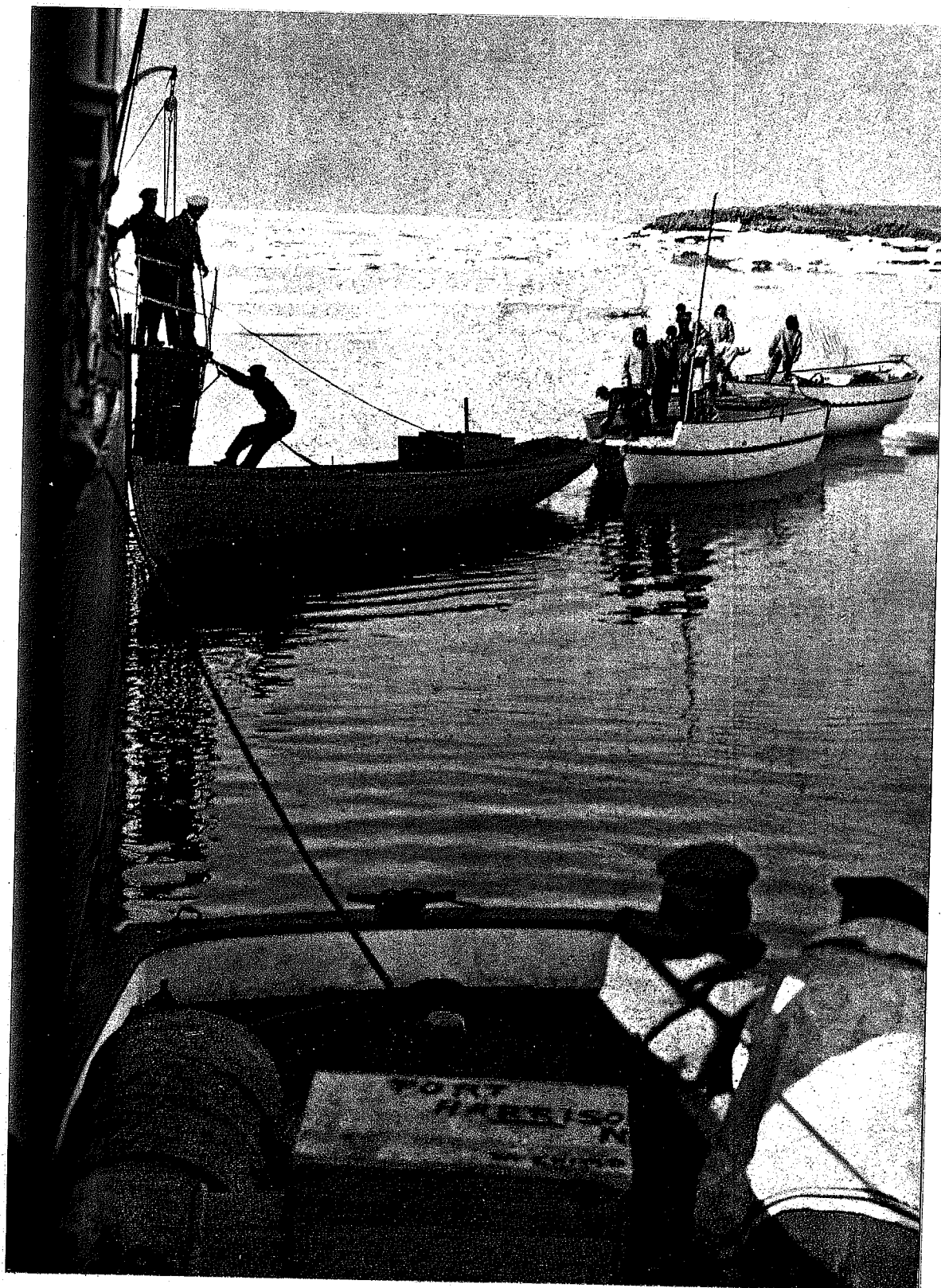
Four Arctic Photographs

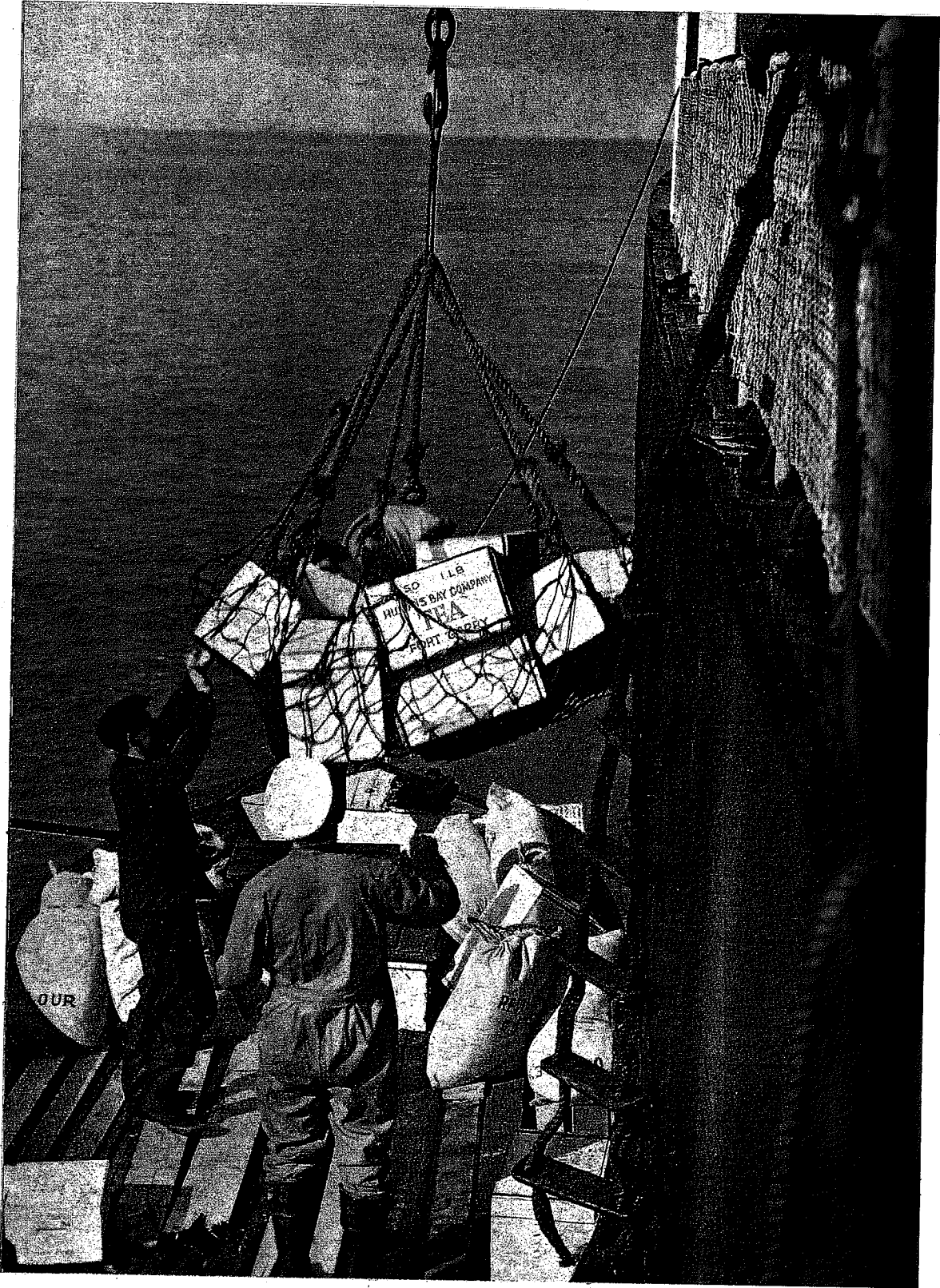
1. The Right Reverend Archibald Lang Fleming, D.D., first Anglican Bishop of the Arctic.
2. R.M.S. "Nascopie," of the Hudson's Bay Company, Stands Off Port Burwell, Hudson Straits, During her 1933 Voyage.
3. Fort Garry Tea for Moose Factory, Ontario, Being Unloaded from R.M.S. "Nascopie" at the Charlton Island Depot, James Bay.
4. Demi Tasse. Eskimo Longshoremen Enjoy Fort Garry Coffee During Unloading Operations at Port Burwell.

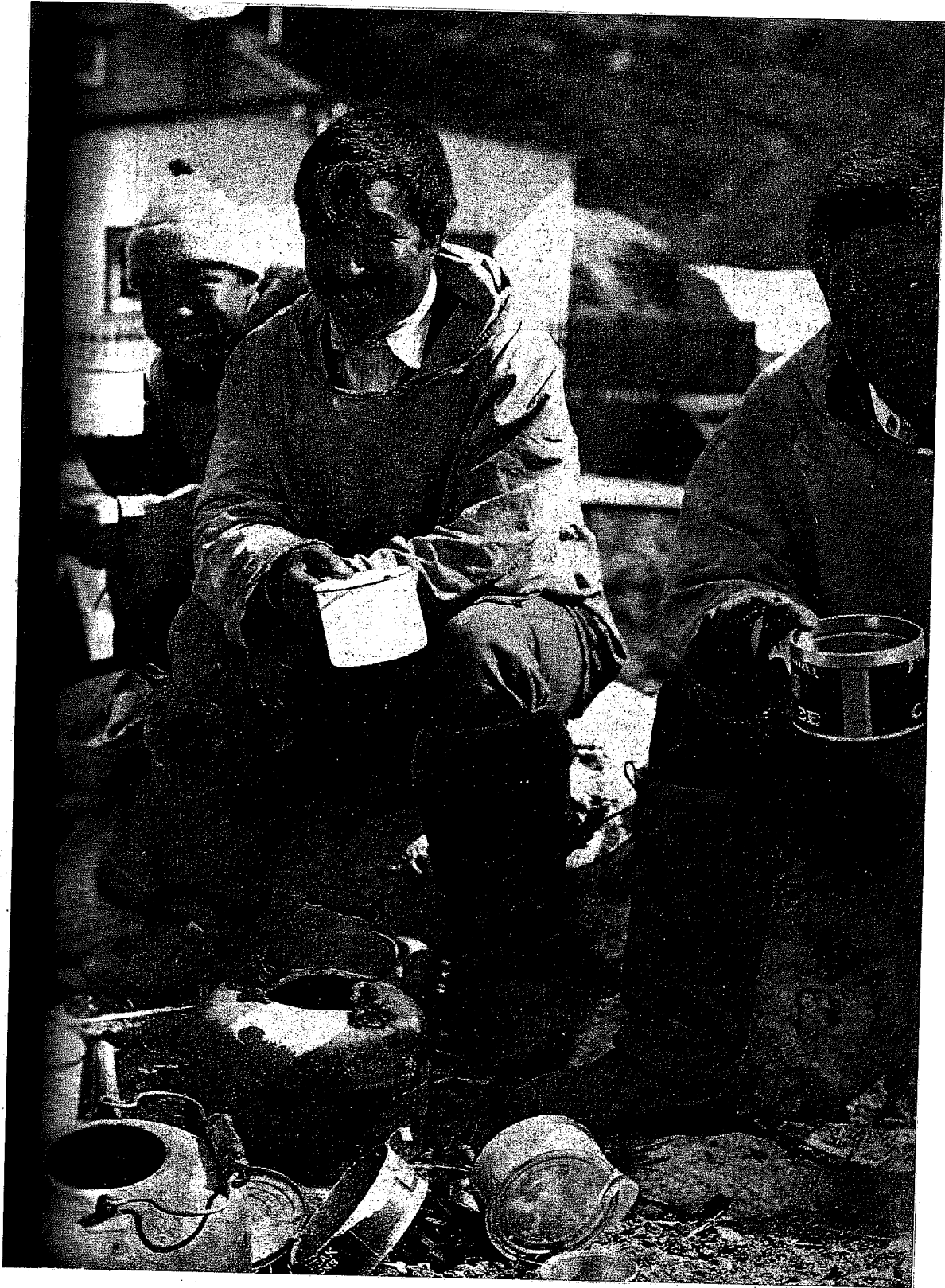
By
MAX SAUER, JR.

Source: This and the following 4 pages from The Beaver, March 1934, 15-19.









natives in the following images, his presence tacitly (at least) approves of the Hudson's Bay Company and its role in his northern diocese.⁴³

The following three Sauer prints are explicitly identified with the company. They are associated with the visible presence of the "R.M.S. Nascopie, of the Hudson's Bay Company" (No. 2) and with the products of its trade, "Fort Garry Tea for Moose Factory, Ontario, Being Unloaded from R.M.S. Nascopie at the Charlton Island Depot..." and "Eskimo Longshoremen Enjoy Fort Garry Coffee During Unloading Operations at Port Burwell" (Nos. 3 and 4). They illustrate not specific personalities and roles, as does the first photograph of Bishop Fleming, but the work carried out by unnamed labourers, both native inhabitants and southerners imported by the HBC. In the second and third views the work is palpably presented, the men frozen in motion by the click of the camera's shutter.

The fourth image depicts a reprieve from labour, although itself only an interruption of the "unloading operations." While Bishop Fleming presides in seriousness over the unfolding scenes, this group of two Inuit men and a boy "enjoy" their mug of coffee, aware of the camera's presence. Ironically (and perhaps condescendingly) entitled

⁴³ See *ibid.*, December 1936, "From the Western Arctic/ A Series of Pictures taken for The Beaver by Richard N. Hourde," 29-35, which begins with a photo of "Hudson's Bay Company Trader" Ernest Riddell, for a similar construction.

"Demi Tasse," the European sound of the word and its connotations of leisure conjure up images divorced from the daily lives of the picture's subjects. In a similar manner, the small cup associated with a demi tasse contrasts with the large mugs; one is in fact improvised from a Fort Garry Coffee tin. In this photograph, in particular, the contradictions inherent in fixing meanings on potentially ambiguous images is readily apparent. In naming and making understandable for a non-northern audience the actions and appearances of these "different" people, Mackay was impelled to impose conventions on this scene that distorted and simplified the motivations of the people portrayed.

In addition to Sauer, other photographers were hired by the company to cover the north for The Beaver. Harvey Basset, of Montreal's Associated Screen News, was aboard the Nascopie in 1934, and was flown into Norway House in January of 1936. Nicholas Morant, a staff photographer with the Winnipeg Free Press, was commissioned by MacKay to cover the Norway House-Island Lake canoe brigade, also in 1936. That same year, Richard N. Hourde photographed the western arctic. The work of other photographers, though not specifically commissioned, was also reproduced in the magazine. Margaret Bourke-White, a highly successful photographer for Life and Fortune magazines, accompanied the Governor General's party down the Mackenzie River in 1937. Appearing courtesy of Life, Bourke-White's photographs

displayed her characteristic preference for shooting from "bizarre angles and in operatic lights."⁴⁴

Although these image-makers brought their own particular vision to their work, The Beaver's layout contextualized their photos, imposing another layer of meaning and interpretation. Hourde's pictures of "Arctic Fishing" were presented as images of a timeless human activity. Biblical quotes suggested spiritual associations, while the lack of any specific identification of time, people or place added to the theme of universality. As northern images, this sense of harmony and peace carried a pragmatic message: "Company men and men of the Mounted Police work side by side with Eskimos..."⁴⁵ Irrespective of Hourde's intentions, his photographs were framed as an argument supporting the beneficent role of the Hudson's Bay Company (and their RCMP associates) in northern Canada.

Commissioned photographers in the field were also under obligation to photograph particular subjects. Lorene Squire, hired in 1938 to go north aboard the Nascopie, was instructed to photograph, in addition to her own specialty

⁴⁴ On Harvey Bassett see below, 152-56 and The Beaver, March 1936, "Norway House," 25-29; September 1936, "With The Canoe Brigade/ A Series of Northern Pictures by Nicholas Morant," 31-38, "Plumb Loco- All of 'Em," Nicholas Morant, 46-49; "The Company Newsreel," 54; March 1937, "Seven Northern Photographs," 30-37, and "Reindeer Herd," 26-29; December 1937, "Life in the North," 12-17; on Margaret Bourke-White, see Stott, Documentary Expression, 270; and also 216-220.

⁴⁵ The Beaver, September 1937, 33-36.

of wildlife, "a more or less routine record of life in the north as you see it, and hitherto unrecorded posts."⁴⁶ In these unfamiliar surroundings, this American from Harper, Kansas would rely on HBC staff for an introduction to her assignment. Alice MacKay, relaying Squire's arrangements for the trip, suggested she seek out fellow passenger J.W. Anderson "who literally knows the Arctic like a book, and can advise you on the spot...."⁴⁷ A prolific writer and photographer, Anderson was keenly interested in the representation of the company for which he worked.⁴⁸

In addition, photographers were dependent on the company to provide transportation and accommodation. Squire's experience of life in the North (like that of other passenger-photographers aboard the Nascopie) was, obviously, a limited one, tied to the movements and circumstances of this yearly excursion into arctic waters. Yet, the Nascopie's annual visit was a distinctive occasion in the seasonal round of life for fur traders, missionaries, government workers and the Inuit in the eastern arctic, removed from the experiences of daily life.

⁴⁶ HBCA, RG2/7/95, Alice MacKay to L. Squire, 26 May 1938.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Anderson was an enthusiastic contributor of visual and written material for The Beaver, for the fur trade's personnel magazine, The Moccasin Telegraph (launched in August, 1941) and for The House Detective, a modest publication produced by the staff at Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, during the 1940s.

Dennis Jordan, the Eastern Arctic Patrol's surgeon and physician in 1944 and 1945, provided an outsider's view of the meaning of the Nascopie's arrival to these arctic inhabitants:

What a thrill it was to come into a post - three shrill blasts on the Nascopie's siren, then the excitement of white men and Eskimos coming aboard, for this was the big annual event, "ship time." Then the business of unloading supplies, the long-awaited mail bags, the personnel. So much could be written of all these things, and of that strange feeling when the ship weighed anchor and we sailed away, leaving behind the people who would have no further personal contact with the outside world for another year.⁴⁹

According to Elsie McCall Gillis, a member of the government meteorological station at Arctic Bay, the permanent residents prepared themselves and their surroundings for the coming of the ship. In her recollections of "ship time," she described the change in Arctic Bay's outward appearance: "Fresh white wash marked the 'Bay' paths leading to [post manager] Jimmy [Bell]'s domain. Inside Jimmy's house, the curtains and rugs were on view again.... The shoreline, too, was ship-shape." It was this annual creation of an orderly and respectable appearance that was captured by the cameras of Nascopie passengers.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ "Introduction" to Roland Wild, Arctic Command: The Story of Smellie and the "Nascopie" (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1955), xi. Jordan was himself a capturer of images of the north, taking "coloured moving pictures" of his trips, ix.

⁵⁰ Gillis and Myles, North Pole Boarding House, 201-203.

The Inuit, too, marked the Nascopie's yearly arrival. For the families of Seekooseelak (who later settled at Cape Dorset), umiakjuakkanak ("big ship time") was the time for setting up camp at the Hudson's Bay Company post.⁵¹ The Inuit camps and their activities that were photographed and reproduced in The Beaver were scenes of a particular and unique aspect of life in the arctic.

Such photographs, however, were presented as part of a greater whole, involved in an ongoing project of illustrating, exemplifying, and at the same time, defining the "North" and the Hudson's Bay Company's role in the region. As "arctic photographs" and "northern pictures," these images were presented in the terms of this developing discourse. The scenes of the Nascopie captured by Sauer, Squire, and Bassett, when reproduced in The Beaver, became enmeshed in a vision of the purposes and personalities of this yearly foray of southern Canadians (and others) into the north.

From the year of Sauer's trip until the Nascopie sank off Cape Dorset in 1947, the company's ship, owned and operated by the Fur Trade Department, also carried the federal government's Eastern Arctic Patrol (EAP). The HBC's crew and fur trade staff were joined by the EAP, led by Major David McKeand until 1944, and thereafter, by J.G.

⁵¹ David Bellman, editor, Peter Pitseolak (1902-1973): Inuit Historian of Seekooseelak (Montreal: McCord Museum, 1980), 16, 47.

Wright. The party consisted of a variety of federal government personnel, including RCMP, post office representatives, doctors, dentists, research scientists, surveyors, radio engineers, and cinematographers. Various missionaries, including the aforementioned Rev. A.L. Fleming, were also frequent passengers. The company sold berths to paying tourists from 1933 until 1941, when this practice was cancelled due to wartime restrictions. Inuit were also taken aboard, travelling from post to post for medical or employment reasons.⁵²

The Nascopie was, of course, involved in expanding the trade of the Hudson's Bay Company, bringing in goods from the south and taking out furs, whale oil, and other products. In supplying the company's arctic posts, the Nascopie was integral to this commercial expansion. The importance of this northern trade was described in The Beaver by Ungava district manager J.W. Anderson:

[Fur Trade Commissioner Ralph Parson's] vision, "Trading north of Hudson's Bay," has become a reality, and now we have the famous HBC flag dotted all over the Eastern Arctic right through to the connecting link [of eastern and western arctic], Fort Ross.... As a result of the realization of this vision, new wealth has been created and the Eskimo has benefitted from the use of

⁵² HBCA, RG3/60/1, Bay Voyage Records, 1933-47, for itinerary and passenger lists (the latter up to 1940) and Ships' Histories, Nascopie; Zaslow, Northward Expansion, 198-199; The Beaver, September 1947, "Nascopie - The Story of a ship," C.P. Wilson, 3-11, which also outlines the Nascopie's history prior to 1933.

the white man's products brought to him in exchange for his furs.⁵³

Anderson's appraisal, written in 1939, testifies to the continuing practice of HBC management throughout the 1930s and 1940s of viewing the northern fur trade as an emblem of HBC enterprise. This conviction even persisted during the dark years of the depression. Governor Cooper's radio speech to the fur trade, broadcast from Winnipeg on October 24, 1933, and reprinted in The Beaver, pointed out the special place of the Nascopie in this northern "vision":

At a time when ruin and disaster have pursued many great enterprises, the Hudson's Bay Company has been able to make progress which is notable in the world of commerce. The voyage of the Nascopie this year might well be a symbol of our progress.⁵⁴

In "The Magazine of the North," as in this speech of the HBC's governor, the Nascopie held a prominent place in the mythology of the company's "progress" and development.

The Nascopie as symbol, however, like the series of Sauer photographs previously discussed, embraced more than a simple concept of commercial expansion. "Trading North" carried with it a whole set of assumptions regarding the importation of British/Canadian ideologies and culture into the eastern arctic. Memorializing the ship on the occasion of her "last tragic voyage of 1947," Clifford Wilson summed

⁵³ The Beaver, December 1939, "Trading NORTH of Hudson's Bay," J.W. Anderson, 43.

⁵⁴ Ibid., December 1933, 2; 13. Cooper was in Winnipeg as part of an inspection tour of the company's Canadian operations.

up this aspect of the Nascopie's role:

The old ship, performing her voyage faithfully year after year, through fog and storm and ice, in war as well as in peace, became a national institution - a sturdy symbol of Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic.⁵⁵

Carrying aboard government and church representatives, as well as fur traders, the Nascopie presented a unified approach to the administration of the Canadian north. The editorial commentary accompanying a photograph in The Beaver's "The Company News Reel," a feature introduced by MacKay that echoed the form of the popular news shorts accompanying feature films, made clear this meaning of the Nascopie's annual voyage. The text beside a photograph of McKeand, HBC Ungava district manager George Watson, and Bishop Fleming declared: "This issue our news pictures lead off with 'The Crown, the Company and the Church,' the three great powers in the Northwest Territories." In the text, these three men, posed together, embody the power of the institutions for which they stand. Significantly, they are framed in a single image, seemingly united in a common enterprise.⁵⁶

MacKay, as the selector and framer of visual material for the company magazine, was keenly aware of the symbolic possibilities offered by such photographs, and of the way in which they contributed to the building of a corporate image.

⁵⁵ Ibid., September 1947, "Nascopie," 7, 10.

⁵⁶ Ibid., December 1935, 50. The photographer is not credited.

The idea of a friendly relationship between the company and these other agents of authority had been, in fact, an important theme of Governor Cooper's speech at the dinner held in Montreal before the Nascopie's 1934 departure. The photograph of McKeand, Watson and Fleming displayed in The Beaver appeared as the visual equivalent of Cooper's earlier assertion that, "In the Canadian North the Church, the Flag and Trade have set a notable example to the Empire of cooperation and harmony."⁵⁷

It is in the portrayal of the 1934 voyage that the varied uses and meanings of the reproducible visual image, as orchestrated by Douglas MacKay in the 1930s, become most apparent. Capitalizing on the presence of Patrick Ashley Cooper, the first Governor to visit Hudson Bay, the company employed a variety of media to represent and glorify this event. In its magazine, in book form, and in moving pictures, the imagery of the fur trade, the north, and the history of the Hudson's Bay Company created an inspiring written and visual text.

The Beaver's report of the 1934 trip of the Nascopie centred on the Governor to construct a meaningful narrative of the "event."⁵⁸ The unnamed narrator (most likely Douglas MacKay), asserting an "ordered sequence in history as there

⁵⁷ Ibid., September 1934, "To The Labrador, Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," 12.

⁵⁸ Ibid., December 1934, "An Illustrated Record of an Unique Voyage," 9-12.

is in nature," conjured up a progression of movement from "one post in James Bay to a trade which covers the whole of British North America...." The culmination of this logical development was the fulfilment of the expectation that

one day a Governor would sail on a company ship over the waters which had borne these earlier vessels.... This year of 1934 has seen that voyage, and has seen a Governor step ashore at Rupert's House where des Groseilliers, with his woodsman's knowledge, elected to build that first establishment in 1668.

From des Groseilliers to Cooper lay an unbroken chain of events, "an ordered sequence" that was at once understandable as well as a "cause for pride."⁵⁹

This was not just history-as-written, however, but also history-as-seen. The Beaver presented "An Illustrated Record of an Unique Voyage," visual documentation of the Governor's trip and the sights encountered: "We are proud to be able to record in this magazine such an event in the Company's history, and realize our good fortune in being able to make the record pictorial." This "good fortune," however, was well planned and carefully executed. The company secured the services of photographer Harvey Bassett, of Associated Screen News, Montreal. In addition to those images appearing in The Beaver, one hundred and four of

⁵⁹ This text's construction of historical "events" brings to mind Marshall Sahlins's reflections on "happenings" becoming "events" as they are given significance in a cultural scheme. But as Sahlins notes: "The event is a happening interpreted - and interpretations vary." Islands of History (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 153.

Bassett's photographs appeared in Trading Into Hudson's Bay.⁶⁰

Published by the company, this "permanent record" of Governor Cooper's trip aboard the Nascopie was announced in the pages of The Beaver as a "significant event" in itself. Noting that "the physical form of the book follows the now famous brochure issued by the company in 1920 in commemoration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its incorporation....," Trading Into Hudson's Bay, like Schooling's 1920 volume, had the same white covers with gold HBC crest and the same large type-face.⁶¹ And like the 1920 Hudson's Bay Company, Trading Into Hudson's Bay extolled, in dramatic terms, the company's continuity of traditions:

So another chapter had been added to the story of the Hudson's Bay Company..., a story of loyal men and great leadership; pages which ring with the names of men who guided the Great Company in other days - Prince Rupert; John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough; Sir George Simpson; Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal; and which must now tell of Patrick Ashley Cooper, the first Governor to visit the company in the barren Northland.⁶²

⁶⁰ R.H.H. Macaulay, photographs by Bassett, Associated Screen News, Trading Into Hudson's Bay: A Narrative of the Visit of Patrick Ashley Cooper, Thirtieth Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, to Labrador, Hudson's Strait and Hudson's Bay, in the year 1934 (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Company, 1934). Like A Brief History, authorship is difficult to determine, the book being credited as "from the journal of R.H.H. Macaulay." D. MacKay most likely played a significant role in the book's production.

⁶¹ The Beaver, December 1934, "Trading Into Hudson's Bay," 14-15.

⁶² Trading Into Hudson's Bay, 89.



Landing Party

(Photo Bassett—A.S.P.)

Chief Factor Ralph Parsons, The Governor, Mrs. Cooper, and Captain Smellie go ashore at Cartwright, Labrador, July 11, 1934

Source: The Beaver, September 1934, 5.

The connection with George Simpson was particularly stressed, made living by the inclusion of a piper who accompanied Governor Cooper's party, an imitation of Simpson's penchant for travelling with a highland piper.⁶³

The description of the official party's landing at Cartwright, Labrador, emphasizing the Simpson - Cooper link, was, in fact, a description of a Bassett photograph:

Sir George Simpson in his 30 foot canoe, with his bear hat, piper and singing voyageurs, made no braver picture than this. A white motor boat of trim line - amidships, on a high backed seat, the Governor and Mrs. Cooper, by the Governor's side the Commissioner. At the small wheel immediately behind the seat stood the 3rd mate in his uniform, and by his side a uniformed seaman to tend the motor. Behind them, standing with arms folded, was the Captain [T.F. Smellie], with his gold ribbon and oak leaves, and aft the Governor's flag. In the bow, facing aft, the piper keeping time to his "Highland Laddie" with one brogue and buckled foot, the ribbons decorating his pipes flying in the breeze.⁶⁴

If the piper did not appear in the actual picture, reproduced in Trading Into Hudson's Bay and in the September 1934 Beaver (see Figure 14), the above description was otherwise accurate in every detail.⁶⁵ Here the written word, although not explicitly acknowledged, testified to the consciously visual interpretation of the Governor's tour. What the written description does not acknowledge is the presence of the photographer, probably responsible for

⁶³ MacKay, Honourable Company, 209.

⁶⁴ Trading Into Hudson's Bay, 19.

⁶⁵ Ibid., between pages 14 and 15; The Beaver, September 1934, 5.

Captain Smellie's stoic stance. The seaman's uniform, with the words "Hudson's Bay Company / S.S. Nascopie" and the company flag emblazoned across his chest, appears as another demonstration of the attempt to fashion an engaging visual record of the governor's 1934 tour.

In addition, the company also commissioned a filmed version of Governor and Mrs. Cooper's journey to Hudson Bay. At least seven reels of the "Governor's Travel Film" were shot, possibly by Harvey Bassett, and according to one commentator, were mostly concerned with the governor's own activities. Some of this material, combined with other film shot by company employees, was edited in 1936 into "Trading Into Hudson's Bay," a forty-minute black and white silent film.⁶⁶

At the same time that the Nascope carried equipment and a cinematographer to record the present voyage, it also had on board a projector. The showing of a film of the previous voyage was a feature of the Nascope's shipboard activities as it sailed down the St. Lawrence out of Montreal.⁶⁷ As well, Governor Cooper brought along a special film, part of King George's message to "his Eskimo

⁶⁶ HBCA, F4, "Trading Into Hudson's Bay," 1936 and F16, "Governor's Trip," 1934. "The Governor's Trip" is being videotaped to facilitate research use. Archivist Judith Beattie's notes provided useful commentary.

⁶⁷ Trading Into Hudson's Bay, 14. Gillis, North Pole Boarding House, 19, also mentions shipboard films (by Dennis Jordan) being viewed in 1945.

subjects." According to Trading Into Hudson's Bay, "to make that message more real ...[the king] had asked the Governor to show...[the Inuit] a special film of their King's ceremonial life, a film from His Majesty's own collection."⁶⁸ Although the Coopers did not bring their own film illustrating their lives in Britain, they did distribute their own, more modest, pictures. Included in the souvenirs Governor Cooper gave to the district and post manager at Cartwright was an autographed photograph, while his wife distributed a folder containing a message and a photograph of herself and her children to the Inuit women she encountered at the HBC posts.⁶⁹ As well as taking away images of the north, the 1934 voyage of the Nascopie also left some behind.

In addition to exporting material goods and the administrative structures of Canadian society into the North, the Nascopie was involved in propagating ways of seeing and being seen that were firmly rooted in Western cultural traditions.⁷⁰ The distribution of filmic and photographic images of English scenes and family portraits constituted one component of the attempt, on the part of

⁶⁸ Trading Into Hudson's Bay, 15.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 23, 38.

⁷⁰ Walter Hildebrandt and Ken Hughes, "Line 'Em Up: Ideology, Visual Image and Prairie Indians (unpublished manuscript) explores western traditions of visual perception, contrasting them with native ways of seeing.

whites, to bridge the cultural differences between themselves and native people. At the same time, the very act of photographing natives by whites was another form of this cross-cultural contact, communicating the codes and social conventions associated with being photographed. A group of Inuit children posed with Mrs. Cooper for the photographer Bassett, learning how to compose themselves for the camera's gaze.⁷¹ This enforced familiarity with photographic conventions accompanied the extension of other non-native practices into the North. Not only were Inuit people examined by medical specialists, tried by juries, and awarded medals for bravery, but they were photographed doing so.⁷²

The association between being photographed and being "civilized" was noted by frequent Beaver contributor Richard Finnie, son of O.S. Finnie, former head of the federal government's Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch. Finnie was the government cinematographer aboard the Nascopie on the occasion of its successful first meeting with the HBC's western arctic supply ship Aklavik at Bellot Strait in 1937, thus completing the opening of the Northwest Passage as a

⁷¹ The Beaver, December 1934, 9.

⁷² Ibid., December 1945, "Nascopie: Veteran of Two World Wars," J.W. Anderson, 43-45, photo of Eskimo Tommy receiving the Royal Humane Society medal for bravery; September 1947, "Nascopie," photos of "Dr. C.H.M. Williams examining an Eskimo's teeth at Chesterfield [1939]" and "Katchoo, tried for manslaughter in 1939," 8-9.

commercial route. In a Beaver article, "Trading Into the Northwest Passage," Finnie was impressed by this "romantic" and "historic" event, but at the same time questioned this expansion of trade into the Canadian North.⁷³ Joining a group on an inspection trip to Nadluktuk, located some 15 miles from the newly established HBC post of Fort Ross, Finnie noted:

Some members of the Government party on board had a notion that they were about to see a band of primitive Eskimos untouched by civilization, never even photographed. They encountered instead six or eight families who were living in canvas as well as skin tents, using Peterborough canoes, modern rifles and utensils... and who well knew what a camera was for.

The knowledge of the camera and its uses were, according to Finnie, a mark of advancing civilization and its attendant "questionable 'benefits.'" Despite his doubts, Finnie aligned himself with the "civilizing" forces, spending a "delightful, unforgettable day" making motion pictures of the camp life of this group of Netsilingmiut people.⁷⁴

⁷³ Ibid., December 1937, "Trading Into the Northwest Passage," Richard Finnie, 46-52.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 53.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: THE IMAGE AND THE WORD IN THE "NEW NORTH"

It is no longer a land where a hardy Scot can live for a year or more without seeing another white man; where he is on his own until the next annual ship comes in, completely out of touch with his boss, and where he can feel like the monarch of all he surveys.

-Clifford P. Wilson¹

The Hudson's Bay Company's efforts at public representation from 1920 to 1945 involved a complex of associations and a variety of modes of presentation. As a twentieth century business, the directors of the HBC were concerned with fostering an image that contributed to pragmatic initiatives. Building up loyalty within the company and heightening a positive perception of the HBC and its activities to influential individuals outside the company, to customers and to the general public were the obvious benefits of Hudson's Bay Company propaganda.

One aspect of this public representation of the Hudson's Bay Company was the issuing of official histories, beginning with William Schooling's 1920 Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1920 and followed later by the 1934 A Brief

¹ "Furs for the White Man," in Wilson, editor, North of 55: Canada from the 55th Parallel to the Pole (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954), 86.

History. As well as these works, the company's own magazine, The Beaver, contributed to this discourse on the continuity of tradition between a glorious past and the company's present. In addition, a growing academic interest in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company was encouraged by allowing the controlled use of the company's records, both through regulated access to the newly organized company archives and by the company sponsored publication of a documentary series, the Hudson's Bay Record Society.² Although a study of the content of the HBRS volumes, comparing and assessing the material published with that available in the archives, as well as the procedures involved in these choices, lies beyond the scope of this study, it might further reveal the extent to which the company attempted to control its public image.

The Hudson's Bay Company, as a corporate body, was unique in its sustained efforts to represent itself as central to Canadian (and British imperial) history and historiography. From the organizers of the 1920 anniversary celebrations to publicity directors and Beaver editors, the formulation of the company's image in the present involved a

² In 1974 the company's archives were transferred to the Provincial Archives of Manitoba in Winnipeg, where they presently reside as a separate department, on loan from the Hudson's Bay Company. The HBRS was terminated in 1982, part of the company's efforts, under the new ownership of the Thompson interests to cut costs and concentrate solely on retail operations. This included the sale of the Northern Stores Division (now renamed the North West Company, Inc.) in 1987.

glorification of the company's past. In particular, its historic role in the Canadian fur trade was portrayed as a precursor to the later colonization of the Canadian west, providing an image of the Hudson's Bay Company as an agent of "progress." In this vision of the HBC's past, the company's imperial connections were stressed, its "achievements" co-opted into the ever-forward development of the British empire.

The reification of the fur trade carried along with it not only an interest in the heroic feats of "explorers" and "discoverers," but also a fascination with their modern day counterparts. Although the first Beaver editor, Clifton Thomas, drew on popular American conceptions of the self-made man to describe the fur trade staff of his day, subsequent Beaver editors developed the image of the contemporary fur trader into a modern equivalent of the early "conquerors" of the wilderness. As the activities of the HBC fur trade expanded northward, The Beaver adopted a northern focus, exploiting the romantic and adventurous elements of this new northern frontier.

As The Beaver continued to explore its northern theme, however, other experts began to appear in the magazine's pages. The increased activity in and interest in the north by government, industry and the public during World War Two was reflected in the pages of The Beaver. Although the pictorial "Oil for the Planes of Alaska" highlighted the

Hudson's Bay Company freighting contribution to the Canol project (the building of the pipeline between the Norman Wells oilfield and Alaska by American troops in 1942), articles by Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources Charles Camsell and RCMP Sgt. W.H. Nevin focused solely on government initiatives in the Canadian north.³ "Mining in the North," by J.P. de Wet (Secretary of the Manitoba Chamber of Mines), surveying the opportunities for industry concluded: "Mining on countless occasions has been the forerunner of colonization.... Who knows, today the Northwest Territories may be at the threshold of destiny!"⁴ The popular idea of a "new north" of unlimited possibility, of a new and conquerable resource and agricultural frontier, also found expression in The Beaver of the 1940s.⁵

The older paternalistic fur trade that held such a romantic fascination for the editors and contributors of The Beaver was, according to Arthur J. Ray, "crumbling by

³ The Beaver, September 1943, 4-14; June 1944, "Opening the Northwest," 4-7; September 1945, "Policing the Far North," 6-10.

⁴ Ibid., December 1945, 20-25.

⁵ See for example, C.A. Dawson, editor, The New North-West (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1947), a collection of reports by the Canadian Social Science Research Council, for an exceedingly optimistic view of the agricultural potential of northern Canada. J. Wreford Wilson, "The Role of Illusion in North American Geography," Canadian Geographer xii,1 (1969), 22-23, discusses the image of Canada's north as a new frontier in the post WWII era.

1945."⁶ In the years after World War Two the federal government became increasingly active in the north, both as an agent of native welfare programs and as a supporter for the initiatives of southern-based economic development. According to Morris Zaslow, this period was marked by an active public interest in the north, fuelled in part by the new perception of the area's "strategic importance in the air age."⁷ In the face of these developments the harmonious image of the 1930s of the Hudson's Bay Company, government and church as a mighty triumvirate also began to fade.⁸

Corporate images of the fur trade also entailed the development of another theme as part of the company's representation of its past and present. Images of native people, as both exotic "others" and familiar friends of the company, were a prevalent feature of the HBC's publicity. In both these incarnations, however, natives were presented as they appeared to white observers, serving as examples of the company's benevolent influence on "primitive" peoples.

⁶ Ray, Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age, 221; "Hudson's Bay Company and the Indians," 350.

⁷ On the establishment of the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources in 1953 see Robert Paine, "Introduction," in R. Paine, editor, Patrons and Brokers in the Eastern Arctic (Newfoundland Social and Economic Papers No.2) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 3-7; Zaslow, Northward Expansion, 306.

⁸ In fact, after the wreck of the Nascopie in 1947, the Eastern Arctic Patrol no longer chartered space from the HBC, but sailed its own ship, the C.D. Howe. One of the most fruitful sources of this image of cooperation had thus disappeared.

In this way, images of "Indian" and "Eskimo" justified the continuation of company policy towards native people.

Although visual media were exploited during the events of the company's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary in 1920, under Douglas MacKay's direction this aspect of the Company's image reached new heights in the 1930s. The elaborate documentation of the Red River Pageant demonstrates this earlier interest in the photographic image. As dramatic enactments incorporating visual elements of presentation, the parades and pageants held in Canada were, appropriately, filmed and photographed for posterity. But while the films and photographs had a limited lifespan in the public domain, the "Anniversary Brochure" continued to be distributed until the late 1920s. Schooling's Hudson's Bay Company, in its lavish presentation, inserted full colour reproductions of paintings and halftone prints of black and white photographs among its pages. Yet it was the written text that formally and officially represented the company's achievements of two hundred and fifty years.

Visual imagery in The Beaver was to play a limited role until MacKay's innovations in 1933. The first editor, Clifton Thomas, paid tribute to the power of the visual image, but, tellingly, employed verbal description to do so. Thomas recounted the scene of the staff banquet held at Winnipeg's Fort Garry Hotel, part of the celebrations honouring the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary. While

the staff sang the last chorus of a song set to a familiar tune and written especially for the occasion

There's a long, long trail a-winding
 Down from the long, long ago
 When the Knights of old sought Hudson's Bay
 Through ice and snow
 And to-night we all are thinking
 Of how those brave men and free,
 Each fought the fight with all his might
 And built our company

the lights dimmed and "the Governor's ensign, a sheer white silken flag, floated in an artificial breeze... on large mirrors at either side of the stage magically appeared likenesses of the Company's first governor, Prince Rupert, and of the present one, Sir Robert Kindersley."⁹

In 1928, Beaver editor Robert Watson reported a similar use of the imagery of HBC governors. Charles Sale, presiding over the "council meeting" at Lower Fort Garry, was described giving an "inspiring address" to the assembled staff: "Behind the Governor, occupying the space almost from floor to ceiling, was a large oil painting of Sir George Simpson... [that] shed an atmosphere of inspiration over the gathering that nothing else could have done."¹⁰ Watson, like Thomas, reported the event and its impact in words.

MacKay, on the other hand, extended this iconography of the "Hudson's Bay Company Governor" to a wider audience. Hiring professional photographer Harvey Bassett to accompany

⁹ The Beaver, October 1920, "Echoes of the May Celebration", 4.

¹⁰ Ibid., December 1928, "Council Meeting," 110-111.

Governor Patrick Ashley Cooper's trip aboard the Nascopie in 1934, MacKay featured his pictures in the pages of The Beaver, which was now distributed outside the company. Although The Beaver of the 1920s and early 1930s made use of visual material, it was at MacKay's initiative that it became a pictorial magazine. Photographs formed an integral component of MacKay's vision of the company magazine as a public relations project. The Beaver's increased emphasis on the visual image was to continue well beyond Douglas MacKay's actual involvement with the company.

The steadily increasing number of paid subscriptions in the 1940s and early 1950s (which peaked at 11,488 in 1952) as seen in Table I, are an indication of the magazine's growing popularity in the years after MacKay's death. Although Beaver editors were no longer also publicity directors, the journal and its editor remained a component of the company's publicity department.¹¹ Editors Alice Mackay (1938 to 1939) and Clifford Wilson (1939 to 1958) imposed their own particular editorial stamp on The Beaver, yet they also limited their innovations within certain bounds established by Douglas MacKay.

¹¹ This relationship between The Beaver and public relations still exists administratively, even though the magazine's function has greatly altered. Interview with Christopher Dafoe, editor, The Beaver, March 12, 1990; see HBCA, RG2/38/7, Alice MacKay personnel report, RG2/38/125, C.P. Wilson personnel file.

Under the brief editorship of Alice MacKay in 1938 and 1939, the magazine remained true to the intentions of her late husband, often memorializing him in the reprints of his speeches and radio broadcasts.¹² She continued to commission professional photographers and to solicit outside writers, while relying on HBC fur trade staff to contribute a sense of authenticity and authority. Alice MacKay added her own distinctive pictorial touches to the magazine, including the use of colour photographs for the cover, but her brief tenure was more marked by a sense of continuity with the previous five years of The Beaver's publication than by substantial change.¹³

Clifford P. Wilson (1902-1977), Alice MacKay's successor, was also influenced by Douglas MacKay's approach. Wilson contributed eight articles to The Beaver and four radio scripts for the company while working as a writer of popular history in the 1930s. In 1937, on Douglas MacKay's recommendation, he was contracted to reorganize the company's historical exhibit located at the Winnipeg retail

¹² The Beaver, March 1938, "They Shall Grow Not Old," 30-32; June 1938, "Men of the Old Fur Trade," 7-9; September 1938, "More Light on Thomas Simpson," 26-31; and December 1938, "In Old Fort Garry Ninety Years Ago," 26-28.

¹³ The Beaver, June 1938, cover, drawing of the schooner Titania on a background of a burgundy Hudson's Bay Point Blanket; December 1938, cover, flagpole at Pangnirtung, Lorene Squire photographer.

store.¹⁴ He continued his museum work for the company the following year, and also enrolled in a museum training course in Newark, New Jersey. Hired as Beaver editor and museum curator in August 1939 when Alice MacKay resigned her position, Wilson further developed his views on the public representation of the HBC's past and present in his eighteen years with the company.¹⁵

Building on his own contacts within the museum community and those links forged by Douglas and Alice MacKay with academics, Wilson opened up the Beaver to contributions from historians and anthropologists. The June 1945 issue, celebrating the two hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of the Hudson's Bay Company, contained, in addition to contributions by the company's own archivist Alice M. Johnson and editor Wilson (under his frequently used pseudonym C. Parnell), articles by ethnologist Douglas Leechman of the National Museum in Ottawa, and by a number of prominent historians, including Chester Martin, the departmental head at the University of Toronto, and Grace

¹⁴ Beaver editors were also involved with the HBC calender (started in 1913) and in the HBC's museum in the Winnipeg retail store (established in 1911). Both the calender, which received a wide distribution, including all the schools in western Canada beginning in 1929, and the museum, which Wilson claimed attracted over 150,000 visitors annually in the 1950s, provide further avenues for exploring the public representation of the Hudson's Bay Company; see HBCA, A.12/5 Misc/415; E.95/2; RG2/10/9.

¹⁵ HBCA, RG2/38/125, Record of C.P. Wilson; E.95 for early manuscripts, including E.95/52, "Should Popular History Be Truthful?" (Wilson says it should).

Lee Nute of the Minnesota Historical Society. Although anniversary celebrations were restrained in deference to the events of World War Two, The Beaver also marked this occasion in a manner far removed from the spectacles of 1920.¹⁶ Wilson's selection of material and contributors represented an attempt to legitimize the history of the company as a serious field of academic history, a concern also addressed by the ongoing series of Hudson's Bay Record Society volumes. In a sense, the two hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary issue's highlighting of the imperial connections of the company (six of the nine articles treated this theme) reflected the preoccupations of the historical profession.¹⁷ At the same time, however, it paralleled the earlier attempts to interpret the company's past as "official history."

Wilson himself perceived a continuity between his editorship and that of the MacKays. In his introduction to a collection of Beaver photographs of the previous fourteen

¹⁶ HBCA, RG2/7/482, Extract, Governor to C. Riley, 14 December 1944.

¹⁷ See Paul T. Phillips, Britain's Past in Canada: The Teaching and Writing of British History (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989), 69, for the persistence of interest in Empire amongst the Canadian historical profession into the post World War II era. One measure of the success of Wilson's (and The Beaver's) legitimization within the academic and professional communities was Wilson's own involvement in and acceptance within these circles. Near the end of Wilson's career as Beaver editor he was a councillor of the Canadian Historical Association (1955-58) and president of the Canadian Museum Association (1955-57); E95/40, Resume.

years that he edited in 1946, Wilson credited Douglas MacKay's work in establishing The Beaver as "an attractive and authoritative source of information on the North, past and present."¹⁸ Wilson was, in fact, introduced to the importance of visual imagery as an integral component of The Beaver's presentation and content in 1934, as a contributor to the magazine. In preparation for the publication of Wilson's series on George Simpson, MacKay arranged for Wilson to accompany Harvey Bassett to photograph Simpson's house at Lachine, Québec.¹⁹

As Beaver editor and museum curator, Wilson often thought in terms of the visual components of his work. Regarding the history museum as a book or magazine "whose story is told in pictures," he also referred to exhibiting museum objects to "illustrate a fact."²⁰ In preparing The New North in Pictures, Wilson expressed similar theories about the value of photographic communication. He initially suggested the title "True North," as "it sums up the theme

¹⁸ The New North in Pictures (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1946), 5. The book was printed in Winnipeg by Saults and Pollard, The Beaver's printers, from the original photographic plates engraved by Brigdens of Winnipeg.

¹⁹ HBCA, E.95/14, D. MacKay to Wilson, 2 April 1934 and 11 June 1934.

²⁰ HBCA, E.95/55, "The Hudson's Bay Company Museum," for McGill News, 1937; E.95/58, "Modern Developments in History Museums," distributed by the Ontario Department of Travel and Publicity, 1951 (originally read to B.C. Historical Association in 1943); see also E.95/14, Wilson to Henry Luce (editor, Life), 13 Oct 1938.

of the book, which is the pictorial representation of the truth about the North."²¹ In the introduction to this selection of images Wilson elaborated on this concept of pictorial truth:

Here in pictorial form is the true North - not the North of the romantic novel or the sensational newspaper story, but the real thing seen through the camera's accurate eye. The people who appear on these pages are genuine northerners, pictured as they went about their daily tasks. In this way the book becomes a record of the North today. But more than that it also becomes an historical record; for the North is changing fast, and in a few years many of the subjects photographed here will no longer be found anywhere.²²

Yet these photographs were representations of the "real," and as "historical records" represent a complexity of meaning. The photographers' choice of point of view, lighting, exposure, and type of lens and film imposed one level of interpretation on the subject,²³ while their placement within the book's structure and mediation by the attached captions further contextualized these images.

The role of photographs in The Beaver allow for an examination of broader issues surrounding the function of

²¹ Ibid., RG2/7/93, Wilson to Lorne Pierce (Ryerson Press), 12 December 1946.

²² Wilson, The New North in Pictures, 4; this portion of the introduction, and many of the photographs, were reprinted in the follow-up to this volume, also edited by Wilson, Pageant of the North, (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1957), n.p.

²³ Jussim, Visual Communication and the Graphic Arts, 301, notes how these elements should make us recognize that photography does not represent a form of "miraculously pure communication."

images, both words and pictures, in the construction of meaning. As Wilson's claims of photographic truth suggests, visual images have an important function as a means of ordering and making coherent the world around us. The camera's shutter, freezing time and motion, permits the static contemplation of a confusing world in flux.²⁴ Related to the tendency to view "others" as types, photography becomes a potent method for naturalizing perceived differences.²⁵ Pictures of "primitives," accepted as the "real," authenticate cultural constructions of difference, validating notions of cultural superiority.

Photography also contributes to the project of drawing and defining mental maps of an unknown world. As one of the Hudson's Bay Company's advertising managers remarked in 1939:

Letters have been received from many Beaver readers throughout the country in which is expressed an appreciation for the colourful, interesting and artistic treatment this periodical now embodies. Many dwell particularly on the reproduction of expertly photographed scenes of the North, relieving they say, the necessity of the reader having to call on his

²⁴ Ibid., 307, considers this aspect of the photographic image as misrepresentation in its isolation of living-as-process into fragments for study.

²⁵ Trachtenberg, Reading American Photographs, 55-7, on images of slaves and criminals as a "system of explanation which makes the difference between free citizen and incarcerated criminal or enslaved black seem 'natural' and proper."

imagination for a picture of that enchanting land when it is described.²⁶

Combined with verbal markers, photographs of northern lakes and mountains transformed their subjects into knowable places. In "Business in the Arctic," the captions of the two leading photographs exemplify this process of understanding. "Mount Camsell, between Fort Simpson and Fort Wrigley" and "Bear Rock, with Bear River and Fort Norman just beyond" not only give names to these "natural" objects, but place them within a world of human habitation. In both photographs, these landmarks of "civilization" are unseen, lying outside the bounds of the pictures' frame. Yet their presence, invoked by the captions, remains palpable. The article's subtitle sums up this way of seeing: "Vast areas of land, sharply contrasted types of country, a bewildering number of rivers and lakes and the link of the Company to make a coherent picture...."²⁷ Similarly, arctic posts with anglicized names were familiar sights in The Beaver. Images of neatly manicured paths leading up to freshly painted post buildings, themselves attempts to make order in the Canadian arctic, were frequently and faithfully reproduced.

²⁶ HBCA, RG2/8/1116, J. Ketter, Advertising Manager, Edmonton, 27 March 1939.

²⁷ The Beaver, December 1936, "Business in the Arctic," M.R. Lubbock, 18-23.

At the same time as The Beaver was involved in its project of mapping the north as a mental construct, the Royal Canadian Air Force was busily photographing the country from the air in aid of government efforts to survey and map Canada. In 1934, the federal government issued the its first national topographic map with contours plotted by air photos.²⁸ In the service of both commercial and government enterprise, photography thus contributed to a growing catalogue of "knowledge." Beginning in 1921 aerial photographs were indexed and filed, and in 1925 the National Air Photo Library was established.²⁹

As a result of its public relations activities, the Hudson's Bay Company's Canadian office built up its own massive photo-archives.³⁰ Yet the organization of this collection, like the use of the images in The Beaver, reflected cultural and social values about the things photographed. Clifford Wilson, in asking the president of the company's fur sales in New York which pictures he wanted for his office, named some of the popular categories: "You can specify... whether you prefer landscapes, people,

²⁸ Sean Finlay, "Surveying and Mapping Helps Build Canada," Geos (Department of Energy, Mines and Resources), Vol. 18, No. 4 (Fall 1989), 25.

²⁹ *Ibid.* The author notes that the library contains over five million aerial photographs.

³⁰ Now deposited in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, the Head Office Photograph Collection (1987/363) contains some 100,000 images.

natives, modern development, or what."³¹ Alan Trachtenberg, in his discussion of the archival method as a way of ordering photo-collections, noted that it reveals "a macro-structure of social meaning, a way of identifying individual pictures even before their use... Each image belong[s] to a larger picture, and understood that way, by its social identification, could thus evoke the whole for which it stood."³² In Wilson's query, as in the HBC's public relations project in general, stereotypical and simplified images of peoples and places served to present a positive vision of the company and its activities.

In the 1950s, The Beaver continued to replay stereotypes of the "happy Eskimo" that had been prevalent in the magazine in the 1920s. A 1952 portraits series by Richard Harrington, a frequent contributor to The Beaver since 1946, was entitled "The Cheerful Eskimo."³³ Clifford Wilson's editorial commentary expounded on this "characteristic mood":

The natives whose portraits appear on the following pages are representatives of the finest types of Eskimos- cheerful, hardy, resourceful, and brave - fit

³¹ HBCA, RG2/8/879, Wilson to B.G. Coward, 9 January 1957.

³² Reading American Photographs, 200, on the work of Lewis Hine.

³³ The Beaver, March 1952, "The Cheerful Eskimo: Outdoor Portraits by Richard Harrington," 7-15.

inhabitants for the most inhospitable region on the face of the northern hemisphere.³⁴

Yet one may ask what identifies these people as cheerful? Presumably their "smiles," which upon careful examination are as often ambiguous as they are obvious. And what, in fact, do these smiles signify? Anthropologist Hugh Brody's experiences in the eastern Arctic in the early 1970s led him to an alternate interpretation of the "cheerful Eskimo":

The Eskimos of today recall that, in face-to-face dealings with traders or other whites, they always felt acutely nervous and tried to present at least an appearance of compliant friendliness. The Eskimo's ready smile is really the mask for a host of conflicting feelings and thoughts.³⁵

The white photographer, with his/her powerful instrument of representation in hand, was also implicated in the economic and power relationships of white and native that Brody describes.

Harrington's compositions, caught up in the traditions of western photography, further isolated the Inuit subjects from their surroundings and their identity. Although "outdoor portraits," their close framing of head and upper torso obliterated any background detail into a grey haze. Obeying the conventions of portrait photography, his subjects look not at the camera but slightly away from it.

³⁴ Ibid., 7.

³⁵ Brody, The People's Land, 152.

And shooting from a low angle, he distorted facial features by this choice of perspective.

Other images, however, challenge both the conventions of professional photography and the categories imposed in the offices at Hudson's Bay House. They can provide an alternative perspective to the texts, both verbal and visual, disseminated in the pages of The Beaver, and suggest other ways of framing the northern land and its people.

In the September 1946 Beaver, two pages were devoted to the photographs of "Pitsulak... an Eskimo who trades at Cape Dorset," and who was in Winnipeg for medical treatment. These photographs, and the larger body of work that Peter Pitseolak generated over three decades as a chronicler of his own life and those of the families of Seekooseelak, question the meanings attached to photographs taken by those passing through an unfamiliar culture and landscape.³⁶

Like Harrington, Peter Pitseolak composed his pictures. Yet seated or standing, indoors or outside, the subjects of Pitseolak's images are pictured in full-length views, within the context of their environment. They confront the camera and the viewer, looking back at us, conscious of and

³⁶ The Beaver, September 1946, "Pictures by Pitsulak," 20-21; see also Bellman, Peter Pitseolak and Peter Pitseolak and Dorothy Harley Eber, People from our Side, (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1975). Over 1,000 of Pitseolak's photographs are held by the McCord Museum's Notman Photographic Archives in Montreal.

participating in this act of representation.³⁷ And, like Harrington's subjects if removed from the distorting influence of his poses and Clifford Wilson's commentary and captions, they defy easy categorization into racial "types" and stereotyped behaviours. Instead, they portray a complexity and ambiguity of emotion and response, defying fixed meanings.

Pitseolak's portraits provide a needed commentary on the Hudson's Bay Company's varied publicity campaigns, from the exuberant display of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebrations of 1920 and Clifton's Thomas subsequent attempt to establish a permanent publicity office; through Robert Watson's literary efforts at building staff morale from 1922 to 1933; to the energetic achievements of Douglas MacKay in the 1930s, whose work resulted in the institutionalization of The Beaver magazine as a public relations organ and set the standard for succeeding editors. Pitseolak's images of Inuit family life serve as a reminder of the way in which the public interpretations of the HBC's past and present were just that, interested attempts to construct particular meanings. These interpretations, serving to bolster the Hudson's Bay Company's established role in Canadian (and British) affairs, reveal one side of the imagery of the fur trade.

³⁷ The Beaver, "Self Portrait," 20, "Young Family," 21; Bellman, Peter Pitseolak, 18 (Figures 6, 7, 8, 9), 36 (1a, 1b), 37 (2a, 2b), and 38 (3b, 4) for example.

The self-images of native people in the fur trade and in the Canadian arctic, and the images of fur traders and white men as "others" also require and deserve explication. In the surviving documents, placed in the context of this alternate discourse, including visual, written and oral traditions, these submerged representations assert their own presence.

AFTERWORD

In the midst of completing this study of The Beaver's origins and early history, and of its relationship to developments within the Hudson's Bay Company and to the larger world of mass media and public relations, I received a package in the mail from the office of The Beaver. In a promotional pamphlet, I was invited to purchase a subscription to "the only national magazine devoted to the fascinating story of this great northern land. For much of this century The Beaver has been exploring the history of Canada and her peoples in thoroughly researched, well written, handsomely illustrated and entertaining articles.... Included in each issue as well are timely book reviews, commentary and information on the unfolding story of the 'true North.'" An enclosed form letter from the "Publisher," A.R. Huband, (Vice-President and Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company), stressed the diversity and reputation of The Beaver. In passing, he subtly indicated the HBC's involvement with the magazine, noting the company's pride in The Beaver. This promotional material, like the magazine itself under the current editorship of Christopher Dafoe, downplayed the company connection,

presenting itself as an accurate and readable journal of popular history.¹

Although The Beaver, now subtitled "Exploring Canada's History," is still published by the HBC, its role in the company has been revised in recent years. Its previous primary functions as a medium for building staff morale and as an aggressive vehicle for public relations were no longer relevant to the HBC by the 1980s. In 1982 the company ceased free distribution to employees. In 1985 The Beaver was required to support itself, and a formal Advisory Board was established.² The magazine switched from a quarterly to a bi-monthly format to facilitate advertisers, and paid subscriptions were actively sought in a national campaign. But the magazine itself remains rooted in an awareness of its past. The Beaver embraces rather than escapes from an identification with its own history and its relationship with the HBC.³ Despite its widened scope, it still employs the rhetoric of the "true North." It will be interesting to see whether The Beaver of the 1990s replays or reformulates the themes of "The Magazine of Progress" and "The Magazine

¹ The editorships of both Malvina Bolus (1958 to 1972) and Helen Burgess (1972 to 1985) witnessed an increasing scope in the magazine's subjects.

² Present members are Shirlee A. Smith of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, University of Toronto historian Michael Bliss, William Nobleman, and Rolph Huband.

³ See, for example, editor Christopher Dafoe's tribute "The Beaver: Seventy Years of History" in the March/April 1990 issue, 4-5.

of the North," or whether it contributes to the building of new images of Canada's (and the Hudson's Bay Company's) past and present.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Unpublished Sources

Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of
Manitoba, Winnipeg

Section A - London Headquarters

A.92 London Office Correspondence, 1919-1932
A.102 London's Secretary's Dead Dossiers,
1920-c.1970

Section E - Private Manuscripts

E.95 Clifford P. Wilson papers, 1907-1972

Record Group 2 - Canadian Committee Office

RG2/1 Minutes, 1912-1970
RG2/2 Sir Augustus Nanton's Correspondence,
1911-1924
RG2/3 Correspondence, Non-Departmental,
1897-1926
RG2/7 Correspondence (Roneo System),
1904-1970
RG2/8 Correspondence (Direct Decimal
System), 1911-1970
RG2/10 Base Files, 1903-1971
RG2/13 Newspaper Clippings
RG2/38 Personnel Files, 1903-1971
RG2/47 General Ledgers, 1925-1970
RG2/72 Beaver Office Files, 1919-1973
RG2/74 Miscellaneous Public Relations
Historical Records, 1919-1969

Photograph Albums

Album 35 Red River Pageant, Lower Fort Garry
Album 57 250th Anniversary Celebrations

The Beaver Office Library, Winnipeg

Research Files

Beaver Magazine
MacKay, Douglas
Thomas, Clifton
Watson, Robert

Clipping Book

Unpublished Papers

- Geller, Peter. "Family Memory, Photography and the Fur Trade: The Sinclairs at Norway House, 1902-1911," paper presented at the Western Canadian Studies Conference, Banff, Alberta, 1990.
- Goldring, Philip. "Canadian Problems and Foreign Models: O.S. Finnie's Inuit Policy, 1922-1931," Ottawa, 1988.
- Hildebrandt, Walter and Ken Hughes. "Line 'Em Up: Ideology, Visual Image and Prairie Indians." Winnipeg, 1990.
- Morton, Anne. "The Old Company in a New Age: The Hudson's Bay Company in the 20th Century North," paper presented to the Winnipeg Northern Studies Group, 1989.
- Morton, Anne. "The Looking-Glass Vision: The Minute Books of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1914-1931," paper presented to The Rupert's Land Research Centre Colloquium, Winnipeg, 1986.

Interviews

- Helen Burgess, publisher, Watson and Dwyer.
Winnipeg, 5 March 1990.
- Christopher Dafoe, editor, The Beaver.
Winnipeg, 12 March 1990.
- Shirlee Anne Smith, Keeper, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.
Winnipeg, 28 February 1990.

Published Sources

The Beaver (published by the Hudson's Bay Company, Winnipeg, 1920-).

The following listing includes those articles and photographs (or photo-series) cited or analyzed in the body of the thesis. In the case of unsigned editorial copy, I have denoted authorship in square brackets []. Photographs are attributed to the photographer when so noted in the magazine. In the instances of anonymous photographs, I have attributed "authorship" to the current Beaver editor, also in square brackets []. It

should be noted, however, that all photographs, as published works, were layed out and captioned by Beaver editors.

"Beaver" articles and editorial copy

- Anderson, J.W. "Beaver Sanctuary," June 1937, 6-11.
- _____. "Trading NORTH of Hudson's Bay," December 1939, 43.
- Boake, Miss. "An Acrostic," November 1922, 77.
- Bonnycastle, R.H.G. "An Igloo Night," March 1931, 163-65.
- _____. "Salvage by the Midnight Sun," June 1937, 12-16.
- Brown, J. "HBC Officers Once Controlled a Northern Empire," December 1921, 2.
- Camsell, Charles. "Opening the Northwest," June 1944, 4-7.
- Chessire, R.H. "Apprentice Training," June 1937, 33-35.
- Chester, Philip A. "Douglas MacKay," March 1938, 3.
- Conn, W.E. "New Fur Commissioner Famed as Trader and Organiser," November 1920, 1-4.
- Cooper, P.A. "To New Heights...." December 1933, 2.
- Cotter, James L. "Eskimos of Eastmain," December 1929, 301-306; and March 1930, 362-365.
- de Wet, J.P. "Mining in the North," December 1945, 20-25.
- Dettloff, C.P. "Comments on Common Errors in Photography," December 1934, 40-41.
- Finnie, Richard. "Trading Into the Northwest Passage," December 1937, 46-52.
- Gibson, William. "The Victory Relics," December 1929, 311-312.
- _____. "The Seal Hunters," December 1931, 347-48.
- _____. "Sir John Franklin's Last Voyage," June 1937, 44-75.

- Godsell, P.H. "Our Aboriginal Customers," June 1924, 328-330.
- Irwin, William. "A Story of Eskimo Courage," December 1931, 351-352.
- Leveson Gower, R.H.G., "The Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company," December 1933, 40-42; 64.
- Lubbock, M.R. "Business in the Arctic," December 1936, 18-23.
- Mack, G.E. "Nascopie Downs Submarine," June 1939, 18-21.
- [Mackay, Douglas]. "The HBC Packet," September 1933, 7.
- [_____]. "The HBC Packet," December 1933, 6.
- [_____]. "The HBC Packet," September 1934, 5-6.
- [_____]. "To The Labrador, Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," September 1934, 10-12.
- [_____]. "An Illustrated Record of an Unique Voyage," December 1934, 9-12.
- [_____]. December 1934, "Trading Into Hudson's Bay," 14-15.
- [_____]. "The HBC Packet," December 1937, 5.
- _____. "They Shall Grow Not Old," March 1938, 30-32.
- _____. "Men of the Old Fur Trade," June 1938, 7-9.
- _____. "More Light on Thomas Simpson," September 1938, 26-31.
- _____. "In Old Fort Garry Ninety Years Ago," December 1938, 26-28.
- Nevin, W.H. "Policing the Far North," September 1945, 6-10.
- Parsons, Ralph. "Foreword," June 1937, 3.
- Prest, J. "Alberta's Indians," January 1922, 5-6.
- _____. "Indians and Edmonton," June 1925, 144.

- Pugsley, E.U. "Courage and Persistence Won Success for Fletcher Sparling," October 1920, 12-13.
- Rowley, O.R. "The First Anglican Bishop of the Arctic," March 1934, 9; 66.
- Sprungman, Ormal. "Photographing the Northland," March 1942, 34-38.
- [Thomas, Clifton] "Echoes of the May Celebration", October 1920, 4.
- [_____]. "To Our Readers," The Beaver, Oct. 1920, 5.
- [_____]. "To HBC Girls," October 1920, 11.
- [_____]. "Promotion," April 1921, 10.
- [_____]. Winnipeg Staff News Notes, August 1923, 403.
- Watson, Robert. "Gentlemen Adventurers," The Beaver, November 1923, 71.
- [_____]. "Chief Peguis" August 1924, 394.
- [_____]. "A Summer Trip to the Arctic," June 1925, 120-22.
- [_____]. "The Stone Fort: A Visit to Lower Fort Garry," June 1925, 127-29.
- [_____]. "S.S. Bayrupert," September 1926, 144-147.
- [_____]. "Council Meeting," December 1928, 110-111.
- [_____]. "Welcome to General Inspector Hugh Conn," June 1929, 216-217.
- [_____]. "Two Distinguished Fur Traders," December 1930, 99-101.
- _____. "A Company Indian," June 1931, 220-222.
- Watt, J.S.C. "Labrador Year," June 1937, 20-29.
- Wilson, Clifford. "Nascopie - The Story of a Ship," September 1947, 3-11.

"Beaver" photographs and photo-series

- Bassett, Harvey. "The Landing Party." September 1934, 5.
- Bourke-White, Margaret. "Life in the North," December 1937, 12-17.
- Cotter, James L., William Gibson and R. Bonnycastle. "Types of Canadian Eskimos," June 1931, 216.
- Harrington, Richard. "The Cheerful Eskimo: Outdoor Portraits by Richard Harrington," March 1952, 7-15.
- Herodier, Gaston. March 1928, cover and "Types of Port Harrison Eskimo," 112.
- Hourde, Richard. "From the Western Arctic/ A Series of Pictures taken for The Beaver by Richard N. Hourde," December 1936, 29-35.
- _____. June 1937, cover.
- _____. "Three Pictures of Eskimo Life," June 1937, 18-19.
- _____. "Fifty Years of Steam on the Mackenzie River," June 1937, 42-43.
- _____ and Harvey Bassett. "Three Company Posts," June 1937, 40-41.
- _____. "Arctic Fishing" September 1937, 33-36.
- [Mackay, Douglas]. "This Exciting Business of Selling in the Big Bazaars," December 1933, 33-36.
- [_____]. "Merchants to Millions," March 1935, 15-18.
- [_____]. "The Company News Reel," December 1935, 50.
- [_____]. "Swift and Candid," December 1937, 27-45.
- [Pitseolak, Peter]. "Pictures by Pitsulak," September 1946, 20-21.
- Sauer, Max, Jr. "Four Arctic Photographs," March 1934, 15-19.
- [Thomas, Clifton]. "Bonnie Babies," February 1921, 17-19.

- [Watson, Robert]. "Dogs of the North," June 1925, 134-135.
- [_____]. "Fur Trade Department," September 1930, 66.
- [_____]. "Happy Huskies." June 1931, 231.
- [_____]. "Our Family Album," December 1932, 150.
- Wilson, Clifford. "Oil for the Planes of Alaska" September 1943, 4-14.

Books

- Banta, Melissa and Curtis M. Hindley. From Site to Sight: Anthropology, Photography and the Power of Imagery. Cambridge: Peabody Museum Press, 1986.
- Barbour, Noel Robert. Those Amazing People: The Story of the Canadian Magazine Industry, 1778-1967. Toronto: The Crucible Press, 1982.
- Bellman, David, editor. Peter Pitseolak (1902-1973): Inuit Historian of Seekooseelak. Montreal: McCord Museum, 1980.
- Berkhofer, Robert. The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.
- Binney, George. The Eskimo Book of Knowledge (London: Hudson's Bay Company, 1931)
- Brody, Hugh. The People's Land: Whites and the Eastern Arctic. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1975 [reprinted 1983].
- Clifford, James. The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Ewen, Stuart. Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of the Consumer Culture. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976.
- Gidal, Tim N. Modern Photojournalism: Origin and Evolution, 1910-1933. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co. Ltd., 1973.

- Gillis, Elsie McCall (as told to Eugenie Myles). North Pole Boarding House. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1951.
- Godsell, Philip. Arctic Trader: The Account of Twenty Years With the Hudson's Bay Company. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1934.
- Haycock, Ronald G. The Images of the Indian. WLU Monograph Series, No. 1. Waterloo: Waterloo Lutheran University, 1971.
- Hudson's Bay Company. The Fort Garry Historical Pageant: Celebrating a Friendship 250 Years Old!. (no date, held in HBCA, RG2/74/3).
- Hudson's Bay Company. The Hudson's Bay Company: A Brief History. London: Hudson's Bay House, 1934.
- Jussim, Estelle. Visual Communication and the Graphic Arts: Photographic Technologies in the Nineteenth Century. New York and London: R.R. Bowker Company, 1974.
- Kesterton, W.H. A History of Journalism in Canada. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967.
- Kouwenhoven, John A. Half a Truth is Better Than None. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- Macaulay, R.H.H., photographs by Harvey Bassett. Trading Into Hudson's Bay: A Narrative of the Visit of Patrick Ashley Cooper, Thirtieth Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, to Labrador, Hudson's Strait and Hudson's Bay, in the year 1934. Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Company, 1934.
- MacKay, Douglas. The Honourable Company: A History of the Hudson's Bay Company. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1936.
- _____. The Honourable Company: A History of the Hudson's Bay Company. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1949 (revised by Alice MacKay).
- _____. The Honourable Company: A History of the Hudson's Bay Company. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1966 (revised by Shane MacKay).
- Manitoba, Department of Education. Empire Day, May the Twenty-Third, Nineteen Hundred and Thirty-One. Winnipeg: Department of Education, 1931. (held in the University of Manitoba Elizabeth Dafoe Library Archives/Special Collections.)

- Moyles, R.G. and Doug Owsram. Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities: British Views of Canada, 1880-1914. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988.
- Peterson, Theodore. Magazines in the Twentieth Century. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956.
- Phillips, Paul T. Britain's Past in Canada: The Teaching and Writing of British History. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989.
- Raucher, Alan R. Public Relations and Business, 1900-1929 Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1968.
- Ray, Arthur J. The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990.
- Rutherford, Paul. The Making of the Canadian Media. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1978.
- Sahlins, Marshall. Islands of History. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Schooling, William. The Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1920. London: Hudson's Bay House, 1920.
- Shapiro, Michael J. The Politics of Representation: Writing Practices in Biography, Photography and Policy Analysis. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988.
- Sontag, Susan. On Photography. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1977.
- Stott, William. Documentary Expression and Thirties America. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.
- Susman, Warren I. Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.
- Sutherland, Fraser. The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines, 1789-1989. Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1989.
- Tedlow, Richard S. Keeping the Corporate Image: Public Relations and Business, 1900-1950. Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press Inc., 1979.
- Trachtenberg, Alan. Reading American Photographs: Images as History: Mathew Brady to Walker Evans. New York: Hill and Wang, 1989.

- Watson, Robert. Lower Fort Garry: A History of the Stone Fort. Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Company, 1928.
- Washburn, Wilcomb E., editor. Handbook of North American Indians: History of Indian-White Relations, Vol. 4. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1988.
- Wilson, Clifford, editor. Pageant of the North. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1957.
- _____, editor. The New North in Pictures. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1946 (held in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives Library).
- Wood, James Playsted. Magazines in the United States: Their Social and Economic Influence. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1949.
- Zaslow, Morris. The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988.

Articles

- Berger, John. "Uses of Photography", in John Berger. About Looking. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980, 48-63.
- Berkhofer, Robert. "White Conceptions of Indians," in Wilcomb E. Washburn, editor. History of Indian-White Relations, 522-47.
- Blackman, Margaret B. "Visual Ethnohistory: Photographs in the Study of Culture History," in Dennis Weidman, ed., Ethnohistory: A Researcher's Guide. Williamsburg: Department of Anthropology, College of William and Mary, 1986, 137-166.
- Brown, Jennifer S.H. "Newman's Company of Adventurers in Two Solitudes: A Look at Reviews and Responses," Canadian Historical Review, LXVII, 4 (1986), 562-71.
- Finlay, Sean. "Surveying and Mapping Helps Build Canada," Geos (Department of Energy, Mines and Resources), Vol. 18, No. 4 (Fall 1989), 22-9.
- Green, Rayna. "The Indian in Popular American Culture," in Wilcomb E. Washburn, editor. History of Indian-White Relations, 587-606.

- . "The Tribe Called Wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe," Folklore, Vol. 99(i), 1988, 30-55.
- Guglielmin, Donna. "The Overlooked World of House Magazines: 100 Million Strong U.S. and Canada Circulation," Content, July 1976, 26.
- Jordan, Dennis. "Introduction" to Roland Wild, Arctic Command: The Story of Smellie and the "Nascopie". Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1955, vii-xvii.
- Merk, Frederick. "Introduction to the First Edition," Fur Trade and Empire: George Simpson's Journal, 1824-25. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1968 [revised edition], xxxiii-lxii.
- Monod, David. "Bay Days: The Managerial Revolution and the Hudson's Bay Company Department Stores, 1912-1939," in CHA Historical Papers (1986), 173-196.
- Morton, Anne. "The Old Company in a New Age: 20th Century Records in The Hudson's Bay Company Archives," in Ann M. Brennan and Martha Andrews, eds. Glaciological Data (22): Twelfth Northern Libraries Colloquy. Boulder, Colorado: World Data Center A for Glaciology, 1988, 307-313.
- Newman, Peter C. "Response," Canadian Historical Review, LXVII, 4 (1986), 572-78.
- Paine, Robert "Introduction," in Robert Paine, editor. Patrons and Brokers in the Eastern Arctic: Newfoundland Social and Economic Papers No.2. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971, 3-7.
- Pakes, Fraser J. "Seeing with the Stereotypic Eye: The Visual Image of the Plains Indian," Native Studies Review, Vol. 1, No. 2, (1985), 1-31.
- Peers, Laura L. "Rich Man, Poor Man, Beggarman, Chief: Saulteaux in the Red River Settlement," in William Cowan, editor, Papers of the Eighteenth Algonquian Conference. Ottawa: Carleton University, 1987, 261-270.
- Qualter, Terence H. "Propaganda in Canadian Society," in Benjamin D. Singer, editor. Communications in Canadian Society. Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1982 (revised edition), 267-84.

- Ray, Arthur J. "The Hudson's Bay Company and Native People," in Wilcomb E. Washburn, editor. History of Indian-White Relations, 335-50.
- Ross, Alex and Anne Morton. "The Hudson's Bay Company and Its Archives," Business Archives, No. 51 (November 1985), 17-39.
- Walden, Keith. "Speaking Modern: Language, Culture, and Grocery Store Window Displays, 1887-1920," Canadian Historical Review, LXX, 3, (1989), 285-310.
- Watson, Robert. "The Indians of Manitoba," in Manitoba, Department of Education. Empire Day. Winnipeg: Department of Education, 1931, 9-31.
- West, Douglas A. "The Imagined Reality of the Canadian North," in W.P. Adams and P.G. Johnson, editor. , Student Research in Canada's North/Les Recherches des etudiants dans le nord Canadian. Ottawa: Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 1988, 590-96.
- Williams, Glyndwr. "The Hudson's Bay Company and the Fur Trade: 1670-1870," The Beaver (Autumn 1983: reprinted 1987) 4-86.
- Wilson, Clifford. "Furs for the White Man," in Clifford Wilson, editor. North of 55: Canada from the 55th Parallel to the Pole. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954, 82-93.
- Wilson, J. Wreford. "The Role of Illusion in North American Geography," Canadian Geographer xii, 1 (1969), 10-27.