

The Crucible:

Pembina and the Origins of the Red River Valley Metis

by

Ruth Swan

A thesis
presented to the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in History

Winnipeg, Manitoba
©) Ruth Swan, 2003

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

COPYRIGHT PERMISSION PAGE

**The Crucible:
Pembina and the Origins of the Red River Valley Metis**

BY

Ruth Swan

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy**

Ruth Swan © 2003

Permission has been granted to the Library of The University of Manitoba to lend or sell copies of this thesis/practicum, to the National Library of Canada to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film, and to University Microfilm Inc. to publish an abstract of this thesis/practicum.

This reproduction or copy of this thesis has been made available by authority of the copyright owner solely for the purpose of private study and research, and may only be reproduced and copied as permitted by copyright laws or with express written authorization from the copyright owner.

Abstract: The Crucible: Pembina and the Origins of the Red River Valley Métis
by Ruth Swan, Ph.D. dissertation, History Department, University of Manitoba

The origins of the Red River Métis lay in the development of the freeman culture of the plains buffalo hunters and traders. These men were voyageurs from Quebec and the Great Lakes who worked for Montreal-based fur trade companies and who married Native women, mostly Cree and Ojibwe. Although the ethnogenesis of this freeman culture developed on the margins of the plains and parkland starting in the 1770s, such as along the Saskatchewan and upper Assiniboine Basin, it was not articulated as a separate ethnic identity until 1815-16 in Red River in the confrontation between the HBC, the Selkirk immigrants, the NWC *Bourgeois* and their young *Bois Brulés* supporters. In this cultural transition, the role of the Pembina fur trade region as a cradle or “crucible” for Métis ethnogenesis has been overlooked because of a “Forks Myopia”.

Focus on the Pembina Métis helps to challenge some existing misconceptions. The southward movement of Cree speakers to Red River in the 1820s has confounded American scholars who have a hard time explaining why the Turtle Mountain “Chippewa” who are Métis in background speak French Cree. Linguists have studied this Métis language, called *Michif*, which in its classic form is composed of French nouns and Cree verbs. Ethnic identity was linked to language and culture and the geographic extent of Michif suggests that it was the dominant language of the buffalo hunters’ camps and in the Red River Settlement for most of the nineteenth century. Bungee, the English-Cree mixed dialect spoken by the Orkney-Homeguard Cree descendants of the HBC, has died out in the last forty years. Using genealogy, researchers can name the freemen and link up the Canadian voyageurs of the early 1800s with the *Bois Brulés* of the Fur Trade War. These families settled at Pembina and The Forks before the arrival of European immigrants in 1812, thus allowing them to claim importance as “first settlers”.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Barry Ferguson, Graduate Chair in History, and Dr. Doug Sprague, my advisor, for their support in finishing this project as well as my committee: Dr. Frits Pannekoek, University of Calgary; Dr. Fred Shore, Department of Native Studies; Dr. Robin Brownlee and Dr. Adele Perry for their useful comments. Their feedback was greatly appreciated, especially the experienced insights of the Métis historians. A special thanks goes to the External reader, Dr. Pannekoek, whose stimulating suggestions prompted further reading and insight.

I would also like to express my great appreciation to my partner, Edward A. Jerome of Hallock, Mn., for his collaboration and for making his family research based on archival research at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives and Provincial Archives of Manitoba, the St. Boniface Historical Society, the Minnesota Historical Society and les Archives Nationales du Québec à Montréal. This study would not have been possible without it. I would also like to acknowledge the help of many other friends in the Métis community, such as Claudette Ek, Larry Haag, Doreen Breland-Fines, Theresa Breland, Claudette Ek, Caroline, Jules, Lorne and Paul Chartrand, the Desroisers clan, and the Red River Cart Committee: Armand Jerome, Satch D'Heilly, Joseph Courchaine, Orille Haugan and Emilio Tacchi who realized the dream of the Métis Journey in 2002. I would also like to acknowledge the fine work of the many archivists at all the archives we have worked at, including Chris Kotecki, Janelle Reynolds, Anne Morton and Gilles Lesage. Historians could not do their research without the help of dedicated archivists, so that is a debt which is gratefully acknowledged here. I would also like to express appreciation to all the professors in the History Department at the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg who stimulated my graduate studies, especially Dr. Jennifer Brown. My family who cheered me on through many arduous seasons are gratefully appreciated, especially my daughters, Kimberley and Leslie; Dillan and Emma deserve more recent appreciation. The addition of wee Nina two weeks after I handed in my draft to my committee was exciting for our family.

This study is dedicated to all the ancestors of the Jerome and Collin families, all the branches, and all the extended kin. I have many happy memories of visiting relatives and friends in the course of this study from International Falls, Mn., to Minneapolis, to Red Lake Falls, Moorhead and west to Montana and the Columbia River. In particular, I would like to thank Edward Jerome's mother and father, brother and sisters and their extended families for their warmth and generosity as well as Dorothy Kalka of Pembina and Senator Dan and Bridget Jerome in Belcourt, North Dakota. It was an inspiration to visit their beautiful home and to share in their love for Chippewa and Métis culture and heritage and to see their wonderful collection of handmade artifacts. I extend special thank you to Anne Healey and Virgil Benoit of l'Association des Français du Nord (AFRAN) who created the annual Chatauqua at the Old Crossing Treaty State Park on the Red Lake River. Visiting the place where the Métis cart trains crossed the river and where the 1863 Treaty was signed with the Chippewa and the Métis is a pilgrimage to the past and an inspiring cultural event of the present. I look forward to coming to

Chatauqua with the Manitoba carts and creating memories with many new friends. Métis culture is a trans-border phenomenon and it is a pleasure to have the opportunity to participate in these events.

I am grateful for the friendship and support of many Manitoba Métis people have greatly increased my knowledge and understanding of their history and culture. The dissertation is no longer a means to an end, but the beginning of a journey of discovery. As a non-Métis, I do not pretend to speak for that community, but I do hope that this historical study will contribute a greater understanding and appreciation by the dominant society for our common history. Inclusion of Aboriginal People in the history of the Red River Valley is a step in better mutual understanding.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Pembina: A Regional Concept; p. 5.

Part I: ORIGINS OF THE MÉTIS IN THE PAYS D'EN HAUT.

- Chapter 1 Métissage on the Saskatchewan River: "Indianized Frenchmen" and their descendants: The case of the Jerome Family; p. 49.
- Chapter 2 To the Great Lakes: the Collin Family at Grand Portage & Thunder Bay: p. 82.
- Chapter 3 From the Great Lakes to Red River: Indigenous Geography and First Traders; p. 122.

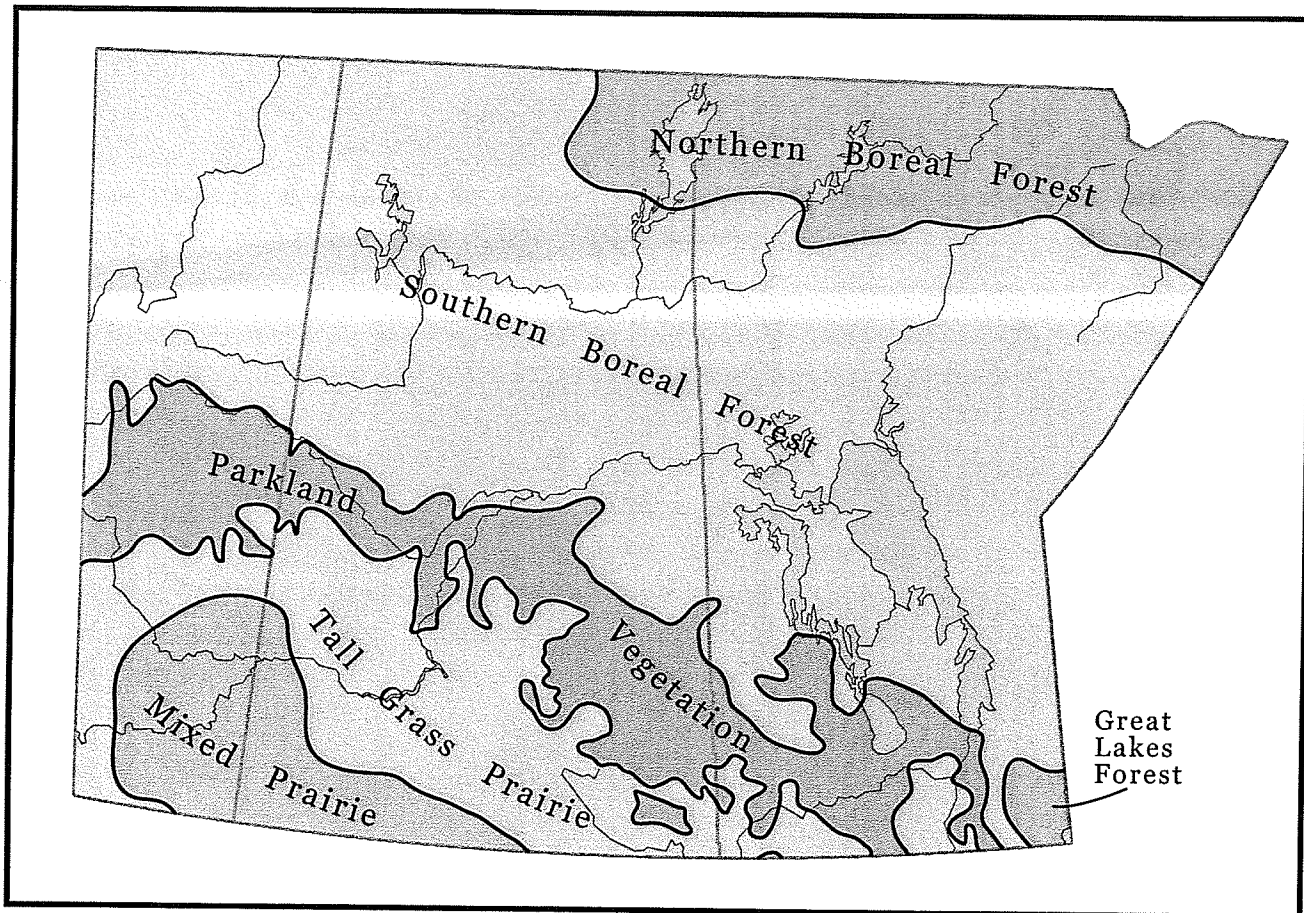
Part 2: MÉTIS ETHNOGENESIS AT PEMBINA:

- Chapter 4 *Ojibbeway Waymetegooshewuk*: "Chippeway Frenchmen" in the Pembina Fur Trade: 1790s; p. 147.
- Chapter 5 Freeman, Aboriginal Women and *Métissage* at Pembina, 1800-1808; p. 185.
- Chapter 6 Colony & Conflict: The Emergence of the Bois Brûlés/Métis, 1808-1821; p. 226.
- Chapter 7 The "Buccaneers of the Plains" Become Settlers in Red River, 1821-1843; p. 296.

Conclusions: Pembina as Crucible of the Red River Métis; p. 329.

Bibliography; p. 343.

Introductory Figure: PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE DETERMINED THE EXPANSION OF THE FUR TRADE. The distribution of the subarctic vegetation determined fur quality and the river basins determined the routes of the fur trade from the south-east to the north-west.



The best furs were in the boreal forest of the Subarctic region designated by the coniferous (evergreens) or Boreal Forest. The Parkland Vegetation Zone was a transition zone between coniferous and deciduous forest. The Tall Grass Prairie was grassland inhabited by migratory bison herds which provided much of the meat supply for Plains Aboriginal groups. Mixed Prairie included pockets of trees in hilly areas such as Riding Mountain, Wood Mountain, Duck Mountain and the Cypress Hills which Aboriginal groups used for hunting and trapping. The hills provided shelter from storms and protection from enemy attacks. The higher elevations produced increased rainfall, more trees and more fur-bearing animals. Similarly, farther north, within the tree line, the colder climate produced thicker and better-quality pelts. A. J. Ray demonstrated that fur trade posts along the fringe of prairie and parkland became used as "provisioning posts" where "beat meat" and grease were collected to make pemmican to supply the long canoe voyages of the Canadian fur traders to the northern posts in the early nineteenth century. See Figure 39: Fur Trade Provision Supply Network in the Early 19th Century, *Indians in the Fur Trade: their role as hunters, trappers and middlemen in the lands southwest of Hudson Bay: 1660-1870*: 129. Examples were Cumberland House, HBC, and Fort Bas de la Rivière [Winnipeg].

Introduction: Pembina, a Regional Concept

Pembina is a small border community on the west bank of the Red River which divides North Dakota and Minnesota. It is also 2.2 miles south of the 49th parallel which divides the United States and Canada, thus being just south of the Canadian province of Manitoba. The modern town is located at the mouth of the Pembina River, on the west side of the Red River in North Dakota. Across the Red is the small community of St. Vincent, Minnesota. To the north, along the east side of the Red is Emerson, Manitoba. These three communities divided by geography and political boundaries make up the regional area of Pembina.

During the fur trade era, two hundred years ago, most of these political lines did not exist or were not important to the people living in the area. The whole of the Red River Valley was claimed by Great Britain and was called Rupert's Land; the Hudson's Bay Company in its charter claimed all the land in the drainage basin of Hudson Bay, that is, all the rivers flowing north, including the Red River which empties into Lake Winnipeg.¹ When this London-based company was established in 1670, it built posts on Hudson and James Bays and traded with Indians who travelled from the interior to trade their furs for European goods. The traders stayed by the side in their protected forts and the Indians acted as middlemen for Aboriginal groups farther east, south and west.²

¹ See the map "Indian Land Cessions during Thomas Jefferson's Presidency, 1801-1809", in Anthony F.C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans*, Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999. Louisiana Territory did not include the Red River Valley.

² For a synopsis of the Hudson's Bay Company history, see Glyndwr Williams, "The Hudson's Bay Company and the Fur Trade: 1670-1870", *The Beaver*, Autumn 1983. A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1939. E.E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870*, 3 volumes, London: Hudson's

Despite these British claims of territoriality and sovereignty in Rupert's Land, when the fur traders arrived in the Red River Valley, the traders came from Quebec, through the Great Lakes, over the height of land west of Lake Superior and into Rupert's Land. The explorations of Pierre de Gaultier, Sieur de la Vérendrye, and his family are well-known. They established a series of forts from Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods to the Red River and northwest of Lake Winnipeg (see Figure 3a). They explored the great northern plains, searching in vain for the mythic *Mèr de l'Ouest*. The government of New France forced them to use the fur trade to finance their explorations, and in so doing, they made alliances with native groups along the way, who gave them directions and helped them survive. Most of their explorations were carried in the 1730s and 1740s.³

Then there is a gap of undocumented time when little is known from written sources about what was happening historically in the Red River Valley until British Canadian "Pedlars" as they were known started exploring Lake Winnipeg, the Red and Assiniboine Rivers (known as Lower and Upper Red Rivers) as a route to the interior plains.⁴ This occurred in the 1780s and 1790s. Peter Grant, a Canadian trader, established the first known fort in the Pembina area in

Bay Record Society, 1958-59.

³La Vérendrye, Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de, *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye and His Sons*, ed. L.J. Burpee, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1927. Yves Zoltvany, "Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography (DCB)*, v. 3: 1974: 246-254. A.J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.

⁴Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1930, 1984. Marcel Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*, translated by George Woodcock, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986. W.S. Wallace, *The Pedlars from Quebec*, Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1954. Olive Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992.

the early 1780s. The exact date of this establishment and his route to the Red River is unknown, but the NWC route to Lake Winnipeg from Lake Superior was via the Ontario route through the Winnipeg River and south on Red River, following the trail of the Les Vérendrye forty years later.⁵ At the same time, there were Montreal-based traders working out of Great Lakes depots like Michilimackinac, La Baye and Fond du Lac, exploring river routes through what is now Wisconsin and Minnesota, through the drainage basin of the Mississippi and into Rupert's Land from the southeast.⁶

These separate exploratory thrusts met in the Pembina region in the late 1790s. There ensued considerable competition and rivalry between partnerships and groups of Montreal-based traders until the New North West Company (XYC) joined into the North West Company (NWC) at the end of 1804.⁷ There was a lesser challenge from the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) traders from Albany and Brandon House, who were forced to move inland by the competition that was siphoning off all their furs.⁸ Numerous posts were established from Pembina south to Grandes Fourches at the mouth of the Red Lake River (emptying from the east), west to the

⁵ Carolyn Gilman, *The Grand Portage Story*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1992. Jean Morrison, *Superior Rendezvous Place: Fort William in the Canadian Fur Trade*, Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2001.

⁶ Harry Duckworth, "The Last Coureurs de Bois", *The Beaver*, Spring: 1984: 4-12.

⁷ A.J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade: their role as trappers, hunters, and middlemen in the lands southwest of Hudson Bay: 1660-1870*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974. Lauren Ritterbush, *The Fur Trade of Northeastern North Dakota: The 1990 Fur Trade Sites Project*, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1991.

⁸ Scott Hamilton, *The Social Organization of the Hudson's Bay Company: Formal and Informal Social Relations in the Context of the Inland Fur Trade*, M.A. Thesis on Brandon House and La Souris sites, University of Alberta, 1985.

Pembina Hills to trade with the Plains Cree and Assiniboine and north to the Rivière aux Gratiis [Morris River] and at the mouths of tributaries along the Red like the Rat and Roseau Rivers, favourite trapping groups of the local Ojibwe.⁹

In the fur trade, Pembina became the focus of this regional fur trade rivalry until the NWC established Fort Gibraltar at the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine River in 1810.¹⁰ The initial goal of the Pembina traders was to collect furs, especially beaver pelts. The geographic location of different native groups living along this geographic borderland of parkland and plains influenced the Pembina fur trade. During this period, the fur trade acted as a centripetal force, drawing Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals together in a common enterprise, resulting in the marriages of fur traders and local native women who created families of mixed backgrounds. These families eventually grew to sufficient numbers that built communal ties and evolved into a new ethnic group that saw themselves separate from both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals.

The best beaver trappers were the Ojibwe who moved west with the Canadian traders. Originally from around Sault Ste Marie, they moved both north and south around Lake Superior, gradually pushing the Dakota westward. These two groups were historic enemies and they carried their tribal animosities into the Red River Valley. After the 1780 smallpox epidemic wiped out large numbers of the Cree and Assiniboine who were living in the valley, the survivors

⁹Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin and Harold Hickerson, *The Red Lake and Pembina Chippewa*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1974. Harold Hickerson, *The Chippewa and their Neighbors: A Study in Ethnohistory*, Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1970, 1988.

¹⁰ Jacqueline Peterson, "Gathering at the River: The Métis Peopling of the Northern Plains", *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, ed. Virginia L. Heidenreich, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1990: 47-64.

welcomed the Ojibwe (or Saulteurs as the French Canadians called them) as allies and these three Aboriginal groups tended to make warfare alliances.¹¹

Aboriginal warfare called for small-scale skirmishes and ambushes, usually carried out in the summer. The Red River was called the “War Road” and from spring to fall when there was no snow on the ground and no ice in the river, it was not safe to travel through the valley or on the plains in small groups where one might be vulnerable to attack. This Aboriginal warfare was a significant factor in retarding the fur trade from the southeast moving into the Red River Valley. Although the Ontario route was longer, it was safer.¹² The Ontario river route pioneered by the Nor’Westers also followed rivers which were deeper and more amenable to transportation by birch-bark canoes, despite the many arduous portages involved. Thus, the physical landscape of the Canadian shield with its river systems and impediments as well as the historic inter-ethnic relations of local Indians influenced the spread of the fur trade as Canadians from Quebec looked for the best fur fields in the northern and western parts of North America.¹³

The Red River Valley was also a border between two important geographic areas, the parkland or transition zone between the forests to the east and the plains to the west; see Introductory Figure: Physical Geography and Climate Determined the Expansion of the Fur Trade which shows the different climatic zones and distribution of vegetation; the range of parkland between boreal forest and prairie grassland was a critical area in the provisioning of the

¹¹ Harold Hickerson, “The Genesis of a Trading Post Band: The Pembina Chippewa”, *Ethnohistory* 3:4: Fall 1956: 289-345.

¹² Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994.

¹³ A.J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.

fur trade. Pembina was on the border of the plains, and the huge buffalo herds migrated there to cross the Red River, the fur traders found it an attractive spot to locate their stockaded posts.¹⁴ The bison of the plains along with deer, birds and fish, were important food resources and it was easier for the plains groups to live independently.

Aboriginal groups living in different climates had adapted to different environments and developed different material cultures. Because it was dangerous to live on the plains without horses, groups like the Plains Cree and Assiniboine developed the custom of hunting in large groups in the 1700s.¹⁵ The Ojibwe were a forest-dwelling people, and their seasonal round depended on resources such as the moose, deer, fish, maple sugar, wild rice and berries. When they moved near the plains, they had to adapt to a new lifestyle and Pembina was a place where this adjustment could be observed. The Ojibwe also hunted on foot and shot buffalo when they

¹⁴ For the geographical factors affecting the distribution of Canadian and HBC provisioning posts, see A.J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade: their role as hunters, trappers and middlemen in the lands southwest of Hudson Bay: 1660-1870*, Toronto: University of Toronto, 1974:129. For the geographic penetration of the interior by Canadian and British traders, see Plate 57: Fur Trade Hinterlands, *Historical Atlas of Canada: From the Beginning to 1800*, v. 1, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987. A map in this plate also shows "Economic Regions, ca. 1670" showing the distribution of different kinds of Aboriginal food sources which are linked to climate and vegetative zones contrasting boreal forest and plains. Plate 61 shows "Competition and Consolidation, 1760-1825, showing competition between Canadians and British companies."

¹⁵ Plate 57, *Historical Atlas of Canada*, v. 1, also shows the distribution of horses from before 1705 to 1805 to Cree, Assiniboine and Ojibwe amongst other plains tribes. For the material culture of Plains groups, see Part VI of *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, ed. R.B. Morrison & C. Roderick Wilson, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986. See Part III: The Horse Wars, of John Milloy's *The Plains Cree: Trade, Diplomacy and War: 1790 to 1870*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1990. For the effect of the horse trade on the Ojibwe, see Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada: 1780-1870*: 47-50. For a very comprehensive overview of Cree fur trade history, see archaeologist Dale R. Russell, *Eighteenth Century Western Cree and their Neighbours*, Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization: Archaeological Survey of Canada, Mercury Series Paper 143, 1991.

moved into close proximity, but, because of the dangers of Sioux attack, they were reluctant to move out of the safety of the forests until the Canadian traders moved into the valley and provided some protection with their walled forts and supplies of guns and ammunition.¹⁶ Consequently, the Ojibwe were moving into the Red River Valley about the same time as the Canadian traders and they all made the adjustments of life next to the plains together such as learning to hunt on the plains with horses and in large groups for protection like the Assiniboine.¹⁷ The inter-ethnic interaction of these Aboriginal groups of various languages and cultures with the non-Aboriginal traders from Quebec and the Orkneys (via Hudson's Bay) eventually gave rise to new groups separate from both the Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals - the Métis and HBC British descendants.¹⁸

There is another important reason for thinking of Pembina as a regional concept, not just a dot on the map at the mouth of the Pembina River. This study on the origins of the Red River Valley Métis is really the first volume of a two-part series on the history of the Pembina Métis.

¹⁶ Charles Bishop, *The Northern Ojibwa and the Fur Trade: An Historical and Ecological Study*, Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Canada, 1974. Harold Hickerson, *The Chippewa and their Neighbours*, Rev. ed. With foreward and critical review by Jennifer S.H. Brown and Laura L. Peers, Prospect Heights, Waveland Press, 1988. Laura Peers questioned any formal links between Ojibwe and Canadian traders, but they "took advantage of the trend". Chaboillez and Henry documented their familiarity with the Red River Valley in the late 1790s and early 1800s. *The Ojibwa of Western Canada: 1780-1870*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994: 14-16.

¹⁷ Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994: Chapter 2: Early Expansion and Adaptation: 1780-1804.

¹⁸ Marcel Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West: Part 3: The Birth of the Métis Group*: p. 290. Jacqueline Peterson, "Gathering at the River: The Métis Peopling of the Northern Plains", *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, ed. Virginia Heidenreich, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1990: 47-64.

After the missionaries arrived in 1818, they immediately sent a priest to Pembina as well as the Forks (St. Boniface) because the majority of the French Canadian freemen and their families were Catholic and a majority were living in the Pembina area. As the population of the Red River Valley expanded in the nineteenth century, the Catholic Métis and the Protestant mixed-bloods created parishes based around Catholic and Anglican churches. The Catholic Parish of Pembina was typical of the parishes of the Red River Settlement and was in fact the southern extension of it. Since the freemen and Métis tended to settle on narrow river lots up and down the rivers, the parish of Pembina drew its congregation from a large geographic area: north to River aux Gratiass, south to Grandes Fourches, west to the Pembina Hills, and east into Minnesota. When the Minnesota Territory was established in the 1840s and for the decade before it became a state, the Pembina community was part of Minnesota Territory (including the west back which later became Dakota Territory). As in the fur trade, the Pembina parish and community (from 1818 to the influx of European immigrants in the 1880s) was much larger than the village at the forks of the Red and the Pembina.¹⁹

Pembina - the origins and variations in the name:

According to Elliott Coues, editor of Alexander Henry's Journal in 1897, the word *Pembina* derives from an Ojibwe word, meaning *High Bush Cranberry*. "The *b* in the name

¹⁹ Ruth Swan, "The Pembina Métis Cemetery: Conflicts and Partial Solutions", *Sacred Lands: Claims, Conflicts and Resolutions*, ed. Jill Oakes, Rick Riewe, Kathi Kinew, and Elaine Maloney, Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute, University of Alberta, 1998: 293-304. Ruth Swan and Edward Jerome, "The History of the Pembina Métis Cemetery: Inter-Ethnic Perspectives on a Sacred Site", *Plains Anthropologist* 44: 170: 81-94. Despite the excellent research of archaeologist Lauren Ritterbush on Pembina fur trade sites, including Walhalla and Turtle River, state archaeologists argued that Pembina was only a small village after the Catholic mission was closed in 1823. See report by Fern Swenson and Paul Picha on the "Dumoulin Site", Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1998.

Pembina is intrusive, for the word is *anepeminan*, from *nepin*, summer, and *minan*, berry, or, as others say, *nipi-mina*.²⁰ John Tanner was adopted by the Ottawa and could not talk English when he was on Red River in Henry's time; but he spoke a dialect of Ojibway (probably of the Court Oreille or Ottawa dialect). Tanner later noted in his memoirs published in 1830 the Ojibwe word for the Pembina River: "at this place, (since called Pembinah) where the *Nebenninahnesebee* enters Red River'. His editor, Dr. James, translated this as High Craneberry River, and renders Red River from *Miskwawgumme-wesebee*.²¹ Keating's narrative of the Long Expedition in 1824 observed: "a small stream, called by the Chippewas *Anepeminan sipi*, from a small red berry termed by them *anepeminan*, which name has been shortened and corrupted into Pembina (*Viburnum oxycoccos*)."²² Francois-Antoine Larocque's Mandan journal, 1804-05, in Masson, I, 1889, has *Pain Binatat*, p. 313, and *Pimbina* elsewhere.²³ In 1798, Thomspson used the English equivalent as Summer Berry River (which was also used by HBC men like Thomas Miller). "The fruit itself is still so called. The accent of the word Pembina is on the first

²⁰ Alexander Henry the Younger first arrived at the Forks of the Pembina and Red Rivers with his guide, Jean Baptiste Desmarais, on September 5, 1800. See the note of explanation from editor Elliott Coues: p. 80. *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry*, first edition 1897, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1965.

²¹ *The Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*, ed. Edwin James, first edition 1830, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1956: 62-63. Most English speakers call it "High bush cranberry" rather than "Craneberry". James identifies it as *viburnum oxycoccus*.

²² *Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River, Lake Winnepeek, Lake of the Woods, etc.*, ed. William Keating (afterward called "Keating's Narrative"), first edition 1824, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1959: II: 38. He does not give dates.

²³ *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, ed. L.R. Masson, first edition: 1889-90, New York: Antiquarian Press, 1960: v. I: 313: "Mr. Chaboillez was absent, having gone to River Pain Binat."

syllable.”²⁴ In Ojibwe, the sounds of *p* and *b* are interchangeable; after dropping the initial *a* and changing *p* to *b*, *anepeminan* changes to *pembina* (sometimes the accent is on the second syllable).

This information is consistent with other sources. One of the earliest sources we found was to John McKay’s Journal at HBC Lac La Pluie [Rainy Lake] in 1796. On November 8, he referred to a Canadian trader “on a River called by the Natives, the Summer Berry River”.²⁵ Charles Chaboillez, like other North West Company (NWC) traders, used the French pronunciation: *Rivière Painbinat*.²⁶ In 1799, Thomas Miller, HBC Pembina trader, wrote to Thomas Vincent on the Winnipeg River at Point au Foutre, locating himself at “River Paupenor”.²⁷ When Alexander Henry the Younger first ascended the Red River, he passed the “Panbian River” on September 5, 1800, and his guide, Jean Baptiste Desmarais, showed him the location of his NWC predecessors: Chaboillez’s post on the south side of the Pembina and Peter

²⁴ *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest, The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry*, ed. Elliott Coues, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1897, 1965: I: p. 82, note; hereafter referred to as “Henry’s Journal, ed. Coues”. Coues referred to Tanner, Keating, Larocque and Thompson in his explanatory note.

²⁵ Hudson’s Bay Company Archives (HBCA), Lac La Pluie Post Journal: B.105/a/4, 1796-97. John McKay later transferred to Brandon House and became the Master there until he died in 1810. The Canadian trader he referred to was Charles Chaboillez who was on Red River at the mouth of the Rat River for the winter of 1796-97 before he located at Pembina. His journal for the first winter has not survived. On August 24, 1800, Henry wrote in his journal: “At the entrance of the Rat we observed the remains of some old buildings, where [Mr. Charles Jean Baptiste] Chaboillez wintered in 1796-97.” See Henry’s Journal, ed. Coues: 60-61 and note. Thompson had also passed this house on March 9, 1798.

²⁶ “The Journal of Charles Jean Baptiste Chaboillez, 1797-98”, ed. Harold Hickerson, *Ethnohistory* 6: Summer, 1959: 272.

²⁷ HBCA: Pembina Search File, note on Point au Foutre Journal, B.4/a/2, January 24 and February 18, 1799.

Grant's fort, the first built on the Red in the 1780s, on the east side of the Red across from the mouth of the Pembina.²⁸

By 1812, with the arrival of the first contingent of Selkirk Settlers, their new governor, Miles McDonell, noted their arrival at Pembina River or "Nipiminan-sipi", again using the Ojibwe name.²⁹ McDonell ordered his men to built Fort Daer for the settlers, on the site of Chaboillez' old post on the south side of the Pembina, west side of the Red, where they wintered for several years because of the proximity of the buffalo herds which crossed the Red River at this point. Because it was on the annual migration route of the great plains herds, Pembina was the location of choice for the fur traders from the 1780s to 1823 when the HBC, knowing that it was south of the forth-ninth parallel, decided to close their posts and Catholic mission and invited the freemen and *Bois Brulés* to move north to settle at the new Catholic parish of St. François Xavier along the Assiniboine River. For this reason, we like to call the latter "Pembina II".

Red River Valley Historiography

Previous writers assumed that Métis ethnogenesis occurred in the Red River Valley in the decade prior to the Fur Trade War of 1815-16 as the young men in Cuthbert Grant's cavalry were mostly in their teens and twenties. This dissertation will argue that it happened earlier and over a wider geographic area. Fur trade historians like Albertan John Foster have complained about "Red River Myopia" regarding the discussion of the origins of the Métis, arguing that

²⁸ Henry's Journal, ed. Coues: I:79.

²⁹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM), Selkirk Papers (S.P.), September 12, 1812, p. 16752 - 253.

historians should take a wider perspective. The focus on the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816 and the articulation of the national consciousness of the “New Nation” led by Cuthbert Grant Jr. has resulted in a focus on the Red River at the Forks of the Assiniboine.³⁰ Partly because the city of Winnipeg evolved at the confluence of these rivers and partly because the Red River Settlement, the first colony in Rupert’s Land, developed along the banks of these two rivers, scholars have tended to focus on this area, ignoring the history of Métis communities which developed all over the Canadian North West and northwestern American states like Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Washington, Oregon and Alaska.

This study attempts to avoid that pitfall by examining some of the areas where *métissage* occurred outside of the Red River Valley before the establishment of Lord Selkirk’s colony in 1812. These groups which exhibited some of the ethnic markers of *métissage* have been called “proto-Métis.”³¹ As Foster predicted, the ethnogenesis of Métis national consciousness was not confined to Red River. Frits Pannekoek in 1991 posed the question: “What has not been determined to date are the precise experiences that formed the unique Métis identity or why individuals claimed the identity as theirs.”³² This dissertation will outline the answers to that very good question. By following the family lines of Pembina descendants backwards, the author

³⁰ M.A. Macleod and W.L. Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963. *The Forks and the Battle of Seven Oaks in Manitoba History*, ed. Robert Coutts and Richard Stuart, Winnipeg: Manitoba Historical Society, 1994.

³¹ John Foster, “The Problem of métis roots”, *The New Peoples*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985: 87. Heather Devine, “Les Desjarlais: The Development and dispersion of a Proto-Métis Hunting Band, 1785-1870”, *From Rupert’s Land to Canada*, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 129-158.

³² Pannekoek, Frits, *A Snug Little Flock: The Social Origins of the Riel Resistance of 1869-70*, Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1991.

has pinpointed the formative generation of traders and Indian women who became the “fathers and mothers” of the Pembina Métis.

Part of the problem was that “settlement” was attributed to European immigration and the settlement of Aboriginals and part-Aboriginals before 1812 has been ignored. The “settlement of the West” is usually tied to 1812 and the Selkirk Settlement, but the fact is that there were already men of mixed ancestry living in the North West with their families before the Selkirkers arrived. Their desire for land and settlement opportunities was largely ignored by historians because of anti-Aboriginal prejudice which assumed that hunters could not raise crops or domesticate cattle.³³ This view is reinforced in the story line of the Pembina State Museum where Métis settlers are not recognized as entering the area until the 1840s with the opening of the American Fur Company post by Canadian, Norman Kittson.

One purpose of writing about the Pembina region is to avoid the problem of “The Forks” myopia. Although the Forks at Winnipeg was later the nexus of the Red River Settlement, the fur trade focussed on the forks of the Pembina and Red Rivers from the 1780s to 1813. Even after the Selkirk Settlers arrived in the valley and the new governor decided to clear land and make farms at Point Douglas, north of the Assiniboine, the immigrants followed the fur traders to Pembina for the winter and built the colony fort, Fort Daer, for at least a decade. Pembina attracted these immigrants the same way it attracted the fur traders - it was close to the buffalo migration route and it was easier to survive the harsh winters of the plains with buffalo meat and

³³ North Dakota historian Anne Kelsch wrote that settlement in the Red River Valley at Pembina began with the Selkirk Settlers, ignoring the fact that they only wintered at Fort Daer, but built their farms at The Forks near Fort Douglas. “Bringing Crofters and Clans to the Red Rier Valley”, *North Dakota History* 63z;1, Einyrt 1996: 21-36.

pemmican which was the staple of the fur trade. Most Canadian fur trade historians have overlooked the fact that the early Red River fur trade did not take place at Winnipeg, but 70 miles fur further south,³⁴ but Americans writing about Pembina and the North Dakota trade (other than Peterson) did not realize that this region was closely tied to the British territory to the north.³⁵ How those cultural blinders misrepresented the story and impacted on the writing about the origins of the Métis is the subject of this story.

Although there was a long history of intermarriage between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in the fur trade, it was in the Red River Valley where these "New Peoples" first evolved and articulated a separate identity, in 1815-16, culminating with the confrontation at Seven Oaks.³⁶ Many scholars have examined how and why this phenomenon occurred.³⁷ The author will also consider the construction of a Metis historical tradition which was largely ignored by outsiders.³⁸ De Trémaudan's history, *Hold High Your Heads*, was published posthumously in 1936, but was based on the oral tradition of l'Union Nationale Métisse de St.

³⁴ For example, *The Forks and the Battle of Seven Oaks in Manitoba History*, ed. Robert Coutts and Richard Stuart, Winnipeg, Manitoba Historical Society, 1994.

³⁵ James Howard, *The Plains Ojibwa or Bungi*, reprinted through the University of South Dakota, Vermilion, S.D., 1977. Compare the articles by Gregory Camp and Jacqueline Peterson in *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, ed. Virginia Heidenreich, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1990.

³⁶ John Foster, "The problem of métis roots", *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985: 81.

³⁷ *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, ed. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985.

³⁸ A.H. de Trémaudan, *Hold High Your Heads (History of the Métis Nation in Western Canada)*, translated by Elizabeth Maguet, Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1982.

Joseph, which hired him to write a history more sympathetic to the Métis perspective. De Trémaudan followed the conventional view that, although there was fur trade rivalry in the interior of Rupert's Land, the Red River Settlement started in 1812 with Lord Selkirk and the Métis appeared after that.³⁹ An exception to the loss of Métis History was the promotion of the myth of the family of J.B. Lagimodière and Marie Anne Gaboury (grandparents of Louis Riel) by both the Catholic Church and the descendants of the Selkirk Settlers because Jean Baptiste worked for Lord Selkirk.⁴⁰ This myth fitted the Master Narrative of British occupation of Rupert's Land and downplayed the negative consequences for the Aboriginal people who occupied it.

Twentieth century scholars like Marcel Giraud, George Stanley and W.L. Morton saw Métis History in the context of Canadian politics and portrayed their political resistance in 1816 as the precursor of their resistance to Canada in 1869 and 1885.⁴¹ They also believed that this political action showed a lack of moral development because the Métis opposed the "forces of good": the Selkirk Colony represented agriculture and the Métis were blamed for defending their hunting rights. Similarly, when they opposed the Selkirk Colony and Confederation, academics like anthropologist Marcel Giraud assumed (before the 1980s) that they were backward and irresponsible.

³⁹ De Trémaudan: p. 23.

⁴⁰ L'Abbé G. Dugast, *The First Canadian Woman in the Northwest*, Winnipeg: Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, trans. 62, 1902.

⁴¹ George F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellion*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960 (first published in 1936). W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957, 1979.

Since the issue of Métis land claims arose in the last decade, more debate about the character of this group has ensued. Although historians like Flanagan and Ens now accept the economic logic of the buffalo hunt, they challenge the reasons put forward by the Manitoba Metis Federation and their researcher, D.N. Sprague, for the sudden Métis diaspora.⁴² Although volume one of this study will end in the 1820s, it will challenge the stereotypes associated with the founding of the Selkirk Colony and the role of the Métis in resisting the authority of the new Governor Miles Macdonell and the validity of the colony itself. It will attempt to address the question of “first settlers” and document the actions of some of the Pembina Métis and their role in that conflict. If the presence of Métis settlers was repressed in historical writing, was the fault with the primary sources or the secondary literature or both?

Another important political fact that needs to be considered in the history of the Pembina Métis is that the Métis living on the American side of the border were never recognized legally as Aboriginal. The legal status of Métisness is a Canadian political construct. In the Canadian Constitution of 1982, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms recognized the Métis as one of three Aboriginal groups in Canada (the other two being status Indians and Inuit). Despite this recent legal recognition, Métis history has always been important in Canadian historiography, possibly because of the influential and controversial role played by Louis Riel in development of Manitoba as a province and in his leadership and advocacy for Métis rights. Because he was

⁴² Frits Pannekoek, “The Historiography of the Red River Settlement: 1830-1868”, *Prairie Forum*, v. VI: #1: Spring 1981: 75-85; and “Metis Studies: The Development of a Field and New Directions”, *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed. T. Binnema, Gerhard Ens & R.C. Macleod, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 111-128.

hung by the Canadian Government and made a martyr to the cause of his people, he could not be ignored and has not been forgotten.⁴³

In the United States, the history of the Métis was repressed and overlooked, especially after the immigration of non-Aboriginal settlers in the 1870s. Most of the Métis descendants who lived in the northern communities of Minnesota and North Dakota have dispersed and the ones who are left have learned to be quiet about their Aboriginal background. If they did not grow up on a reservation with Indian status, like the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa at Belcourt, N.D. or the Red Lake Band of Chippewa in Minnesota, they were legally white, but, if they inherited some of physical features linked to Aboriginal identity, such as black hair, brown eyes and brown skin (which tends to be darker than that of local Scandinavian descendants), they were often the victims of racial taunts and slurs, discrimination and sometimes violence. They learned to keep out of trouble by not claiming their Métis or Aboriginal heritage. They did not tell the stories of their ancestors. They fit into the “Melting Pot” of American society by dissociating themselves from their Canadian roots and ties to Rupert’s Land and Manitoba. They dealt with racism by ignoring the ethnic markers of Métis identity and by watching as the symbols of their cultural past were erased from the local landscape like the farming of their ancestors’ graves at Pembina.

Like the Taliban destroying the giant statues of Buddha because they were not Islamic, non-Aboriginal North Dakota community leaders allowed the desecration of the Pembina Métis Cemetery because it represented a people and a history which they did not care to remember. The local descendants were too ashamed and too powerless to stop a local family from farming

⁴³ Maggie Siggins, *Riel: A Life of Revolution*, Toronto: Harper Collins, 1994.

over the graves of their ancestors, the first pioneers of North Dakota and northern Minnesota. Most of the local leaders argued for the rights of private property owners to farm over these graves which were linked to the site of the first Christian mission in the state. Local rumour suggested that the farmers who desecrated the Metis graves did so intentionally “to keep the Half-breeds out”.

This repression of Métis history in the United States is slowly changing.

This dissertation will answer some of the challenges posed by Dennis Madill in an historiographical essay called, “Riel, Red River, and Beyond: New Developments in Métis History”, published in 1992.⁴⁴

We still have much to learn about the process or processes of Metissage...A more comprehensive social history that not only examines the officer class but also those occupying the lowest rung of “fur trade society” is required. Recently, there have been more studies on Metis settlements other than Red River, but there is a need for more in-depth research. The Native component of Metis history requires more consideration. Little has been revealed about the relations which Indian women and their Metis offspring maintained with their Native kin. Scant attention, moreover, has been paid to how the varied tribal cultural traditions influenced the patterns of Indian-white relationships during the fur-trade period.⁴⁵

This dissertation focuses on the lower-level *engagés* and their families with Indian women rather than on the *Bourgeois*, except when their descendants also became Métis. It challenges the obsession with The Forks and examines Métis ethnogenesis at Pembina. It considers the Indian wives of the fur traders and their influence on their Métis offspring and considers how Indigenous knowledge and cultures influenced the development of these new Plains groups.

⁴⁴ Dennis Madill, “Riel, Red River and Beyond: New Developments in Métis History”, in *New Directions in American Indian History*, ed. Colin Calloway, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992: 49-78.

⁴⁵ Madill: p. 73.

Methodology

The pressures of colonialism that Red River Metis experienced as they forged a new identity were similar to the racism and class discrimination experienced in other parts of the world wherever Europeans encountered indigenous societies.⁴⁶ In writing about Native History, or other ethnic and “visible” minorities, historians have found a failure of the historical method when the documents of a period were not created by the indigenous people themselves, but by outsiders, usually newcomers, who were not often familiar with local cultures and conditions. They created literary tropes or stereotypes of the local residents based on racist, classist or gender assumptions.⁴⁷

Beginning in the 1950s, in response to American land claims research demands, historians and anthropologists evolved a new interdisciplinary methodology called “Ethnohistory” using the techniques of outside sources to round out their understanding of the indigenous groups under study.⁴⁸ Historians adopted insights of ethnologists, linguists and archaeologists while anthropologists questioned the validity of the paradigm of the “ethnographic

⁴⁶ *God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny*, rev. ed. Conrad Cherry, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971. John Carlos Rowe, *Literary Culture & U.S. Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, 2000. Ann Laura Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies”, *Journal of American History*, v. 88: #3: December 2001: 829-865.

⁴⁷ Mary Louise Pratt, “Fieldwork in Common Places”, Stephen A. Tyler, “Post-Modern Ethnography: From Document of the Occult to Occult Document”, and other essays in this volume, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, ed. James Clifford and George E. Marcus, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986. *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

⁴⁸ Helen Hornbeck Tanner, “Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin (1903-1988), Founder of the American Society for Ethnohistory”, *Ethnohistory* 38: #1: Winter 1991: 58-72.

present” and began to situate source documents in their historical context. An historian might question, for example, whether it is appropriate to cite an eye-witness account of a cultural phenomenon in 1850 to explain a situation in the same place in 1800. Historians document change and helped anthropologists understand that change is just as likely to occur in colonial situations as in the developed societies like Europe and North America. Anthropologists helped historians realize that continuity of traditional cultures can be maintained in the face of superficial changes such as dress or even on a deeper, syncretic level with the religious conversion and language change.⁴⁹ Thus, continuity and change are two opposite themes commonly examined by ethnohistorians. As Jennifer Brown wrote in her Presidential Address to the Ethnohistory Society in 1991, Ethnohistory is a “middle ground” between History and Anthropology, anticipating Richard White’s use of the phrase by a year:⁵⁰

Ethnohistorians are often intellectual free traders; we borrow other people’s methods, concepts, and tool kits, from linguistics, archaeology, geography and literary criticism, and we thereby enrich our analysis, even if we risk making them more complicated, and

⁴⁹ Francis Jennings, “A Growing Partnership: Historians, Anthropologists and American Indian History”, *Ethnohistory* 29: #1: 1982: 21-34. James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985. Roger Keesing, “Young Dick Attack: Oral and Documentary History on the Colonial Frontier”, *Ethnohistory* 33: #3: Summer 1986. Lin Poyer, “History, Identity and Christian Evangelism: The Sapwuhfik Massacre”, *Ethnohistory* 35: #3, Summer 1988. Barnett Richling, “ ‘Very Serious Reflections’: Inuit Dreams about Salvation and Loss in Eighteenth-Century Labrador”, *Ethnohistory* 36: #2: Spring 1989: 148-169. Elizabeth Vibert, “ ‘The Natives were Strong to Live’: Reinterpreting Early Nineteenth Century Prophetic Movements in the Columbia Plateau”, *Ethnohistory* 42: #2, Spring 1995.

⁵⁰ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

ourselves more confused. But once we cross those borders, how many of us want to go back to the fenced preserves maintained by our departmental disciplinarians?⁵¹

In fact, the scientific and cultural values and attitudes of the 19th and 20th centuries western intellectual thought influenced the interpretation of the evidence.⁵² Complicating the historical analysis is the problem that the Métis (like most Aboriginal groups) mostly did not write down their own version of their history or they were not part of an educated elite with access to publishing their memoirs like some of the fur traders. They were oral story tellers or, like Pierre Falcon, song composers and, to a great extent, their perspectives have been kept within their communities, not influencing to a great degree the way professional historians told their story.⁵³

Historians and anthropologists tended to be non-Aboriginal and were often influenced by the racism and prejudice of their own cultural backgrounds.⁵⁴ In the process of the colonial settlement of the Canadian and American West, the Aboriginals were either marginalized as a “vanishing species” or scapegoated for all the problems of the dominant culture.⁵⁵ These biases

⁵¹ Jennifer S.H. Brown, “Ethnohistorians: Strange Bedfellows, Kindred Spirits”, *Ethnohistory* 38: 2, Spring 1991: 113-123.

⁵² Robert Bieder, “Scientific Attitudes Toward Mixed-Bloods in early 19th century America”, *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 8: #2: 17-20. Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indians, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986. Bieder, “The Representations of Indian Bodies in 19th century American Anthropology”, *American Indian Quarterly* 20: #2: Spring 1996: 165-179.

⁵³ De Trémaudan’s history, *Hold High Your Heads*, 1936, was an exception.

⁵⁴ Lyle Dick, “The Seven Oaks Incident and the Construction of a Historical Tradition, 1816 to 1970”, *Journal of the CHA*: 1991: 91-113.

⁵⁵ H. David Brumble, *American Indian Autobiography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. James A. Clifton, *Being and Becoming Indian: Biographical Studies of North*

strongly influenced the people who wrote about the Métis, either in the primary sources, like fur trader journals and memoirs, or in the secondary literature that was based on these sources. They will be examined for bias and inaccuracy.

Post-modern analysis has given scholars new perspectives on these problems and thus a new way to use the sources, that is, to extract what factual information is useful for historical reconstruction while at the same time ignoring or questioning the prejudices of the writers.⁵⁶ Ethnohistory, using a combination of historical and anthropological sources, helps to minimize the pitfalls of historic racism and avoid racial stereotypes and scapegoating.⁵⁷ A multidisciplinary approach is useful, not only using historical, geographical and anthropological writing, but also new methods of literary criticism, art history and textual analysis contribute to new insights into the contrasting cultural and historical perspectives of different ethnicities, classes and genders.⁵⁸ For example, although it is obvious that there were communities of people of mixed ancestry in other parts of Rupert's Land, it has been difficult to explain why exactly this group, or groups, evolved a "unique language" (or languages) according to linguists

American Frontiers, Chicago: The Dorsey Press, 1989.

⁵⁶ Bruce Trigger, "Ethnohistory: Problems and Prospects", *Ethnohistory* 29: 1982: 1-2. Toby Morantz, "Old Texts, Old Questions: Another Look at the Issue of Continuity and the Early Fur-Trade Period", *Canadian Historical Review* 73: 2: 1992: 166-193.

⁵⁷ A good example of ethnohistorical method is Laura Peers' book: *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994 where she combines historical analysis of primary sources with ethnological insights from Anthropology.

⁵⁸ For example, Gerald Friesen, "The Imagined West" and I.S. MacLaren, "Paul Kane and the Authorship of *Wanderings of an Artist*", in *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed. Theodore Binnema, Gerhard Ens, & R.C. MacLeod, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 195-200 and 225-248.

based on the mixing of European and Aboriginal languages.⁵⁹ Debates have been ongoing about the nature of this mixing and to what extent it was biological and/or cultural.⁶⁰

This study will use linguistic insights about the development of “mixed languages” to round out the reading of primary historical documents to understand this cultural shift or “ethnogenesis”. As Métis historian Olive Dickason pointed out, the “Michif language” was not a creole or a pidgin language, but linguists argue that Michif was a new language. The Michif of the buffalo-hunters’ camps utilized French nouns and Cree verbs, suggesting that the people who spoke it were fully bilingual.⁶¹ Métis descendants report that their ancestors were multilingual and this is an area of Indigenous expertise which outsiders commonly overlook. Linguists as well as descendants can demonstrate the difference between classic Michif spoken at Turtle Mountain, North Dakota, the Michif French of Manitoba communities like St. Laurent which is mainly French with a Michif accent and Canadian French spoken at Métis communities like St. Boniface, St. Pierre and St. Malo, Manitoba.⁶²

⁵⁹ Peter Bakker, *A Language of Our Own: The Genesis of Michif, the Mixed Cree-French Language of the Canadian Métis*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

⁶⁰ While most modern social scientists would agree that differences are cultural rather than biological, racial stereotypes are so embedded in the colonial languages of English and French that it is difficult to dispel racial stereotypes which still impact on Aboriginal people in Canada.

⁶¹ Olive Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992: 173.

⁶² Guy Lavallée, “The Michif French Language: Historical Development and Métis Group Identity and Solidarity at St. Laurent, Manitoba”, *Native Studies Review* 7, #1, 1991: 81-93. Jules Chartrand, personal communication, July 2002. Linguists Peter Bakker and Robert Papen, at the Linguistics Workshop at Brandon University, March 2003, personal communication. Normand Fleury, Michif language consultant, Manitoba Metis Federation, same place, same time.

The comparative framework of secondary literature for this study of an American community is not only Canadian historiography of the fur trade in Rupert's Land, but also the methodology of American Black History regarding miscegenation and the genre of Slave Narratives. Hybridity and racial mixing was a product of the colonial experience and the offspring of mixed unions usually faced discrimination because of misguided racial theories of the 19th and 20 centuries which linked physical characteristics such as skin colour and facial features to inferior intelligence.⁶³ Conflict over slavery and civil rights in the United States challenged anthropologists to re-examine these socially-constructed views of race for their historical development and Canadian law professors are reexamining the implications of race in the Canadian Justice System.⁶⁴

Robert Bieder examined the history of racialism and its origins and described how evolutionist Lewis Henry Morgan postulated three successive states of human progress: savagery, barbarism and civilization.⁶⁵ Morgan believed that all human cultures could be ranked, past and

⁶³ On the influence of evolutionary theory on race, see: Adam Kuper, *The Invention of Primitive Society: Transformations of an Illusion*, London: Routledge, 1988. Robert J.C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*, London: Routledge, 1995. Vernon Williams, *Rethinking Race: Franz Boas and His Contemporaries*, University Press of Kentucky, 1996. Lee Baker, *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race: 1896-1954*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

⁶⁴ Constance Backhouse, *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada: 1900-1950*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

⁶⁵ Robert Bieder, "Scientific Attitudes Toward Mixed-Bloods in Early 19th century American", *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 8: #2: 17-20. Also: *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986. "The Representations of Indian Bodies in 19th Century American Anthropology", *American Indian Quarterly* 20: #2, Spring 1996: 165-179.

present, across time and space.⁶⁶ These ideas of human hierarchies influenced Canadian historical writing. Although Lewis Morgan visited Pembina and Red River Settlement in 1861 on a fieldwork tour, he did not pay a great deal of attention to the “halfbreeds” he met there, such as informant Angus McKay.⁶⁷ Perhaps Morgan, like many anthropologists, considered the “halfbreeds” too “civilized”, being Christian and settled, to be of any use in a study of Aboriginal people.⁶⁸ They were not “pure” Aborigines.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Lewis Henry Morgan, *The Indian Journals: 1859-62*, ed. Leslie A. White, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959: 120-130. Morgan made an expedition to the Red River Valley when collecting vocabularies for his linguistics study of kinship terms in a cross-cultural comparison. He passed by Pembina on the steamer *Pioneer* on August 3, 1861, and stopped for an hour. He reached [Upper] Fort Garry on August 6; returned through Pembina on August 7, continuing south to Georgetown [south of Fargo] where he took the Red River cart train back east. For a discussion of the evolution of Morgan's ideas, see Elisabeth Tooker, “Lewis H. Morgan and His Contemporaries”, *American Anthropologist* 94: 1992: 357-375.

⁶⁷ Angus McKay, Morgan's informant, was the brother of the famous Hon. James McKay; their mother was a French Métisse named Margariet Gladu. Angus was the son-in-law of the famous Pembina trader, Joseph Rolette and his Métisse wife, Angelique Jerome.

⁶⁸ For a contemporary view of Morgan's trip to Red River, see the memoir of J.J. Hargrave, the son of James and Letitia Hargrave, who travelled with the scientist by Red River cart and by steamboat to the settlement: *Red River*, Montreal: printed for the author by John Lovell, 1871.

⁶⁹ To see an outdated account of how Métis were viewed by anthropologists as marginalized descendants of Aborigines, see James H. Howard, *The Plains-Ojibwa or Bungi: Hunters and Warriors of the Northern Prairies with special reference to the Turtle Mountain Band*, in *Reprints in Anthropology*, v. 7: Vermilion, S.D.: 1977. The Turtle Mountain Band are recognized as Chippewa [Ojibwe] by the U.S. government although most of the descendants are Cree and Métis in background. For the historical development of the Turtle Mountain Band, see Gerhard Ens, “After the Buffalo: The Reformation of the Turtle Mountain Métis Community, 1879-1905”, in *New Faces of the Fur Trade, Halifax Fur Trade Conference, 1995*, ed. Jo-Anne Fiske, Susan Sleeper-Smith & William Wicken, East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1998: 139-152.

Anthropologist Johannes Fabian analyzed this anthropological discourse of race which likened the “savages and barbarians” of ancient Europe with “survivals” in North America, equating their intellectual potential and material progress across time and space. In the views of these discredited theories, Native North Americans were ranked below European immigrants and people of mixed ancestry were assumed to be somewhere in the middle.⁷⁰ “Othering” is a process by which non-Aboriginal scholars constructed an identity of their “subjects” which is different and usually exotic, often based on ethnological field work and the method of “participant-observation”. Post-Modern anthropologists like George Stocking are now questioning this approach which artificially constructs a view of the group which emphasizes difference and ignores Western influences and modern adaptations.⁷¹

Jennifer S.H. Brown used the ideas of Bieder on scientific racism and “othering” and applied them to racial mixing in Rupert’s Land. In a 1993 article, Brown showed how racialism and stereotypes influenced the Canadian historical writing of the 20th century, particularly in the works of Marcel Giraud, G.F.G. Stanley and W.L. Morton, with an analysis of wording and texts

⁷⁰ Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, New York: Columbia University, 1983. For applications of post-modern theory to historical writing, see *The Postmodern History Reader*, ed. Keith Jenkins, London: Routledge, 1997.

⁷¹ George Stocking, ed., *Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983 and *Colonial Situations: Essays on the Contextualization of Ethnographic Knowledge*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press: 1991. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University of Press, 1988; see his chapter “On Orientalism” which discusses Edward Said’s attack on imperialism and cultural discourse through textual analysis. Said further develops this theme in *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Knopf, 1993. Roger Sanjek, ed., *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990; this is a collection of essays reflecting on the creation, usage and contextualization of data taken in the field before being transformed into ethnography.

which demonstrated that Aboriginal and Métis people in the Canadian West were seen as inferior. Even the famous anthropologist, Franz Boas, thought along these lines in his early work and researched the size of heads, comparing Indian heads with those of “half-blood Indians”.⁷² However, Boas always supported human rights and argued that all races were equal in potential, later repudiating his earlier theories. Boas was influential in changing the direction of Ethnology and Anthropology into more liberal lines of research and interpretation. Much of post-modernist Anthropology involves a reinterpretation of such outdated theories.

John Fierst, an historian of the Tanner Project, has challenged the negative views of Aboriginal people proposed by influential earlier writers like ethnologist Henry Rowe Schoolcraft who believed that Indian intellectual potential were limited.⁷³ Fierst has argued that the suspicions and personal animosity of an influential scientist like Schoolcraft made readers doubt the veracity and historical insights of Tanner’s memoir of his experience as a white captive of the Ottawa in the fur trade. Such new perspectives help to understand the origins of racist ideas in texts so that they can be discarded without losing useful cultural information. While Schoolcraft saw the Indian Tanner as violent and unstable, Fierst views him as a great contributor to our understanding of an “Indian” view of the fur trade in a memoir which can be read as a first-class autobiography.

⁷² Franz Boas, *Race, Language and Culture*, Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada, 1894: 138-148.

⁷³ John Fierst, “Return to Civilization: John Tanner’s Troubled Years at Sault Ste. Marie”, *Minnesota History*: 36: Spring 1986: 23-36. Also: “Strange Eloquence: Another Look at the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner”, in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*, ed. Jennifer S.H. Brown & Elizabeth Vybert, Toronto: Broadview Press, 1996: 220-241. Henry R. Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers: 1812-1842*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1851.

Jennifer Brown, Sylvia Van Kirk and others have pioneered a feminist approach to Native History, portraying the fur trade from the perspective of the Indian women who were the country wives of the fur traders.⁷⁴ What these authors suggest is that the Indian wives of the newcomers were not concubines or sexual slaves, but for the most part partners who played an economic as well as social role in their husband's careers. However, because of the repression of gender in historical texts where the women were often ignored or marginalized in traders' memoirs and because of negative stereotypes of Native women, their role was forgotten except by descendants. Despite the denial of generations of Western Canadians about their Native background, it is now possible to show that miscegenation or intermarriage between traders and local women was more extensive than previously thought.

Feminist writers like Brown and Van Kirk also demonstrated that the relationships between these couples was not, as sometimes portrayed, exploitive, where stereotypes showed them in a negative light, easily cast off when her non-Aboriginal partner left the *pays d'en haut*. Their social unions were recognized by the community according to Indian custom, where the women and their children often benefitted from the situation. Because of racism later encountered by their descendants, Aboriginal ancestry was often repressed or ignored in fur trade families because people felt ashamed of their background. While racist ideas were rejected scientifically, they still influenced behaviour and caused problems in relationships and

⁷⁴ Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1980. Van Kirk, *'Many Tender Ties': Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670-1830*, Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1980. Van Kirk, "Towards a Feminist Perspective in Native History", *Papers of the 18th Algonquian Conference*, ed. William Cowan, Ottawa: Carlton University, 1987: 377-389. Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press: 2001.

communities. Descendants still report insults, racial taunts and school yard fights or assaults because their non-Aboriginal neighbours perceived them as different or inferior.⁷⁵

Black History Parallels: The Comparative Perspective

This repression of Métis History has interesting parallels in Black History in North America. Autobiography and genealogy became a way to demonstrate the injustice of slavery.⁷⁶ The publication of Slave Narratives by the Abolition Movement had a political context as they engendered sympathy for the families of slaves and former slaves. Historians now use these oral histories as sources for Black History. The problem that non-Black historians had in writing about and reading Black History may provide insight for historians of Native History in Canada. Race, though scientifically discredited, still is embedded in the cultural values of North Americans and still has an impact on visible minorities because negative stereotypes about Blacks and Aboriginal People emphasize their alleged inferiority. The issues of race, class and gender in Slave Narratives are reflected in similar problems faced by Aboriginal People in Canada despite the fact that Aboriginal People were not “slaves” according to a legal definition.

⁷⁵ In the 1920s, the brother of Louis, Alexandre Riel accused the French Canadians of being traitors to the Métis cause, charging with them with “racism and paternalism” in a dispute over French education rights. Antoine Lussier’s “Introduction” to De Trémaudan, *Hold High Your Heads*, 1982: xx. Alexandre’s great-grandson echoes similar reports of racism today from his youth; Satch D’Heilly, Red River Métis Journey, “Manitoba Moments”, CKY T.V., documentary video, January 2003. Fran Grecco, lawyer in St. Louis, Ms; descendant of the Goulet family of St. Boniface and Pembina, personal communication, August 2000.

⁷⁶ For example, *Five Black Lives*, ed. Arna Bontemps, Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1971. Harriet A. Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987. Marion Wilson Starling, *The Slave Narrative: Its Place in American History*, Washington: Howard University Press, 1988. Jennifer Fleischner, *Mastering Slavery: Memory, Family and Identity in Women’s Slave Narratives*, New York: New York University Press, 1996. *I Was Born a Slave: An Anthology of Classic Slave Narratives: v. 1: 1770-1849*, ed. Yuval Taylor, Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1999.

Aboriginal identity is defined legally in Canadian Constitution of 1982, recognizing three types: Indians (First Nations), Métis and Inuit.⁷⁷

A good example of this problem for historians can be seen in the reaction to the suggestion that President Thomas Jefferson, the author of the *Declaration of Independence*, had a Black Slave as his “mistress” or concubine and fathered five children with her, his sister-in-law named Sally Hemmings. In 1974, Professor Fawn Brodie published a controversial biography of Jefferson, using a method called “psychobiography”, which sent shock waves through the professional historical community. Barbara Chase-Roboud used Brodie’s biography as the basis for a novel about Jefferson and Hemmings in 1979 which furthered the “scandal” as some writers termed the issue. They could not accept the irony that one of the most loved “Founding Fathers” would be so hypocritical as to keep a Black mistress and his children in slavery while advocating political freedom for non-Blacks. The controversy became more heated when Black descendants claimed that Jefferson was their ancestor. Non-Black historians argued that Brodie was “inventing” evidence and there was no evidence in the documentary record.⁷⁸ Although Jefferson did not acknowledge his family and relationship with Hemmings in his voluminous writing, the

⁷⁷ Harry Daniels, former President of the Native Council of Canada gave a talk on how he lobbied to have the category of “Métis” inserted in the Constitution in 1982 at the Indigenous Law Society conference in Saskatoon, June 2003.

⁷⁸ Virginius Dabney, *The Jefferson Scandals*, New York: Dodd, Mead, 1981. On the cover is written: “A Rebuttal by Virginius Dabney, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and historian to allegations that Thomas Jefferson kept a black mistress and fathered five illegitimate children”. The fact that Dabney characterized this alleged situation as scandalous shows that the idea of Jefferson’s miscegenous sexual relationship had negative connotations for his political and historical legacy as a “founding father” and author of the *Declaration of Independence*.

descendants' claims were recently vindicated with the use of DNA evidence to link the Black family members to Jefferson.

Métis reports of similar repression of family history demonstrate the link in racism and repression of historical evidence of visible minorities which cannot be easily documented in primary sources. As a result, I have attempted to use biography and genealogy as did the genre of Slave Narratives to document certain families lines to find the earliest generations of Métis and their parents. Métis ethnogenesis can be pinpointed exactly in the generation of parents who were usually voyageur fathers and Native mothers. Following these lines backwards shows that the development of this "New Nation" did not occur just in the Red River Valley, but more widely across the *pays d'en haut* than previously acknowledged. This is the main argument of this dissertation. Swan used the research of Pembina descendant Edward Jerome on his ancestors in the fur trade and together they have published several biographical articles on them. The genealogical information was the framework for historical analysis and Swan demonstrated how following family lines backwards from modern descendants can be useful in pinpointing the parents of the Pembina Métis.⁷⁹

The problem with using genealogical information for historical research is that genealogies are often inaccurate or contradictory.⁸⁰ Swan offset this hazard by doing the historical research herself with primary documents to ensure accuracy. The reason it is difficult

⁷⁹ To show how genealogy can be useful in developing "Family History", see Jim Watts and Allen F. Davis, *Generations: Your Family in Modern American History*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978.

⁸⁰ Robert Taylor and Ralph Crandall, eds., *Generations and Change: Genealogical Perspectives in Social History*, Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1986.

to do this work is because it is time-consuming, but Swan and Jerome have demonstrated that it is possible to link the Métis families with their voyageur and Indian ancestors, and identifying the formative generation. Their family studies are a model for other Métis families who wish to attempt a biography of their families and the fact is that genealogy is very important for Métis descendants who have to demonstrate a link with an Aboriginal ancestor to prove their Métis identity.

Some quantitative historians might suggest that following only two families does not give a complete picture of Métis ethnogenesis; what about the other 598 families? Swan would argue that using the genealogical/biographical approach is an alternative to the quantitative approach and her choice was to provide microhistory, not macrohistory, to provide insights into the Pembina Métis experience.⁸¹ The fact is that using genealogy for individual families is an offshoot of the methodology of Historical Demography.⁸² From an ethnohistorical approach, genealogy is closely related to the study of kinship and social organization which is the basis of Ethnology.⁸³ For example, the work of A. Irving Hallowell on Northern Ojibwe social organization stems from his field work in Lake Winnipeg communities in the 1930s.⁸⁴

⁸¹ For insights into the use of Microhistory and Biography, see Jill Lepore, "Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography", *Journal of American History*, v. 88: #1: June 2001: 129-144.

⁸² Chad Gaffield, "Theory and Method in Canadian Historical Demography", *Clio's Craft: A Primer of Historical Methods*, ed. Terry Crowley, Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1988.

⁸³ Constance deRoche, "Exploring Genealogy", *Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects for Ethnographic Data Collection*, ed. Michael Angrosino, Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 2002.

⁸⁴ A. Irving Hallowell, *Contributions to Anthropology: Selected Papers of A. Irving Hallowell*, ed. Raymond D. Fogelson, Fred Eggan, Melford Spiro, George Stocking, Anthony

Indigenous Ways of Knowing

One way to challenge the historiographical problems of racialism and prejudice in the Master Narrative as Lyle Dick observed was through the use of literary criticism. Dick deconstructed the colonial discourse, going back to primary documents and showing how, in the Battle of Seven Oaks, for example, the Métis were blamed for the violence that occurred and the aftermath exploited to reinforce negative stereotypes of people of part-Aboriginal background.⁸⁵ Dick used the depositions from the Coltman Report prepared for the trials of the Fur Trade War to pursue a Métis perspective of events. These are “written down oral history”, but need to be considered for bias or influence of the officials, such as Lord Selkirk as Justice of the Peace in the affidavits he took at Fort William. Dick challenged the bias of non-Aboriginal historians by using these primary sources.

Another way to combat racism is to incorporate modern Indigenous perspectives into the new histories of past colonial conflicts.⁸⁶ Although some non-Aboriginal scholars have

Wallace and Wilcomb Washburn, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.

⁸⁵ Lyle Dick, “The Seven Oaks Incident and the Construction of a Historical Tradition, 1816-1979”, *Journal of the CHA: 1991: Revue de la S.H.C.*, 91-113. Dick distinguishes between the “story” or basic facts from the “discourse”, or rhetorical overwriting by the event’s historians. This is a post-moderning approach to historical analysis and useful when writing the history of disadvantaged ethnic groups, visible minorities and women, who are disadvantaged socially and economically, despite not being a minority.

⁸⁶ Marie Battiste and James Youngblood Henderson, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge*, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Purish Publishing, 2000. These authors contrast “Eurocentric views” versus “Indigenous” knowledge. The problem is that there is great diversity in both cultural traditions, so how can there be one view of each? And how does this affect any Aboriginal person with non-Aboriginal ancestors like the Métis and even many people with First Nations status? Or what about people who are not raised in Aboriginal communities, but have Aboriginal ancestors? In a similar vein, Wendat (Huron) Georges Sioui argues that an Aboriginal perspective is critical to understanding Native History: *Pour une*

suggested that Native people have different cultural aptitudes and expertise,⁸⁷ others argue against the view that cultural knowledge can be determined biologically and such “tropes” often reinforce dangerous stereotypes.⁸⁸ Native scholar Devon Mihesuah argued against the idea that Indigenous knowledge or world-view was all-encompassing or monolithic. “Cultural ambiguity was and is common among Indians. Traditional Native women were as different from progressive tribeswomen as they were from white women....”⁸⁹ Historians and other scholars have debated the best way to do so which has sometimes ended up in disputes over who is best qualified to write Native History.⁹⁰ To suggest that only people of Aboriginal background can

autohistoire amerindienne: Essai sur les fondements d'une morale sociale. Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1989. *For an Amerindian Autohistory: An Essay on the Foundations of a Social Ethic*. Translated by Sheila Fischman. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992.

⁸⁷ *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, ed. Calvin Martin, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. Martin argued that there was an environmental ethic among traditional Indians in the “Noble Savage” tradition of the French Enlightenment thinkers. Martin's work has been critiqued by anthropologists such as Shepard Krech, III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1999. Krech argued that Native People have impacted the environment in both positive and negative ways.

⁸⁸ James Clifton, ed., *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990. Maureen Mathews and Roger Roulette, CBC Radio documentaries on Indian stereotypes. Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*, Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1993, follows the lead of Mathews and Roulette.

⁸⁹ “Commonality of Difference: American Indian Women and History”, in *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998: 36-37.

⁹⁰ Vine Deloria Jr., “Comfortable Fictions and the Struggle for Turf: An Essay Review of *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies*”, *Natives and Academics*, 1998: 65-83.

write Aboriginal History is racist because it suggests that there is a biological component to culture, a concept which most anthropologists would reject.

On the other hand, it should be obvious that Native people or specifically Métis people will be able to contribute significant understanding to past events involving their ancestors because of their “insider” knowledge of their own cultures and communities and they do not need a Ph.D. in History to do so. Swan and Jerome have demonstrated that a good way to offset some of the perils of the “outsider” perspective where the academic is non-Aboriginal is to collaborate in a team approach, so that accuracy in research and cultural or indigenous knowledge can support each other. Jerome is an excellent archival researcher and Swan has attempted to learn about and participate in Aboriginal and Métis cultural events. They have found that such collaboration is a useful way to produce good history and biography of their chosen subjects. This is especially true in situations in which the power relationship is equitable between the collaborators and one side is not controlling the agenda.

Another way to provide Indigenous knowledge is through modern oral history. African anthropologist Jan Vansina has noted that: “The sources of oral historians are reminiscences, hearsay or eyewitness accounts about events and situations which are contemporary, that is, which occurred during the lifetime of the informants. This differs from oral traditions in that oral traditions are no longer contemporary. They have passed from mouth to mouth, for a period beyond the lifetime of the informants.”⁹¹ Most people do not remember family history beyond the generation of their grandparents unless there was an historic event of some import to which

⁹¹ Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985: 12.

they can link stories of ancestors' participation, for example, as in my own family, the Battle of Waterloo or the War of 1812. Canadian war historian C.P. Stacey discussed the problems of oral history as he interviewed hundreds of Canadian soldiers who were overseas during World War II:

This brings me to that great problem of the contemporary historian, the unintentional liar. My experience was that one very seldom encountered a deliberate liar. I don't know how many people I interviewed, but it must have been hundreds; and I don't believe that more than two struck me as lying of set purpose. Some few others, I thought were perhaps fantasizing a bit, because they were that sort of people. But there were considerable numbers who lied to me while honestly believing that they were telling the absolute truth....Nearly all of them were devoted to their own misconceptions, and refused to be convinced by contrary evidence, however overwhelming, whether it took the form of contemporary documents or the evidence of numbers of other people. The long roster of unintentional liars includes some distinguished generals who have written memoirs.⁹²

As Stacey pointed out, the best way to decide on the authenticity of the oral text is to compare it to other contemporary sources and the bulk of evidence should point in the right direction.

Anthropologists also use oral interviewing techniques which they then record and document as part of their ethnological research on a given community. These are often published as "autobiographies" of the subject without always making obvious the role of the amanuensis or translator. Literary critics are now bringing to light how these texts of "written down" oral history may have been changed or influenced by the editorial construction of the middle man.⁹³ Examples of "written down oral history" which will be examined in the dissertation will be John Tanner's *Narrative*, giving an Indian perspective on the fur trade, the depositions of the *Bois*

⁹² C.P. Stacey, "Fables and Foibles: History and the Human Animal" in *Clio's Craft: A Primer of Historical Methods*, Toronto: Copp, Clark, Pitman, 1988: 14.

⁹³ The criticism of outside influences on Indian writing can be found in David Brumble, *American Indian Autobiography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990. David Murray, *Forked Tongues: Speech, Writing & Representation in North American Indian Texts*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991. William Clements, *Native American Verbal Art: Texts and Contexts*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996.

Brulés in the Fur Trade War which were taken as evidence in the ensuing trials, and the songs of Pierre Falcon, one of Cuthbert Grant's cavalry, who transmitted Métis culture and history orally and through performance. Falcon's song was transcribed and published in 1871 by J.J. Hargrave, a Red River historian, the son of an HBC officer, who appreciated its historic significance: "M. Falcon neither reads nor writes. The song was taken down from his own lips for the purpose of the present publication...[despite] its wide oral circulation has never before appeared in print."⁹⁴ Hargrave, like his predecessor Alexander Ross, must have collected other oral traditions when he visited in the 1860s; for example, his description of Lord Selkirk's visit in 1817. Hargrave added some important details when he described the treaty with the Saulteaux [Ojibwa] and Cree and "in addition....two circles, each of six miles radius, were ceded around Fort Douglas [at the Forks of the Assiniboine] and Fort Daer [sic - Pembina] as centres."⁹⁵ Since the Forks of the Pembina and Red where the modern village stands today is only two miles south of the Canada-U.S. border, then this circle must have extended at least a mile inside the Canadian line (although it was not decided in the Treaty of Ghent in 1818 that the border would be at the 49th. Parallel). Hargrave also noted that Selkirk was called "Silver Chief" by the Indians.⁹⁶ These 19th century contemporary sources thus give details not found elsewhere.

The book, *Women of Red River*, published in 1923 was also based on local oral history and traditions of the Red River Settlement although for the most part it collected stories from the

⁹⁴ J.J. Hargrave, *Red River*, Montreal: printed by John Lovell for the author, 1871. The copy which I borrowed from St. John's College Library was personally signed by the author for the Bishop's of Rupert's Land who must have given it to the St. John's School.

⁹⁵ Hargrave, p. 77.

⁹⁶ Hargrave, p. 77.

British mixed-blood descendants rather than from the French Métis.⁹⁷ Exceptions were the story of the “first white woman in the West”, Marie Anne Gaboury, and Angelique Nolin, a Métisse school teacher, the daughter of Pembina trader Louis Nolin and his Ojibwe wife.⁹⁸ These amateur historians must have relied on the memories of local residents and preserve their stories in print. As some Métis friends who were descendants of Cuthbert Grant have told me, “We read about our ancestors in books.”⁹⁹ One of the co-authors of the biography, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, Margaret McLeod, collected oral stories about the Métis settlers of St. Francois-Xavier Parish who settled with Cuthbert Grant such as the fact that he was educated in Scotland and had a medicine chest which he used in treating local friends and relatives.¹⁰⁰ The medicine chest and sword she collected are now on display in the Manitoba Museum in Winnipeg.

Material culture and historical geography are two other disciplines which can demonstrate the importance of indigenous knowledge in Native History. For example, a hide coat decorated with silk embroidery on the cover of the catalogue, *Where Two Worlds Meet: The Great Lakes Fur Trade*, was actually a coat from a Pembina Métis given to the Governor of Minnesota Alexander Ramsey when he conducted a treaty there in 1851, so it really did not represent the Great Lakes fur trade at all. In the forest and lake region of Lake Superior, it is more likely that

⁹⁷ W.J. Healey, *Women of Red River*, Winnipeg: Women’s Canadian Club, 1923.

⁹⁸ Healey: chapter 1: on Gaboury; p. 116 on the Nolin family.

⁹⁹ Theresa Breland and her cousin, Doreen Breland-Fines, personal communication, April 16, 2003.

¹⁰⁰ Preface for *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown* written by Cuthbert Grant of Grantown: “Mrs. MacLeod assiduously collected reminiscences of Grant and Grantown from his descendants and those of his friends and relatives [in the 1930s].”

the voyageurs wore cloth coats which worked better when wet than a hide coat. Placing the artifact in the context of its collection helps to show that it represented the “winter dress of the Red River half-breeds”.¹⁰¹ However, the coat and its decoration show the expertise and beauty of Pembina Métis women and their needlework.

Anthropologist Serena Nanda has cautioned museum scholars to be critical of the Western traditions influencing displays which may distort the “meaning, content, function and individual authorship of tribal art”. “The Western museum’s preoccupation with the antique, the pure, and the authentic in tribal art also grows out of a Western capitalist system of values that ignores the values and voices of those it claims to celebrate by displaying their art.”¹⁰² Identifying the tribal or indigenous voices of those it claims to celebrate will help promote cross-cultural understanding.

These are similar issues to ones raised by Aboriginal scholars and curators who worry about inappropriate representation and distortion in museum exhibits composed by outsiders. Involving Aboriginal consultants in developing such displays can provide appropriate cultural understandings and respect. Scholars like anthropologist Trudy Nicks have also warned about the difficulties in attempting to link ethnic identity with material objects and museum exhibits.¹⁰³ Often, early collectors bought material and did not document who had made them or sold them.

¹⁰¹ *Where Two Worlds Meet* catalogue by Carolyn Gilman, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1982: description on page 107.

¹⁰² Serena Nanda, “Using a Museum as a Resource for Ethnographic Research”, in *Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects for Ethnographic Data Collection*, ed. Michael Angrosino, Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 2002.

¹⁰³ Trudy Nicks, “Mary Anne’s Dilemma: The Ethnohistory of an Ambivalent Identity”, *Canadian Ethnic Studies XVIII*, #2 (1985): 103-144.

Similarly, even more modern situations, the people who made the objects may later change their identity, either through marriage or political status and thus objects can be misidentified.

Studying groups such as the Métis whose material culture may involve various traditions, they are often misidentified in museum collections. For example, a list of Pembina artifacts in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington suggests that they are catalogued as “Chippewa” although most of the people living there were Métis. Similarly, the N.D. State Historical Society labelled artifacts made by Mrs. Baptiste Renville at Pembina as “Chippewa” when in fact she was Metis; her birth name was Jane Heckenberger and she was a descendant of W.H. Cook and his Cree wife at York Factory. The dissertation will use some evidence of cultural mixing through an examination of artifacts from the fur trade archaeological collections and from art to demonstrate that it occurred even in places outside of Red River where the word “Métis” was not commonly used.

Historical Geography is the final approach which will be used to demonstrate Indigenous knowledge of the fur trade routes and mapping by explorers.. For example, in 1733, Christophe La Jemerais [Jemeray], the nephew of Pierre Gaultier, Sieur de la Vérendrye, composed a map showing the “newly discovered” route from Grande Portage to Lac des Bois [Lake of the Woods]. He also included an arrow from the western tip of Lake Superior [later: Fond du Lac] to Lac Rouge [Red Lake] in the Red River Valley. It did not show the rivers and lakes, suggesting that this area was what cartographer Malcolm Lewis called *terra semicognita* because it was known, but not explored by Europeans or Canadians.¹⁰⁴ Geographer Wayne Moodie has also

¹⁰⁴ Malcolm Lewis, “Indian Maps: their Place in the History of Plains Cartography”, *Great Plains Quarterly* 4: Spring 1984: 91-108.

used the drawings and sketch maps that Indians provided to fur traders to show the accuracy and different ways of portraying routes and distances.¹⁰⁵ La Jemerais noted on the map that he based the information on the reports of the Indians. Since the newcomers were not familiar with the area, it was obvious that they used Indian guides and Indigenous knowledge to make their discoveries. Unfortunately, because historical texts have in the past promoted the idea of a “barren wilderness”, readers assumed that these explorations were done by guesswork. It is thus important to challenge such tropes and stereotypes when looking for new evidence and to reconstruct what was Indian knowledge before the newcomers arrived and took credit for it. La Jemerais’ map demonstrates that the French knew of the Minnesota route in the 1730s even though the French and British did not explore the area until the 1780s and 1790s and it demonstrates how the French relied on Indigenous knowledge for their explorations.. This penetration of the Red River Valley from the south will be explored in Chapter 3.

The Red River Valley Métis - “People In Between” or “Indianized Frenchmen”?

This dissertation rejects the racist myth that European immigrants and French fur traders were the first and only settlers in the Red River Valley. The only way to answer the question “Who were the first Métis?” is to identify the formative generation that included fur traders who married native women and whose sons became Cuthbert Grant’s *Bois Brûlés* in 1815-16. Were they the mixed-ancestry voyageurs from Lake Superior or the sons of the freemen of the plains or both? Since the development of Métis plains culture and the Michif language were associated

¹⁰⁵ *Historical Atlas of Canada*, v. 1, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Plate 59: “Indian Maps” showing that fur traders depended on Indian geographical knowledge to help them in their explorations of new routes.

with the buffalo hunt, the material culture and language development will give clues to the formation of this new identity.

By the 1820s, the mixed population that came to prominence in Red River under the leadership of Cuthbert Grant in 1816 was noticed and documented in Hudson's Bay Company records. The consolidation of North West Company and Hudson's Bay Company in 1821 had two important results: 1) over a thousand men were laid off and became freemen as they were no longer needed with the end of competition; and 2) some former Nor-Westerners, both bourgeois and engages were employed with their old enemies, either on short-term contracts of one to three years or seasonal contracts to transport goods, furs and provisions back and forth. The long canoe brigades from Montreal to the Great Lakes and northwestward were abandoned and only used for quick trips as when Sir George Simpson left Lachine near Montreal to attend the annual meetings at York Factory. York boats became the main transportation vehicle of the fur trade, bringing in good from York to Lake Winnipeg and west; or back and forth to Red River for provisions. The Orkneymen and their descendants had the advantage, having already worked for the HBC and many French Canadian and Metis voyageurs joined their ranks.

Of the large numbers of freemen, there were two significant developments. One was their adaptation from the voyageur culture of the river systems through the Canadian Shield to the bison hunter culture of the plains. While this had been happening since the 1770s, it occurred in the greatest numbers after 1821. Furthermore, the arrival of missionaries (Catholic in 1818 and Anglican in 1820) and the establishment of churches and schools led to the centripetal pull of the Red River Settlement, drawing in freemen and their families from all over the North west. Since returning to Lower and Upper Canada or Britain was no longer an option for many of these

former voyageurs, Red River became an attractive option, despite some bad memories of the fur trade war. In the settlement, parishes were organized around Catholic and Protestant churches. Thus, the effects of the missions on the one hand was to draw in the freemen community while at the same time, dividing their ethnic identities between Catholic and Protestant, French/Cree and English/Cree. Cree was the *lingua franca* of the fur trade and the Ojibwe language was quickly subsumed by Cree within a generation. Thus, by the 1840s, the new culture of the plains reached its florescence in languages (Michif and Bungee), the organization of the large, bi-annual bison hunts with military discipline and democratic organization and the artistic outpouring demonstrated in beautiful beadwork, silk embroidery and leather work. Pembina became a crucible for the florescence of Métis culture.

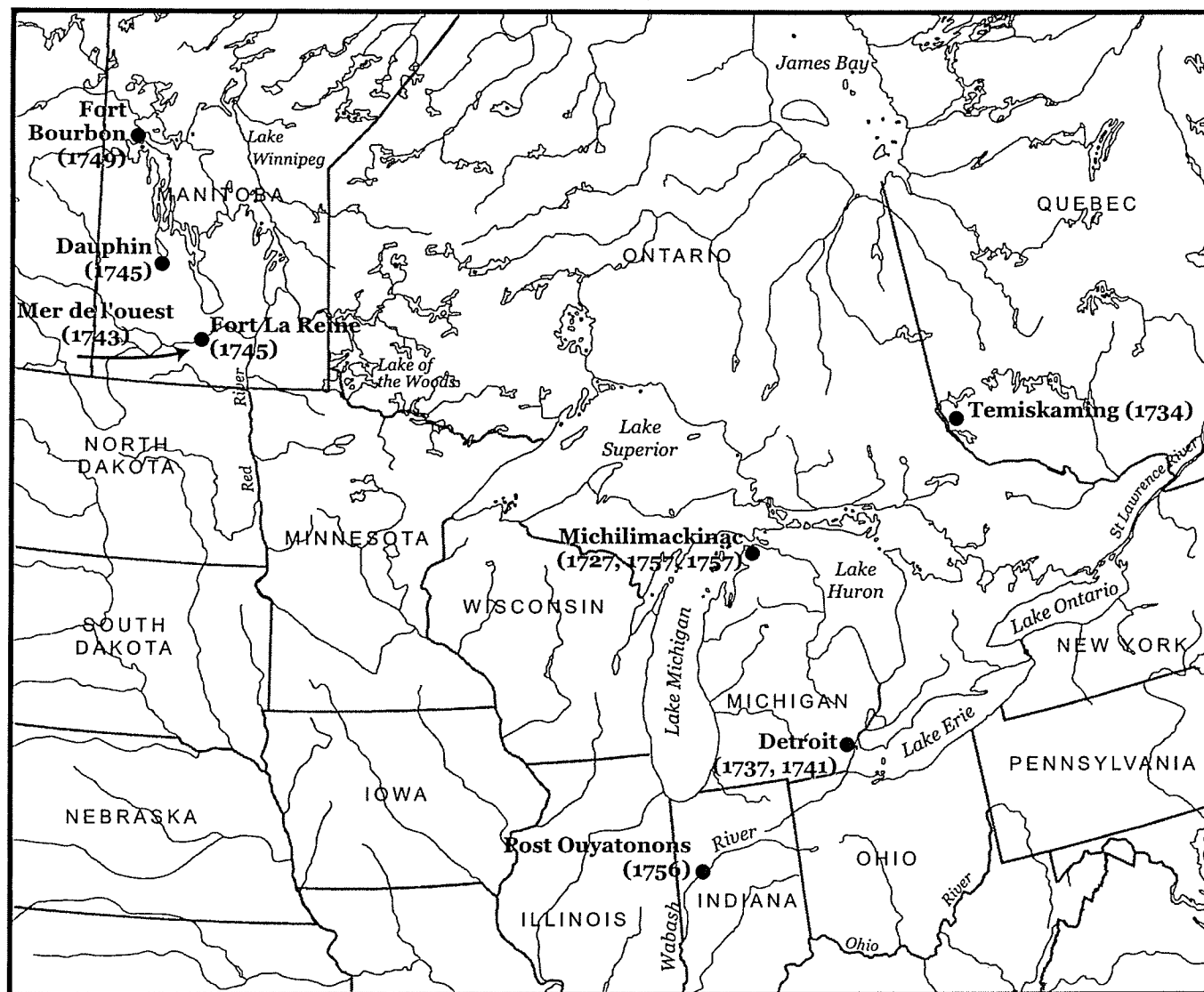
The opening of the Pembina Museum in 1996 was a positive step in recognizing the persistence and vitality of Red River Valley Métis culture as most of its exhibits demonstrate the history of the Pembina Métis. This history will also tell that story and correct a few errors. Part of the research was contributed by my Red River Métis collaborator Edward A. Jerome, of Hallock, Mn., and many of his ancestors are the subjects of our historical study.¹⁰⁶ Hopefully, this collaboration will provide new insights into the geographical and historical processes of Métis origins.

¹⁰⁶ Ruth Swan & Edward A. Jerome, "The Collin Family at Thunder Bay: A Case Study of *Métissage*", *Papers of the 29th Algonquian Conference*, ed. David Pentland, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1998: 311-321. Swan & Jerome, "Unequal Justice: The Métis in O'Donoghue's Raid of 1871", *Manitoba History Spring/Summer 2000*: 24-38. Swan & Jerome, "A Mother & Father of Pembina: A NWC Voyageur Meets the Granddaughter of The Buffaloe", *Actes du 32^{eme} Congrès des Algonquinistes*, ed. John Nichols, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 2001: 527-551.

According to Emma Larocque, Professor of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba, the Metis were not “people in between” cultures as Jacqueline Peterson called them, but “Freemen”. Were they people of “the Middle Ground” as historian Richard White saw the French Canadian traders in the Great Lakes region¹⁰⁷ or the *Ojibbeway Waymetegooshewug* [Indianized Frenchmen] described by John Tanner? Were the Métis sons different culturally from their voyageur fathers and Native mothers? They developed a new and unique culture which was understood by insiders and recognized by outsiders. Eurocentric interpretations of history have not always portrayed them in an positive light. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that their origins were older and geographically wider than previously thought. Who were the people who comprised the formative generation of Métis parents at Pembina and can they be named from the primary sources? If that identification is possible, how did the story of these ancestors get lost in the telling?

¹⁰⁷ Jacqueline Peterson, “The People In Between”, Ph.D. dissertation, Chicago: University of Chicago: Chicago Circle, 1981. Emma LaRocque, “Native Identity and the Metis: Otehpaysuak Peoples” in *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st. Century*, ed. David Tars and Beverley Rasporich, Canada: Nelson Thomas Learning Centre, 2001. Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

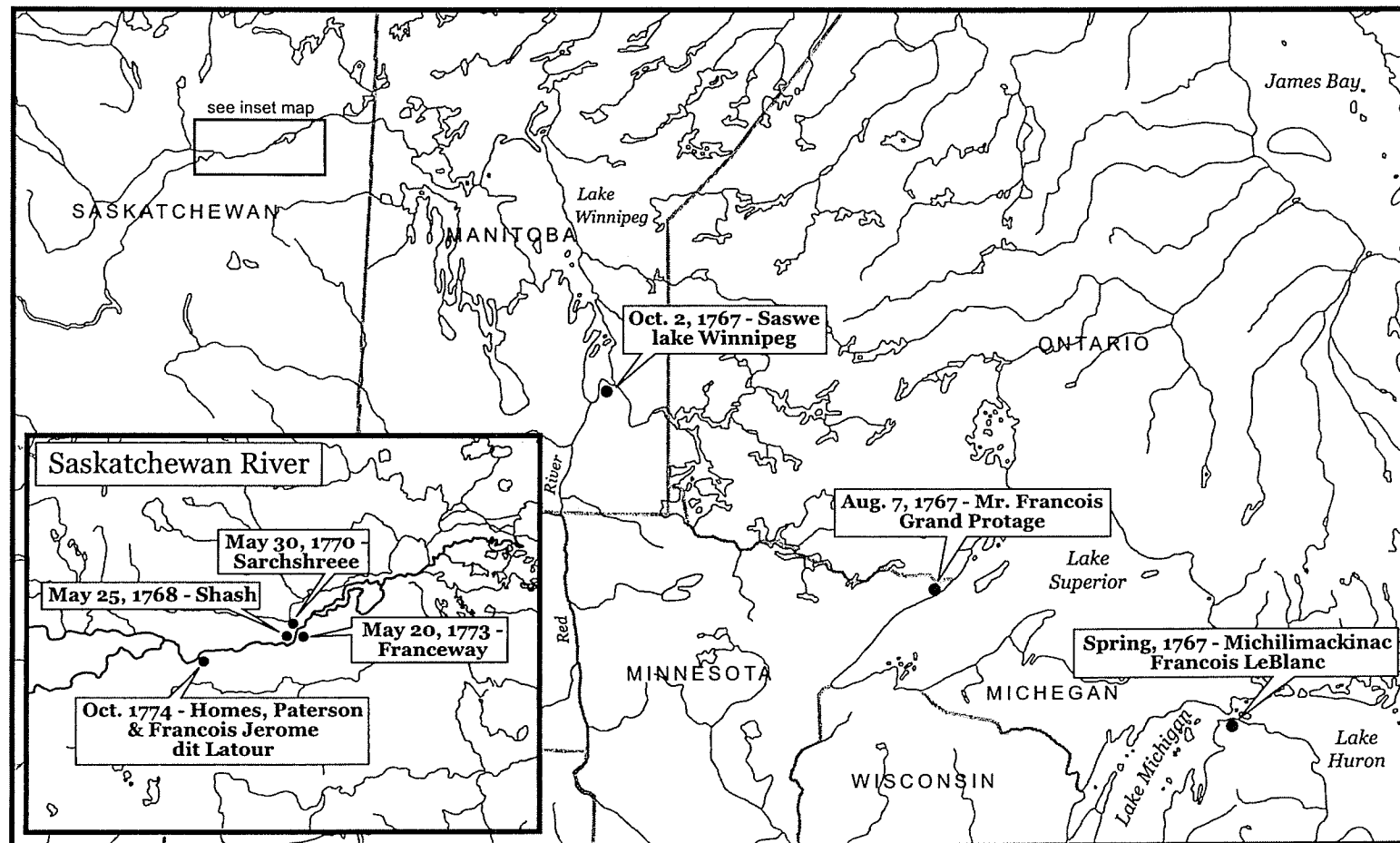
Figure 1a Fur Trade Voyageur Contracts for François Jerome - 1700s



Note: Modern Provincial and State boundaries are included for reference.

Source: Rapports de l'Archiviste du Québec

Figure 1b. Reports of Mr. François, Saswe, Franceway and François Jerome, 1767-1774



Part One: Origins of the Métis

Chapter 1: Métissage on the Saskatchewan River: “Indianized Frenchmen” and their descendants: The case of the Jerome Family

In order to trace the origins of the Red River Valley Métis, I used the genealogy of Edward A. Jerome, of Hallock, Mn., whose family have lived on their farm for over a century and have been in the Red River Valley since the 1820s. Hallock is twenty miles from Pembina and the farm is located on the Two Rivers, a tributary of the Red River. The Jerome family is still living in the Pembina area and has done so for almost two hundred years. When Edward Jerome traced his ancestry backwards, he found Jeromes who were living on the Saskatchewan River in the late 1700s as well as to other ancestors in the Thunder Bay area of Lake Superior. Along with Ed Jerome, I researched these families to determine which couple were the formative generation; who were the mothers and fathers of the Red River Métis? At what point did these families arrive in Red River? Is it possible to document their Native ancestors?

François Jerome turned out to be a voyageur from Quebec who was in the North West during the French regime, and made the transition to the new fur trade in the British regime as a trader. There were several generations of Jeromes on the Saskatchewan River before they moved south in the 1820s. While it is difficult to identify exactly who was the first Métis in this family, it is possible to trace the family and their movements through the generations and show how they developed as voyageurs, traders, interpreters, buffalo hunters and Red River Valley settlers. Since François Jerome came from Quebec, I decided to describe the movement of these Quebec fur traders and voygaeurs to the Great Lakes and North West. Most students of fur trade history

assume, like Jacqueline Peterson, that the voyageurs moved to the Great Lakes first, married Native Women and had children before making the next move to the Western Subarctic in their search for the best furs. It is unexpected to find a voyageur who became a trader during the French period, before 1763, and made the transition into the British era of the fur trade, leading the earliest expeditions from the Great Lakes to the North Saskatchewan River. Thus, François Jerome emerges as a significant historical figure, not just as the ancestor of a Métis family.

The common pattern in the 18th century was for French Canadian traders to settle in the Great Lakes region and communities of mixed ancestry people grew up there, especially at major trading centres like Detroit, Michilimackinac and La Baye [Green Bay, Wisconsin, on Lake Michigan].¹⁰⁸ We shall look at this development more fully in Chapter Two, but, as the Great Lakes trade was developing in the 1700s, fur traders from Quebec also penetrated the Western Plains, looking for the North West Passage to the Orient and more specifically, the *mer de l'ouest*. Indian reports suggested a large, inland body of water which French explorers hoped would lead them to a river running west to the Pacific Ocean and an easy sailing route to China.

The family of Pierre Gauthier, Sieur de la Vérendrye, led and organized these explorations of the interior of North America, opening up the area west of Lake Superior, called the *pays d'en haut* [the upper country, or, in English: the North West].¹⁰⁹ The French government

¹⁰⁸ Jacqueline Peterson, "Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis", *Ethnohistory* 25/1, Winter: 1978: 41-67. Peterson, "The People in Between: Indian-White Marriage and the Genesis of a Métis Society and Culture in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1830", Ph.D. Dissertation, Chicago: University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, 1981.

¹⁰⁹ *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye and his Sons*, ed. Larence J. Burpee, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1927. The search for the Western Sea is discussed in the biography by Yves Zoltvany, "Pierre, Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, v. 3, Universities of Laval and Toronto: 1974: 247-254.

and colonial administrators in New France wanted to know the potential of the western side of the continent for economic development, but did not want the expense of subsidizing the expeditions. To finance their explorations, the colonial administrations of New France encouraged Pierre Gaultier, his sons and their *engagés* [voyageurs], to trade with the local Indians. Sieur de la Vérendrye undertook the fur trade under duress, but had the genius to establish a string of posts along the interior waterways which could provide food and support for his explorations because it was too far to return to Quebec each fall. He thus pioneers the system of wintering in the interior which made the Montreal-based fur trade possible. The posts they built included: Kaministiquia at Thunder Bay, Fort St. Charles on Lake of the Woods in 1732, Fort Maurepas on the southern edge of Lake Winnipeg in 1734, Fort Rouge at the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine in 1737, Fort La Reine on the Assiniboine near present-day Portage la Prairie in 1737, and Fort Dauphin on Lake Winnipegosis in 1739; see Figure 3a: Indigenous Knowledge, Indian Geography: La Jemeray's map of 1733. After the father Pierre retired in 1742, his sons continued his work by establishing Fort Bourbon on Cedar Lake, at the entrance to the Saskatchewan River west of Lake Winnipeg; and Fort à la Corne near the forks of the Saskatchewan River in 1753, ten years before the fall of New France (1763). As Gerald Friesen noted:

This chain of posts was designed not only to control the highways of the fur trade and to protect the most effective route to the Rockies and the western sea, but also to cut directly across the flow of furs to the English on the shores of Hudson Bay. Thus, the competition between French and English intensified once again. As was the case at the close of the preceding century, the French won the lion's share of the trade.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984: 53-54.

As a result of these interior posts, the French were able to intercept Cree Indian middlemen before they took their furs to Hudson's Bay, and traded with them along the fringe of plains and parkland, so that the transportation of furs and goods was undertaken by the French, rather than the Indians. Through loss of furs, the Hudson's Bay Company traders in their bayside posts realized that Canadian competition was cutting into their business and they began sending young men westward with their Indians to gather intelligence about the competition and to recommend new methods of dealing with the Canadian "pedlars" as they called them.

The fur trade was a lucrative business, but it was also a distraction for men who were anxious to get on with their explorations. It also became dangerous when the French allied themselves with the Cree, Ojibwe and Assiniboiné against the Dakota/Sioux. The newcomers were drawn into traditional tribal alliances and Indian warfare which often prevented the easy flow of goods. Jean Baptiste La Vérendrye lost his life along with Father Aulneau on June 8, 1734, at Lake of the Woods when the whole expedition was killed by the Sioux "as a penalty for having armed the Indians of his command against the Sioux in 1734".¹¹¹ The father had sent his son to live with the Cree to learn their language and customs and the French explorers and traders continued this practice as good communication with their allies and customers was a priority.

To undertake these great journeys to the west, La Vérendrye recruited young men from Quebec who paddled the canoes for his expeditions and carried out the labouring jobs of the posts where they wintered. According to voyageur contracts in Quebec notarial records, François

¹¹¹ Yves Zoltvany, *DCB*, on Pierre Gaultier, Sieur de la Vérendrye, v. 3. See also Kathryn Young and Gerald Friesen, "La Vérendrye & the French Empire in Western North America", *River Road: Essays on Manitoba and Prairie History*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1996: 16.

Jerome, the son of a French militia officer by the same name, was one of these young men. His father's whole name was François Jérôme dit Latour dit Beaume, who had come from Brittany to Montreal in 1698 and married Marie-Angélique Dardennes in 1705 in Montreal. They had 13 children, include two sets of twins; the eldest son, François Jr. was born in August 1706. After 1718, the family moved to the parish of St. Laurent on the island of Montreal.¹¹²

François Jerome Jr. first engaged for the West in 1727, his voyageur contract vaguely stipulating that he was engaged by M. De Villiers to make a trip to the *pays d'en haut*.¹¹³ The exact destination was not stipulated. On 12 October 1733, he married Marie-Denise Denoe die Destailis. His mother-in-law was Jeanne Adhémar, a sister of the Royal Notary.¹¹⁴ Her father was Antoine Adhémar de Saint-Martin and his son, Jeanne's brother, succeeded him to the title. Jean Baptiste Adhémar became Royal Notary in 1714, so he was François Jerome's uncle by marriage. The prestige of being married to the Royal Notary was passed down through several

¹¹² René Jetté, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles du Québec des origines à 1730*, Montreal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montreal, 1983: 598. Jerome dit Beaume, Leblanc et Latour, François, de...Bretagne, 30 ans en 1705; cited 18-11-1698 a Montreal; sergent de la compagnie de Le Verrier. C. Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles Canadiennes*, Montreal: 1887, v. 2: p. 173: Marriage of François-Jérôme Beaume, [father of François Jr.] b. 1675, de St. Médrias, diocèse de St. Malo [France] and Angélique Dardenne, b. 1682, 3 novembre, 1705, Montréal. A footnote suggests that his names are "Leblanc dit Latour, sergent de M. Leverrier." On page 602 with the Jerome family genealogy, the footnote for François Jerome suggests "Son vrai nom est Beaume". Sometimes, this name was printed "Beaune" or "Bone". In the next generation, that surname was dropped and the son was known as "François Jerome dit Latour". Tanguay lists Jerome family surnames: Baumeleblanc, Beaume, Baumeleblanc, De la Tour, Latour, Leblanc, Longtin, Patry, Rivière.

¹¹³ Jerome's first voyageur contract is recorded in the Archives Nationales du Quebec (ANQ): François Jerome dit Latour, 13 mai, 1727, Notaire: Jean Baptiste Adhémar #3600.

¹¹⁴ André Vachon, "Antoine Adhémar de Saint-Martin", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography (DCB)*, v. 2: Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969: 10-11. Jean-Guy Pelletier, "Jean Baptiste Amable Adhémar", *DCB*, v. 4: 5-8.

generations of Métis families in the North West, along the Saskatchewan and into Red River as various descendants used the “dit St. Marte” or “St. Matthe” corrupted in English as “Sematte”.¹¹⁵

This couple had eight children baptized in Montreal between 1735 and 1746, five boys and three girls, registered in the parish of Notre Dame de Montreal. Two died as infants. In the genealogy of Tanguay, however, there are no continuing descendants of this line, although there are descendants listed of some of François’ brothers, Nicholas-Charles and Jean Baptiste.¹¹⁶ This is perhaps an indication that François Jerome’s male descendants moved out of Montreal.

François Jerome’s career as a voyageur and later a trader continued from 1727 to 1757 (see Figure 1a for the geographical extent of his contracts). In the 1730s, he was posted to the French post at Detroit, south of Lake Huron.¹¹⁷ In 1743, François Jerome made a contract with

¹¹⁵ See Hudson Bay Company Archives (HBCA) Search File, Gerome Family: Fort Carlton District Report, B.27/e/2, fo. 2d, May 28, 1819. Martin Jerome was known as “St. Mart Jerome” or “St. Matte Jerome”. January 30, 1822: Samart Gerome and Battoches Son [Letendre] arrived from Dog Rump Creek’s House...”. This tradition was carried on in Red River by Martin’s son, André Jerome and his sons. Also, National Archives of Canada, (NAC), R.G. 15, v. 1505, General Index to Manitoba and NWT Half-Breeds and Original White Settlers, 1885: 8 children listed of André St. Mathe and Marguerite Gosselin, listed in Ste. Agathe Parish. In Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM): MG2-B4-1: District of Assiniboia, General Quarterly Court: “André Jerome St. Matthe, found not guilty on charge of levying war against the Crown; charged: 24 November, 1871.”

¹¹⁶ Tanguay, Jerome Genealogy, p. 603. This volume includes Jerome entries to 1785.

¹¹⁷ Voyageur contract information are published in the *Rapport de l’Archiviste de la Province de Quebec (RAPQ)*. The Detroit contracts were for François Bone/Baune/Beaune. I have included the complete name in the voyageur contract to show how François was identified in the records, as there is some variety. But genealogical sources such as Tanguay and Jetté suggest they were the same person. His father François Sr. was too old to do this type of energetic livelihood.

Sieur de la Vérenderie [sic] to go to the Sea of the West.¹¹⁸ In 1745, François Jerome was hired by Sieur Maugras to go to Forts La Reine and Dauphin.¹¹⁹ The father, Pierre La Vérendrye, had retired in 1742, but his sons were carrying on his exploration work. Fort La Reine was located on the Assiniboine River at Portage la Prairie and Fort Dauphin was between Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipegosis. In 1749, François Jerome had a contract for Fort Maurrepas [sic] on the Winnipeg River and Fort La Reine on the Assiniboine.¹²⁰ Both these forts had been established by the La Verendrye family as they were located on strategic waterways which connected with Manitoba Lakes that led to the northern reaches. In 1756, François Jerome dit Latour contracted to Sieur Louis Lamay Desfonds to “poste Ouyatonons”, the Wabash Post in the Illinois country southwest of Lake Michigan.¹²¹ The following year, he must have made enough money to hire his own voyageurs and became a trader himself: “Sieur François Jerome dit Latour hired Joseph Beaumayer and Gabriel St. Michel to go to Michilimackinac.”¹²² This suggests that the latter

¹¹⁸ RAPQ: Sea of the West: Volume published 1929-30, p. 429. In a report on “La Famille Jerome”, Alfred Fortier, Director of the St. Boniface Historical Society (SHSB) mentioned that the Jerome family was present in the Canadian West for about 250 years, citing François’s contract to sieur de la Vérendrye in 1743 to look for the Sea of the West. He also cited various North West Company (NWC) references as in David Thompson, Masson and Alexander Henry the Younger to Jeromes along the Saskatchewan River. Fortier began his Jerome Genealogy with Martin Jerome Sr., married to Louise Amerindian, parents of Martin Jr. (Born about 1800) and Marie-Louise (born 1803) who moved to the Red River Settlement in the 1820s. “La Famille Jerome”, *Bulletin, La Société Historique de Saint-Boniface*, 4:été 1993:5.

¹¹⁹ RAPQ: La Reine and Dauphin: Volume published 1922-23: p. 219-220.

¹²⁰ RAPQ: Maurrepas and La Reine: v. 1922-23, p. 238.

¹²¹ RAPQ: Wabash: 1931-32, p. 237.

¹²² RAPQ: Beaumayer to Michilimackinac: v. 1931-32, p. 352. St. Michel likewise, same volume, p. 351.

French post on the Michigan shore between Lake Michigan and Lake Superior was now François Jerome's base of operations and he may have stopped returning to Montreal each season.

If a trader wanted to penetrate the forested interior beyond Lake Superior, he had to make a base in the Great Lakes and arrange to have the goods brought from Montreal one season; then when the furs came out in the spring, a Montreal crew would return with them. The voyageurs from Montreal were called "mangeurs de porc" [Pork-eaters]. The North West voyageurs in the interior were known as the winterers; although their diet at the posts consisted mainly of fish and meat, or pemmican, the canoe brigades ate Indian corn and wild rice traded from the Indians. The Canadian companies used the model of La Vérendrye to organize posts at regular intervals to stockpile food as the voyageurs did not have time to hunt and fish on their long journeys. The men like François who organized the trade and supervised the voyageurs were called "wintering partners" and they had the support of Montreal merchants and financiers who organized the trade goods to go to the Great Lakes and the selling of the furs in Montreal and Europe. The pioneering efforts by the La Vérendrye family and the Great Lakes traders like François Jerome dit Latour who obviously learned from them when he worked for them developed the extensive Montreal-based trade network which culminated in the North West Company, which spanned the continent to the Pacific and the Arctic Ocean by the 1790s. Obviously, when British partners became involved in the Canadian companies after 1763, they did not have the expertise and depended on the experience of their French traders and voyageurs to keep pushing north and west to the finest fur fields of the Athabaska, a fine example of mutual cooperation.

The great legacy of the La Vérendrye family was not just their explorations, but their logistics: the supply lines they pioneered to provide supplies to the travellers. Between 1741 and

1743, Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye, second son of Pierre Sr., built Fort Dauphin, near Lake Winnipegosis, while other members of their group built Fort Bourbon to the northwest of Lake Winnipeg, and Fort Paskaya to the northwest of Cedar Lake.¹²³ Pierre then spent the entire year of 1742 at Fort La Reine. He returned to Montreal in 1745 to fight in the wars against the Indians and British.¹²⁴

François Jerome became associated with LaVérendrye family in 1743 when he signed a contract to explore for the *mer de l'ouest* and later in 1745 with Sieur Maugras for Forts La Reine and Dauphin. Sieur Pierre Gamelin Maugras was the cousin by marriage of Louis-Joseph Gaultier de la Vérendrye, also known as Le Chevalier, the fourth son of Pierre Gaultier and Marie-Anne Dandonneau.¹²⁵; so it appears that Jerome was most closely associated with this member of the famous family. Le Chevalier had spent from the spring of 1742 to July 1743, exploring the plains south east of Fort La Reine. According to his biographer, Antoine Champagne, he was accompanied by his brother, François Gaultier du Tremblay, two Frenchmen, and some Indian guides. Although François Jerome was engaged to explore for the Sea of the West in 1743, it is not clear if he accompanied the LaVérendrye brothers in 1742-43.¹²⁶ This trip greatly increased geographical knowledge of the central plains and also proved there was no Sea of the West in that area and the large body of water described by the Indians

¹²³ Yves Zoltvany, "Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye", *DCB* v. 3: 252.

¹²⁴ Antoine Champagne, "Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye, Jr.", *DCB* v. 3:244-245.

¹²⁵ Antoine Champagne, Louis Joseph Gaultier de La Vérendrye, *DCB* v. 3: 242.

¹²⁶ A.S. Morton: 233. "In 1742-43, [le Chevalier] and his brother François made their final, if mistaken, attempt to reach the Sea of the West with the assistance of the Gens des Chevaux."

was probably Lake Winnipeg. La Vérendrye Sr. decided to focus on the north and the Saskatchewan River.

The Governor of New France, Charles de Beauharnois, had a master plan to extend French control of the west, but it suffered from the vagaries of French politics and the explorers had trouble getting the financial support they needed. Pierre Sr. had been replaced as commandant for the *poste de l'Ouest* in 1743 while his sons stayed in the west:

In 1747 [Beauharnois] sent Pierre and the Chevalier [Louis Joseph] de la Vérendrye to carry on the trade of the Western Posts, doubtless hoping that the Court would relent, as indeed it did and reappoint the father [Pierre as commandant]. The sons spent the winter at the northerly posts facing the English. In the spring of 1749, the Chevalier ascended the River Saskatchewan [Paskoyac] probably from Fort Bourbon, to the confluence of the north and south branches "where [there] is the rendezvous every spring of the Crees of the Mountains, Prairies and Rivers to deliberate as to what they shall do - go and trade with the French or with the English." That year the French carried off the main part of the trade in small furs at the expense of York Fort.¹²⁷

In the late 1740s, the sons stayed in the west, while their father tried to raise more capital for their exploring projects and their men continued to pursue the fur trade and take furs away from the English on the bay. Unfortunately, Pierre Sr. died in December 1749 in Montreal¹²⁸ while his sons were recalled to Quebec for various military engagements. It is generally assumed by historians that most French officers were recalled to New France to defend it, but the French

¹²⁷ A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*: 230-31.

¹²⁸ Champagne, Louis Joseph Gaultier de La Vérendrye: 241-244.

lost the colony in 1763.¹²⁹ Little is known of the French traders like Jerome who worked for them and who were taking the furs away from the HBC.

When Jerome went to Fort Bourbon in 1749, he was not a soldier like Les Vérendryes, but a voyageur and trader. In May 1749, the Master of York Factory received a letter from him, asking for a list of prices and proposing a little *commerce cachée*, or private trade. He also showed his wisdom based on experience in dealing with the natives:

As it came to our knowledge by the bearer of the said letter that you was ready to send one of your men in those parts, you may do it with all safety and fear nothing on our side. Leave the Indians quiet as we do. Although we have an officer with us, if you have any money, Goods or otherwise, we might settle a little private trade. Send us word at what price you take Beaver...

He sent along his broken oboe with the Cree traders, asking that it be repaired by the blacksmith at the fort. "I send by the Bearer of the Letter a Hautbois to get mended and in so doing, you will do me a sensible pleasure. You will give it to the Bearer of the Letter, and I shall have the Honour to send you the payment next year or bring it myself."¹³⁰ Historian A.S. Morton noted that this was the "first evidence of the plaintive reed by the shores of a western lake."¹³¹ John

¹²⁹ According to Antoine Champagne in his DCB biography of Louis Joseph Gaultier de La Vérendrye [Le Chevalier], [DCB, v. 3: 243-4], he was active in the fur trade on Lake Superior. He went to Michilimackinac and Grand Portage in the spring of 1750 to pay his men and obtain the furs to pay his father's debts. In 1752, he was in charge of Chagouamigon [Ashland, Wisconsin] on the southwest shore of Lake Superior. In 1756, he was made commandant of the *poste de l'Ouest* and operated out of Michipicoten and Kaministiquia. He drowned off the coast of Cape Breton in November 1862.

¹³⁰ Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA): A.11/114, fos. 130-131; York Factory Journal, May 17, 1749, correspondence copied by John Newton, Master. Newton copied a translation of François Jerome's letter into his journal. It is not the original in French, but it is contemporary and documents Jerome's trading activity at Fort Bourbon.

¹³¹ A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1939: 231.

Newton, the Master at York, disparaged Jerome's proposal, but copied a translation of his letter in his journal; the original was in French. Newton later became famous as the composer of the hymn, "Amazing Grace", written after his conversion to Christianity. Having been the captain of African slave ships, the hymn expressed his need for redemption.¹³²

In the early 1750s, the HBC masters at York Factory were so concerned at the threat to their trade that they began sending young men back with the Cree traders to explore and gather information about the Canadian traders, or pedlars as they called them. Anthony Henday left York Fort in June 1754 and travelled along both branches of the Saskatchewan, reporting on the vast buffalo herds and resources of the plains. He also learned that the Cree were middlemen in the trade, gathering up the furs of the Blackfeet and Assiniboinés who did not want to make the long trip to Hudson's Bay. Gerald Friesen described the problems that Henday encountered in getting the furs back to York:

But when his party commenced the long journey toward York, their sixty newly built canoes heavy with the furs they had gained in trade, they did not breeze past the French posts as Henday had hoped but rather stopped at each one for a little relaxation. At Fort la Corne¹³³, for example, 'the master gave the natives ten gallons of adulterated brandy and has traded from them above one thousand of the finest skins.' The story was repeated

¹³² Joan Craig, "John Newton", *DCB* v. 3: 482-483.

¹³³ Note: Fort la Corne is probably Fort St. Louis, established by Louis Chapt, Chevalier de la Corne. The French King awarded him the Cross of St. Louis for military honours in the Seven Years War. He was made commandant of the Western Posts in 1753 and Morton suggests: "built a new post (possibly with 200 yards of the Fort La Jonquière of 1751) on the Saskatchewan. It stood on the fine alluvial flat on which the HBC built their Fort à la Corne towards the middle of the 19th. Century. Its remains lie a mile west of the site of the Company's post. It was no more than an outpost of Fort Paskoyac. Fort St. Louis, as La Corne's post was called, was visited by Anthony Henday on his return." A.S. Morton: 238.

at Fort Basquia, and when the flotilla reached Hudson Bay in later June, many of the best and lightest furs had been left behind with the French....¹³⁴

Friesen also contended that the problems of the French competition were not communicated to the London Committee who only saw an "expurgated version of Henday's full journal, and his information was not acted on for another two decades."¹³⁵ Presumably he is referring to the establishment of the first HBC post in the interior, Cumberland House, established by Samuel Hearne in 1774.¹³⁶ The York Masters continued to send out exploring expeditions which brought back information about the French pedlars in the 1760s and 1770s such as Joseph Smith, Joseph Waggoner, Isaac Batt, George Potts, Henry Pressick, William Pink and Mathew Cocking. A.S. Morton noted that nine voyages were made into the interior from 1754 to 1762.¹³⁷

François Jerome was obviously part of these early French trading operations along the Saskatchewan, and he was gaining valuable experience about the logistics of the trade without having to deal with the politics of the French court and colonial administration like the Les

¹³⁴ Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984: 56.

¹³⁵ Friesen: 56. He based this observation on the comments of A.S. Morton who was critical of the HBC for not building interior posts during the French regime. Morton saw the fur trade as a contest of European empires, battling for territory. "True to Britain's form, it refused to prepare for the renewal of the crisis [competition with Montreal traders after 1763], and ...it had to develop its organization,...after the way had broken out, slowly, painfully, and...with great losses." *A History of the Canadian West*: 251-252.

¹³⁶ W.S. Wallace, *The Pedlars from Quebec*, Toronto: Ryerson, 1954: 13.

¹³⁷ Many of these inland traders who travelled with the Cree returned with over 60 canoes full of furs and they succeeded in persuading some of the Blackfeet to trade at the Bay. Morton reported that some of the French traders were reckless in their use of alcohol and stealing native women which resulted in several attacks on their posts and several deaths. It may have been the fear of these Indian attacks which inhibited HBC masters from building forts in the interior. Morton: 252-253.

Vérendryes.. The French traders saw an opportunity when the war in New France called their officers home and they took advantage of the lack of colonial control and built their own posts on the strategic Saskatchewan route. Little is known about their activities, however, except for hints in the HBC journals by the inland visitors. Morton observed:

The Frenchmen remaining at the posts were little more than voyageurs and clerks long in the trade. Among them, probably, were Louis Menard at Nipigon, the elusive Francois on the Saskatchewan, and perhaps a Blondeau at La Reine. One by one the posts were abandoned, no doubt for lack of goods. La Reine was still open in the winter of 1757-58, when Joseph Smith was on the Assiniboine. In the spring Fort Bourbon was burnt. It was not reoccupied. In 1757, La Corne's Fort St. Louis was closed; in 1759, Fort Paskoyac. That summer a Frenchman named Jean-Baptiste Larlee came down from this last post to York Fort to seek employment. He was sent off to England....He reported that...Frenchmen were building where Henday had proposed that the Company should open a post (at Moose Lake). By 1760 all the French posts on the Saskatchewan were closed.¹³⁸

The man described as "Larlee" was probably a "Desjarlais" and this suggests what became a Michif accent: changing the "ais" sound to "ee".

If the French military posts closed by 1760, others were built because some of the traders stayed in the west. When HBC man William Pink encountered the French pedlars in the spring of 1767, the Indians told him that the Canadian houses had been on the Saskatchewan for at least ten years, i.e. 1757 before the end of the French regime. François Jerome had been sent to the Wabash River in Illinois country in 1756, but at that time the trade became free and he hired his own men at Michilimackinac in 1757 and returned to the Saskatchewan.¹³⁹ Morton reported a story from Fort Bourbon in 1757 when HBC trader Joseph Smith met the French Master over a pot of brandy. The French leader questioned his guest about their involvement in the Seven

¹³⁸ A.S. Morton: 254.

¹³⁹ RAPQ: v. 1931-32, p. 237, voyageur contract.

Years War and whether the fur traders should allow military conflicts to interfere with the trade. "What if the King of England and the King of France are att [sic] war together, that is no reason why we should, so Lett us be friends."¹⁴⁰ Because of these fragmentary references, it was difficult for historians to pinpoint the names of these French traders.

It was a long way back to Montreal and it was probably around this time that the French traders started using Michilimackinac and Grand Portage as rendezvous points¹⁴¹ so that they could take their furs out in the spring and return with their Canadian goods before the cold weather in October.¹⁴² After the war ended in 1760, there was no official sanction for interior trading and no licenses granted until 1763. After working west of Lake Superior since 1743, François Jerome had acquired knowledge of local Indian customs and the Cree language which helped him pursue a successful trading career. By 1757, he was in charge of his own crews and continued his role as a wintering partner for another twenty years along the Saskatchewan.

¹⁴⁰ A. S. Morton: 254.

¹⁴¹ W.S. Wallace, *The Pedlars from Quebec*, Toronto: Ryerson: 1954: 7-10. On May 16, 1769, William Pink from York Factory reported that he met the English Canadian trader James Finlay on the Saskatchewan and he planned to take his furs back to Montreal. But two men were left at the "lower house" to trade for the winter. Thomas Corry came from Michilimackinac and wintered at Cedar Lake below Pasquia, then took his furs to Grand Portage. Corry then spent a second year on the Saskatchewan and then returned to Montreal, making such a fortune that he was able to retire from the trade.

¹⁴² According to Antoine Champagne, Le Chevalier [Louis-Joseph Gaultier de La Vérendrye] obtained permission in the the spring of 1750, after his father's death, to go to Michilimackinac and Grand Portage, "to meet the canoes coming from the west, in order to settle his father's business." He expected to be made commandant of the Western Posts, but did not receive the appointment. In 1752, he was appointed to the post of Chagouamigon [Ashland, Wisconsin, on the southwest shore of Lake Superior] to conduct the fur trade, but conflicted with other French officers. In 1756, he was given commandant of the *poste de l'Ouest* and remained in the Lake Superior area; the trade became free and he had to buy the appointment. *DCB*, v. 3: 243.

There is some disagreement in the literature about when the first Canadian traders entered the North West after 1763, because trade licenses were not issued until 1768. W.S. Wallace observed that the Moose Factory journals from James Bay reported that Indians had seen the Canadians since 1761.¹⁴³ A.S. Morton noted that Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher wrote to Governor Haldimand that the first trader from Michilimackinac to the interior was in 1765. He asked rhetorically: "There were men, then, who snapped their fingers at the Regulations, and from 1765 slunk through into the North-West. Who were they? The historians must now put on the mantle of Sherlock Holmes, point out the delinquents, and track them to their lair."¹⁴⁴ The use of his language suggests slyness or dishonesty rather than entrepreneurial competitiveness. This may have been a British trope against the French traders. W.S. Wallace identified "Franceway" as the first master pedlar to reach the Saskatchewan in 1767. William Pink saw his buildings near The Pas in the spring, but the French were not there, possibly having already left for the Great Lakes Rendezvous.¹⁴⁵

In 1767, there was a license issued to Francois Le Blanc (printed as "Blancell"). In the fur trade returns for 1767 at Michilimackinac, Le Blancell was listed as being financed by Alexander Baxter of Montreal to take six canoes to Fort Daphne [Dauphin] and La Pierce

¹⁴³ W.S. Wallace, "The Pedlars from Quebec, *Canadian Historical Review (CHR)*, v. 13: 1932: 388.

¹⁴⁴ A.S. Morton, "Forrest Oakes, Charles Boyer, Joseph Fulton and Peter Pangman in the North West, 1765-1793", *Trans. R.S.C.*, Section II: 1937: 89.

¹⁴⁵ HBCA: York Factory Journal: B.239/a/56, William Pink's first expedition, May 16 and May 31, 1767. The Indians told Pink that the first house they passed had been where the French resided ten years earlier and second site, seven years earlier, i.e. 1760. They predicted that "five large canews" would be returning that summer or fall.

[Portage La Prairie or Fort La Reine] valued at 2400 livres. This was the largest consignment of goods that year; the next highest was value was 1106 livres to Louis Menard, financed by Forrest Oakes.¹⁴⁶ "That François LeBlanc was handling business (for himself or for others) in a large way is shown by the value of his cargo - 2400 l."¹⁴⁷

A number of the HBC traders sent inland encountered a man known to them as "Franceway" or by his Indian name, "Saswe" or a variant of it from 1767 to 1777. In the same summer after Captain James Tute and Jonathon Carver met "Mr. Francis" at Grand Portage, William Tomison for the HBC had come inland from Fort Severn and on September 3, 1767: "Arrived at the great Lake [Lake Winnipeg] where I found many Indians, waiting for the arrival of the English and French pedlars. They informed me that there were two Houses at Misquagamaw [Red] River within ½ days padle across the Lake."¹⁴⁸ Tomison also commented on the variety of goods the Canadian traders were bringing into the interior: "they take all kinds of furs, the natives were cloathed in french cloth, blankets, printed callicoes and other stuffs ready made-up and many other sorts of trading goods, their tobacco is white and made up in rolls and

¹⁴⁶ "Fur Trade Returns", ed. Charles Lart, *Canadian Historical Review*, v. III, 1922: 351-58. P. 353.

¹⁴⁷ A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, 268.

¹⁴⁸ The Indians told Tomison there were two houses on Red River, one commanded by an Englishman named Wapestan and a Frenchman named Paquatick. A.S. Morton guessed that these men were Forrest Oakes and Charles Boyer; the latter had been previously on the Rainy River. They also said there were three forts to the westward. In 1767, Thomas Corry, one of the earliest British traders on the Saskatchewan, built the Fort du Milieu on the Assiniboine and Forrest Oakes built the Pine Fort in 1768. The other two earliest British traders were Joseph Fulton and Peter Pangman. See "Forrest Oakes, Charles Boyer, Joseph Fulton and Peter Pangman in the North-West, 1765-1793", *Transactions Royal Society of Canada (T.R.S.C.)*, Section II: 1937: 87-100. The Indians at Rainy Lake plundered Oakes and Boyer in 1765 and it was perhaps this incident which prevented François from getting to the Saskatchewan that year.

brinks, their guns are lightly made.”¹⁴⁹ He was “humiliated” to find that he could not prevent the Indians from selling their best furs to these Canadians.¹⁵⁰

A month later, in October 1767, on Lake Winnipeg Tomison met a French trader with ten Frenchmen and fourteen Indians in six large canoes on their way to The Pas and identified the leader as “Saswe”. This was two months after “Mr. Francis” left Tute and Carver at Grand Portage. Tomison complained that Saswe refused to talk “Indian” with him. Perhaps this is because Tomison was speaking either a different dialect of Cree from York Factory which Saswe did not use. Tomison learned through an interpreter that Saswe was financed by a Frenchman in Montreal and was not connected with the traders at Misquagamaw [Red] River. He described Saswe as follows:

his dress was a ruffled shirt, a Blanket Jacket, a pair of long trousers without stockings or showes [sic], his own hair with a hatt bound about with green binding, a poor-looking small man about 50 years of age, he seemed to have a great command over the men, he lay in the middle of the canoes with his wife and son, each of these canoes carie about 3 tons, his Indian conductor guide padled in a small canoe with his wife who was dresed very fine, when the wind favoured, they have a square sail which helps them greatly.¹⁵¹

Tomison’s description provides details of the material culture of the French Canadian traders coming into the North West after 1763. François Jerome was born in 1706, so in 1767, he would have been 61, but a man doing this kind of hard travelling twice a year would have been in good physical shape, even if he was not paddling the canoe like a voyageur. The “poor-

¹⁴⁹ HBCA: Fort Severn Post Journal: B.198/a/10, June 16, 1767; Tomison’s inland journey.

¹⁵⁰ John Nicks, “William Tomison”, *DCB* v. 6: 775-7.

¹⁵¹ HBCA: Fort Severn Post Journal, B.198/a/10, 1767-78, October 2, 1767. Cited by Lytwyn: 25-26. See Jonathan Carver’s details about the dress of Indianized Frenchmen at Detroit which are similar: *Jonathon Carver’s Manuscripts*: 66.

looking” comment suggests that he was not ostentatious, but dressed for practicality, like the Indians. Instead of Canadian shoes, he probably wore moccasins made by his Indian wife. The “blanket jacket” refers to the typical Canadian voyageur capote made from a blanket. The reference to the family suggests he had an Indian country wife, and she was probably at least twenty years younger than himself, since the son sounds like a child. In those days, even young teenage males would have been working, in this case, paddling the canoe.

Saswe must have enjoyed the respect of his Indian companions as he commanded a large fleet of six canoes. Since he sat in the middle of the canoe with his family and was not paddling, he was in a higher social position than his men, suggesting that he was no longer a voyageur and had become a “bourgeois” or wintering partner. Since he had “great command over the men”, not a given in the social hierarchy of the fur trade, he must have had a gift for treating his men well and with respect, i.e. he was a good leader. During this time period, the French Canadian traders were outnumbered by the Indians and had to get along with them; they had no great numbers of Canadians to back up company discipline and could not “command” without first winning the respect of his men and his customers. After trading four bags of wild rice from Tomison’s Indians, Saswe pushed on and did not stop at The Pas as he had told the HBC man, but continued to Pemmican Point on the Saskatchewan.

Although the HBC traders often underestimated their Canadian competition, Saswe was a successful trader who got along well with his French Canadian engagés as well as his Indian customers to such an extent that the bayside managers realized that they were losing about a third of their furs every season to these newcomers. William Pink was another HBC trader inland from York who had passed the Canadian houses in the spring of 1767. He was also trying to get

information on the Canadian traders for his master, Ferdinand Jacobs. The following spring of 1768, on May 25, Pink passed the house where “Shash” had resided. He was told that Shash was in partnership with James Finley of Montreal, “the first Englishman from Montreal to reach the Saskatchewan in charge with 12 Frenchmen.”¹⁵² He noted that the chiefest persons name is Shash, they are all French men that are heare upon the account that the English did not now the way.”¹⁵³ The following year, on May 16, 1769, Pink observed: “this day i came down to the plase whare the people of Quebeck ware staying as i went up heare i find the people belonging to this man ware not yet come up....one English man with 12 Frenchmen with him, his name is James Finley from Montreal, he came up with three canewes.”¹⁵⁴

On Pink’s fourth journey, on May 30, 1770, he noted that no Canadian canoes came up in the fall of 1769. He met a canoe with four French men who told him that “Sarchstreee” would be coming with four canoes, but that winter had come on too early and they had a good deal of goods taken, presumably by Indians. They had come from forts “at the Bottom of the Bay”. Usually this was term which referred to the bottom of James Bay, but that was not on the Canadian route to the interior. Perhaps Pink misunderstood and the French Canadian referred to Traverse Bay at the bottom of Lake Winnipeg on the southeast side. The Canadian route through the Winnipeg River emptied into the lake at this point. Although there were no forts there in 1770 (the post the farthest west of Lake Superior was at Rainy Lake), it was customary for the

¹⁵² A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, London: Thos. Nelson: 1939: 279. Here we see the Anglo-Canadian writers like Morton assuming that the British were “in charge” when actually Pink’s words suggest that Saswe [Francois] was the main man.

¹⁵³ HBCA: York Factory Journal, B.239/a/58, 1767-68, Pink’s second journey inland.

¹⁵⁴ HBCA: B.239/a/61, 1768-69, May 16, 1769. Pink’s third journey inland.

traders to meet the Indians (and vice versa) at the mouths of significant river as Tomison had done.¹⁵⁵ It would take twenty years for the Canadians to realize that it would be a good idea to have a provisioning post at this site where they could supply the canoe brigades with pemmican for their long journeys to the Athabasca.

To summarize the fragmentary reports of this French trader, Figure 1b outlines his progress from the Great Lakes to the Saskatchewan. In the summer, François LeBlanc obtained the fur trade license at Michilimackinac. On August 7, 1767, Mr. Francis met Captain Tute at Grand Portage, Lake Superior. October 2, William Tomison met Saswe with six large canoes and fourteen Indians on Lake Winnipeg, claiming he was going to The Pas. On May 25, 1768, the following spring, William Pink passed the Shash had resided and then visited the new post where he was partners with James Finley from Montreal. These reports apparently were about the same trader, a man well-known to the Indians along the Saskatchewan, who was the principal opponent of the HBC.

The third HBC trader who encountered the trader he called Franceway was Mathew Cocking, but before they actually met, he received information about him from his Indian companions. For example, on March 4, 1763, Cocking heard from a young hunter that "Franceway had sent some of his Men through the Country among the Natives to collect provisions..." Franceway knew the importance of collecting country produce before the long winter. Later, he would use the same deployment, called *en déroutine*, to send his men to the Indian camps to collect their furs without waiting for them to bring them into the posts. On

¹⁵⁵ Around 1792, a French Canadian named Toussaint Lesieur established what would become a very important provisioning post at the mouth of the Winnipeg River, called *Bas de la Rivière Winipic*. When the HBC took it over in 1832, they called it *Fort Alexander*.

March 17, 1773, Cocking observed: "several canoes are laying in places all the way down to the Pedlers principal settlement at the Grand Carrying Place". The Indians told Cocking that they were dissatisfied with Franceway's trading practices and threatened to take away his furs by force if he refused to comply with their demands.

On May 20, 1773, Cocking and his Indians arrived at Franceway's settlement and the trader greeted the Indians with a gift of four inches of tobacco. Cocking estimated that he had about 20 men with him. He described Franceway's trading post as follows:

Franceway's dwelling is a long square Log house, half of it appropriated to the use of a kitchen and the other half used as a Trading and Bedroom with a loft above the whole length of the Building where he lays his Furs. Also 3 small Log Houses, the Mens apartments, the whole enclosed with ten-foot stockades forming a square of about 20 yards. His canoes are 24 feet long measuring along the Gunwhale, 5 quarters broad and 22 inches deep.¹⁵⁶

Cocking complained about the way the Indians gave away all their furs for a low price and a gift of "spiritous liquors". Cocking was surprised that the Indians who had previously complained about Franceway were on such good terms with him and were willing to trade away all their furs. On May 21: "The Natives all owned and complained at their hard Dealing of Franceway and at the same time cannot account for their folly in expending their Furs."

On May 22, 1773, Cocking accepted an invitation to dinner with Franceway and his country wife. The latter employed a translator, whom Cocking thought was an Irishman, but possibly it was Peter Pangman whose New England accent might have been confused for an Irish one. Pangman later that summer travelled to York Factory to see if he could import his goods

¹⁵⁶ HBCA: York Factory Journal: B.239/a/69: August 23, 1772.

through Hudson Bay, showing he was in the interior, but Cocking's superior, Ferdinand Jacobs, disabused him of that notion.¹⁵⁷

What really bothered Cocking was that François allowed the natives and engagés to come and go inside his house when they liked. "They never keep a watch in the night, his reason was that the men would not consent to any such order if given by him."¹⁵⁸ In the hierarchical nature of the Hudson's Bay Company, there were social distinctions between officers and "servants", their term for the labourers, and social distances between the officers, men and Indians. Since the HBC had not yet moved inland, they were not used to dealing with Indians in their own territory. Keeping a distance between traders and clients of whom Cocking was somewhat afraid was an issue for him. Cocking was critical of Franceway's methods of dealing with the Indians, but this was more a reflection of his own prejudices than an objective assessment of the French trader's success. A.S. Morton saw through the pretence: "Cocking, with no goods, no rum, and but little tobacco, a stranger, with a great gulf - an English gulf - between him and the Indians, was helpless before this Indianized Frenchman."¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ "Peter Pangman", authors "in collaboration", *DCB*; v. 5: 656-657.

¹⁵⁸ HBCA: York Factory Journal: B.239/a/69, Ma 20-23, 1773, Mathew Cocking's Journal.

¹⁵⁹ A.S. Morton, *History of the Canadian West*: 286. The anti-French bias in primary sources such as Cocking's journal persisted in later historical writing. Although people like W.L. Morton could not be described as anti-French, he like A.S. Morton, tended to emphasize the British traders who entered the North West after 1763 as the British replaced the French bourgeois in the upper levels of the Canadian partnerships. For example, W.L. Morton wrote: "In 1768 James Finlay was on the Saskatchewan, and in 1771 Thomas Corry. The new Northwest traders had all but reoccupied the former fur domain of the French." He did not mention the French Canadian traders like Franceway, Louis Primeau and Charles Boyer. *Manitoba: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957, 1979: 38.

It was precisely the French traders' ability to live like "Indianized Frenchmen" that made them successful traders in the interior. As Thomas Hutchins at Albany Post pointed out in 1776: "The Canadians have great influence over the natives by adopting all their customs and making them companions. They drink, sing, conjure, scold with them like one of themselves and the Indians are never kept out of their houses whether drunk or sober, night or day."¹⁶⁰ British traders like Hutchins and Cocking found the Canadians' egalitarian attitudes disturbing to their accepted ideas of the British class structure. Readers should be cautious about accepting literally the judgmental attitudes of traders like Cocking; for example, when he called Franceway "an ignorant old Frenchman". The HBC man also mocked Indian rituals that they used to ensure good hunting and regarded their medicine as superstitious. On October 30, 1772, he observed:

Indians all employed looking after their Traps. The evenings are all spent in smoking and singing their God Songs, every Indian in his turn inviting the rest to smook and partake of a cold collation of Berries; this is done that they may be fortunate in trapping, live long, etc. Which they think has a great effect at the same time neglecting the only method of building many traps, most of them being very dilatory."¹⁶¹

Unlike Anthony Henday who enjoyed living with the Indians and made the most of their hospitality, Cocking depended on them to guide him in a foreign country, but at that same time

¹⁶⁰ Giraud, *The Metis in the Canadian West*, v. 1: 584, note 328 cites Thomas Hutchins, Albany Fort, HBCA: A.11/3, p. 29, July 5, 1776. Giraud argued that adoption of native customs by the French helped strengthen their trading relationships with the natives. The French Canadians even adopted powers of divination to impress their customers. See also Bruce White, "Encounters with Spirits: Ojibwa and Dakota theories about the French and their Merchandise", *Ethnohistory* 41:3, Summer 1994: 369-406.

¹⁶¹ HBCA: York Factory Journal: B.239/a/69: Cocking's Journal.

acted judgmental and critical. This was not a good way to ensure good trading relations with Indians that often disparaged the newcomers for their lack of survival skills in the interior.¹⁶²

Franceway understood the nature of fur trade rituals, immediately giving Cocking's Indians some tobacco when they arrived at his camp and treating them with respect. Some of his Indian informants told Cocking that they had collected forty skins at the buffalo pound and sent them to Franceway expecting a supply of ammunition and liquor in return. Cocking was at a disadvantage because he only had Brazil tobacco, highly prized by the Indians, but few goods to trade. "But I know Liquor is the chiefest inducement which I find the Natives always go for to the Pedlers in the Winter."¹⁶³

There were other references to Franceway/Saswe in the records of the fur traders. Now the inland traders were not just from York, but from other bayside posts, such as William Tomison from Severn. Moses Norton, Master at Churchill sent Joseph Hanson inland in 1773 to report on the invasion of pedlars. A.S. Morton wrote: "Joseph Frobisher and François were on the Saskatchewan in the Frobisher-McGill -Blondeau interest.....An old Canadian who had been upwards of 30 years among the Indians, had come in with three canoes equipped by one

¹⁶² Bruce White has written extensively about the symbolic nature of fur trade rituals and argued that the Ojibwe around the Great Lakes perceived French traders, with practical material goods like metal objects and cloth, as other-than-human persons, god-like creatures, with special magical powers whom they called "*esprits*" [spirits].

¹⁶³ HBCA: B.239/a/69: Cocking's York Factory Journal, August 23, 1772. "They showed me some Brazil Tobacco, saying it was traded from [Thomas] Correy, he had but a small quantity left when they see him, most of it being expended before; however, he traded it at the same rate as the Company's Standard. Virginia Leaf a large Brick as a six Beaver coat. Vermilion, awls, etc., given gratis, also cloathing, several." For the ritual use of alcohol in the trade, see Bruce White, "'Give Us a Little Milk' ", *Minnesota History*, Summer 1982: 60-71.

Solomon, a Jew from Montreal.”¹⁶⁴ Victor Lytwyn identified this French trader as François Jerome dit Latour.¹⁶⁵ A.J. Ray indicated that in 1774 William Holmes came into the Saskatchewan Country with Charles Paterson, and François Jerome dit Latour with seven canoes on their way to their post at Fort des Prairies [Fort à la Corne, Saskatchewan].¹⁶⁶ A.S. Morton found references to these pedlars in Samuel Hearne’s Cumberland House Journal:

A month after Hearne finished his log hut [at Cumberland House], the Pedlars came up the Saskatchewan on their way to their wintering grounds. The two Frobishers, Joseph and Thomas, and their partner, Charles Paterson, with Francois, in the company came.... Their partner, Paterson, with François, was going up the Saskatchewan with 12 canoes and 60 men. These two, while in friendly association, were probably connected with different firms in Montreal - Paterson...with the Frobisher-McGill partnership, and François with Finlay. François, as has been seen, had come inland the year before independently of Blondeau, but had entered into an arrangement and occupied what came to be called Isaac’s House jointly with him.....Thus, the Pedlars were on all the waterways converging on Cumberland House, save the Gras River route.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*: 289.

¹⁶⁵ Lytwyn, *The Fur Trade in the Little North*: Winnipeg: Rupert’s Land Research Centre, University of Winnipeg, 1986: 11. Cocking also suggested that Franceway had been in the North West among the Indians for thirty years.

¹⁶⁶ A.J. Ray, “William Holmes”, *DCB* v. 4: 365-66. In the *Journals of Hearne and Turnor*, Champlain Society, 1934: 120, editor Tyrrell quoted a letter from Samuel Hearne at Cumberland House, October 9, 1774: “Messrs. Paterson and Franceway came in the other Canoe out of curiosity.”

¹⁶⁷ A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*: 305. Morton cited the Cumberland House Journal, December 16, 1774, as mentioning: “Messrs Paterson Homes and Franceways houses”; two more probably three, posts were now in operation, presumably Isaac’s House [established by Isaac Batt], and one or two of the three contiguous forts some 23 miles farther upstream and about two miles above the present La Corne. Morton estimated they had about 160 men compared to the eight that Hearn had for the HBC. It was undoubtedly this source of Paterson that led A.J. Ray to write in the *DCB* on “William Holmes” that François was Jerome dit Latour; v. 4: 355-6.

The fierce competition taught the pedlars that they were better off combining their interests and cooperating so that they could all profit.

In 1775, Alexander Henry travelled along with the Saskatchewan with Paterson, Holmes and two Frenchmen (unnamed) which is odd because he was probably with the Canadians along the Saskatchewan. He did not mention François although he was still wintering along the Saskatchewan. Morton wrote that: "There was a Frobisher post somewhere beyond Lake Winnipegosis. A Master along with Isaac Batt was to winter at some place to be agreed upon with the Indians."¹⁶⁸ The competition was driving the Canadians into partnerships which led to the formation of the North West Company in 1784. After this, the references to Franceway are less frequent and peter out by 1777 when he was reported by Cocking to have left the country after killing an Indian.¹⁶⁹ He retired to Detroit and his death date is unknown.¹⁷⁰

To reiterate, François Jerome dit Latour, the son of the militia captain in New France, went to the Great Lakes and *pays d'en haut* in 1727. By 1743, he was assigned to the La Vérendrye party to explore for the *mer de l'Ouest*. In 1749, he was working at Fort Bourbon on Cedar Lake, on the strategic route linking York Factory with interior and the competition of these Canadians forced masters at York Factory to send men inland to gather information about the competition and persuade the Indians to maintain their custom of trading at the Bay. Several of

¹⁶⁸ A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*: 311.

¹⁶⁹ W.S. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*: 45. "Extract of Cocking's Journal, January 22, 1776: "The Pedler Franceway who has been many Years Trading in these Parts being superannuated is retired."

¹⁷⁰ *Journals of Hearne and Turnor*: 120: note by editor Tyrrell about François retiring to Detroit.

these like William Pink and Mathew Cocking encountered a trader named Franceway, Saswe, Shash, Shashree. His surname was never mentioned and the only French Canadian who had a fur trade license out of Michilimackinac at this time was François LeBlanc. Genealogist Cyprian Tanguay suggested that the Jerome family used other surnames, such as Beaume/Beaune, "dit Latour", and LeBlanc. Both fur trade historians A.J. Ray and Victor Lytwyn argued that the famous Franceway who was one of the earliest French Canadian traders up the North Saskatchewan and who had been in the country (according to Cocking for thirty years) was François Jerome dit Latour.

The other piece of the puzzle is that there were Jeromes mentioned in fur trade records as living on the Saskatchewan River, in the area around Fort Carlton, for three generations after François before they moved to the Red River Settlement in the 1820s. Pierre Jerome/Gerome was an interpreter at Fort des Prairies on the Saskatchewan in 1799 and 1804.¹⁷¹ Similarly, when Alexander Henry the Younger moved to Fort Vermilion in 1809, he hired "Jerome" as his Cree interpreter.¹⁷² The fact that this man was working as a Cree interpreter suggests that either he had been living in the area for a long time or he had a Cree wife or mother.

Pierre Jerome died at Carlton in 1821 and the officer in charge, John Peter Pruden, suggested that he had been "many years in the service of the NWC as Interpreter for the Crees

¹⁷¹ L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie de Nord-Ouest*, vol. 1: 63 and 397, at Fort des Prairies.

¹⁷² E. Coues, ed., *Henry's Journal*, v. II: 544. In a footnotes, Coues stated: "Mr. Jerome, Jerome or Gerome, of the NWC, was at Fort George with John Mcdonald and Mr. Decoigne, in September 1798, but interpreters are not usually given any title. Edward Jerome suggests that the "M. Jerome" may have been Martin Jerome, not Monsieur Jerome. Also by Alfred Fortier: "David Thompson cite un M. Jérôme au Fort George, le 18 septembre 1798; un M. Gérôme est interprète pour la NWC au Fort-des-Prairies en 1804." *Bulletin, SHSB*, 4: 1993:5.

and I should suppose he must be upwards of 80 *years* of age.”¹⁷³ This would put his birth at about 1740. At the same time at Fort Carlton was a young Martin Jerome aged about 20 years old, but it appears that a Martin Jerome Sr. was between the generations of Pierre and Martin Jr. Martin Jr. listed his father as Martin Sr. on his marriage certificate and his sister, Marie Louis Jerome, born 1803 listed her father as Martin on her St. Boniface marriage record.

Henry’s journal also suggests that the man he used as Cree interpreter was younger and more active. For example, when he worked at Fort Vermilion in the winter of 1809-10, he worked *en dérrouine* collecting furs from the Crees: September 19: “Jerome returned from the Cree camp, where there are 20 tents.” February 13: “I sent Jerome off *en dérrouine* to Mistanbois.” February 20: “Jerome and [La]Rocque cutting out pemmican bags.” May 21: Jerome & the lads supply us with fish.”¹⁷⁴ Jerome also appears on Henry’s census of 1809 with no wife, but four children. On June 3, 1810, roster of families: of 17 tents for Henry’s men, Jerome and LaPierre shared a tent with 2 men, 1 woman and 5 children.¹⁷⁵ These records suggest that Jerome lost his wife and was raising the four children himself. However, only two of the four later showed up in Red River Settlement in the 1820s. This was probably Martin Jerome Sr.

In the North West Company Fort des Prairies Equipment Book of 1821, Martin Jerome, age 19 [born around 1802] has an account, showing him to be a “Native of Fort des Prairie”, i.e. born on the Saskatchewan. His good friend, Jean Baptiste Letendre Jr. was also listed in the account book. Called “Samart Gerome”, he did some work for the master at Carlton House in

¹⁷³ HBCA: Carlton House Post Journal, B.27/a/11 and district report, B.239/a/1, fo. 50.

¹⁷⁴ Coues, Henry’s Journal, v. 2: 545, 584, 587, and 599.

¹⁷⁵ Coues, Henry’s Journal, v. 2: 555 and 603.

1821-22. For example: December 17: "Sent off Wm. Gibson and 2 half Breed young men with the packet for Dog Rump Creek." January 30: "Samart Gerome and Battoshes Son [Letendre] arrived from Dog Rump Creek House, but brought no letters from Edmonton House." June 5: "Mr. Monro, Samart Gerome, Beauchamps and Gausawap arrived with horses from Edmonton, 15 of which belonged to the Company [HBC] and 6 to private individuals."¹⁷⁶ Chief Factor Colin Robertson at Norway House requested Pruden to have guides ready for his trip from Carlton to Edmonton in 1822 and suggested that "Jerome and the White Eagle's son are supposed to be the best guides."¹⁷⁷

In the early 1820s, Martin Jerome Jr. became a freeman and moved to Red River Settlement with the Letendre family after the death of Pierre Jerome. He is listed in many of the subsequent censuses.¹⁷⁸ This migration to Red River by the Jerome and Letendre families paralleled the general movement of freemen and their families to the settlement, where they could raise their families close to schools and churches.

It is not possible to determine the exact relationship of François, Pierre, Martin Sr. and Martin Jerome Jr. (Samart Jerome). It appears that Pierre was born in Quebec and Martin Jr. on the Saskatchewan. His mother must have been Indian or mixed-blood, but her identity is unknown. The fate of François' Indian wife and child are also unknown. It seems likely that Pierre was the nephew of François Jerome dit Latour, the son of his brother Pierre, born in 1718;

¹⁷⁶ HBCA: Carolton House Post Journal: B.27/a/11 and 12 for these dates.

¹⁷⁷ E.E. Rich and H. Fleming, ed., *Colin Robertson's Correspondence Book, 1817-1822*, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1939, p. 194.

¹⁷⁸ HBCA: E.5/2, fo. 8d-9; and E.5/3, fos. 10d-11; E.5/4 and E.5/5.

Pierre Jr. was born in 1740, the right age for the Cree interpreter at Fort Carlton in 1821.¹⁷⁹

Again, the exact relationship of Pierre, Martin Sr. and Jr. is not exact, but the difference in ages suggests that Pierre was Martin Jr.'s grandfather and Martin Sr. died between Henry's departure (1812) and the consolidation of the fur trade companies in 1821. It is not unreasonable to suggest that there were three generations of Jeromes on the Saskatchewan after François and that they must have had some connection with him.¹⁸⁰

John Foster speculated that it was freemen of the 1770s and later like François and Pierre Jerome who married native women and gave birth to the young people who became the New Nation, the Métis of the Red River Valley. He argued that going *en déroutine* to the Indian camps, marrying native women, but still being outsiders led to the development of this separate identity, but the only example he used was of the Dumont family, whose descendant Gabriel became famous in the 1885 confrontation with the Canadian government.¹⁸¹ This was the first step in an inter-generational process of ethnogenesis. Language was also a good indicator of new ethnic identity. It probably took several decades for the the in-group language of Michif (French nouns and Cree verbs) to develop in the buffalo hunters' camps, but I think that Foster would have agreed that this probably happened outside of Red River for several decades before 1815.

¹⁷⁹ Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Généalogique*, Montreal: 1937: 602-3.

¹⁸⁰ Alfred Fortier, Director of the Société Historique de St. Boniface (SHSB) suggested this link in his Jerome family genealogy which starts with Martin Sr. *Bulletin SHSB* 4, été 1993:p. 5.

¹⁸¹ John Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Metis", *Prairie Forum* 19:1: Spring 1994: 1-13.

The Jerome family are a useful prototype of Métis ethnogenesis. By the third generation, French Canadian descendants married Native women and lived separate from the fur trade posts. They adopted Indian clothing, technology and languages. They became the great horsemen and buffalo hunters, fluent in Cree and using Indian expertise to survive on the plains and parkland. They were economically and psychologically independent, giving rise to the name which they called themselves: the Freeman. They could support their families and hunt communally, sharing with their friends and relatives, while at the same time, participating in the capitalist system of profit by trading their surplus dried meat and fat for pemmican to the fur trade companies who were dependent on them for country produce.

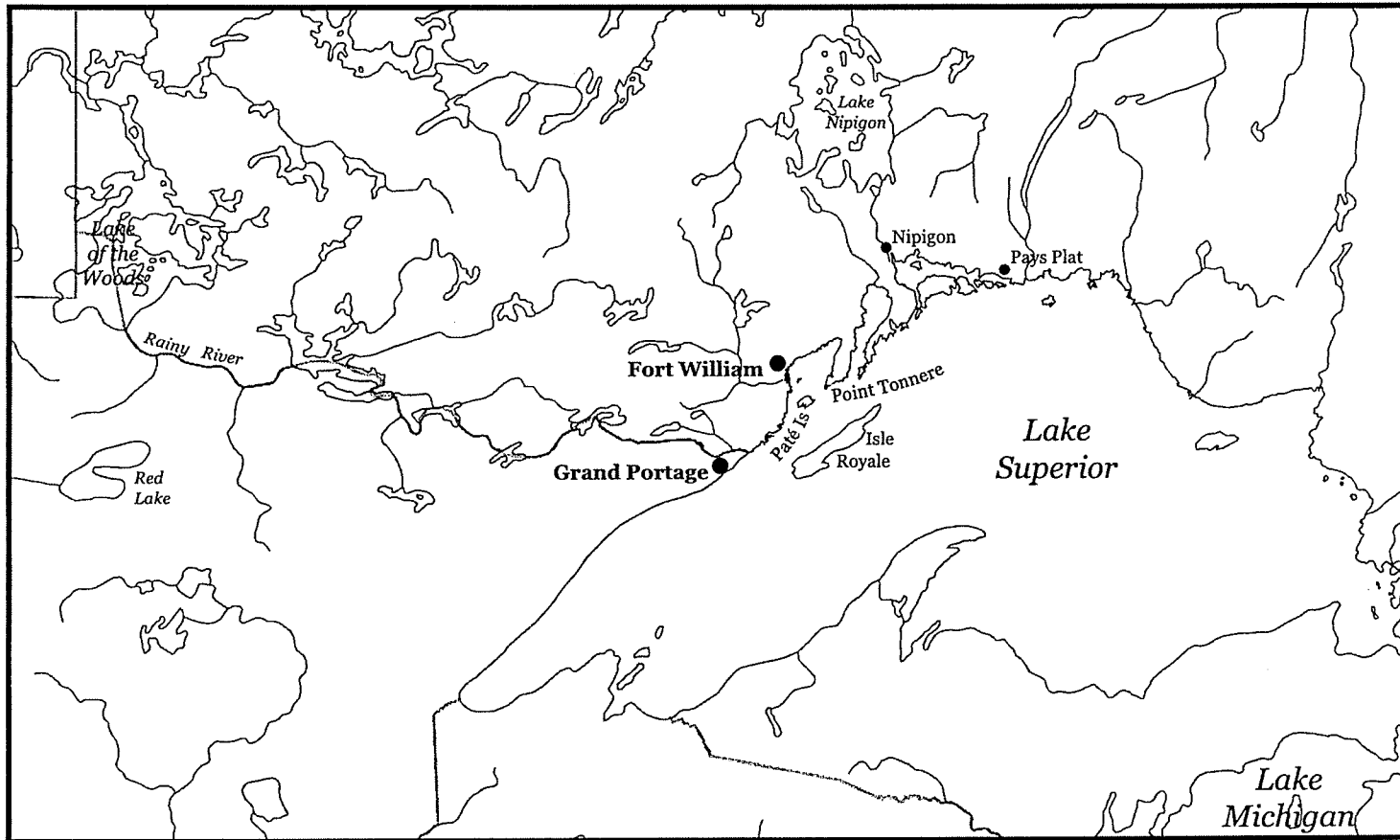
Foster identified the first step in the process, but he was only partly right. It was the development of the freemen culture, separate from the non-Aboriginal traders and Indians, that led to the development of the Métis. Young Samart Jerome and his friend Jean Baptiste Letendre probably called themselves “freemen” rather than “Métis”, but it is hard to say when there is no documentation from the people themselves. Were they like the French Canadian traders that Richard White identified in the Great Lakes, like Jean Baptiste Cadotte, who married Native women, learned the Indian languages and lived with them? Was François occupying the “Middle Ground” as a successful trader? Clearly, this generation of French Canadian was important in the development of the Métis. Witnesses suggested he had a wife and child. Since he would not have brought his white wife with him, this woman must have been Indian. Did his wife translate for him or act as a “cultural mediator” as Sleeper-Smith suggested?¹⁸² Was his

¹⁸² Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region: 1650-1815*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*,

child Métis? Where did he/she fit in? It is difficult to say with the fragmentary nature of the records for that period. After 1821, when large numbers of these families were no longer employed in the fur trade war, they moved to Red River where they became the dominant group, and claimed their birthright to the settlement of the North West. We shall return to the Jeromes in Chapter Seven.

Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991: 8. Sleeper-Smith does not like to use the term *Métis* in her study because she says that it is rare in 17th and 18th century sources. She says it is “confusing”, suggesting that *Métis* populations were found at Michilimackinac and Green Bay. She also states that it is more common in Canada where “mixed-ancestry offspring have themselves sought reservation lands as a sovereign people”. Apparently, she was confused. Perhaps she was right to suggest that in the smaller communities around the Great Lakes, identity was determined by kinship rather than by nationality or ethnicity. She disagrees with Peterson.

Figure 2. Lake Superior: 1799-1830



Chapter 2: To the Great Lakes: with the Collin Family at Grand Portage & Thunder Bay

Although the destination with the biggest allure was the northern Subarctic regions with the best furs, especially, the Athabasca region of northern Alberta,¹⁸³ the Great Lakes constituted the area where the Montreal voyageurs headed during much of the eighteenth century. Then as the fur trade moved north and west, the Great Lakes communities, peopled with communities of French Canadian traders and their families, developed characteristics which some historians have identified as Aboriginal or “Métis”.¹⁸⁴ This chapter will look at the developing characteristics of Métis culture which later manifested in Red River Valley to see to what extent they were present in Lake Superior fur trade communities and to examine how *metissage* in the fur trade affected ethnogenesis.

Not a great deal is known about individual voyageurs who came from Quebec and settled in the Great Lakes communities, aside from the useful writings of Jacqueline Peterson and Susan

¹⁸³ Alexander Henry the Younger described the importance of the Athabasca trade: “It is true, profits arise from the trade in other parts, eastward; but nothing in comparison to what we obtain from the Athabasca country.” Coues, *Henry’s Journal*, v. 2: 474. Cited by Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1930, 1984: 229. Also: W.S. Wallace, *The Pedlars from Quebec*, Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954: 20-21. E.E. Rich, *Hudson’s Bay Company*, v. 2, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 209: Fort Chipewyan was known as the “El Dorado of the north-west.”

¹⁸⁴ Jacqueline Peterson, *The People in Between: Indian-White Marriage and the Genesis of a Métis Society and Culture in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1830*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, 1981; and “Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis”, *Ethnohistory*: 25/1: Winter 1978: 41-67. Gerhard Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing Worlds of the Red River Métis in the Nineteenth Century*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.

Sleeper-Smith.¹⁸⁵ The latter challenged Peterson's view that the mixed ancestry descendants of French traders and Native women should be called *Métis* because that term was rare in 17th and 18th century sources. While Sleeper-Smith viewed the mixed-ancestry descendants as "indigenous" and emphasized their kin networks, through the Catholic Church as well as trade, W.J. Eccles saw them as more French and tied by ethnicity to Quebec and French Canadian culture through links to the old North West by French officials and traders.¹⁸⁶ Geographers and native and fur trade historians have contributed to our understanding of French expansion into the Great Lakes Basin.¹⁸⁷ Descendant Theresa Schenck produced a notable family study on her

¹⁸⁵ Jacqueline Peterson, "Prelude to Red River: A social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis", *Ethnohistory* 25, 1978: 41-68; this was reprinted as "Many Roads to Red River" in *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, ed. By Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985: 37-71. "Ethnogenesis: The Settlement and Growth of a 'New People' in the Great Lakes Region, 1702-1815", *American Indian Culture & Research Journal* 6:2, 1982: 23-64. Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

¹⁸⁶ Eccles suggested that the Métis were descended from the *Hommes du Nord*, [the North Men], i.e. the Winterers, rather than the *mangeurs du porc*, the voyageurs who travelled between Montreal and the Great Lakes. However, it is quite likely that the winterers were the descendants or relatives of *mangeurs du porc*. *The French in North America: 1500-1783*, rev. ed., Markham, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1998: 163. Voyageur contracts for the Collins, also known as Collin dit LaLiberté, had been going to the Great Lakes posts for most of the 18th century.

¹⁸⁷ Conrad Heidenreich & Francoise Noel, "France Secures the Interior: 1740-1755", Plate 40, *Historical Atlas of Canada*, v. 1, eds.. Cole Harris & Geoffrey Matthews, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987. Arthur J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade, their Role as Hunters, Trappers & Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1870*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974. Archaeological and historical work on fur trade sites are as follows: Susan Campbell, *Living & Working at the Fort*, Fort William Archaeological Project, Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Culture & Recreation, 1976. Carolyn Gilman, *The Grand Portage Story*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1992, based on work by archaeologists Alan Woolworth, Douglas Birk and their crews. Jean Morrison, *Superior Rendezvous-Place: Fort William in the Canadian Fur Trade*, Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2001.

ancestors, the Cadottes of Lake Superior, and this article will use the inter-generational family case study to examine the situation of the evolving métis culture.¹⁸⁸ Pembina Métis descendants Edward Jerome traced his ancestry back to another fur trade ancestor, Antoine Collin, the canoe-maker at Grand Portage and Fort William.¹⁸⁹ This microstudy of his family investigates the canoe-maker's origins, the place of the family in the social hierarchy of the fur trade post, and what their ethnic identity might have been. In Chapter Seven, we will again link up with the Collin Family to find out how the Collins ended up in the Red River Valley. The purpose of this approach is to show where the ancestors of the Pembina Métis came from.

Before Jerome researched his background, Antoine Collin's ancestry was difficult to trace because of the paucity of records in the 18th and early 19th centuries. There were no church records for the Thunder Bay area until the late 1830s when Father Pierz, based at Sault Ste. Marie Michigan, went around Lake Superior to visit the Ojibwe and fur trade communities. The priest listed an Antoine Collin (son of Joseph), born in 1766, and his sister, Angelique Collin, born in 1767.¹⁹⁰ Another Métis source suggests that Antoine Collin was born in 1780.¹⁹¹ His

¹⁸⁸ Theresa Schenck, "The Cadottes: Five generations of Fur Traders on Lake Superior", *The Fur Trade Revisited: Selected Papers of the 6th. North American Fur Trade Conference, Mackinac Island, Michigan, 1991*, ed. Jennifer Brown, W.J. Eccles, & Donald P. Heldman, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, Mackinac Island: Mackinac State Historic Parks, 1994: 189-198.

¹⁸⁹ I am indebted to Edward A. Jerome of Hallock, Mn., for sharing his family history and research notes with me as the basis of this study.

¹⁹⁰ I would like to thank Father William Maurice, Ste. Anne's Church, Fort William First Nation, Thunder Bay, for genealogical information and Eric Angel for his suggestions.

¹⁹¹ D.N. Sprague & R.P. Frye, *Genealogy of the First Métis Nation*, Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983: Table 1: lists 1780 for Antoine's birthdate and 1783 for his wife.

son, Michel, swore in an affidavit in 1874 that he had been born at Fort William in 1799 [Kaministiquia]. Since his father worked for the North West Company (NWC) and the company did not move from Grand Portage to establish the new rendezvous until 1804, it seems more likely that Michel was born at Grand Portage where his father was stationed.¹⁹²

Although it has not been possible to identify Antoine Collin's mother, it is safe to assume that he had biracial heritage and his mother was probably Indian because there were few French non-Aboriginal women in the Great Lakes, especially at the western end of Lake Superior (see Figure 2). Elizabeth Arthur described the Collin family as long-established residents: "The Collins were in Fort William area from the beginning of the nineteenth century...some were half-breeds; almost all married Indian girls."¹⁹³ The Collin family was different from the local Ojibwe Indians because of their occupation as "freemen" within the fur trade hierarchy although we do not know exactly when they became freemen rather than contracted employees.¹⁹⁴ After the American Revolution in the 1780s, there were growing numbers of voyageurs of mixed ancestry in the Great Lakes area who were not born in Quebec and who either signed contracts in Michilimackinac or joined the growing ranks of "*gens de libre*" [freemen]. These men with

¹⁹² *Thunder Bay District, 1821-1892, A Collection of Documents*, ed. Elizabeth Arthur, Toronto: Champlain Society, University of Toronto Press, 1973: 61, note: Father Pierz made two visits to Fort William in 1838-39. On page xxix of the "Introduction", Arthur writes: "At a meeting at La Pointe [Wisconsin] in 1847, Father Pierz apparently agreed that the Jesuit order, recently reestablished in Canada, should assume responsibilities for the far northwest on both sides of the international border." I would like to thank Jean Morrison and Eric Angel for this reference as well as for referring me to Susan Campbell's *Fort William: Living & Working at the Fort*, 1976.

¹⁹³ Arthur: xliv-xlv.

¹⁹⁴ Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), Fort William District Report: B.231/e/5: An 1828 census lists both Michel and Antoine Collin as freemen, i.e. not under contract.

French names who had Aboriginal mothers were a significant part of the labour force as the wintering partners of the Montreal partnerships pushed north towards Lake Winnipeg, the Saskatchewan (like François Jérôme) and Athabasca or west through Grand Portage, Fond du Lac and Fort William to the Red River, Pembina and other plains provisioning posts along the border of the plains.¹⁹⁵ Unlike the French women of mixed ancestry studied by Sleeper-Smith at the larger posts like Michilimackinac and Green Bay, the wives of the lower-level voyageurs and freemen did not exercise influence in the trade except through their own production, such as making maple sugar, leather goods such as moccasins and snow shoes, and through labour such as building canoes and perhaps trapping small animals and fishing. Their kin networks would have been more linked to the local Indian groups where they were raised than to other fur trade communities in the Great Lakes. They did not have the Catholic Church to reinforce such ties.

Antoine Collin's wife was Mishaha Weyers (Latour); her ethnic background is unknown.¹⁹⁶ She may have had a French father with the name Latour (for example, François Jerome's family used that name), but perhaps she was raised by her mother's Ojibwe relatives.¹⁹⁷ Since their son, Jean Baptiste, applied for scrip as a "Halfbreed head of family", at least one of his parents had Aboriginal ancestry or both. Another son, Michel, was born on Lake Superior in

¹⁹⁵ Peterson, "Prelude to Red River", 1978:49.

¹⁹⁶ National Archives of Canada (NAC) in Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM), Affidavit for Half-breed Scrip, v. 1319, for Jean Baptiste Collin.

¹⁹⁷ Another possibility is that her surname was "Sayer", rather than "Weyers". John Sayer was a NWC bourgeois in the Fond du Lac district of northern Minnesota. He was born about 1750 and had a fur trade licence for Michilimackinac by 1780 (W. S. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, Toronto: Champlain Society: 497). Sayer could have had an Ojibwe daughter born about 1783 who had a son in 1799.

1799 and lived all his life there¹⁹⁸ and his descendants intermarried with the local Ojibwe and became members of the Fort William Band.¹⁹⁹

A contemporary was Joseph Collin who worked at Fort Alexandria under the NWC bourgeois, Archibald Norman McLeod, as an interpreter in 1800-1801.²⁰⁰ For example: "I sent Collin and 7 me off *en déroutine* to where the Vent du Nord came from with the value of 3 large kegs of rum & for 60 skins in goods." "Collin came back, he brought 19 wolves and 14 Beavers, 7 Catts and 5 foxes, 39 bladders of Grease and a little dried and Green Meat."²⁰¹ If Joseph Collin was working as an interpreter at Fort Alexandria on the Upper Assiniboine in the early 1800s, he probably either had an Indian [probably Ojibwe] mother or had been in the country for many

¹⁹⁸ Elizabeth Arthur, ed., *Thunder Bay District*, note, page 63: "Michel Collin claimed in an affidavit sworn in 1874 that he had been born at Fort William in 1799...Later he acted as an interpreter and at one time was in charge of the L'Orignal post."

¹⁹⁹ Father Maurice, Ste. Anne's Church, Fort William First Nation, personal communication based on his study of local genealogies. Jean Morrison, *Superior Rendez-vous Place*: Peter Collins, Chief, Fort William First Nation, descendant of Antoine Collin: 136, 137.

²⁰⁰ C. Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Genealogique des Familles Canadiennes*, v. 3: Collin family lists the generations as follows: I: Mathurin, b. 1643; II: Andre, b. 1675; III: Joseph, b. 1706; IV: Joseph, b. 1729; married Louise André, 1756; had a son Joseph, b. 1760. If Antoine Collin was born near Grand Portage in 1767, he and Joseph may have been half-brothers; Joseph with a French Canadian mother and Antoine with an Ojibwe mother.

²⁰¹ McGill University, Redpath Library, Masson Collection, Diary of A.N. McLeod; also published in C.M. Gates, *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest: 123-185*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1985. ; note on Joseph Collin's identity, p. 130; quotes on page 144: December 21 and 30, 1800. Joseph Collin was also mentioned by Daniel Harmon on p. 60 and 80-82. Also Masson, *Bourgeois*, v. 1: 404. I have no documentation on the connection, but it seems likely that Joseph Collin was related to Antoine of Grand Portage; possibly his father, but more likely a brother or cousin. He had a Métis daughter Louise, born about 1815, who married #5118, Louis Villebrun, a Métis born about 1805. Sprague and Frye *Genealogy of the First Métis Nation*: Table 1.

years; he would have been about 40 years old. If he was related to Antoine at Lake Superior, the lack of records makes it impossible to say for sure.

The fact that Antoine's two sons, Michel and Jean Baptiste, of the same parents [Antoine and Mishaha Weyers dit Latour] diverged in ethnically different directions provides a good example of the complexity of the "mixed-blood"²⁰² experience. The fact that these siblings adopted different ethnic paths undermines racial stereotypes that suggest that ethnic identity was determined by biology. Michel's descendants melded into the local Ojibwe community at Fort William while those of his younger brother became Métis in Red River. Most anthropologists and ethnohistorians would argue that ethnic identity was cultural and influenced by local social and economic conditions and individual choices.²⁰³ Peterson rejected the biological argument which suggested that intermarriage led to hybridization and sterility. These 19th century ideas were scientifically invalid ("blood does not mix"; genes mix). She identified ethnic markers such as "living arrangements, material culture and occupations of Métis set them apart from both their

²⁰² Note that the term "mixed-blood" is a metaphor in the English language for mixed ancestry of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. It has no scientific validity, keeping in mind Peterson's warning: "blood does not mix". All human blood is the same and intermarriage between ethnic groups can and does occur. Peterson, 1978: 46.

²⁰³ Jennifer Brown argued that the "mixed-blood descendants of the fur trade joined a common cause that emphasized their maternal descent" because they were denied upward mobility in the fur trade companies. *Strangers in Blood*, Vancouver: UBC Press: 1980. In cases like the Collins where mixed descendants melded into the local native communities, a distinct ethnic category of "Métis" did not last throughout the nineteenth century. It is possible, however, that voyageurs and freemen around the posts in the late 1790s and early 1800s did consider themselves somewhat distinct from local bourgeois and Indians, but, since they did not leave any memoirs or written record, it is difficult to document.

Indian kin and neighbors and from European society to the east".²⁰⁴ Whether they were Métis yet could be debated, but there was much evidence of cultural mixing.

I assume that Antoine Collin's wife was raised according to Aboriginal customs, in this case, Ojibwe customs. Duncan Cameron, a NWC trader in the Nipigon area, described the Indian custom that fur traders and voyageurs followed in approaching a young native woman that they wanted to marry *à la façon du pays*, i.e. according to Indian custom. Cameron had children in the country and probably used this approach himself:

When a young man wishes to take a wife, he employs his father, or some other near relative, to go and give the young woman's father, or some other near relative, a present of a gun, or of any other valuable article he may have, and ask for the young woman. If the demand is agreeable, the present is accepted....the father or brother of the young woman will take her by the hand and deliver her to the young man, without any further courtship or ceremony, and without even consulting in the least the inclination of the young woman, who perhaps has never spoken to the young man before. The husband must then go and live with his father-in-law for a year at least, and give him all he hunts during that time, the father-in-law, however, finds him necessities and clothing, and if he is a good hunter, which is the best qualification he can have to ingratiate himself with the old people, he is maintained and treated the best of the whole family.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ Peterson wrote in 1978: "Many of the labels describing the offspring of interracial unions articulate an implicit wish to blot out or sterilize the human consequences of miscegenation..."half-breed", "breed" and "mixed-blood" hint broadly at culture and biological impotence"; see "Prelude to Red River", 1978:46. On ethnic markers, see page 50. The fear of miscegenation and resulting sterility may have had stronger currency in the United States which linked miscegenation to Black/non-Black encounters. However, there is no doubt that British fur traders (perhaps more than French Canadian) held social values which disparaged intermarriage. See Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, 1980: 129-130; this was true of men like Sir George Simpson and James Hargrave and did not represent the majority of HBC officers who tended to be loyal to their natives wives and families. One of the reasons that Red River was attractive as a retirement community was that their native families would hopefully encounter less prejudice there where mixed-blood and métis families were in the majority.

²⁰⁵ Duncan Cameron, "The Nipigon Country", *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, ed. L.R. Masson, v. 2: New York: Antiquarian Press, 251. Nipigon was just north of Lake Superior and in Ojibwe country, so the customs would be similar to those at Grand Portage and Fort William. Daniel Harmon also described a similar custom: *Sixteen Years in the Indian*

Cameron noted that no feast or social getogether was held for marriages, but the parents would invite the community to a large feast for the naming of their children.²⁰⁶ Cameron's country wife was part of the Loon Clan of the Nipigon area.²⁰⁷

Peter Grant, a trader who married an Ojibwe woman, Marguerite Ahdik Songab, noted that native women were indispensable to their husband's ability to be a good hunter and provider; for a fur trader new to the country, she could teach him survival skills and help him make it through the long Canadian winters. Her work included making and mending his shoes [moccasins], scraping the skins, carrying home the meat, pitching the tent and cooking the food.²⁰⁸ The Collin family probably followed these native customs.

There is a long ancestry for the Collin name in Quebec, and I assume that any French Canadian voyageurs and *engagés* in the North West Company living at Lake Superior must have originated in Quebec. The first listed, Mathurin Collin, married in Quebec in 1668; thereafter,

Country, Toronto: Macmillan Co. Of Canada, 1957: 29. Also Peter Grant, "The Sauteux Indians", *Masson*, v. 2: 319-321.

²⁰⁶ Cameron had a native wife and family; Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1980: 97. Cameron was the NWC bourgeois in charge of Red River department during the confrontation with the HBC that resulted in the Seven Oaks Massacre, June 19, 1816; *Masson*, v. 2, "The Nipigon Country": 234.

²⁰⁷ Jennifer Brown, "Duncan Cameron", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography [DCB]*, v. 7, 1988: 139. Cameron later married a non-Aboriginal woman when he retired to Williamstown, Ontario, in 1820.

²⁰⁸ Peter Grant, "The Sauteux Indians", *Masson*, v. 1: 321. For information on Marguerite Songab, see James W. Chesebro, *A Genealogy of the Ancestors and Descendants of Pierre Bottineau*, compiled by the author, Annandale, Virginia, 1989: Marguerite Songab, Pt. 4: 6.

there are numerous references to the name, with Antoine being baptized in 1736 and 1743.²⁰⁹

There was no baptism for an Antoine in 1766 as per Father Pierz' notes, perhaps because Antoine the canoe maker was born in a place not serviced by missionaries on a regular basis.

Voyageur contracts from Quebec suggest that there were at least ten men by the name of Collin dit Laliberte in the Great Lakes area during the 18th. Century; for example, there was a Pierre Colin dit Laliberte at Detroit by 1713; an Antoine Colin at Michimackinac by 1752 and a Claude Colin at Kaministiquia (future site of NWC post Fort William) by 1752.²¹⁰ These men may have been the canoe-maker's grandfather, uncle or cousins. There was a contract for Joseph Laliberte dit Colin to go to Michilimackinac in 1753 and 1754 and to Grand Portage in 1758, and since the missionary listed Antoine's father as Joseph, this voyageur was in the right place at the right time to be his father.²¹¹ The above evidence suggests that Antoine Collin was the son of a fur trade union in the Great Lakes area, but he also might have been an "Indianized Frenchman" who originated in Quebec and decided not to return to his place of birth when his contract expired.

Voyageur contracts lasted three to five years and the French voyageurs took native wives *à la façon du pays* [according to the custom of the country].²¹² Since many of the voyageurs listed in the genealogical dictionaries disappeared from the Quebec records and appear in Great

²⁰⁹ C. Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique*, Montréal: Eusèbe Senécal & Fils:1871-90, 3:109-112.

²¹⁰ *Rapports de l'Archevêque de la Province de Québec (RAPQ)*.

²¹¹ MHS, QAR: #263, 12 juin 1753; #283: 19 mai, 1754, and #361, 21 janvier, 1758.

²¹² This means according to Indian custom.

Lakes communities, Peterson argued that they formed the basis of mixed-blood communities around the Great Lakes, such as Detroit, La Baye (Green Bay), Chicago, Sault Ste. Marie, La Point and Grant Portage.²¹³ Peterson's point, supported by Richard White's claim that "a separate people, the *métis*, ...mediated between French and Algonquians and became of critical important to the area" is debatable because the people around Lake Superior posts like Grand Portage and Fort William did not use the word "Métis" or "métis"; they used the term "freemen" which did not necessarily imply an ethnic designation. As Jean Morrison noted:

The Collins belonged to Fort William's population of "free" Canadians; those former *engagés* who stayed in the Indian country, for one reason or another, on the expiry of their contracts. This term apparently applied to their descendants as well. But although "free" meant without contract, it did not mean freedom from company control. Neither the NWC nor the HBC tolerated independent entrepreneurship with their domains.²¹⁴

These differences reflect the complexities of the issue and what words and names are appropriate.²¹⁵ Since the people around the fur trade posts like the Collins may have been separate from the Indians in terms of living conditions (inside or near the fort instead of out in the bush) and separate from the upper echelons like the bourgeois and partners in terms of labour (and probably lived in wigwams rather than log houses), it is better to call them freemen than *métis*. It is not necessary to assume that the people described by Richard White were either of

²¹³ Peterson, 1978: 45: "Perceived, but dimly by the seaboard world, and largely ignored between 1763-1816, the inhabitants of these towns, like those of La Baye, were, as it happens, people of primarily mixed race - Métis".

²¹⁴ Jean Morrison, *Superior Rendez-vous Place*: 65.

²¹⁵ For a discussion of these issues and the different names such as Peterson, 1978: 46 and 54: names such as "chicot, bois brulés, gens de libre, Canadese and Canadien were gaining currency by the end of War of 1812. It is significant, however, that these designations pointed to either occupational or mobility patterns characteristic of Métis, rather than race." See also the Introduction to *The New Peoples*, by Peterson and Brown:3-16.

mixed ancestry or not. Both non-Aboriginals from Quebec as well as those of mixed ancestry could take the role of interpreter, diplomat and trader, so learning these skills such as speaking Native languages and learning fur trade protocols were learned skills, and cultural, not because of their mixed-ancestry, although obviously those voyageurs who grew up in a bilingual or multilingual household like Jean Baptiste Cadotte would have an advantage from birth.

Fur trade records provide the most information on the men of the Collin/Colin family. The earliest records from the North West Company (NWC) show that Antoine Colin was at Grand Portage in 1799 with an annual wage of 600 lives.²¹⁶ See Figure 2 for the geography of the Lake Superior fur trade. The NWC Ledger Book of 1811-21 includes Antoine Colin and his sons Michel and Jean-Baptiste; most of Antoine's income derives from canoe-building.²¹⁷ Antoine also had an 1816 NWC account; against his annual wages (implying he was a contract employee and not a freeman), he purchased on November 19, 1816 a 3 foot gun, 95 lbs. Flour, 3 bls. Powder, 10 lbs. Shot, 4 flints and 1 worsted belt. Against the income of a canoe on 20 November, he obtained two quarts of high wines mixed and a large horn comb. There are only four dated entries for 1816-17, suggesting that Antoine's family was fairly self-sufficient. Michel only appeared in two entries for September 6 and 7 1816, with such items as blankets, strouds, yew-handle knives, tobacco, portage strap, silk handkerchief, and six yards printed

²¹⁶ "Reminiscences" of the Hon. Roderick McKenzie, *Bourgeois de la Compagnie de Nord-Ouest*, ed. L.R. Masson, v. 1, New York: Antiquarian Press, 1960: 66. John MacDonell gave a good description of Grand Portage in 1793; Gates: 92-96.

²¹⁷ HBCA: F.4/32, NWC Ledger Book, 1811-21, Account for Antoine Colin, fo. 231; Michel Colin, fo. 238; and Baptiste Colin, fo. 148. Jerome and Swan researched the data included here before we saw the work of Judge and Campbell.

calico. This suggests that Antoine and his family were mostly interested in cloth as a trade good item and in fact it was the largest category of trade item that fur trade customers demanded.²¹⁸

These accounts infer that freemen families were essentially self-sufficient and not dependent on the trade, but used the goods available for convenience. Obviously sewing with cloth had an appeal for native women as it was a lot easier than scraping and tanning skins to make leather clothing. For voyageurs whose clothing was liable to get wet often, wool was obviously preferable for winter clothing than leather which would stiffen when wet.

During the "Fur Trade War" when the NWC and HBC competed fiercely for the furs and loyalty of their clients, between 1812-21, there was often abuse reported by the lower-level engagés which resulted in defection to the competition. The HBC Thunder Bay (Point de Meurons) post journal noted Antoine Colin's unhappiness with the NWC and his offer to switch allegiances:

This afternoon, Colin the Canoe Maker of Fort William came here with a Cacock of Sugar to trade - he complains greatly of the usage he has met with from the Nor-Westers and has made one an offer of canoe bark which he says he will send the latter end of this month.²¹⁹

There was no further reference to this offer, suggesting that Antoine Collin changed his mind about defecting from the NWC's service, perhaps because he was able to persuade the bourgeois

²¹⁸ In an examination of the 1780-1786 account book of Maurice Blondeau, a Montreal trader who supplied goods to French Canadian trader Jean Baptiste Cadotte at Sault Ste. Marie, anthropologist Bruce White found that cloth, clothing and blankets made up 49.4% of the inventory. See "Montreal Canoes and their Cargoes", *Le Castor Fait Tout: Selected Papers of the Fifth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1985*, ed. Bruce Trigger, Toby Morantz and Louise Dechène, Lake St. Louis Historical Society, 1987: 170: Table 1: Contents of 12 Canoe loads of Merchandise Sent by Maurice Blondeau to Jean Baptiste Cadotte, 1780-86.

²¹⁹ HBCA: Fort William Post Journal: B.231/a/4, June 2, 1818.

to increase his pay. The Indians liked competition between the companies because they could benefit from it and undoubtedly the freemen took advantage of those opportunities as well.

The fur trade journals and account books of the HBC after consolidation in 1821 provide the greatest amount of information on these former employees of the NWC.²²⁰ The post journal of 1826-27 by senior Chief Trade Roderick McKenzie and his son Benjamin provides a good example. Antoine Collin and his son Michel both appear frequently in the journal, but evidently had different responsibilities. Antoine was treated as a respected freeman who operated on a seasonal round, being assigned to specialized activities involving wood-working: canoe-making, barrel-making, repairing fence posts, laying cedar roofs and fishing. He did not live all year round at the post, but came and went depending on where he was needed. Michel, his son, seemed to be one of the post labourers who was assigned daily chores like the other men, but was also an apprentice to his father and often assisted him in specialized activities. By 1828, Michel too was described as a “freeman” in the journals.²²¹

Ethnic identity was not often used in the fur trade records (including some NWC sources in the HBCA). The clerks keeping the journals usually distinguished between “Indians” and “freemen”, suggesting that those with French names had more responsibility and higher social

²²⁰ The HBCA journals and account books from Fort William provide most of the information for Susan Campbell’s historical study and Judge’s manual for park interpreters at the modern living history site, “Old Fort William”. The manual suggests that “Antoine Collin...is the head of the family in the period we portray at Old Fort William”, Judge, n.d.: 9.

²²¹ HBCA: Fort William District Report, B.231/e/5. A U.S. government census in 1926 on Chippewas [Ojibwe] in Michigan showed 3505 full-bloods and 6006 half-bloods, showing extensive intermarriage by that time. Walker D. Wyman, *The Chippewa: A History of the Great Lakes Woodland Tribe over Three Centuries*, University of Wisconsin-River Falls Press: 1993: 155.

status in the eyes of the officers than Indians. For example, on June 25, 1837, “Two boats arrived from Michipicoten in charge of Baptiste Visinau [Vezina, another well-known freeman family] and Louis Rivet. The crews were all Indians. They brought Provisions & Salt for the current outfit”.²²² The freemen were usually named and were known to the clerk keeping the journal; the Indians were nameless, by contrast, unless the head of a family hunting group: “Michel Collin and the Indians have house 8 cart loads of hay in the stable loft”.²²³ The clerks knew the Indian trading captains or male heads of families; these were men who lived and hunted outside the post and were not nameless laborers. However, these Indians socially interacted with the freemen who engaged in a seasonal round and often hunted or fished with the local Ojibwe families: “The Spaniard (Chief) with old Peau de Chats [Skin of the Cat] arrived from the Grand Portage. They report that there are a great number of Freemen with their families fishing on Isle Royale for the American Fur Company”.²²⁴ Antoine is often identified as “old Collin” and his son simply as “Michel” because they were so well-known to the HBC personnel: “Old Collin with an Indian went off to fish for himself at the Small Islands on the west end of the Pattie [Pie Island; or Potter’s Island]”.²²⁵ He and his son were often referred to as “freemen”; “Old Collin the

²²² HBCA: Fort William Post Journal: June 25, 1837, B.231/a/17, fo. 3.

²²³ HBCA: For William Post Journal, July 27, 1836: B.231/a/16, fo. 4d.

²²⁴ HBCA: Fort William Post Journal, August 22, 1837, B.231/a/17, fo. 7d.

²²⁵ HBCA: For William Post Journal, October 11, 1837: B.231/a/17, fo. 11d. For a lyrical description of this area, see Irishman John Johnston’s description of Potter’s Head and Contemplation Island in “Lake Superior”, Masson, v. 2: 159-160. His first visit was about 1794. His country wife was the Ojibwe daughter of the local chief at La Pointe, Chequamegon Bay, whose name was Wabogish. The Johnston’s eldest daughter married Henry Schoolcraft, American Indian agent at Sault Ste. Marie. His *History of the Indian Tribes of the United States* was probably a result of information from his wife and her relatives. See Figure 2.

freeman went off to make Martin Traps somewhere about the Petit Marais”.²²⁶ “Michel Collin the freeman and Cedar the Indian went off along with the men to hunt about Lac la Fleche”.²²⁷

The earliest reference to a “halfbreed” was on May 26, 1831: “Solomon the Halfbreed, The Canard & Petit Corbeau’s stepson arrived.”²²⁸ This group sounds like several Ojibwe hunters rather than a reference to a French freemen, but it might imply Solomon had a French father, but was raised with the Indians.²²⁹ Only rarely did the HBC clerks used the racial epithet of “halfbreed” for these men as in the description of the fray between the “Halfbreeds and the sailors” on New Year’s Day 1838:

All the Servants of the Company & Freemen paid us a visit this morning agreeably to the custom of the country, treated them with as much Brandy as they choose to drink and with Butter Cakes. The women also with cakes & Wine and lastly the Indians with a Couple of Glasses of Wine. There was some blows & a squabble between the Cooper & Michel Collin the Freeman which was very near occasioning a general Fray between the Halfbreeds and Sailors.²³⁰

²²⁶ HBCA: B.231/a/17.

²²⁷ PAM: Fort William Collection, MG1C1: February 28, 1830.

²²⁸ PAM: Fort William Collection, MG1C1, May 26, 1831.

²²⁹ Paul Thistle discovered a similar usage with the Twatt band in Saskatchewan who were trading at Cumberland House and two sons of Magnus Twatt were given special treatment because they had a non-Aboriginal father although he died when they were young and they lived with their Mother’s Cree people. Thistle, “The Twatt Family: 1780-1840: Amerindian, Ethnic Category or Ethnic Group Identity?”, *Prairie Forum* v, 22, no. 2: Fall: 1997: 193-212. The Twatt brothers were identified as “Half Breeds” by the Cumberland House traders; they were raised by their mother away from the post with the Indians, but by the 1820s were living separate from the Indians. Nevertheless, because they were descended from an HBC labourer who was not French Canadian, it is difficult to accept the Twatts as “Métis” unless they adopted that ethnic designation at a later time. Most social historians agree with Jennifer Brown and John Foster that the HBC mixed-bloods developed a separate identity at a later date.

²³⁰ HBCA: Fort William Post Journal, B.231/a/17, fo. 17, January 1, 1838.

An overview of the seasonal round demonstrates the Aboriginal economy and culture in which the freemen of Thunder Bay participated. These freemen spent much of their time in subsistence activities, supporting their families from country produce; that they were not “dependent” on the post, but only traded for luxuries such as alcohol and cloth and the occasional tool; and that they spent a good deal of their time with their Aboriginal friends and relatives. The fact that these freemen had French names somewhat disguises the Aboriginal side of their culture and the close interaction they enjoyed with the local Ojibwe.

The seasonal round, well known to anthropologists, generally involved the following cycle of economic pursuits: maple sugaring in the spring, building canoes in the summer, fishing in the fall, and hunting with the families inland away from the lake in the winter.²³¹ The following describe the seasonal round for the Collin family in 1826-27:

June 30: A. Collin, his Son, Scandagance & Petit Ours [2 Indians] arrived from raising canoe bark, brought 99 rolls.

July 5: Collin began to put a new bottom to Governor Simpson’s Canoe, ditto a [canot de] maitre with the assistance of his son.

July 7: Collin finished mending Governor Simpson’s Canoe. Two canoes of the Land Arctic Expedition arrived from the Interior with dispatches for Montreal.

July 8: Collin repaired one of the Land Arctic expedition Canoes.

July 11: Collin began a north canoe, his Son and Masta assisted him

²³¹ Edmund Danziger, *The Chippewas of Lake Superior*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978. Harold Hickerson, *The Chippewa and their Neighbors*, Ed. Jennifer Brown and Laura Peers, Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1988. Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada, 1780-1870*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994. Theresa Schenck, *“The Voice of the Crane Echoes Far”: the Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa, 1640-1855*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1997.

July 16: Michel Collin & 3 Indians went up the River to seine for sturgeon, but only brot 3 small ones.

July 18: Collin & his son began to put the Laths & Timbers in the Canoes that he made last week.

Aug. 23: Collin making a fishing canoe.

Sept. 8: Bouchard & Deschamps went & brought barrels to Collins fishing Isles Seiners - Shaeling & Michel at small jobs around the post.

Sept. 18: Gambois [Grandbois] went off along with [Antoine] Collin for fall fishing.

Sept. 19: Michel Collin & Deschamps went off for the fall fishing. The men with the Boat brought barrels to the Welcome Islands.

Oct. 19: 3 men went off with the Schooner Boat to Rabbit Island, Michel's fall fishing to bring him barrels & to take home some fish.

Oct. 24: Late at night, the men arrived in a small canoe from Rabbit Island, with the news that the Boat was broken open on the Island in the gale of Monday - so much so that she could not be repaired.

Oct. 28: Set the men with the Boat to bring Collins fish.

Oct. 30: The men arrived from Collins fishing with 16 Barrels fish. Sent the men off to the Pate [Potter or Pie Island] to bring Collins fish.

Nov. 1: Collin & Bouchard arrived from the fishing. [Antoine Collin disappears from view until the spring, suggesting that he has gone inland to hunt during the winter.]

Nov. 8: The men went to the Welcome Islands, brought 5 barrels of fish. Our fish is now all home. The women of the Fort began Knitting Nets.

Dec. 2: Sent off an Indian boy to where Michel is encamped to know if he will go up to Lac la Fleche along with my men [to investigate American competition].

Dec. 3: Michel arrived along with the Indian boy.

Dec. 11: Dompierre & Grandbois went to the Monte with the old mare to bring Michel's wife Rabbits. [The fur was used in clothing and the meat for food].

March 10: Michel Collin & his family went off to their sugar bush to hunt Rabbit.

March 15: Michel [and men] went off to Lac la Fleche with corn.

March 19: The men went to the Monte with Collin to bring his baggage.

March 26: Robidoux went with Madam Collins baggage to the Monte.

April 3: Dominique & Oisina [Vezina] making bars for Governor Simpson's canoe. [Note that Antoine Collin is brought in for the specialized work.]

April 5: Madame Collin paid us a visit.

April 30: Collin, his old lady and the Little Englishman [an Indian] arrived from the Sugar Bush...I was informed that the Americans were in search of Indians along the lake and that they had been four days ago at his tent [note his dwelling].

May 1: Collin & his old lady went off for the Sugar Bush.

May 2: Collin arrived from his sugar bush, intends beginning a north canoe tomorrow for Governor Simpson.

May 5: Collin & Dompierre at their usual occupation. The women of the Fort served [assisted] at the canoe.

May 6: Michel Collin went off for his sugar bush.

May 13: Collin finished stretching a new canoe...Michel Collin, his mother and Oisina's [Vezina's] wife arrived from the sugar bush.

May 15: Brisebois, Michel Collin with the Indian women sprouted potatoes up at the Root House.

May 16: Michel and 3 Indian Boys went off to seine at the Rapids for suckers. Sheling [Shaeling] began painting the Governors Canoe.

May 17: Collin with the Indian women finished cleaning & sweeping out the Fort. Michel arrived from the rapids, brought 95 suckers.

May 22: Mrs. Alex. McTavish arrived from Lake Nipigon in a north canoe with 4 men.

May 23: Collin & the Nipigon men began a north canoe for Mr. McTavish.

May 26: Gov. Simpson, my father [Roderick McKenzie] and Mr. Ross arrived from Michipicottan.

May 27: At 2 am this morning, Gov. Simpson and Mr. Ross started for the interior in 2 north canoes.

May 28: [Some of the men] started for the Pate [Pie or Potter's Island] to bring some canoe wood that has been cut there several years. Mr. Alex McTavish went off.

May 31: Collin making small repairs to the Governor's large canoe [last entry for the year].²³²

The above is an abridged selection of entries from the Fort William Post Journal in 1826-27, chosen to illustrate either the Collin family's activities or information about the canoes, canoe-making and wood-working which was obviously an important task at Fort William. Because of the climate and vegetation, large birch trees were in abundance and so it was an important location. Also, because it was a trans-shipment point from the Great Lakes to the interior, it was necessary to switch from the large Montreal canoes to the smaller *canots de nord* [north canoes] used on the river systems. So it is not surprising that local men, perhaps too old for the rigorous life a voyageur, would develop an expertise in canoe-making which they learned from the Indians, possibly their own relatives. German ethnographer J.G. Kohl collected an oral history account of Governor Simpson's canoe trips in the 1850s which might have referred to the ones made in the 1820s by Antoine Collin:

The great gentleman is always in a terrible hurry. His canoe is very large and long, and remarkably pretty, and of light build. He has always a corps of twenty or twenty-four paddlers with him. These are very powerful, hardy, and experienced Voageurs: 'Des hommes choisis! Des plus beaux chanteurs du monde!' They sing the merriest songs, and work à l'aviron actively the whole day. The canot du gouverneur cuts through the waters as a bird the air - eights miles an hour! A steamer can scarce keep up with it. The men paddle eighteen or twenty hours a day.²³³

²³² PAM: Fort William Collection, MG1C1, 1826-27 (no page numbers).

²³³ J.G. Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway*, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1985: 256-257.

Kohl also wrote that singing was important for the voyageurs as it helped pass the time.

The organization of the labour changed when the HBC took over Fort William from the NWC after 1821 and the descriptions of canoe-making in HBC journals do not represent the NWC situation. According to Jean Morrison based on her study of Fort William labour contracts, the NWC engaged a large group of canoe makers and Antoine Collin was one of these.²³⁴ Under the HBC, there was no longer need for great flotillas of canoes as the goods were imported through Hudson Bay, not through the Great Lakes. So the main demand was for local Lake Superior canoes and specialty items.

Under the HBC, Collin seems to have been treated well. Antoine Collin enjoyed the patronage and attention of Governor George Simpson who depended on good transportation to get around Rupert's Land quickly. As a reward, Simpson ordered him a special present. On July 18, 1829, the clerk noted: "As old Collin has nothing to do til Monday, I have him a Gallon of Rum which Governor Simpson desires me to give him."²³⁵ The fact that Antoine Collin received special recognition from the Governor must have been a mark of distinction for him; his work was valuable to the most influential officer in the HBC. The mark of the Governor's patronage suggests that Antoine Collin enjoyed some special privileges and was a valued servant.

As a freeman, Antoine Collin had some control over his work situation, but, for Native people in the HBC structure, conditions changed after the 1821 consolidation when competition ended: "Often Indians both built and paddled the canoes which transported the trade goods and furs between the inland posts and the Bayside...Indian canoemen were highly paid for their

²³⁴ Jean Morrison, personal communication.

²³⁵ PAM: Fort William Collection: MG1C1.

services, and they also had the winter free to trap fur-bearing animals, if they wished".²³⁶ In the pre-1821 period, Indians were not subject to "prejudicial treatment" as labourers; the main difference between them and regular HBC servants was that the latter worked on three-to five-year contracts with security and fixed annual salaries while the Indians worked seasonally as required. After 1821, when there was a surplus of labour, the status of Indians declined and the hierarchy of the company became more rigid and conservative.

Susan Campbell described the NWC social hierarchy at Fort William and distinguished three groups of labourers based on ethnic heritage: 1) descendants of the "original French settlers"; 2) the "(Métis) sons of the voyageurs"; and 3) "native tribes".²³⁷ She based her classification on a description by Nor-Wester Ross Cox who wrote a memoir of his experiences trading in the Columbia. Cox did not use the *Métis* - he called Baptiste LeBlanc "a half-breed hunter".²³⁸ Campbell must have inserted the word "Métis".

These categories described by Cox and Campbell are problematic in terms of ethnicity, suggesting modern terminology rather than contemporary usage. The first group were the "Pork-Eaters" from Quebec who only came as far as the Great Lakes; Campbell assumes they were non-Aboriginal which may not have been the case.²³⁹ She inserted "(Métis)" into the second category,

²³⁶ Carol Judd, "Native Labour & Social Stratification in the HBC's Northern Department: 1770-1870". *Canadian Review of Sociology & Anthropology* 17:4, 1980: 306.

²³⁷ Susan Campbell, *Fort William: Living and Working at the Fort*, 34.

²³⁸ Ross Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River*, London, 1831, v. 2: 289.

²³⁹ Olive Dickason: "Jacques Rousseau, eminent Quebec biologist, claimed in 1970 that forty percent of French Canadians could find at least one Amerindian in their family trees". "From 'One Nation' in the Northeast to 'New Nation' in the Northwest: A Look at the emergence of the Métis" in *The New Peoples*, ed. Peterson and Brown, Winnipeg: University of

“sons of the voyageurs” although that was not a term commonly used at the time by Anglophone writers in the fur trade. It is difficult to know what name they used for themselves as most of them did not write. It is also a term which was more commonly connected with the people at Red River and not around the Great Lakes. In the HBC records, clerks usually differentiated three categories based mainly on occupation and life-style: “servants”, “freemen” and “Indians”.²⁴⁰ It is quite possible that people of biracial ancestry belonged to all three, but were distinguished by their lifestyle and nature of their work.

Campbell also distinguished between the NWC terms *engagé* and *freeman*. She stated that the former were contract employees and the latter were men who stayed in the Northwest at the expiration of their contracts, living near a post with their native families and working for the companies for short periods of time.²⁴¹ However, this distinction is based on the category of labour and not ethnicity. Therefore, it may be unwise to assume “Métis” for the second category or non-Aboriginal for the first; and the “Indians” around Great Lakes posts like Grant Portage and Fort William may or may not have had European ancestors. Extensive intermarriage between fur traders and native women for at least a century in the Great Lakes area suggests that there were significant mixed offspring in all three groups. Perhaps it would be useful to call the sons of the Great Lakes voyageurs “métis”, but this would be confusing to most readers. Calling them “freemen” or “engagés”, terms common in the Montreal-based trade, is more appropriate.

Manitoba Press, 1985: 19.

²⁴⁰ PAM: Fort William Collection: MG1C1, January 1, 1830: “The Co.’s servants, free men and Indians paid us their usual visit this morning according to the custom of the country” [to celebrate New Year’s Day].

²⁴¹ Campbell: 34-36.

Campbell described the “freemen” and the “Indians” at Fort William as if they had different lifestyles from their Aboriginal neighbours. She cites the Collin family as one of the long-standing residents of the area “whom one must rank among the first settlers of the area”.²⁴² Voyageur families like the Collins had been at the French posts around the Great Lakes for several generations by the time Antoine was working at Grand Portage in 1799. It is not clear when he became a freeman, but an 1828 census showed that Michel Collin (Freeman) had one wife and five children and Antoine Collin (Freeman) had one wife and one child. Although this historian of Fort William acknowledged that the men at the post married the local Ojibwe women, she implied that the HBC regulations (after 1821) pressured these families to assimilate into the non-Aboriginal community. Our research suggests that, with the Collin family, and probably with other freemen, the opposite occurred.

By the 1830s, some of the post journal entries were not so complimentary to “Old Collin” and his family. In September 1836, the clerk wrote that “Old Collins wife went off and left all her children with him...she is a worthless character, most likely she is gone to find the Americans at the Grand Portage”.²⁴³ A week later, the family was reunited. “Old Collins wife did not go far - the old man was informed that she is with the people who are fishing at the Welcome Islands where he immediately went for her”.²⁴⁴ The journal writer was incorrect in speculating that Madame Collin had defected to the opposition; she was probably staying with relatives at the

²⁴² Campbell: 40; Arthur: Introduction: lxiv.

²⁴³ HBCA: Fort William Post Journal: B.231/a/16, fo. 9d.

²⁴⁴ HBCA: Fort William Post Journal: B.231/a/16, fo. 10.

fishery. This may be an example of bias in the primary sources towards native women. The clerk assumed bad motives for her disappearance which turned out not to be justified.

It is difficult to determine the identity of Antoine Collin's wife at this period; but it appears that she is probably a different wife from the mother of Michel and Jean Baptiste, Mishaha Weyers dit Latour, who was too old to have an infant in 1836. He may have had more than one wife. Polygamy was not uncommon among the Ojibwe and having more than one wife was a mark of social distinction.²⁴⁵

Other negative comments included allusions to Collins' drinking bouts and a question of paternity of a grandchild. Michel's daughter Mary had a son whose father she refused to name.²⁴⁶ These references suggest increasing intolerance on the part of the fur trade writers, who were usually non-Aboriginal. As time progressed, more cultural distance emerged between the post clerks and the labourers and freemen who adopted an Aboriginal lifestyle, so the expertise of these people was ignored while racial inferiority was highlighted.

Although the "Indianized" French and voyageurs of mixed ancestry may not have called themselves by the term "Métis", there was considerable evidence of cultural mixing. Cultural manifestations such as dress suggest that the people of mixed ancestry at the Great Lakes fur

²⁴⁵ Duncan Cameron: "Although a plurality of wives is allowed, they seldom take more than four, sometimes all sisters, who live together in great harmony, without the least jealousy towards each other; the first or favorite wife presides over the others." Masson, v. 2: 252. There were examples of jealousy among the wives; see Alexander Henry the Younger and the death of his *beau-pere*; Henry's Journal, ed. Gough: 173 note; and John Tanner noted that there may have been some jealousy with his wives; Tanner's Narrative: 125. Peter Grant wrote that "Their [hunter's] consequence and respectability in society are generally esteemed according to the nature of their alliances and the number of their children." Masson, v. 2: 320.

²⁴⁶ Campbell: 41.

trade posts combined elements from the local Ojibwe and French voyageurs before the time of treaty in 1850. For example, their dress was somewhat distinctive, such as the hide coat pictured on the cover of the catalogue, "Where Two Worlds Meet". "Skin coats modeled on the European cloth coats sold by traders were made by the Ojibway, Cree and particularly the Red River métis in the early 1800s".²⁴⁷ In the Great Lakes region, however, it is more likely that cloth coats were used because the voyageurs who were spending much of their time in canoes did not like leather which became stiff when wet.²⁴⁸ It was probably not appropriate to include the hide coat in the Great Lakes catalogue because it was given to Governor Ramsay at Pembina and was undoubtedly a buffalo-hunters' coat, and not a voyageur coat.²⁴⁹ As Trudy Nicks has warned, you cannot guess at the ethnicity of an artifact without more information.²⁵⁰

Alexander Henry the Elder described traditional voyageur dress when he disguised his English-Canadian identity by adopting the dress of a "Canadian" (i.e. French Canadian voyageur)

²⁴⁷ Carolyn Gilman, *Where Two Worlds Meet*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1982: 107. A similar hide coat described as "Sioux-Métis type", circa 1840, can be seen in the catalogue, " 'Bo'jou, Neejee!': Profiles of Canadian Indian Art", ed. Ted Brasser, Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1976: #158, Man's Coat "made from tanned skin", p. 58 and 155. Julia Harrison, *Métis: People Between Two Worlds*, Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985: 86, 89: "modeled on the narrow-waisted, broad-shouldered European coats of the 1840s, this piece is in the Métis tradition of elaborate, innovative decoration.

²⁴⁸ Carolyn Gilman, *The Grand Portage Story*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1992: 9. An example of the blue capote which was most common was illustrated by Peter Rindisbacher in his painting of Col. McKay's farewell to his Indian allies at Prairie du Chien after the War of 1812. There is a man dressed in Métis style with a blue capote, red Assomption sash and beaver hat, third from left; Gilman: 45.

²⁴⁹ A sketch of a similar buffalo hide coat by Frank B. Mayer who accompanied Governor Ramsay to Pembina in 1851 can be seen in *The New Peoples*, ed. Peterson and Brown.

²⁵⁰ Trudy Nicks, "Mary Anne's Dilemma: The Ethnohistory of an Ambivalent Identity", *Canadian Ethnic Studies XVIII*, #2, 1985: 103-114.

consisting of a loose shirt, a molten or blanket coat and a large red worsted cap. "I had the satisfaction to find that my disguise enabled me to pass several canoes, without attracting the smallest notice".²⁵¹ Actually, a local Indian chief noticed and Henry was lucky not to be killed, since the Ojibwe were allied with the French and hated the British.²⁵² Henry neglected to mention the famous Assomption sash or "ceinture fléchée" which voyageurs brought to the Great Lakes region.²⁵³ These were adopted by Indian groups in the region as well.²⁵⁴

Floral beadwork was another manifestation of *metisage*, combining elements of Ojibwe art forms, decoration of utilitarian objects and French materials. Unfortunately, as Ted Brasser has pointed out, "Red River métis culture and its artistic expressions flowered and withered before the ethnologists began their systematic collections of documented artifacts".²⁵⁵ The same

²⁵¹ Alexander Henry the Elder, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories*, Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig, 1809, 1969: 35. For the red voyageur hat, see the oil painting, "The Voyageur" by Abby Fuller Abbé about 1860, illustrated in Gilman, 1992: 70. For drawings of voyageurs, see pages 44-45, Gilman, 1992 as well as paintings by Frances Anne Hopkins. See "Man's shirt made of dark-red felt, with applied panels of beaded black velvet"; Brasser, 1976, #174, p. 165. This shirt is characterized as "Ojibwa" and was collected on the Bois Fort Reservation in northern Minnesota in 1913.

²⁵² William Warren, the mixed-blood Ojibwe historian, also recounted the Henry story, attributing his escape from capture by the Ojibwe because of the intervention of Madame Cadotte, Ojibwe wife of Jean Baptiste Cadotte of Sault Ste. Marie. She swore he was a French Canadian. *History of the Ojibay People*, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1984: 215. For relations between the French Canadians and the Ojibwe, see pp.: 124, 132, 134.

²⁵³ Gilman, 1992: 45 and colour photograph on p.69. *Histoire et origines de la ceinture fléchée traditionnelle, dite de L'Assomption*, ed. L'Association des artisans de ceinture fléchée de Lanaudière, Inc., Sillery, Quebec: Editions du Septentrion, 1994.

²⁵⁴ Sheryl Hartman, *Indian clothing of the Great Lakes: 1740-1840*, no place, published by the author, 1988: 115 and cover photograph.

²⁵⁵ Ted Brasser, "In Search of métis Art", *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, ed. Peterson and Brown, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1980: 221.

could be said for the fur trade culture of Lake Superior; see for example the undated photograph of the beaded tikanagen or cradle board.²⁵⁶ From one of the American Chippewa communities in Minnesota, probably Grand Portage, this artifact shows the complexity of design in 19th. Century Ojibwe beadwork, combining French and Aboriginal influences.

The catalogue from “Where Two Worlds Meet” shows examples of a red woolen shirt decorated with floral embroidery and blue silk ribbon, glass beads from Grand Portage in the late 1700s and an Assomption sash from the early 1800s.²⁵⁷ The catalogue does not include much beaded clothing and decorations because it is based on archaeological collections and such items would not last well when buried. Describing the archaeological research at Grand Portage and Fort Charlotte (the end of the portage), Gilman explained that underwater archaeologists on the latter site braved aggressive leeches and fast water to find a treasure trove of artifacts: “Unlike the depot on the bay, which was mainly yielding artifacts of the 1770s to 1790s, the river held everything from early French ceramics to modern camping debris. Wooden canoe parts, keg lids, and leather shoes had been preserved in the anaerobic sludge.”²⁵⁸ Some of the artifacts illustrated were probably collected or donated at a later date after the demise of the fur trade in Minnesota,

²⁵⁶ Edmund Danziger, *The Chippewas of Lake Superior*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978: 41.

²⁵⁷ Gilman, 1982: woolen shirt: 68, 96; glass beads: 14, 66; sash: 45, 69.

²⁵⁸ Gilman, 1992: 132.

like the sash which came from the Codere family in Montreal.²⁵⁹ This type of sash has become a well-known Métis symbol, worn on special occasions to signify pride in culture.²⁶⁰

Another example of Great Lakes finger-weaving can be seen in the catalogue called "*Bo'jou, Neejee!*": *Profiles of Canadian Indian Art*, which shows an example of a "Powder Horn with Sash", by Great Lakes Algonkians, circa 1780.²⁶¹ The sash part was used to sling the powder horn over the hunter's shoulder. This artifact demonstrates the strong cultural attachment of Great Lakes Indians and voyageurs to Quebec and the fur trade.²⁶² The sash would have been commonly worn in the Great Lakes region in the 18th century and carried into the Northwest to be adopted by the sons of the voyageurs in the 19th century.²⁶³

²⁵⁹ Sash, #121, p. 45 and 69.

²⁶⁰ Julia D. Harrison, *Métis: People Between Two Worlds*, Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985: 88-89.

²⁶¹ Ted Brasser, "*Bo'jou, Neejee!*" *Profiles in Canadian Indian Art*, Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1976: Powder Horn with Sash: #140, p. 142.

²⁶² Brasser, 1976, exhibited an Iroquois sash, dated before 1845 with interwoven white beads and a geometric design, #161, p. 157. This shows an Aboriginal adaptation of the Quebec Sash.

²⁶³ The use of the *ceinture fléchée* has been well documented in the work of Cornelius Kreighoff in Quebec habitant life. J. Russell Harper, *Cornelius Krieghoff: The Habitant Farm*, Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1977; see cover detail. See an example of Métis male dress in the colour portrait of Joseph Rolette who represented the Pembina Métis in the Minnesota Territorial Legislature during the 1850s. His outfit includes a sash, beaded tobacco bag, leggings, decorated garters to hold up the leggings and moccasins. It is likely that his Métis "art" was made by his wife, Madame Angelique Jerome Rolette, a daughter of Martin Jerome and Angelique Letendre (see Chapter One on Martin Jerome). Voyageurs in the Great Lakes may have evolved this tradition much earlier. Ted Brasser, "In Search of métis Art", in *The New Peoples*, ed. Peterson and Brown: 221-229; Rolette colour plate. Compare with a Métis sash in Harrison: 88.

A painting by Eastman Johnson of Ojibwe women at Grand Portage in 1857 showed them wearing clothing made of trade blankets, cloth (ribbon decoration) and trade silver.²⁶⁴ It is likely that women in the Grand Portage and Fort William area were wearing such clothes at least 50 years earlier. When Daniel Harmon was at the Bas de la Riviere Winnipeg post in 1800, he wrote in his memoirs about marriage customs in the fur trade and described how Indian brides of fur traders gave up their Aboriginal clothing and adopted European dress: "Should they accept the articles offered, the Girl remains at the Fort with her lover, and is clothed after the fashion of the Canadians, with a Shirt, short Gown, Petticoats & Leggins etc."²⁶⁵ Susan Sleeper-Smith included some colour portraits of Great Lakes women from Lafayette, Indiana, whose clothing appears more European than those of the Indian women at the western end of Lake Superior (although it is difficult to see the clothing under their shawls). Perhaps this reflected their higher status.

A woolen hood collected by Frances Densmore in 1930 at Grand Portage is made of grey wool decorated with yellow and black fringe and Gilman suggested it "resembles those in 19th-century paintings of Indian life".²⁶⁶ Such an artifact from a 20th century Ojibwe community on Lake Superior shows how the fur trade influenced Indian dress and how European styles were adopted by local women artisans and clothing makers. In 1832, Antoine Collin's HBC account showed that he obtained a blanket coat from the HBC and 33 other items including cloth, blankets, shawls, handkerchiefs, thread, needles, soap, a "smoothing iron", hose, shoes, a crest,

²⁶⁴ Gilman, 1982: 72. Morrison, *Superior Rendez-vous Place*: 62.

²⁶⁵ Daniel Harmon, *Sixteen Years in the Indian Country*, ed. W.K. Lamb, Toronto: Macmillan Co. Of Canada, 1957: 29, August 7, 1800.

²⁶⁶ Gilman, 1983: 96.

scalpers, dressed moose skin, ribbon and a tin dish, most of which were for the use of his female relatives.²⁶⁷ His wives and daughters were probably excellent at sewing and beadwork. These Great Lakes fashions which were common in trading centres and Ojibwe communities were quickly adopted in the North West.

Music also demonstrated *metissage* was occurring in the Great Lakes region in the early 19th century. Fiddling and dancing are well-known in Manitoba Métis communities.²⁶⁸ In 1992, Northern Michigan University produced a film called the “Medicine Fiddle” which records “a unique musical tradition among Native Americans of mixed blood found in Ontario and Manitoba, Upper Michigan, Wisconsin and North Dakota”. Sociologist Michael Loukinen observed that these Ojibwe/Chippewa fiddlers with French names shared a common heritage:

There is this common belief that when people assimilate into another culture, they shed their ancestral heritage and become part of a new host culture. But in reality a blending process takes place. Many think this is a loss, but I believe it is a source of a new vitality.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ PAM: Fort William Journals, MG1C1, Item 23, accounts.

²⁶⁸ Lynn Whidden, ed., *Metis Songs: Visiting was the Metis Way*, Regina: Gabriel Dumont Institute, n.d.

²⁶⁹ “Medicine Fiddle: a film featuring Métis folk music: Fiddlers and dancers from Native and Métis families of the northern United States and Canada star in this 81 minute color documentary (1991). The fiddle was introduced to native peoples by French fur traders in the late 1600s and by Irish, Scottish, and Scots-Irish trappers, lumberjacks and homesteaders in the late 1700s. Over the past two centuries, this music has become deeply embedded in the cultural memory of mixed-blood descendants”. Video jacket cover. Quote by Michael Loukinen in Christine Saari, “Producing the Closest Thing to Life”, Great Lakes Traditional Culture Film Series, Dept. Sociology, Northern Michigan University, n.d., Marquette, Michigan, USA.

Lawrence Houle, one of the featured Manitoba fiddlers and a Canadian champion, grew up with a Métis identity until he obtained Ojibwe status through the Ebb and Flow First Nation.²⁷⁰ He is currently working as a Medicine Man in Winnipeg.²⁷¹ Many Manitoba Métis would recognize the familiar fiddle tunes and dances played by the Great Lakes Ojibwe in the “Medicine Fiddle” video. The fiddle traditions of Quebec and Scotland carry on cultural links through the Great Lakes Ojibwe to the Métis of the Canadian and American Prairies.

Another important aspect of material culture was canoe-making, a good example of Aboriginal technology adapted to the fur trade.²⁷² St. Joseph Island, near Sault Ste Marie, was a NWC centre for canoe-making around 1811.²⁷³ However, Grand Portage and Fort William were important as well because of their geographic location: climate, vegetation and technical expertise meant that local resources were available for this work. Simply put, large birch trees grew in abundance and local families - not only Ojibwe, but freemen like the Collins - developed the expertise and were in demand for their workmanship.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ Anne Lederman, *Old Native and Métis Fiddling in Manitoba*, record set, 1986, 1987.

²⁷¹ Houle, personal communication with the author, 1990.

²⁷² A comprehensive history and catalogue, *Birch Bark Canoes of the Fur Trade*, by Timothy Kent, no place, published by the author, 1997, documents the importance of this mode of transportation as the fur trade could not have functioned without it.

²⁷³ Eric Ross, *Beyond the River and the Bay*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970:58-59.

²⁷⁴ Joseph Collin at Fort Alexandria on the Upper Assiniboine also did some woodworking: November 30, 1800: “Collin was out along with one of the men all day looking for Birch to make Slays, but found none fit for that purpose.” McGill University, Masson Collection, Journal of A.N. McLeod, and published in Gates: 136.

These examples of material culture show that there was extensive *metissage* or cultural mixing for probably most of the 18th and 19th centuries in the Lake Superior region. How to describe this process and the populations involved is more difficult. What cultural niches various descendants of the biracial communities chose in different places and at different times has fascinated historians. According to Jennifer Brown, it is difficult to find the appropriate vocabulary to describe such groups. However, through genealogies, it may be possible to trace the historic process of *metissage* on a family-by-family basis with differences even between brothers.

The mixed Ojibwe and French material culture (and probably language) which may have originated in French/Ojibwe communities around Lake Superior became identified in the Red River Valley as “Métis”, but in the Great Lakes region with the dispersion of the French trading communities with the influx of Anglo-American immigrants after the American Revolution (1770s), many aspects of this mixed culture (clothing, technology, music and transportation) became identified with the Ojibwe of Lake Superior, so that people with French or anglicized French names and manifestations of a mixed culture survive in Lake Superior Ojibwe reservations into the 20th and 21st centuries.²⁷⁵

In the fur trade era before 1830, HBC journals suggest that biracial heritage was less significant than the type of work done and the relationship to the post, even though many of the freemen from Quebec did marry Ojibwe women and hunted, fished and sugared with their “Indian” relatives. The fact that these freemen fathers stayed in the community with their native

²⁷⁵ Theresa Schenck, *The Cadottes: Five Generations of Fur Traders on Lake Superior: 197.*

families was significant. The concept of “patrifocality” in the fur trade predicted that, if a father stayed with his country wife and native children, the sons would be more likely to identify with the father and maintain an ethnic identity connected to the fur trade post. If the father were absent and the son grew up in the Northwest without a male figure as role model, he would be more likely to be identified as “halfbreed” or “métis”:

As buffalo hunters, suppliers, or workers in other subservient capabilities, they tended to constitute the lower classes of the fur trade, while maintaining a separate group consciousness that went back to the earliest days of Red River.²⁷⁶

Jennifer Brown did not discuss how this process affected the development of biracial consciousness in the Great Lakes area before the Red River settlement was established. Historically, a separate “métis” identity did not develop there as it did in Red River in the early nineteenth century. Because the treaties were established in 1850, 20 years earlier than in Red River, many of the freemen who had married Ojibwe women and their descendants took treaty when the opportunity arose. As a result, Indian descendants with French names (Pelletier, Boucher) or anglicized French names (Collins) still live at the Fort William First Nation, adjacent to the city of Thunder Bay.²⁷⁷ Many others adopted the ethnic identity of the dominant groups, such as Franco-Ontarian, especially if they had lighter skin colour and lacked Aboriginal features.

There were large enough biracial groups of French and Indian men that they provided a separate class of “freemen” in the fur trade hierarchy in the late 1700s and early 1800s. They did not come from Quebec, and had no intention of retiring to Quebec, but company bourgeois

²⁷⁶ Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood*: 219.

²⁷⁷ Father Maurice, personal communication, 1998.

treated them as a separate group from their native kin. Some of these men such as Antoine's younger son Jean Baptiste Collin, who moved to the Red River valley in the 1820s, married a mixed-blood woman, Betsy Henry (the daughter of Alexander Henry the Younger), were parents of some of the Pembina Métis and made application for scrip themselves as "Half-breed Heads of Families" in 1878.²⁷⁸ The process of Métis ethnogenesis did not evolve in the Great Lakes as it did in the Red River Valley. As a result, the Collin family who remained near Thunder Bay became "Indians" after the treaties and the descendants of the son who moved west became "Métis".²⁷⁹

Jennifer Brown described the importance of the woman as "centre and symbol" in the creation or "ethnogenesis" of Métis communities.²⁸⁰ She used the term "matrifocality" to describe the process whereby the adult children of fur trade unions remained with their native mothers in the west when their fathers returned to Canada or Britain, thereby increasing the influence of the women on their progeny of mixed background, but it is difficult to apply these concepts when the mother's identity and background are unknown or unclear. As with many of these families, there is nothing known of Antoine Collin's mother (probably Ojibwe) or his first wife, Mishaha Weyers dit Latour, (or if he had a second wife, "Madame Collin") to know what influence they had over their sons. Although there were French Canadian women at major towns

²⁷⁸ PAM: copy of Half-breed Affidavits from Department of Interior, Ottawa, National Archives of Canada (NAC), v. 1319, microfilm C-14926.

²⁷⁹ Ruth Swan and Edward A. Jerome, A Mother and Father of Pembina: A NWC Voyageur Meets the Granddaughter of The Buffaloe, *Actes du Trente-Deuxième Congrès des Algonquinistes*, ed. John D. Nichols, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 2001: 327-551.

²⁸⁰ Jennifer Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Métis Communities", *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3: 1983: 39-46.

like Mackinac, Michigan, this was not the case at Grand Portage and Fort William, so the assumption is that the wives and mothers of these fur trade engagés were Aboriginal, at least by the 1700s.

The HBC journals suggest that Michel Collin enjoyed a close relationship with his mother who remained at Lake Superior with a multi-generational kin network. What influence she had on the younger son, Jean Baptiste, the son who moved west, is difficult to estimate, but obviously the Collin family do not represent the situation that Brown described as she was referring to mothers and the children of fur traders who remained in the North West after their husbands (usually of the officer or bourgeois class returned to “civilization”). Antoine Collin and other freemen and lower level engagés never left. Jean Baptiste Collin was more like the people that Peterson described, moving as immigrants from the Great Lakes region into Red River and bringing aspects of their mixed French/Ojibwe culture with them - the “Chippewa Frenchmen” as John Tanner called them. As we saw up the Saskatchewan River, *metissage* was imported into Red River from other populations which earlier demonstrated cultural mixing. This did not only happen at Great Lakes posts, but at posts of the Canadian traders in the North West or *pays d'en haut*, but *metissage* did not necessarily mean “ethnogenesis”.

With the demand for voyageurs in the fur trade war, many younger sons were drawn westward, but Baptiste was not the only Collin to go to settle in the Red River Valley. Genealogical sources suggest that two women named Rosalie Collin and Hélène Collin were the children of Antoine and Josette Collin, possibly by his second wife. These records come from Sault Ste. Marie, which was the closest community to Fort William with a Catholic priest in the

early 1800s.²⁸¹ Joseph Collin who worked in the Swan River area for Daniel Harmon and A.N. McLeod was probably related to Antoine Collin's family. Joseph had a daughter who became Louise Villebrun and settled in the Red River Settlement.²⁸² All the other claimaints for halfbreed scrip were descendants of Baptiste and Betsy Collin.

There is no evidence that Antoine Collin went to Red River himself, but he threatened to, as described in the Fort William Post Journal in 1824:

Old Collin got drunk yesterday and this morning came over to inform Mr. McKenzie that he means to go to the Red River. He returned the ct. [hundredweight] etc. thread he had purchased for making his nets for the fall fishery. However, this is not likely to last long being a drunken freak.²⁸³

While Antoine did not make good on his threat, his family did go to Red River on August 14:

"Antoine Collins wife & some of his family went off with them [the Freeman] for Red River".

Which wife this was is again difficult to determine; however, if Mishaha Weyers dit Latour was still alive in 1824 and Antoine had another wife, Josette, with young children, the former may

²⁸¹ Dr. Mary Black Rogers reports that Rosalie Collin married Francois Desmarais at St. Boniface on September 20, 1825 (personal communication, 1997). Genealogist Heather Armstrong reports the marriage of Helene Collin to her second husband, Joseph Biron, at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan in 1847. Hélène was born about 1814 and died in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., in 1903 (personal communication, 1998). We would like to thank Andrea Hannibal-Paci for her assistance in obtaining this information.

²⁸² *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, ed. Charles Gates, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1965: 129-130; 130 note. Gates identified Joseph Collin as an interpreter for the Northwest Company, stationed at Fort Alexandria in Archibald MacLeod's journal, Nov. 16, 1800. He is mentioned in Coues: 936; Harmon: 95; and Masson, v. 1: 404. His daughter made an affidavit for half-breed scrip and identified herself as the widow of the late Louis Villebrun of Selkirk. She was born in 1807, North West Territories (outside of Red River); her father was Joseph Collin and her mother was an Indian. National Archives of Canada (NAC): Dept. Of Interior, Affidavits: microfilm (C-14926).

²⁸³ Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, Fort William Journal 1823-24: July 15, 1824. This journal is not available in the HBCA or PAM.

have moved to Red river with her younger son, Jean Baptiste, when he decided to settle there. Since Antoine's wife was never called by her first name, it cannot be decided. It is also not known whether she returned to Fort William. With so little information on the wives and mothers of the freemen, it is difficult to analyze the influence of several generations of metissage had on this family in the Great Lakes region other than hints from the material culture and in the post records of the fur trade.

To conclude, the examination of the family of freemen and canoe-makers at Grand Portage and Thunder Bay shows that, despite their French name and labour for the fur trade companies, the Collins were closely connected to the local Ojibwe community. In his younger years, Antoine Collin may have been a dashing voyageur who grew up around the Great Lakes posts and made a living as a canoe paddler. In his later years, he demonstrated a sufficient expertise in birchbark canoe-building and woodworking that he no longer had to continue such an arduous life-style and could pursue subsistence activities with his family for most of the year.

What ethnic identity did the Collin descendants who stayed at Lake Superior develop? A petition from the Fort William Indians to Sir John A. Macdonald in 1887 included the names of three Collins: Baptiste, Simon and Michael.²⁸⁴ Genealogical information from the Fort William First Nations parish records suggest that descendants of Michel Collin (born about 1798-99) married local Ojibwe women and descendants with the name "Collin" still live in that community.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ Arthur: 199.

²⁸⁵ Father Maurice, personal communication, 1998.

Although there are a few references to “halfbreeds” in HBC journals, it is difficult to claim there was a separate cultural niche for people of mixed heritage at Lake Superior fur trade communities in the early 1800s. Communities like Grand Portage and Fort William were more post than town. Any incipient *métissage* demonstrated by cultural manifestations such as beadwork, clothing, music and fur trade technology did not develop into an obvious ethnic separation as occurred at Red River by 1815. The signing of the Robinson-Superior Treaty in 1850 left Fort William descendants with two choices: they could be either treaty “Indian” or non-Indian. Despite *métissage*, the descendants of the freemen with French names became Ojibwe or French Canadian. On the American side of the lakes, in upper Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, the same thing happened and many descendants of the French Canadian voyageurs became status Indians, but as the French/Ojibwe voyageurs moved into northern Minnesota and through Rupert’s Land to the Red River Valley and they became embroiled in the conflicts of the fur companies, their mixed culture evolved into a new ethnic identity, especially as they became freemen in increasing numbers. Their sons, like the Réaumes and the Cadottes, may have realized that they would not have the same opportunities as non-Aboriginals to advance through the hierarchy.

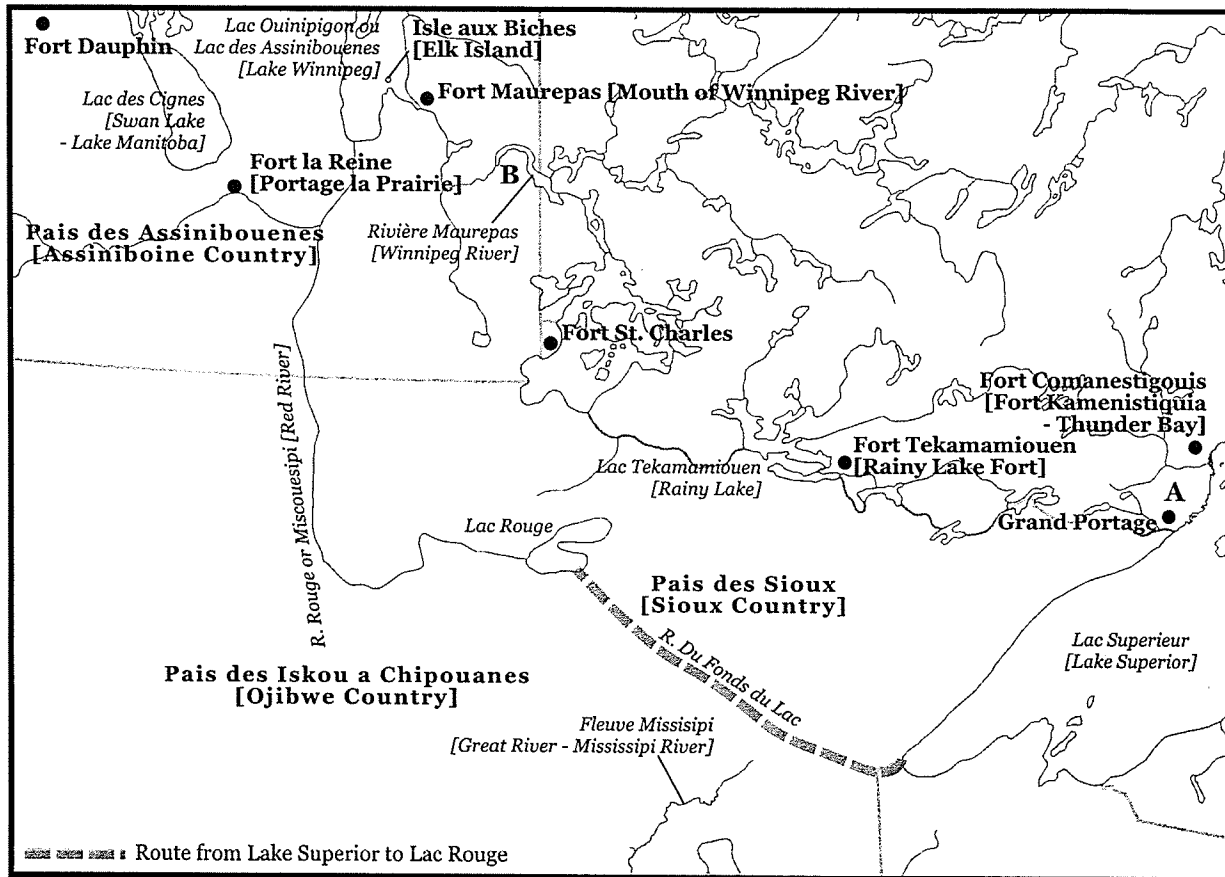
Both Peterson and Foster suggested that the ethnic designation of “Métis” emerged with the trader-broker and provisioning roles in the fur trade, what Richard White called “the middle ground”,²⁸⁶ but this idea does not explain what happened in the Collin family. Antoine Collin

²⁸⁶ Jacqueline Peterson, “Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis”, *Ethnohistory* 25/1 Winter 1978: 41-67. Peterson argued in note 3 that names like “chicot” and “bois brûlé” referred to occupational niche rather than skin colour. Cited by John Foster, “The Métis: The People and the Term”, *Prairie Forum* 3:1, 1978: 63: “Several families appear to have survived the disruption of the Conquest by forming marriage alliances with

does not appear to have been a trader at all. He was a freeman who worked for the North West Company and later HBC who was hired for particular jobs, such as canoe making, fishing and woodworking. Collin did spend a lot of the year in subsistence activities along side the local Ojibwe while provisioning the posts with his seasonal fishing. Collin did not need the “middle ground” because he grew up at Lake Superior posts and was part of the indigenous community. If one of his sons became the patriarch of a large family of Red River Métis, the reasons for that must be found in the Red River Valley, not Lake Superior. I will take up the story of Antoine Collin’s descendants in the 1820s in Chapter Seven when Jean Baptiste Collin relocates and marries the granddaughter of The Buffalo, one of the leading captains of the Pembina Ojibwe hunters. Like Martin Jerome Jr. and his wives, Angelique Letendre and Elizabeth Wilkie, Jean Baptiste Collin and his mixed-blood wife, Betsy Henry, are symbolic fathers and mothers of the Pembina Métis, that formative generation.

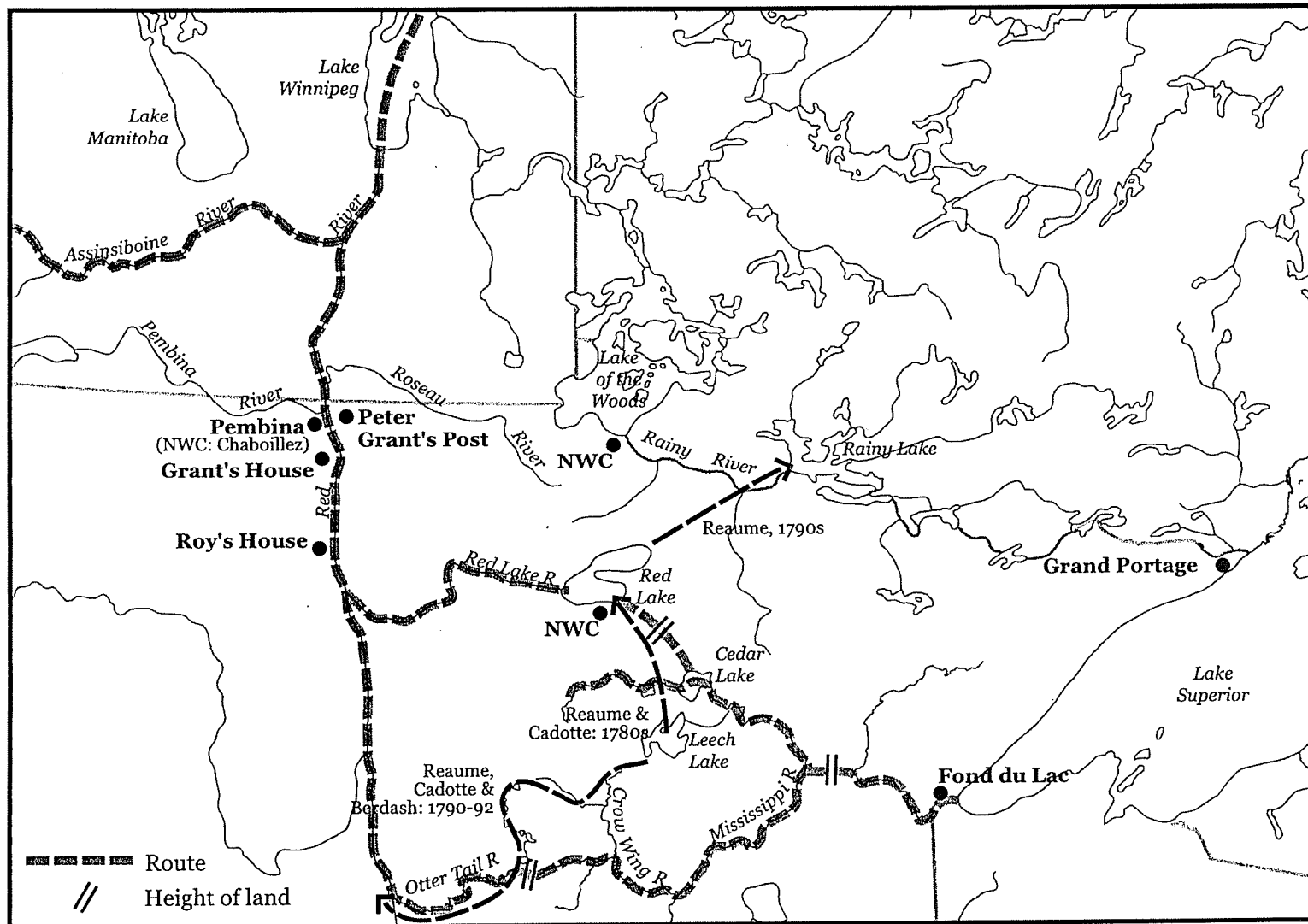
incoming British traders....The broker skills of a brother-in-law of mixed ancestry, leading an *en déroutine party*, were as crucial as British manufactures in achieving a successful trade.” He cites as examples the Sayer, Wilkie, Pangman and McGillis families. But these were *bourgeois* or traders like Jean Baptiste Cadotte at Sault Ste. Marie. The experience of engagés and freeman may have been different. While Antoine Collin may have enjoyed close ties with his wife’s family, he was not dependent on them either, having grown up in the area and being familiar with Aboriginal customs and technology.

Figure 3a: INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE, INDIAN GEOGRAPHY: The Route from Lake Superior to Lake of the Woods and the Indian route from Lake Superior [Fond du Lac] to the Red River Valley [Red Lake] drawn by La Vérendrye's nephew, Christophe de la Jemeray. (Source: Service hydrologique, Paris: copy from the Société Historique de St. Boniface).



La Jemeray's map of 1733 shows the "newly discovered" Pidgeon River route from Grande Portage through Rainy Lake [Lac Takamamiouen] to Lake of the Woods [Lac Minittie or Lac des Bois]. The "Pais des Iskou a Chipouanes" means "Ojibwe Country" near Red Lake [Minnesota]. The Red River is Rivière Rouge [Miscoquesipi]. The line from the western end of Lake Superior to Red Lake called 'Rivière de fonds du Lac' must be based on Indian knowledge as there are no lakes or rivers shown until Red Lake in the Red River Valley. The French had not yet explored this area, but they knew there was a connection or Indian route from Lake Superior to Red Lake in the Red River Valley. French and British traders from Michilimackinaw only explored this area in the 1780s. In notes on the map, La Jemeraye wrote that he received information "sur le rapport des Sauvages" [in the report of the Indians]. A to B is the route from Grande Portage to the Winnipeg River. Geographer Malcolm Lewis described this map information as *terra semicognita* because it was known, but not explored by Europeans or Canadians. (See "Indian Maps: Their Place in the History of Plains Cartography", *Great Plains Quarterly* 4: Spring 1984: 91-108.)

Figure 3b. Southern Penetration of the Red River Valley from Lake Superior: 1780s & 1790s



Chapter 3: From the Great Lakes to Red River: Geographical Fur Trade Routes to the Red River Valley and First Traders

Francois Jerome on the Saskatchewan River and Antoine Collin on Lake Superior were examples of men involved in the fur trade, showing how voyageurs from Quebec ended up in the *pays d'en haut* of the western Great Lakes and north west through Canadian subarctic regions. Most readers unfamiliar with the expansion of the Canadian trade out of Montreal might assume like Jacqueline Peterson²⁸⁷ that Great Lakes' trading families migrated to Red River and then west after the War of 1812, but the Red River Valley was a backwater in the early trade after the British took over in 1763. The fact is that there were Michilimackinac traders interested in exploring and exploiting the resources of Red River in the 1780s and 1790s, but the Red River Valley was mainly useful because of its access to the Assiniboine route to the west and north. See Figure 3b to see the penetration of the Red River Valley from Lake Superior.

The French under les Vérendryes via Grand Portage on Lake Superior had unsuccessfully sought the great Sea of the West which would lead them to the Orient in the 1730s and 1740s. British traders in Montreal after 1763 were also interested in exploration of the best canoe routes to the interior as the central part of North America was still largely unknown to outsiders. They also sought a North West Passage to the Pacific. Thus, in the decades after New France fell to the

²⁸⁷ Jacqueline Peterson, "*The People in Between: Indian-White Marriage and the Genesis of a Metis Society and Culture in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1830*", Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, 1981: 255: Chapter VI: "Zero at the Bone: To Red River or Oblivion": "The dispersal of the old Métis population from the corporate trading towns, whether in the form of forced segregation into suburbs or selective migration to the British provinces after 1815, was widespread."

British, the Canadian (French and British) traders and voyageurs continued to explore and experiment with routes to determine the best and most efficient ways to access the richest fur-bearing regions of the North West. The fur trade operated on the following maxim: the colder the climate, the better the fur. See effects of climate on the distribution of the Boreal Forest resources in the Canadian Subarctic for the best fur-bearing regions in Introductory Figure.

As shown by the story of Francois Jerome, French Canadians who had travelled with les Vérendryes were familiar with the route from Lake Superior to Lake Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan via the Kaministiquia River, through Rainy Lake [Lac La Pluie] and Lake of the Woods [Lac des Bois]. See Figure 3a: Indigenous Knowledge, Indian Geography. This was the oldest known route west of the Great Lakes.²⁸⁸ One of the most important contributions of this family of explorers was their innovation of establishing a series of posts along the river routes to provision the canoe travellers into uncharted territory. In choosing their locations, they relied on Indian expertise. The map drawn by Pierre La Vérendrye's nephew, Christophe La Jemeraie [La Jemerais] in 1733 shows place names in French and Cree and he wrote on the map that he based his information on the reports of the Indians. Since he included lakes and rivers on his map on the Ontario route and showed little detail on the line from the western tip of Lake Superior [Fond du Lac] to Red Lake, the latter appears unexplored by the French.

The father Pierre Gaultier, Sieur de la Vérendrye, used the advice of a Cree leader and guide, Ochagach, in 1729 to try the Pidgeon River route through Grand Portage, south of the

²⁸⁸ A.J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 11. Jacques de Noyen had explored it as early as 1668 and it was on French maps such as Joseph La France's map of 1739-1742 showing Superior Lake, Lake de Pluie, Lake of Wood and Great Lake Ouinipique [Winnipeg].

Kaministiquia, as it was shorter route to Rainy Lake.²⁸⁹ The French and British traders continued to use this route until 1804 when it was found to be south of the 49th parallel and the Nor-Westers' built Fort William on the Kaministiquia River at Thunder Bay.²⁹⁰ See Figure 3b to compare the routes.

Nor-Wester Edward Umfreville explored a second route from Lake Nipigon (north of Lake Superior through the Albany and English Rivers to Winnipeg River) to Lake Winnipeg in 1784, but this one was not a practical alternative and little used for the loaded canoes of the North West Company [NWC].²⁹¹ The third route explored from Lake Superior was through the western-most point, Fond du Lac. Michilimackinac traders called "South Men" financed wintering partners to explore the area between Minnesota and the Red River Valley in the 1780s-90s.²⁹² This southern route was less practical than the original French route through Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods because it involved crossing two Heights of Land (into the Mississippi and Red River drainage areas) and because of the protracted and dangerous warfare between the

²⁸⁹ Jean Morrison, *Superior Rendezvous Place*, Toronto: Natural Heritage Books: 12-13. Two maps compare the Indian version with the modern version of the two routes. See discussion of Indian maps by Wayne Moodie in Plate 59, *Historical Atlas of Canada*, v.1, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.

²⁹⁰ Carolyn Gilman, *The Grand Portage Story*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1989.

²⁹¹ A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, Toronto: Thos. Nelson & Sons, 1939: 346. Morton argued that the NWC wanted to ensure a route entirely in British territory.

²⁹² Harry Duckworth, "The Last Coureurs de Bois", *The Beaver* Spring 1984: 4-12. Page 5 discusses the 3 routes from Lake Superior to Lake Winnipeg. Douglas Birk, ed., *John Sayer's Snake River Journal, 1804-1805: A Fur Trade Diary from East Central Minnesota*, Minneapolis: Institute for Minnesota Archaeology, 1989. Lauren Ritterbush, *The Fur Trade of Northeastern North Dakota: The 1990 Fur Trade Sites Project*, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1991: 24.

Dakota Sioux Indians then inhabiting most of the Minnesota and the Ojibwe and their Cree and Assiniboiné allies who were pushing west with the fur trade.

During Les Verendrye's time, the Cree and Assiniboiné occupied the area west of Lake Superior, but they gradually moved west as the Ojibwe beaver hunters from Lake Superior displaced them. Consequently, the Ojibwe came to occupy the lake district of central Minnesota which became their long-term home by the mid-1780s.²⁹³ They settled at places like Leech Lake and Red Lake and assisted the newcomers to explore the best routes through the region. These lake-centred Ojibwe villages served as staging points to the trading posts at Pembina.²⁹⁴ Although the French knew from Indian reports that they could go from Fond du Lac to Red Lake in the 1730s, they could not easily use that route because of Indian warfare between the Ojibwe and Dakota Sioux.

Jonathon Carver explored the Mississippi Valley for the British in 1766-67, and joined Captain James Tute as a surveyor at Prairie du Chien under orders from Major Robert Rogers to travel to the Fort des Prairies on the Saskatchewan to look for a mythic Ourigan River which emptied into the Pacific [this may have been the Columbia]. Carver travelled from

²⁹³ *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, ed. Helen Hornbeck Tanner, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986: Map 13: Indian Villages and Tribal Distribution, c. 1768; shows the "contested zone" for central to northern Minnesota from Leech Lake to Red Lake between the Ojibwa from around Lake Superior and the Dakota Sioux to the west. It was this protracted warfare resulting from the fur trade that made it difficult for newcomers to explore the best route to the Red River Valley and Rupert's Land.

²⁹⁴ For example, Flat Mouth moved from Leech Lake to Pembina to trade with Alexander Henry in 1800, but returned to the former area by 1805. See list of Henry's hunters, in Coues, Henry's Journal: 54: #24: Aishquebugicoge; 24: Gueule Platte; 24: Flat Mouth. Harold Hickerson, "The Genesis of a Trading Post Band: The Pembina Chippewa", *Ethnohistory* 3:4: Fall, 1956: 299.

Michilimackinac through Green Bay (on Lake Michigan) to Prairie du Chien on the Mississippi, north to the Minnesota River and then returned, via Grand Portage (where he met “Mr. Francis” in the summer of 1767); and back to the Sault Ste. Marie. At that time, the route north from the Mississippi to Red River Valley was still largely unknown to the British and French, but Carver noted on his map, published in London in 1769, that the route west of Red Lake [Minnesota] would lead to “Fort LaRain”, meaning “La Reine”, the post established by the Les Verendryes on the Assiniboine at Portage La Prairie.²⁹⁵ Carver probably obtained this intelligence from his Indian guides on the Mississippi who knew that Red Lake was over a Height of Land and would take them to the Assiniboine, a westward-flowing river which the British Nor-Westers sought as a route to the north west.²⁹⁶ This would also become the most used southern route from Minnesota to Pembina. Although a few short-lived posts were established on Red River north of the Forks after 1763, they were quickly abandoned and Portage La Prairie, south of Lake

²⁹⁵ *The Journals of Jonathan Carver and Related Documents, 1766-1770*, ed. John Parker, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1976. Carver’s map was first published in London in 1769. The original is in the British Museum with his papers. I consulted the original papers in the British Museum and he called the trader “Mr. Francois”, not “Mr. Francis”.

²⁹⁶ In La Jemeray’s map, he shows a little portage just before Red Lake [Lac Rouge] which suggests the Height of Land between the Mississippi drainage basin and that of the Red River Valley.

Manitoba, became the major Canadian post on the lower Assiniboine.²⁹⁷ After Fort Rouge in the 1730s, here was no post at The Forks until 1810.

If Carver's memoir and map were published in London in 1769, it would not have taken long for the North West Company with agents in Britain to get these documents and make the new geographical knowledge known to their partners. This information on the connection between Red Lake and Red River (across the Height of Land from the Mississippi) confirmed Indian reports that helped the Michilimackinac traders (competing with the NWC in the 1780s and 1790s) to pioneer their way while trading with the Ojibwe from Fond du Lac to Leech Lake [Lac de la Sensue], Red Lake [Lac Rouge] and to the Red River from the south.²⁹⁸ As well, the NWC traders from Montreal and Grand Portage were moving inland from Lake Winnipeg and south up the Red to the Forks, and then along the Assiniboine, past Portage La Prairie [the old

²⁹⁷ Earlier Red River posts included: La Verendrye's Fort Maurepas (2) about 6 miles below Selkirk; established in 1734 by Pierre Gaultier Sr.; #346 in Voorhis. Fort Rouge was established at the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine about 1734-35; St. Pierre wintered there is 1751-52; shown on some French maps as south of the Assiniboine; site of Bruce and Boyer's small wintering cabins of 1780; #480 in Voorhis. Voorhis suggested that the first Canadian fort built on Red River after the French regime was by Joseph Frobisher in 1774 or earlier between Netley Creek and St. Andrews; an old camping ground of the Assiniboines; #180 in Voorhis. Voorhis suggests in a list of Winnipeg forts that the HBC had three posts in the vicinity of Winnipeg in 1780, 1799 and 1800. I do not agree. I do not believe the HBC had a post there before Miles Macdonell established Fort Douglas in 1812; #142. Voorhis suggests that the NWC Fort Gibraltar (#191) dated from 1805 or 1807; but Robert Coutts argues that it was started in 1810. A.S. Morton argued that Frobisher's Fort was reported to William Tomison by Indian informants on the Red River [Misquagamaw] in 1767. "Forrest Oakes, Charles Boyer, Joseph Fulton, and Peter Pangman in the North-West, 1763-1793", *Transactions of the R.S.C., Set. II: 1937: 89-90*.

²⁹⁸ Perrault showed this route on his map on "Carte 3: Sources du Mississipi jusqu'à la rivière Rouge - Minnesota". Perrault's Journal, Louis Cormier, ed., Montreal: Boréal Express, 1978: 79.

Fort LaReine], Pine Fort, posts around Brandon at the mouth of the Souris and up to Qu'Appelle and the northern plains where the buffalo were plentiful.²⁹⁹

The Red and Assiniboine Rivers (known as the Lower and Upper Red) followed the border of parkland and plain and the posts along it became useful for the provisions they collected. Dried buffalo meat, called by the Indians *pemitico* or pemmican, became the staple of the long voyages through Lake Winnipeg to the Athabasca where the great furs were obtained by the 1790s and these posts became more important for the country food they produced than the furs they collected.³⁰⁰ Nevertheless, in the 1780s and 1790s, furs were still the prize and traders from Canada built posts along the canoe routes and encouraged the Indians to trap until the beaver were gone and they needed new sources of supply and posts in new locations.³⁰¹ During this period, many competing posts were built and moved as will be seen in the Red River Valley in subsequent chapters. This changing location of posts meant instability for the traders and voyageurs who had difficulties in making alliances with local bands and with moving their

²⁹⁹ Wood and Thiessen dispute the claim by A.S. Morton that Pine Fort on the north side of the Assiniboine was built as early as 1766 or 1768, claiming the evidence of James Sutherland and Daniel Harmon was hearsay. It was 18 miles below the junction of the Souris and Assiniboine River. Sutherland claimed it operated for 18 years. Raymond Wood & Thomas Thiessen, *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967: 11note. Ernest Voorhis, *Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime*, Ottawa: Dept. Of Natural Resources, Dept. Of Interior: 1930: #433; argued that Pine Fort was built in 1784-85 and abandoned by the NWC ten years later (1794) after the HBC established Brandon House in 1793.

³⁰⁰ A.J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974: Figure 39: Fur Trade Provision Supply Network in the Early Nineteenth Century: 129.

³⁰¹ Eric Ross, *Beyond the River and the Bay*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970: maps of physiography and vegetation zones of the North West, fur trade transportation routes in 1811; and location of posts.

families if they had native wives and children. Consequently, many of the Nor'Westers left their Aboriginal families behind when they were re-assigned after the summer rendezvous.³⁰²

Who was the First Trader in the Pembina Region after 1763?

Peter Grant was the first trader to winter in the Pembina region, according to Alexander Henry the Younger when he passed the spot on September 5, 1800, in his first journey up the Red River. His interpreter Jean Baptiste Desmarais showed Henry where Peter Grant's post was on the east side of the Red, at the present site of St. Vincent, Mn. Henry did not establish the date of Grant's occupation except that it was "some years ago and was the first establishment ever built on the Red River" [in the Pembina region]. Henry's informant was an experienced voyageur as Henry noted that Desmarais was "one of the first who ever came up this river."³⁰³ It is possible that Peter Grant informed Henry about the site of his Pembina post and its history because Henry stayed overnight with him at Lac La Pluie [Rainy Lake] on his way from the rendezvous at Grand Portage to Red River on August 2, 1800.³⁰⁴ It is also possible that Grant, the experienced *bourgeois* who was in charge of the Rainy Lake District, recommended Desmarais to Henry as the young trader would benefit by his experience.

³⁰² For an example of how fur trade employment impacted on an individual clerk, see Sylvia Van Kirk, "George Nelson's Wretched Career", in *Rendezvous: Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981*, ed. Thomas Buckley, Grand Portage: Old Fort William: 1984: published by the North American Fur Trade Conference, St. Paul: 207-213. Also: Jennifer Brown, "Partial Truths: A Closer Look at Fur Trade Marriage", *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed. T. Binnema, Gerhard Ens, and R.C. Macleod, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 59-81.

³⁰³ Barry Gough, *Alexander Henry the Younger's Journal, 1799-1814*, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1988: arrival at Panbian River, Sept. 5, 1800: p. 43; Henry's comments on Desmarais: Sept. 8, 1800: p. 48.

³⁰⁴ Gough, Henry's Journal: Henry met Peter Grant August 2, 1800: p. 11.

Although Grant's claim as the first Pembina trader is not in dispute, there is argument over the date of his tenure and the route he took inland is unknown. Many historians have guessed that Peter Grant was at Pembina in the early 1790s, but Jean Morrison, his biographer, suggested that it was earlier, from 1784 when Grant first joined the NWC as a clerk until 1789 when he was assigned to Lac Rouge [Red Lake, Mn.].³⁰⁵ The main argument that Grant was not at Pembina in the early 1790s was that by that time he and his brother David were in partnership as independent traders and were going up the Assiniboine in opposition to the North West Company.³⁰⁶

Although he left no surviving memoir, Peter Grant's time at Pembina was significant for another reason. He married *à la façon du pays* an Ojibwe woman named Marguerit Ahdik Songab; "Ahdik" suggests that she belonged to the Reindeer clan and her Ojibwe name was

³⁰⁵ Historians who suggested Grant was at Pembina in the 1790s: Grace Lee Nute, "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-Trading Area, 1660-1855", *Minnesota History* 11:4 1930: p.366: #34-37: Pembina. Nute also noted that David Thompson had mentioned "Grant's Post" ten miles south of Pembina on the west side of the Red. Tyrrell, Thompson's editor, did not identify which Grant built the post on the west side. Voorhis suggested it was Cuthbert Grant because he was in charge of the Red River District. *Historic Forts and Trading Posts*, 1930: #203. Lauren Ritterbush also believed that Peter Grant was the first as per Henry and argued for the 1790s: *The Fur Trade of Northeastern North Dakota: The 1990 Fur Trade Sites Project*, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1991: 24-25. W.S. Wallace's does not specify where he was between 1784-89; *Documents relating to the North West Company*, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1968: v. 22: 451. Jean Morrison, "Peter Grant", *DCB*: v. 7: 356-7.

³⁰⁶ John Macdonell, a.k.a. "Le Pretre" and brother of Governor Miles Macdonell, wrote that Peter Grant was working as an independent trader in the vicinity of the Qu'Appelle and Assiniboine Rivers in the winter of 1793-94. See L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie de Nord-Ouest*, v. 1: "John Macdonell's Journal":285: November 6, 30 and December 2, 1793. "David and Peter Grant planned a depot in opposition at Grand Portage, 1793", Charles Gates, *Five Fur Traders in the Northwest*, "The Diary of John Macdonell", Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society: 1965, p. 95note, cited by Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*: p. 255. The Grants did not build the post at Grand Portage, but went to the interior.

“Clear Sky Woman”. She was born in the vicinity of Lake of the Woods [Warroad, Mn.] and initially married an Ojibwe hunter, Pewanakun, with whom she had three children. She then had five children with Peter Grant. Their daughter, Suzanne Grant, was said to be born at the Pembina Post [St. Vincent] when her father was trading with the Ojibwe there. If so, she would have been the first documented mixed-blood child born in the area. She married Joseph Raiche, a voyageur from Quebec at St. Boniface in 1820 and they had twelve Métis children whose ties stayed with Minnesota. Her husband died in 1871 and Suzanne in 1889 and they were buried in Osseo, Mn [near the Twin Cities]. Her brother, Saganash Jean Baptiste Grant, married Julie Ducharme in 1825 at Red River and they had six children. According to a family genealogy by a descendant, James Chesebro, Peter Grant kidnapped Marguerite Songab’s two younger sons and took them back to Montreal for a Canadian education, probably when he retired in 1805.³⁰⁷

Although no post journals survive of Peter Grant’s stay at Pembina, he is well-known for a contribution he made to the collection of Nor’Wester materials collected by Sir Roderick Mackenzie and published by his son-in-law, L.R. Masson. Grant’s piece was called “The Sauteux Indians” and undoubtedly his own wife was a major informant. Of course, in those days, the wife rarely received any credit for her knowledge and expertise in fur trader memoirs and Grant did not name his sources, unlike mixed-blood Ojibwe historian, William Warren, who

³⁰⁷ James W. Chesebro, *A Genealogy of the Ancestors and Descendants of Pierre Bottineau*, Annadale, Va., 1989. This material was made available to me through the kindness of Dr. Mary Black-Rogers, a descendant of the Pembina Métis and a noted anthropologist. The author claimed that their eldest daughter was Marie Grant, wife of Pierre Falcon, but most authors believe that she was the daughter of Cuthbert Grant Sr. and the sister of the Warden of the Plains. M.A. MacLeod & W. L. Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963: 2-3. Cuthbert Grant Jr. had 3 sisters: Mrs. John Wills, Mme. François Morin and Mme. Pierre Falcon.

wrote *A History of the Ojibwe People* and mentioned informants like his uncle and aunt, Michel Cadotte and his wife, a mixed-blood family who settled at La Pointe [Chequamegon], Wisconsin.³⁰⁸ When Grant described the marriage customs as an objective observer, modern readers might assume he described his own wedding according to the custom of the country:

After these preliminaries...nothing more is wanted but the consent of the parents, which, to a good hunter or warrior, is seldom denied. He then makes them a considerable present, which, if accepted, becomes his permission to sleep with his mistress and keep her as his wife. The marriage is so far consummated without further ceremony, but, to make it binding, it is necessary that he should live at least one winter with his father-in-law, during which the old man claims an indisputed right to all the produce of his hunt; but so soon as the young couple have a child of their own, they are released from any further dependence on the old people, and are at liberty to go and live where they please.³⁰⁹

This is a custom which anthropologists would call *matrilocal residence pattern*. “Matrilocal” means that the newly married couple stayed with the bride’s parents for the first year; the Euro-Canadian husbands may not have realized they were staying with their mothers-in-law who would have had a strong bond with her daughters.³¹⁰ Ethnohistorian Jennifer Brown suggested

³⁰⁸ It was not just fur traders who made use of their relatives’ indigenous knowledge. Ethnologist Henry Rowe Schoolcraft who was Indian agent at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, also used his wife’s family as informants on Indian customs which he collected and wrote about. His wife was Jane Johnston, the daughter of Irish trader, John Johnston, and his Ojibwe wife. Mrs. Johnston’s father was Waubojee, a famous Ojibwa leader, so Jane was his granddaughter. Schoolcraft noted that his mother-in-law gave him much information. William M. Clements, *Native American Verbal Art: Texts and Contexts*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996: 112-113.

³⁰⁹ Peter Grant, “The Sauteux Indians”, in L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, v. 2: 320.

³¹⁰ Jennifer Brown, “Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Métis Communities”, *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* III: #1: 1983: 39-46. The term “matrilocal” means that the young married couple stayed with wife’s mother; she would be known to the groom as his mother-in-law. Peter Grant may have been confused on this custom. Brown cites the work of anthropologists Charles Bishop and Shepard Krech, III, who argued that

that “we should inquire whether native women in emergent metis groups looked for and found ways to maintain this organization bias in their own families and social lives”.³¹¹ This custom was adopted in later Métis families as well where large extended families stayed in close proximity and continued both Aboriginal and imported traditions of the fathers; for example, Antoine Collin and his wife, Marguerite Godin Collin, lived by her mother, Isabelle Godin, and her grandmother, Magdeleine Isaac, in the Pembina region (near Emerson) in the 1870 Red River Census.³¹²

Grant also described customs like polygamy, having more than one wife, which was practical in native communities where there was a shortage of men due to early deaths from warfare and disease. Further, Grant noted that the number of wives and children reflected on the status of the adult male. Outsiders like Grant, living in an Aboriginal culture, quickly realized the advantages of having a wife “to make and mend his shoes, scrape the skins, carry home the meat, pitch the tent and cook the victuals, with many other domestic concerns which necessarily fall to their lot, while his province is principally confined to hunting and fishing.” Grant also noted that divorce was easily decided by the mutual consent of the couple and without the interference of the community. A different custom was called “passing off” when a trader was

“matriorganization” may have been significant in the early postcontact period. See their article: “Matriorganization: the Basis of Aboriginal Subarctic Social Organization”, *Arctic Anthropology* 17:2: 1980: 34-45.

³¹¹ Brown, 1983: 40. See also: Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994: 45. “Men often lived with their wives’ relatives for several years after the marriage, but then took their wives back to their own people.”

³¹² This is an example of the “ethnohistorical method”; i.e. using published insights from Anthropology to round out the historical record. See *The Dictionary of Anthropology* for definition of terms such as “matrilocal”.

forced to move by his company to a new location; he often left his first wife and children behind and found a new one.³¹³ Grant himself passed Marguerite Songab to another Canadian voyageur named Charles Bottineau and she became the mother of the famous Métis plainsman, Pierre Bottineau.³¹⁴ In all, Marguerite Songab had a total of fourteen children: three with her Ojibwe hunter, Pewanakun; seven with Peter Grant and four with Charles Bottineau, who later worked with Alexander Henry at Pembina.³¹⁵

The legacy of these early traders and their Indian wives was their descendants. Marguerite Songab is known as the mother of Pierre Bottineau and the matriarch of a large extended family of mixed-blood children who became "Métis", both Grants and Bottineaus. Peter Grant retired to Montreal and died in obscurity in 1848. W.S. Wallace obtained a photo of his daughter Mary

³¹³ Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994: 36, 45. Passing off is described by Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1980: 50-51. See also Jennifer Brown, "Partial Truths: A Closer Look at Fur Trade Marriage", in *From Rupert's Land to Canada*: 69 in which George Nelson did not pass off his first wife at Grand Portage, but just left her there. Brown suggests that Nelson and his colleagues did not consider her his marriage partner in this case.

³¹⁴ Peter Grant, "The Sauteux Indians": 321. Chesebro Genealogy: part 4: page 7.

³¹⁵ In Charles Gates, "The Diary of Hugh Faries", there are several references to Mr. Grant's Girl": May 3, 1805: "Mr. Grant's girl set off to stay with her brother." P. 239. This was at Rainy Lake. The editor assumed she was the wife of James Grant, but this cannot be determined from the journal. Apparently Peter Grant who had been at Rainy Lake as *bourgeois* retired in the summer of 1805 and returned to Montreal; Morrison, *DCB*, v. 7. There are at least five references to this Ojibwe woman, who made an obvious impression on the author, Faries. In a note on page 203, editor Gates noted that the traders passed off their Indian wives to another man when they left the country and cited Harmon's Journal: 23 and 39. It is possible that "Grant's Girl" was Peter Grant's country wife, rather than James'.

“who appears...to have been born of an Indian mother.”³¹⁶ If Mary lived in Montreal, she probably did not identify as a “Métisse as this term was used in fur trade country.

Other Early Pembina Traders Who Explored the Minnesota Route to Red River

James Grant was another early Scottish-Canadian trader in the Red River Valley who is known only through fragmentary documentation. He was a captain in the British army at Detroit in 1764; became one of the “South Men” who traded through Michilimackinac as early as 1782 and, in 1783, Perrault observed him to be at Cahokia [St. Louis, Ms.]. In 1785, his firm of Sutherland and Grant sent six canoes to Timiskaming [northwest of Montreal] and ten to Michilimackinac; in 1786, they sent 16 canoes to the Great Lakes centre.³¹⁷ J.B. Perrault noted that in 1784-85, Joseph Réaume wintered at Lac Rouge [Red Lake, Mn.] at the fort of Mr. Grant; the editor identified this Grant as James Grant of Michilimackinac, and assumed that James Grant had been at Red Lake prior to the fall of 1784.³¹⁸ This would make James Grant the earliest known trader at Red Lake, and thus, the Red River Valley. Presumably he came into the Red River Valley from Fond du Lac and the southern route because this was the way the Michilimackinac traders (the South Men) accessed northern Minnesota and the Red.

³¹⁶ Wallace, *Documents Re: NWC*, biography of Peter Grant (1764-1848): 451. “Though not a son, he would appear to have been a relative of John Grant of Lachine.”

³¹⁷ Wallace, biography of James Grant (d. 1798), p. 450. Wallace does not suggest this James being related to any of the other fur trade Grant families.

³¹⁸ Louis P. Cormier, ed., *Jean-Baptiste Perrault: marchand voyageur parti di Montréal le 28e de mai, 1783*, Montreal: Boreal Express, 33 and 52. Grace Lee Nute used this source to identify Red Lake Post #3, #48 in her inventory of Minnesota fur trade posts *Minnesota History* 1930: 369.

Since Peter and James Grants' genealogies and background are not identified, it is difficult to say if they were related, or had any influence on their choice of posts and knowledge of the interior. Existing evidence suggests that they did not work together or influence each other because they worked for different concerns. Peter was a clerk with the NWC and likely entered through the Grand Portage/Ontario route to Pembina in 1784. James was based at Mackinac and worked with other traders from that area like Joseph Réaume, and probably Jean Baptiste Cadotte and John Sayer. Consequently, it would appear that, if two men by the name of Grant were at Pembina and Red Lake within a year of each other, it was a coincidence.

It seems more likely that James Grant was the older brother of Cuthbert Grant, Sr. because Cuthbert Sr.'s older son James was baptized in Montreal in 1798 and James Grant was one of the witnesses. Cuthbert was the son of David Grant of Letheredie, Scotland and his mother was Margaret Grant. They also had a son Robert Grant of Kincarth who was also active in the Red River area from 1785-6 and 1790, but this may have been up the Assiniboine as he founded Fort Esperance on the Qu'Appelle River in the same area as Cuthbert Sr. in the 1790s.³¹⁹

There is the mystery of "Grant's House" to consider as well. It was documented by David Thompson in 1797 as being 10.5 miles south of Pembina on the west side of the Red

³¹⁹ Wallace, biography of Robert Grant (1752-1801); he was an active Nor'Wester; p. 451. Wallace says that he spent most of his career in Red River and wintered there in 1785-86 and in 1790, place unknown. See the genealogy of the Warden of the Plains, Cuthbert Grant Jr., Macleod and Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*: 2: baptismal record for Cuthbert Grant's son James, witnessed by James Grant, 1798 in Montreal; p.3, genealogy. This genealogy does not mention James Grant. Cuthbert Sr., biography in Wallace on page 449 says he is a younger brother of Robert Grant. This does not mention brother James either. Cuthbert Sr.'s son James was born in 1791 and is younger than the Michilimackinac trader. Perrault's editor, Cormier, suggested that James Grant was a Captain at Detroit in 1764 who retired and became a trader; footnote p. 52. With so many Grants in the fur trade, it is difficult to rule out connections.

[south of Chaboillez' post], but Thompson did not specify which Grant built it. See Figure 3b. Grace Lee Nute assumed that it was built by Peter Grant, but this seems unlikely.³²⁰ Alexander Henry and J.B. Desmarais twice clearly identified Peter Grant's post on the east side of the Red and never mentioned the post on the west side of the Red 10.5 miles south of the Pembina mouth.³²¹ They also clearly stated that Peter Grant built the first post in that part of the Red River Valley, suggesting that "Grant's Fort" was built later.

The Nor-Westerns had a tendency to ignore their competition, so it is possible that Grant's Fort was built by the South Men, rather than the NWC. Thus, it is possible that James Grant moved west from Red Lake in the early 1780s and built a post on Red River, or more likely, one of his associates like Joseph Réaume, whom John Hay observed wintering near the "Pamican River" in 1792.³²² Perhaps James Grant was Réaume's *bourgeois*. Jean Baptiste Cadotte was at Red Lake by 1790 and may have built an outpost on Red River.³²³

³²⁰ Grace Lee Nute, "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-Trading Area, 1660-1855", *Minnesota History* 1930: #38, Grant's Fort; Pembina posts are described as #34-37. Red Lake Posts are #46-48.

³²¹ Elliott Coues, ed., *The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry*, v. I: the first sighting was on September 5, 1800, when Henry and Desmarais were travelling to Park River on horseback; p. 80-81. On May 17, 1801, on the way to the rendezvous at Grand Portage, Henry wrote: "I went up to Panbian river on horseback to find a proper spot for building. I got there at twelve o'clock, crossed Red river with Desmarais, planted my potatoes, and sowed a few garden seeds on the spot where Mr. Grant's fort stood. We recrossed, and....pitched on the north side of Panbian river...."; p. 181.

³²² The Réaume family were involved in the Great Lakes trade. See Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men*, chapter 3: on Marie Madeleine Réaume: 38-53.

³²³ Cormier, ed., *Jean-Baptiste Perrault...: 78*: Perrault noted the wintering assignments for 1790-91 and Baptiste Cadotte, mixed-blood son of the Sault Ste. Marie trader, was sent to Lac Rouge.

Without giving a reason, Ernest Voorhis suggested that "Grant's House on Red River" was built by Cuthbert Grant Sr. for the NWC.³²⁴ This may be because of hints in HBC post journals from the Winnipeg River and from NWC John Macdonell's diary that the Canadians had a post at Pembina in the winter of 1793-94.³²⁵ Since Cuthbert Grant was the *bourgeois* for the Red and Assiniboine areas and was up the Assiniboine to Qu'Appelle junction, it is possible that Cuthbert Sr. was responsible for "Grant's House". He supervised the operations of the Red River and, if he sent Schultz and Desmarais from the Winnipeg River to Pembina in 1793-94, they might have stayed at this house, possibly to compete with the South men. If so, it might be more appropriately called: the Schultz/Desmarais House. Although references to HBC posts are vague, they were thought to be a mile north of the NWC posts at Pembina, not south like "Grant's Fort".³²⁶ On September 16, 1796, HBC master at Lac La Pluie [Rainy Lake], John

³²⁴ Voorhis, *Historic Forts...* #203: Grant's House on Red River. He listed #204 as Peter Grant's post on the east side of the Red, built about 1793, as the "first trading post on the upper Red river", clearly relying on Henry's evidence and guessing at the date.

³²⁵ Duckworth summarizes the evidence in his article, "The Last Coureurs de Bois", *The Beaver*, Spring 1984: 4-12. He used John Macdonell's *Diary of the Red River (1793-97)* in Masson: I. On May 19, 1794, Macdonell met two canoes of South Traders, led by a Monsieur Fournier on the Assiniboine below Fort de la Reine; the Nor'Westers removed a deserter, Morelle. The next day, they met Frederick Schutz [Schultz] and Desmarais [probably Jean Baptiste] who had wintered on the "Pimbina River" and met their colleagues at the Forks. Macdonell reported that they worked for the partnership of Beaubien [dit Desrivieres] and {Gabriel Attina] LaViolette. L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois...*, v. 1: 290. HBCA Post Journals for Rainy Lake (and Portage de l'Isle) kept by John McKay reported that Frederick Schultz, a.k.a. the Soldier, worked for the Canadian (NWC) traders on the Winnipeg River and went to the Red River about this time; HBCA: B.105/a/1, Sept. 19, 1793. Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1795-96, B.105/a/3: May 5, 1797, identifies the Canadian master as Fredrick Shoults when he is back on the Winnipeg River. There was no HBC post at Pembina until 1797-98. Thanks to Harry Duckworth and Edward Jerome for sharing their notes on Rainy Lake journals.

³²⁶ Archaeologist Lauren Ritterbush made a detailed attempt to locate the Pembina area posts. *The Fur Trade of Northeastern North Dakota: The 1990 Fur Trade Sites Project*,

McKay, learned from Frederick Schultz, the Nor'Wester, that "those new adventurers from Michilimackinac and south, has all of them abandoned the north....that David and Peter Grant has given up business for themselves, that the latter is Master at Lake la Pluie in the Northwest Company service....."³²⁷ The NWC countered the opposition of both the Michilimackinac traders and independents like the Grants by buying them out or bringing them into the partnership, thus easing competition.

Another explanation for Grant's House is that it was built by Robert Grant who had spent most of his career on the Assiniboine. James Sutherland believed that Robert Grant had been at Pine Fort east of Brandon since 1770.³²⁸ While this time may have been exaggerated, he certainly was well-known in the Assiniboine area. It is odd that neither Chaboillez or Henry mentioned this house in their journals, suggesting again that it belonged to an opposition concern, either the South Men from Michilimackinac or the XYC who sent John Sayer from Fond du Lac to Pembina in 1799 to 1800.³²⁹

1991.Chapter IV: Historical Background, p. 22-44. This project was challenging because frequent flooding on the Red and resulting diking in the twentieth century have made it almost impossible to find definitive archaeological material close to the rivers, despite the fact that there were many posts in the area and some of them well-documented historically.

³²⁷ HBCA: Lac La Pluie Post Journal, 1796-97, B.105/a/4, September 16, 1796.

³²⁸ HBCA: Brandon House Post Journal, B.22/a/4, 1797. Pine Fort was closed when the HBC established Brandon House upstream in 1793.

³²⁹ HBCA: Brandon House Journal B.22/a/6. F.4/1: John Sayer Account Book, 1795. *The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander Mackenzie*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970:480: observed that Mr. Sayer wintered at Riviere Pabinas [Pembina]; also 484-5: June 4, 1799: from Mackinac: "Mr. Sayer...left his Winter Quarters the latter end of April...He came out by Red Lake, Grande Fourche and Lac La Pluie." From Alexander Mackenzie to William McGillivray, Grand Portage, June 15, 1799. This description of the exit suggests that Sayer went east from Red Lake across country to Rainy Lake, a big

The other major explorers of the southern route through Minnesota were Joseph Réaume and Jean Baptiste Cadotte, mixed-blood sons of Great Lakes traders, the men that Peterson identified as the “prelude” to the Red River Métis.³³⁰ They were obviously successful in challenging Dakota hegemony over central Minnesota and helped their Ojibwe allies (who were probably even relatives) to push into the Valley. The fact that they had Indian mothers, could speak fluent Ojibwe and French and were familiar with the Great Lakes and beyond made them very successful traders out of Michilimackinaw, Sault Ste. Marie and Fond du Lac.

Joseph Réaume was with Captain James Tute and Jonathon Carver in Minnesota in 1767 as an Indian interpreter. Major Robert Rogers had sent this exploring party into the Mississippi Valley west of Lake Superior to find the Ourigan River, a North West Passage to the Pacific Ocean. He ordered them to meet “Mr. Francois” [a.k.a. Francois LeBlanc, Franceways, Saswe and Francois Jerome) at the “great carrying place” [Grand Portage] to get supplies to travel to “Fort La Pierre [Fort des Prairies on the Saskatchewan] and Lake Wennepek”, the farthest point

shortcut. This was only possible because he shipped 30 packs of furs to Chaboillez on the Assiniboine. The Winnipeg River route was the only reliable way to transport loaded canoes. See Figure 3b for the Indian routes connecting Red Lake, Rainy Lake and Red River.

³³⁰ Joseph Réaume came from a prominent Great Lakes trading family from Green Bay; see *The Journals of Jonathan Carver: 125 note*. Jean Baptiste was the son of a prominent trader at Sault Ste. Marie who became a partner of Alexander Henry the Elder. His mother was Ojibwe. David Thompson wrote of him with great admiration when he visited his post at Red Lake Falls {Mn.}. “I had long wished to meet a well educated native, from whom I could derive sound information.” *David Thompson’s Narrative: 1784-1812*, ed. Richard Glover, Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1962: 188. Cadotte was 35 years old, “the son of a French gentleman by a native woman, and married to a very handsome native woman, also the daughter of a Frenchman.” Réaume and Cadotte’s explorations have been summarized by archaeologist Douglas Birk, *John Sayer’s Snake River Journal, 1804-05*, Minneapolis: Institute of Minnesota Archaeology, 1989:25-28. Theresa Schenck, “The Cadottes: Five Generations of Fur Traders on Lake Superior”, *The Fur Trade Revisited*, ed. Jennifer Brown, W.J. Eccles, Donald P. Heldman, Michigan State University Press, 1994: 189-197.

west that the French knew. This plan failed because Rogers did not receive the furs he expected from Tute's expedition and financial exigencies forced him to cut back on Tute's supplies.

Although Charles Boyer had opened up the route to Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods from threatening Indians, Francois had to give the bad news to the expedition that Major Rogers had not sent additional supplies. Starving, they returned to Michilimackinac in the fall, disappointed with the outcome of their exploration project. Although it was a failure from Rogers', Tute's and Carver's point of view, it gave Joseph Réaume a wonderful opportunity to explore the country and to be one of the first traders from the south to move into the Red River Valley and to winter at Pembina.³³¹

In 1786, Montreal suppliers to their traders at Mackinac (Messrs. Côté, W. Todd, Campion, Chaboyer Sr. and M.A. Desjardins) formed la Compagnie Générale du lac Supérieure et du Sud. Jean Baptiste Cadotte Sr., Alexander Henry Sr., John Sayer and others were involved, possibly James Grant.³³² Jean Baptiste Perrault described their assignments, and the wintering partners went to different lakes in central Minnesota. Refer again to Figure 3b. In 1785, Joseph Réaume wintered at Lac Rouge near "Mr. Grant's fort". Perrault's map of "les Sources de Mississippi et Lac Rouge" shows that the South Men already knew that this route over the Height of Land into Rupert's Land from Fond du Lac which they could use as an alternate route to Grand Portage. By 1790, Cadotte Jr. wintered at Red Lake and Réaume was at Rice Lake [Lac la

³³¹ *The Journals of Jonathon Carver*, ed. John Parker: p. 125 note on Réaume's family at Green Bay; for Rogers' plans for the expedition, see Carver's journal, May 21, 1767, p. 125; and Rogers' letter to Tute of June 10, 1767, p. 197. Explanatory note of Francois' identity, p. 132 note. The letter that Francois delivered to Tute and Carver from Major Rogers, dated July 20, 1767: p. 198.

³³² Perrault's Journal, p. 56. See Wallace, biography of James Grant: 450.

Folle].³³³ It was not difficult to get to Pembina from Red Lake; one merely descended the Red Lake River to Red River and went north a short distance.

Alexander Henry the Elder (partner of Cadotte Sr at Sault Ste. Marie) ordered Réaume and Cadotte in 1790 to lead the Ojibwe to the Prairies.³³⁴ This was dangerous as they would have to challenge the Dakota Sioux to get to Red River. Réaume tried in the spring of 1791, but failed to get west of Leaf River. This was a new route, and went from the Leaf River to the OtterTail west to the Red, then north to the Assiniboine [the Upper Red River]. See Figure 3b. It was considerably south of the Red Lake route which he probably had used in the 1780s. Being closer to the Dakota and part of the “debatable” zone identified by Hickerson, it was more dangerous and not practical in the long run.³³⁵

The Montreal partners like Henry wanted a peace deal with the Ojibwe and Dakota to avoid the ruinous warfare which inhibited travel in the interior. The wintering partners were successful in 1792 and apparently that is when Joseph Réaume wintered at Pembina.³³⁶ Nine years later, a Leech Lake Ojibwe named The Berdash, son of Le Sucre, [one of Alexander Henry the Younger’s trading Indians] corroborated Perrault’s story. He reported to Henry in 1801 that

³³³ Perrault’s Journal, p. 78 - 1790.

³³⁴ Perrault’s Journal, p. 85, re: Henry’s orders to take the Indians to the prairies.

³³⁵ Harold Hickerson, *The Chippewa & their Neighbours: 105-119*. Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada: 6-7, 15*. Hickerson linked the warfare of the Ojibwe and Dakota to competition over food resources.

³³⁶ Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 1930/1986: 254-5, note: “Apparently prior to 1792 the route by Fond du Lac was stopped by antagonism of the Sioux and Chippewa. Réaume was the first man to break through that year. The route was obviously difficult as John Hay, who went up the Assiniboine and wintered on the Souris or Mouse River in 1794-95, came out in 1795 by Winnipeg River and Grand Portage.”

he had participated in the peace attempts: "Both his speed and his courage were tested some years ago [1792] on the Schian river [Sheyenne], when M. Réaume attempted to make peace between the two nations, and Berdash accompanied a part of Saulteurs to the Sioux camp."³³⁷

Although dressed like a woman, Berdash outran the Sioux attackers and created such a diversion that the warriors were able to escape. The peace negotiations with the Dakota were not successful and eventually the Ojibwe/Dakota conflict forced the South traders to abandon their company, join the NWC and use the Ontario route.

After spending 1792 on the "Pamican River", Joseph Réaume moved up the Assiniboine the following year when John Macdonell met the South Men near Portage la Prairie. Duckworth described the attempts of this partnership to crack the NWC trade. Réaume and LaViolette were at the narrows of Lake Manitoba in 1795-96. Both he and Cadotte were offered partnerships and they were brought into the larger company.³³⁸ In 1802, XYC trader George Nelson described Réaume's reputation with the Indians as an "elderly gentleman, humane, peaceable, and Strictly

³³⁷Coues, Henry's Journal: I: 164: January 2, 1801. Henry observed about the Berdash: "He is very fleet, and a few years ago was reckoned the best runner among the Saulteurs." This story by the Berdash is supported by the fact that Perrault reported him, the son of Ojibwe leader Le Sucre, at Michilimackinac in 1791 when Réaume's cousin was attacked. The Berdash told Perrault at that time that Mr. Henry, Montreal merchant, had equipped Mr. Cadotte and Mr. Joseph Réaume to lead the Leech Lake Indians to the prairies." Perrault's Journal: 85.

³³⁸ Harry Duckworth, "The Last Coueur de Bois", *The Beaver* Spring 1984: 11-12. A Joseph Rhéaume was a voyageur on the Athabasca River for the NWC in 1804, but this may have been the son of the Minnesota trader who was assigned to take charge of the Folle Avoine Department of the Fond du Lac District. He and John Sayer traded on the Kettle and Namekagon Rivers, south of Fond du Lac. He visited Sayer's Snake River Post twice that winter. Douglas Birk, ed., *John Sayer's Snake River Journal, 1804-05*: 28.

conscientious...loved and revered by indians and all who knew him."³³⁹ These were the qualities of a successful trader.

Jean Baptiste Cadotte was back in Minnesota at his post at the confluence of the Clearwater and Red Lake Rivers [near Red Lake Falls, Mn.] when David Thompson passed by March 21, 1798, and stayed with him and his family, taking observations for his map and waiting for the spring thaw.³⁴⁰ He was later deprived of his partnership for alcohol problems which affected many fur traders and retired.³⁴¹ He died in 1818 at age 57. Although Cadotte and his mixed-blood wife had four children, there is no suggestion that they remained in Red River; they may have returned to their cousins at La Pointe, Wisconsin (to children of Michel Cadotte) on Lake Superior. The Métis Cadottes of Red River were descended from Laurent Cadotte, a voyageur assigned to work in Athabasca.³⁴²

Although Harry Duckworth saw the South Men as failures, it was not really their fault. The route through Minnesota was too challenging for a number of reasons. First, the Indian warfare made it very dangerous to have posts in central Minnesota, let alone travel back and forth

³³⁹ Birk: 28. Richard Bardon & Grace Lee Nute, "A Winter in the St. Croix Valley, 1802-03", *Minnesota History* 28:1: 1-14; and 2: 142-159; and 3: 225-240; ed. Richard Bardon and Grace Lee Nute; reminiscences of George Nelson in northern Minnesota.

³⁴⁰ *David Thompson's Narrative*, ed. Richard Glover, p. 188.

³⁴¹ Wallace, biography of Jean Baptiste Cadotte (1761-1818), p. 428. "His wife was, like himself, a half-breed; and by her he had four children." He was fluent in Ojibwe, French, English and Latin.

³⁴² Gail Morin, *Manitoba Scrip*, a compilation of Halfbreed Affidavits for Manitoba Scrip. In Masson's list of voyageurs from 1804, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, v. 1: 400, Laurent Cadotte was a voyageur "contre-maitre" assigned to the English River District, part of the Churchill River near Ile à la Crosse.

to Lake Superior. Secondly, they had to cross two watersheds instead of one on the Ontario route, making the transportation of goods very difficult over numerous long and arduous portages.³⁴³ Thirdly, the rivers were not reliable for canoe travel from spring to fall. This was perhaps the most important reason of all to discourage the use of the Fond du Lac penetration of the Red River Valley. Even if the Indian peace proposals had succeeded, the physiography and the river systems would have forced the Michilimackinac traders through Grand Portage. Apparently “Mr. Francois” not only had the jump on his competitors, but he chose the right route, perhaps because he consulted the local Indians and relied on their expertise.

This examination of the first traders into the Pembina and Red Lake regions and the analysis of the routes shows the migration of Great Lakes traders and engagés into the Red River Valley. They did not generally move as families with wives and children, as Peterson suggested, but came as bachelors and married local women. In the next chapters on the Pembina fur trade, we will see how these families grew and developed into the freemen culture of the plains, transforming the voyageurs into buffalo-hunters. It was not the fur trade around the posts that led to the separate identity for the Métis. Mixed blood men like Réaume and Cadotte probably did not think of themselves as different from their French Canadian fathers, but they were good at their jobs and their expertise in using Indian technology for transportation and travel as well as their language skills as interpreters helped the newcomers push into uncharted territory to reveal the interior of North America which was ripe for colonial expansion and exploitation. They were not “people in between” as Peterson viewed them, but part of the mix of cultures in which they

³⁴³ These are well described by George Monk among others whose journal is at McGill University, Redpath Library, Rare Book Room.

lived. Their success as explorers in the Minnesota fur trade expansion to Red River was due to their facility in Indian languages and knowledge of Indian culture. Those voyageurs and traders with Indian mothers and wives had an obvious advantage. Unfortunately, nothing is known of the women in their kin networks. One question for further research would be to what extent was there any difference between the "Indianized Frenchmen" from Quebec who were voyageurs who lived with the Indians and the young men from the Great Lakes who had Indian mothers and grew up in the trading towns?

Figure 4a. Canadian Fur Trade Route to Red River from Grand Portage, before 1804

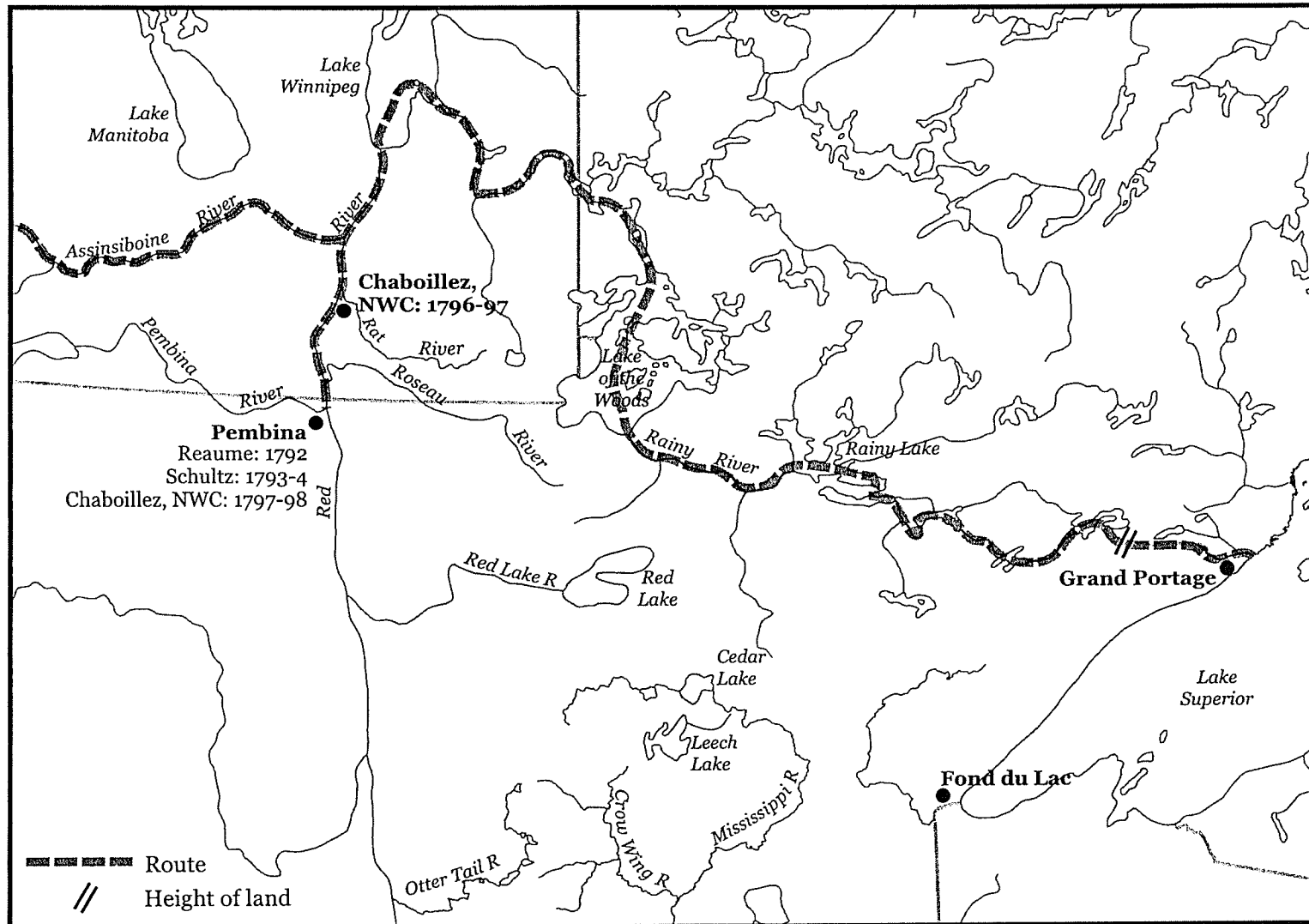


Figure 4b. HBC Route from Albany to Pembina and Brandon House, 1797

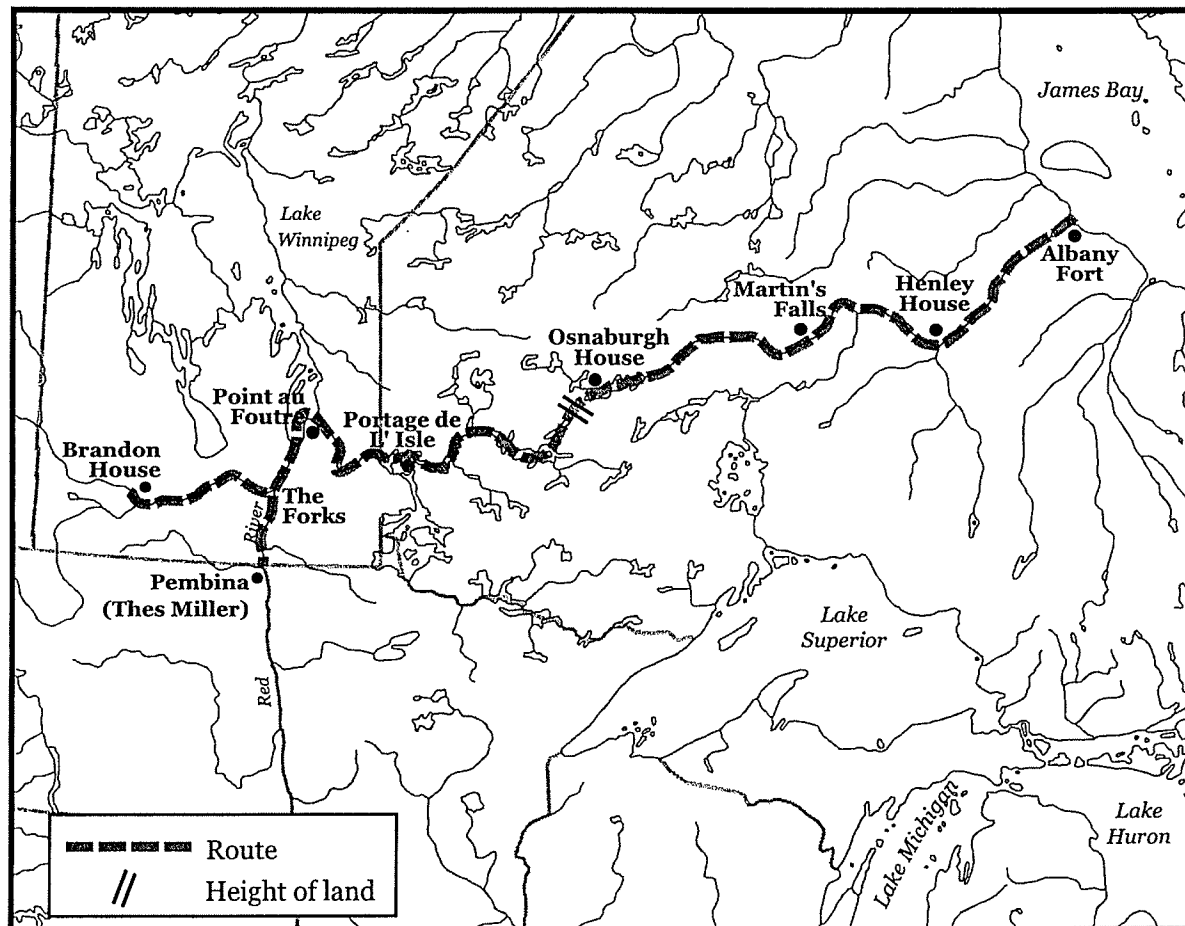
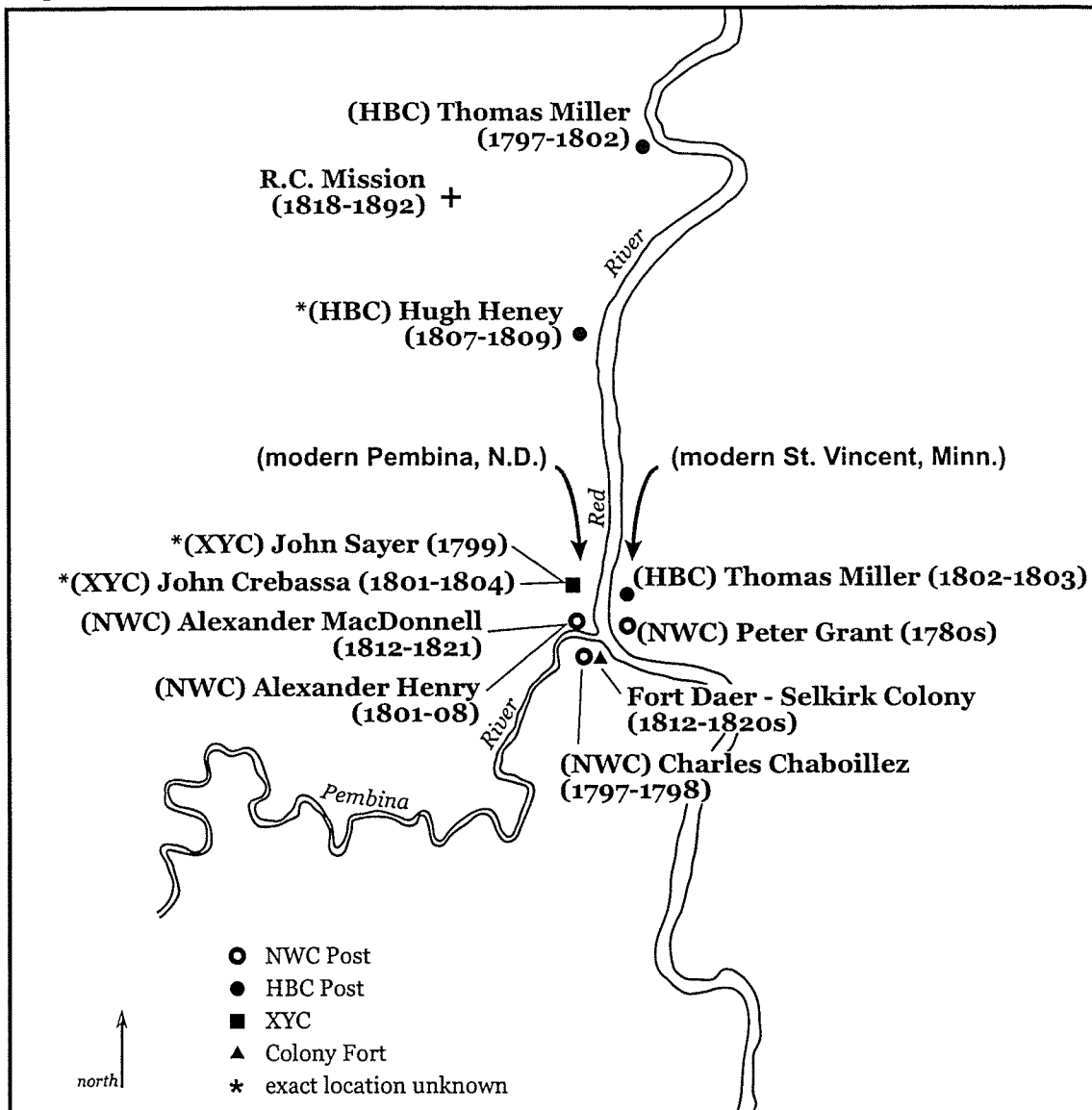


Figure 4c. Pembina Area Fur Trade, 1780s - 1820



Chapter Four: *Ojibbeway Waymetegooshewug*: Chippeway Frenchmen in the Pembina Fur Trade: 1790s

Nor'Westers Charles Chaboillez, Alexander Henry and Ottawa hunter John Tanner wrote journals which were later published which give modern readers rich insight into the life of the Indian trappers and French-Canadian, British and mixed-blood traders in the Pembina region two hundred years ago.³⁴⁴ Although there are no existing journals written by the freemen and their Métis sons from this period, these contemporary sources provide some rich insights into developing Métis culture which would be publicly claimed in the next decade during the Fur Trade War.

Other traders left little documentation and their stories have to be pieced together from fragments and hints in other sources. For example, the journals in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives include Pembina journals for this period, but they were not published and have not been generally consulted. There was some confusion because the author, Thomas Miller, called them Red River journals and the first two were catalogued under Winnipeg.³⁴⁵ Later HBC Pembina post journals kept by Hugh Heney were catalogued under Pembina.³⁴⁶ There are no XYZ

³⁴⁴ Peterson's article on the Pembina fur trade relies heavily on these sources, but not the journals of the HBCA. See articles by Peterson and Camp in *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1990: 33-64.

³⁴⁵ HBCA: Winnipeg Post Journal: B.235/a/1-2, 1797-98; authored by Thomas Miller.

³⁴⁶ HBCA: Pembina Post Journals: B.160/a/1, 1-2, 1808-1810; B.160/a/3-4: 1812-13. These were kept by Hugh Heney.

journals, but inferences can be gleaned from HBC and NWC sources about their activities up to 1804.

Readers should keep in mind that just because there is a gap in the records does not mean that there were no Indians or traders there. For example, Alexander Henry noted that Thomas Miller spent the winter of 1801-02 at Pembina, but there is no HBC journal from that year, probably because it was burned when the post burned down.³⁴⁷ However, the sources that are available from Pembina and neighbouring posts give us a detailed insight into the era when the Metis culture and consciousness were developing in the Red River Valley after Peter Grant's occupation in the 1780s, the explorations of the South Men like Réaume and Cadotte in the 1780s and 1790s, and Schultz and Desmarais in 1793-4.

The first Pembina occupation by the Nor'Westers described in detail in a published journal was by Charles Chaboillez in 1797. This French Canadian clerk was born in Montreal, Quebec [Lower Canada] in 1772, the son of a fur trader by the same name who came from Michilimackinac. Charles Jr. joined the NWC about 1793 and was in the Red River District from 1796 to 1805 and had four mixed-blood children who he later brought back to Montreal for

³⁴⁷ Alexander Henry the Younger wrote in his journal: "October 27 [1801]: The Hudson Bay Co. People [Thomas Miller] started to build at the Grande Passage on the Panbian River; (Gough: 1: 123). "On the 7th [March 1802] We made a *feu de joie* with the Hudson Bay Com. The Houses at Grand Passage Burnt and their baggage and roasted about 10 Cows Buffalo in their store house, fine sport for the Wolves and Crows." See Gough, v. 1: 126 and his note 115. Gough noted that this *feu de joie* meant a bonfire and was probably deliberately set by Henry's men and was therefore arson. Miller had previously built on the east side near Peter Grant's old post when he arrived on September 13, 1801; Gough:122. Miller left Red River on April 28, 1802 and Henry reported that he burned the east side on May 1. Gough assumed he was making a fire break, but it is more likely that he burned Miller's post on the east side at the same time; see Gough: 128, note 119. Henry did not report Miller returning to the Pembina area until 1805 and there are no post journals for these years for the HBC after 1798. If Henry was trying to intimidate the HBC opposition by burning their buildings, he apparently did a good job.

baptism not long before he died in 1812.³⁴⁸ Charles Chaboillez spent his first winter at the mouth of the Rat River at the Red in 1796-97. Although there is no extant journal from this year, he obviously came to know the geography and the local Indians who were attracted to his post.³⁴⁹

Chaboillez moved south to the mouth of the Pembina River the next season. Although his journal for 1797-98 gives daily descriptions of the fur trade on Red River, it does not explain issues such as competition with the Hudson's Bay Company, the context of its expansion inland to compete with the Canadian traders on their doorstep or issues of labour problems and desertions.

1) Monsieur Racette: The First Documented Freeman in the Red River Valley

When Chaboillez wintered at Pembina in 1797-98, there may have been an occasional freeman in the area, but it was dangerous to stay in that area alone. The Missouri trade from Brandon area south to the Mandan villages on the Missouri were more likely to attract

³⁴⁸ There seems to be conflicting evidence on Charles Chaboillez between Coues, pp. 60-61, Wallace, p. 432 and Harold Hickerson, "The Journal of Charles Jean Baptiste Chaboillez, 1797-1798", *Ethnohistory* 6:3, Summer, 1959: 265. Coues observed in footnote 61: "There are two persons named Chaboillez, father and son, both of the NWCo. and often confused". It appears that Hickerson did just that by suggesting that the trader was born in Trois Rivières in 1742, in which case he would have been 54 when he first went to the Red River. This was a young man's game and it seems more likely that the Pembina trader was his son, born in 1772, according to Wallace, whose sisters were married to Simon McTavish and to Roderick McKenzie. Wallace also suggests that his father was born in Michilimackinac in 1736. The Charles born in 1772 had four Metis children born in the West who were baptized in Terrebonne in 1811. The father died in 1808 and the son in 1812 and both are buried in Terrebonne, Quebec.

³⁴⁹ "The Fur Trade in the Scratching River Region", pamphlet published by the Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Winnipeg. This work is based on information in the journals of Charles Chaboillez and Alexander Henry the Younger when they were at Pembina. They called the river the Rivière aux Gratiis; it is now called the Morris River. The mouth of the Rat River is just south of present-day St. Adolphe, Manitoba.

independent traders and men like Menard were reported in that area as early as 1778.³⁵⁰ In this period, the Brandon area was the staging point for British and Canadian traders to go to the trading centre of the Mandans as they could ascend the Souris River and make a short overland trek to the Missouri and the prosperous earth-lodge villages of these indigeous plains traders. It was at Brandon posts that this plains trader, Louis Menard, flourished and where probably originated the first freemen in the southern part of modern Manitoba.

The Missouri trade may have led to the expansion of HBC into the Red River Valley because it was organized from Brandon House at the mouth of the Souris; see Figures 3b, 4a and 4b for hinterland of Brandon posts before 1800. In the fall of 1796, Brandon House master John McKay attempted to appoint a French trader named "Ricette" [Racette] as leader of a contingent of Brandon HBC men to establish a new Red River post at Pembina, but McKay's Orkneymen refused to work for a francophone because they did not know French.³⁵¹ As a result, McKay, noting that the NWC were drawing away some of their Cree and Assiniboiné Indians, was unable to compete with Chaboillez at the mouth of the Rat River that season.³⁵² Possibly Racette had worked for a Canadian concern previous to this date, but there is no documentation about his

³⁵⁰ W.R. Wood and T.D.Thiessen, *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1985, 1987: 43-44. Menard lived with the Mandans and David Thompson observed that he was "in every respect as a Native", i.e. an Indianized Frenchman.

³⁵¹ This could have been George Racette who was listed in the NWC Account Book: Fort William and St. Mary's, 1820; HBCA: F.4/25, suggesting he came from Lake Superior. In the Brandon House Journal, his first name is not given; this is common for the voyageurs, thus making it difficult to track their genealogy.

³⁵² Lauren Ritterbush wrongly identified this man as "Picotte" as the first freeman on Red River. The Brandon House Post Journal (B.22/a/5/fo. 5) is difficult to read. It is possible that other freemen who had worked for the South Traders or NWC stayed also. See Scott Hamilton, *The Social Organization of the HBC...*: 83-84.

background. The resistance of the Orkney servants to the authority of a French trader underlines the disadvantage that French Canadians and French Métis would have in the future working for the HBC. Their social mobility was limited by their language, ethnic identity and religion and they only rarely achieved the level of postmaster.

McKay noted in the Brandon House post journal that Racette decided to spend the winter on Red River anyway; and insisted that he have a gun for subsistence hunting and personal protection. Although women are rarely mentioned in the fur traders' journals, readers can infer that Racette probably had a native wife and family who helped him survive away from the posts. A native family was obviously an indispensable asset for a freeman. Although this Racette's name does not reappear as a later trader in Red River, the family name was a well-known Métis name in Red River for most of the 19th century; if he wintered on the Red River in 1796-97, he was likely the patriarch of this well-known Métis family.³⁵³

2a) Competition and HBC Expansion Inland

When his Orkneymen refused to follow Racette to Pembina, John McKay appointed John Richards, another Brandon House country born man who was bilingual, to lead the Pembina

³⁵³ There are sixteen men by the name of "Racette" in *The Genealogy of the First Métis Nation* edited by D.N. Sprague and R.P. Frye. The earliest listed in Table 1 was #4146, Augustin Racette, "European/Canadian", meaning "non-Aboriginal", born in born in 1796. This Augustin was probably a son of the "Ricette" hired by McKay and he probably had an Aboriginal mother. As noted, his first name was not documented. Margaret Clarke, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community of the Assiniboine Basin: 1793-1812*, MA Thesis, University of Winnipeg, 1997: 4-80, note 33. Edith Burley, *Servants of the Honourable Company*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997: 228. Burley called him "a Canadian master" and did not attempt to transcribe McKay's spelling of the name. Burley cites Brandon House post journal, B.22/a/4: fo. 19-19d, November 19-20, 1796.

HBC post.³⁵⁴ Since the Canadian competition all spoke French, this was an asset as well as Aboriginal languages. While the men at Brandon House originally came via Albany Factory, they may have spoken Swampy Cree and picked up some Assiniboiné at Brandon, but they would not have encountered the Ojibwe in great numbers who were generally east of Red River at this time or following the traders north up Lake Winnipeg and along the Saskatchewan; see Figure 4b.³⁵⁵ These HBC newcomers at Brandon would have been at a disadvantage when competing with Canadian traders on Red River at Pembina who knew Ojibwe (Saulteaux) and may have had an Ojibwe wife and relations. At first glance, it might appear that Charles Chaboillez and his French Canadian voyageurs were more experienced and capable of dealing with the Red River Valley Ojibwe Indians than the Orkneymen and Country-Born from Albany and Brandon House.

³⁵⁴ Hamilton wrote that McKay observed that the two Brandon House men who agreed to serve under "Ricette" were John and Tom Richards, "two Country Born men of great experience who were likely in the best position to assess Ricette's unquestioned qualifications and experience as a trader. Clearly, the Orcandian labourers retained no small prejudice against French Canadian (or Roman Catholic) officers despite the fact that they were serving with French Canadian labourers." *The Social Organization of the Hudson's Bay Company*: 84.

³⁵⁵ Peers cites the Brandon House post journal in 1794 re: trade of the Ottawa, John Tanners' adopted group, and related by language and culture to the Ojibwe; she also cites William Tomison at Edmonton House in March 1798 reporting on the "Bungee Indians", HBC nomenclature for the Ojibwe. The trading occurrences of the Ojibwe and Ottawa in the Brandon House area was not my subject of study, but I would question that they were there in great numbers in the 1790s, based on Tanner's narrative which suggested their trade hinterland ranged from Rainy Lake to the Upper Assiniboiné basin; they moved around a lot in this period. See Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press: 32. *A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*, ed. Edwin James, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1830, 1956. Apparently McKay was worried about Canadian competition in Red River in 1796 and intended to counter it by sending in HBC men to Pembina.

While Chaboillez was busy at River Salle (south of Pembina; now the Forest River)³⁵⁶, negotiating with Vincent Roy in the fall of 1797, Thomas Miller, an Orkneyman, arrived from Brandon House under orders from John McKay to replace “Mr. Richards” who had defected to Chaboillez.³⁵⁷ The Nor’Wester was a tough competitor and assigned some of his “people” to follow “the English”. They would go right to the Indians’ tents and offer better terms.³⁵⁸ The French called this system of going to the Indian camps to collect the furs *en déroutine* and John Foster credited the Canadians with pioneering it to take the furs before they could be traded to the competition.³⁵⁹ They may have invented it in Quebec, along the Ottawa, and around the Great Lakes before taking to the North West. Chaboillez in his journal portrayed poor HBC

³⁵⁶ There were two “Rivières Salle”: one in North Dakota and one in Manitoba. The latter, a.k.a. “Sale” is a tributary of the Red River from the west whose mouth is at present-day St. Norbert on the southern edge of Winnipeg. The Pembina traders like Chaboillez and Henry sent their men to the Indian families trapping along the tributaries both north and south. The “Salle” in North Dakota was called in English the “Salt” River or Forest River, just south of Henry’s Park River Post. Roy’s trading post was just south of this tributary. See the map in Gough, v. 1: PEMBINA POSTS AND RED RIVER: 1799-1808, between pages 8-9; Toronto: Champlain Society: 1988.

³⁵⁷ Chaboillez’ Journal, 1797-98, ed. Harold Hickerson, *Ethnohistory* 6:3: Summer 1959: 287; November 12, 1797. “Mr. Miller from River La Sourie arrived during my absence to take charge of the Post that Mr. Richards had left, he saw part of the Indians in the Montragne on his way coming...” This suggests that Miller travelled overland from the Souris River via the Hair Hills and down the Pembina River. It was safer to travel along the Assiniboine, but a longer route.

³⁵⁸ Chaboillez’ Journal, 1797-98: p. 288: November 12: 1798: “The Grand Coquin Bands was with Wiscanjack & Band [of] Indians from River la Biche, they [Chaboillez’ men] followed Mr. Miller who went to that Band - Sauvé and Belaire went to the Carpe Rouges Tents”.

³⁵⁹ John Foster, “The Plains Metis”, in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, ed. Bruce Morrison & Roderick Wilson, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart: 1986: 382.

trader Thomas Miller as an inexperienced neophyte who had problems dealing with his customers. For example, on December 1, he noticed:

Mr. Miller who was with three Men was Pillaged of Twelve Quarts Spirits One New Gun & a couple Blankets, & very near being Killd.³⁶⁰

The Indians did not hesitate to play one trader off against another. When Chaboillez refused to give them “a large Keg Mixd Rum” and told them to go hunt some more beaver:

They were very much Displeased - in the Evening they all went to the English & prevailed on Mr. Miller to avoid Quarrels, he having but few Men with him and all out in the Prairie - he gave them 24 Pints Mixd Rum - & on their living [leaving] the House they robbed him of a New Gun”.³⁶¹

On another occasion, January 7, 1798, the Old Courtre Oreille arrived with Sauvé, one of the Canadian voyageurs, and wanted some rum. When Chaboillez refused to give it to her, “she went off to the English”.³⁶² Miller persisted and returned to Pembina for several more seasons and was still there when Alexander Henry, Pembina’s most famous diarist, arrived in the fall of 1801.

The fact is that Miller was not such a neophyte from the shores of James Bay at Albany Factory. He was an experienced labourer with the HBC who had helped establish the interior thrust of the HBC from Albany to Brandon in 1793, an exercise undertaken by the HBC to counter the competition of the Canadian traders. Anthropologist Scott Hamilton, who studied the social structure of the HBC at Brandon House and analyzed the salary scale, described Miller as a competent senior labourer whose “career epitomized the rise to authority that many labourers

³⁶⁰ Chaboillez’ Journal, p. 288.

³⁶¹ Chaboillez’ Journal, p. 291, December 13, 1797.

³⁶² Chaboilez’ Journal, p. 365.

aspired to.” After being in charge at Osnaburgh House, on the route from Albany to the Winnipeg River (see Figure 4b), and being summer man at Brandon House, Miller was given the leadership of the Red River post at Pembina under the supervision of the Brandon Master to compete with Chaboillez after McKay’s plan to hire Racette fell through and after John Richards deserted to the NWC.³⁶³

Miller was not inexperienced in the interior either as he had been at Brandon for four seasons and had made several trips to the Missouri and Mandan villages from Brandon House in 1795-96. This was a dangerous undertaking because of the threat of Indian attacks and horsestealing, and Miller demonstrated his ability to successfully complete these challenging trip missions.³⁶⁴ If Miller complained about the difficulty of competing *en dérouine* with the Canadians, it was not because of his own incompetence, which Chaboillez’s text suggested, but because he was badly outnumbered and could not get the furs to justify his wintering on Red River. For example, on May 1, 1798, he despaired: “Murray arrived...and says the band has stoped all the indents to arrive till they traded all there furs as I have neither goods or liquor worth mentioning I can get nothing - not there debts or anything else.”³⁶⁵

³⁶³ Scott Hamilton, *The Social Organization of the Hudson’s Bay Company: Formal and Informal Social Relations in the Context of the Inland Fur Trade*, Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta, 1985: 140. For Hamilton’s description of the refusal of the Brandon men to follow Ricette to Pembina, see p. 83-84. Their reason was that they did not speak French and would have had to rely on John Richards as interpreter.

³⁶⁴ W.R. Wood & T.D. Thiessen, *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains*: 59, 65 and the Appendix listing trips to the Mandan by British traders. Their source was the Brandon House Journals for the 1790s, HBCA.

³⁶⁵ HBCA: Pembina Post Journals on Red River, B.235/a/1/ fo. 9d.

Foster argued that the emergence of the Plains Metis grew out of the *en dérrouine* system of the NWC whereby partners supplied “small parties of men with goods to go en derouine with bands of Indians “pounding” buffalo in the parkland during the winter months”.³⁶⁶ He linked these trips with the development of the pemmican provisioning niche which gave the freemen a *raison d’être* and their own niche in the fur trade. Foster thought that it was the *Bourgeois* who did the trading, but actually most of the voyageurs went outside the post as well; there was no class distinction. The Chaboillez Journal for 1797-98 suggests that the purpose of the *en dérrouine* trips was mainly to collect furs. December 15, 1797: “the Indians were all arived & he left Dubois to go & pass the Winter with them to take care of their Skins”. The Indians were hunting for provisions for the post as well: December 7, 1797: “The Corbeau arrived Killd Six Cows which I paid him 18 Skins for in Rum - Sent the People for the Meat.”

In the late 1790s, at Pembina, the voyageurs turned traders were not going to the Plains with the Indians specifically for provisions, but furs; they brought in “beat meat” and grease when available and the “pemetigon” was made at the post, not by freemen on the plains.³⁶⁷ Chaboillez sent pemmican supplies with his men when they went *en dérrouine* so they could survive on the plains away from the post. This cornering of the provisioning niche would not happen for at least another decade, but these Canadian voyageurs were making the transition from men accustomed to the forest (travelling by canoe, and eating wild rice) to learning survival techniques to live on the plains, especially during a harsh Prairie winter. As Foster imagined,

³⁶⁶ Foster: “The Plains Metis”: 382.

³⁶⁷ Chaboillez Journal: April 5, 1798: p. 382: Made 3 Tonneaux [Taureaux] Pimetegan.

when the former voyageurs went *en déroutine*, they sometimes lived with Indian groups, took a wife and traded with her relatives.

During the 1790s, the Canadians with Chaboillez and the South Men learned these plains skills such as using dog sleds to haul their goods, meat and furs; and they obtained clothing made by their Indian wives adapted to plains resources such as long coats [capotes] made of buffalo hide, tipis covered with buffalo hides and good hide mocassins.³⁶⁸ While the HBC men were learning as well, they were outnumbered by great numbers of experienced Canadians from the east meant that they were at a disadvantage. While the inland expansion meant taking the trade directly to their customers, the HBC men had four years experience at Brandon House to prepare them to work with the Plains Cree and Assiniboine. In moving to Pembina, they had to adapt to Ojibwe country; they did not have the manpower to compete with the Indianized Chippeway Frenchmen [*Ojibbeway Waymetegooshewuk*] from Minnesota and Lake Superior, especially because they did not have Ojibwe mothers or wives who could translate for them, and it was a long trip from Albany.

2b) Internal NWC competition between Canadians from Grande Portage and Fond du Lac (the South Men)

The arrival of the "South Traders" at the end of October 1797 came as a big surprise to Chaboillez, suggesting that the left hand did not know what the right hand was doing. However, this is not surprising given that the Canadian traders were exploring the area west of the Great

³⁶⁸ The hide coat on the cover of *Where Two Worlds Meet* is a good example of a Pembina frock coat style made of buffalo hide with quill-work embroidery and beaded fringes. Although it was given to Governor Ramsey at Pembina in 1851, it might have been made earlier. See page 107 for the description.

Lakes and did not have any reliable maps; David Thompson did not come through on his mapping expedition until the spring of 1798. Apparently the partners encouraged the bourgeois to push into new areas with the expertise of Indian and Metis guides as they continually searched for new sources of fur. While the Montreal-based traders from the Great Lakes were pushing through Minnesota in the 1780s and 1790s, the North West partnership was exploring routes from Grand Portage to Winnipeg River and through Lake Nipigon. Experience taught them that the former route was the most practical for heavily-loaded canoes, especially since attacks by the Dakota/Sioux could be more easily avoided.

When Chaboillez arrived on the "River Painbinats" on September 22, 1797, he was not expecting other North West traders to arrive just south of him at the mouth of the "River Salle" [Salt/ Forest River, Minnesota] a month later.³⁶⁹ Thus, the incursions from the Ontario route and the Fond du Lac route met from different directions in the fall of 1797. Although Chaboillez was in charge of the Red River Valley trade, he was also to some extent competing with Cadotte and his men at Red Lake, Red Lake Falls and Roy's House, just north of Grandes Fourches (Grand Forks). This internal competition was partly linked to the old rivalry between South Men from Michilimackinac and Fond du Lac who were challenging the Ontario route through Grande Portage. The NWC dealt with this competition of the South Men by taking most of the wintering partners into their concern. As the geography of the Red River Valley was explored by these immigrants from the Great Lakes, they and their Montreal partners could economize and

³⁶⁹ Journal of Charles Chaboillez, ed. Hickerson: Chaboillez arrived at Pembina on September 22, 1797, p. 279; Roy and Desjaton arrived at River Salle on October 27, p. 280. Chaboillez paid them a visit on November 12, p. 287. Chaboillez offered to send him back to Cadotte, but he begged to stay. The bourgeois sent Chaurette to Pembina for more goods and left a voyageur named Dubois as Roy was short of men.

rationalize the transportation system and avoid unproductive competition between the Canadian traders which was quickly leading to the eradication of the beaver and fur resources.

After consulting with Cadotte by express, Chaboillez agreed to allow Vincent Roy to stay where he was at Roy's Post south of Pembina (see map 3b) and assisted him with supplies and the use of a clerk, Miniclier³⁷⁰, who could read and write as well as another man, Dubois,³⁷¹ but the bourgeois continued to eye these South Traders somewhat suspiciously and viewed their operation as competitive with his own. He may have preferred to act in a friendly manner and offer the services of his own men, so that he could keep an eye on their business and discourage other Indians from trading there. Chaboillez competed with at least three concerns: 1) the English (HBC) under Thomas Miller, 2) the South Men at Roy's and Cadotte's (Red Lake Falls) although they were all under the NWC partnership; and 3) the XYC, whom he called the "Y men", a concern which lasted from 1798 to 1804 led by Sir Alexander Mackenzie.³⁷²

³⁷⁰ This Miniclier may be a man named "Mini" in HBC and Peter Fidler's freeman lists of 1814 and 1819. For example, John Sayer's account book for 1795-97 lists Meneclier on page 18 (HBCA: F.4-1, John Sayer and Company). In Hugh Heney's Pembina account for the HBC, 1811-12, he lists "Ninie" (HBCA: B.160/d/1, Pabina River Accounts). The Pembina Post Journal kept by Heney in 1812-13 lists "Minie" as one of his men (HBCA: B.160/a/4). Peter Fidler's list of 1814 shows him with a wife, a boy and a girl (HBCA: B.235/a/3, p. 59). Sprague & Frye's *Genealogy of the First Metis Nation* lists three men in Table 1 by the name of "Minnie"; Jean Baptiste Minie was categorized as "European" which meant non-Aboriginal and listed as birth date of 1780, putting in the right time period for the South Men and Canadian traders. Since the HBC clerks like Heney and Fidler did not spell French names correctly, it is likely that Meneclier and Mini or Minnie were the same man.

³⁷¹ Chaboillez' Journal, p. 287, November 12 ff.

³⁷² Chaboillez' Journal, p. 291, December 15, 1797: "The Two Y Men preparing to sett off They Traded Ten Wolves gave them each 1 Foot Tobo [Tobacco]...". This company was a combination of Forsyth, Richardson and Company which had been involved in the fur trade out of Detroit and Michilimackinac, Leith Jamieson and Company of Detroit and Parker, Gerrard and Ogilvy which was active around Lake Superior. Mackenzie officially joined in 1802, but

It is possible that some of the South Men who had entered the Red River Valley with earlier traders like Réaume and Cadotte worked for Chaboillez and then became independent traders, like Miniclier who had worked for John Sayer and Company, 1795-97. On June 1, 1798, Chaboillez noted in his journal: "Miniclier and La Pointe paid each six skins on account." Since Miniclier was one of his men mentioned in the journal, he apparently joined the NWC. However, since a man named "Minie" later worked for the HBC and was also a freeman in 1814 (as per Peter Fidler's list) with a wife, a boy and a girl, it appears that Chaboillez allowed his men to do some trading on their own account. This helped them gain the skills they needed to become independent freemen in the next decade. The NWC was less strict than the HBC in controlling their employees' behaviour and encouraged entrepreneurship.

Foster argued that an important ingredient in the freeman culture was the importance of being one's own boss, and not taking orders from a *bourgeois*.³⁷³ Foster observed that the freemen did not like working for others and this ethos not only became a critical ingredient of freemen culture, but also of Métis culture.³⁷⁴ One of the reasons that the original Métis had

may have had representation through a nephew since 1798. This "New North West Company", known as the XY Company, joined the old NWC in 1804. "Historical Introduction", *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, ed. Stewart Wallace, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1934:16-18.

³⁷³ Foster, "The Plains Métis" in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, ed. Morris and Wilson: 384.

³⁷⁴ Compare other sources on the term: the Freeman which is very persistent in Métis History and culture: the title of Diane Payment's book: *Les Gens Libres: Otipemisiwak*: this is a social history of the Métis of Batoche. Emma LaRocque: *Otehpaysuak* - the self-reliant ones; in "Native Identity and the Metis: Otehpaysuak Peoples" in *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st Century*, ed. David Taras & Beverley Rasporich, Canada: Nelson Thomas Learning Centre, 2001: 389. Senator Ed Head, a Sayer descendant, who speaks Michif uses the same Cree word: *Otipimisiwuk*. He was raised in Sheridon, Manitoba; personal communication,

mostly French and High Scots' names was because the Canadian companies like the NWC and XY companies fostered this independent entrepreneurial spirit and cultural identity in their voyageurs and their Métis sons as opposed to the "House Indians" of the HBC which had a more hierarchical social structure.³⁷⁵ This mentality of independence associated with the Canadian voyageurs became an important aspect of Métis identity. Foster said that the influence was not Indian, but European, but I would disagree. The freedom of the Plains Indians, such as the Cree and the Assiniboine, must have been a big influence as well on their assumption of the mantle of "Freemen", along with their material culture which will be examined in Chapter 5.

Foster also pointed out that earlier writers had portrayed the concept of "Indianized Frenchmen" in a negative light; viewed through the lens of racial theory, marrying Indian women and having "Indianized" children suggested that the non-Aboriginal biological inheritance was diminished, because 19th century racial theory linked biology and culture and assumed that Indians were inferior to Europeans and non-Aboriginals like French Canadians. Foster argued that these "Indianized Frenchmen" were not "failed Euro-Canadians" as suggested by scholars like Giraud, but men who chose to adopt the native lifestyles when it was to their advantage to do

St. Norbert Hotel, February 2, 2002.

³⁷⁵ Jennifer Brown noted that the NWC backgrounds were French Canadian and Highland Scots (mostly Catholic) while the HBC men were Protestants from the Orkneys. Thus, the descendants of these companies were different in origin and brought those differences to the Red River Settlement after parishes developed in 1818 and 1820. See "A Parcel of Upstart Scotchmen", *The Beaver* February-March, 1988: 4-11. Also: "Fur Trade as Centrifuge: Familial dispersal and Offspring Identity in Two Company Contexts" in *North American Indian Anthropology: Essays on Society and Culture*, ed. Raymond DeMallie and Alfonso Ortiz, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995:197-219.

so.³⁷⁶ Brown, Van Kirk and Sleeper-Smith have demonstrated the value of a native wife to the fur traders, giving rise to a large population of mixed-culture children in the North West.

John Sayer was another significant South Trader who had previously worked out of Michilimackinac in 1780 and later the Fond du Lac district of the NWC. He was one of the "South Men" who were working their way north, exploring Minnesota from Lake Superior³⁷⁷ and approaching the Red River Valley and the Assiniboine with access to the west. As Duckworth showed, these South Men were competing with the larger NWC concern and ultimately were absorbed by this more powerful company, so men like Sayer were moving in and out of the concern.³⁷⁸ Sayer had a mixed blood Ojibwe wife, Obemaunoqua, who was probably the mother of several sons who stayed in the Red River Valley: Guillaume Sayer, the leader of the Free Trade Movement in the 1840s and John Charles Sayer, a clerk and interpreter in 1815.³⁷⁹ In his will, he acknowledged three "natural" children: Margaret, Henry and James.³⁸⁰ Although

³⁷⁶ Foster, "The Plains Métis", in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*: 384.

³⁷⁷ Sayer biography in Wallace: 497; Duckworth, *The Last Coureur de Bois*, cited Perrault who was in partnership with Sayer in 1789-90, but Sayer went on his own in 1791. In 1793, Sayer, now with the NWC, sent Perrault to establish Fond du Lac, pp. 6-8. A.S. Morton on the "South Men", *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*: 434: South Men were "traders from Michilimackinac who entered the valley of the Mississippi from Lake Superior at Fond du Lac and reached the Red River from the south."

³⁷⁸ Duckworth, *The Last Coureurs de Bois*: 12.

³⁷⁹ "John Sayer", *DCB* vo. 5: 1983: 814. W.L. Morton, "Guillaume Sayer", *DCB*, vol. 7: 1988: 840-841. Guillaume Sayer [William Serre] was buried at Saint Laurent Manitoba August 8, 1868, at age of 75, so his birth was about 1793 when his father was in Minnesota. *John Sayer's Snake River Journal: 1804-1805*, ed. Douglas Birk, 1989: 24-25.

³⁸⁰ Wallace: 497 and Douglas A. Birk, *John Sayer's Snake River Journal: 1804-05*, Minneapolis: Institute for Minnesota Archaeology, 1989:24-25.

Sayer died in Ste. Anne's, Montreal, in 1818, he left native children in the west who were the ancestors of many modern Red River Metis.³⁸¹

As archaeologist Lauren Ritterbush noted, Alexander Henry the Elder's outfit of 1791 (Réaume, Cadotte & Berdash) intended to move the Leech Lake and Sandy Lake Ojibwes to challenge the Dakota in their hunting grounds west of Crow Wing, not possible without the guns and supplies of the traders. In 1791, John Sayer had sent his own men to winter in Minnesota. In 1793, he was Fort St. Louis, just west of the Great Lake.³⁸² In 1795, he had his own company again with Perrault at Lac du Cedre Rouge [Cass Lake] and Vincent Roy at Lac Rouge [Red Lake], the same Roy who would move near Chaboillez on the Red River two years later.³⁸³

Sayer also worked with Sir Alexander McKenzie and the XYC. McKenzie wanted Laviolette to winter for the NWC at Pembina in 1796, but that arrangement fell through when his partnership with Francois Beaubien dit Desrivieres broke down.³⁸⁴ Obviously, the Pembina area was the focus of Red River competition before Chaboillez arrived in 1797. Sir Alexander McKenzie noted in his annual report in June 1799 for the past winter (1798-99) that Sayer and his XY men were pressing the Ojibwe to go farther south, but they refused for fear of the Sioux, as one had been killed the previous winter and another was ill. In 1798-99, Sayer wintered where

³⁸¹ I would like to thank Senator Edward Head, Winnipeg, former President of the Manitoba Metis Federation, for his memories of the Sayer ancestors.

³⁸² Ritterbush, archaeology report on Pembina fur trade: 57.

³⁸³ HBCA: F.4/1, "Messrs. John Sayer & Com, 1795, Accounts": Perrault at Cedre Rouge, Bousquet at Lac du Sable [Sandy Lake] and Lac du Riviere Rouge [Red Lake River] and Vincent Roy was in charge of Lac Rouge [Red Lake].

³⁸⁴ *MacKenzie's Voyages*: 458. Duckworth, *Last Coureurs de Bois*: 11.

Chaboillez had been, at Pembina while the latter supervised the Red River department from Portage la Prairie.

[Sayer] was accompanied from Lac Winipic by Dejadon [Desjardins] and Wills in 3 canoes half-loaded, of the former I have already spoken, the latter Winters at R. Du Milieux [a tributary to the Assiniboine] opposed by one Delorme under the directions of Mr. Chaboillez [NWC], who winters not far away from them at Portage la Prairie. Mr. Sayer is opposed by [blank] and five boats which the HB people from Albany have in that river.³⁸⁵

It is possible that Miniclier worked for John Sayer in the XYZ and then went free when he returned to Lake Superior. Since Miniclier was not mentioned by Henry after 1800, he may have gone free after John Sayer left the area. Account books for the HBC Pembina Post in 1811-12 showed a man named "Minie" or Ninie which may have been Miniclier.³⁸⁶

Thus, with the competition between NWC, XYZ and HBC, the Indians were doing well and often playing one off against another; Chaboillez already complained of this situation. The HBC trader whose goods came from Albany was Thomas Miller who continued at Pembina for several season and Alexander Henry the Younger arrived for the NWC in 1800.³⁸⁷ Henry's first

³⁸⁵ Mackenzie: 480.

³⁸⁶ HBCA: Pabina River Accounts, Hugh Heney, B.160/d/1: 1811-12. He is listed in Peter Fidler's list of Free Canadians in 1814 and 1819 with a wife, a boy and a girl; B.22/e/1. He is also mentioned by Miles McDonnell in his Journal in the Selkirk Papers, copy in PAM.

³⁸⁷ Although Miller obtained his goods from Albany on Hudson Bay which was in competition in the HBC with York Factory, he worked under the supervision of John McKay at Brandon House who could help him out with short-term problems. Albany staff were too far away to help out during a trading season. McKay moved from Lac La Pluie to Brandon House in 1797. See Brandon House Journal, November 5, 1797: HBCA, B.22/a/5. See John McKay's Service Record, HBCA. Point au Foutre House [Fort Alexander] near Bas de la Riviere Winipic was part of the orbit of these posts; October 13, 1798: postmaster Thomas Vincent "sent a letter to Mr. Miller at River Pamponon [Pembina] by two Canadians". HBCA, B.4/a/2, Point au Foutre; the Canadians made fun of this name, suggesting the translation was: "He does damn all".

winter was at Park River, south of Pembina, but the Ojibwe were too fearful of the proximity of the Dakota/Sioux and he built a more imposing stockaded post at the confluence of the Pembina and Red River in the fall of 1801, north of the Pembina from Chaboillez' post. Here he remained with the NWC men until 1808. The competition with the XYC ended at the end of 1804 and, as Hickerson and Peterson noted, many of the unemployed voyageurs who were mainly French Canadian and metis in background, took to the plains as "freemen".³⁸⁸ The freemen must have been good competitors because Henry did not have a good word to say about them: "Those freemen are a nuisance in the country and generally a parcel of scoundrels. I never yet found an honest man amongst them."³⁸⁹

3) Chaboillez and the NWC Material Culture and Trade Practices, 1797-98

Chaboillez and the North West Company traders dominated the Pembina trade and Chaboillez' journal provides details of the adaptation of material culture from a forest environment to a plains adaptation. Peterson linked it to the influence of the Assiniboine "whose plains lifeways served as a model" for future freemen and Métis culture. The NWC post at Pembina in 1797 was typical of a smaller post of that era and is the only one about which we have information.³⁹⁰ The plan of the NWC contained a stockade surrounding four buildings: 1) a "Big House" for ten men; 2) one for "us", Chaboillez' family; 3) the Desjardais' house for four

³⁸⁸ Peterson, "Gathering at the River: The Métis Peopling of the Northern Plains", in *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, ed. Virginia Heidenreich, 1990: 53.

³⁸⁹ Henry, Coues: 151.

³⁹⁰ Peterson described three types of posts in the Great Lakes: 1) the large trading centre, like Michilimackinac, 2) the smaller trading centre and 3) the hamlets. "The People in Between: Indian-White Marriage & the Genesis of a Metis Society & Culture in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1830", Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, 1981: 106.

people, suggesting he had a wife and children and 4) a "Little House". From this base camp, the bourgeois organized the distribution of trap lines, probably in consultation with the senior Indian hunters like Le Sucre, Le Boeuf, and Old Manomine, and assigned his men to collect the furs. Sometimes, the Indians brought in their "skins" and other times they sent a messenger for men to come and collect them from their cache. Usually on these occasions, the hunter made a present of some extra skins to the trader who provided him with some alcohol for a "boisson", or drinking party.

Old Manomine and Two Young men arrived from above they left the Sucre with Ten Men in the River Salle - and had a large Cache of Provisions at the entrance of that River which he begd to send for - gave them each a Dram & a foot Tobo [Tobacco] the Old Man made a present of four Dressed Skins & Six Beavers for which I gave Him 2 Gallons Rum & the Boisson Begun - expentd [sic] mostly a large Keg Sans Dessein.³⁹¹

"Sans Dessein" implied that there were no trade good obtained and that the liquor was part of a ritual exchange; i.e. there was no credit and no obligation to pay the trader back.³⁹² If the trader did not respect the Indian customs, his customers would take their business to his "neighbour" as they often threatened and played one trader off against another.

Alcohol was mentioned frequently in the journals and was used to reward good trappers, but the patterns of drinking were different for the newcomers who did not write about it in their journals. The Indians went without while they were away from the post and then went on a binge when they returned with their skins to the post; the traders were probably tippling on a daily basis and Chaboillez often gave him men "a dram" either to stimulate them before a journey or reward

³⁹¹ Chaboillez' Journal, September 26, 1797, p. 280. These Indians were stationed at the Salt River or River Salle where Roy and Dejadon would arrive on October 27 and build.

³⁹² Bruce White, "Give Us a Little Milk", *Minnesota History* 48/2: 60-71.

them when they returned. "Roy & Côté arrived from above [Roy's Fort on Salle River] they brought letters from Mssrs Cadotte & Sayer gave the latter a Dram & 1/2 fath: Tobacco."³⁹³

Although the traders were often disturbed at the violence which resulted from the binges, competition encouraged them to keep providing various kinds of liquor which was popular with their customers.

While the voyageurs had to be expert canoe men to get hired and make the trips inland to their posts, they were then required to do whatever the bourgeois ordered for the good of the trade and the survival of the traders. This included labouring jobs, such as building the post, and going *en déroutine*, leaving the post to travel to the Indians' tents to collect the furs and hunting with them on the plains when the food supplies were short, especially from about January to April. When they arrived in the fall, the newcomers must have relied on their Indian guides and more experienced French friends to learn the skills of hunting on foot:

Desjardais & Six men sett off to go & fetch the Cache...Desired Desjardais to walk Two Days in the Prairies as they were up the River, & that the English intended to send up to them." (September 27, 1797)³⁹⁴

Since Desjardais and his men could not find these Indians, the "People from above arrived the Cache belonging to Old Manomine & the Sucre they brought except their Medicine Bags".

Chaboillez kept the skins, meat and grease.³⁹⁵ In this case, the Indians came in with the men from Roy's fort, but, when the voyageurs went "en déroutine" to the Indians, they had

³⁹³ Chaboillez' Journal, January 23, 1798, p. 369.

³⁹⁴ Chaboillez' Journal: 280.

³⁹⁵ Chaboillez Journal: 281, October 3, 1797.

opportunities to meet the young Indian women and form alliances which would provide them with both a family life and trade advantages.

These passages show that at this time, the Indians west of Pembina were doing most of the buffalo hunting because the hunters on the east side of the Red were used to forested areas and hunting animals such as moose and elk. Buffalo were not common in the forested areas of Minnesota where the Ojibwe felt at home. On December 7, 1797, Chaboillez observed that "the Corbeau arrived Killd Six Cows which I paid him Eighteen Skins for in Rum - Sent the People for the Meat".³⁹⁶ The Ojibwe did not have many horses and neither did the traders, so, when they made winter trips to the plains to hunt, they travelled by dog sled. Chaboillez would hire an Indian hunter who would track down some buffalo and then send his French Canadian and Metis out to bring it back. As the winter progressed and they were short of food, the bourgeois sent more men to the prairies to hunt buffalo. On January 21, 1798, he noted: "Sent the People for the Meat - Bertrand & Desjardaix returned the former from Hunting Killd Six Cows a Days Journey from this and the latter from the Montagne" where he went to collect furs and seven large bladders of bear grease, useful for medicine and cooking.³⁹⁷ The next day, he hired Challifoux to hunt "being very Short of Provisions - gave him Two Mea: Powder & 50 Balls - Challoux gone with him to hunt - gave him the same quantity of Amunition, the Buffaloe is at a Days Journey from this - gave them each a Dram & they sett off."³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ Chaboillez Journal, 289.

³⁹⁷ Chaboillez' Journal, p. 368.

³⁹⁸ Chaboillez' Journal, p. 369, January 22, 1798. Hickerson thought that Challifoux was a Chippewa that Chaboillez met between Grand Portage and Rainy Lake, note 77, p. 309. It seems more likely that he was of mixed background with a French father, but raised as a

By the beginning of March 1798, the men were desperate for meat and Chaboillez blamed the Indians for running the buffalo and driving them away from Pembina. This was a mistake repeated twenty years later by the Selkirk Settlers under Miles Macdonell and probably resulted in the Metis and Scots learning how to hunt in groups governed by strict communal rules, a trademark of the Metis buffalo hunt a few decades later.

4) Indianized Frenchmen: Identifying Pembina voyageurs

Chaboillez' journal provides names of these NWC voyageurs who became the fathers of future generations of Metis buffalo hunters and their families. My purpose in studying these early journals of Pembina traders and Indian trader John Tanner is to identify their voyageurs by name and to see what can be identified about their background from archival and genealogical sources. It is not possible to examine all these precursors of the Pembina Métis in the detail that Edward Jerome researched his own ancestors, the Jerome and Collin families, but it is possible to learn more about the lower-level woodsmen who became "Indianized Frenchmen" and made the transition from voyageur to buffalo hunter to freemen in the Red River Valley in the 1790s.

Charles Chaboillez' journal from 1797-98 provides modern readers with the earliest published post journal from the Pembina fur trade, but the tendency to include only surnames complicates the identification process, especially in trying to determine the ethnic background of the labourer and whether he had Aboriginal ancestry. Using the surnames does not preclude an Aboriginal mother or grandmother, so that a French name is not a definite marker of French or French Canadian (i.e. non-Aboriginal) ancestry. Most historians have made the assumption that

Chippewa/Ojibwe, like one of John Tanner's sons. His first name was Ignace, see September 28, 1797, Chaboillez' Journal, p. 280.

a French name indicated a non-Aboriginal voyageurs, but it is obvious with more documentation that there were more men of mixed-ancestry like Réaume and Cadotte than previously thought. On the other hand, it is just as unrealistic to assume like Peterson that all the voyageurs with French names were already Métis. The only way to determine ethnicity and racial background is to provide the documentation on individual families, impossible with a large-scale study.³⁹⁹

In studying Peter Fidler's 1814 list of "Free Canadians, with their Indian wife and their Children of both sexes living with them, residing on the Red River, February, 1814", it is important to note that 43 names are included in the major category: "at the Forks and Pembina", suggesting that they may have had gardens and log cabins at both places, or lived at one and hunted at the other; the list hints at mobility between the two places although there was no known post at the Forks until 1810. There is also a significant note in the margin: 10 Canadians and their families. Of the remaining 30 names, most are French; a few exceptions like Angus McDonell were Canadians who had native families and probably spoke French. McKay cannot be identified without a first name. This suggests that the 25 remaining French names were "Indianized Frenchmen" who not only had Indian wives, but Indian mothers. Apparently, Fidler did not use the term "Free Canadians" as a racial designation. Perhaps he listed the Canadian men separately, suggesting that they came from Quebec like Hamlin, Marsolait, and

³⁹⁹ Sprague and Frye's *Genealogy of the First Metis Nation* has been criticized for such assumptions in the first generations of Métis fathers who were assumed to be "European" and "born in Canada". Augustin Racette, born in 1796, is a good example. #282, Alexis Bercier, was listed as a Canadian born in 1771. This information is based on Red River census of 1870 and halfbreed affidavits, but sometimes families did not always volunteer correct information on their family's ethnic background in the 1870s because of anti-Métis discrimination or because of lack of knowledge. Children might not have known all their grandparents and their ethnic identity. The number of voyageurs with Aboriginal background was probably larger than most historians assume using the surname as the only indicator without detailed genealogical research.

“Lajimonière”. Possibly the others came from the Great Lakes and had been in the fur trade for several generations like the Collins at Thunder Bay. It is obvious from this list that most of the Red River freemen of 1814 had French names, but the majority were not designated “Canadians”. What were they? They were not designated Métis as Peterson suggested, but she is probably right that they were voyageurs who had Indian background and had left company service to support their families in the provisioning trade where they provided an entrepreneurial service and had a relationship of mutual dependency with the posts that they served. It was the best of both worlds. They did not have to take orders from a boss, they could hunt and provide a living for their families and there were enough of them to provide military protection for the settlement from the Sioux. But 1814 was 16 years after Chaboillez left the Pembina post and in that time a new generation of young men were growing up in the new lifestyle and culture. The freemen families that were identified by Fidler in 1814 were only starting out in 1798 with new Indian wives and only a few young children.

Confusion over names is immediately obvious in studying Chaboillez’ journal to determine the identity of his voyageurs. For example, in the social hierarchy of the NWC Pembina Post, the *bourgeois*, Charles Chaboillez, had his own house as did his assistant, Desjardais. The identity of this latter clerk is difficult to determine because the trader did not often mention first names, a common problem with the fragmentary nature of evidence of the earliest voyageurs. When the South Traders arrived October 27, 1797 and built “Roy’s fort” near the Salt (Forest) River, Roy’s assistant was identified as “Desjadon”; these two (Desjardais and Desjadon) can be distinguished by the spelling, but the name in French for both is “Desjardins”. To further complicate the scene, Chaboillez had a voyageur at his Pembina Post named “Roy”

who was probably younger and less experienced than the man sent by Jean Baptiste Cadotte at Red Lake Falls to establish this auxiliary post on Red River.⁴⁰⁰ Jean Baptiste Roy was probably younger and inexperienced while Vincent Roy, from the Fond du Lac department, was one of the "South Traders" who was the senior.⁴⁰¹

The first names of the Desjardins are not known, but this was a common name in the early fur trade. A "Dejadon" had been with Réaume at Portage la Prairie on the Assiniboine in 1794; was Laviolette's clerk in the Swan River district in 1795-96 and with Roy and Chaboillez in 1797-98. He was later with John Sayer and John Wills at Pembina; a "De Jardin" was with the XYC at Reed (Roseau) Lake in 1804 and Henry described a "Desjardins" as a "freeman" in 1805.⁴⁰²

⁴⁰⁰ Chaboillez' Journal, p. 279, September 23, 1797: "Challoux Dubois, Chaurette, Roy and Bercier sett off a Hunting. This was a month before Roy established the post at River Salle.

⁴⁰¹ Coues, editor of Henry's journal, listed possible Roys in a note on pages 186-187 and Vincent was a voyageur and interpreter in the Fond du Lac district in 1799 and 1804. Jean Baptiste Roy was at Fort Gibraltar when it was seized by Colin Robertson in 1816. Grace Lee Nute includes Roy's Fort as #41 on her inventory, but does not identify him by name. "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-Trading Area, 1660-1855", *Minnesota History* 1930: 367. Hickerson, editor of Chaboillez' Journal, identifies the Roy who came to the River Salle as Vincent Roy, p. 306, footnote 60. He cites Perrault stating that Roy was in opposition to l'Etang who was in opposition to Cadotte at Red Lake Falls. This was in 1798 when David Thompson visited him., see Richard Glover, ed., *David Thompson's Narrative, 1784-1812*, Toronto: Champlain Society, pp. 185-188. Thompson arrived at Chaboillez' post at Pembina on March 14, 1798; on March 21, he came to Roy's or Leroy's, 45.5 miles south; on March 25, visited Baptiste Cadotte. See Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA: F.4/1): John Sayer's accounts for 1795-97 lists his men, including Vincent and Jean Baptiste Roy.

⁴⁰² See Henry, Coues: 269. Duckworth, *The Last Coureurs de Bois*, Beaver: Spring 1984: 10 and 11. Chaboillez' Journal: 284. With John Sayer at Pembina: *Mackenzie's Voyages*: 480. As an XY freeman, 1805-06, Coues: 268-269. He was killed by the Sioux August 13, 1813 and he left a widow, boy and girl. See Peter Fidler's List of Free Canadians, HBCA: B.235/a/3 (1M153), 1814. His widow married Highlander Angus McDonald, brother of John McDonald of Garth, who was a voyageur with Henry. See PAM, Selkirk Papers, Miles McDonell's Journal,

Whether these South Traders, Roy and Desjardins, were the same person as the one who arrived with Roy at the “River Salle” in 1797 or who worked as Chaboillez’s second-in-command is impossible to determine without more documentation, but circumstantial evidence suggests these “Desjardins” (assistants to both Chaboillez and Roy) had extensive experience at trading in the Red River Valley. Jean Baptiste Desjardins, a Métis born in 1799 and Antoine Desjardins (1803-62; probably Métis) born in the North West Territories were probably sons of one of the above.⁴⁰³ If the same Desjardins had come in from Lake Superior with Réaume in the early 1790s, he obviously would have brought a great deal of practical experience of use to his bourgeois, but, even if he were of mixed ancestry, he did not immediately separate himself from the French Canadian culture.

Many of the voyageurs who came from the Great Lakes area in the 1790s were of mixed background, but they had either adopted the culture of their French Canadian fathers from Quebec or they grew up with their Indian mothers and their relatives and lived like Indians. Mixed blood men like Joseph Réaume and Jean Baptiste Cadotte seemed to identify with their fathers’ ethnicity despite their mixed background because they worked as traders and did not live with the Indians. We have no information about their Indian wives and children. Although they exhibited some of the characteristics of *métissage*, they did not yet articulate a separate ethnicity.

It was in the early 1800s while living in the Red River Valley and on the fringes of plain and parkland (close to the bison resource) that the voyageurs became freemen, adopted a plains

April 6, 1814.

⁴⁰³ *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation*, ed. Sprague and Frye, Table 1: #1262, Antoine Desjardins, married Isabelle Lambert, Metis. #1278, Jean Baptiste Desjardins, Metis, married Marguerite Hamelin, Metis. Their fathers’ names are not listed.

lifestyle and developed the expertise to access plains' resources. Because the fur trader journals do not identify "Métis" per se, it seems presumptuous to call the French Canadian voyageurs by that name, as Jacqueline Peterson did.⁴⁰⁴ Nevertheless, it is possible to identify some of the fathers of the Métis of the next decade from voyageur lists and to observe them making the transition from voyageur to buffalo hunter, one of the prerequisites to Métis identity formation. It was basically by adopting the horse culture of the Assiniboines and Plains Cree and becoming freemen, separate from the Canadians and the Indians, that was the crucible of the new culture. The next chapter on the Pembina fur trade will focus on that transition from voyageur to buffalo hunter to freeman.

Since the Ojibwe and the fur traders moving west did not have many horses in the 1790s and early 1800s, it probably took a few years to refine these skills. Furthermore, many of the Metis who developed the buffalo-hunting economy and the cart trains to Saint Paul and the northwest were Cree in background and descended from traders who had been along the North Saskatchewan and points north. The demise of the XY Company in 1804 did result in unemployment for many voyageurs who took to the plains with their families. The children of the voyageurs from this earlier period who were born in the 1790s (during Chaboillez' time) and 1800s (Henry's tenure) were young adults by 1815 and developed their plains skills which were

⁴⁰⁴ For example, Peterson wrote: "The horse gave the Métis too much freedom....The spirited independence and colorful gear of the Assiniboin proved as enticing to the Métis as their use of horses." There is nothing in Henry's descriptions that precluded these voyageurs from being French Canadian. These "Indianized Frenchmen" adopted some aspects of native dress, but the pipe, carts, trade goods and sash were part of French Canadian material culture. Henry does not include examples of speech. If these voyageurs were talking a mixed language of French and Ojibwe, they might have had Indian mothers, but this is only speculative. Peterson, "Gathering at the River: the Métis Peopling of the Northern Plains": 52-53. Most of the ethnic markers which Peterson claimed were "Métis" could also have been from Quebec.

necessary for the Red River Metis culture and economy. So Hickerson was correct to suggest that the demise of the XYC in 1804 was a significant date in the evolution of Métis consciousness because the amalgamation of companies led to lay-offs and the development of the freemen communities. But were there antecedents to these XYC freemen in the 1790s?

Chaboillez mentions approximately 39 voyageurs and traders that he encountered in the fur trade, mostly at Pembina (see Appendix). An analysis of the French names shows that most of them worked as voyageurs and labourers at the post, while a few might have been living with the Indians. Although the majority of NWC “bourgeois” were Scottish, Chaboillez himself was French Canadian whose father had been born at Michilimackinac, so he came from a family of Great Lakes traders.⁴⁰⁵

Tanner mentioned that he spent the another winter hunting for a trader called *Aneeb* “which means an elm tree” who was based at Portage la Prairie, but also traded in the Pembina Hills (between the Red River on the east and the Souris River on the west). This must have been a French trader named *Delorme* which translates into “elm”.⁴⁰⁶ The fact that Delorme/Aneeb had an Ojibwe name suggests he was on good terms with the local people as Tanner usually called the traders by their European names. And there were subsequently many Delormes in Red River who could trace their ancestry back to *Aneeb*. If Aneeb was French Canadian, he was probably

⁴⁰⁵ Gratien Allaire wrote the biographies of both father and son, in volume 5, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, University of Toronto/Laval, 1983; son, Charles Chaboillez (1772-1812), pp. 177-178. His father is Charles-Jean Baptiste Chaboillez (1736-1808), pp. 178-9.

⁴⁰⁶ Tanner, p. 64. Thanks to Lacey Sanders for figuring out the translation of Aneeb to Delorme. Personal communication.

Francois Delorme (1767-1847) whose Indian wife was Charlotte (1775-1835).⁴⁰⁷ He was probably also the same Delorme who was Chaboillez' assistant in 1797-98. Chaboillez left him in charge of the Pembina Post when he went upstream to visit the "South Traders", Roy and "Desjadon" [Desjardins].⁴⁰⁸ He was later one of Henry's lieutenants with a Post at the Hair Hills, probably where Tanner traded with him, an important source of Pembina fur returns about thirty miles west of the main post at the mouth of the Pembina River. He had been a voyageur with the Lower Red River Department since 1799, but was a freeman by 1814.⁴⁰⁹

Tanner called some of the traders with French names and native background *Ojibbeway Waymetegoosheshewug* which translates to "The Chippeway Frenchmen". This term suggests the concept of "Indianized Frenchman" and was applied to the French traders from Quebec and the Great Lakes.⁴¹⁰ The bicultural nature of the term suggests that some of these voyageurs, like Joseph Cadotte and Francois Nolin were of mixed ancestry, probably from the Great Lakes

⁴⁰⁷ D.N. Sprague & R.P. Frye, *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation*, Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983, Table 1.

⁴⁰⁸ "Journal of Charles Chaboillez: 1797-1798", ed. Harold Hickerson, *Ethnohistory* 6:3, Summer 1959: 284, October 27: "Quiniss & Maccathy Counoye arrived...informed me that the South Traders naming Roy & Desjadon were arrived at the River Salle..." Chaboillez went to visit the South Traders on November 12 and, when he returned to Pembina, he found "Delorme with Two Men & very short of Provisions". Delorme had been left in charge while Chaboillez was at the River Salle. See page 187: November 12, 1797.

⁴⁰⁹ Henry's journal, Coues, p. 172, Gough, p. 259. See Henry's employee lists for 1804-1805. See Masson, vol. 1: and Coues' note on Delormes in the fur trade, p. 193. Henry sent "Mr. Delorme" to Portage la Prairie to summer in 1804, "no doubt the same as the Delorme of the above text." See Peter Fidler's List of Free Canadians: Delorme, wife, 3 boys and 3 girls and Delorme Jr, B.235/a/3 (1M153).

⁴¹⁰ Tanner, p. 72.

area.⁴¹¹ French Canadians had been trading into the Great Lakes area for a century at this point, and inter-marrying with Ojibwe women. Like Jean Baptiste Cadotte, the son of the Saulte Ste. Marie trader, they spoke both French and native languages and understand the protocols and motivations of either side in the fur trade gave them advantage in the diplomatic necessities of fur trade experience. David Thompson observed in 1798 that Cadotte at Red Lake Falls post had been educated in Quebec and spoke his native language, Ojibwe, along with Latin, French and English. "I had long wished to meet a well educated native, from whom I could derive sound information for I was well aware that neither myself, nor any other Person I had met with, who was not a Native, were sufficiently masters of the Indian Languages".⁴¹²

⁴¹¹ Sprague & Frye: Table 1: #613 Joseph Cadotte born in 1813, the husband of P. Chartrand, born in 1815, was probably the son of Laurent Cadotte, a Metis born in 1786 and Betsy William[s], and grandson of Laurent Cadotte from Canada born in 1758. The Red River branch of the family through Laurent was probably related to the Minnesota branch of the Cadottes who descended from Jean Baptiste Cadotte (1723-1803) and an Ojibwe wife, Anastasie. Jean Baptiste was at the Sault before 1751 during the French regime and later a partner of Alexander Henry Sr. in the 1760s; went up with him to the Fort des Prairies on the North Saskatchewan in 1775 to open up the northern trade. His two sons, J.B. Jr and Michel, were raised and educated in Montreal. See Wallace, *Documents*, biographies of Jean Baptiste Cadotte and his sons, pp. 428-9. Theresa Schenck, "The Cadottes: Five Generations of Fur Traders on Lake Superior" in *The Fur Trade Revisited: Selected Papers of the Sixth North American Fur Trade Conference, Mackinac Island, Michigan, 1991*, ed. by Jennifer S.H. Brown, W.J. Eccles, and Donald P. Heldman, Michigan State University Press, 1994: 189-198. Schenck does not make the link from Minnesota to Red River, but it is likely that some of Jean Baptiste's grandsons traded into the Red River Valley and met up with their Canadian cousins. A grandson of younger son Michel was William Warren, the mixed-blood Ojibwe historian. Francois Nolin was the son of Jean Baptiste Nolin (1777-1819) of Sault Ste. Marie who moved to Pembina in 1819 according to W.S. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, p. 489. Francois probably had an Ojibwe mother like the Cadottes, but Wallace did not document the maternal line of the Nolins. According to Roderick McKenzie's list of 1799, Francois Nolin was at Fort Dauphin; see "Reminiscences" by Hon. Roderick McKenzie, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, ed. L.R. Masson, vol. II, New York: Antiquarian Press, 1960: 62.

⁴¹² *David Thompson's Narrative*, ed. Richard Glover, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1962:188.

In discussing the good relations between French Canadian traders and Ojibwe women, mixed blood Ojibwe historian William Warren suggested that “they respected their religious rites and ceremonies, and they “never laughed” at their superstitious beliefs and ignorance. They fully appreciated, and honored accordingly, the many noble traits and qualities possessed by these bold and wily hunters of the forest”. They also married Ojibwe women and had large families and French family names are still very common on Ojibwe reserves from Wisconsin and Minnesota through northwestern Ontario and Manitoba.⁴¹³

As a result, French Canadian voyageurs and traders gained a reputation for being on more amicable terms with local Indians than their British counterparts, but the fact is that Orkneymen from Scotland were just as likely to take a native wife and raised mixed-blood children, especially when the British company moved inland in the 1780s.⁴¹⁴ One of Miller’s “servants” (lower-ranked HBC employee like a voyageur] was John Easter, an Inuit, and Easterville,

⁴¹³ Warren’s comments on Ojibwe-French relations are on pages 131-133. He cites Michel Cadotte, Jean Baptiste’s brother, “who is now the oldest man of mixed Ojibway and French blood in the northwest” as a source. “I have obtained much reliable information, corroborating with that obtained from the Indians themselves.” William Warren, *History of the Ojibwe People*, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1984. Observations on French Ojibwe names on American and Canadian “Chippewa” reserves is by Swan, personal observation.

⁴¹⁴ Jennifer Brown wrote: “In certain respects, the HB Orkneymen and the French voyageurs were comparable; by the later eighteenth century, each group dominated its company numerically, providing inexpensive labour in lower ranks. But....the Orkneymen entered an organization in which greater upward mobility and occupational diversity were possible.” *Strangers in Blood*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1980: 47. My interpretation is that French voyageurs were advantaged in their relations with their Indian customers, but disadvantaged by their ethnic backgrounds and were kept in the lower ranks of fur trade companies. This may have spurred their movement into the “freeman” category.

Manitoba, a Metis community in the Interlake region, was named after his descendants.⁴¹⁵ If voyageurs and traders⁴¹⁶ had French or British surnames, it is difficult to document that they had Aboriginal mothers or ancestors or not since there were few church or other records in the interior in the late eighteenth century. Only detailed family genealogical studies might lead to the conclusion that these fur trade employees were already part-Aboriginal, as in the case of the Antoine Collin or Francois and Pierre Jerome families.⁴¹⁷

Some of the Indianized Frenchmen had left children to be raised by their Indian wives. There were also some men with French-sounding names in Chaboillez' journal whom Hickerson identified as Chippewa/Ojibwe: Challifoux, Gavin Bouche and Maccathy Counoye.⁴¹⁸ It is possible these men had French voyageur fathers, but had been raised by their Indian mothers

⁴¹⁵ HBCA, Pembina Post Journal, B.235/a/1: November 23, 1797. Note that the first two Pembina Post Journals were called "Red River Journals" and by mistake were catalogued under "Winnipeg"; there was no HBC post at the Forks of the Assiniboine and Red until Miles McDonell built Fort Douglas.

⁴¹⁶ Scott Hamilton, *Social Organization of the HBC*: 88; James Sutherland in the Brandon House Journal, described Easter as an "Exquimaux and the Company's slave", suggesting he was an indentured servant with no salary; HBCA: B.22/a/4/ fo. 19 and 19d. Margaret Clarke noted in Figure 11: Men of Brandon House - 1804-1810 that Easter was Inuit, a steersman and had an Indian spouse; had served 17 years in the HBC by 1810, suggesting he started his career in 1793. Clarke, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community in the Assiniboine Basin*: 4-74.

⁴¹⁷ Jennifer Brown, "Diverging Identities: The Presbyterian Metis of St. Gabriel Street, Montreal", in *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Metis in North America*, ed. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985:204.

⁴¹⁸ For example, Henry noted a trader named "Cornoyer of the XY" on October 27, 1801. It is possible that "Maccathy Counoyer" described by Hickerson as a Chippewa (but he was just guessing) may have been a relative of this relative; perhaps he was dressed like an Indian and Chaboillez did not distinguish.

and adopted the culture and lifestyle of their Indian relatives.⁴¹⁹ They were part of the Ojibwe immigrants from Leech and Red Lakes who had moved into the Red River Valley with the fur trade and were considered members of these families. They lived the lifestyle of the Indians. To be inclusive was typical of Indian communities and the fact that the Metis developed as a separate ethnic group in Red River was an unusual occurrence in the fur trade. Perhaps a separate Metis identity developed in Red River as significant numbers of these people moved to Red River between 1806 and the 1820s with the demise of the companies, but it did not happen overnight with the appearance of a few freemen in the 1790s during Chaboillez' tenure.

Ethnic Markers of *Métissage*: Moccasins and Flamboyant Clothing

Material culture involving the study of clothing and equipment provides good insights into *metissage*. As voyageurs, either from the Great Lakes or Quebec, made these hunting expeditions to the plains, they learned new skills, especially buffalo hunting. Being on foot, they depended on Indian expertise and equipment such as snowshoes and moccasins, made by the Indian women (who were not mentioned per se in the journals) but who were obviously making these articles for the trader. Chaboillez made many references to shoes; for example, on October 29: "Cut four Dressed Skins in Shoes, which I divided between the People." Or when he "sent 4 men to the Montagne to the Montagne to Payjick Tent - gave them each a dram & one pair of Shoes" on December 15. When Delorme & Desjardais [Desjardins] went to the South Traders on December 31 with two men, the bourgeois gave them each a pair of shoes. When David

⁴¹⁹ Peterson, *Gathering at the River*: 50: Accompanying Chaboillez were hunters named Reame [sic], Chalifoux, Bouche and Cournoyer, men who identified themselves as Ojibwa or Ottawa, but who were certainly children or grandchildren of Canadian or Métis trade personnel from Sault Ste. Marie, Mackinac or Green Bay.

Thompson required assistance to go to Cadotte's post at Red Lake Falls on March 15, 1798, Chaboillez ordered "Two Green Skins for Snow Shoes - being obliged to furnish the Lac La Pluie, River La Sourie & the People going up with Mr. T.[Thompson] to Mr. Cadotte with them - theirs being out of service." On March 20: "gave them in all - say Mr. Thompson & 3 men Twelve Pair Shoes - River La Sourie [Brandon area] Nine Pairs Shoes."⁴²⁰ John McKay at HBC Brandon House also complained about the use of leather for moccasins which the men expected as part of their engagement contract. "Mr. Millar gives me an account of 58 Moose Skins used at this place since last fall."⁴²¹

Such demands must have kept the Indian women busy, possibly Chaboillez' and Desjardais' wives who lived at the post or wives of the hunters who could meet the demands of the traders. Chaboillez provided these shoes (moccasins) and snow shoes to his men to make sure their expeditions would be productive; it is not clear from his journal if the NWC was obligated to provide moccasins as a contractual obligation as was the HBC. There is no doubt, however, that without a good supply of shoes, they would not make it safely back to the post.

As Métis consciousness developed, clothing was often the most obvious criteria of distinction between Indians, Metis and Whites. Peter Rindisbacher provided a good example in his painting of "A Gentleman Travelling in Dog Cariole in Hudson's Bay with an Indian Guide".⁴²² The caption ignored the presence of a third man running beside the cariole with a dog

⁴²⁰ Chaboillez' Journal, Oct. 29: p. 285; Dec. 15: p. 291; Dec. 31: 295; March 15: p. 378; March 20: p. 379.

⁴²¹ HBCA: B.22/a/10/9d; cited in Scott Hamilton, *Social Organization of the HBC: 100*.

⁴²² Henry, Gough I:plate next to page 124. Rindisbacher made this in the 1820s. Dog driver sports a top hat and a wide sash with a complex pattern. Compare this with "Winter

whip in his hand. He dressed differently from the Indian and the “Gentleman”, wearing a capote, a European-style coat, but tied with an Assumption sash from Quebec; he wore an Indian style leggings tied with garters around the knee; his feet were not visible, but had snowshoes like the Indian guide, but had no blanket. His hat was like a top hat (Beaver felt) with a large decoration; and his hands were protected by leather mittins [in French: *les mitaines*; *les gants*]. This is an example of material culture because dress was often the most obvious outward expression of mixed heritage. The Métis adopted the most practical of Aboriginal elements and moccasins were at the top of the list for those who valued comfortable footwear. A photo of André Jerome of Minnesota with his brothers at a family reunion in 1905 shows him proudly wearing his ceinture fléchée and his moccasins. Rindisbacher drawings from the 1820s are one of the best sources of Metis dress from this period. Another painting depicting “Two of the [HBC] Companies Officers Travelling in a Canoe Made of Birchbark Manned by Canadians.” Here the steersman wears a top hat and red sash and is standing authoritatively while the other voyageurs are hatless and do not appear to be wearing sashes.⁴²³ This is somewhat surprising as one would have expected the French Canadians to be wearing sashes as well.

There is very little documentation of who the native women were because they are not usually mentioned in the journals, one exception being an old woman trapper named Coutre Oreille. Like John Tanner’s mother, Netnokwe, she headed a small family group. On August 26,

Voyaging in a Light Sledge”, Alvin M. Josephy, *The Artist was a Young Man: The Life Story of Peter Rindisbacher*, Fort Worth, Texas: Amon Carter Museum, 1970: 35. Although the composition is strikingly similar, the man running beside the cariole is dressed with an Indian headdress style hat, with a capote and plainer sash.

⁴²³ Josephy, *The Artist was a Young Man*: 41.

she and two sons arrived and took credit for 30 skins; then obtained 6 knives, 3 gunworms, 3 awls and 9 gunflints. They also “made a present of Fish to the value of four skins”. On October 24, another woman arrived to trade: “Brought 40 lbs. Grease, 2 Beaver Skins, 1 Wolf, for which I paid her Seven Phiols Mixd Rum”.⁴²⁴

Conclusion: Indianized French Voyageurs were the antecedents to the Freeman

The question remains: why did the Métis develop a separate cultural identity from the Indians and the Euro-Canadians in Red River and the North West? Foster suggested that it was based on the freemen culture and their provisioning niche in the fur trade. During the 1790s in the Pembina [Lower Red River region], this did not occur. If there were some independent traders, like Racette or Menard, they were not identified as a collectivity known as “freemen”.

John Foster theorized that the origins of the Métis could be found in the fur trade practice of the Nor’Westers to go *en déroutine* to collect the furs at the Indians’ camps, thus bringing the male traders into close contact with Aboriginal women and their male kin. The intermarriage of the newcomers with the local Indians resulted in the development of a large mixed-blood population which would soon separate along with their fathers and mothers from residency at the Indian camps and the fur trade posts. However, Foster was not successful in identifying more than a few of these traders who became the freemen fathers of the Métis. The biggest challenge of sources like Chaboillez’ fur trade memoir is to identify the lower level employees and to determine their ethnic identity. Then it is possible to find the formative generation who were the parents of the Pembina Métis.

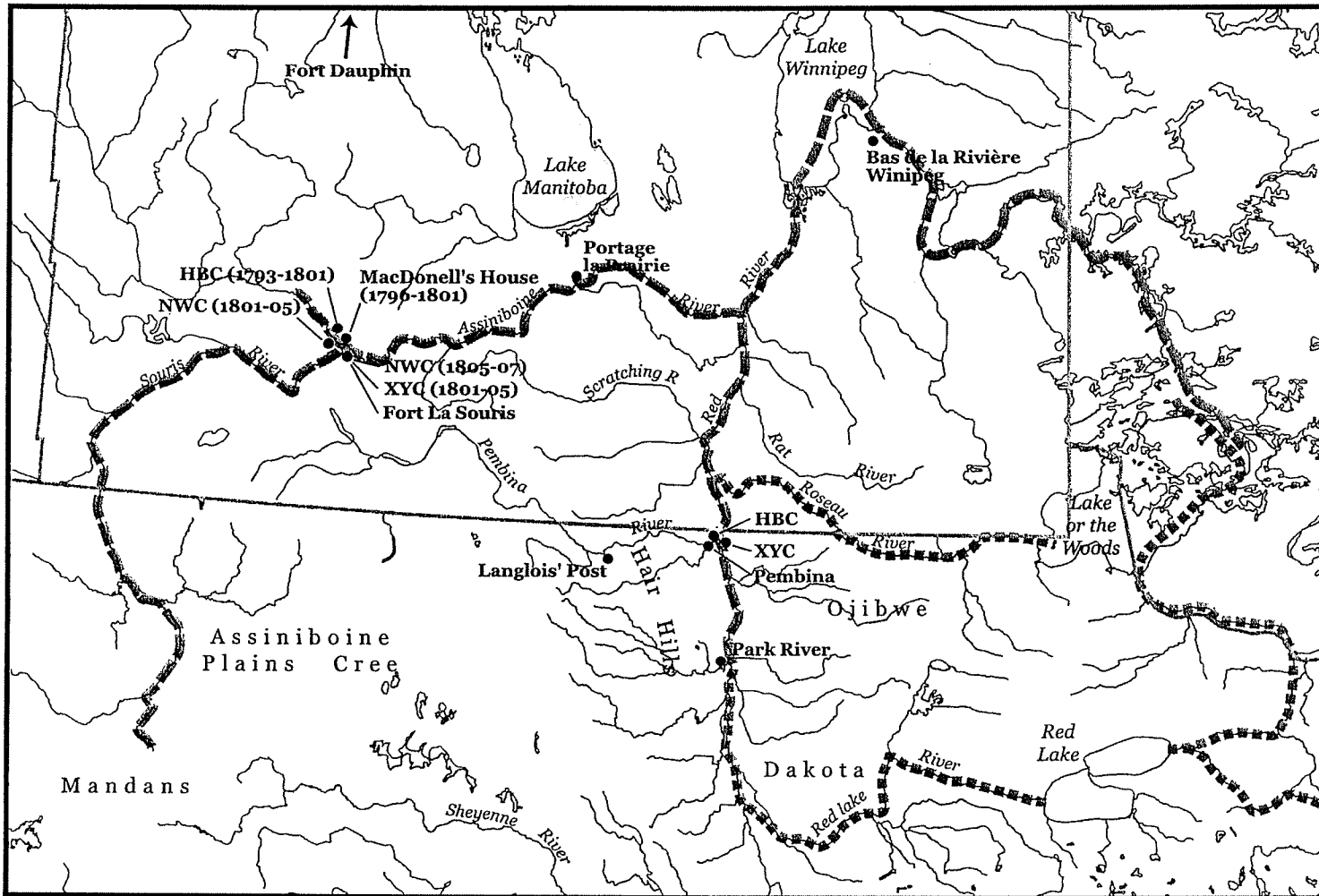
⁴²⁴ Chaboillez’ Journal: Old Coutre Oreille, August 26: p. 275. “Arrived a woman”...p. 284.

Many historians like W.L. Morton assumed that voyageurs with French names were automatically French Canadian. Peterson assumed that these voyageurs who “flocked” to the Red River Valley from the Great Lakes were “Métis”, but Chaboillez never used that racial designation. He did not in fact use an ethnic designation, and usually omitted their first names as well, but the fact that they had French names was enough for Peterson to conclude that they had French fathers from the Great Lakes who had married Indian women. Even if they were of mixed ancestry like Réaume and Cadotte, there is no evidence that they considered themselves different from their fathers and mothers.⁴²⁵ The traders and voyageurs from the Great Lakes were “Canadian”, i.e. French Canadian and their Indian background was not an issue.

The first step in Métis ethnogenesis happened under the Pembina traders of the 1780s and 1790s where the voyageurs made the transition from woodsmen to plainsmen. Chaboillez described how his men went *en déroutine* to the Indian camps. There they married local Aboriginal women according to Indian custom (*mariage à la façon du pays*). They learned how to hunt bison on horseback while living on the fringe of plain and parkland at fur trade centres like the Pembina fur trade. In the process, they made the cultural transformation of *Indianized Frenchmen*. As Foster predicted, most of these were of French Canadian and Indian background (from the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes trading systems) and did not include except for a few individual families people of Orkney/Cree descent. In the 1790s, the fathers identified with their own ethnic origins and the children were too young to adopt a separate identity.

⁴²⁵ The situation at Pembina was obviously very different from the trading communities of the Great Lakes like La Baye [Green Bay, Wisconsin] or Sault Ste. Marie where there were missionaries, churches, companies, contracts and a division of labour. The Native Women of Pembina in Chaboillez' time are not easily identified.

Figure 5a. Pembina Fur Trade during Alexander Henry's time: 1800-08

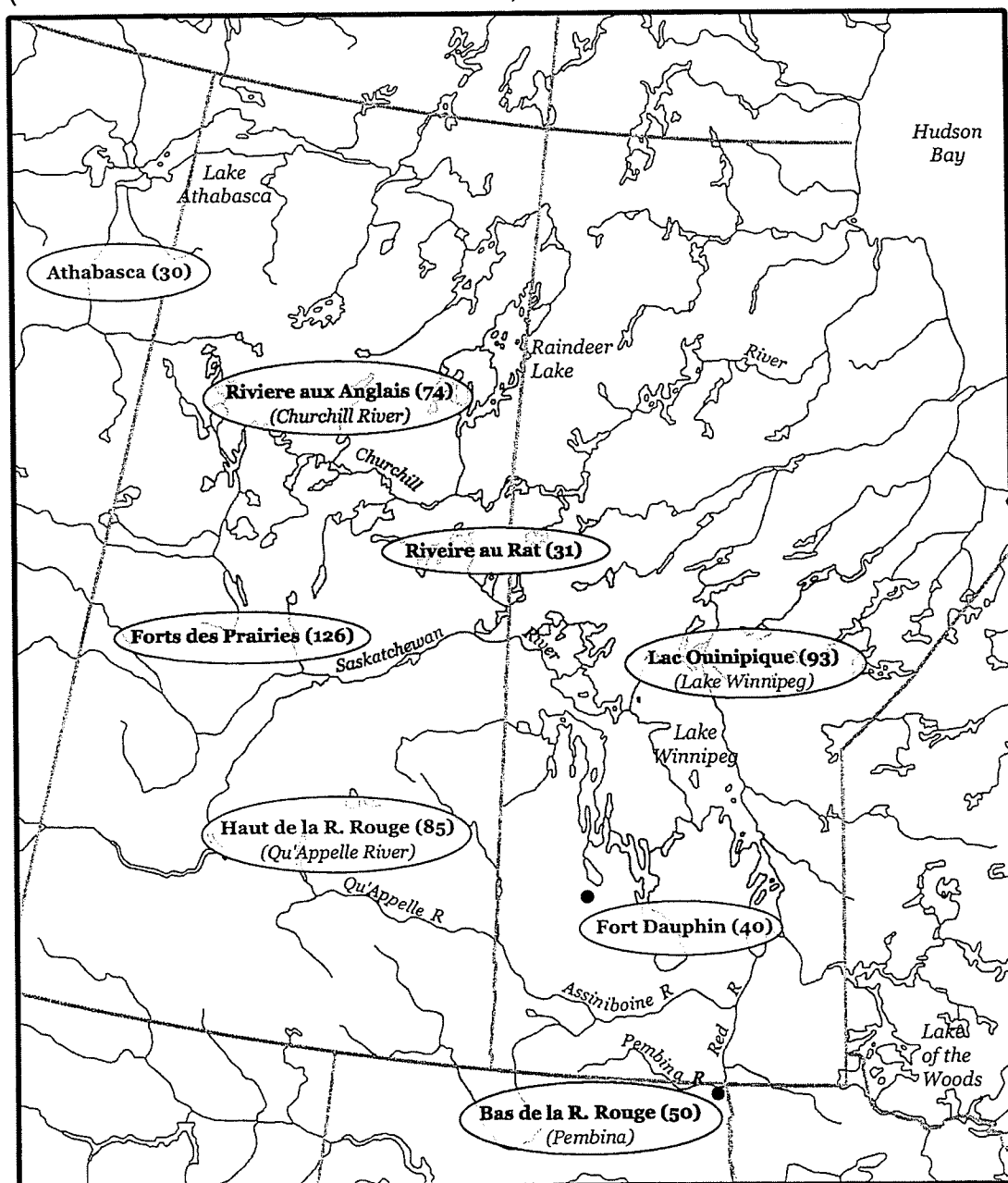


Henry's routes. 1) NW - to Lake Winnipeg, Winnipeg River to Lake of the Woods - east to Grand Portage.

2) NW - SW - along the Assiniboine River, south on Souris River to Missouri River.

Indian routes between Red Lake to Pembina (Red River) and Red Lake to Lake of the Woods and Rainy Lake

Figure 5b. Location of NWC "Countries" West of Rainy Lake, 1804
(Fathers of the Bois Brulés of 1815-16)



N.B. Bourgeois (45)

Numbers = NWC personnel assignments in 1804 listed by L.R. Masson in *Les Bourgeois de la Campagne de Nord-Ouest*

Source: Eric Ross *Beyond the River and the Bay*. 1970, University of Toronto Press

Chapter Five: Freeman, Aboriginal Women, and *Métissage* at Pembina: 1800-1808

If the traders from Canada did not already have native ancestry, then they quickly adapted by integrating into native society. Peter Grant, Charles Chaboillez, Alexander Henry and most other men of the North West Company as well as those of the HBC, XYC and undoubtedly the South Men took Indian wives according to the custom of the country and had children of mixed ancestry. These families formed the basis of the new Métis communities which would become more visible in the decade of the Selkirk Settlement after 1811. Although Henry did not mention any Métis in his journal either, focussing on the Ojibwe and his own French Canadian *engagés* [labourers], there are hints of some cultural adaptations that were developing during Henry's time at Pembina from 1800 to 1808. And since Pembina was the centre of the Red River fur trade, it is a good place to observe the development of the freemen-Métis culture.

5a) Jean Baptiste Desmarais: Pembina voyageur and prototype freeman

Along with people like Desjardins and Francois Delorme, Henry had another French Canadian/Métis interpreter/guide who had been in the Red River Valley for some time and who was a veteran of fur trade exploration, Jean Baptiste Desmarais.⁴²⁶ He may have lived at Peter Grant's post before 1789 as he was with Grant that year when he was sent to Red Lake.⁴²⁷ In

⁴²⁶ Coues' version of Henry's journal lists 52 references to Desmarais. Most of these are at the Park River post 1800-01. Four are in the fall of 1801 when Henry sent him to R. Aux Gratiis and two are for their departure in 1808. There is a significant gap between 1801 and 1808 where he does not warrant a mention. This is when he probably was a freeman through desertion, as Henry names most of his engagés. He is also on the account of the new firms of McTavish Frobisher & Co, a partnership of the NWC, November 30, 1799, directly under the name of James McGill, with an account of 362 lb., 10' and 3 3/4; p. Wallace: 104-105.

⁴²⁷ Grant was at Pembina before 1789, A.S. Morton: 438. Grant went to Red Lake: Coues, note, p. 80; Wallace: biography of Peter Grant: 451.

1793, Desmarais guided Frederick Schultz from Rainy Lake to Pembina; they encountered John MacDonell at the Forks in the spring of 1804; Schultz spent several following seasons at Lac la Pluie and possibly Desmarais assisted him at that post; see Figures 3b and 4c.⁴²⁸ He is not mentioned by Chaboillez in 1797-98 and so must have been elsewhere, but was on the roster of the Lower Red River department of the NWC in 1799.⁴²⁹ Pembina was the only fur trade location on the Red River at that time. When Alexander Henry the Younger needed an experienced guide to take him to the Forks of the Pembina and Red Rivers in August of 1800 to see the old forts of Grant and Chaboillez and to pick a new spot to build, Jean Baptiste Desmarais was the man who acted as Henry's guide.⁴³⁰

Henry's description of his first trip to Red River is full of geographical details:

Early I sent the Indians ahead on discoveries; they had but one horse among them. At 9 o'clock, I sent off the canoes; Desmarais and myself proceeded by land. We came to Panbian [Pembina] river and crossed it to the old fort which was built in 1797-98 by Mr. Chaboillez. Opposite the entrance of this river, on the E. Side of Red river are the

⁴²⁸ See John MacDonell's journal of 1793-94 in Masson, I: 290, Duckworth: 10 and Ritterbush: 25. HBCA: Lac La Pluie Journal, B.105/a/1-3; John McKay, the HBC postmaster at Lac la Pluie [Rainy Lake], observed September 19, 1793 "to [two] traders went from here...one of them for Portage du Isle, Mr. Latour by name. The other for some part in the red River, could not learn his name." In subsequent journals, he identified this trader as "the soldier" and stole a letter referring to him : October 28, 1794. Also, May 5, 1796: "at dark we arrived at the canadians settlement. Frederick Shoults the master took charge of the goods..."

⁴²⁹ J.B. Desmarais is listed in L.R. Masson's list of 1799 for Lower Red river at L800; *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie de Nord-Ouest*, v. 1: 64. He is not listed in the Bas de la Rivière Rouge in 1804; Masson: I: 401.

⁴³⁰ First time at Pembina, September 5, 1800, on their way to Park River, Henry, Coues:79; second time, May 17, 1801, Henry and Desmarais return to Pembina to choose a new site for the post, Coues:181. It seems more than coincidental that Henry choose J.B. Desmarais to accompany him when he needed to see the location of Grant's and Chaboillez' posts. The Nor'Westers had probably assigned Henry to the Pembina region [Lower Red River - *Le Bas de la Rivière Rouge*] at the rendezvous at Grande Portage in the summer of 1800.

remains of an old fort built by Mr. Peter Grant some years ago; this was the first establishment [of the NWC] ever built on Red R. Panbian river takes its rise out of the Ribbone lakes or Lacs du Placotte, a chain of lakes...on the W. Side of the Hair Hills...⁴³¹

Reading between the lines of Henry's information, we can deduce that Jean Baptiste Desmarais was the source of this geographical knowledge while leading Henry on his first trip to Red River and probably into dangerous territory.⁴³² The Ojibwe as well as Henry's men were anxious about a surprise attack by the Dakota/Sioux and expected to see them appear at a moment's notice. Hearing the neighing of an unexpected horse (their Indian friends who had gone ahead), the guide and bourgeois hid behind some large oaks and prepared for an attack. "But in a few moments, we perceived Aupersay coming on Crow's mare. This was an agreeable surprise...We three went on together, and soon overtook the Indians, who were approaching a herd of cows. Bulls were so numerous that, though we passed them at 100 paces, they did not run, but only turned to stare at us."⁴³³ Henry loved to hunt, especially on horseback, both for the food, provisions and sport, and he wrote about his hunting opportunities at Pembina with great enthusiasm.

The buffalo were the reason the Canadians came to Red River and Pembina in the first place; they migrated across the Red River there and it was a good place to build a post, but the

⁴³¹ Henry, Coues: 78-81. First arrival in Pembina area, Red River, September 5, 1800.

⁴³² When Henry planned a new post at Pembina River in the spring of 1801, he again took Desmarais with him to check out the location. "...crossed the Red river with Desmarais, planted my potatoes and sowed a few garden seeds in the spot where Mr. Grant's house stood..." [Coues: 181, May 17, 1801). They chose a new site on the north side of the Pembina across from Chaboillez' old post on the south side; Henry noted there were "many large fine oaks for building."

⁴³³ Henry: Coues: 83. September 5, 1800.

more experienced voyageurs resisted any attempt by Henry to settle farther south than Park River. Desmarais, whom Henry called a “veteran and **one of the first who ever came up this river** seriously advised me to think about building.”⁴³⁴ Henry added: “I was well assured the Indians would not follow me.” Assured by whom? Probably by his experienced guide, Desmarais. Bourgeois like Henry often appeared self-important and arrogant in their journals and sometimes portrayed their accomplishments as single-handed exploits, but they were aware they could only push their men and allies so far.⁴³⁵ “About dark the canoes arrived, the men fatigued and in bad humour. They had seen a wounded buffalo...had I not told them this morning that I should stop here, I believe they would have returned.”⁴³⁶ Henry capitulated and built his post, which lasted only for a year, when he was forced to move north to the mouth of the Pembina river. From this encounter, Jean Baptiste Desmarais emerges as an experienced guide and assertive assistant who would not be submissive to the authority of the younger bourgeois whose stubbornness might have cost them some lives.

Henry has numerous references to Desmarais in the first year at Park River, but they almost disappeared after they moved to Pembina in the late summer of 1801.⁴³⁷ Henry sent

⁴³⁴ Henry’s observation that Desmarais was one of the first to come up Red River suggests that Desmarais accompanied Peter Grant to Pembina in the 1780s and had done so several times since.

⁴³⁵ Another example of Henry’s rhetorical style of taking credit for accomplishments his men did. On August 1, 1808, he wrote: “I made up 30 bags of pemmican”; Gough: 1: 327. What he meant was that his men made up 30 bags of pemmican; perhaps he gave the order, but he did not do the work himself.

⁴³⁶ Henry, Coues: 90-91.

⁴³⁷ On April 18, 1801, Desmarais arrived from Fort Dauphin, via Portage la Prairie. “He complains of having passed a very disagreeable winter” (Henry, Coues: 175-176). This may be a

Desmarais and five men (with their families) *en déroutine* to River aux Grâties (Scratching River, at present-day Morris, Mn.) to winter and trade with the Indians trapping on that tributary of the Red. In early November, Desmarais and an Indian, "old Mogue", returned to the main post and complained that they had not seen one Indian since they arrived less than two months earlier. They must have been determined to leave because it was freeze-up and their canoe became stuck in the ice near "Panbian River". Bad weather and freezing rivers made it a difficult time to travel. They may have been reluctant to live downriver without the protection of more people. Without the friendly Indians (Cree, Assiniboiné and Ojibwé), they were vulnerable. Henry ordered Desmarais back to his station and visited him with his horse and cariole in December. He noted that the guide was catching fish with a net, and had got a large sturgeon recently.⁴³⁸ Desmarais had learned Indians survival skills and with his family followed the seasonal round; although encouraged to stay in one location, they undoubtedly made use of whatever local

different Desmarais, possibly François, who was an interpreter for NWC at Upper Red River [the Assiniboiné] in 1804. On April 26, "I sent Desmarais with a man in a skin canoe to Langlois; the latter is to proceed to Portage la Prairie with dispatches for Mr. Chaboillez." The latter was in charge of Red River department and was Henry's supervisor. See also August 10, 1806 at Riv. Aux Souris Post [Brandon] where the Assiniboiné interpreter Desmarais opened the gate and allowed a horse thief to escape, Henry's Journal, Gough: 290-291. Since Jean Baptiste Desmarais was in Minnesota and Red River for most of the 1790s up to 1802, it would appear that his ties with the Ojibwé, not the Assiniboiné. However, he and François may have been related. They could have been step-brothers, one with an Ojibwé mother and one with an Assiniboiné mother.

⁴³⁸ Henry, Coues: departed September 25, 1801: p. 188. Returned November 7, 1801: p. 191. Henry visited them on December 21, p. 192.

resources were available and fishing was an important way to augment their diet when buffalo were scarce.⁴³⁹

By the spring of 1802, Desmarais was with the Ojibwe at River aux Gratiass and Reed [Roseau] River, downstream from Panbian River post.⁴⁴⁰ Henry went to meet him on April 26 to collect the furs and “got 30 Beaver skins from Pickoutiss” [Peguis, one of the Red Lake Ojibways], who would a decade later become an important ally of Selkirk Governor Miles MacDonell.⁴⁴¹ Henry embarked on May 31, 1802, for the rendezvous at Grand Portage and returned in September.

Desmarais disappeared from the journal. Henry noted in April and May 1802 a couple of desertions by men named Melancon and Joseph Cyr.⁴⁴² These desertions suggest that Henry was unpopular. Perhaps his experienced guide was also fed up with Henry’s arrogant attitude.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁹ For example, taking the men fishing in canoes with a net, September 15, 1800 (Henry, Coues: 98). Winter fishing with a small net at the entrance of Riviere aux Gratiass, December 21, 1801 (Coues:192). Henry noted that Desmarais caught a sturgeon “some time ago”.

⁴⁴⁰ Henry noted that it took three young Indians ten days from Lac la Pluie [Rainy Lake] via Reed Lake [Lac Roseau] to Pembina. They abandoned their canoes at Reed Lake and went the rest of the distance on foot. This was the Indian route to Red River across the Height of Land, described by Tanner. It was often too shallow to be practical for loaded canoes, but worked for light canoes carrying a few passengers.

⁴⁴¹ Henry’s Journal, ed. Coues: p. 196: April 26, 1802. Desmarais was *en déroutine* with Peguis and relatives at the Reed [Roseau] River.

⁴⁴² Henry, Coues: Melancon deserted April 27, 1802, p. 196; Joseph Cyr, May 15, 1802, p. 197. Augustin Cadotte moved to Tekogonabick, an Indian woman; his meaning is not clear; May 24, 1802, p. 198.

⁴⁴³ For a view of labour conflicts and resistance in the HBC, see Edith Burley, *Servants of the Honorable Company: Work, Discipline and Conflict in the Hudson’s Bay Company, 1770-1870*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997.

There is no indication in his memoir that Henry and Desmarais had a falling out, that Desmarais deserted or where he spent the next six years, but possibly he went to live with his wife's family, the Ojibwe to the east or the Plains Cree or Assiniboine to the west.⁴⁴⁴ Henry is silent on the question of his experienced guide's disappearance. The invisibility of Desmarais in the records suggests he was a freeman from 1802-1808.

In 1808, Desmarais showed up on June 1 as Henry engaged him as a voyageur in a canoe for the NWC, taking out the "taureaux" [buffalo hide bags of pemmican], grease, potatoes, meat as provisions for the trip and baggage.⁴⁴⁵ Perhaps he had disappeared for seven years, but agreed to work for Henry as a freeman on a temporary contract.⁴⁴⁶ Henry was leaving Red River for his next assignment up the North Saskatchewan. This is the only reference to the famous guide after 1802.⁴⁴⁷ What happened?

⁴⁴⁴ Sprague and Frye, *Genealogy of the First Metis Nation*, Table 1: there are 21 men named Desmarais, five born before 1812 when the first Selkirk settlers arrived. It does not show who were the sons of Jean Baptiste and does not list the name of his wife, presumably an Indian.

⁴⁴⁵ Henry, Coues: I: voyageurs embarked for Fort William, June 1, 1808, p. 430. Henry's list of Ladings at Panbian river, June 1, 1808, Jean Baptiste Desmarais in a canoe with Angus Brisebois and Jean Baptiste Larocque, p. 443. There are no references to him in the text after 1802.

⁴⁴⁶ Scott Hamilton, *The Social Organization of the Hudson's Bay Company: Formal and Informal Relations in the Context of the Inland Fur Trade*, Edmonton: University of Alberta, 1985: Hamilton suggested that the HBC sometimes hired freemen to guide the less-experienced men who were not so familiar with the water routes. Hamilton: 188-189. The NWC may have done this also.

⁴⁴⁷ During the Fur Trade War in 1815-16, Jean Baptiste Desmarais was reported at the Turtle River working for the NWC when he was attacked by the HBC and his pemmican supplies were confiscated. This site was also popular with the Freemen and they had a big camp there at the same time.

Fur trade discipline was tenuous and the lower-ranked voyageurs had more independence than a bourgeois might have liked as when the men at Brandon House refused to serve under the French Monsieur Racette. If an experienced guide, interpreter and Indian trader like Jean Baptiste Desmarais could not rise to a partnership because of his French name⁴⁴⁸, he might not be inclined to take orders from someone who was putting the lives of his family and himself at risk. He might be better off in the plains with other Bois Brûlés or “freemen” and their Indian families.⁴⁴⁹ Peterson discussed push and pull factors which influenced the development of the freemen culture. The “allure” of the horse and cart culture was the “pull”. She suggested that a push fact was the unemployment of large numbers of XY voyageurs after 1804. Another push factor may have been fur trade discipline itself. Men who aspired to being their own boss would not knuckle under to the demands of a younger *bourgeois* when they had an option to live on the plains with their Indian wives and native kin. They adopted the Indian lifestyle because it was more attractive than the routine labour and the constraining social hierarchy of the post. Desmarais is a good example of an engagé who was more experienced than his boss and he resisted Henry’s egocentric style.

⁴⁴⁸ *Bourgeois* like Charles Chaboillez were an exception and he probably owed his position to his father’s influence as an old trader. See Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, biographies of Chaboillez, father and son: 432. Two of Charles Jr.’s brothers-in-law were Simon McTavish, head of the NWC, and Hon. Roderick Mackenzie, an influential partner.

⁴⁴⁹ Generally voyageurs did not get promoted to partnerships, especially if they were French. Jean Baptiste Cadotte and Charles Chaboillez were exceptions. See Jennifer S.H. Brown, “A Parcel of Upstart Scotchmen”, *The Beaver*, February/March 1988: 4-11 for background on social mobility in the North West Company. Mainly Scottish Highlanders with strong ethnic and kin ties and a few Englishmen and American loyalists like Henry and Simon Fraser dominated the upper echelon of the Montreal company. Most of the lower-ranked voyageurs were French Canadian, Aboriginal (Mohawk) and metis.

5b: “GENS LIBRES”: Freeman at Pembina; Connections with the Souris River [Brandon House] and the Mandan Trade:

Desmarais disappeared in 1802, two years before the consolidation of NWC and XYC, and probably became a “*gens libre*” [freeman]. There were probably already freemen who had learned the value of independence. They had been living on the plains for years before 1804; for example, when Henry and Chaboillez made their famous trip to the Mandans in 1806, they met a trader named René Jussaume who had been on the Missouri since 1789-1791 according to Henry and David Thompson who hired Jusseaume as a guide nine years before Henry in December 1797. Jussaume’s wife and children dressed and lived like natives.⁴⁵⁰ Henry chose for his guide to the Missouri a former Irish artillery man, Hugh McCracken, a free trader who spent “weeks and months” at the Missouri villages.⁴⁵¹ As noted, the earliest freeman resident with the Mandans was a French Canadian named Menard who had been living there since 1778 and traded with the Canadians and British traders in the Brandon/Souris River area; see Figure 5a: Pembina Fur Trade During Alexander Henry’s Time: 1800-1808. Menard served as an interpreter for these traders until his death in 1804 and must have been well-known to men like Thomas Miller and Hugh Heney who had made the trip from Brandon to the Missouri Mandan villages.⁴⁵² By going

⁴⁵⁰ Henry, Gough: p. 224 note.

⁴⁵¹ Henry, Gough: p. 201 note and 202. See note on Jussaume, comparing sources in Wood and Thiessen, *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains*: 46.

⁴⁵² Information on Menard, first name possibly François or Pierre, in Wood & Thiessen, *Early Fur Trade*...:43-44. See appendix: Miller made two trips to the Mandans in 1795. David Thompson wrote in his journal that at the Fall Indian [Atsina] villages on the Missouri, the Canadian traders met “Manoak, a frenchman who has long resided with these people”. This was probably Menard. *David Thompson’s Narrative: 1784-1812*, ed. Richard Glover, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1962: 170.

“free”, these French Canadians set an example which many more would follow, especially after the amalgamation of the NWC and XYC in 1804, giving rise to one of the major factors in the development of the freemen families and their independent spirit. Part of this attitude reflected class and ethnic distinctions in the fur trade, reinforced along Canadian ethnic lines after the British loyalists took over the upper levels of the Canadian trade after 1763.

If there were French Canadians living in Red River 25 years before the Selkirk Settlers arrived in 1812 (as Father Charles Bourke reported at York Factory), the process of adapting to the plains environment was well underway.⁴⁵³ Military protection required hunting together to avoid ambush and attacks, but the development of freeman bands resulted in building kinship and community. David Thompson and Jussomme warned the Mandan chief about the danger of Plains travel between the Missouri and the Assiniboine in January 1798:

Monsr. Jussomme and myself spoke to the Chief of the extreme hazard of such a small party escaping their enemies; and that if they wished to have a direct trade with us, they must form a party of at least forty men with Horses, and come when the Snow was not on the ground; that even among the Stone Indians, who are friendly, there were bad men enough, on seeing such a small party, that would plunder them; and they had all better return.⁴⁵⁴

Thompson noted that the journey took 33 days because of winter storms to go 238 miles across the plains by dog team and on horseback when it would normally take ten days in good

⁴⁵³ PAM, MG2A1, Selkirk Papers, vol. 67, Page 17878: Rev. Charles Bourke accompanied Irish laborers for the HBC to York Factory in 1811. On July 1, 1812, he met four French Canadians who travelled with Hugh Heney from Pembina. They told him that there were French Canadians at Red River who had resided there for ten, fifteen and twenty-five years before the Selkirk Settlement began. They raised potatoes and had gardens and collected wild rice. They made Red River sound like a Garden of Eden and may have exaggerated somewhat their production, but Bourke was impressed with potatoes, as good as any he ate in Ireland. Unfortunately, the priest did not name these four early French Canadian settlers.

⁴⁵⁴ Thompson's Journal: 180.

weather.⁴⁵⁵ The straight line distance from the Mandan Villages to McDonell's post on the Assiniboine by Rivière la Souris was 188 miles.⁴⁵⁶

These freemen soon learned that for many an independent life was worth more than a small company contract and a winter's worth of bourgeois' bullying. Alexander Henry was not silent on the question of the freeman who were competing with him for trade. He despised them, probably because they were competent. His first mention of them was in describing New Year's rituals on January 1, 1802: "Nor' Westers, Bay traders, XY men, freemen, and others would visit one another on that day."⁴⁵⁷ By the end of 1803, when he received news of the consolidation of NWC and XYC, he complained: "Much plagued with my hunter, Joseph Cyr. Those freemen are a nuisance in the country and generally a parcel of scoundrels. I never yet found an honest man amongst them."⁴⁵⁸ Henry's critical comments should not be considered racist because there is no way of knowing if the freemen were part-Aboriginal or not. They could just as easily been Canadian, but he did not like their competition and their independence. He may also have disparaged them as former employees who now claimed equal social status, an affront to his social snobbery and class values as a *Bourgeois*.

After 1804, more freemen appeared on the plains. Hickerson suggested that the "Metis first appeared in small numbers at Pembina in 1805, freed "servants" of the defunct XYC, hunted buffalo on horseback on the prairies between the Red, Sheyenne and Missouri river in large

⁴⁵⁵ Thompson's Journal: 169-70.

⁴⁵⁶ Thompson's Journal: 181.

⁴⁵⁷ Henry, Coues: 125 note.

⁴⁵⁸ Henry: Coues: 151: December 30, 1803, re: freemen.

organized parties, and transported the meat and hides back to the settlement in two-wheeled horse-drawn carts".⁴⁵⁹ It is not known how large these hunting groups were and they probably consisted of smaller numbers than a decade later. Hickerson cited Alexander Ross, but the development of large buffalo hunting parties on the plains probably did not get started until the 1820s and grew to significance in the 1840s.⁴⁶⁰ Because of Ross' detailed and romantic descriptions of the large buffalo hunting parties and the exciting paintings of visiting artists like Paul Kane (who depicted the Pembina buffalo hunt in the 1840s), the conditions which led to the development of these large hunting parties at the Pembina posts during the early 1800s have been largely ignored. Although Henry started experimenting with cart building in November 1801, and was using them by 1802, his men were not travelling in the large hunting parties of a decade later.⁴⁶¹

In August 1807, when Henry arrived back at his post on Panbian [Pembina] River after the Fort William summer rendezvous, he observed the ranks of the free men increasing: "This season we were troubled by an augmentation of Freemen from Canada, etc. Their total numbers now in this river amount to 45 men." And on October 31, 1807 at the Hair Hills west of Pembina: "We saw all the different gangs of Freemen along the hills. Buffalo are in

⁴⁵⁹ Harold Hickerson, "The Genesis of a Trading Post Band: The Pembina Chippewa", *Ethnohistory* 3: 4: Fall 1956: 326.

⁴⁶⁰ Hickerson cited Alexander Ross's history of the Red River Settlement who only moved to Red River in the mid-1820s and also Belcourt who came to Baie St. Paul as a missionary in the 1830s.

⁴⁶¹ Re: cart building: Henry's Journal: November 15, 1801; September 20, 1802; and March 30, 1803: "a real pair of wheels on plan of those of Canada [Quebec]". May 5, 1803: re: cart's value: "This invention is worth four horses to bring as much property on their backs, as one horse will bring in one of those carts."

abundance...⁴⁶² Although he no longer had to worry about the XY competition, many of these freemen were now in private trade of their own, competing with the larger companies. Henry's negative comments about the freemen reflected his concern over the effectiveness of their competition. He could not control them.

5c: Red River Carts Developed at Pembina: Ethnic Marker of Métis Ethnicity: A Symbol of the transition from voyageurs to buffalo hunters:

Jacqueline Peterson tried to rectify the Forks myopia of most historians by writing about the Pembina fur trade during the time of Chaboillez and Henry and she suggested that the development of the Red River carts and the freemen culture were two of the most important building blocks of the development of a separate Métis identity and culture.⁴⁶³ She argued that the plains gave easy access to horses through Indians like the Assiniboinés and Plains Cree to the west who were excellent horsemen. The Ojibwe, on the other hand, who had recently moved from Leech Lake and Red Lake, had few horses and like the traders and voyageurs had to learn buffalo hunting on horseback.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶² Henry, Coues: freemen: Aug. 31: p. 298; and Oct. 31: p. 298.

⁴⁶³ Jacqueline Peterson, "Gathering at the River: The Métis Peopling of the Northern Plains", in *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, ed. Virginia L. Heidenreich, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1990: 47-64.

⁴⁶⁴ Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*: 47-51. William Warren interviewed many Ojibwe elders for his history and included much information about the formation of the Red Lake community. He describes an early exploring expedition with M. Cadotte and said that one of the men was from Sault Ste. Marie; he dated the presence of NWC traders in the area from 1796 and described them making a buffalo hide boat at Pembina when returning from the "Prairie Portage" or Portage La Prairie. *History of the Ojibwe People*: chapter 24: 278-289. Since this was Cadotte's attempt to access Red River through Leaf River, it was more likely

Although Henry himself enjoyed riding and hunting, as undoubtedly did his voyageurs, he blamed the horse for his men's increasing independence from his authority. He felt that the horse gave the men too much freedom and spurred family formation by allowing the families to hunt on the plains; furthermore, the families were not split up by husbands and fathers being forced to abandon them to a new posting. The *bourgeois* did not want these families to become a financial burden on the posts.⁴⁶⁵

In describing the new culture, Peterson drew the romantic metaphor of the "centaur people" of N. Scott Momaday, the Indian writer, and invoked the Sioux sign of a hand dividing the face (mixed ancestry) and a circling motion indicating wagon wheels, the Red River cart,⁴⁶⁶ but Joseph Kinsey Howard, the Montana historian, attributed this sign to the Cree, suggesting that to the Indians watching the cart trains cross the open plains, the Métis looked like "Wagon Men": half man, half wagon. The latter interpretation did not emphasize mixed ancestry or racial inferiority, but the symbol of the cart represented ingenuity, transportation expertise and affluence, becoming an important ethnic marker of Métis culture in the 19th century. Modern Cree linguists like Rev. Stan Cuthand of Saskatoon translated the word "Metis" as a Cree word

1792, the same expedition described by the Berdash. Warren received this oral history from Cadotte's wife who gave it to him about 1850; the women and children stayed behind at Fond du Lac.

⁴⁶⁵ Peterson: :51.

⁴⁶⁶ Peterson may have been confused here. She said it was a Sioux sign for the Metis, "a fully forged ethnic group, a new tribe"; p. 48. See Howard's definition in *Strange Empire*, Toronto: James Lewis and Samuel, Toronto, 1952, 1974: 39.

meaning “half-son”, emphasizing kin relations rather than racial categories.⁴⁶⁷ Apparently many Indian groups did not resent the addition of fur traders’ children to their extended families.

Historical geographers Barry Kaye and John Alwin described the early references to cart building and credited Alexander Henry for introducing the cart to the western interior in the post 1800 era.⁴⁶⁸

The first reference to these carts appears in the 1 September 1801 entry of the detailed journal he kept at the NWC’s Pembina River post. That day four small carts, each drawn by one horse and loaded with baggage and three packs, presumably eighty to ninety pounds each, left the post.⁴⁶⁹

The first wheels consisted of the sawed off ends of three-foot tree trunks. By 1802, “the typical cart was about four feet high, was pulled by one horse, and could carry about five packs.” The wheels were perfectly straight, and improved by perpendicular spokes, four to a wheel. By 1803, Henry reported: “a real pair of wheels on the plan of those in Canada”. Later Canadian carts would haul the equivalent of five pack horses, about 800 pounds.⁴⁷⁰

Kaye & Alwin claimed that these carts revolutionized the NWC transportation system, using them for overland transportation from Pembina to Portage la Prairie on the Assiniboine and

⁴⁶⁷ Stan Cuthand, personal communication with the author, Winnipeg, 1998.

⁴⁶⁸ Barry Kaye and John Alwin, “The Beginnings of Wheeled Transport in Western Canada”, *Great Plains Quarterly*, Spring 1984:122. They noted that Henry reported in 1808 that remains of carriage wheels “some years ago” could be seen around the former French post St. Louis on the Saskatchewan and remnants of trails around Fort St. Louis and Fort Pasquia, possibly during the French regime.

⁴⁶⁹ Kaye and Alwin: 122.

⁴⁷⁰ Kaye and Alwin: 122. Wheels one solid piece: November 15, 1801; Coues: 191. 1802 cart described with spokes and four foot wheels in Henry’s Journal, September 20, 1802, Coues: I: 204-05. Carry as much as five horses: May 1, 1803, Coues: 211.

Shoal Lake.⁴⁷¹ Along with the carts came the great roads or tracks which linked the posts and Indian camps wherever they were accessible on the open prairie and parkland. Obviously, carts were not much use in the wooded areas until the 1840s when a trail to Saint Paul, Minnesota, was cut through wooded areas east of the Red River, called the “Woods Trail” or the old “Crow Wing Trail”. The carts were used to bring buffalo meat from the plains to the posts, to take goods to various outposts and to collect furs and robes before the spring rendezvous at Lake Superior. Overland transport was particularly useful when the rivers of the northern plains became so low in summer and fall that it was difficult to transport by canoe and batteau which would ground on the bottoms. HBC posts like Brandon House also adopted the carts to meet the incoming servants in the fall, probably after seeing the utility of Pembina carts.⁴⁷² This was another example of the HBC Pembina-Brandon House connection and may have reflected the influence of Thomas Miller and his HBC men with the Souris River posts.

Peterson argued that the ethnogenesis of the Métis culture was based on the transition of the voyageurs to buffalo hunters and that this transition occurred at Pembina during Henry’s tenure.⁴⁷³ She described how “young men and their families” flocked to the Red, the Pembina Hills, and the tributaries of the upper Missouri after 1800, but this is not accurate.⁴⁷⁴ A close reading of Henry’s journal suggests that the voyageurs were contracted employees of the

⁴⁷¹ Kaye & Alwin: 123.

⁴⁷² Kaye & Alwin: 125-126. First reference to a cart at Brandon House: 18 April, 1804: HBCA: Brandon House Post Journal, B.22/a/11/fo. 11.

⁴⁷³ Peterson, “Gathering at the River”: 51: “Several factors contributed to the transition from trappers to buffalo hunters.”

⁴⁷⁴ Peterson: 48.

companies and were assigned to their posts for a period of time. They could not choose to go to Pembina instead of, for example, Athabasca.⁴⁷⁵ They went where they were assigned; if they had previous Indian alliances like George Nelson in Wisconsin, they left their wives and children with Indian kin and formed new alliances with local Indian women at the assigned places.⁴⁷⁶ They did not “flock” to Red River, but were dispersed around the plains and northern subarctic forests, wherever the company decided they were needed.

The distribution of these voyageurs can be seen on the map in Figure 5b: Location of NWC “countries” west of Rainy Lake, 1804. Numbers in brackets show the number of voyageurs who worked at each location in 1804. Many of these voyageurs would become fathers of the *Bois Brûlés* in the Fur Trade War of 1815-16, but in 1804, most of their offspring were still young children. This theory of mine is confirmed by Peter Fidler’s list of freemen, 1814, which shows 42 men, 34 Indian wives and 92 children at Pembina and the Forks. Fidler included six families at Qu’Appelle and five whose men were killed by the Sioux on August 13, 1814. Obviously, Grant’s cavalry drew from a much wider area along the fringe of plain and parkland, up as far north as the Saskatchewan River and the English River on the NWC route to Athabasca. Apparently Fidler was not aware of these young men who would identify with the *Bois Brûlés* and would answer their Captain’s call to drive out the English. He only identified those men

⁴⁷⁵ Masson: *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie de Nord-Ouest*, lists of voyageurs: v. 1: 1799: 61-66. List of voyageurs, 1804: 395-412.

⁴⁷⁶ Jennifer Brown, “Partial Truths: A Closer Look at Fur Trade Marraige”, *From Rupert’s Land to Canada*, ed. Binnema, Ens & MacLeod, University of Alberta Press, 2001: 59-80.

living in the vicinity of the Forks and Pembina and along the Assiniboine as far as the mouth of the Qu'Appelle River.

Peterson was right that the transition from voyageurs to buffalo hunters was an important change in the evolution of the freemen culture, but the freemen did not automatically become "Métis". Many of the freemen were French Canadians and those who were of mixed ancestry are difficult to distinguish because the genealogies of these lower-level employees are not well-researched. Peterson assumed that the freemen and Métis were one ethnic group by 1805, but I would argue that these extended family groups of relatives and friends were multigenerational and the fathers were the freemen. Even if 25/42 men on Fidler's list were not "Canadian", i.e. not from Quebec, they never called themselves "Metis". Yet many of these men on Fidler's list formed the core group of Grant's cavalry the following two years, 1815-16. Many sons of the voyageurs of other posts joined Grant's cavalry, so they were not just around the Forks or even Red River. It was the fur trade war that forced them to adopt the new ethnic identity of *Bois Brûlés* or Métis. This development will be drawn more clearly in Chapter 7 dealing with the voluntary migration of Métis families into Red River after the consolidation of the NWC and HBC in 1821. Clearly, this emerging Métis identity may have produced ethnic markers and symbols by Henry's time like the Red River carts and the buffalo hunters, but they did not necessarily choose to separate themselves from French Canadian voyageur culture. If they were raised with their Indian mothers, it is difficult to document these Indigenous influences in non-Aboriginal sources.

Peterson argued that this migration to Pembina and The Forks occurred before 1803, but I would challenge her that there was no "migration" of voyageurs and families. These men

generally came as batchelors and married Native women locally. Henry described a cavalcade of his employees led by Michel Langlois to the Hair Hills on October 3, 1803 which Peterson felt personified the emerging Métis culture of horses, carts and extravagant confidence. Henry disparaged the group for their pretensions, calling them "meadow gentry", suggesting he did not appreciate their independent spirit and pretensions at equality. Peterson also quoted Henry in late 1805 observing several freemen in the Pembina area⁴⁷⁷; but Alexander Henry counted 75 men, 40 Indian wives and 60 mixed-ancestry children in Lower Red River [Pembina] for the NWC only in 1805.⁴⁷⁸ Many of these NWC men would be freemen a decade later, but they were still on contract in 1805, so the number of freemen was still quite low. By 1807, there were forty-five freemen observed by Henry in Lower Red River; Peterson concluded that many of these freemen were on Peter Fidler's list of free Canadians, their Indian wives and children in 1814.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁷ "In October of 1803, Henry described a noisy caravan of employees off to the Hair Hills. The following selection from his description anticipates the much-noted flamboyance of the Métis buffalo hunters of the mid-nineteenth century." Peterson, *Gathering at the River*: 53. For the primary source, see Henry's Journal, Coues: I: 225-228, October 3, 1803. Henry noted: "Let an impartial eye look into the affair, to discover whence originates the unbounded extravagance of our **meadow gentry, both white and native**, and horses will be found one of the principal causes." Here Henry suggests that this plains culture included both French Canadians, their Indian wives and mixed-blood children. This is in contrast to the census he made in 1805 when he listed the wives and children of the "white" men [traders] are "white"; Henry's Journal, Coues: I: 282, Report of North west Population, 1805. Here he only used two categories of ethnicity: White and Indian, no "Métis" or intermediate category for the children. Reference to freemen by Henry in late 1805: Henry's Journal, Coues: 268-269: Pelletier, Desjardins & Pangman.

⁴⁷⁸ Alexander Henry's Journal, ed. Coues, I: 282: Report of Northwest population. Jennifer Brown pointed out that Henry called the Indian women "white" if they were living with "white men", i.e. the traders; in contradistinction to the Indian population in the next columns. Brown, *Strangers in Blood*: 96.

⁴⁷⁹ HBCA: Winnipeg Post Journal, B.235/a/3, fo. 59; Peter Fidler's List of Free Canadians, their Indian wives and children; this list may have been compiled on the order of

Peterson challenged the racist stereotype that the first settlers at Pembina were European immigrants. "Despite Lord Selkirk's efforts to attract settlers to the District, the number of freemen and Métis along the Red River was growing faster than the number of either company fur trade employees or European immigrants to the Selkirk, or Red River colony."⁴⁸⁰ Although this growth in the freemen families was documented by critics like Henry in Lower Red River, one must assume that the same process was happening at other Canadian posts along the fringe of plain and parkland where they had access to the bison resource, such as Qu'Appelle, Dauphin, English River and Fort des Prairies, making the growing freemen family population much larger than the above figures suggest; see Figure 6. Grant's Métis cavalry of 1815-16 came from these NWC centres as well as Red River, so they were not just Red River freemen, but also the sons of the NWC voyageurs at all the posts along the fringe of plain and parkland. Those that had an opportunity to hunt on horseback, learn plains skills and make pemmican became the freemen while those on Lake Winnipeg and in the forest belt did not make the same transition.

Although there is no list of the freemen observed and disparaged by Henry, one can assume that there was a core group of freemen of former XY men like Pelletier, Desjardins and Pangman, possibly augmented by some of Henry's own men after he left in 1808. On October 26, 1805, almost a year after the amalgamation, Henry complained about the XY freemen arriving at Pembina:

Pelletier, Desjardins, Bos. Pangman, and others, arrived from the Assiniboine - X.Y. freemen, the first of the kind who ever came to Panbian river, and as great a nuisance, according to their capacities, as their former employers. This quarter has hitherto been

Governor Miles McDonell who had referred to it, but it could not be found in his papers.

⁴⁸⁰ Peterson: 53-54.

free from men of that description, as I made it a rule never to give a man his freedom in this country on any conditions whatever, and I have always found the benefit of such a procedure.⁴⁸¹

This is an important clue because these men would all play an important role in the settlement of Red River after the European immigrants arrived. They were already established in Red River seven years before the immigrants landed at The Forks in 1812-13. One of them, Bostonais Pangman, was a Métis, the son of trader Peter Pangman, who would become one of Cuthbert Grant's lieutenants in the Fur Trade War. These men were laid off at the end of 1804 and were hunting in groups on the plains, but they were likely had established farms and gardens somewhere along the Red or Assiniboine and were enjoying the freedom from the authority of the companies. They would become famous for their potatoes in the establishment of food provisions for the new Selkirk Settlement.

5d) Primary Sources Not Racist; Good Sources of Métis Material Culture:

Although Alexander Henry often evinced a negative attitude to the freemen, it was not because he was racist and critical of their Indian families; he had at least two himself. He resented the competition that the freemen represented because the traders would have to pay more for bison meat and grease to make the much-needed pemmican. He gave examples of men like Joseph Cyr about whom he complained: "Those freemen are a nuisance in the country, and generally scoundrels; I never yet found one honest man amongst them".⁴⁸² By contrast, Henry

⁴⁸¹ Henry's Journal, Coues: 268-269; Gough: 178.

⁴⁸² Henry's Journal, Coues, I: 231; November 30, 1803. Cyr was a freeman who was hunting for Henry on April 24, 1802; p. 195. He deserted to Portage la Prairie on May 15; p. 197. He was again a hunter for Henry in 1803-04. Obviously, Henry could not control him and he resented Cyr's independence.

enthusiastically described Michel Langlois' cavalcade to the Hair [Pembina] Hills October 3, 1803 noting the clothing and material culture of his men, such as Antoine Payet, Madame Payet, Charles Bottineau, wife and 3 children, (born in the Pembina area), Auguste Brisbois, Michel Jasmin, Joseph and Madame Dubord, Antoine Thellier, Antoine La Pointe, Pouliot, Domin Livernois, Madame John Cameron ill on a travois, Madame Langlois and her sick daughter, providing a wonderful picture of the romantic plains lifestyle, a combination of French Canadian and Aboriginal (especially Assiniboine) culture.⁴⁸³ The horses and carts were a prominent feature. Henry noted the influence of Aboriginal culture, according the Indian wives respectful status by calling them "Madame". "The total forms a precession nearly a mile long, and appears like a large band of Assiniboines."⁴⁸⁴ Thus, we see that Henry's men who were going to the Hair Hills [Pembina Hills] had adapted to the plains and had made the transition to the buffalo hunter culture. This group traded with the Plains Cree and Assiniboine. It would be easy for them to desert as Cyr had done in 1802.

Henry's poetic description of his contracted *engagés* foreshadows the new category of freeman which was evolving around Pembina. They created difficulties for the traders because these men, like the Indians, understood supply and demand economics and could benefit from their entrepreneurial niche as plains providers, but Henry admired them and maybe even envied them. If he had not been a *bourgeois*, he probably would have been a freeman himself.

⁴⁸³ Henry's Journal, ed. Coues, I: 225-228, October 3, 1803.

⁴⁸⁴ Henry's Journal, Coues, I: 228. Peterson pointed out that the details anticipated "the much-noted flamboyance of the Métis buffalo hunters of the mid-nineteenth century; p. 53.

Alexander Henry had good qualities and one of them was his writing ability. His narrative is very detailed for the eight seasons he spent in the Red River Valley. He described the rich environment, the animals which provided meat (red deer and buffalo) and those that provided the furs they sought (beaver, wolf, fox, bears, muskrat). Henry loved the lush wild fruits and berries and did not hesitate to plant a garden and raise vegetables. Since he had moved from the north side of Lake Superior, his experience mirrored that of the Ojibwe who had moved around Lake Superior to the plains in the 1780s and 1790s, and, like them, he and his men who were newcomers had to learn plains skills. If the voyageurs had some experience in Red River like Desjardins, Delorme, and Desmarais, they passed on their expertise to the newcomers. These experienced voyageurs provided the basis for the development of the freeman and Metis culture without receiving any recognition by the bourgeois in his journal.

If Henry was an example, he and his men learned quickly and loved the freedom of the prairies. Perhaps the new environment transformed the voyageurs' psychological outlook. Having moved recently from Lake Superior, the prairies offered opportunities for getting away from the confines of a small post. They loved travelling on horseback, for hunting and sport. Since they spent a good deal of time with Jean Baptiste Desmarais the first winter, perhaps they learned from the more experienced guide. The men did not hesitate to venture out in summer or winter, with their dog teams, or horse and cariole.⁴⁸⁵ They could paddle a canoe or walk great

⁴⁸⁵ Henry, Coues: 191: November 30, 1801: "Men began to use sleighs and dogs." On December 21, 1801, Henry went to Riviere aux Gratiis to visit Desmarais by horse and cariole, p. 192.

distances.⁴⁸⁶ At Park River, buffalo hunting was easy when the herds migrated past the fort. On September 9, 1800, Henry and Desmarais pursued a herd that came to the river to drink.

Desmarais wounded a cow and they both chased her until they killed her. Then Desmarais butchered the carcass while Henry pursued a wounded bull. Then they realized another herd was running in the plain, perhaps chased by their enemies. Being uneasy, they took the meat back to the post before dark.⁴⁸⁷ A little experience taught the newcomers that hunting in larger groups was safer and rules were required to keep from running the herds out of shooting range. These ideas developed and experience refined them during the next 25 years until the Metis evolved a disciplined force governed by with a command structure and military rules, known as the “Rules of the Buffalo Hunt”, both for security from Dakota war parties as well as to avoid stampeding the herds.

5e) John Tanner’s Narrative, an Indian view of the Red River Fur Trade:

John Tanner’s narrative described some of the history of Ojibwe and Ottawa who moved from the Great Lakes to the prairies, and showed the interdependence of fur traders and local Indian trappers and hunters. His journal also provides an Indian insight into the Pembina fur trade and could be considered “written down Oral History” giving an Indigenous perspective.

Tanner’s adopted mother, an Ottawa woman called Netnokwe, first talked of going to Red River in the early 1790s when they were in the vicinity of Mackinaw, an important fur trade

⁴⁸⁶ On September 18, 1800, having seen buffalo nearby, Desmarais went to look for his horse, presumably he was on foot, p. 99 in Henry, Coues. On November 7, 1801, Desmarais and Old Mogue arrived at Park River Post. Having left Riviere aux Gratiis by canoe, they got caught in the freeze-up at Pembina on November 5, p. 191. So they must have travelled on foot on the river ice for two days to get to Park River.

⁴⁸⁷ Coues, Henry: 91-92.

rendezvous site on an island between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan.⁴⁸⁸ She wanted to join the relations of her husband.⁴⁸⁹ On arriving in what is now Manitoba, they spent winters up the Assiniboine River to hunt beaver, but travelled back to Lake Winnipeg with the traders (not identified), went up the Winnipeg River to Lake of the Woods and Rainy River.⁴⁹⁰ There was no fur trade post at the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers in the early 1800s. The main posts were at Rainy Lake, the mouth of the Winnipeg River (Bas de la Riviere Winnipic), Pembina, Portage la Prairie (on the route to Lake Manitoba) and Brandon House or La Souris; see Figure 5a. Although smaller posts were opened and closed on an annual basis, these regional centres lasted longer.

Tanner's narrative also proved a useful source of Indian geographical knowledge. For example, he described the Indian route to Red River from Lake of the Woods which went over the height of land to Roseau River, a tributary of the Red River.⁴⁹¹ La Verendrye's nephew, La Jemeray, had pioneered this approach fifty years earlier.⁴⁹² This route did not work for the

⁴⁸⁸ Tanner, p. 26. See *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, ed. By Helen Hornbeck Tanner, Newberry Library, Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1987, Map 20: Indian Villages, c. 1810: pp. 98-99.

⁴⁸⁹ Tanner, p. 19.

⁴⁹⁰ Tanner, pp. 26-30.

⁴⁹¹ Tanner, p. 45. "We then returned to Lake of the Woods. From this lake the Indians have a road to go to Red River which the white men never follow; this is by the way of the Muskeek, or swamp carrying place." Tanner's name for Roseau River is "Begwionusk" which means "cow parsley".

⁴⁹² This Indian route from Lake of the Woods to Roseau River which Tanner used in 1816 to attack the NWC at Pembina and The Forks is not on La Jemeray's map of 1733, suggesting that possibly he learned about it while at Lake of the Woods. La Jemeray is credited with being the first French man to reach Red River down the Roseau, but obviously he depended on Indian

traders as the rivers were too shallow for canoes loaded with trade goods and furs, but small canoes with small families could easily make it. The Ottawa in Tanner's small family hunting group camped for some time on Roseau Lake (which is now in Minnesota and has been drained by local farmers) and then moved onto the plains to hunt bison for their food supply. Tanner recalled:

Netnokwa determined to go with her family to the trading house of Mr. Henry, who has since drowned in the Columbia River... This place is near that where a settlement has since been made, called Pembina. With the people of the fur-traders [Ojibwe and their Canadian relatives] we hunted all the remainder of the winter. In the spring [c. 1802] we returned, in company with these lodges of Indians to the lake where we had left our canoes [Roseau Lake]. We found all our property safe...It was now our intention to return to Lake Huron, and to dispose of our peltries at Mackinac....⁴⁹³

Roseau Lake was one of the winter camping spots where the Canadians went *en déroutine* to trade and collect furs. The fact that Tanner mentions "Mr. Henry" suggests that this first visit occurred early in Henry's sojourn at Pembina between 1801 and 1808. Although these small, extended family groups of native trappers worked very hard to assemble beaver pelts for trade, Tanner described how they very often lost their profits either through bad luck (losing their receipt in a house fire), theft or intimidation by the traders or getting drunk and swindled.⁴⁹⁴ Although Henry's own journal shows him to be rather impatient and demanding of his Ojibwe trading

guides to make this exploration.

⁴⁹³ Tanner, p. 50. They went to Grand Portage instead where they traded their furs to a man called Lafromboise of the NWC. But they lost the receipt for the value when their lodge burned down, so they never made a profit from that long trading trip to Lake Superior.

⁴⁹⁴ Tanner, p.50: a pack was stolen and his mother "did not hesitate to ascribe the theft to the trader" at Rainy Lake. P. 52: lost the receipt in the burning lodge. P. 62. "Some traders canoes came along, and the old woman, not having entirely recovered from her drunken frolic, sold my fish for rum."

partners, Tanner did not criticize Henry as he did other traders. Tanner's second mention of the Pembina trading post was about a year later:

We went by way of the Muskeeg carrying place to Red River...At this place since called Pembinah, where the Nebininnah-ne-sebee [High Bush Cranberry River] enters the Red River, had formerly been a trading house. We found no people, whites or Indians; and as we had not plenty of provisions, we went on all night, hoping to meet with some people....we met the traders coming up to *Nebeninnah-ne-sebee* and gave them part of the meat we had taken from the bull. Without any other delay, we went on to the Prairie Portage of the Assiniboine River.⁴⁹⁵

Tanner's use of the Indian term for "highbush cranberry" confirms the translation of other authors such as Keating in 1823 for the origin of the name of Pembina.⁴⁹⁶ The HBC name for Pembina was "Summerberry River", a translation of the Ojibwe word as Summerberry was the highbush cranberry. In northern Minnesota, what Canadians call a "Saskatoon berry" is known as the "Juneberry", a different species. Tanner's group probably arrived at Pembina in the summer when they went to Grand Portage or Fort William for the annual rendezvous with the Montreal partners and their Indian customers may have dispersed.

Henry's stockaded fort at the mouth of the Pembina River protected his men and their families from attacks by the Dakota/Sioux and they learned to be cautious when travelling near the plains. There was considerable change obvious between their first seasons at Park River and Pembina. They initially hunted buffalo on foot, alone or with one or two companions. After being on the Red River for eight seasons, Henry and his men had learned to hunt in groups and be wary

⁴⁹⁵ Tanner, pp. 62-63.

⁴⁹⁶ W.H. Keating, p. 38: suggests that Pembina was "named by the Chippewas *Anepeminan sipi* which name has been shorted and corrupted into Pembina (*Viburnum oxycoccus*). "Sipi" in Ojibwe means river. So the fur trade forts at Pembina were located at the Forks of the Pembina and Red Rivers because the rivers were transportation routes. There were few horses in use in the early 1800s.

of ambush. They hunted on horseback, not on foot, and used Red River carts to bring their meat and grease from the plains.⁴⁹⁷ On July 22, 1808, before embarking for Fort William, Henry described the last attack by the Sioux. The Indians were asleep in their tents, "pitched in a range on the first back between the river and the fort." There were 22 warriors (men in arms), 50 women and many children. When they were awoken with shots, they panicked and shouted for help. Henry and his nine men gave them safe haven in the fort. With the help of Henry's cannon and supplies of guns and ammunition, they fought off the attack. It was still dangerous.⁴⁹⁸ Plains skills (military and survival) were necessary for life in this environment which was rich in resources, but still dangerous because of the periodic warfare and skirmishes of local tribes.

Although these fur trade authors often did not mention their native families in their published journals, they documented their existence through wills and other documents. These extended families stayed in the vicinity of the fur trade forts where they received protection against the attacks of the Dakota/Sioux and these family ties benefitted both fur trader and natives because the trader had Indians close by that he could count on for help, sustenance and expertise while the Indians gained preferential treatment, or so they expected in the reciprocal nature of their culture.

⁴⁹⁷ Henry claimed credit for bringing the idea of the two-wheeled carts of Quebec to Red River. They originally cut the ends off trees for the wheels (November 15, 1801; Coues:191; see note, Gough:123: Henry used the carts to transport meat from Hair Hills and Reed Lake, September 20, 1801; May 5, 1803: "This invention is worth four horses.") It is just as likely that one of his men suggested the idea, or that it was a joint invention.

⁴⁹⁸ Henry, Coues: 442-438. Several groups of freemen coming from the Hair Hills or from the south narrowly missed being attacked. Henry described their escape as "astonishing", p. 438.

Alexander Henry had hired a chief named Le Boeuf ("The Buffalo") as his hunter November 2, 1802, stating he was known among the "Saulteurs" as one of their best hunters. This Ojibwe hunter obtained his name from his superior abilities to hunt the plains animal.

He has often, even in seasons when there is no snow, approached a herd, and then when on his firing they ran off, chased them on foot for a long distance, loading and firing rapidly and keeping in the thick of the herd until he killed as many as he wished. He came in today with a loup-cervier (coyote) that he had caught in the plains in a fair chase and killed with his small ax; he certainly is an extraordinary runner. He is a tall man, spare and lean, of a mild disposition, but wicked when provoked to anger.⁴⁹⁹

In keeping with Indian and fur trade custom, The Buffalo had offered Henry his eldest daughter when the trader arrived in 1800; he refused to take her, but apparently changed his mind, because, according to his will, his country wife was The Daughter of the Buffalo (later known as Magdeleine Saulteaux) and had four children with her.⁵⁰⁰ He called them: Elizabeth, Julia, Ann and William. His sons by his first Ojibwe wife were 1) John Alexander; 2) George; and 3) Robert. Their mother was never identified by name in the will.⁵⁰¹ Through his daughters, Alexander Henry had Métis grandchildren. The descendants of Henry's daughters (Betsy Henry

⁴⁹⁹ Henry's Journal, Coues: I: 205-206, November 2, 1802.

⁵⁰⁰ Henry's Journal, Coues: I: offer of eldest daughter, August 22, 1800, p. 58. On Henry's list of Indians, #25: Boeuf, The Buffalo, Indian name not listed, p. 54. Henry calls him a chief and gives him spring presents, p. 196. For Henry's will, see Gough's edition, "Introduction", lxvix. The Ojibwe word for buffalo is: MASHKODE BIZHIKI; *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, ed. John D. Nichols and Early Nyholm, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.

⁵⁰¹ For information on the Métis family of his daughter, Elizabeth, a.k.a. Betsy Henry, see Ruth Swan & Edward A. Jerome, "A Mother and Father of Pembina: A NWC Voyageur Meets the Granddaughter of The Buffaloe", *Actes du 32ème Congrès des Algonquinistes*, Winnipeg: l'Université du Manitoba, Winnipeg, 2001: 527-551. She married Jean Baptiste Collin of Thunder Bay. Her sister Julie Henry married Jean Baptiste Lepine and was the mother of Ambroise Lepine, Louis Riel's Adjutant General.

Collin, Julie Henry Lepine and Nancy Henry Campbell) can be traced through church, census and HB affidavits in Red River to the 1870s and beyond. Through these families, some of Henry's descendants like the Jerome family of Hallock, Mn., or the Weigle/Lepine family of Winnipeg, Mb., have lived in the Red River Valley for two hundred years.

Although Henry did not always take seriously the threat of the Dakota/Sioux and discounted the anxieties of the Indians (Cree, Ojibwe and Assiniboine) and his men, they did have reason to worry and the threat was real.⁵⁰² On May 12, 1802, an Ojibwe family from Red Lake brought the news that seven "Saulteurs" had been killed by the Sioux in that area.⁵⁰³ Another Minnesota attack occurred while Ojibwe were hunting beaver at Folle Avoine River. Henry learned on September 15, 1806, that two men had been killed by 50 Dakota/Sioux: one of his hunters, Naubeenvishcung and a Canadian named Charette from Michilimackinac.⁵⁰⁴ There were several attacks on Henry's post, as well as the ambush at Tongue River, a tributary of the Pembina, when he was at the Fort William Rendezvous in the summer of 1805. Henry's "beau-pere" and "belle-mere" and several children were killed.⁵⁰⁵ They were his wife's family.

Henry learned of the attack a month later when he returned and gave the Ojibwe supplies to organize a war party and go after the Dakota in their own territory. Tanner wrote about the

⁵⁰² On May 24, 1802, Henry wrote: "The Indians give daily alarms and would persuade me of danger; but I am no longer a stranger and not easily imposed on", Henry, Coues:197-198.

⁵⁰³ Henry, Coues:197, attack on Red Lake Ojibwe.

⁵⁰⁴ Henry, Coues:423, attack on Ojibwe at Folle Avoine. This Charette may have been Simon Charette who was with the Cadottes in 1799; see Coues' note.

⁵⁰⁵ Henry, Coues: attack on Tongue River: 260-261. The Dakota killed or took prisoner 14 persons - men, women and children.

same incident as he was part of the party that attempted to avenge this crime. Henry gave the war party ammunition and supplies to avenge the deaths of his wife's family. They travelled south into Minnesota, but were not successful in catching the murderers.

There was also danger at home such as the possibility of accidental death. For example, Venant St. Germain was accidentally shot by another NWC man, Joseph Rainville, entirely by accident in 1804.⁵⁰⁶ Their former XY opposition leader, J. Duford [Desford, Desfault] had threatened Henry's assistant, Pierre Bonza, in 1803 and Henry gave him a beating; Duford was shot accidentally by an Indian in a drunken state when a gun went off prematurely.⁵⁰⁷

Tanner's description of the customs of the Red River Ottawa and Ojibwe in the late 1790s and early 1800s gives a cultural baseline for activities of this group. It is useful to compare the practices of various people in the fur trade to see who was continuing to use Ojibwe customs and who was using Christian/Euro-Canadian ones and/or both. As Ritterbush and Peers have noted, the Ojibwe who moved onto the plains west of Red River continued most of their cultural activities that they had developed in the forests around the Great Lakes and west of Lake Superior.⁵⁰⁸ These were somewhat different from the Plains Cree and Assiniboiné who hunted

⁵⁰⁶ Henry received the news of St. Germain's death on August 19, 1804; Henry, Coues: 249.

⁵⁰⁷ Threatened Bonza, November 6, 1803; Coues: 231. Death of Duford, Coues: 270, October 31, 1805.

⁵⁰⁸ Lauren Ritterbush, *Culture Change and Continuity: Ethnohistoric Analysis of Ojibwa and Ottawa Adjustment to the Prairies*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1990:151. She concluded that the equestrian, bison-hunting culture of the Assiniboiné, plains Cree and freemen/metis might have influenced the adjustment of the Ojibwa to the plains, but it was not obvious during the "initial period of occupation of the prairies." Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada, 1780-1870*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994:54; Peers agreed with Ritterbush about the cultural continuity of the Western Ojibwa on the prairies.

different animals and did not have forest food resources such as wild rice and fish. Since their language was different from Assiniboine, but similar to Cree, the Ojibwe, or Saulteaux as they were known in Manitoba, brought a different cultural influence to the Red River Valley.

Christianity may have represented a set of cultural values that voyageurs brought with them, but it was not practised because there were no priests or ministers. It would be an educated guess to suggest that most of the freemen did not practise Christianity when they were in the *pays d'en haut*. As the Metis developed a separate cultural identity from their Indian relatives, some continued to practice Aboriginal ceremonies while others, especially after the arrival of Christian missionaries in 1818, adopted the Christian beliefs taught by the Catholics and Protestants.⁵⁰⁹ For example, on May 18, 1801, Michel Langlois' wife was initiated into the Grand Medicine Society of the Ojibwe at Reed River [Roseau R.] along with two young men and a woman.⁵¹⁰ This is a good clue that Langlois' wife was Ojibwe. It is generally difficult to learn about the spirituality of the freemen since they did not keep memoirs. Henry himself was sceptical of these ceremonies and demonstrated the kind of newcomer disapproval that Warren stated the Indians despised in the English traders.⁵¹¹ Michel Langlois, Henry's assistant, may have been the kind of

⁵⁰⁹ Traditional Aboriginal spirituality is seen to be inclusive, so that new ideas and rituals can be added into old routines whereas Euro-Canadian and American Christianity tended to be exclusive and missionaries taught that native customs and beliefs were wrong and had to be eliminated. Good Christian natives were not encouraged to maintain their old ways. John Webster Grant, *Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries and the Indians of Canada in Encounter Since 1534*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984. An example of traditional customs was the practice of the Grand Medicine Society (Midewiwin), Wabbano and Shaking Tent ceremonies described by Alexander Henry.

⁵¹⁰ Henry, Gough: Mediwin, Grand Medicine: 118-119; initiation of Langlois' "Girl":118.

⁵¹¹ William Warren, the Ojibwe historian, suggested that the Ojibwe loved the French because "they respected their religious rites and ceremonies, and they "never laughed" at their

French Canadian trader who was more diplomatic and did not insult his hosts by questioning their religious rituals. He may have participated in them himself. It is likely that before the first missionaries arrived in 1818, these Indianized Frenchmen often participated in native ceremonies when offered the opportunity when living with their Indian relatives.

It would probably be misleading to think of Ojibwe speakers as a homogenous "nation", but they certainly shared common cultural values and beliefs, language and religious beliefs being good examples.⁵¹² Tanner remained sceptical of Ojibwe spirituality, but he acknowledged that some of their medicines and his mother's dreams were effective in aiding their hunting ability.⁵¹³ Tanner's world view was probably similar to many of the Indianized Frenchmen he encountered in the fur trade. Tanner's own family showed this transition from traditional Aboriginal culture to the Metis identity in succeeding generations. One of his sons continued the

superstitious beliefs and ignorance. They fully appreciated, and honored accordingly the many noble traits and qualities possessed by these bold and wild hunters of the forest." *History of the Ojibwe People*, 132. His informant for diplomacy between the French and the Ojibwe was mixed-blood trader, Michel Cadotte of La Point [Wisconsin], his uncle.

⁵¹² See "The Chippewa and Their Neighbours: A Critical Review" by Jennifer Brown and Laura Peers, in *The Chippewa and their Neighbours: A Study in Ethnohistory*, by Harold Hickerson, Prospect Heights, Ill: Waveland Press, 1988: 140-142: "Clans, Resources and the Question of 'Atomism' ".

⁵¹³ Tanner's Narrative: p. 184. He described two spirits which acted as intercessors for Ojibwe prayers: Nanabush and Musekkummik Okwi, the earth or great-grandmother of all. He noted that Nanabush sent down roots and medicines of sovereign power to heal their sicknesses, and in times of hunger, to enable them to kill the animals of the chase. On page 185, he linked the origin of the Metai [Midiwiwin ceremonies] with Nanabush who challenged Gitche-manito and was appeased with the gift of the ceremonies. "Hence it is that good Indians never dig up the roots of which their medicines are made, without at the same time depositing in the earth something as an offering to Mesukkummik Okwi."

Ottawa and Ojibwe traditions of his mother's people while a younger son, James Tanner, became a Baptist minister and was killed in Red River in the aftermath of the Resistance of 1869-70.

5f) Origins of the Red River Valley Métis, 1800-1808

In order to find the origins of the Red River Valley Métis, it is necessary for modern researchers to cull through the memoirs and post journals looking for references to the French Canadian voyageurs and their sons who later became "freemen". We have looked for French names, such as Desjardins, Delorme, and Desmarais, assuming that the origins of the French Metis were French Canadian fathers from Quebec or the Great Lakes. We have also looked for the names of Scottish and English fur traders who fathered descendants of the future Metis nation, such as John MacDonell, John Sayer and Alexander Henry (Chaboillez was an exception as a French post master). If these fur traders were Catholic, like MacDonell, their children were more likely to marry and integrate into the French Metis community. Some of the first freemen mentioned by Henry were Joseph Cyr, Antoine Pelletier, Desjardins and Bostonais Pangman who would a decade later play a leading role as Cuthbert Grant's lieutenant in charge of the Pembina Métis.

Although Peterson wrote about the ethnogenesis of the material culture with the emphasis on Red River carts and the new category of freeman, she did not name many of these families whose fathers started out as voyageurs at the Pembina posts and whose mothers were local Indian women, perhaps because she did not do archival research.⁵¹⁴ Peterson herself did not rely on genealogical research and family links; she assumed that people with the same names as Great

⁵¹⁴ The gender perspective on Indian women originated in the work of Jennifer Brown and Sylvia Van Kirk in their dissertations published in 1980. See *Strangers in Blood* and *Many Tender Ties*.

Lakes traders were related.⁵¹⁵ Without the genealogical links, it is difficult to determine who was of mixed ancestry and who was French Canadian, but Peter Fidler's 1814 list suggests that over 50% of the men (25/42) were not considered "Canadian"; and thus, must have been from outside Quebec; many of them must have been like the Collins or the Cadottes with Great Lakes Aboriginal ancestors. Although they may not have called themselves "Métis" as Peterson suggested, they were Indianized Frenchmen whether they had Native mothers or not. Only 5/42 had British names.

The ethnogenesis of Métis culture in the first decade of the 1800s resulted from a number of special conditions demonstrated through the Pembina fur trade: 1) The transition of ecozones from forest to parkland and plain required new technology and skills, especially the transition from voyageur lifestyle to that of the buffalo hunter, as suggested by Peterson.. 2) The bison resource and the use of the horse led to the development of the Red River cart, an important symbol and ethnic marker of Métis material culture. The cart facilitated hunting in groups and transporting large harvests of plains resources, especially to make pemmican, so that posts along the Red and Assiniboine became provisioning posts after the furs ran out. 3) The geographic location of the different Indian groups which coalesced around the Pembina region resulted in alliances by the traders with the Ojibwe, Plains Cree and Assiniboine while inheriting the enmity of the Dakota. The warfare which traders encountered which made the Red River Valley dangerous was inherited from previous Indian alliances and was not caused by the fur trade; nevertheless, this Indian warfare influenced the course of settlement as Pembina was considered

⁵¹⁵ "[Chaboillez'] non-Indian servants included men named Chevalier, LeDuc, Dubois, Roy, Bertrand, and Cadotte, members of well-established Great Lakes trading families of mixed French and native ancestry." Peterson: 50.

a dangerous posting. It also would discourage freemen from settling on the plains, for example, at Turtle River south of Pembina, without the protection of a fort; as a result, The Forks became more attractive by 1812. 4) Interaction between Pembina traders and native women while *en dérouine* resulted in marriage between the newcomers and Indian women. The population of children of mixed ancestry, specifically the sons of these unions, as well as voyageur sons along the fringe of plain and parkland (from places like Qu'Appelle, Dauphin, English River and Forts de Prairies) a decade later would proclaim the "The New Nation". 5) The amalgamation of the companies in 1804 and the subsequent unemployment of many French (and a few Scottish) voyageurs led to the development of the freeman identity and culture as these men had the opportunity of supporting their families on the plains through the buffalo hunt and were no longer dependent on bourgeois wintering partners and Montreal financiers to give them orders. The egalitarian organization of these groups, inherited from their Indian kin, and their economic independence from the companies and the posts led these people to call themselves "les Gens libres [the Free People - Otipemisiwak]."⁵¹⁶ This psychological independence, resistance to the hierarchical social order of the Europeans and Canadians and a resentment of the racism that these cultures imported would subsequently be a hallmark of Métis identity and culture.

In the process, some of the lower-ranked voyageurs became impatient with their working conditions and pay. They found that, like the Indians, they could maintain their families independently on the rich resources of the plains, like Louis Ménard, René Jussaume,

⁵¹⁶ Diane Payment used the Cree word in the title of her book on the history of the St. Laurent and Batoche Métis. Senator Ed Head, a descendant of trader John Sayer and famous Métis trader, Guillaume Sayer, also used this word; he grew up in the northern Cree-speaking community of Sherridan, Manitoba; personal communication.

McCracken, and Racette. Some deserted or disappeared like Miniclier and Jean Baptiste Desmarais. They chose to work when they needed it or not. As long as the buffalo migrated through the valley near Pembina, they obtained food and leather; luxury goods were available from the posts and their Indian kin provided male company and female sustenance.

After the consolidation of the XYC and the NWC in 1804, there were more freemen with whom they could hunt and travel in groups. Traders like Henry did not approve of these freemen, outside of the control and discipline of the bourgeois and wintering partners, but the process could not be averted as long as there was a surplus of labour and trained voyageurs on the prairies who needed to support their families.

The fact that Alexander Henry wrote negatively about the freemen did not make his opinions racist. His objections to these competitors were based on the economic situation he faced as a wintering partner. The freemen were a threat to his business because of their expertise in the fur trade. He had at least twice married native women according to Indian custom and had children of dual ancestry. Henry did not cast aspersions on people of mixed ancestry like some traders in the later period; for example: Sir George Simpson who became Governor of the Northern Department of the HBC who had several native partners and children. Henry's negative comments reflect more the class perspective of a *Bourgeois* rather than someone who disparaged Indian ancestry. Sources such as Chaboillez' and Henry's texts were later misrepresented by twentieth century writers who imposed their own negative cultural values on their views of Indian life at Pembina at the turn of the 19th century.

French Anthropologist Marcel Giraud (researching in the 1930s) ascribed negative qualities such as violence, instability and weakness as stereotypical characteristics linked to the

freemen's Métis offspring.⁵¹⁷ Giraud reflected the ideas of biological racism which have since been discredited scientifically, but whose ideas are still embedded in the cultural stereotypes of Western Canada. These ideas continue to result in racial discrimination against visible minorities with Aboriginal features.

Giraud was typical of academics like G.F.G. Stanley and W.L. Morton who believed that Aboriginal background was inferior to that of the Canadians and European immigrants, most of whom came from a peasant background. Gerhard Ens challenged these racist stereotypes of Giraud, Stanley and Morton by suggesting that the "nomadism" associated with the buffalo hunters was the best economic choice for adult men living in the Red River Valley during most of the 19th century.⁵¹⁸ He argued that by the 1840s the hunt and subsequent bison robe trade was a more successful adaptation than the primitive agriculture of the Selkirk colonists, but this economic choice backfired in the 1870s when the bison herds were exterminated. "The Metis

⁵¹⁷ Marcel Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*: I: 347-354. Giraud discussed both the good and bad qualities of the freemen, but he emphasized that they were nomadic, wild like Indians, schooled in nature and uncontrolled by Euro-Canadian taboos. Evidence of this "uncontrolled" behaviour was having sex with Indian women without the sanction of priests. He ascribed their nomadic lifestyle as linked to their association with Indians, rather than a social and economic choice. Other historians like W.L. Morton also employed rhetorical stereotypes embedded in Canadian culture, and assumed that nomadic freemen and Métis were easily manipulated dupes of the NWC partners. "The Nor'Westers....assured the *métis* that they were a "new nation", intermediate between the whites and Indians, and that they possessed through their Indian mothers an unextinguished title to the lands of the Northwest. They also instilled in them some vague military notions, much in vogue in those years of war, which were speedily assimilated into the custom of the buffalo hunt. These wild, proud men constituted something of a military force in a vast territory where there was no organized police power." Using words like "wild" suggests foreshadowing of the violence of the Seven Oaks incident [La Grenouillère] which he described three pages later as "this sudden and deadly burst of passion at Seven Oaks"; *Manitoba: A History*, 1957, 1979: 51-54.

⁵¹⁸ Gerhard Ens, *From Homeland to Hinterland*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996: introduction.

identity in Red River was primarily an ethnic identity based on an occupational specialization in the fur trade....Once Red River ceased to provide an occupational niche in the fur trade, Red River ceased to be a homeland."⁵¹⁹

Unfortunately, Ens only told part of the story. The part of the nomadic stereotype he ignored was related to settlement. Ens believed that the Métis were "proto-capitalists" who left Red River to follow the herds as their population moved west. This argument implicitly reinforces the nomadic stereotype. Although Giraud did very detailed research on the formation of the freemen families, he ignored their on-going connection to place and their desire to settle in the rich buffalo plains of the Red River Valley.

W.L. Morton took this one step further by suggesting that the *métis* lifestyle at Pembina was "uncivilized" and must inevitably give way to the higher scale of Euro-Canadian culture based on the farming, Christianity and a colonial education system.⁵²⁰ Morton and other writers like him believed that colonialism was justified and inevitable because of the inherent inferiority

⁵¹⁹ Ens: 175 in conclusions.

⁵²⁰ In describing Pembina in 1821, when there were 500 *métis* at Pembina and 419 at The Forks, Morton wrote: "there could be no stronger comment on the effect of the ill-success of agriculture and the pull of the nomad life than the disparity in numbers between the colonists at the Forks and the *métis* at Pembina. The truth was that the rude community on Red River [Pembina] was much more a casual settlement than it was a planned colony." *Manitoba: A History*, p. 61. In comparing non-Aboriginal French Canadians with the *métis*, Morton let his prejudices slip even more: "These French Canadian colonists lived chiefly at St. Boniface, where they furnished a steady element among the fickle *métis*. They brought the sober industry and steady morals of old Quebec to the Northwest and maintained in Red River the civilized manners and social gaiety of their ancestral way of life. From this group most of the leaders of the French community of Red River were to trace their origin." Morton: 63. One suspects he was referred to the Lagimodière, grandparents of Louis Riel; but I would argue that the former were famous because they were relatives of the famous Métis leader; he was not famous because of them. This shows how racist notions influenced past historical writing; the racism was in the interpretation in secondary literature, rather than in the primary sources.

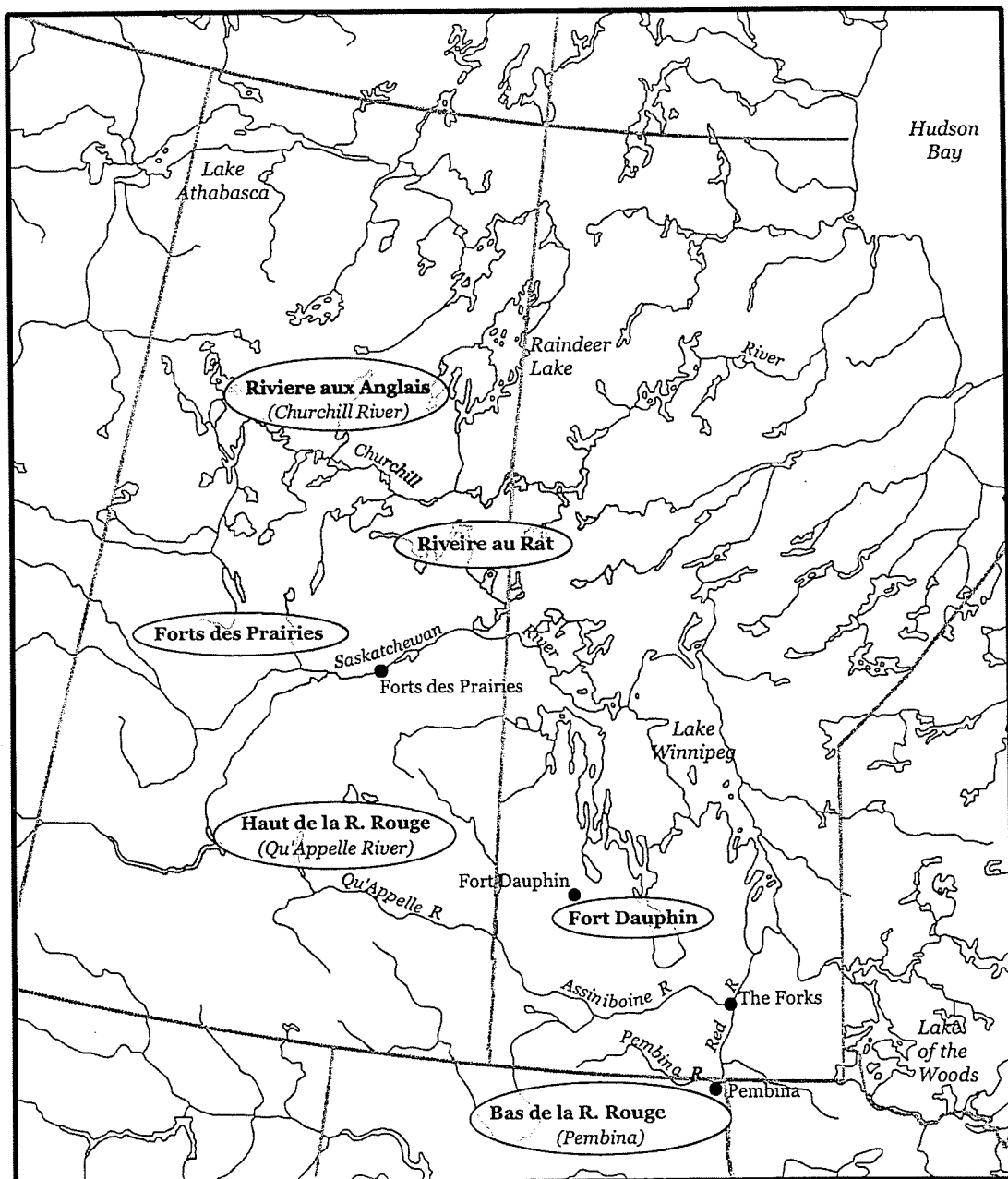
of the indigenous residents. Although Ens challenged both Giraud and Morton for their racist stereotypes, his own conclusions were internally contradictory. Ens believed that the Métis were rational capitalists in the 1840s, but were irrational hunters in the 1870s who doomed their communities by choosing to move west despite the obvious economic advantages of claiming their indigenous rights to land in Red River. All these writers implicitly restated the nomadic myth and implied an inferiority of *métis* making bad decisions about their future because they moved around too much and did not stay in one place long enough to claim it. An exception to the racist stereotype was the Lagimodière family who portrayed a model which better fit the non-Aboriginal view of history: the voyageur father worked for Lord Selkirk, thereby putting him into the winning camp and he married a white wife, unlike most of the freemen. Despite the fact that his wife, Anne Marie Gaboury, had to adapt plains skills and live like a Native women, she was praised for her Catholic values and her interest in raising vegetables. Promotion of the family was at the expense of the majority of freemen who married Native women and became Indianized Frenchmen, hunting buffalo and trading pemmican.⁵²¹

The next decade will deal more with the freemen families and their desire to make Red River their permanent base to challenge the nomadic stereotype. Although not the heroes of the documentary records of the 1790s and early 1800s, like their literate *bourgeois* or the famous Indian captive, John Tanner, these children of the voyageurs and traders are not invisible to the modern eye. Through Métis genealogies, we can document their existence before the Selkirk Settlers arrived in 1812. Their shadows and scattered references hint at a story which promises

⁵²¹ Abbé G. Dugast, "The First Canadian Woman in the North West", *Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba*, Winnipeg.

more excitement as the competition between the Canadians and HBC heated up. When Alexander Henry in 1808 moved along the North Saskatchewan River, he took his wife and children with him, but many of the freemen and their families stayed in the Red River Valley and continued to hunt and trade at the Pembina posts. The next decade saw these families in the Fur Trade War, violence at The Forks and a new sense of themselves as the Bois Brulés.

Figure 6. Communities of Freeman and Grant's Métis Cavalry, 1815-16



N.B. Exact numbers of Métis Cavalry unknown.

Chapter Six: 1808 to 1821: Colony and Conflict: The Emergence of the Bois Brulés/Métis

The period after Alexander Henry's departure from Pembina in 1808 to 1821 in the Red River Valley was one of conflict which resulted in the violent deaths of settlers, fur traders and freemen, partly because of the escalating violence over competition between the fur company rivals and because the Hudson's Bay Company led by the Lord Selkirk agreed to the establishment of a new colony of farmers at the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers⁵²². Not wanting to return to Quebec where their ethnically mixed families might not be accepted, the *Canadiens* chose to become *gens libres* or "freemen".

These freemen, their native wives and mixed descent children increasingly grew in numbers, with the men doing seasonal jobs for the traders while supporting their families with food from the plains (buffalo meat and pemmican, dried meat mixed with grease and berries), from the forest (deer and moose), or by fishing, while collecting wild fruit in the summer and whatever "country provisions" they could gather or trade with the local Indians. Their population increased as men were laid off by the companies, through consolidation (the union of NWC and XYZ in 1804), retrenchment (HBC policies to be more competitive) or desertion.

It was not just the lower level engages and servants who became "Indianized Frenchmen" or just the French Canadians. There were "Indianized" men of many different ethnic groups.

⁵²² Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM), Selkirk Papers, v. 67: "Return of officers and men massacred at Red River 19th June 1816 by Halfbreeds and others in the service of the NWC of traders from Montreal", p. 18067. This list does not include the two Metis in Grant's Party: Battosh (Letendre) who was killed and young Trottier, wounded. Report to the House of Commons, *Papers Relating to the Red River Settlement, 1815-1819, State Historical Society Collections (SHSND) Collections*, v. 4.

Most of the fur traders, bourgeois and engages, officers and servants, Scotchmen, Orkneyman, Black or New Englander, adapted to the country by marrying local women. Their children were ethnically mixed, but generally the fact that their parents were Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal led to a mixing of cultural traits which developed into new mixed cultures of the plains. It was a multicultural mix with Cree, Assiniboine and Ojibwe being the dominant Aboriginal influences and French Canadian and Scottish being the dominant non-Aboriginal influences in the Red River Valley.⁵²³ Mixed languages evolved also, with the dominant ones being Michif (Cree-French) and Bungee (Cree-English with some Gaelic and Orkney influences).

The Red River Valley during the fur trade was a community built on opposing forces. On the one hand, the centripetal force of community attracted ethnically mixed families that were part-Aboriginal and part non-Aboriginal, to the Red River Valley, families who needed a base where their children could be educated without enduring the racism and ostracism of their home societies in Europe and eastern Canada.⁵²⁴ Unfortunately those negative racist values were imported along with the education and missionization, creating a centrifugal force away from the centre, so that in future decades the mixed children of the voyageurs and traders would be set

⁵²³ Obviously, in other regions like the Athabasca where Métis communities developed, where there were other Aboriginal groups and non-Aboriginal ethnic groups, there were other combinations of cultural features, such as Iroquois voyageurs in Alberta, Dene in the North West Territories and various groups in the Rocky Mountains and west coast. See Richard Slobodin, "Subarctic Metis", in *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 6, "Subarctic", ed. by July Jelm, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press: 361-71. See also various articles in *The New Peoples: Being & Becoming Métis in North America*, ed. Jacqueline Peterson & Jennifer S.H. Brown, Winnipeg, University of Manitoba Press, 1985.

⁵²⁴ Jennifer Brown, "Fur Trade as Centrifuge", *North American Indian Anthropology*, Raymond De Mallie & Alonzo Oriz, eds., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995: 197-219.

against each other in opposing parishes of Catholic and Anglican, and socialized with imported rivalries based on the competing Euro-Canadian cultures and languages of French and English. Through this socialization and colonial process, these Euro-Canadian languages and cultures would dominate the Aboriginal influences, but the first missionaries did not appear in Red River until 1818, so that the initial suggestion of a colony established by Lord Selkirk had an attraction for fur trade families in both companies, the HBC and NWC, when it was first proposed at the beginning of the next decade [1810].

Living together away from the posts was a catalyst for this development of the freeman/Bois Brulé/Métis culture. The threat of Sioux attacks forced them to band together, forming strong communities. As well as inventing new ways to offset local military problems such as hunting on horseback and in large groups, they became economically successful and independent of the control of their former employers.

There are few historic written sources which document the perspective of the freemen and their families or of the local Aboriginals. The freemen were successful entrepreneurs, and being outside the control of the bourgeois drove the traders to make critical comments. The obvious success of the *gens libres* in living independently from the posts made the traders angry and prone to write about them in negative terms. Fur trader journals were one-sided and did not reflect the perspective of the freemen/Bois Brûlés/Métis. Although not racist, the limited nature of these primary sources have been a problem for historians and may have contributed to the construction of racial stereotypes in twentieth century historical writing. When Henry dismissed the freemen as “dishonest”, it was because they were effective competitors against him and he

could not control their economic activities.⁵²⁵ Unfortunately, some historians take this character assessment literally and believe that these *gens libres* with Aboriginal background suffered a fatal flaw because of their biological inheritance.

In 1818....came Rev. J.N. Provencher and Rev. S. Dumoulin of the Church of Rome, to resume the work of the Catholic missionaries in the Northwest and begin the work of Christianizing and **pacifying the turbulent *bois-brûlés***. With them came some French Canadian families from Lower Canada to give a firm core of civilized folk to the farming settlement of the **half-wild *métis***.⁵²⁶

This is how history perpetuates racist ideas because the idea of the inferiority of visible minorities is so strongly embedded in our culture.

Another problem with the sources is that the non-Aboriginals who wrote them were stationed at posts, many in the Red River Valley or along the Assiniboine, a major tributary of the Red. The story of the freemen families and their evolution into communities of *Bois Brûlés* or Métis, both at the Forks and Pembina happened across the Prairies and all over the Canadian North West to the Athabasca and North West Territories and northern plains states wherever the fur trade pioneered and continued as seen in the previous chapters about the fur trade along the fringe of plain and parkland. The purpose of focussing on Pembina is to show that there was a "Forks myopia". Before Fort Gibraltar was built in 1810, the Red River fur trade was at Pembina, not the Forks.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁵ Henry's Journal, Gough: 151: November 30, 1803.

⁵²⁶ W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, University of Toronto Press: 1957, 1979: 56.

⁵²⁷ For example, in Masson's list of staff of the NWC in 1804, he lists *Le bas de la Rivière Rouge* [Lower Red River which is Pembina] on page 401-02 and *Haut de la Rivière Rouge* [the Assiniboine basin] on page 402-03. L.R. Masson, ed., *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, New York: Antiquarian Press, 1960, v. I. For the Nor'Westers, *Rivière au Rat* on page 405 was on the route to Athabasca. Harry Duckworth, *The English River*

While the pemmican from bison meat made possible the long canoe brigades of the Montreal traders to the Canadian North West, it also became the staple of the freeman culture and economy, giving them the independence to live separately from the traders and the posts, outside the hierarchical authority of the Europeans and Canadians. The *gens libres* adopted a more egalitarian model of community influenced by their social interactions with local Aboriginals, including their wives and kin networks, so that they came to increasingly resent the snobbery, arrogance and assumption of authority by newcomers. As their Métis sons grew to adulthood in the first decade of the nineteenth century, they had no experience with the social structures of Britain or eastern Canada, and assumed that the egalitarianism they experienced and their claims to the land were threatened by people who they considered incompetent, who could not survive without their food supplies and technological expertise and who were so foolish as to believe that the “proprietor to the soil” lived on the other side of the ocean.⁵²⁸ Their independent way of life and claims to a homeland were principles worth defending.

When fur resources declined from overhunting, provisioning became their prime function. As the population of *gens libres* increased and learned that hunting on horseback and

Book: A NWC Journal and Account Book of 1786, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1990: xi.

⁵²⁸ On September 4, 1812, at the Forks, Governor Miles McDonell organized the ceremony for “seizin” the land for Lord Selkirk. He stated that the NWC gentlemen “came across” at noon, suggesting that the ceremony was held on the east side of the Red River, i.e. Saint Boniface. “When the conveyance was read **both in English & French in presence of all our people & several Canadians and Indians** (Mr. Heney having prepared a translation), my commission was likewise read, at the conclusion of which 7 swivels were discharged [cannon blasts] and 3 cheers given....the gentlemen assembled at my tent...we drank toasts...the Head [The Premier - Ojibwe chief] was given a Keg Rum for the populace...” PAM: S.P.: Miles McDonell’s Journal: p. 16744.

in groups was the most efficient way to hunt buffalo on the plains without being attacked by the Sioux, the freemen and their families took over this important economic function from the local Indians and Pembina was the main post on the Red River which drew them to trade their provisions.

Earlier histories emphasized the establishment of a colony of European farmers as the beginning of settlement in the west in 1812.⁵²⁹ Because the goal of a community of farmers who stayed in one place rather than hunting on the plains was seen as an advance of “civilization”, Euro-centric writers perceived that anyone who promoted that enterprise was heroic and anyone who opposed it was a scapegoat and perhaps evolutionarily backwards.⁵³⁰ The ethnohistorical approach requires questioning the context of the sources and collect evidence from more than one perspective. This is challenging when writing about a group which used oral history rather

⁵²⁹ Rhoda Gilman, Carolyn Gilman & Deborah M. Stultz, *The Red River Trails: Oxcart Routes between St. Paul & the Selkirk Settlement: 1820-1870*, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1979. This story of the Red River cart trails pioneered by the Métis starts with the story of Lord Selkirk in Baltimore in 1817 and the authors noted that “the visionary earl was far ahead of other men”; page 1. Anne Kelsch, “Bringing Crofters and Clans to the Red River Valley”, *North Dakota History*: v. 63:1, Winter 1996: 21-32. These are good examples of a Euro-American view of the history of the Red River Valley. Although Gilman, Gilman & Stultz focus on the Métis, they still assume that the history of Red River Settlement started in 1812. Even A. De Trémaudan, expressing the Métis oral tradition, dated the beginning of Red River as 1812; *Hold High Your Heads*: 23.

⁵³⁰ Marcel Giraud, writing in the 1930s, believed in the unscientific theory of Métis “moral degeneracy” based on his observations of conduct such as “loose conduct”, drinking, lack of self-discipline and “touchy sensibility”. He did not equate these behaviours to racism and the poverty of the Depression years in the Canadian Prairies. He also neglected the fact that many of the fur traders had drinking problems and some of the above problems: such as Hugh Heney and Peter Grant. See Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*, v. 1: 481.

than written documents. This study will attempt to deconstruct the stereotypes and extract useful evidence discarding prejudiced attitudes.⁵³¹

My argument is that it is important to place the Métis at the centre of the story to understand their perspective rather than that of the outsiders like Chaboillez, Henry, and Tanner, who became heroes of their own memoirs. So we shall try to recreate the story from the Métis perspective, focussing on the *gens libres and Bois Brulés* who now formed sufficient numbers and strength to challenge outside authorities who were inexperienced in the ways of the *pays d'en haut*. What happened in this contentious decade resulted in an amazing and positive reformulation of Métis identity.⁵³²

Hugh Heney's Earlier Career and Problems

To understand the conflict that escalated after 1812, we will look at the Pembina fur trade after Henry left in 1808 and the role played by Hugh Heney, a free-trader, Nor'Wester and Hudson's Bay Company manager. The background of this trader is confused,⁵³³ but he had a

⁵³¹ For example, Giraud did some excellent primary research in the HBCA in London which is useful, while many of his observations and analysis can be ignored.

⁵³² Two of Pierre Falcon's songs were published in *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*: "The Battle of Seven Oaks", pp. 50-51; and "Lord Selkirk at Fort William", pp. 56-57. The French version of "La Chanson de la Grenouillère" and "Les Tribulations d'un Roi Malheureux" can be found in the booklet, *Pierre Falcon*, Winnipeg: Manitoba Historic Resources Branch, 1984: 10-11. These songs gave some of the few contemporary Métis views of their own historical events, i.e. they were based on the oral tradition by a contemporary.

⁵³³ Margaret Clarke's MA thesis discussed the development of freemen families in the Assiniboine Basin, 1793-1812. She focussed on the mixed community at HBC Brandon House and discussed the career of Hugh Heney at length, starting on page 4-78. Clarke in a footnote questions whether the fur trade Hugh Heney was the Montrealer Hugues Heney in Jacques L'Heureux biography in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, v. 7:393-4. He was called to the bar in Lower Canada in 1811 while Heney was at Brandon House and Pembina for the HBC. See "Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community of the Assiniboine Basin, 1793-1812", MA Thesis,

career in the fur trade before joining the HBC in the summer of 1806. The Brandon House journal reported that Hugh Heney accompanied the old experienced free trader named Louis Menard, the first Canadian to visit the Mandans, in September 1804. British traders from the NWC, HBC and free traders had been making this trip to the Missouri from the Brandon/Le Souris houses since about 1778-83.⁵³⁴ Thomas Miller of the HBC had made these trips himself when he was at Brandon House in 1795-96.⁵³⁵

In November 1804, Francois-Antoine Larocque noted that Heney was at the NWC Fort Assiniboine at the mouth of the Souris with Charles Chaboillez; whether he was a free trader at the time or working for the NWC and Chaboillez is not clear. Heney followed Larocque south along the Souris River to the Mandans camps near the Missouri River. Often, the British traders from the Brandon-Le Souris area cooperated on these trips and travelled together for protection to avoid being attacked by larger groups of Indians like the Sioux or Assiniboines looking for horses. Apparently Heney was brave or reckless enough to go with only two Indian guides.

On December 16, 1804, they arrived at Fort Mandan on the Missouri River and the following day Larocque and Heney were interviewed by William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The American explorers "found Mr. Henny a Verry intelligent Man whom whome

Winnipeg: University of Winnipeg and Manitoba, 1997: 4-103. I agree with this assessment because the temperamental fur trader did not have the personality to become a successful politician in Quebec. Apparently they are two different men.

⁵³⁴ "Six contemporary sources, many of them by men who knew him personally....provide dates for his arrival between 1778 and 1783. "Introduction", Raymond Woods and T.Thiessen, *Fur Traders of the Northern Plains*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967: 43.

⁵³⁵ Table 1, list of British traders going to the Missouri River, Mandan villages, to trade. W.R. Wood and T. Thiessen, *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1985.

we obtained Some Scetches of the Countrey between the Mississippi & Missouri, and Some Sketches from him which he had obtained from the Indians to the West of this place.”⁵³⁶ Heney had also worked in the Rocky Mountains.⁵³⁷ He made another trading trip to the Mandans from October 22, 1805 to January 10, 1806.⁵³⁸

Heney soon quarrelled with the NWC and approached John McKay, the HBC master at Brandon House to employ him, and the following summer, July 1806, Heney accompanied McKay to Albany on James Bay to get his contract.⁵³⁹ The HBC Post at Pembina was still being supplied by Albany as in Thomas Miller’s time (in fact, Miller spent the winter of 1805-06 at Pembina)⁵⁴⁰, and was still under the immediate supervision of the Brandon House Master, John McKay, so the post journal for Brandon House makes reference to HBC activities at Pembina. Heney was not at Brandon House in 1806-07, and his location was not documented, but he was on the Red River for at least two years (1807-09). Heney remarked in the first Pembina Post

⁵³⁶ This is a quote from Lewis and Clark, *Original Journals*, v. 1: 238 cited in Raymond Woods and Thomas Thiessen, “The Narrative of Francois-Antoine Larocque”, *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains: Canadian Traders Among the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians, 1738-1818*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1967: 143. Heney also went to the Rockie Mountains with Larocque; see his “Yellowstone Journal” in Wood and Thiessen: 156-220.

⁵³⁷ Margaret Clarke, *Reconstituting Fur Trade Families...*, p. 4-82, note 43, citing HBCA: Brandon House Journal, B.22/z/1, document #4, f. 9.

⁵³⁸ Woods and Thiessen, Appendix 1, no page number.

⁵³⁹ Clarke: 4:78. She found a reference to McKay and Heney at the depot at Martin’s Falls on the way to Albany.

⁵⁴⁰ Henry’s Journal, ed. Gough: August 29, 1805: p. 176. After his buildings were burnt in the spring of 1802, Miller did not return until the fall of 1805. There is a suggestion of arson.

Journal (that has survived)⁵⁴¹ that he was at Pembina the year before 1808-09, that is: 1807-08.⁵⁴²

McKay reported Heney at the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine in September 5, 1807, on his return from Albany in taking out the furs from the previous spring.⁵⁴³ McKay noted the great number of freemen at the Forks: "I would have nothing to do with them, I have enough of their witchcraft already I sent them all to the Country man Haney, he may settle with them as he pleases." McKay's reference to Heney as a countryman of the Canadians suggests that Heney came from Montreal. Hiring Canadians was one way for the HBC to improve their competition against the Montreal-based NWC.⁵⁴⁴ Heney's stop at the Forks was for temporary trading only as was customary when the traders went out in the spring and returned from their summer rendezvous. Although the traders went to the Forks to trade, they preferred to winter at Pembina.

Apparently Heney had been trading on Red River that winter and on September 12, 1807, Alexander Henry in his last season at Pembina noted that "Two HBC boats arrived from Albany

⁵⁴¹ A note on the archival holdings on Pembina: HBCA: the first two Pembina Post Journals from Thomas Miller (1797-1800) were filed in the HBCA under Red River/Winnipeg: B.235/a/1-2. Although Miller was at Pembina from 1800-1802 and from 1805-06, these journals have been lost, possibly when the posts were burned down by his opponents. So although Heney kept the first journal listed at Pembina (1808-09), he was not the first HBC trader at Pembina and he mentions that he was there a year earlier, so his first Pembina journal has also been lost.

⁵⁴² HBCA: Hugh Heney, Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/1, 1808-09. The HBCA biography on Heney does not mention his role as manager of the Pembina River Post from 1806-1809 and 1811-13; and the keeper of the accounts, B.160/d/1, 1811-12 where Heney is listed as having the highest wage of 50 L while most of his 11 men made half that at 25L. Thomas Miller's Pembina journals from 1801-02 and 1805-06 have not survived either.

⁵⁴³ Clarke: 4-48-79.

⁵⁴⁴ I would agree with Margaret Clarke on her assessment of Heney's Canadian background.

Factory, Hugh Henry [Heney] in charge".⁵⁴⁵ He does not mention him again except for one extraordinary incident. HBC journal references show that Heney was at Pembina both years, 1807-09, as that was still the main HBC trading post on Red River.⁵⁴⁶ Heney noted in the Pembina Post Journal that he was waiting at the Forks for the winterers who were expected to bring provisions down the Assiniboine, but they arrived with very little.⁵⁴⁷ On September 5, he wrote: "got to my last year house...36 miles from where I left the boats". This referred to the location where Alexander Henry reported him, but the exact location has not been determined.⁵⁴⁸ Archaeologist Lauren Ritterbush suggested tentatively that it may have been located between the border (49th parallel) and north of the present town of Pembina.⁵⁴⁹ He does not say a great deal

⁵⁴⁵ Gough, Henry's Journal:I: 298 (and Coues I: 424. Coues' notes that he is mentioned by Masson and Tanner called him "Hanie, a trader for the Hudson's Bay People had arrived at Pembinah").

⁵⁴⁶ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/1, 1808-09.

⁵⁴⁷ HBCA: B.160/a/1, August 28, 1808.

⁵⁴⁸ Lauren Ritterbush, *The Fur Trade of Northeastern North Dakota: The 1990 Fur Trade Sites Project*, Project Report, State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1991: Pembina Survey Area C, 62-63. "The available documents provide little information about these posts and their identification with this locality is only tentative....Today this area lies under the floodwater dike southeast of the modern Catholic Church of Pembina."

⁵⁴⁹ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/1, 1808-09. In this journal, Hugh Heney does not give the location of his post, but it was not at the mouth of the Pembina. Apparently, Miles McDonell built the colony fort south of the NWC fort and so it was closer to his rival, Nor'Wester Alexander MacDonell, than his allies in the HBC. This caused a lot of resentment from Heney who had expected to be a close advisor to the new Governor. Heney's post was probably within walking distance but may have been close to what is now the border about 1.5 miles north of town. This would be the location of the Catholic Mission established for the freemen community and Selkirk Settlers in 1818 and it makes sense that the mission was close to the HBC post. Ritterbush identified it as Pembina Survey Area C (p. 62-63) and site #32PB65 (p. 77-79) in her report: *The Fur Trade of Northeastern North Dakota: The 1990 Fur Trade Sites Project*, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota: April 1991. Ritterbush admitted

about the trade, but noted on March 21, 1809: "I quarrelled with my neighbour [Alexander Henry] - he threatens to take me prisoner to Grand Portage for giving debt to an Indian whose son had killed some of their people."⁵⁵⁰ This accusation would re-occur four years later with the NWC clerk Alexander McDonell making the same accusation to Governor Miles McDonell about one of Heney's Indian trappers who the Nor'Westers labelled "The Murderer".

The First White Woman in the West?

It seems odd that Alexander Henry did not mention much interaction with Hugh Heney other than his arrival and the birth of Isabel Gunn's son James on December 29, 1807. She was "one of Mr. Heney's Orkney lads", a young woman who had dressed as a man to follow her lover, John Scarth, to Rupert's Land. When she became pregnant, she continued to hide her condition from her manager, Mr. Heney, and went to his competitor, Alexander Henry, and asked for help with the labour. Henry was of course shocked when the young man turned out to be a young woman in childbirth.⁵⁵¹

Donald Murray, a descendant of Selkirk Settlers, claimed that this child was the first non-Aboriginal child born in the west, but the Lagimodiere family suggest that the eldest daughter of Jean Baptist and Marie-Anne Gaboury, Reine born January 6, 1807, (a year before Isabel Gunn's

that this suggestion was "tentative" because Heney and others never described the exact location, but it is a good educated guess and the author agrees with her suggestion. It is obvious from Heney's Pembina journal that the NWC post was between Fort Daer and the HBC post and this was a source of friction between Heney and Governor Miles MacDonell. See Figure 4c.

⁵⁵⁰ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal: B.160/a/1: March 21, 1809.

⁵⁵¹ See Henry's Journal, Coues, v. I: December 29, 1807, p. 426; Gough, v. 1299-300; footnote 270 cites: Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: 175-76*; and Malvina Bolus, "The Son of I. Gunn", *The Beaver* 302:3, Winter 1971: 23-26. See research by Warren Sinclair.

son) was the first.⁵⁵² Lagimoniere [note: primary sources usually spelled the name with an “n” while more modern sources use the “d”]⁵⁵³ was a freeman at Pembina and had left his native wife, Josette, and three daughters there when he went home to Quebec for a visit in the winter of 1805-6. When he returned with a wife from Quebec, who had been Mlle. Gaboury, his Indian wife was not too pleased, as he had broken the rules of the custom of the country. Since he had not passed her off to the protection of another voyageur, his wife would have assumed that he planned to return to his Indian family.

Bringing a non-Aboriginal woman to the *pays d'en haut* created consternation in fur trade country as it upset the common custom of marrying local women *à la façon du pays*. His Indian family was at Pembina and perhaps Lajomonière himself preferred to keep his new wife away from that community where his first wife would come into contact with her.⁵⁵⁴ This case of serial

⁵⁵² Coues cites Murray in an article by C.N. Bell, note, *Henry's Journal*: I:426. See Lagimodière Genealogy. For more information from Warren Sinclair and Sylvia Van Kirk, see note in Gough, *Henry's Journal*: I: 299-300. For a fictional account of Isabel Gunn, see Audrey Thomas, *Isabel Gunn: A Novel*, Toronto: Viking Press, 1999. This couple, praised as the first non-Aboriginal couple in the West, misrepresent the evolution of the freeman culture. The fact is that Jean Baptiste Lagimodière had an Indian wife and three daughters at Pembina before he returned to the west in 1808 with Ms. Gaboury. Marrying a local native woman was the more common pattern as noted in previous chapters.

⁵⁵³ PAM: S.P., Miles McDonell's *Journal*, January 13, 1813: p. 16783. See Lynne Champagne, “Jean-Baptiste Lagimonière”, *DBC* v. 8: 534-535 (French edition). George F.G. Stanley, “Marie-Anne Gaboury (Lagimodière)” *DCB* v. 10: 296-297: “first white woman resident in the west, grandmother of Louis Riel”. Both these biographies suggest that the couple arrived at Fort Daer, Pembina, after their marriage in April 1806, but in fact Fort Daer was not built until December 1812. If they went to Pembina, they were not mentioned by Alexander Henry and there was no HBC Pembina journal until the fall of 1808.

⁵⁵⁴ The first version of the Marie Anne Gaboury story which was probably based on personal interviews was from a priest, l'Abbé G. Dugast, *The First Canadian Woman in the Northwest*, Winnipeg: Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba, #62, 1901. It was originally published in French in 1883, eight years after her death. Grant MacEwan used this source and

monogamy was not that uncommon in the fur trade and probably happened more often than not. It was a myth that Marie-Anne Gaboury from Quebec was his first and only wife. What is important in the Lagimodière story is that he represented the typical voyageur who became a freeman and a buffalo hunter. Although his children were biologically non-Aboriginal, they were raised in the multicultural freemen culture and his sons probably considered themselves as much a *Bois Brulé* as their friends. Since the sons married *Métisses* (with the exception of Josette who married French Canadian Amable Nault), most of their grandchildren were *Métis*. The family was part of the freemen/*Bois Brulés*/*Métis* culture and that is why they were important.

When Marie Anne Gaboury arrived in Pembina in the summer of 1806, she had to learn to adapt to local conditions and live like a freeman's wife, travelling all over the plains in search of buffalo and skins. Like the voyageurs from Quebec, this young French Canadian woman had to learn Aboriginal ways to survive on the plains such as horseback riding, making leather clothing such as moccasins and cooking with local food. In order to survive and look after her family, she became an "Indianized" French woman.⁵⁵⁵ This couple's children married into the

was inspired by descendant Hector Coutu, Brosseau, Alberta. *Marie Anne: The Frontier Adventures of Marie Anne Lagimodière*, Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1984. MacEwan wrote that he first started researching her story in 1946. Lagimodière descendent, Agnès Goulet, wrote a biography of her ancestor and suggested that the Indian woman who was Jean Baptiste's country wife and mother of his three daughters was so angry when he returned to Pembina with his Quebec bride that she tried to poison her. See *Marie-Anne Gaboury: Une femme dépareillée*, Saint Boniface: éditions des Plaines, 1989: 20-21. The oral tradition was thus continued by descendants in both St. Boniface, Manitoba, and in Alberta.

⁵⁵⁵ The *Centre Patrimoine* of the Société Historique de Saint Boniface owns a *centure fléchée* which is said to have belonged to Jean Baptiste Lagimodière when he made his famous trek to Montreal in 1815 to warn Lord Selkirk about the destruction of the Red River Colony. While it is likely that his wife finger-wove his sashes, it is doubtful that they would have survived two centuries. But obviously this kind of sash is symbolic of Red River voyageur and Métis culture and is important for that reason in local material culture and history. The sash is

freemen/Métis community; two of their children married the son and daughter of Edward Harrison, one of Alexander Henry's clerks. Another daughter Julie Lagimodière married Louis Riel Sr.

Gens libres like the Lagimonières were trading at Pembina before 1812 when the Selkirk Settlers arrived; they later went travelled farther west to Métis wintering spots like the Cypress Hills at the border of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Montana. Their second child, Jean Baptiste was born in 1808 and known as "La Prairie" because he was born along the Saskatchewan River with the freemen, probably at one of the Forts des Prairies of the NWC. And their third child, Josette, born in 1809, was known as "La Cypresse" because she was born in the Cypress Hills, a Métis wintering spot on the border of southwestern Saskatchewan and eastern Alberta.

Although in the following decade Jean Baptiste Lagimodière would play a significant role in working for the HBC and thus support the efforts of Lord Selkirk and his colony, this French Canadian's reputation was probably enhanced by being on what was interpreted as the side of "civilization", being associated with the HBC and the colony of farmers.⁵⁵⁶ The site of the family homestead at the mouth of the Seine River in Saint Boniface is currently the focus of an archaeological study with the goal of making it a heritage site. But this voyageur's lifestyle in the pre-1812 era suggests that he and his family lived like all the other *gens libres*, hunting buffalo,

thus an obvious feature of local interpretation of Métis historical events.

⁵⁵⁶ This may have been a story of heroic proportions promulgated by the Roman Catholic Church because the story of the Lagimodières is usually linked to the coming of the Catholic missionaries, and emphasizes Marie-Anne Gaboury's pioussness and religiosity. She was the housekeeper for the local priest before her marriage and she had a strong spiritual influence on her children, like Julie Riel, and her grandchildren, Louis and Sara Riel, who became a Grey Nun. See Agnès Goulet, *Marie-Anne Gaboury: Une femme dépareillée*, Saint Boniface: Editions des Plaines, 1989; chapitre IX: L'arrivée des missionnaires à la Rivière Rouge.

selling the surplus to trade concerns and following the seasonal round to harvest local food resources for their subsistence.

From the Métis perspective, it is not really significant which woman, Isabel Gunn or Marie-Anne Gaboury, was the first non-Aboriginal woman in the west. What is interesting is that they both arrived within a year of each other and both gave birth at Pembina in the same year, 1807 (keeping in mind that the first documented child of a Pembina voyageur during Henry's time was part-Black, whose parents were Pierre Bonga and an Ojibwe woman on March 12, 1802).⁵⁵⁷ Isabel Gunn's son James was adopted into the HBC fur trade and lost to view in Red River except perhaps by descendants of the Scottish Selkirk settlers⁵⁵⁸ while the

⁵⁵⁷ Alexander Henry's Journal, ed. Gough, v. I:126: "Pierre's wife was delivered of a daughter, the first new fruit in this Fort, and a very Black." Gough's note 116: "The child's name is not known; her mother was Ojibwa (or Chippewa), and her father was Pierre Bonga." In Masson's list of voyageurs for 1804, *Le Bas de la Rivière Rouge*, Pierre "Bonza" is listed as an interpreter i.e. Ojibwe interpreter. He came from Mackinac, son of Black slaves Jean and Jeanne Bonga who belonged to Captain Daniel Robertson, British commandant at Mackinac, 1782-87. His parents obtained their freedom from slavery and married at Mackinac June 25, 1794. In the Leech Lake, Mn., Ojibwe band in 1887, there were "about 70 colored halfbreeds, descendants of a West Indian negro slave named Bonga...who came among them about 1790...", N.H. Winchell, *The Aborigines of Minnesota*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1911: 703-704. For a description of an incident at Mackinac involving "le vieux Bonga, Nègre" in 1791, see *Jean Baptiste Perrault marchand, voyageur, parti de Montréal le 28e de mai, 1783*, ed. Louis Cormier, Montreal: Boréal Express, 1978. He was reported at Fort William in 1816.

⁵⁵⁸ Elliott Coues, editor of Henry's Journal in 1897, cites C.N. Bell, citing Selkirker Alexander Murray about the controversy, claiming that Henry's Orkney servant bore the "first all-white child on Red River". Murray claimed he knew the Lajimonières personally and they never claimed that Marie Anne was the "first white woman in the country". This may have reflected Murray, Bell and Coues' ethnic prejudices for certainly in French parishes, children were taught that the Lajomnières were the first non-Aboriginal settlers in St. Boniface. Claudette Ek and Daniel Vandal, personal communication. This author argues that the reason that this couple were significant historically was not for their non-Aboriginal family, but because they were the parents of Julie Riel and the grandparents of Louis Riel and their children married into the Métis families of the Red River Valley. Most of Riel's strongest supporters were his relatives, especially his brothers and first cousins who were Lagimodière descendants like André Nault

Lagimodière stayed in the West and became the grandparents to a large extended Métis family who played a very important role in future events. Isabel Gunn resumed a female identity, was sent to Albany as a washerwoman and nurse where she was called Mary and was sent home to the Orkneys in 1809. She died single in 1861.⁵⁵⁹ Unfortunately, Hugh Heney's post journal for 1807-08 is lost, so his reaction to these freemen families and to Isabel Gunn's secret identity did not survive.⁵⁶⁰

The mythology which has grown up around Marie Anne Gaboury as "the first white woman in the West" is part of the "Canadian Master Narrative" identified by historian Lyle Dick, who suggested that the story of the "Seven Oaks Massacre" served nationalist demands for a Canadian slant to the story.⁵⁶¹ The Selkirk Settlers assumed dominance in the story over local settlers because they were seen as farmers and not nomadic hunters. The Lagimodière couple as non-Aboriginals became symbols of non-Aboriginal settlement who were allied with the British side (HBC) in the fur trade. Although most Métis would see them as important because they were the grandparents of the Métis leader, Louis Riel, non-Aboriginal Canadians saw them as white and acceptable as farmers and settlers. If Jean Baptiste had stayed with his Indian wife and her three daughters, he probably never would have become as famous as he has because he would

who was white.

⁵⁵⁹ See also "The Son of I. Gunn", *The Beaver*, 302:3: Winter 1971: 23-26.

⁵⁶⁰ The first Pembina Journal is listed as 1808-09 and assumed to be written by Hugh Heney although his name is not on it. The journals written by Thomas Miller for 1797-99 are listed under Red River and were assigned the Winnipeg number: B.235/a/1-2. The journal when Miller was at Pembina from 1800-1802 and also when he was noted by Henry in 1805-06 have not survived.

⁵⁶¹ See biographies of Lagimodière in volume 8 and of Gaboury in volume 10, DCB.

have been just like all the other Canadian freemen with the Indian wives and Métis wives. The promotion of this couple as the first family of the West is based on the racist myth that white people made better farmers and settlers. According to the stereotype, nomadic hunters could not by definition be settlers, but the fact is that they lived on river lots and only hunted when they needed food or meat to make pemmican.

Hugh Heney's HBC Career and his Conflict with Governor Miles McDonell

The journal kept by HBC trader Hugh Heney at Pembina from 1808-09 is not remarkable except for the references to the freemen, which occurred more often than during the previous decade. And Heney showed his Canadian acuity and Nor-Wester experience by hiring them to work for the HBC. For example, he hired "one Delorme" [Francois], a freeman, with five men to trade in the Blue Hills.⁵⁶² This location is not obvious, but it may have been Heney's name for the Hair Hills or Pembina Mountain.⁵⁶³ This was probably the same Delorme who was known as

⁵⁶² HBCA: Pembina Post Journal: B.160/a/1: September 28, 1809.

⁵⁶³ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal: B.160/a/1: September 28 and 29, 1808. Alexander Henry described his first trip to the Pembina Mountain or Hair Hills and described the bed of the Pembina River, cutting through them. He observed that "the bed of the river is sand and blue gravel". It might have been this blue gravel that gave the name the "Blue Hills". Ed Jerome suggests that it was graphite. The Pembina escarpment is the only noteworthy elevation in the vicinity of Pembina and Henry located an outpost there to serve the Plains Cree and Assiniboiné who were reluctant to trade at Pembina which served the Ojibwe further east. There was an Indian trail across the Plains from Pembina to the Pembina Hills and then west to the posts on the Assiniboiné at the mouth of the Souris River. The traders used this trail in the winter when they did not feel threatened by the Sioux, but it was too dangerous in the summer when they went to the Forks and then west, a much longer journey. The trail crossed the Assiniboiné at the Grande Passage, a fording place, which was probably in the vicinity of Headingly and the White Horse Plain. This led to the establishment of the parish of St. Francois-Xavier in 1824 because *gens libres* settled along the river in that area. Henry identified a place called "Pinancewaywining, which is the common route to the Assiniboiné River when they pass over the Mountain to hunt Bears [plains grizzlies] and Buffalow on the east side of it" and he planned to locate an outpost there. This choice was based on Indian geography and the wise fur traders like Henry and Heney

Aneeb [Elm tree] to John Tanner. Heney also described buffalo hunting with the freemen, which suggests that he hired them to get buffalo meat and make pemmican.⁵⁶⁴ He also bought wolf skins from them and sent William Flett, an Orkeyman, to the salt spring to make salt in the winter.⁵⁶⁵ On March 21, Hugh Heney noted a threat from his neighbor, probably Alexander Henry: "Quarreled with my neighbour the[y] threatened to take me prisoner to Grand Portage for giving Debt to an Indian whose son had killed some of their people." And threats via his Aboriginal customers continued, as on April 8: "the Indians and Canadians report that the NW are to pillage our furs this spring as we go out."⁵⁶⁶

For some odd reason, Alexander Henry did not report these threats in his journal or any other violent incidents.⁵⁶⁷ Perhaps in Hugh Heney, Alexander Henry had met his match, an HBC man trained in the methods of intimidation and aggressive competition of the Canadian

paid attention to their expertise on local routes. See Henry's Journal, ed. Gough:70.

⁵⁶⁴ HBCA: B.160/a/1: December 14, 1808. "They killed but one Buffalo Cow and I killed three." Heney was never modest about his own accomplishments.

⁵⁶⁵ HBCA: B.160/a/1: Wolves' skins, February 2, 1809. Salt: January, 20, 31, February 6 and 7, 1809. Edward A. Jerome of Hallock, Mn., a Pembina Metis descendant, suggests that this salt spring was located near the Two Rivers about three miles from the Red River, ten miles south of Pembina.

⁵⁶⁶ HBCA: B.160/a/1: March 21 and April 8, 1809.

⁵⁶⁷ Remember that Henry reported on September 13, Thomas Miller built on the east side of Red River and on October 27, 1801, at the Grand Passage on the Pembina River (Gough, Henry's Journal: I: 122, 123.) Henry reported a grand "jeu de foie" [big bonfire] which burned all the HBC buildings at the grand passage on March 7, 1802 and Henry set the east side of the Red River ablaze on May 1, two days after Miller left for Albany, presumably burning down the HBC buildings on the east side in the process. (Gough:I: 126 and 128.) Gough noted that the jeu de foie was probably arson, but he did not make the connection in the second incident.

company.⁵⁶⁸ Heney was so competitive that he would undercut his supervisor, at Brandon House, John McKay, to get more furs. John McKay and Hugh Heney had similar life paths: they both had Montreal connections, having started their fur trade careers there, and both left the NWC to join the HBC.⁵⁶⁹ The weaker English Company certainly benefitted from the employment of these experienced former NWC traders who were more capable of defending their company's interests against the Canadian men who usually had more staff and a better selection of goods. Heney could also speak and write French, another indication that he was from Montreal. Speaking French was certainly an advantage for a fur trade manager and Heney used it to his advantage to recruit freemen like Bostonais Pangman and Francois Delorme to work for the HBC.

John McLeod worked for Heney who sent him and Pangman to establish an outpost at Turtle River for the HBC. This was south of Pembina near Grand Forks. Pangman was listed on Peter Fidler's list of freemen in 1814 with an Indian wife, one son and two daughters. McLeod said that Pangman quit the HBC over a disagreement with Peter Fidler at the Forks. Heney had promised him some equipment which Fidler refused to provide. He observed that Pangman was

⁵⁶⁸ On November 5, 1808, John McKay reported in the Brandon House Journal that one of his Indian customers reported being offered a big keg of brandy to bring in their furs to him instead of to his boss, McKay, at Brandon. This was only two years after McKay had helped him out by hiring Heney when he had quarrelled with the NWC, probably Chaboillez at Fort Assiniboine [a.k.a. as Le Souris]. See Margaret Clarke, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community of the Assiniboine Basin*: 4-79, citing HBCA: B.22/a/16/f.5.

⁵⁶⁹ Margaret Clarke, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community of the Assiniboine Basin, 1793 to 1812*, MA Thesis: University of Winnipeg: 1997: p. 4-80. I would like to acknowledge Clarke's work about Hugh Heney's tenure at Brandon House, his relationship with the McKay family and the Brandon Mutiny, because there are many useful Pembina references in the Brandon House journals.

very good at counteracting some of the malicious reports made about the HBC by the Nor'Westers and "perhaps the value of a few pounds given this man who was a very interested servant would have prevented a great many violences that afterwards took place."⁵⁷⁰

The Hudson's Bay Company must have been impressed with Heney's qualifications because they not only hired him, but sent him to London for the winter of 1809-1810 to meet with the London Committee. Clarke has described how Andrew Wedderburn, Selkirk's brother-in-law, had persuaded the committee to establish a new program of retrenchment and cut-backs, to better meet the North West Company opposition. They were also making plans to prepare for the new colony to be established in the Red River Valley by Selkirk and Heney must have been considered an excellent candidate to continue his work at Pembina in support of the HBC's efforts to advance the colony and settlement scheme.

Heney must have been excited at the prospect and returned to Red River with great enthusiasm. Unfortunately, in the summer of 1810, John McKay, master of Brandon House, was dying of a terminal disease, consumption, which was bad luck for the HBC as he had provided good management. Realizing that he could not continue, he appointed an Orkneyman, William Yorstone, to run the post. He had been at Pembina with Thomas Miller. Since Yorstone had been working in the area for 11 years by the winter of 1810-11, he was experienced, but disadvantaged by the fact that he was not an officer in the HBC. He had supervised the post during previous summers when McKay and his second, Joseph Beioley, were at Albany. Yorstone had been Master of Moose Lake, northwest of Lake Winnipeg, for 1810-11. He was

⁵⁷⁰ PAM: John McLeod Memoirs, MG1D5. For Delorme, see HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/1, September 28-29, 1808.

also literate, as he kept the journal and Thomas Norn asked him to run the place because, although appointed an officer, was too inexperienced to cope with the responsibility.

Heney unfortunately messed up this important assignment. He went to Pembina (on the Red River) instead of Brandon (on the Assiniboine) and did not arrive at the latter until November 4, 1810. The staff at Brandon had been cut from twenty to ten, which was not Heney's fault, but part of the new retrenchment scheme. Heney instructed the Brandon House men to accept only food provisions from the Indians, instead of furs. The goal was to stockpile pemmican for the expected Selkirk Settlers, but the new plan did not gain favour with the HBC men or their Indian customers because the plan was somewhat secret and poorly communicated to the lower levels of the staff who had difficulty persuading their Indian customers that their furs were no longer needed.⁵⁷¹

Heney was authoritarian in his outlook and abusive when drunk. This combination of bad management traits caused resentment among his men, who were used to the even-tempered McKay who had died July 5, 1810. By February, 1811, the men revolted against Heney's leadership and forced him to leave Brandon House. The HBC officers found the Pembina postmaster, Archibald Mason, guilty of being the leader of the mutiny and fired him as well as fined him his wages.⁵⁷² William Yorstone defended the mutiny in the post journal and went to

⁵⁷¹ Information on the Brandon Mutiny is from Clarke, *Reconstituting the Assiniboine Basin*....pp. 4-88-4-103.

⁵⁷² Edith Burley, *Servants of the Honourable Company: Work, Discipline and Conflict in the HBC, 1770-1870*, Toronto and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997: 229. Yorstone was not initially punished as he was a follower, but was later sacked for being "unruly and mutinous" despite his record of good service and loyalty. Burley: 231. For Archibald Mason as master at Pembina, see Figure 12: Men at Brandon House in 1810-11 in Margaret Clarke, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community in the Assiniboine Basin: 1793-1812*, MA thesis, 1997: p. 4-98.

England to defend the actions of the Brandon House men after some further conflict with other officers. He never returned to Rupert's Land, presumably lost his position despite his experience and loyalty and his native family were left without a father.⁵⁷³

So Heney went to Pembina in February 1811 with a cloud over his head. He had quarrelled with the NWC and switched employers. Before he could make his mark, his tough attitudes resulted in disaster. But the London Committee backed him and gave him a second chance, because he followed their orders and was obviously a competent trader when not drunk. It did not take Heney long to blow his second chance with the HBC at Pembina.⁵⁷⁴

Preparations for the New Colony:

In the meantime, life in the Pembina fur trade continued. When it built Fort Gibraltar at the Forks in 1810, the NWC were increasingly focussed on the Forks. While Heney was in London, the second Pembina Post Journal recorded by John Stitt recorded local events.⁵⁷⁵ The North West Company sent John Wills to Pembina after Alexander Henry left,⁵⁷⁶ but by the

⁵⁷³ Margaret Clarke, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community of the Assiniboine Basin, 1793 to 1812*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1997: on Yorstone: Chapter 4:100-102.

⁵⁷⁴ For more information on the Brandon Mutiny, see A.S. Morton, *The History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*: 544-552. E.E. Rich, *The History of the HBC: 1670-1870*, v. 2: p. 300. Marcel Giraud, *The Metis in the Canadian West*: 374. Edith Burley, *Work, Discipline and Conflict in the HBC, 1770-1870*, Ph.D. dissertation, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1994 and her book, *Servants of the Honourable Company*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997: 225-232. Margaret Clarke, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community....*, 1997: 4-87 to 4-105. Her thesis contains all the primary references in the HBCA to the Brandon House mutiny.

⁵⁷⁵ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/2, 1809-10. Some people spell his name "Still".

⁵⁷⁶ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/2, August 29, 1809: "NWC passed us this evening on there way for Pabana [Pembina] River, Mr. John Wills, Master."

following spring of 1809, the trader at Bas de la Riviere advised Wills to move to the Forks because Pembina was still too dangerous with attacks by the Sioux.⁵⁷⁷ Although Pembina was closer to the buffalo migration route, with the help of horses and carts, the traders could get the provisions they needed from the increasing numbers of freemen who were out on the plains and who congregated at the Forks of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers to bring provisions to the traders on the way inland. For example, as Stitt arrived at the Forks, he met two HBC men with meat for the boats on September 1, 1809; "the NW men for Pabana was there likewise and a good many Free Canadians." They met the boats going up the Assiniboine in the fall with goods and coming out in the spring with their furs, trading provisions as required. Then they returned to Pembina for the winter or for the summer fishing.

There is also evidence that these freemen at the Forks were growing vegetables in such good condition and in such quantity that they were able to sell their surplus to the traders as part of the provisioning trade. They were able to obtain vegetable seeds from Indian gardens, both from the Mandans (the Brandon-Souris River link to the Missouri) as well as seed potatoes which were grown in fur trader gardens wherever possible to vary the heavy protein diet. Hugh Heney, having visited the Mandans, knew the value of plains vegetables and, having spent several winters at Pembina, knew the value of a good potato. Heney encouraged the freemen at Pembina, the Forks and Brandon to hunt and plant as much as they could, especially in

⁵⁷⁷ Robert Coutts, *The Forks of the Red & Assiniboine: A Thematic History, 1734-1850*, Report #383, Winnipeg: Parks Canada, n.d.: 85, citing the article by C.N. Bell, *The Old Forts of Winnipeg*.

anticipation of the new colony.⁵⁷⁸ He was prepared to buy their garden produce, especially if it meant that his competitors, the Nor'Westers were in short supply. On August 24, he noted in his journal: "On my arrival here [at the Forks], I bought a quantity of Potatoes, I say 150 bushels from the following freemen: Botino [Bottineau], Peltier and Baptiste Roi, intending a share of them for Mr. Hillier".⁵⁷⁹

These freemen had been mentioned before; Charles Bottineau had worked for the NWC at Pembina with Chaboillez and Henry.⁵⁸⁰ Henry also mentioned Antoine Peltier as one of the freemen from the Assiniboine in 1805 who arrived in Pembina with Bostonais Pangman, Desjardins and others; and Baptiste Roy had also worked in the Fond du Lac Department with

⁵⁷⁸ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/4, 1812-13. On August 20, 1812, Heney at the mouth of the Red River {Red River House or Fort William after William Hillier] send word to the freemen by Jack R. Kipline and Baptiste [the Indian] to Brandon and Pembina to tell all the freemen to bring their provisions to the forks of Red River. "Bostonais, our interpreter, had orders to send out all the freemen he might find at the forks to hunt on my account, by which mean I hope to have a quantity of meat in readiness to supply the colonists on their arrival in Red River." He also wanted to meet the freemen at "Pabina....my intention for so doing is to pick from among them such men as I know by experience will be able by there skill in hunting to provide a sufficient quantity of food to support **the great number of people suspected for East Winnipeg Factory and the colony this coming fall.**" This suggests that Heney bought the meat to feed the colony.

⁵⁷⁹ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/4, 1812-13. This suggests that he bought the potatoes the HBC men who continued to conduct the fur trade in Red River: at Pembina and at Red River House [Fort William] at the mouth of the river.

⁵⁸⁰ Masson, List of Voyageurs for 1804: Voyageur: Contre-Maitres: Chs. Bottureau was Bottineau: p. 401. Henry's Journal, ed. Gough: v.1: 304: 1808 Ladings of the Panbian River June 1, 1808: Charles Bottineau. Peter Fidler's List of "Free Canadians in the Red River District, 1814 and 1819" lists Joseph Bottineau with his family at Pambina & Forks both years; we believe this is Charles Bottineau; HBCA: Brandon Ho. Post Journal: B.22/a/1.

John Sayer in 1795 and in 1804 for the NWC before moving into Red River.⁵⁸¹ Roy testified at the trials over Seven Oaks in 1820 that "For 12 years past I have cultivated a piece of ground of my own...My house was about 40 paces distant from the opposite shore and the NW fort...I used to sell the produce to the gentlemen of the NWC or of the HBC".⁵⁸² This statement suggests that Roi [or Roy] had been at the Forks since 1808, two years before Fort Gibraltar was built and fur trade records show that he was at Pembina before that.⁵⁸³ Baptiste Roy is also another of Edward Jerome's ancestors through two of his daughters, Marie and Magdeleine Roy.

Tanner also described an old Frenchman at the Forks who gave him lodging and a place to store his furs when he was having difficulty dealing with John Wills at Fort Gibraltar. Since the Frenchman's house was "on the other side" from Fort Gibraltar, this might have been where

⁵⁸¹ Henry named Antoine Peltier as an XY freeman from the Assiniboine on October 26, 1805 (Coues:I:268). "Peltier, Desjardins, Bos. Pangman and others, arrived from the Assiniboine - XY freemen,...and as great a nuisance, according to their capacities, as their former employers." Coues believed he was the same Peltier who worked at the Pine Fort on the Assiniboine in 1793. And Baptiste Roy worked for John Sayer & Co., 1795, for the *commis* Charles Gauthier; see HBCA: F.4/1, NWC Account Books. Roy was a voyageur in the Fond du Lac Department, NWC, Masson, 1:410. Jean Baptiste Roy helped build Fort Gibraltar at the Forks in 1810; Robert Coutts, *The Forks of the Red & Assiniboine: A Thematic History, 1734-1850*, Report 383, Winnipeg: Parks Canada, n.d.: p. 85. Coues' note (Henry, v. 1: p. 187) suggests was at Fort Gibraltar when it was seized by C. Robertson in April 1816 and was a witness for the Semple case in Toronto in 1818. The trader at "Roy's House" mentioned by Chaboillez is thought to be Vincent Roy, who also worked for Sayer and Cadotte in Fond du Lac Dept; see Hickerson, *Chaboillez' Journal*, p. 306. On Fidler's list, Antoine Peltier, Baptiste La Roy [sic] and families are listed for both years at Pambina & Forks; HBCA: B.22/a/1.

⁵⁸² Robert Coutts, *The Forks of the Red & Assiniboine: A Thematic History, 1734-1850*: 84.

⁵⁸³ For a discussion of the controversy surrounding the date of the establishment of Fort Gibraltar, see Robert Coutts, *The Forks of the Red & Assiniboine: a Thematic History: 1734-1850*: 85-87. Coutts argues that it was John Wills who took the initiative in 1810 because of the danger of Sioux attacks at Pembina. Wills, who was Cuthbert Grant's brother-in-law was in charge of the Pembina post from 1809-10 while Heney was in London, England.

Roy was living and raising potatoes (possibly at the south point across the Assiniboine or across the Red in what became Saint Boniface).⁵⁸⁴ Whether Tanner stayed with Baptiste Roy is beside the point; what was important was that there was already developing a community of freemen at Pembina and the Forks before the Selkirk Settlers arrived in 1812 and many of them traded at Pembina or had previously lived there.

David Thompson also stated that the first settlers at the Forks were Canadians and their native families.⁵⁸⁵ They were hunting and fishing as well as growing vegetables and collecting wild fruit. It was an environment rich in natural resources and the freemen, their wives and families were proud of their produce. Robert Coutts, an historian with Parks Canada, noted their importance in the heritage of the region.⁵⁸⁶ Unfortunately, the fact that these freemen, their Indian wives and children were living on Red River either at the Forks or at Pembina has been lost in all the mythology which surrounded the establishment of the Selkirk Colony in 1812. These French families were reduced to the role of nomadic hunters, an unstable element in a volatile mixture.

⁵⁸⁴ Tanner's Narrative, ed. James, pp. 173-175. "I collected my skins together...put them in the canoe, and returned to the old Frenchman's house on the other side."

⁵⁸⁵ Thompson passed the Forks in the spring of 1798 on his way to Pembina and Grand Portage; when he edited his journals much later in mid-century, he recalled that: "Several Canadians who had married native women with their families first settled, and they were soon joined by servants of the HBC who had done the same, with their families." *David Thompson's Narrative: 1784-1812*, ed. Richard Glover, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1962: 187. This recollections suggests that the Canadians were settled there before the Selkirk Settlers.

⁵⁸⁶ Coutts, *The Forks of the Red and the Assiniboine*, p. 85: "A small Métis community, based upon a variety of economic activities including agriculture, fishing, voyaging and the supply of plains provisions to the fur trade, was in existence at or near the Forks a number of years prior to the founding of the Selkirk Settlement in 1812."

Charles Bourke, the priest at York Factory in the summer of 1812, provided another piece in the Red River potato puzzle. He had come over with the Irish labourers for the Selkirk colony in the first contingent that had spent the winter at the Nelson Encampment, 1811-12. Hugh Heney went north to York that summer, possibly to report to his superintendent, Mr. William Auld, about the Brandon Mutiny and to meet the Selkirk Settlers. Rev. Bourke reported meeting several Canadian voyageurs who accompanied Heney, but unfortunately he did not name them. He quizzed them about the agricultural potential of the proposed Red River Settlement. He said that they had lived on Red River [possibly Pembina as well as the Forks] for upwards of ten, fifteen and twenty-five years.

A robust strong man about 50 remained there for 25 years. I stuck close to this Canadian, as he satisfied my curiosity in every point of view - he was a simple, honest, well-behaved man, had all the appearance of steadiness - and a good sense about him, little or none of the vanity that distinguishes the Frenchmen. He said that the land was incomparably fertile in the production of potatoes and all sorts of vegetables, without the exception of any, that the rice was growing wild there, and that when it is ripe there, those that know the good of it, gather their annual provisions, there is not in fact in this world any that could or will produce better grain, of every kind indiscriminately, they make their own sugar [sic] there, the country tea, they gather in the season; they make their own soap, and provisions of all sorts abound there. Buffalo, deer; fish of every kind and the feathered creation, multiplied about to infinity. I ate some of the sugar [sic] he brought with him made by the Indians, as good as any west Indian sugar; the soap they brought was far preferable to the factory soap from Europe.⁵⁸⁷

It is frustrating that Rev. Charles Bourke did not bother to name the Canadians who accompanied Heney to York in 1812, especially the man who had so impressed him and who

⁵⁸⁷ PAM: Selkirk Papers [S.P.] (MG2A1), v. 67: p. 17,878, Rev. Charles Bourke, July 3, 1812, York Factory. It is possible that the voyageurs who accompanied Heney to York were the same freemen from whom he bought the potatoes: Botino, Peltier and Roy (HBCA: B.160/a/1, August 24, 1812). Bourke did not name them and we have not been able to identify them. I would like to thank Edward A. Jerome for making his notes on Charles Bourke's Journal in the Selkirk Papers available to me.

claimed to have lived at Red River for 25 years. He must have been in Red River since 1787, possibly a voyageur like George Racette or Jean Baptiste Desmarais. Although we do not know for certain his identity, it is possible to narrow down the list to some possible names.

Two Canadian freemen who later claimed to have been old Red River residents were Baptiste Marcellais [Marsolais] who in 1817 swore he had spent 34 years in Red River and Jacques Hamelin [Ammelin/Amleur] who claimed 20. That puts Marcellais on Red River in 1783 and Hamelin in 1797. Baptiste Marcellais Sr. was a Canadian born about 1767 who married Angelique Assiniboine, born in 1785. They had a son Louis Marcellais born in 1805 in Red River [probably Pembina].⁵⁸⁸ In Peter Fidler's lists of "Free Canadians in the Red River District" of 1814 and 1819, Marcellais is listed with a wife and 2 boys in 1819.⁵⁸⁹ If Baptiste were born in 1767, he would have only been 16 in 1783, but he may have been a voyageur with Peter Grant who went to Pembina in the 1780s. Antoine Marsellais was "at Pambina & Forks" in both years with his family; but he is not listed in the genealogy. This suggests that Baptiste and Angelique's children and grandchildren stayed in Red River until at least 1875 and made affidavits for "halfbreed scrip".

⁵⁸⁸ Sprague & Frye, *Genealogy of the First Métis Nation*: Table 1: #3024: Baptiste Marcellain and # 3028, his son Louis.

⁵⁸⁹ HBCA: Brandon House Post Journal, B.22/a/2, 1819. Peter Fidler's List of Free Canadians in the Red River District includes 6 men from River Qu'Appelle; 12 at Brandon House; 36 at Pambina and Forks; 4 in Swan River; and 5 in Pambina in 1814. He also lists 8 "servants of the HBC lately", suggesting that they became freemen also, so they were not just Canadians. See appendix for alphabetical list.

A strange omission from Peter Fidler's list of freemen was Louis Nolin who was another old Pembina resident.⁵⁹⁰ He was working for the HBC for Miles McDonell in 1817 when Lord Selkirk's private army attacked Fort Douglas; Nolin observed that Nor-Wester, Joseph Cadotte, one of the prisoners of the Selkirk Party, was his half-brother.⁵⁹¹ Nolin's father was Jean Baptiste (1777-1819), Canadian trader at Sault Ste Marie whose wife must have been a Cadotte because Joseph Cadotte and Louis Nolin were half-brothers, suggesting they had the same mother and different fathers.⁵⁹² Nolin Sr sold out his Lake Superior interests and moved to Pembina in 1819 shortly before he died. So both Joseph Cadotte and Louis Nolin had Great Lakes connections and may have been part-Aboriginal because it is likely that these Indian traders on Lake Superior (Nolin and Cadotte) would have married a native woman. Despite

⁵⁹⁰ On Fidler's lists at Pambina & Forks, he lists a "Louis" with no surname; this could be Louis Nolin. He had his family with him for both 1814 and 1819. Nolin gave a deposition to Lord Selkirk August 21, 1816 at Fort William about Seven Oaks. See State Historical Society of North Dakota, (SHSND) *Collections*: v.4: 398-400. For biography of Jean Baptiste Nolin, see Wallace: 489.

⁵⁹¹ PAM: S.P. Miles McDonell's Journal: The attack on Fort Douglas by Selkirk's party was described by Miles McDonell on January 9, 1817; p. 17183. January 13: Joseph Cadotte is a prisoner; makes a deposition; p. 17186. January 25: Mr. Nolin [sic] goes with Joseph Cadotte and Versaille, a halfbreed, to Qu'Appelle with a letter for Cuthbert Grant from Miles; p. 17189. On February 6: Nolin is used by Miles McDonell as Ojibwe interpreter; p. 10198. February 25: Nolin refuses to interpret for Miles with Peguis and goes off; p. 17209. March 2: Joseph Cadotte arrives with Cuthbert Grant, demanding the prisoners; the former wrote to his brother; p. 17212. See Selkirk Papers, Miles MacDonell's Journal: v. 10, p. 3244: "Joseph Cadotte, clerk, NWC, is a half-brother to our Nolin."

⁵⁹² Biographies in DCB: David Armour, "Jean-Baptiste Cadot", *DCB* v. 5: 128-130; this was the Lake Superior trader who was father of Michel at La Pointe and Jean Baptiste Jr. at Red Lake and Red Lake Falls, encountered by Thompson in 1798. The father was also a partner of Alexander Henry the Elder. Bruce White, "Joseph Cadotte", *DCB* v. 6: 99-101. White suggests that there was probably a relationship between Jean Baptiste Cadotte, Sr. and Joseph, but it is not documented. Joseph may have been a son and half-brother to the Red River Valley explorer.

these kin connections, Nolin and Cadotte were on opposite sides in the fur trade war in Red River as Nolin worked for the HBC and Miles MacDonell while Joseph Cadotte was an enthusiastic supporter of the NWC, Cuthbert Grant and the *Bois Brulés*. These brothers' divided allegiances show that fur trade loyalty was not based strictly on ethnic or family connections.

Jacques Hamelin was another Canadian freeman on Fidler's list who was an ancestor of Red River Métis. He was born in 1771 in Quebec, so would have been 26 in 1797; he married Angelique Tourangeau, born 1770. Fidler lists a Joseph Hamelin at Pembina and the Forks in both 1814 and 1819 with a wife and 8 children. Fidler could have been wrong about the name Joseph; he called Charles Bottineau "Joseph" as well, so the list is not completely accurate, but is very useful nonetheless. It shows the substantial number of freemen with families already living in the Red River Valley by 1814, only two years after the first group of Selkirkers arrived and they were persistent as well. 25 out of the 36 families at Pembina and the Forks in 1814 were still there five years later, despite the conflict at Seven Oaks in 1816 and its aftermath. Any of these men could have been Charles Bourke's informant; he was undoubtedly on Fidler's list.⁵⁹³

In any case, Rev. Bourke's observations about the potatoes are important. Bourke rated the potatoes that the Canadians brought to York as superior to his Irish potatoes which was quite a compliment. Even if the freemen were exaggerating about the potential for Red River agriculture, it is obvious that they and their families were already settled in the Red River Valley, both around Pembina and the Forks, and were already raising crops before the European

⁵⁹³ For the depositions of Jacques Hamelin Sr. and Baptiste Marsolais [sic] Sr., see HBCA: S.P. v. 60: pp. 15911-15913. In Sprague & Frye's Genealogy, Jacques Hamelin is #2114 on Table 1. I would like to thank Dr. Mary Black Rogers for this reference. Jacques Hamelin was one of her ancestors. She comes from Little Canada in Minneapolis, Mn.

immigrants arrived to take up agriculture.⁵⁹⁴ Bourke's statements challenged the stereotypes of French voyageurs and freemen which suggested that they were nomadic hunters rather than farmers. These Canadians were former voyageurs who had come into the valley with the fur traders, married native women and stayed. Bourke's praise for their Canadian potatoes underlines the fact that the Canadian freemen were planting gardens before the Selkirk Settlers arrived in Red River at the same time that the Lagimodière family were chasing buffalo in Alberta.⁵⁹⁵

When Hugh Heney returned to Red River after his trip to York Factory with his Canadian boatmen, he immediately made arrangements to organize provisions for the incoming labourers from Scotland and Ireland. This was a small group of 18 men who were expected to build the forts and houses for the immigrants and start the farming to provide for their sustenance, but, having been marooned at York for the winter because of a late arrival, they missed the spring planting and arrived nine days after Heney at the end of August. The second group destined to arrive in Red River in 1812 were on schedule, so that they were expected later in the fall, having made it to York before freeze-up. As a result of the delay of the first group, a crisis was looming.

⁵⁹⁴ This makes the argument about the who were the first **European** settlers in the Canadian West or in North Dakota and Minnesota irrelevant and racist.

⁵⁹⁵ For stereotypic writing arguing that the Selkirk Settlers were the first European settlers in North Dakota even though they only spent the winters at Pembina and farmed at the Forks in British Territory, Rupert's Land, see Anne Kelsch, "The Selkirk Settlers: Bringin Crofters and Clans to the Red River Valley", *North Dakota History*, v. 63:1, Winter 1996: 21-32. It is based on the racist assumption that the first settlers were Europeans, rather than Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal. See my response: Ruth Swan, "The Pembina Métis and the Myth of the Selkirk 'Visitors' ", paper delivered to the Northern Great Plains History Conference, Bismarck, N.D., September 25, 1997. I would like to acknowledge the helpful comments of Dr. William Lass, Mankato State University.

No preparations had been made and two groups were expected without enough time to plant a new crop for winter provisions.

Heney's purchase of potatoes from the freemen at the Forks (Botino, Peltier and Roy) resulted in his losing his position as fur trader at Pembina and as the HBC point man in helping the Selkirk colony survive its critical first years in the Red River Valley. Heney was ready to battle the Nor'Westers for the Red River fur trade. He did not expect to have to resist the heavy-handed tactics of the new Governor appointed by Lord Selkirk who would become his boss.

Heney wrote in his journal that he immediately sent two of his men, Jack Ram Kipling (formerly of Brandon House) and Baptiste the Indian, to Brandon and Pembina to tell the freemen at those places to forward all their pemmican and meat to the Forks of Red River.⁵⁹⁶ He also dispatched a freeman (son of a NWC partner) Bostonais Pangman, "our interpreter" [HBC], to tell all the freemen he could meet to hunt for more meat. "I also sent word to the freemen that I wished to see them at Pabina at which place they might depend on seeing me in a few days, my intention is to **pick from among them such men as I know by experience will be able by their skill in hunting to provide a sufficient quantity of food to support the great number of people expected for East Winnipeg Factory and the colony this ensuring fall.**"⁵⁹⁷ Heney

⁵⁹⁶ These men are listed in Hugh Heney's account book from Pabina River: B.160/d/1: 1811-12. Besides himself, Kipling and John Baptiste, the Indian, , he listed: Bellehumeur, Louis Cadotte, Angus McDonald, John Kipling Sr., John Kipling Jr., John Richards McKay [son of the Brandon House Master, a mixed-blood], Ninie [possibly Miniclier], Joseph Peltier and William Plowman. Descendants of the Kipling family ended up living on the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Reservation in Belcourt, N.D. Bellehumeur was at Pembina for a long time and his descendants also went to Belcourt. Angus McDonald may have been the father of Isabelle, who married Louis Godin and was the ancestor of Edward Jerome. Isabelle did not know her father's first name.

⁵⁹⁷ HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/4, August 20, 1812, by Hugh Heney.

knew that the skilled freemen hunters and their families would be able to supply the colony, especially if they had a market and good prices for their meat and pemmican.

Heney showed good sense by hiring some of the French Canadian freemen, like Bostonais Pangman, Bellehumeur dit Monette and Angus McDonald [MacDonell, a Canadian who had arrived with Henry] to transport his goods.⁵⁹⁸ Because he was Canadian himself, he relied on his countrymen to provide the skilled labour necessary for the fur trade. Although the Orkneymen at plains' posts like Brandon House (who made up the bulk of the HBC labouring classes) adjusted to life in the interior of Rupert's Land, they were not as skilled as the Canadian freemen who had been living on the plains since at least 1805. Colin Robertson appreciated the skills of these men and went to Montreal to hire French Canadians for his HBC boat brigades a few years later.

On August 24, 1812, Heney decided to go to the Forks to meet the freemen, rather than wait for Governor Miles McDonell at the mouth of the Red River where the HBC had built a post called the "Red River Fort" [a.k.a. Fort William after William Hillier]. At the Forks, Heney bought 150 bushels of potatoes from three freemen: **Charles Bottineau, Antoine Peltier and Jean Baptiste Roy [Roi]**, noting that part of this supply was for his supervisor, William Hillier, who had arrived with the settlers at York.⁵⁹⁹ His supervisor, William Hillier was an HBC man, not attached to the colony, but who had travelled with the new Governor and his people on the ship to York Factory and Hillier was expected to run the fur trade in the Lower Red River region.

⁵⁹⁸ HBCA: B.160/a/4: August 23, 1812. And Pembina Account Book, B.160/d/1, 1811-12. These men had worked for Heney the previous winter as well.

⁵⁹⁹ HBCA: B.160/a/4: August 24, 1812.

However, with the arrival of the Colony Governor, Miles McDonell, the lines between colony and HBC soon blurred and the traders for the London-based concern discovered that they were under the command of Selkirk's military appointee who had no fur trade experience (although his brother was John McDonell, a NWC partner who retired in 1812 mentioned in Chapter 3).⁶⁰⁰

The fact that the Scottish Earl chose a military officer with no experience in the *pays d'en haut* suggests that he anticipated that the rival North West Company, based in Montreal, would oppose his settlement and he needed a soldier to put down any resistance. It was probably also unrealistic for Selkirk to expect his newly recruited settlers to act as soldiers as well to protect the settlement. Unfortunately, Selkirk was not a good judge of ability and he chose a man who was not a good leader; Hugh Heney was the first victim of Miles McDonell's incompetence.

A detailed comparison of the Heney's Pembina Post Journal for the winter of 1812-13 and Miles McDonell's journal shows that Heney and "Captain McDonell" as he called him were on a collision course.⁶⁰¹ Heney quickly realized that the new governor was not apt to listen to his expert advice. Heney was immediately concerned when he observed Hillier and Miles McDonell socializing with the "rascally" NWC officers. "I behold with extreme concern an intimacy commencing between them from there [sic] Dinner and Supper parties, I am afraid something

⁶⁰⁰ Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*: his biography of John MacDonell (1768-1850): 465-466. He retired to Point Fortune in 1812 and so did not meet his brother Miles in the west. Herbert J. Mays, "McDonell, John", *DCB* v. 7:557-8. His nickname was "Le Pretre"; he married Magdeleine Poitras, a Cree-Métis from Qu'Appelle, born around 1782. Her father was Andre Poitras, a *commis [clerk]* with the NWC in Upper Red River [the Assiniboine] in 1804; see Masson's list of personnel, p. 402.

⁶⁰¹ Heney's journal is in HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/4, 1812-12; and Miles McDonell's journal is in PAM: Selkirk Papers (copied from originals in Selkirk's home in Scotland for the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa); hereafter called "S.P."

will arise fatal to the interests of the Hon. Company.”⁶⁰² Heney knew the rivalry and the aggressive competition that was going on in Red River; the new governor chose to ignore it and placate his enemies with good will and parties. Besides, the clerk at the NWC post was his cousin, Alexander, but, in pleasing the NWC gentlemen, he alienated his natural allies in the HBC.

In the fall, Miles McDonell decided to move the new immigrants to Pembina for the winter, so that they would be closer to the buffalo herds, where it was easier to hunt than at the Forks (the same reason that the fur traders had located at Pembina in the first place). He ordered the building of a new fort which he christened Fort Daer, after Lord Selkirk. Before it was finished in December, Miles stayed in the NWC fort with his cousin while his immigrants stayed with Heney at the HBC post about a mile downstream. This was another cause of resentment.⁶⁰³

During the course of that season, Heney complained about a number of issues which showed his criticism of the new governor was more than a personality conflict and which explained the latter’s incompetence as an administrator, a magistrate and a trader. These conflicts with the HBC traders (some of Heney’s superiors had the same complaints) who should have been the governor’s allies foreshadowed many of the problems that Miles McDonell and the colony encountered which might have been avoided if the Earl of Selkirk had appointed an

⁶⁰² HBCA: B.160/a/4: August 24, 1812.

⁶⁰³ HBCA: B.160/a/4: Pembina Post Journal, kept by Heney. September 15, 1812: “Captain McDonell paid me a visit, he has pitched his tent in the Fort, and spends all his spare time at the house of the NWC...though it would have been more proper for [him] to live in the fort of the Hudson’s Bay which has been the residence of his people since their arrival.” Miles McDonell reported the naming of Fort Daer and raising the flag on December 24, 1812; PAM: S.P., Miles McDonell’s Journal, p. 16787.

experienced fur trader like Colin Robertson instead of a Canadian military officer who had never been west of Lake Superior. Because most of the conflict between Heney and McDonell occurred at Pembina where they spent the winter rather than at the Forks, this microstudy of their relationship also exposes some of the problems that the newcomers encountered in their first winter in the Red River Valley and the role of the Canadian freemen and their families in helping the immigrants survive a harsh and unfamiliar environment. Contrary to the popular view, the French freemen and their families did not initially oppose the colony and helped the new immigrants survive their first winter in a new and harsh climate for which they were unprepared.

The first major conflict was over provisions. Heney was under the impression that he was to carry on the fur trade from his base at Pembina, but Miles McDonell was soon interfering with Heney's relations with the Indians and freemen without having any experience or expertise in the trade. Heney continued his efforts to stockpile pemmican for the winter, and on September 12, 1812, he traded 1485 pounds of pounded meat and fat and 44 pieces of piece meat,⁶⁰⁴ but he complained that, despite the fact that the freemen were rumoured to have great quantities of provisions, they were holding back to force up the price. The freemen were good negotiators and knew that they had Heney, the HBC, and the colony in a tight spot. The influx of new immigrants increased the demand on the pemmican supply and the price rose. Heney agreed to pay them one third in merchandise, the other two thirds in Brandy, tobacco and ammunition for all they could supply before October 20, 1812. After that date, he would return to the old

⁶⁰⁴ HBCA: B.160/a/4: September 12, 1812.

standard, expecting that “by that time to have a sufficiency of provisions to support a great number of additional hands, till fresh meat can be procured” in the winter.⁶⁰⁵

Heney intended to provide pemmican to both Hillier’s party at the mouth of the Red River and give half of all meat provisions to the colony,⁶⁰⁶ but McDonell undermined his arrangements.⁶⁰⁷ When a freemen, Joseph Cyr, brought in 390 lbs pounded meat and fat (to make pemmican at the posts), he went to Miles McDonell, who promised him all dry goods instead of liquor and tobacco, thus raising the price, and then sent him to Heney for payment without consulting the HBC trader. Heney was furious because he could no longer maintain the price he had negotiated with the freemen the previous week and with more costly provisions, the people at Pembina might run out of pemmican before the bison made their winter migration through the area, thus putting many lives at risk.⁶⁰⁸ Heney was also angry because he had warned McDonell to get his own goods to pay for provisions. Instead, the governor assumed that Heney could trade all his goods for the benefit of the colony and bill Lord Selkirk. This undermined the fur trade because Heney could not be trading for furs when he had to use all his goods to buy food for the immigrants. It was just such an arrangement that disrupted the trade at Brandon House and led to

⁶⁰⁵ HBCA: B.160/a/4: September 13, 1812.

⁶⁰⁶ HBCA: B.160/a/4; September 13, 1812.

⁶⁰⁷ Heney also complained about Hillier remaining at the mouth of the Red River when he would have been able to provision himself and his men better at Portage la Prairie on the Assiniboine or at Pembina; with the extra men, Heney wanted to build an outpost at Turtle River, near Grand Forks, where there was a big camp of freemen and where the buffalo were plentiful. With Hillier at the bottom of the Red, he was not able to get his own supplies and had to depend on Heney to supply him from Pembina. Why Hillier would not take Heney’s advice is not known, but perhaps it was just the hierarchical nature of the HBC. (HBCA: B.160/a/4).

⁶⁰⁸ HBCA: B.160/a/4: September 22, 1812.

the mutiny in 1811. He slowly realized that the fur trade was not anywhere on the governor's list of priorities.⁶⁰⁹ Yet, despite his misgivings, he promised: "I shall never see the colonists suffer for the unfriendly behaviour of their chief, but shall render them every assistance I can without hurting the trade...or distressing their servants under my command."⁶¹⁰

Miles McDonell soon found out that "Mr. Heney appears displeased at my meddling at all with the meat. He is sending a boat below with provisions for Mr. Hillier & to bring up potatoes." McDonell was shocked to learn that Heney would not share the potatoes "which I was told were intended for me".⁶¹¹ The governor was clearly desperate for the potatoes and he continued to complain about Heney and his lack of cooperation. On September 22: "His hunters arrive in the evening - sent me no part of the Meat." But once Heney had obtained enough meat and fat to make the annual pemmican supplies for the boat brigades, he continued to share whatever meat his hunters brought to Pembina: On November 12, 70 lbs of beef; on November 20: one deer; on November 27: 3/4 of a buffalo; and on December 17: 176 lbs green [fresh] meat.⁶¹² Miles McDonell hired his own hunter, a freeman named Tranchemontagne, but it was

⁶⁰⁹ Straightening out the accounts of the colony and HBC became a big problem for Selkirk by 1816. William Mure, the manager of Selkirk's estate at Kirkcudbright, "which remained the basis of his income - and fortune - ominously reported that...he doubted he could get large sums of cash to Andrew Colvile in London to pay for the expenses of the colony....Thomas Coutts and Company, the Earl's London bankers, would shortly thereafter refuse to accept another large 12-month bill from Selkirk, citing lack of funds and company policy". "Introduction" by J.M. Bumsted, *The Collected Writings of Lord Selkirk: 1810-1820*: Iv. As Governor, Miles McDonell had to take some responsibility for the confused accounts of the colony and for imposing on the HBC traders.

⁶¹⁰ HBCA: B.160/a/4: September 22, 1812.

⁶¹¹ PAM: S.P., Miles McDonell's Journal, September 21, 1812.

⁶¹² HBCA: B.160/a/4: provisions listed in Heney's journal by date.

difficult for the colonists to collect the meat the hunter killed because there were few carts at Fort Daer and Pembina. Miles dispatched two carts to get the meat when he had them available.⁶¹³

By January 22, 1813, Haney was frustrated and dumbfounded at the irresponsible behaviour of the colony officers: "I have strained my warehouse of every pound of meat, and made slaves of the hon. Compy's servants to draw provisions for him and his people, yet for all this, these two preceding days the common people in Fort Daer have been fasting, owing to all Captain McDonell's provisions being expended." He was also furious with Hillier for socializing with Miles McDonell and his Nor'Wester friends at Fort Daer.⁶¹⁴ While he and his retinue were feasting, the colonists were starving. On January 27, 1813, the governor put the immigrants on half rations to preserve the food supply.⁶¹⁵ But in this case, Heney was wrong about the partying. Mrs. McLean's child had died and the governor had invited Hillier and the Nor'Westers in for the wake.

Heney had good reason to be angry about the socializing with the Nor'Westers; it was not just jealousy on his part. He had ample evidence that the NWC clerks like Miles' cousin Alexander were manipulating the new governor and leading him into some bad decisions. For one thing, Heney feared that the Indians would be confused about the governor's loyalty to the

⁶¹³ PAM: S.P., Miles McDonell's Journal, September 23, 1812.

⁶¹⁴ HBCA: B.160/a/4: January 22, 1813.

⁶¹⁵ PAM: S.P., Miles McDonell's Journal, [between p. 16789-16799], January 27, 1813. "Short allowance of provisions. Today at 3 o'clock buried Mr. McLean's child, the Gentlemen of the three forts & all my people attend. Mrs. McLean is distressed, they pass the evening with me."

HBC and he would lose his debtors if they thought that Captain McDonell was a friend of the NWC.

The location of Fort Daer was also a problem. While it was under construction in the fall of 1812, Miles stayed with the Nor-Westerns in Alexander Henry's old stockaded fort on the north bank of the Pembina; Fort Daer was across the river on the south side. The colonists stayed with Heney about a mile north, so he and they were only observers of the interaction of their leader and his purported enemies led by his cousin, Alexander MacDonell. Miles noted in his journal that "Mr. McDonell accompanied me to look for a place to build on" and agreed with his cousin that the the best location was the site of Chaboillez's old post.⁶¹⁶ Then he sent for the men to camp at the chosen spot while the women and children stayed with Heney at the HBC. With the NWC post between Fort Daer and the HBC, the NWC clerks could observe all the colonists' movements while Heney's post was removed from that of the colony; not a good choice of location from Heney's point of view, but the new governor was oblivious to his objections.

There were numerous complaints about the Governor. Heney heard from William Plowman, the Pembina cooper, that Alexander McDonell had attacked the HBC post on the Winnipeg River and stabbed Plowman when he tried to stop the burglary of HBC goods. When Plowman complained to Hillier, he did nothing. It was part of the governor's job to act as magistrate and run the colony court. He and his appointees were expected to charge suspected criminals and hold a trial, but Hillier was reluctant to press the charge against the governor's cousin although he promised to do so.⁶¹⁷ The next day, Heney exploded: "I am hurt and greatly

⁶¹⁶ PAM: S.P. Miles McDonell's Journal, p. 16752: September 13, 1812.

⁶¹⁷ HBCA: B.160/a/4: November 3, 1812.

surprised to hear that Mr. Hillier has been dining at the NWC house by which means he is now making a companion of a rascal notorious for having committed an action for which if Justice was administered, he ought to have been hanged.”⁶¹⁸ On November 6, Hillier warned Heney that he “was greatly surprized at the power the Honourable Compy. and the Earl of Selkirk had been pleased to delegate Captain McDonell...who had the power to turn out of these rivers the hon. Compy’s traders, desiring that I would be careful in what manner I dealt with Capt. McDonell...” Hillier was warning the Pembina trader not to challenge the governor’s power, but Heney could not believe that the London Committee would allow the governor of the colony to harm the trade of the HBC.⁶¹⁹ Apparently, they could and did.

A more outrageous example of the Nor’Westers manipulating the governor in the administration of justice was the case of “The Murderer”. On November 11, 1812, Miles McDonell wrote in his journal: “Learn this morning that the Indian who came yesterday with Mr. Heney had wantonly murdered 3 Canadians at the Dalles on the River Winipeg years ago.”⁶²⁰ But Heney believed that this was a story concocted by the NWC to undermine the HBC trade. According to Heney, the Nor’Westers ravished this Indian’s wife, using the murder charge as an excuse, but Heney believed him to be “a harmless Indian”, one of his debtors, and he did not believe the charge. “It is well known that the real murderer lives at the Rainy Lake, but he being a Trader at the NWC’s post there, they thought it most prudent to impute the murder to an Indian inimical to them”. The accused paid one of the Nor’Westers a quantity of skins to prevent his

⁶¹⁸ HBCA: B.160/a/4: November 4, 1812.

⁶¹⁹ HBCA: B.160/a/4: November 6, 1812.

⁶²⁰ PAM: S.P. Miles McDonell Journal: November 11, 1812.

own homicide, like a protection racket. Heney's superior HBC officer, Hillier, took the Nor'Westers' side in the dispute and would not permit "The Murderer" as they called him to pitch his tent by Heney's post in case Captain McDonell and his cousin might see it when they came for dinner. So Heney kept his friend in his room, as much for safety and to prevent a confrontation as anything else.⁶²¹ If Heney were right about the above accusations, then Miles McDonell did not have the objectivity to be a good magistrate to promote justice and fair dealing in the colony.

Miles McDonell did not like Heney and did not trust him, just as he was reluctant to trust the Indians and freemen.⁶²² When he first arrived and visited Fort Alexander at the mouth of the Winnipeg River, Miles noted on August 26, 1812, that he had seen the publication of Heney's "confidential mission". This may have been the orders from the London Committee of 1810 to prepare for the colony by stockpiling provisions. Why Heney's instructions should have been kept confidential is not clear and perhaps some of the responsibility for the problems Heney faced were that most of his HBC colleagues did not understand what was taking place and what kind of role they were expected to play.⁶²³ But Miles McDonell made Heney look bad in his journal by suggesting that he was mean-spirited and refused to provide food for the starving

⁶²¹ HBCA: B.160/a/4: January 1 and 4, 1813.

⁶²² Two other incidents demonstrate Miles McDonell's bias in justice matters. On February 15, 1814, he suspected Baptiste Le Roy's brother-in-law of theft because he was the only Indian around at the time; PAM: S.P. Miles McDonell's Journal, p. 16882. On June 13, 1814, he charged Francois Delorme, his own trader and interpreter at the Forks of trespass; p. 16906.

⁶²³ Margaret Clarke suggested this reason in her MA thesis, relating to Heney's problems at Brandon House with the mutiny of 1811. *Reconstituting the Fur Trade in the Assiniboine Basin, 1793-1812*, University of Winnipeg, 1987: 4-97.

immigrants. He never acknowledged the donations of meat and provisions that Heney made to Fort Daer and, when he wrote to Lord Selkirk, he complained about the lack of cooperation from the HBC officers. William Auld, the Governor at York Factory, was eventually sacked for this reason. Yet Selkirk was aware that his governor treated his inferiors rudely and had complaints from HBC men, including Auld, who blamed Miles for “unprincipaled mismanagement” and Hillier, who believed that the governor had had a nervous breakdown at York in the summer of 1814.⁶²⁴

One indication that Miles was trying to make Heney look in the worst possible light was the fact that he had William Yorstone’s Brandon House Journal from 1810-11 copied into his own journal; this documents the mutiny at Brandon House two years earlier and shows how the men found Heney drunk and abusive. McDonell left readers with the impression that Heney was hard to get along with and historians such as J.P. Pritchett read McDonell’s version without knowing Heney’s side of the story and assumed that the HBC men were jealous of the governor’s power and resisted helping him in this important enterprise.⁶²⁵

⁶²⁴ *Collected Writings of Lord Selkirk*, v. 2, “Introduction” by J.M. Bumsted, p. xxxvii. Hillier quoted McDonell saying: “I am a villain - the colony will be ruined all by my fault.” He cites PAM: S.P. “William Hillier, Notes of his Narrative of M. Macdonell Cond’t at YF, Aug end, December 1814”, pp. 1504-1505.

⁶²⁵ J.P. Pritchett made excuses for Miles McDonell, suggesting that the challenges were so difficult that a better man would have had difficulty overcoming the problems of the climate, inexperienced farmers, and lack of preparations. He suggested that the HBC traders “were able to accomplish by fraud what declared enemies could only attempt by force”; p. 108. He does not explain this and does not document Heney’s attempts to provide provisions, but suggests that the NWC bought up all the provisions from the freemen before the first group of settlers arrived. But he also noted that “During the fall months, however, Macdonell’s men did not want for food, as the natives and “freemen” generously brought in large quantities of buffalo meat, wild berries and “prairie turnips”; p. 85. They brought these provisions to sell, not as gifts.

Heney's accusations make sense. For example, he complained when McDonell hired Chief Peguis, the "Cut-Nosed Chief", to be his hunter. "Capt. McDonell has done this by advice of the NWC's interests who know well that Peguis is not a hunter of either deer or Buffalo, has at his disposal a party of men who are the best hunters of furs in that part of the country and who have been traders of mine..."⁶²⁶ Peguis and his Ojibwe hunters were beaver trappers, and, being relatively new to the plains, not skilled at bison hunting. They had few horses and hunted on foot. If McDonell wanted skilled hunters, he could have chosen them from the Assiniboinés, Plains Cree or freemen.

Peguis had recently had a fight with John Wills, the NWC officer at Fort Gibraltar and the Ojibwe and Ottawa (as noted by Tanner) did not like the Nor'Westers. They found them too aggressive and unfair in their dealings. The Ojibwe preferred Heney, but he feared that all their skins would end up in the hands of the NWC if they were hunting for the colony and the governor was getting all his advice from his cousin. Miles McDonell was spending all his time at their post, but, since Miles McDonell was new to the valley, he probably was not aware of these tribal differences or realize that the Ojibwe were expert beaver hunters rather than bison hunters.

Peguis was a great diplomat and charmer and knew how to cement a good relationship with the newcomers. When he visited the governor on September 30, McDonell observed: "The Cut nosed chief of the Forks a Soto [Saulteau] had arrived last evening and came this morning with 5 attendants to visit me. He advanced with much apparent joy and took me by the hand, brought him into my tent and & was followed by his people. Gave them 2 qts. Spirits to take

⁶²⁶ HBCA: B.160/a/4: October 14, 1812.

away with them to drink...”⁶²⁷ Because of this good relationship, Peguis continued to act diplomatically and to keep both sides from attacking each other as hostilities increased.

It is probably an exaggeration to say that the Ojibwe were for the colony and the Métis were against it. Both groups saw the new settlement as advantageous for markets and protection, but there was some inter-ethnic rivalry between the freemen and the Ojibwe. The Indians resented the free Canadians running the buffalo and tried to stop them in January 1815,⁶²⁸ but the Métis would not accept regulation from an outside authority when it interfered with their trade as with the Pemmican Proclamation in January 1814 and the governor’s prohibition on running the buffalo which was aimed primarily at the freemen in July 1814 (as the Ojibwe were still hunting on foot). Charles Bottineau continued to run the buffalo at Turtle River, telling the Indians that “No person has authority to stop him”. On January 24, 1815, Miles complained: “Free Canadians still running the cattle with horses”.⁶²⁹ They defied his authority and he could not stop them. But he did alienate them by interfering with their economic pursuits.

Another problem the Governor had was with interpreters. On September 16, he requested an interpreter from Heney who send him Cadotte, an Ojibwe linguist.⁶³⁰ Miles also hired

⁶²⁷ PAM: S.P. September 30, 1812: Miles McDonell’s Journal.

⁶²⁸ PAM: S.P., Miles McDonell’s Journal: January 11, 1815: Botino stopped hunting on horseback by Indians; p. 16946. Miles McDonell had hired Botino a year earlier to hunt for the colony; January 28, 1814; p. 16879. He had banned the running of the buffalo on July 21, 1814; p. 16915.

⁶²⁹ PAM: S.P. Miles McDonell’s Journal: “No person has the authority...”: p. 16946. “Free Canadians still running...”: between pp. 16946 and 16967.

⁶³⁰ PAM: S.P.: September 16, 1812: Miles McDonell’s Journal. “Request a man from Mr. Heney who speaks Indian.” This is at Pembina. Louis Cadotte was one of Heney’s servants at the HBC post at Pembina; HBCA: Pembina Account Book: B.160/d/1, 1811-12.

Francois Delorme (Aneeb) and left him at the Forks with a small group of settlers who were wintering there to protect the colony's property. Yet Heney noticed that McDonell often used the NWC interpreter at Pembina which was not a good idea because the message might be influenced by company preferences.⁶³¹ Miles usually invited his cousin Alexander to be present when he was dealing with the Indians. When a band of Ojibwe from Turtle River arrived, led by Chief Le Sucre, "the old chief made a speech which Mr. Isham could not intepret nor could he repeat to them what I said in reply. Mr. McDonell's interpreter Le Roy [Baptiste Le Roy, freeman] did it at my request, treat them with 3 galls. Rum & 2 fathoms of Tobacco."⁶³² Probably Isham was a Cree interpreter and that is why he could not understand Ojibwe. But despite the fact that Baptiste Roy helped McDonell with his interpretation, Miles still did not trust the freeman who had provided Heney with the large crop of potatoes and had helped build Fort Gibraltar. When he moved the colony to Pembina for the winter on October 14, McDonell decided to deposit all his seed grain, liquor & ammuniton in the NWC Fort [Gibraltar] for security "as I did not deem it safe in Le Roy's house" at the Forks.⁶³³ It was this kind of action which not only worried the HBC men, but also insulted the freemen.⁶³⁴

⁶³¹ HBCA: B.160/a/4: October 26, 1812.

⁶³² PAM: S.P.: October 24, 1812.

⁶³³ PAM: S.P.: Miles McDonell's Journal, October 14, 1812.

⁶³⁴ Lord Selkirk warned Miles McDonell about his manner of dealing with subordinates after he received complaints about various incidents of conflict from Dr. Edwards and Mr. McRae. "The expressions he ascribed to you are such as ought never to be used by a person in a Situation of Command." Apparently Selkirk had also noticed McDonell's abusive treatment of "tradesmen" before the Governor left England. Pritchett, *Red River Valley: 1811-1849*, New York: Russell & Russell: 1942, 1970:107. These verbal tirades obvious did not get documented in his journal and letters.

There were other freemen that Miles McDonell hired that first fall and winter, although the NWC were discouraging the Indians and freemen from helping the colony. Charles Tranchemontagne, Charles Bottineau, Francois Delorme, and Jean-Baptiste Lagimonière were the ones mentioned most often.⁶³⁵ In fact, a careful study of Miles McDonell's and Hugh Heney's journals from 1812-13 show 25 freemen and Bois Brulés who were mentioned as assisting the colony in one way or another. This shows that they did not initially oppose the establishment of Selkirk's settlement and perhaps saw it as advantageous, giving them a market for their excess produce and a community with future schools and churches which would benefit their families. Although they hunted on the plains, they settled along the rivers and were happy to contemplate the prospect of having Peter Fidler, the HBC surveyor, lay out lots for them along with the immigrants and Indians.⁶³⁶

⁶³⁵ Tranchemontagne: September 18, 27, October 26, 30, December 24, 1812; January 13: Tranche and Lajimonière; January 26, May 24: families arrived at the Forks; May 25: Tranche & Cadotte arrived with the remainder of the horses from Fort Daer, June 20, 1813. Bottineau sold potatoes to Hugh Heney, August 24, 1812, at the Forks (B.160/a/4); March 15, 1813: NWC clerk Alexander McDonell told Bottineau to take the potatoes to Capn. McDonell, but he declined (B.160/a/4) and tried to coerce him into making a false statement that Heney had promised the potatoes for the colony; Bottineau refused (*ibid*). May 11, 1813: Bottineau, a freeman, camped with Indians at Rivière aux Gratias (PAM: S.P. Miles McDonell's Journal). June 25, 1813: Bottineau brought a letter to Miles from his brother at Montreal, John McDonell, who had moved his Cree wife and Métis family to the Ottawa River. May 21, 1815: Miles accused Bottineau of burning the HBC camp at Turtle River (Miles McDonell's Journal). In his deposition, Bottineau said that NWC officers threatened those free Canadians of Red River who hunted for the colony like Bottineau and Dauphinais in 1814; Alexander McDonell & Seraphim Lamar burned the HBC post at Pembina after he refused to do it and reproached those freemen who did not help them; he also hunted for Colin Robertson in the summer and winter of 1815-16 (PAM, S.P., v. 60: 15847050, Coltman depositions, 7 July, 1817). Francois Delorme and his son were engaged by Miles McDonell October 14, 1812, to trade with the Indians at the Forks and assist the colonists there (Miles McDonell's Journal).

⁶³⁶ De Trémaudan also wrote that the Métis welcomed the Scottish farmers at first, but became exasperated with Miles McDonell's proclamations which tried to control how they

Cuthbert Grant and Bostonais Pangman were also in and out of the Pembina trading houses from 1812-14. On September 28, 1812, two weeks after Miles McDonell first arrived in Pembina, he noted that Captain Grant with a "Soto chief of Portage de Prairie", Canard Noir [Black Duck from Portage la Prairie], paid him a visit to get information about his intentions for the colony. Miles explained his plans:

[Canard Noir] wished to be advised & instructed by me in what manner he & his people were to live & conduct themselves, hoped I would not take all the soil from them & requested a piece of land to be allotted him & his people, that the times were hard, etc, the traders did not supply as well as formerly & he trusted I would establish some regulations for the relief of them (the Indians)....I informed them that I was sent out here by the proprietor of the soil to establish Regulations for them & others in the country to punish the bad and reward the good, **that lands would be allotted to them & they should be instructed in the cultivation thereof for their own benefit....**that I would endeavour to prevail on the Sioux to make peace with them or otherwise would assist to repel & reduce them to the necessity of suing for peace...⁶³⁷

This was an important diplomatic meeting for the new governor with local Aboriginal leaders.

Cuthbert Grant was a young man of about 19 years old, recently returned that summer from Canada where he had been educated after the death of his father, Cuthbert Grant Sr in 1799.⁶³⁸

The name of his mother is not known, but she is believed to have been Métis-Cree. He was

hunted, fished and cut wood. They resented the interference with their way of life. This comes from the Métis oral tradition. *Hold High Your Heads*: 28.

⁶³⁷ PAM: S.P., Miles McDonell's Journal, September 29, 1812.

⁶³⁸ Wallace, biographies in *Documents Relating to the NWC*, gives Cuthbert Jr.'s birth date as "1796?". His father was born in Scotland and was a partner in the NWC by 1795, having served in Athabasca and along the Saskatchewan at Qu'Appelle, Fort Rivière Tremblante. M.A. MacLeod & W.L. Morton suggest he was born in 1793 (*Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963: 1-2) and George Woodcock uses the same date in his biography in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, v. 8:341-344. Cuthbert Sr. and his Cree wife had at least five Métis children and Cuthbert Jr. was proud to call himself a *Bois-Brulé* or Half-breed; see three letters he wrote in 1815 and 1816, reprinted in MacLeod & Morton: 34-36.

typical of the sons of Canadian traders who were born in the North West before 1800. By the time the Selkirk settlers arrived in 1812, they were reaching adulthood. This generation came to call themselves the *Bois Brulés* (or sometimes Halfbreeds).⁶³⁹ It is likely that their reputation for impetuosity and high spirits had as much to do with their youth as their culture. They were expert horsemen and commanded the plains with their mobile cavalry.

Since young Cuthbert had not spent his adolescence in the West, he must have immersed himself in learning the trade from the ground up and immediately started travelling with the local Indians, perhaps to learn their languages and improve his riding and hunting skills, which may have been neglected when he was in school in Montreal. It is not clear whether he was interpreting for the Black Duck in this meeting with the governor, but Miles did not mention another interpreter present. He probably took the young man for granted and did not realize that his visitor would become one of his strongest opponents.

Since "Captain Grant" travelled with the Indians, the newcomers may not have realized that he was Métis, not Indian. If he dressed like an Indian, he probably looked like one.⁶⁴⁰ The

⁶³⁹ In a letter to J.D. Cameron at Sault Ste. Marie, from River Qu'Appelle, March 13, 1816, Cuthbert Grant used both words. MacLeod & Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*: 36.

⁶⁴⁰ PAM, S.P., Alexander McDonnell's Journal: p. 18051. Alexander McDonnell who took over leadership of the colony after Miles McDonnell was arrested in 1815 and taken to Canada also kept a journal in the Selkirk Papers. On June 18, 1816, he wrote in his journal: "The Indian chief called Captian Grant arrived here with his band of Indians." On June 21, he identified him as "Cuthbert Grant, Chief Commander of the Band." Apparently McDonnell thought he was an Indian. This was before and after the Seven Oaks incident. Perhaps Grant went to Pembina to rendezvous with Bostonais Pangman and his freemen and then after Seven Oaks, they returned to Pembina to avoid being apprehended. Apparently, they were dressed to look like Indians, possibly to scare the colonists and to emphasize the Aboriginal warfare threat. It was akin to the Americans at the Boston Tea Party dressing up as Indians when they threw the cargo of tea into Boston Harbour or when modern American soldiers get ready for battle, they paint their faces (as do some sports fans) to intimidate the enemy. I have never heard of other nationalities doing

difference between the Métis and Indians was largely one of residence if the freemen were living in camps away from the posts and separate from the Indians' extended family groups. But when there were mixed bands, especially on the buffalo hunt, it was probably difficult to tell them apart. Tanner noted that the Indians by 1810 were using cloth and blankets for clothing.⁶⁴¹ The freemen and Métis would have worn moccasins and some leather and cloth, including the sash. But Indians from Quebec like the Mohawk (Iroquois) voyageurs from Kahnawake and Kahnésatake also wore the sash. The freemen and their families lived in tipis, which were useful when they travelled on the plains and so at this time the ethnic markers between Aboriginals and the freemen/Métis families were blurring, especially when they were hunting together.⁶⁴² In their summer fishing camps, they may have lived separately.

this, but it may not be uncommon in battle situations.

⁶⁴¹ Tanner complained that when John Wills, NWC, refused to give him debt, his wife had to tan moose hides and make leather clothes for his family instead of using the cloth, blankets and woolen clothes they were accustomed to. HBC personal accounts show that a great deal of cloth was traded to Indians and freemen. This complaint of Tanner's would have been about 1809-10. See Tanner's Narrative, ed. James: p. 173. For a typical voyageur account, see Joseph Vandall, Fort William, Red River Settlement, September 6, 1816: 1 blk silk Handkerchief; 1 pr. Beef [bison leather] shoes; 2 yds. Common strouds; 1 cotton shirt; 3 yds. Printed calico; 2 fos. Tail feathers. December 6, 1819: 1 pair brown cloth Trowsers, 1 pr. Indian Shoes [moccasins]. HBCA: Fort William (RRS: NWC), E.7/8. I would like to thank Edward Jerome who figured out that this Fort William was at the mouth of Red River, Hillier's fort; HBCA: Pembina Post Journal, B.160/a/4.

⁶⁴² I do not accept the argument of MacLeod and Morton that there was an ethnic difference between the French Canadian freemen and their mixed-culture children. I agree with Professor Paul Chartrand's "Supper Table Rule": that all those who sit around the same supper table should be considered Métis if one of the parents is Métis and I doubt that the freemen thought of themselves as any different from their children. Professor Paul Chartrand to the author, personal communication, January 2003.

The Black Duck's deferential style was typical of Indian diplomacy; looking for reciprocal relations, he only acted submissive, complaining about the traders, while expecting to get land for his people as part of the colony, so that they could settle in Red River without as much fear of attack by the Sioux.⁶⁴³ On September 30, 1812 as noted, the governor met with the "chief of the Forks, a Soto", Peguis and on October 24, with Le Sucre. At the latter meeting, the governor had to rely on the NWC interpreter Baptiste Roy with whom he did not trust to leave his goods at the Forks, because Mr. Isham would not translate the proceedings. The local Indian chiefs were interested in finding out the proposals for the settlement, although they may not have agreed with Miles McDonell that "the proprietor of the soil" lived in Scotland. The Aboriginal view was that the soil was not owned by anyone. Probably Cuthbert Grant did not agree with Miles' claim for Lord Selkirk either, even though he was probably one of the few Aboriginal descendants at that time who had been to school in Montreal and possibly even educated in Scotland.⁶⁴⁴ The Métis he led later agreed that they had an Aboriginal right to the land of Red River and the Nor-Westerners encouraged the idea that they had an Aboriginal right to defend it.⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴³ Mary Black Rogers, "Varieties of Starving": Semantics and Survival in the Sub-Arctic Fur Trade, 1750-1850, *Ethnohistory* 33:4, 1986.

⁶⁴⁴ Family oral history collected by M.A. MacLeod suggested that Grant was educated in Scotland; MacLeod & Morton: *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*: 83. Woodcock wrote in his *DCB* biography, v. 8: 341-344, that he was probably educated in Montreal. Both may be right. MacLeod and Morton speculate that Grant may have gone to England in 1822-23 for medical training. MacLeod interviewed old people in St. Francois Xavier who believed he had a medical practice. This is further confirmed by a medical chest in the collections of the Manitoba Museum of Man in Winnipeg which is believed to have belonged to Grant. John Tanner recounted that Grant removed a bullet from his chest in the spring of 1823 on an island near Rainy Lake [Lac la Pluie]; Tanner Narrative: 273-275.

⁶⁴⁵ See Charles Bottineau's refusal to stop running the buffalo. PAM: S.P., Miles McDonell's journal: "No person has authority to stop him." January 15, 1815; p. 16946.

Since most of the NWC clerks and partners had native wives and Métis families like their voyageurs, they were probably sympathetic to this view and not just using it to manipulate these young men to defend the company's interest. They had their sons' futures to worry about as well.⁶⁴⁶

Bostonais Pangman was, like Grant, the son of a North West partner, Peter Pangman, who had retired to Montreal and taken a seigneurie, leaving his son to live as a freeman in the West.⁶⁴⁷ Although a freeman, Bostonais had been hired by Hugh Heney in the fall of 1812 to be an interpreter for John McLeod at the outpost of Turtle River [called by McDonnell the "Upper Forks"]. The Governor disparaged the arrangement, suggesting that "Bostonais does not speak a word of English nor does McLeod speak a word of French".⁶⁴⁸ Yet McLeod developed an admiration for this skilled hunter, trader and interpreter and it was this McLeod who wrote in his journal that during the winter Bostonais warned him that the NWC men at Turtle River, Toussaint Vaudry and Bonhomme Montour, were telling the local Indians bad things about the HBC and colony and, if they did not put a stop to it, bad results would follow. There were many such incidents reported in the next few years where the NWC was accused of arousing the local

⁶⁴⁶ Jennifer Brown's theory of patrilocality in *Strangers in Blood*, 1980.

⁶⁴⁷ Alexander Henry had described the Métis son as an "XY freeman from the Assiniboine" when he visited Pembina with Peltier, Desjardins and others; see Henry's Journal, ed. Coues, v. 1:268-269, October 26, 1805. See Wallace's biography of his father: *Documents Relating to the North West Company*: 490-491. Peter Pangman Sr. became a partner in 1787 and retired about 1794 when he bought the seigneurie of Lachenaie in Lower Canada; and died in 1819. "He had a half-breed son, commonly known as "Bastonnais Pangman" who was prominent in the Seven Oaks affair on the Red River in 1816. This nickname refers to the fact that his father was born in New England of German descent.

⁶⁴⁸ PAM: S.P., Miles McDonnell's Journal, October 20, 1812.

Aboriginal communities, including the Freeman and their families, at Pembina and the Forks, as well as at Rainy Lake, along the Assiniboine to Qu'Appelle and along the Saskatchewan and English [Churchill] Rivers.

When Hugh Heney left the settlement in the spring of 1813, having given up any hope for the settlement, McLeod and Pangman summered at the Forks, building a new post there to house the HBC property. Peter Fidler who had previously been at Brandon House was brought to the Forks for the HBC. Fidler neglected to honour a promise of goods that Heney had made to Pangman and he quit the HBC. McLeod lamented the loss of Pangman to the HBC: "I was extremely sorry at the time as well as afterwards; for perhaps the value of a few pounds given this man - who was a very interested servant - would have prevented a great many violences that afterwards took place". McLeod also noted that on leaving, Heney "instructed me not to give any assistance whatever to the Colony should they ever produce orders from Mr. Hillier to that effect. As Pangman left our service, he said that Peter Fidler might get to his winter quarters, but that he would run a great risk of not returning."⁶⁴⁹ So it was not just Miles McDonell who showed bad judgement in dealing with the freemen and Bois Brulés, but Peter Fidler as well. Even Colin Robertson who admired the freemen and Métis offended and insulted them on occasion.⁶⁵⁰

Both Fidler, the HBC man from Britain, and the Canadian governor who was a professional soldier were used to a strict hierarchy of authority based on the class system. The

⁶⁴⁹ PAM: John McLeod's Journal, his observations on Pangman are in the section around May 1813, no specific dates.

⁶⁵⁰ Cuthbert Grant wrote to J.D. Cameron, complaining about insults from Colin Robertson: "altho' Robertson made us of some expressions, which I hope he shall swallow in the Spring - he shall see that it is neight 15, 30 nor 50 of his best Horsemen that can made the Bois Brûlés bow down to him..."; March 13, 1816. MacLeod & Morton: 36.

governor expected everyone in Red River to follow his orders, whether they were reasonable or not. Fidler and MacDonell did not like it when the freemen and their families were independent enough to resist authority and ignore their orders.⁶⁵¹ These officers mishandled the situation and, although these freemen were initially willing to sell their provisions to the colony, the misleading rumours of the NWC clerks and *bourgeois* as well as the mistakes and naiveté of the governor and his allies drove the freemen and their sons into increasing dislike for the colony. It constituted a threat to the NWC provisioning system and the Métis sons of the freemen would not tolerate the insults that they felt in a social system which made them inferior, even if, like Grant and Pangman, their fathers were partners and important traders of a previous generation.⁶⁵²

It took Miles McDonell some time after Heney left in the spring of 1813 to realize that he was being manipulated by his own cousin, Alexander, and his *bourgeois*, Duncan Cameron, and by that time, the Nor'Westers were succeeding in both persuading the *Bois Brulés* that the colony should be destroyed; and they worked on the European immigrants that they should desert and

⁶⁵¹ The idea of the "freeman" was not just an economic niche in the fur trade, but a philosophy that was engrained in the Métis culture, a state of mind, and they did not take well to authoritarian structures when there were other options. On the plains, they were independent of the rigid control of the outsiders and they called the shots. This was the attraction of their way of life and this resistance to outside control was a long-standing issue in Métis history. Edward A. Jerome, Hallock, Mn., personal communication.

⁶⁵² Re: insults: When Cuthbert Grant helped in the arrest of Colin Robertson in 1819 at Grand Rapids, and the latter observed that it was strange that in the execution of a lawful warrant the "murderers of Red River should be employed", Grant drew his pistol, exclaiming, "Don't insult the half-breeds or I'll shoot you!" Robertson must have been trying to goad him because generally Robertson admired the Métis. For example, Governor Semple did not like the Métis or trust them. On November 18, 1815, he wrote: "The freemen and some half-breeds coming in to offer their services, Mr. Pritchard and Mr. Robertson seem certain as to their sincerity..."; the governor thought they only wanted rum and tobacco. "Mr. Robertson and I differ, for with him, they are the best fellows in the world." PAM: S.P.: p. 17990.

leave for Canada to avoid being killed. From 1813 to the collision at Seven Oaks on June 19, 1816, tensions mounted, hostilities increased and Miles McDonell succeeded in alienating everyone from his own officers and settlers to the freemen and their sons.⁶⁵³ He was finally forced to leave the settlement in June 1815, after numerous violent incidents, threats and intimidation by the Nor-Westerners and the unresolved issue of the pemmican supplies which the NWC badly needed for its northern brigades..⁶⁵⁴

In August, 1815, after the first destruction of the colony when Grant and his men had forced the settlers to leave, Colin Robertson for the HBC persuaded some of the colonists who were planning to return to Scotland to revive the colony, re-build their burned out homes and re-plant their crops. He also attempted to win back the loyalty of the freemen and Métis. Robertson was full of energy and enthusiasm for Lord Selkirk's project and would have made an excellent

⁶⁵³ For example, on May 7, 1813, Miles McDonell wrote that he ordered "Delorme to remove himself and family to opposite side the river on account of his children and a parcel of starving dogs he keeps"; (PAM: S.P., v. 62, p. 16824). Delorme was an influential freeman and not a good person to insult or alienate. But this was how McDonell treated his employees. He could be demanding, exacted harsh punishments and, like his Irish officer Owen Keveny, made enemies. On February 28, 1813, McDonell fired Mrs. Smyth, his American cook, because she refused to make his breakfast. He blamed her republican leanings - "does much mischief among the people, talking to them of the United States liberty and Equality"; (S.P., v. 62, p. 16799). On June 9, John Sweeny, a vagabond Irish boy, also refused to help with the cooking. He ran away several times so the governor "had him tied to a tree and flogged on the posteriors"; (S.P., v. 62, p. 16834). Corporal punishment was commonly used to discipline the men, as well as boys. Rev. Charles Bourke at York Factory noted December 29, 1811, that William Hillier beat one of his men named Jordan with a stick; when Jordan complained to Captain McDonell, he did nothing. When Jordan complained to the priest, he noted that "blood was gushing out of his mouth, nose and ears, I could do nothing for him" (S.P., v. 67, p. 17851). Bourke was so disgusted with the Selkirk enterprise that he never went to Red River with the first group of immigrants and returned to Ireland in the spring.

⁶⁵⁴ Miles McDonell was forced to surrender to the *Bois Brulés* on June 17, 1815 and was taken by boat for trial in Canada. PAM: S.P., p. 17040.

governor. But again the Earl made a bad choice and appointed Robert Semple, a Scottish loyalist born in New England, who was just as arrogant as Miles McDonell. He arrived in November 1815, and, by the spring of 1816, Colin Robertson, like Heney and Auld in his disgust with how the colony was being run, was forced to quit because of Semple's incompetence. Again, the new Governor could not bring himself to listen to his experienced officers. This time, disaster struck the immigrants who remained loyal to the Selkirk enterprise.⁶⁵⁵

Cuthbert Grant, the Bois Brûlés and the Fur Trade War

The violent confrontation at Seven Oaks has been examined in great detail by many historians. In the spring of 1816, Cuthbert Grant assembled his cavalry made up of young *Bois Brûlés* from Qu'Appelle, Dauphin, English River [Churchill River] and along the Saskatchewan River⁶⁵⁶ (see Figure 6). These young men were dispersed along the fringe of plain and parkland

⁶⁵⁵ Extensive secondard literature describes the incidents leading up to the Seven Oaks incident. A few examples are: A.S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, London: Thos. Nelson & Sons, 1939, Chapter 7: Lord Selkirk's Colony: 1800-21: 508-600. Morton blamed the events of the 19 June, 1816, on the Nor'Westers who "were the prime movers in the conspiracy, enjoyed the fruit of the bloody deed, and rewarded its perpetrators"; p. 578. M.A. MacLeod and W.L. Morton also argued that the Nor-Westerners were to blame for the confrontation. They said that it was an accident whereas A.S. Morton thought that the Métis were planning to attack Fort Douglas; see chapters four and five, *Cuthbert Grant of Granttown*; "the collision at Seven Oaks was an accident", p. 53. George Woodcock blamed Grant and his men, suggesting that the deaths would never have occurred if they had not demonstrated "hostile intent"; *DCB* v. 8: 1985: 343. A good review of the events from 1814 to 1816 can be found in the "Introduction", *The Collected Writings of Lord Selkirk: 1810-1820*, v. II: ed. J.M. Bumsted, Winnipeg: Manitoba Record Society: 1988: "The Colony Dispersed & On the Defensive": pp. xxxviii to lxxiii. Bumsted concluded that the official view of the hostility between the fur trade companies was that Selkirk was guilty of a conspiracy at Fort William to ruin the NWC and its reaction was merely defensive, but "the weight of evidence ran against the official view", p.lxxiii.

⁶⁵⁶ In a letter from Cuthbert Grant to J.D. Cameron, Sault Ste. Marie, March 13, 1816, three months before Seven Oaks, he stated his intention to destroy the colony for a second time if required. "The Halfbreeds of Fort Dauphin, de Prairies and English River are all to be here

at the NWC posts where they worked. They assembled at Pembina at Bostonais Pangman's camp where Sheriff Alexander MacDonell, who had taken over when Miles left, noted their arrival; he then arrested the three leaders: Bostonais, Charles Hesse and Alexander Fraser.⁶⁵⁷ The *Brulés* were drawing in men from a large area which included the whole North West and using Pembina as their staging point. It was only 70 miles from the Forks. A year earlier, they had developed a military organization with four "chiefs of the Halfbreed Indians, Indian Territory, The Forks, Red River" who signed peace proposals with Peter Fidler on June 25, 1815 before sending the colonists away and burning their houses and colony fort.⁶⁵⁸ According to these documents (which Fidler believed were written by NWC clerk, Alexander McDonell) the leaders were Cuthbert Grant [Qui appelle], Bostonais Pangman [Pembina], William Shaw [English River District] and Bonhomme Montour [Pembina].

[Qu'Appelle] in the spring, it is hoped we shall come off with flying colours & never see any of them again in the colonizing way in Red River....according to our arrangements we are to remain at the Forks & pass the summer for fear they should play the same trick as last summer of coming back, but they shall receive a warm reception." Cited in MacLeod and Morton, p. 36. James Sutherland wrote in HBC journal at Qu'Appelle that the "Half Breeds in Athabaska, English River, Saskatchewan and Swan River were collecting under their several chief and had sent information that they all join Grant early in the spring to sweep Red River of all the English." MacLeod and Morton: 37.

⁶⁵⁷ On March 17, 1816, Colin Robertson took over Fort Gibraltar and arrested Duncan Cameron; *Collected Writings of Lord Selkirk*, v. 2: 119. In a related move, Alexander MacDonell at Fort Daer arrested the leaders of the Pembina freemen: Bostonais Pangman, Charles Hesse and Alexander Fraser; the latter two had come from Qu'Appelle. PAM: S.P. Alexander MacDonell's Journal: p. 18015. He sent them to the Forks, where Cameron, who was still allowed to carry on the fur trade, liberated them

⁶⁵⁸ MacLeod and Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, pp. 29-30. See originals in PAM: S.P., Fidler's Journal, June 25, 1815. A copy is in Fidler's Winnipeg Post Journal, B.235/a/3, 1814-15.

Although these sons of the NWC partners and voyageurs were generally portrayed as being the dupes of the NWC clerks and *bourgeois*, especially Alexander McDonell and Duncan Cameron, they must have had their own reasons for getting involved. Certainly the Nor'Westers appealed to their nationalist spirit by presenting them with flags, swords and pistols in the summer of 1815 after the destruction of the colony. Their flag was described by James Sutherland, HBC master at Qu'Appelle, as "red with a figure of 8 placed horizontally in the middle of it and is said to be a present from the NWC along with Some Swords and a few pairs of Pistols to these deluded young men, the Half Breeds as a recompense for their exertions against the colony, spring 1815".⁶⁵⁹ And at the end of March, 1816, Cuthbert Grant Jr. again raised the Métis flag over his post at Qu'Appelle, for at the age of 23, his friends recognized him as the "Captain-General of all the Half Breeds in the country". James Sutherland noted the significance of the new flag-raising from the HBC post:

and likewise a rejoicing for the news brought by Swan River MacDonald [Bras Croche - John MacDonald of Garth] that the Half Breeds in Athabasca, English River, Saskatchewan and Swan River were collecting under their several chiefs and had sent information that they would all join Grant early in the spring to sweep Red River of all the English.⁶⁶⁰

These were the first mentions of the Métis flag with the horizontal figure 8, a sign of ethnic pride and patriotism. Also, the military discipline of Grant's cavalry was a response to the problem of stampeding the buffalo and showed that the Métis intended to find their own solutions to current problems. The new organization also suggests that Grant took the threat of the colony very seriously and a military solution was the only answer. Métis historian Fred Shore has suggested

⁶⁵⁹ MacLeod and Morton: 32; based on a quote from Sutherland's Journal, S.P.

⁶⁶⁰ MacLeod and Morton: 37; based on Sutherland's Journal in the Selkirk Papers.

that the fact they elected their captains and lieutenants suggested a more egalitarian tradition which reflected the Aboriginal world-view.⁶⁶¹

The Métis were also concerned about their land rights and were willing to fight to protect their claims. They did not come from somewhere else and did not need a Canadian education like Grant had to figure out the threat posed by insensitive and authoritarian governors. But in Grant's letters, he referred to insults that had been made to the *Bois Brulés*: "Speaking of the new Governor [Semple], he gives every indication that we shall really be forced to shut him up if we are to spoil his game - he has indeed attempted everything he can....But we must hope that our turn will come when that he will be paid with a vengeance. As for McLean, he will laugh on the other side of his face."⁶⁶² McLean must have insulted Cuthbert Grant and his friends at some point and paid for the rudeness with his life.

It is doubtful that the Métis opposed the colony only because they were manipulated by the NWC; the fact is that many of them had worked for Miles McDonell and welcomed a new source of employment as well as a community in which they could raise and educate their children, but they were offended by the governor's aloofness, for they had complained to Colin

⁶⁶¹ "The rampant individualism which was the mark of First Nations' warfare was not evident in Métis military tactics. They adopted a European method for fighting, but kept an Aboriginal method for determining the rules and the leadership under which they could operate. Most importantly, as far as the individual Métis was concerned, they also ceased to be subject to the rules once the crisis which had spawned the need for collective action had expired. Fred Shore, "The Origins of Métis Nationalism and the Pemmican Wars, 1780-1821", *The Forks & the Battle of Seven Oaks in Manitoba History*, ed. R. Coutts & Richard Stuart, Winnipeg: Manitoba Historical Society: 81. It does not seem likely to Swan that this military discipline was in place before 1814.

⁶⁶² MacLeod and Morton: 34. Letter to Seraphim Lamar, NWC, The Forks: December 2, 1815. Governor John Semple had just arrived in Normber 1815.

Robertson that he never invited them into his house and offered them something to drink, signs of social interaction amongst the freemen and their families and a common courtesy in fur trade society.⁶⁶³ The freemen and their sons were independent of the economic and social restraints which forced the Europeans and Canadians into a subservient position towards higher authorities. They adopted a more egalitarian model because they were independent of the posts and even the governor was forced on occasion to ask for the help, when he needed an interpreter or when he needed them to hunt for the colony to prevent the immigrants from starving, but Miles McDonell's bad judgement in issuing the Pemmican Proclamation in January 1814 and the ban against the Métis running the buffalo in July 1814 (perhaps at the instigation of the Nor'Westers) was the final straw that the freemen and their sons would not tolerate.⁶⁶⁴ In reconstituting the community after the first destruction in 1815, Colin Robertson and Governor Semple goaded the Métis in proving their military strength. It was foolish and irresponsible to taunt the Bois Brulés without a military force to back up the insults and they risked the lives of the colonists by so doing.

MacLeod and Morton have suggested that there were political differences in the attitudes of the non-Aboriginal freemen, or free Canadians, and their sons, the *Bois Brulés or Métis*. Since some of the Canadians like Jacques Hamelin, Baptiste Marsolais and a man named J.B. Letendre [a.k.a. Batoch] complained during the investigation of the fur trade war that they had tried to

⁶⁶³ MacLeod and Morton: 31. These authors argued that Robertson valued the Métis as an "independent third party who were to be consulted, flattered and engaged on their own terms. He saw that, if they could be won from their old alliance with the NWC, the Nor'Westers would be easily defeated. So Robertson invited them in to his house and treated them as valued allies.

⁶⁶⁴ Seraphim Lamar confessed that Duncan Cameron had induced Miles McDonell to prohibit the running of the buffalo. MacLeod and Morton, p. 31.

prevent their sons from joining Grant's cavalry, these historians assumed that the free Canadians were more sophisticated about justice issues and were afraid to break the law, but it is more likely that the difference in attitude between fathers and sons was based on age rather than ethnicity as young men tend to be more enthusiastic about going to war before they have experienced the horrors of combat, while their fathers and older men know better the dangers.⁶⁶⁵ Maybe their mothers did not want them to go either, but their opinions were not documented.

The Letendre family lost their son, young Batoch, who was the only Métis killed at Seven Oaks, while Joseph Trottier was wounded.⁶⁶⁶ In the Semple party killed that day, there were 12 Scots, 5 Irish, 3 English and 1 Dane that died in that violent confrontation on the 19th of June,

⁶⁶⁵ These ideas were discussed at the Rupert's Land Colloquium, Winnipeg, in June 2000 when Theresa Schenck discussed the different roles of the Ojibwe and Métis in the Fur Trade War. Schenck speculated that age rather than ethnicity accounted for the difference as HBC evidence suggests that the older Freeman fathers did not approve of the conflict like Battosh Letendre's father.

⁶⁶⁶ State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND), v. 4, *Summary of Evidence in the Controversy between the HBC and the NWC*, [hereafter known as the Coltman Report]: p. 534: André Trottier, "halfbreed", stated the following to Commissioner William Coltman as a despotism into the investigation of the fur trade war: "that on his arrival near the encampment he was met by Mr. Alexander Mcdonell, who had with him Seraphim Lamar and Bostonais Pangman, and asked him, "What news?" to which he answered, "we fought yesterday"; and being further questioned, he answered, "that there were 22 of the English killed, that on their side, his brother [Joseph Trottier] was wounded, and a half-breed of the name of Batoche, killed." Bostonais Pangman was quoted as saying that Batoche was his cousin and he must be revenged.

1816.⁶⁶⁷ Sheriff Alexander MacDonell made a list with ethnic background of the Selkirk men, but did not bother to name the Métis victim and his wounded companion.

As word spread across the plains and throughout Rupert's Land of the Seven Oaks incident, various reports were made which showed the perspective of the writers. HBC officers tended to blame the NWC and the Bois Brulés for the murder of Semple and his men; NWC officers blamed Lord Selkirk for starting the controversy by placing the colony in the middle of the NWC supply lines and encouraging violence to defeat their rivals. There are no objective views of the situation, but experts argue over various details. In the following report, John Peter Pruden, the HBC master at Carlton House on the Saskatchewan, documented the reaction of Battoch's father to his son's death which he blamed on the NWC *bourgeois*:

The Canadian master of this place, Batoch [Letendre], is father of the young halfbreed who was killed in Red River. Having heard that the old gentleman always disapproved of his son's joining in that affair, and that he had reproached Mr. Hughes, even in the hearing of our people [HBC] with all the bitterness of parental grief for having occasioned the death of his son, I sent for him..Loading Messrs. Hughes and Halden [Haldane] with the severest reproaches, it was them, said the old man with great warmth who deprived me of my son: by flattering promises and artful insinuation, they induced him, for the first time in his life, to disregard my advice and act in direct opposition to my wishes; I never, continued he, would consent to his going to Red River, because I believe the business he was to be engaged in to be both cruel and unjust, a sufficient proof of which was, the NW Proprietors themselves refraining from taking part in it....⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁷ According to a list compiled by Alexander McDonell of the colony, there were six officers killed: Governor Semple, John Rogers, Mr. Wilkinson, James White, surgeon, Mr. Alexander MacLean and Mr. Ener Holte [the Dane]. Mr. John Bourke was wounded. Fifteen men were killed: Duncan Macnaughton, Duncan Macdonell, James Moore, Sr., James Moore, Jr., George Mackenzie, Henry Sinclair, James Brien, Donald Sutherland, Bryen Gilligan, John Mehn, James Gardner, Pat Marooney, Daniel Donovan, Adam Sutherland, Reginald Green. PAM: S.P., Alexander McDonell's Journal, v. 67:p. 18067.

⁶⁶⁸ HBCA: Carlton House Post Journal, B.27/a/6, December 14, 1816, J.P. Pruden.

In an Edmonton House report for 1816, HBC trader James Bird described what he heard about the death of Governor Semple and blamed it on Francois Deschamps, an old freeman:⁶⁶⁹

The last scene of Mr. Semple's life is known only from the accounts of Boucher and some of the other Half-breeds who say that as they approached him laying wounded on the field, he asked them to spare his life and while they stood yet undetermined, an old Canadian named Francois Deschamp went behind him and with more than savage cruelty blew out his brains....⁶⁷⁰

But the Nor'Westers believed that it was not Deschamps who killed the governor, but a local Indian with a grudge (following the old scapegoat theory: when in doubt, blame an Indian).

Nor'Wester Archibald Norman McLeod described his version of the murder of Semple which did not blame Deschamps:

The Governor begged for his life after he was wounded severely, which the half breeds granted and one of them stood by to protect him, but an Indian whose child had died in the winter and to whom the governor told on the plenitude of his confidence that he lost his child for his attachment to the NWC, told the governor today "you must follow my child as you boasted it was medicine killed him", so saying he shot him. Lord Selkirk has lost a great many men in the course of last winter and spring, no fewer than 58 have paid the great debt, 30 of whom starved to death, 19 of the number in a department where the servants of the NWC never experienced hunger...⁶⁷¹

These excerpts show the contradictory nature of the evidence available.

The Coltman Investigation and Report

When Commissioner Coltman arrived in [date] 1817, he proceeded to interview many of the men involved in the fur trade war, about incidents in Red River and Athabasca where there were many hostile acts and deaths. Selkirk was pressuring the Canadian prosecutors for charges

⁶⁶⁹ Francois Deschamps, Sr. and Jr., were on Peter Fidler's list of Free Canadians at Qu'Appelle in 1814 and 1819; B.22/a/21.

⁶⁷⁰ HBCA: Edmonton Annual Report, 1816: B.60/e/2, by James Bird.

⁶⁷¹ HBCA: F.3/2, A.N. McLeod, Fort William to Justice Reed, July 29, 1816.

and convictions. The Nor'Westers wanted charges against the instigators of the colony enterprise. Coltman took the position that the incidents were part of a private war, rather than criminal acts. Anticipating Nelson Mandela's Truth and Reconciliation Commission by nearly two hundred years, Coltman notified the freemen and Métis that, if they came forward to testify what happened, the Canadian courts would be very lenient. As he result, he collected several hundred depositions which document the various perspectives of the participants. While it is difficult to find any consensus, it is interesting to focus on some of the Métis who made depositions and how they viewed the fur trade war after it was over.

One important witness was the HBC hunter, Charles Bottineau [Botino, Bautineau].⁶⁷² He talked about the intimidation against hunters who worked for the colony. At the end of 1814, Duncan Cameron and Alexander McDonnell ordered the freemen not to give the the colonists any provisions, even if they died of hunger. Only Dauphine [Dauphinais] and Tranchmontagne dared to refuse the order. [La] Plante (a freeman from Saskatchewan) was punished by the NWC for giving provisions to the "English".⁶⁷³ The NWC took four of his horses and sent him to Montreal with the threat that he would never see his family again.

Further information about the intimidation of Bottineau was given by F.D. Heurter, a former Des Meurons soldier and former clerk of the NWC who joined in 1816 and arrived in Red River after the massacre.⁶⁷⁴ Daniel McKenzie wanted Bottineau arrested for hunting for the

⁶⁷² PAM: S.P. v. 60: pp. 15847-50. Deposition given to William Coltman, July 7, 1817. The Deponant is a freeman of the Red River. Translated by Ruth Swan.

⁶⁷³ This is a French Canadian term referring to mother tongue rather than ethnicity.

⁶⁷⁴ HBCA: E.8/5: fos. 152-179. Deposition.

Colony and sent Heurter, a former soldier, to arrest him. He gave him "a printed copy of the opinions of three English lawyers ...concerning the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company which Daniel McKenzie [NWC] told me would convince the said Beautineau [sic] that I had a right to take him prisoner for that he would not know the difference between it and a warrant, not knowing how to read or write." When he was brought before the assembled halfbreeds and servants of the NWC, McKenzie forced Bottineau to take his baggage to a waiting canoe, threatening to take him to Montreal "for desertion of the interests of the NWC, and for hunting for the Colony", but he was discharged when Antoine Hoole [Houle] gave security for his good behaviour. Houle had confessed to the murder of a Mr. Moore. According to this NWC deserter, Bottineau and the magistrate then retired to apartments of the late Governor Semple and got drunk together.

Heurter also spoke about the attack on Fort William by Lord Selkirk and some of the NWC officers wanted the servants and halfbreeds of the NWC (about 20-25) at Bas de la Rivière to go to Fort William and take back the post or, if they met Lord Selkirk on the way, to ambush his party and stop them. "A halfbreed named Laplante from the Saskatchewan" replied that he understood that the Earl was guarded by a party of the King's troops, "that for his part, he would never fight against them, and that rather than be guilty of such things, he would take a buffalo robe about him, and live like an Indian in the plains." The rest followed the example of LaPlante and most of them refused to advance further than Bas de la Rivière. Some of the halfbreeds in this party were Cuthbert Grant, [Joseph] Cadotte, Bostonais Pangman, William Shaw and several others. Grant was later charged for the murder of Owen Keveny because of his attendance at this meeting. Both Bottineau and Heurter's depositions show the intimidation that the Métis

encountered if they resisted the plans of the NWC officers or if they disobeyed. Their big fear was being transported to Montreal and kept from returning to their families.

Lord Selkirk also took depositions (sworn statements) from witnesses at Fort William in August 1816, one of whom was Louis Nolin who worked for the HBC at the Forks and was an eye-witness to the Seven Oaks incident. On June 17, 1816, Governor Semple called Nolin to interpret for two Indians called "Moustouche and Courte Aureille [Oreille]" [Ojibwe]. It is possible that Moustouche was actually Charles Bottineau, the freeman. They had left the camp of the Bois Brulés and warned Semple about the planned attack to drive the colonists out of Red River for a second time. In any case, they identified the leaders as Cuthbert Grant, Hoole, Pruneau, Fraser, Bourrassa, Lacerbe [LaCerte] and Thomas McKay, all with the NWC.⁶⁷⁵ Lord Selkirk wrote about the same warning to Semple and suggesting that the Sauteaux [Ojibwe] were willing to help defend the settlement and Fort Douglas, "but Governor Semple declined their services, **being unwilling under any circumstances to employ savages against his countrymen**".⁶⁷⁶ Perhaps if Semple had not been so prejudiced, he would have listened to the warnings of his local Aboriginal allies and stayed inside Fort Douglas, waiting for reinforcements.

Louis Nolin also raised the issue of land rights in Red River. On June 22, 1816, after Grant drove out the settlers, there was a meeting with "Mr. McKenzie" at which the Bois-Brulés asked if Lord Selkirk had a right to establish settlers at Red River. "Mr. McKenzie replied that

⁶⁷⁵ Deposition of Louis Nolin, Before Thomas Earl of Selkirk at Fort William August 21, 1816, *State Historical Society of North Dakota Collections*, v. 4: 398-400.

⁶⁷⁶ "The Memorial of Thomas Earl of Selkirk, c. 1819", *The Collected Writings of Lord Selkirk: 1810-1820*, ed. J.M. Bumsted, Winnipeg: Manitoba Record Society, 1988: 122.

he had no right whatever, that all these lands belonged to the Bois-Brulés; and Lord Selkirk, as well as the NWC might send traders there; but he had no right to take possession of these lands. Immediately after the arrival of Mr. McKenzie, the traders of the HBC were also driven away from Red River."⁶⁷⁷

The Métis must have been surprised when Lord Selkirk appeared in June 1817 leading a contingent of European mercenary soldiers who had recently fought the Americans in the War of 1812 and also William Coltman, the commissioner from Canada, who came to hear their stories and decide on their fate. While the Bois Brulés might have had second thoughts about the honesty of the NWC parnters, they probably realized that they did not have the control of the settlement that they counted on, as long as the retired soldiers were in the colony. But they had gained a measure of self-respect, confidence and a pride in the Métis Nation, the New Nation.

In the past, the Métis became the scapegoats in the story of the Selkirk Settlement, portrayed as the malleable dupes of the North West Company officers who apparently led them on to increasingly violent and dangerous actions until only military force could keep their violent impulses in check.⁶⁷⁸ The violence of this decade was blamed on the Aboriginal character of the

⁶⁷⁷ Deposition of Louis Nolin, taken by Lord Selkirk as Justice of the Peace at Fort William, August 21, 1816. It was taken in French and the translation is included. Nolin was a French Canadian who was hired by Colin Robertson and arrived in Red River in 1815. These depositions taken by Selkirk at Fort William are a form of oral history, but obviously he included ones in his publication that he thought would support his case in the Canadian courts. They should be examined in context. *Statement Respecting the Earl of Selkirk's Settlement on the Red River*, London: John Murray, 1817: Appendix: xli-xliii (p. 41-43). For literary criticism of texts on Native History and issues of translation and influence of middlemen, see David Murray, *Forked Tongues: Speech Writing and Representation in North American Indian Texts*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1991.

⁶⁷⁸ A.S. Morton suggested that the Governor's failure to curb their violent tendencies led to the first Riel Rebellion in 1869-70. This author fails to see how the events of 1816 are

Bois Brulés rather than the economic and social conditions which created the conflict in the first place, already noted in the Nor'Westers aggressive tactics in combatting fur trade opponents.

The irresponsible machinations of Lord Selkirk and his officers were generally ignored in the old scenarios by authors like John Perry Pritchett because the establishment of a colony of farmers was seen as a desirable project. Since the Métis were not considered settlers, but nomads, who wandered around the prairies looking for buffalo, they did not deserve consideration as central players in the conflict. Because the Selkirk party wrote extensively and the freemen and Métis had no one to write their stories, the historical written record was one-sided. Historians saw them as victims of their NWC masters,⁶⁷⁹ and, more recently, the politically correct approach was to praise the peaceful approach of Chief Peguis and his Sauteaux newcomers as the "good Aboriginals" while again scapegoating the Métis for their depredations, the wild and savage "bad Aboriginals" who played their role with relish and enthusiasm.⁶⁸⁰

The racial stereotypes which were attached to the Bois Brûlés were lenses through which non-Aboriginal historians saw the conflict of the Fur Trade War. The violent nature of the

connected to those of 1869-70.

⁶⁷⁹ A good example of this interpretation is M.A. MacLeod & W.L. Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1963. On page 41, they described the response of the Nor-Westerns and Métis to a threat from Governor Semple: "The threat was not well-considered, for it released the pent-up eagerness of the *brulés* for war. Sutherland was aware of their keenness, and Macdonell professed to be unable to restrain them. Grant now had some sixty of his Young Fellows, the wilder *brulés* of the prairies and the northern rivers, under his command. He must use them soon, or they would trickle away, back to their girls or out to hunt on the plains..." This war spirit might be more appropriately linked to youthful enthusiasm than to the race or ethnicity.

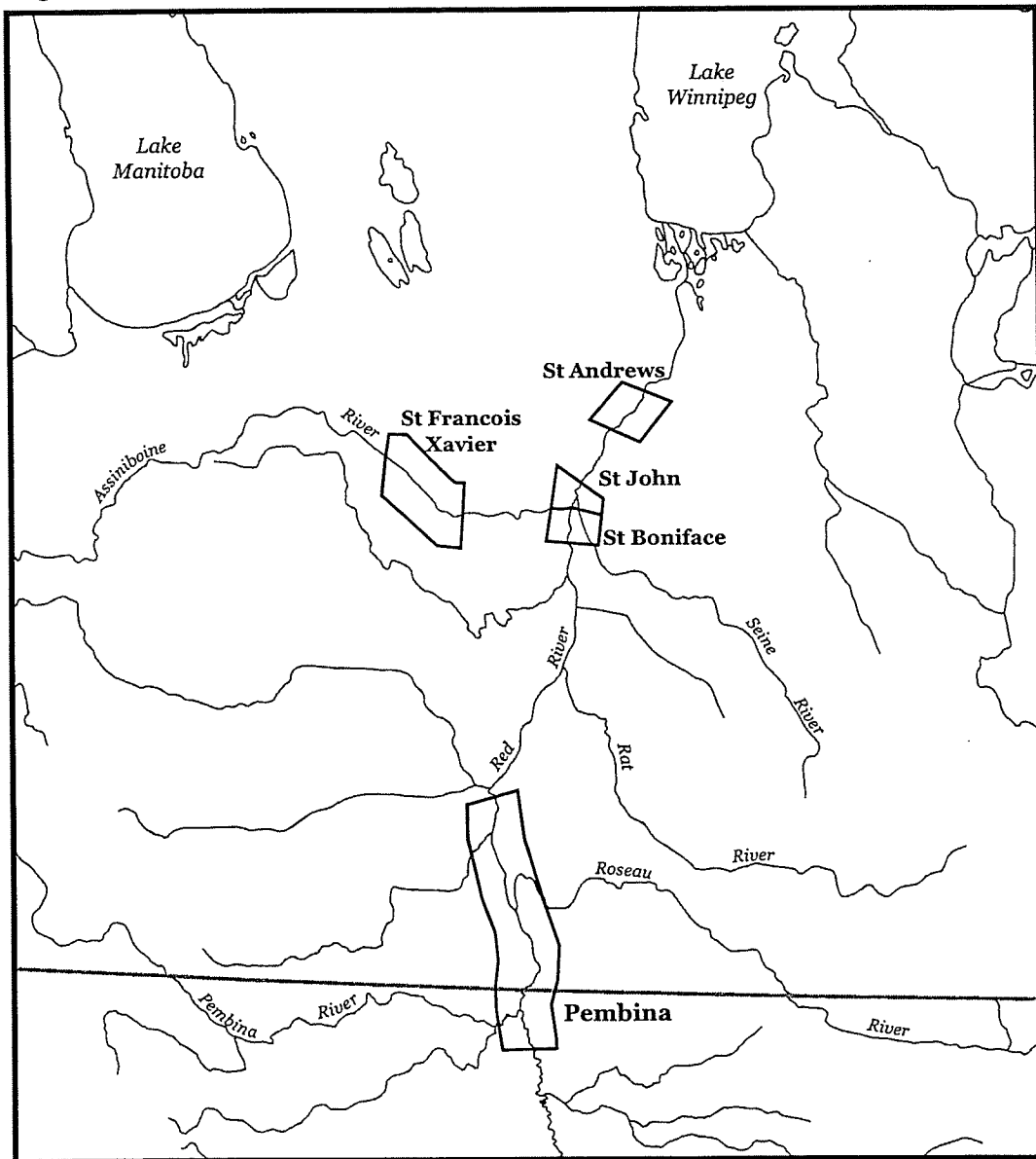
⁶⁸⁰ Theresa Schenck, paper delivered to the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies Colloquium, Winnipeg, June 1998.

“halfbreeds” and the nomadic myth combined to make them take the blame for the tragedy. More recently, they have been seen as agents of the North West partners and rarely has the Métis perspective been considered. Pierre Falcon’s “*Chanson de la Grenouillère*” was a rallying cry for the New Nation and the national spirit which infused the community. They asserted their military strength to protect the interests of their employers who were also in many cases their father, uncles and cousins. In so doing, they articulated a new identity. This was a watershed of monumental proportions. “La Grenouillère” was behind them and they could move forward to claim their rights as settlers in the new Red River Settlement.

The military discipline and elected organization of the buffalo hunt (to avoid the problem of stampeding the herds) was a big improvement and they still had their flags and stories to tell around the campfires. Pierre Falcon was composing songs to remember their exploits and they realized that, even if they were still outsiders to the elite of the Red River Colony, they were the majority and a force to be reckoned with. They had fought for control of their resources and a more egalitarian society, an outlook they inherited from their Indian cultures; they were not prepared to let that go. They were no longer afraid to identify themselves - “Nous sommes Michifs!” The newcomers might be a little more cautious with their insults in the future.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁸¹ “Nous Sommes Michifs” is a commonly heard rally cry of Métis in speeches and public discourse. Louis Nolin was one of the few to use the term “Mitifs” for the *Bois Brûlés*; see Appendix X, deposition of Louis Nolin at Fort William in *Statement Respecting The Earl of Selkirk’s Settlement upon the Red River, 1817*. Cuthbert Grant referred to the insults to the Métis by Colin Robertson in his letter to J.D. Cameron, at R. Qu’Appelle, March 13, 1816 in *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, 36.

Figure 7. Parishes of the Red River Settlement, 1821-29



Chapter Seven: The “Buccaneers of the Plains” Become Settlers in Red River, 1821-1843

The confrontation at Seven Oaks on June 19, 1816 was a catharsis for all the tensions that had been building in the Red River fur trade war. After Lord Selkirk arrived to meet the settlers and the Indians to survey his colony in 1817, the Canadian commissioner Coltman calmed the hostilities by refusing to give in to the demands from both sides for revenge and punishment. He concluded that it was a “private war” between economic interests and did not pursue a military solution. Consequently, enmity subsided, but bad feelings were not forgotten.

The political condition of the freemen in being allied, but not controlled, by the NWC hierarchy and their subsequent realization that they were to some extent misled by their former *bourgeois* may have helped the freemen’s sons to separate ethnically from the psychological control of the Nor’Wester officers. Certainly Cuthbert Grant himself seemed to have distrusted the elite class of the NWC and identified with the hunters and plainsmen. As a son of a *bourgeois*, this attitude is surprising. One explanation is that he resented the Montreal partners, like William McGillivray, who had control over his father’s estate; Grant told Sir George Simpson that he was owed about L10,000.⁶⁸² Grant was not successful in getting a settlement until 1825 through the intervention of Simpson.

The Governor’s support may have helped overcome Grant’s suspicions of the Hudson’s Bay Company, so that he agreed to work for them after the merger and accepted the post as “Warden of the Plains”. Simpson regarded Grant as a good man to have on side and a dangerous one as an opponent. He observed that Cuthbert Grant Jr. was widely admired and respected, not only by the Métis who regarded him as “Captain of the Buffalo Hunt”, but also the former North

⁶⁸² MacLeod & Morton: 79

West partners who appreciated his professional qualities and the Indians because he talked their languages and understood their customs.⁶⁸³ Grant was the acknowledged leader of the community except for the Scottish who remembered June 19, 1816, and Simpson was successful in preventing him from settling at Pembina where the HBC feared anti-HBC competition would flourish. Simpson persuaded Grant to start a new settlement at the White Horse Plains, St. François-Xavier Parish, in 1824.

The ethnic separation of the Métis involving a separate identity from both the Indian and non-Indian communities was one of the characteristics of Métis culture described by Peterson. The organization of the large hunting bands outside the control of the posts and separate from the fur trade, i.e. the provisioning trade, led to their economic, social and ethnic independence. While this development started with the freemen camps of the 1790s and early 1800s, it came to fruition with the sophistication of the buffalo hunt organization visible in the 1820s.

The first years of the colony showed that the freemen and their families wanted to be settlers and saw the establishment of the Selkirk Colony as threatening to their interests only when they were not treated respectfully for their expertise and their customs by the colonial leaders like Miles McDonell, Colin Robertson and Robert Semple.⁶⁸⁴ As Miles McDonell wrote in 1814: "About 12 free Canadians came today in a body to learn the terms on which they can

⁶⁸³ MacLeod & Morton: 80-82; Giraud, v. 2: 67-68.

⁶⁸⁴ MacLeod and Morton: 75-76. When Grant and Shaw ambushed Colin Robertson at Grand Rapids in 1819, and Robertson made a sarcastic remark about the "murderers of Red River" employed in the execution of an arrest warrant, Grant shouted: "Don't insult the half-breeds, or I'll shoot you!" The authors suggested that Grant was defending the honour of the Métis as a group rather than defending himself.

have land. They conclude chiefly on taking lower lots.”⁶⁸⁵ These comments do not describe the wild nomads of the plains portrayed by later authors.⁶⁸⁶ They wanted to be settlers and join the colony as long as their rights and self-worth were respected. This did not happen until after 1821 and the union of the two fur trade rivals.

7a) Population Explosion in Red River Settlement after 1821:

1821 marked the third date of significance in the evolution of the voyageurs into *Gens libres* [Freemen] and *Bois Brulés* [Métis]. The first was the consolidation of the NWC and XYZ in 1804. The second was the establishment of the Selkirk Colony in 1812. After 1821, roughly 1000 men were unemployed and most of them migrated from the various posts around Rupert’s Land and the North West to Red River to raise their families where they could get land, send their children to school and attend church with their friends and relatives.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁸⁵ PAM, Selkirk Papers, p. 16892, Miles’ MacDonell’s journal at Fort Daer, April 12, 1814.

⁶⁸⁶ For example, when the Long Expedition arrived at Pembina August 6, 1823, to survey the border between Canada and the USA, the expedition’s scientist, William Keating, gave a detailed description of the Pembina Métis. While it was somewhat laudatory in its description, he also ascribed features of scientific racism to this group, suggesting that they “do not appear to possess the qualifications for good settlers; few are farmers; most are Halfbreeds who have been educated by their Indian mothers, have imbibed the roving, unsettled and indolent habit of Indians...have acquired no small share of cunning and artifice. These form at least 2/3 of the male inhabitants. The rest consist of Swiss and Scotch settlers....as unfit for agriculture pursuits as the Halfbreeds themselves.” Keating also concluded his scientific observations of humans of mixed background by suggesting: “experience shows that men addicted to hunting never can make good farmers.” Many Canadian historians like W.L. Morton have shared this stereotype that the buffalo hunters could not adapt to agriculture. See William Keating, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter’s River*, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1959: II: 39.

⁶⁸⁷ Gerhard Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing Worlds of the Red River Metis in the Nineteenth Century*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996: 19. Ens argued that after 1821, the mixed-bloods of the HBC posts adopted a “Metis identity”. This idea is based on the work of John Foster. I would argue that these Orkney-Cree descendants did not adopt a “Metis”

In response to a "Petition of Residents of the Red River Colony, 1817",⁶⁸⁸ the Roman Catholic Mission was established in 1818 by Fathers Provencher and Dumoulin, the latter going to Pembina to convert the Indians and minister to the buffalo hunters who were mostly Catholic.⁶⁸⁹ Their instructions were to evangelize the Indians, reform the "delinquent French Canadian Christians", baptise their wives and educate their children. Lord Selkirk had died in 1820 in France and his estate and the HBC did not want a large band of buffalo hunters living south of the 49th parallel where they would be outside the control of the London-based

identity until much later when they forced out of the HBC by lack of social mobility. This mostly happened in the 1840s and later, and not in the 1820s. A few exceptions might have been some of the men from Brandon House who had been in the Red River Valley since the 1790s, and those who formed the Birsay Village west of the White Horse Plain on the Assiniboine in 1818: Magnus and John Spence, William Corrigan and John Flett; Ens: 19. See Barry Kaye, "Birsay Village on the Assiniboine", *The Beaver*, Winter 1981: 18-21. Magnus Spence, who had been on the Saskatchewan for 30 years, was reported by Long and Keating to be living on the Red 49 miles north of Pembina in 1823 when they visited on their exploring expedition. *The Northern Expeditions of Stephen H. Long*, ed. L. Kane, June Holmquist and Carolyn Gilman, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1978: 185, August 11, 1823. It is about 70 miles from Pembina to Winnipeg (St. Norbert), so 50 miles would be about Ste. Agathe. Apparently he did not move to the English Parishes north of the Forks.

⁶⁸⁸ Grace Lee Nute, *Documents Relative to Northwest Missions, 1815-1827*, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1942: 14-17. These settlers described themselves as formerly engaged in the fur trade and known as "free Canadians". There are 18 French names; the 4 Scottish names (McDonell, Latmer, Bain and Fraser) are sons of Nor'Westers who were integrated into the Pembina Métis community. Angus McDonell has been a voyageur with Henry and Fraser was probably the same Alexander Fraser who was with Postonais Pangman at the Forks, March 13, 1816; McLeod and Morton: 35; and was listed by John Peter Pruden at Carlton House, January 21, 1817, (HBCA:B.27/a/6) called Frazer a "halfbreed". These men with Catholic connections became part of the French Catholic community.

⁶⁸⁹ See *Documents Relating to Northwest Missions, 1815-1827*, ed. Grace Lee Nute, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1942: 60-61; "Instructions to Missionaries".

company.⁶⁹⁰ Although Anglican minister John West arrived in Red River in 1820, the Anglican Church did not establish a church at Pembina. It was a Catholic Parish. This was the nature of the Red River Settlement; it evolved into a series of Catholic and Anglican Parishes so that religion divided the settlement into opposing religious institutions, competing for souls and converts.⁶⁹¹ Opposing religious loyalties drove a wedge between the French Métis and British mixed-bloods of the HBC who did not really share a common racial identity until probably the late 20th century.

The general pattern of settlement was as follows. The Catholics were at the Forks at St. Boniface on the east side with the Des Meurons and Swiss Protestants along the Seine. The Anglican Cathedral would be across the Red on the west side just north of the Assiniboine. Catholics later settled at St. Francois-Xavier on the Assiniboine 22 miles west, also called Grantown after Cuthbert Grant, and the Anglicans established a farming community at the Rapids, or St. Andrews around 1828-1830 for the Orkney mixed-bloods who migrated south after 1821.⁶⁹² As population increased, French Catholics spread west along the south side of the

⁶⁹⁰ MacLeod & Morton: 78 and Ens: 20. Ens noted that in 1819, there were forty families and 300 people at the Pembina Mission based on a report by Dumoulin, January 5, 1819 in Nute:179. In fact, Pembina was bigger than St. Boniface which is one reason that the HBC and Selkirk's heirs were concerned about it. It was outside their control. By November 13, 1822, Dumoulin reported 394 baptisms, 68 marriages and 49 burials before the mission was officially closed in 1823 and Dumoulin returned to Quebec; in Nute: 378, Dumoulin to Bishop of Quebec.

⁶⁹¹ Rev. John Shanley, Bishop of Fargo, "The Founding of the Catholic Church in North Dakota", Report of the North Dakota State Historical Society, *N.D. State Historical Society Collections*, Bismarck: vol. 2, Appendix: 3-34. See Gerhard Ens, *From Homeland to Hinterland*, for a comparison of the parishes of St. Francois Xavier and St. Andrews.

⁶⁹² Robert Coutts, *The Road to the Rapids*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2000:36-40.

Assiniboine to St. Charles and north to Lake Manitoba and St. Laurent in the 1850s; they also went south to St. Norbert and later St. Agathe which would link up with the Catholic parish at Pembina. The Anglican expansion moved north along the Red, eventually including the Swampy Village of St. Peters north of St. Andrews (which had started as a Indian mission in 1836⁶⁹³ and St. James and Headingly on the Assiniboine in the 1850s. Thus the two groups of mixed bloods were fairly evenly matched in terms of population and land base, with the French Catholic group being slightly larger by 1870.

7b) The Dissolution of the Pembina Parish by Order of the HBC: 1823

When it became known that Pembina was south of the border after the Treaty of Ghent in 1818, the HBC and Roman Catholic Mission were ordered to close their buildings and move to the Forks. John Halkett of the Selkirk Estate wrote to Bishop Provencher in 1822 and ordered the “removal of settlers who, of their own accord, occupied lands at Pembina.” He argued that 1) Pembina was in American territory (and outside the control of the HBC monopoly, threatening its trade). 2) Pembina was a cause of “mischief to the Indians”, tempting the Sioux to attack the settlement because they considered it part of their territory; 12 people had been killed recently. And 3) he accused the free Canadians and others in Pembina area of driving the buffalo away from the Forks.⁶⁹⁴ This last point is a good example of scapegoating the freemen and Métis. The buffalo never were in the vicinity of the Forks and the people at the Forks always had to go to Pembina to hunt, so this point is disingenuous, but it is interesting to note that Halkett described

⁶⁹³ Coutts: 47.

⁶⁹⁴ Grace Lee Nute, *Documents...*: 353-354. Halkett to Provencher, July 20, 1822.

the families at Pembina as “settlers”. He refused to legally recognize this settlement by giving legal title which they wanted and expected as an incentive to persuade them to move north.⁶⁹⁵

Provencher noted in 1822 that moving the Pembina mission would cause great hardship for the church which had invested money and labour into buildings, but also to those Pembina families who had built their homes there. “There are several persons established at Pembina who have gone to a great deal of expense there, because until now the question of abandoning it had never been thought of. These persons are going to find themselves worse off than when they arrived, which is the case with us. The establishment at Pembina is a great deal more valuable than this one.”⁶⁹⁶ Most of these settlers were the names on the Petition of 1817 and those who had invested in building log cabins and gardens were reluctant to leave this paradise of food resources. Some examples were J.B. Marsellois [Marcellais], Jacques Amelin, Louis Nolin, and Michel Monet dit Bellehumeur.⁶⁹⁷

The Catholic missionaries feared the competition with the new Anglican Protestant clergy, John West on the west bank of the Red just north of the Forks in the parish of St. John’s established in 1820, the site of the present Anglican cathedral. They worried that the HBC and

⁶⁹⁵ “It is therefore determined that no grant of land whatever shall be now made at that place, nor any legal title made over to those who have placed themselves at Pembina.” Halkett blamed the church for extending itself “so soon into that country under the circumstances of the Red River Settlement”, suggesting that Pembina was a Catholic Parish like St. Boniface. “It is not too late to remedy the evil”. Halkett to Provencher, July 20, 1822, in Nute: 354.

⁶⁹⁶ Nute: Provencher to Plessis, August 11, 1822: 364.

⁶⁹⁷ Nute: 16-17.

Selkirk administrators were more partial to the Anglicans.⁶⁹⁸ Father Dumoulin tried to persuade Halkett to keep the Pembina Mission, but he would not change his policy, so Dumoulin gave up in 1823 and returned to Quebec.⁶⁹⁹ Bishop Provencher also complained to Halkett that it would be difficult to persuade the Pembina settlers to move to the Forks because of the difficulty of getting provisions there and the threat of starvation. The Catholics of Red River (Canadians and *métis*) went to Pembina because of the buffalo migration route near that place. Bishop Provencher lamented that the Pembina mission and the Pembina settlers had invested in the area and it was expensive to move. "There you have the reason why so many people were drawn there, who would have been able to settle at The Forks just as well, and who, leaving now, would find themselves worse off than when they arrived in the country."⁷⁰⁰

Provencher originally suggested establishing a Métis parish at Lake Manitoba and his reasons were not surprisingly reflective of the attitudes of local elites. "This lake is not far from here [St. Boniface] and it affords fishing and hunting, which the *bois brulés* like better than the pick-ax".⁷⁰¹ The French Canadian freemen and their families resident at the Forks and Pembina

⁶⁹⁸ Nute: Provencher to Plessis, August 11, 1822: 365: "Mr. Halkett arrived here in the midst of the famine...Mr. Dumoulin did not find him greatly disposed to favor the mission, although he made no active opposition. He says that he appeared very favorable toward Mr. West, an Anglican minister."

⁶⁹⁹ Nute, "Introduction": xvi.

⁷⁰⁰ Nute: Provencher to Halkett, August 10, 1822: 358-359.

⁷⁰¹ Nute: 364: Bishop Provencher to Bishop Plessis, Quebec, August 11, 1822. Provencher was somewhat jealous of the success of the Pembina Mission under his associate, Father Dumoulin, and he seemed happy to see it close.

had been agitating for a Catholic priest for several years.⁷⁰² They argued that recent political upheaval was caused by the absence of priests; the free Canadians and métis were peaceful and gentle and most were Catholic, but were misled by superiors (the NWC officers) who were “absolute masters of the land”.⁷⁰³ They implied that the violent confrontation at Seven Oaks would not have happened a year earlier if the Catholics had had a priest in the settlement to educate their families about their moral duties.

George Simpson, the new leader of the HBC, proposed moving the mission to the White Horse Plains, west of the settlement on the Assiniboine, and the name St. Francois-Xavier Parish, was brought from Pembina to the new village of Grantown. Ens suggested that Simpson chose to appoint Cuthbert Grant to lead the new enterprise because he was the head of the Pembina Metis. Undoubtedly he did have influence with them and MacLeod and Morton suggested that Grant may have stayed in the Pembina area during 1819 while awaiting the consequences of the Seven Oaks conflict and the fur trade war.⁷⁰⁴ The fact is that Grant’s base was at Qu’Appelle, not

⁷⁰² Nute published a 1817 petition of the “Residents of the Red River Colony” to the Bishop of Quebec for a Catholic priest. There are 22 names and 2 witnesses, all French. Nute: Petition of the Residents of the Red River Colony, [1817], 14-17.

⁷⁰³ The petition signers of 1817 quoted in Nute:16.

⁷⁰⁴ MacLeod and Morton: 74. “Many of the *brûlés* drew together in the Pembina hills, where they formed a menace overhanging the colony all the winter of 1818-19 and summer of 1819. That Grant was with them at least part of the time may be supposed, but no account remains.” Ens suggests that Cuthbert Grant was excluded from the revamped HBC that was formed in 1821 because of his role in Seven Oaks, although he was allowed to operate as a trader for the company for a short time at the Forks. “Yet Grant was considered valuable to the fur-trading company because he exerted considerable influence over the Pembina Metis. The company gave Grant the tract of land in the hope that he could persuade his countrymen to settle in British territory and take up agriculture. Such a development offered the HBC more control over the Metis” although this control may have been more an illusion than a reality. Ens: 21.

Pembina. He was instead the acknowledged leader of all the *Bois Brûlés*, not just the Pembina Métis, whether they were living on the Saskatchewan, English River district, Qu'Appelle, Dauphin, Brandon or Red River.⁷⁰⁵ MacLeod and Morton reported that a delegation of Pembina Métis visited Grant at Fort Hibernia up the Assiniboine in 1819 to persuade him to fight the consolidation out of Pembina, but he declined. Instead, when Cuthbert Grant recruited his friends and relatives to join him at the White Horse Plain, many were tempted. Métis settlers wanted to get legal title to their river lots, but those that had chosen their favourite places at Pembina like Augustin Nolin⁷⁰⁶ who ran the Pembina ferry and Charles Joseph Bottineau up the Tongue River⁷⁰⁷ were forced to move again. While some of the prominent Métis like Bostonais Pangman followed their leader to Grantown, not all the Pembina Metis left the community in 1823.⁷⁰⁸ Pangman probably was the most notable Pembina leader until he left for Grantown.

⁷⁰⁵ MacLeod & Morton: 77. These Pembina settlers may have been Nolin, Larante, and Forrest with Joseph Cadotte at Rainy Lake in 1817.

⁷⁰⁶ Both Long and Keating had mentioned Augustin Nolin's ferry at Pembina and described him as one of the leading inhabitants. Keating: II: 17. He also mentioned "an old trader, who had resided there for upwards of forty years" who was unnamed, but who described a large flood that Keating did not believe. This may have been Jean Baptiste Marcellais Sr. who signed the 1817 petition, was on Peter Fidler's list of freemen and who had made a deposition about the Red River War. Louis Nolin signed the petition of 1817, but not Augustin.

⁷⁰⁷ Miles McDonell had mentioned riding to Point Botino about 12 miles from the confluence of the Rivers Pembina and La Langue [Tongue River, a tributary of the Pembina]. Provincial Archives of Manitoba, (PAM), Selkirk Papers (S.P.), April 17, 1814, Miles McDonell's Journal, p. 16893. He also mentioned two other Pembina freemen: "Old Peltier and Bostonois with their families go off in carts to the Forks". This "old Peltier" may also have been Keating's informant about the flooding and Bostonois was Bostonais Pangman.

⁷⁰⁸ Grace Lee Nute in her Introduction to *Documents...* suggested that "Pembina was not really abandoned. The letters of the missionaries at the Forks, or St. Boniface tell of the despair of the settlers after the withdrawal of the mission, of the settlement of many of them on the Assiniboine River west of St. Boniface...and of the migration of many settlers from the Red

The problem for historians describing Pembina Parish history after 1821 is the lack of documentation. Since there was no fur trade post or mission, there were no outsiders in the community who could read and write. Most of the freemen and their Métis families did not write and keep historical records. Cuthbert Grant was educated in Canada and possibly Scotland, and was literate; consequently more is known about the new parish of St. Francois Xavier established in 1824, or what I call Pembina II because some of the Pembina Métis moved under Grant's leadership.⁷⁰⁹ With church records and Red River censuses in the 1820s, the growth of the St. Francois-Xavier can be followed.

Bostonais Pangman helped Grant persuade some of the Pembina Métis to make the move to the new parish on the Assiniboine.⁷¹⁰ As Grace Lee Nute pointed out, some of the Red River residents who moved between Pembina and the Forks later relocated south to the Mississippi and

River Valley after the flood of 1826..." Nute: Introduction: xvii.

⁷⁰⁹ The establishment of St. Francois Xavier has been well described by MacLeod & Morton in *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown* and they use some letters and accounts left by Grant. This is the source of much of Ens' early description of the founding of that community and he also shows some of the Pembina connections. However, many of the men who moved to Grantown were not from Pembina, but friends of Grant's from the earlier decade of the fur trade war when they were up the Assiniboine Basin with him at Qu'Appelle and elsewhere in the Northwest. For example, Pierre Falcon was born up the Saskatchewan and the Poitras family has been near Qu'Appelle. A daughter had married John McDonnell before they moved to Point Fortune on the Ottawa River.

⁷¹⁰ PAM: Warren Sinclair Genealogies, Pangman family shows him with two sons and two daughters. Centre Patrimoine, St. Boniface Historical Society (SBHS), Alfred Fortier files on St. Francois Xavier Parish Register. On Peter Fidler's list for 1819, Bostonais Pangman is listed as having a wife, one boy and 2 girls. Most of his children were raised in St. Francois-Xavier Parish as francophone/Ojibwe descendants and married into families who moved to St. Laurent, another French Catholic parish in the 1850s. He persuaded about 50 families to move.

Fort Snelling area, like Benjamin Gervais⁷¹¹ and Charles Bruce, and Dr. Mary Black Rogers has tracked one of her ancestors, Antoine Pepin from the Athabasca to Red River and Saint Paul.⁷¹² As a result of the closing of the Pembina mission and HBC post, Pembina residents moved both south and northwest. I call Pembina “the crucible” of Metis culture because people who lived there later dispersed and took the culture with them all over the Northwest.

While there is no exact list of the Pembina settlers after 1817, Peter Fidler’s list of Free Canadians in 1814 and 1819 gives an idea of the core group along the Assiniboine and Red Rivers. In the 1814 list, there were 2 categories: Rivière Qu’Appelle and Pembina and the Forks. There were 6 freemen listed at Qu’Appelle and they were all French. At the Fork and Pembina were 42 freemen: 41 French and 1 Scot (Angus McDonell) who had come in with Henry. Ten were specifically designated “Canadian”. By 1819, there were 5 locations of Canadian freemen and their families listed by Fidler: Qu’Appelle: 3 French and 3 Orkney mixed-bloods; at Brandon House: 12 French freemen; Pembina and the Forks: 33 French and 2 Scots (associated with the NWC); Swan River: 4 French; and 8 Scots/Orkney freemen, who were former servants of HBC

⁷¹¹ Benjamin Gervais was the uncle of Martha Gervais who was Pierre Bottineau’s second wife. Pierre Bottineau was a famous Métis guide in Minnesota and the son of Charles Joseph Bottineau and Margaret Ahdik Songab. Both Benjamin Gervais and Pierre Bottineau were considered pioneers of the Minneapolis/Saint Paul area with Gervais settling at White Bear Lake and Bottineau at St. Anthony’s Falls. Gervais was considered a “white man” because he came from Quebec, born around 1787. He was age 63 in the 1850 federal census in Minnesota and his brother Pierre Gervais was Martha’s father. Benjamin had been in Red River in 1812 and then moved to Minnesota. See James Chesebro, *A Genealogy of the Ancestors and Descenents of Pierre Bottineau*, Manassas, Virginia, 1989.

⁷¹² For Gervais and Bruce, see Nute: xviii. “Former residents of Pembina moved to Stillwater, St. Paul and other places in Minnesota.” Black Rogers, personal communication. I would like to thank Dr. Black Rogers for sharing her meticulous research notes with me and for her hospitality in Minneapolis.

Brandon House. It was this latter group who Kaye and Ens suggested formed the basis of the Birsay Orkney mixed-blood group on the Assiniboine near the White Horse Plain. Although 23 people were listed by Fidler, Kaye suggested that the population may have been larger as Fidler had surveyed 14 lots.⁷¹³ This Birsay Village was dispersed in 1819 after the crops were destroyed by grasshoppers and several people died of diseases. They then moved closer to the Forks although Magnus Spence was later reported south of the Salle River [St. Norbert] in 1823.⁷¹⁴

Fidler's list of Canadian freemen is probably incomplete, given the fact that Cuthbert Grant raised Métis cavalry groups from other communities outside of Red River in 1815-16, such as Fort des Prairies on the Saskatchewan, English River and Fort Dauphin; see Figure 6. While this list may be incomplete, it does provide names of early Canadian freemen, most of whom had French names and who would provide the basis of future French Catholic Métis parishes.

7c) The Dissolution of the Pembina Parish After 1823 was only partially successful:

Peter Fidler's list of freemen in 1819 did not distinguish between those living at Pembina and the Forks, which is a problem in determining the actual settlers at Pembina after the parish was established in 1818. However, it seems likely that most of these freemen named by Fidler were living at Pembina in 1819 and more moved in until August 30, 1821 when Father

⁷¹³ Kaye, "Birsay Village on the Assiniboine": 20. Fidler only included information on two of these Orkney families from Brandon House, and Kaye thought he may have underestimated the numbers with his census being incomplete.

⁷¹⁴ Major Long's expedition, in 1823. *The Northern Expeditions of Stephen Long*, ed. L. Kane, June Holmquist, Carolyn Gilman, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society: 1978.

Destroismaisons reported to the Bishop of Quebec that there were 350 Catholics at St. Boniface and Pembina had 450 Catholics.⁷¹⁵

By January 1820, the priests reported 50-60 freemen and their families at Pembina.⁷¹⁶ At least seven names from the 1817 petition from Red River Catholics can be found on both lists.⁷¹⁷ By the spring and summer of 1821, there were 450-500 people.⁷¹⁸ The priests were only counting Catholic settlers at Pembina, so, if there were Swiss and Scottish Protestants at Fort Daer, they were not included in these numbers. The priests strongly emphasized that these Pembina freemen were *Canadien and métis*.⁷¹⁹ With Peter Fidler's list, it is not possible to distinguish between the freemen at the Forks and Pembina, but obviously they were all considered Red River Settlers. As the Pembina Mission was growing faster than the one at St. Boniface, it is not unreasonable to assume that many of Fidler's freemen were already at Pembina and it would

⁷¹⁵ Nute: 328: August 30, 1821.

⁷¹⁶ Nute: 264, January 20, 1820, Dumoulin to Plessis.

⁷¹⁷ These are : Jean Baptiste Marsellais, pere, Angus Mcdonell/McDonald, Louis Nolin, Michel Monet dit Bellehumeur, Francois Enos dit Delorme, Joseph Ducharme and Joseph Belleguarde. See Nute: 16-17.

⁷¹⁸ Nute: 290-91, 500 people at Pembina; March 29, 1821. On August 30, 1821, it was reported 450 Catholics at Pembina; Nute: 328.

⁷¹⁹ Nute: 264. Pembina, January 30, 1820: Dumoulin to Bishop Panet: "This spring I hope to finish marrying the Canadians who were living here with Indian women; they number not fewer than fifty or sixty." On January 3, 1821, Bishop Provencher at St. Boniface wrote to the Bishop of Quebec that the *métis* women and children spoke French "very imperfectly", so he would have to learn the Indian language (not specifying which one). "As for most of the Canadians and old *métis*, unhappily they are very weak Christians." This suggests that the French Canadian freemen did not practise Catholic rites without a priest and some having lived in the North West for upwards of thirty or forty years were quite unused to Christian rituals. Many had probably adopted some aspects of Aboriginal spirituality.

have continued to grow after the consolidation of the fur companies in 1821 if border politics had not forced the closing of the Pembina post and mission.

There is evidence in missionary and fur trade records that not all Pembina Métis moved out of the area. In his history of the Catholic Church in North Dakota, Bishop of Fargo John Shanley wrote: "The care of the Pembina flock was not abandoned. Father Destroismaisons continued to visit there at times, and in the spring Mr. Harper [a lay brother] accompanied the hunters to the chase. The hunting was on the North Dakota prairies from Red river to the Missouri. Wherever the chase led there went the priest and it is safe to assert that the first missionaries, beginning with Dumoulin, had visited in these hunting expeditions nearly all of the state between those two rivers."⁷²⁰ Ens wrote that "Bishop Provencher ordered the Pembina mission to close and encouraged the Métis there to move to Red River Settlement. With no trading post or mission left, most Métis followed their priest to Red River Settlement."⁷²¹ This assumption that the close of the Pembina Mission meant that Pembina was abandoned is shared by most writers.⁷²² But Bishop Provencher wrote in 1824 that, although some of the Pembina

⁷²⁰ Shanley: 19.

⁷²¹ Ens: 20. His reference is the Woods Report, written by army captain Samuel Woods, for the U.S. Congress in 1850 after a survey expedition in 1849. This is not good evidence for what was happening in the 1820s. See Woods Report, 1850, *House of Representatives Executive Document #51*, 31st. Congress, 1st. Session, Washington; I obtained a copy from the Law Library at the Hamline University, Saint Paul, Mn.

⁷²² Fern Swenson and Paul Picha, *Investigations at Dumoulin Mission and Cemetery Site (32PB100)*, Pembina County, North Dakota, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, October 1998. On page 2, these state archaeologists wrote that "With the establishment of the 49th Parallel as the international boundary in 1823, the Quebec Diocese withdrew north to the Saint Boniface-Fort Garry locality at modern-day Winnipeg. Many of the details surrounding daily operation and activities at the Mission continue to elude us in the surviving historical record (Bakker 1997; Burns 1988)." Most authors assume that the Pembina Métis disappeared

Métis moved to St. Francois Xavier, "there are still a good number of settlers who have got it into their heads that they were to have a missionary from America."⁷²³ And the fact is that the Pembina settlers undoubtedly still considered themselves part of the Red River Settlement at its southern end. In June 1825, Provencher was still complaining about his difficulty in establishing a school for girls at St. Boniface because Miss Angelique Nolin who he hoped to recruit as a teacher was still looking after her father. "Old Man Nolin, whose daughter is burning with a desire to consecrate herself to God, obstinately prevents her. I believe it will be necessary to wait until he died - he is 83 years old" which means that he was born in 1742.⁷²⁴ This was Jean

from 1823 to the re-establishment of commerce with Norman Kittson in the early 1840s and the American Fur Company. This mistake was not made by Jacqueline Peterson in her article "Gathering at the River: The Métis People of the Northern Plains", in *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, ed. Virginia Heidenreich, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1990: 55 or Gregory Camp, "Commerce and Conflict: A History of Pembina, 1797-1895", *North Dakota History*, v. 60:4: 27: "Between 1818 and 1838, Pembina was served by mission priests and did not have permanent parishes." Swenson and Picha did not cite either of these articles.

⁷²³ Provencher mentioned this demand in two letters to Bishop Plessis in Quebec: June 1 and June 13, 1824; Nute: 418 and 422. The Pembina residents also refused to move their presbytery, hoping to get a missionary through an American Bishop. The visit of the Long Expedition in August 1823 also prompted them to send a petition to the U.S. Congress. It was hinted at by Long, but I have not found a copy. Long wrote in his diary for August 7, 1823: "The Inhabitants [of Pembina] appeared highly gratified to ascertain that they were included within the U.S. Territory, and steps were immediately taken to make a representation to Congress in a respectful petition of their condition, views and wishes." *The Northern Expeditions of Stephen H. Long: 183*. Northern Minnesota territory was not yet organized and the Pembina Mission fell under the auspices of the Bishop of New Orleans as it was part of Louisiana territory although this had been disputed by the Selkirk party who argued that all of the Red River Valley was in British Territory. See comments about pleas to Bishop du Bourg in Nute, e.g. p. 422, note. Several letters are included in Nute's publication of missionary correspondence.

⁷²⁴ Nute: Provencher to Plessis, June 12, 1825: 427. His plan to recruit Miss Nolin was also mentioned in a letter of June 13, 1824, p. 420.

Baptiste Nolin who Alexander Ross claimed had been in the Red River Valley for fifty years and had witnessed the huge deluge of 1776.⁷²⁵

The Winnipeg journals of the HBC written by James Hargrave in the 1820s also demonstrate that there was still fur trade activity in the Pembina region. The HBC could not legally operate outside of Rupert's Land, but it bent the rules by sending free traders like Andrew McDermott and John Bourke across the line to trade furs and robes from the U.S. side. The HBC sent McDermott and Bourke to Pembina. Cuthbert Grant was along the Assiniboine at Fort Hibernia near Swan River and south of Brandon up the Souris River.⁷²⁶ Then the HBC traded with these "petty traders" at the Forks and shipped their skins to London on their ships via York Factory. Hargrave also documented the company's efforts to persuade the Pembina Métis to move north. On April 7, 1823, he noted that Mr. Clark had persuaded {Charles Joseph] Bottineau to accept a lot of land at the Image Plain. "The influence of such men as he and Nolin must be of great use in inducing those *Brulés* of lesser note to follow their example." On April 29, 1823, he reported the dismantling of the Pembina fort:

About noon, four men arrived from Pembina with a raft formed of the building at that place. The remainder of the company establishment at that place, consisting of one house and the pickets of the fort will be brought down during the ensuing month.⁷²⁷

But the HBC were not successful in persuading all the Pembina settlers to move, either to the Forks or to St. Francois Xavier Parish. On September 17, 1824, Hargrave noted:

⁷²⁵ Alexander Ross, *The Red River Settlement: Its Rise, Progress, and Present State*, London: 1856; republished by Helen Doherty, Manitoba, 1984: 107.

⁷²⁶ *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*: 77-78.

⁷²⁷ HBCA: B.235/a/5, Winnipeg Post Journal, April 7 (re: Bottineau) and April 29, 1823 about dismantling the Pembina HBC fort.

The retired servants who arrived yesterday not concerning it to their advantage to pass the winter in the Settlement set out this morning for Pembina where they intend to fix their residence, and were supplied by us with provisions for their voyage.⁷²⁸

The HBC allowed “petty traders” like Andrew McDermott to trade with the Pembina settlers.

This allowed them to get around the American law which forbade HBC trade south of the line.

“Mr. McDermot was supplied with goods for the purpose of trading on his own account at Pembina.”⁷²⁹ Obviously, Pembina settlers were still there and needed trade goods.

7d) Pembina Metis Culture in the 1820s: Ethnicity, Language, Dress and Style

The core group of Métis families were located around the missions at Pembina and St. Boniface and their cultural characteristics of the successful bison hunters would come to dominate the culture of the Red River Settlement. The Selkirk Scottish, Des Meurons and Orkneymen would have to adapt to their way of life and learn plains skills in order to get enough food to survive the harsh winters of the Red River Valley. In this process, French Michif became the dominant language of the buffalo hunters and it probably had been for several decades already. Peter Fidler’s list of (mostly) French & Canadian Freeman: a total of 52 French families and 5 Scots in 1819, showing that the French group of mixed families was the dominant group (34 families at Pembina and the Forks). In 1819, Fidler did not designate who was specifically “Canadian”. The Highland Scots allied with the NWC tended to marry into the French group and their families became Catholic after the arrival of the Catholic missionaries in 1818. Thus,

⁷²⁸ HBCA: B.235/a/6: Winnipeg Post Journal: September 17, 1824, re: retired servants planning to stay at Pembina.

⁷²⁹ HBCA: B.235/a/6: September 11, 1824: re: McDermot trading at Pembina.

descendants of the Catholic Scots tended to meld with the French Métis while the families of the Orkneymen generally continued their Protestant/Anglican orientation.

As a result, the dominant culture of the buffalo hunters from Pembina and the Forks were mostly French Métis; if any of the HBC freemen joined them, they probably communicated in Indian languages like Cree, Ojibwe or Assiniboiné.⁷³⁰ Linguists suggest that Cree was the *lingua franca* of the fur trade.⁷³¹ James Short's family from Brandon House provide an example of this pattern of intermarriage. Short was an Orkney labourer who married an Ojibwe woman and they had two mixed-blood children born before 1806 with a total of eight children altogether. These children would have been raised in the HBC tradition of "Home Guard Ojibwe" rather than "Métis" because their father lived at the post, like the Twatt family of Nipawin, Saskatchewan.⁷³² His son James Jr. (1809-70) was listed as a Catholic in depositions by his descendants in 1870; he married twice: Charlotte Gladu, a Métisse woman (1805-47); and Angelique Saulteaux, born

⁷³⁰ MacLeod and Morton suggested that "year by year the Métis became ever more French as the Scots were assimilated, yet ever a more distinct people." It was the organization of the buffalo hunt and the development of a separate identity, language and culture, which helped set them apart from both the Indian and non-Indian immigrants. Since the Catholic Scots descendants of the North West Company intermarried with the French Catholics, this group became French/Ojibwe or French/Cree speakers. Jennifer Brown compared the cultural differences of the fur traders of the HBC and NWC in her article: "Fur Trade as Centrifuge: Familial Dispersal and Offspring Identity in Two Company Contexts", *North American Indian Anthropology*, ed. Raymond DeMallie & Alfonso Ortiz, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995: 197-219. I would argue that the French Michif became the dominant language and culture of the buffalo hunters after 1821. Linguist Robert Pappen, personal communication, Brandon University Linguistics Workshop, March 8, 2003.

⁷³¹ Richard Rhodes, "Algonquian Trade Languages", *Papers of the 13th. Algonquian Conference*, ed. William Cowan, Ottawa: 1982: 1-10.

⁷³² Paul Thistle, "The twatt Family: 1780-1840: Amerindian, Ethnic Category or Ethnic Group Identity", *Prairie Forum* 22:2, Fall 1997: 193-212.

in 1830, also listed as a Catholic in 1870.⁷³³ A James Short was listed as an HBC guide and middleman in the 1850s, but that was probably a grandson of the Orkneyman.⁷³⁴ Daughter Sarah born in 1795 married Hugh Ross Jr. Daughter Betsy born in 1815 married Joseph Lepine, a son of Jean Baptiste and Julie Henry (daughter of Alexander Henry of Pembina) and a brother of Ambroise Lepine, Riel's famous Adjutant-General. Daughter Mary Short born in 1820 married Pierre Pangman, son of Bostonais and his Ojibwe wife, and they lived in St. Francois-Xavier. Most of the grandchildren of the Orkney labourer and his Ojibwe wife, Bethsy Saulteaux, both Protestants, at Brandon settled in Red River and became French Métis. Having a British name did not ensure that a family would remain British and Protestant in ethnicity, especially if the lived in a Catholic parish like St. F.-X. While Irene Spry argued that there was extensive intermarriage between Catholics and Protestants in Red River, I disagree and believe that Spry was using the exceptions rather than the norm, suggesting the rate of intermarriage was low..⁷³⁵

Although the numbers of Catholics and Protestants in census figures was fairly equal in the Red River Settlement, the cultural orientation of the buffalo hunters is difficult to prove with genealogy, but linguistics offers useful insights. Since the language of the buffalo hunters was mainly French/Cree (Michif), it seems logical that the Cree-speaking British Orkney descendants who joined the hunt on a temporary basis were the minority. The Orkney Cree developed a mixed language called "Bungee" and stayed ethnically distinct. Settlers who took river lots in a

⁷³³ Sprague and Frye, *Genealogy of the First Metis Nation*, Table 1: #4367.

⁷³⁴ Sprague and Frye, Table 3: contract employees of the HBC.

⁷³⁵ Irene Spry, "The métis and mixed-bloods of Rupert's Land before 1870", *The New Peoples*, 95-118.

Catholic Parish like St. F.-X. became Catholics and those in Protestant parishes like St. Andrews became Protestant.⁷³⁶

The Orkney HBC freemen from posts close to the plains like Brandon House, who probably were already experienced bison hunters, established the Birsay Village near the White Horse Plain to be closer to the buffalo herds in 1818-19, but they could not maintain a community so far from the safety of the Forks. So they either had to join the French Canadian freemen at the White Horse Plain (a.k.a. St. Francois-Xavier or Grantown) or live with the HBC descendants where English and the Protestant religion would become more important.⁷³⁷ It was during this period that the Canadian freemen and Métis sons developed the idea of the large hunts for safety and protection from Indian attack. Some HBC freemen may have joined these groups, but it was still not safe to live outside the settlement. The establishment of the Birsay Village by HBC freemen suggests that they did not want to live with the Canadian freemen. It is quite possible that, before 1818, there was some social interaction and intermarriage between the

⁷³⁶ For Gerhard Ens' comparison of family demographics in these two parishes, see *From Homeland to Hinterland*, Toronto: University of Toronto: 1996.

⁷³⁷ PAM: Selkirk Papers, Miles McDonell Journal, reported in 1817 visiting Lagimonière's house on the Assiniboine. This is before he received a land grant from Lord Selkirk for the family homestead at the mouth of the Seine River in St. Boniface. So apparently some Canadian freemen were already located at the White Horse Plain; Ens suggests that André Poitras and others located there in 1814, but were forced to move by the Nor'Westers, but Lagimonière associated with the HBC and the colony which is hard to explain. It seems most likely that this early occupation of the White Horse Plain area was undocumented. Ens: 19. Giraud: I: 415. Giraud cites the Selkirk Papers, narrative of John Pritchard, who was sympathetic to the HBC and colony, that the Nor'Westers forced Canadian freemen like André Poitras not to settle in the colony.

HBC and NWC descendants.⁷³⁸ However, given the climate of competition and company loyalty during the period of the fur trade war, the general pattern was that Protestants (Orkneymen) settled around the Anglican churches and the Catholics (French and Highland Scots) in Catholic parishes. These nine Orkney men and their descendants as suggested by Peter Fidler's list were in the distinct minority and most of the freemen were deemed by Fidler to be "Canadian", meaning French Canadian.

7e) Long and Keating's Expedition Documented Pembina Metis Settlement & Culture:

The American boundary survey led by Stephen Long and his geologist, William Keating, in 1823 provided more evidence of the continued Pembina settlement as well as the Pembina Métis culture. While both kept journals, Keating's is more complete and he gave a description of the Pembina buffalo hunters in 1823. In Keating's account, we can see the influence of scientific racism, as he believed that agriculture was a higher form of civilization than hunting and that the Pembina hunters were thus morally inferior human beings:

The settlement considers of about 350 souls, residing in sixty log houses or cabins; they do not appear to possess the qualifications for good settlers; few of them are farmers; most of them are half-breeds, who having been educated by their Indian mothers, have imbibed the roving, unsettled, and indolent habits of Indians. Accustomed from their early infancy to the arts of the fur trade, which may be considered as one of the worst schools for morals, they have acquired no small share of cunning and artifice. These

⁷³⁸For example, Margaret Clarke's demographic study of the families in the Assiniboine Basin (centring on Brandon House) showed nine cross-marriages between spouses with French and non-French names in the Assiniboine Basin between 1814-1843. Their river lot location determined their family's religion; if they located in a Catholic parish, and Protestant children married Catholics, they would be assimilated into the French Catholic parishes; or if they located in a Protestant (Anglican) parish, vice versa. For example, the descendants of people like Bostonais Pangman, Cuthbert Grant, Angus McGillis and James Short, an Orkneyman who worked for the HBC at Brandon, became Catholics. Margaret Clarke, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community of the Assiniboine Basin, 17983 to 1812*, MA Thesis, Winnipeg: University of Winnipeg, 1997: Figure 7: Families in the Assiniboine Basin, 1805, pages 3-60- 3-61.

form at least two-thirds of the male inhabitants. The rest consist of Swiss and Scotch settlers, most of the former are old soldiers [Des Meurons] as unfit for agricultural pursuits as the half-breeds themselves. The only good colonists are the Scotch, who have brought over with them, as usual, their steady habits, and their indefatigable perseverance... [The soil] does not at present yield sufficient produce to support the settlers, who therefore devote much of their time to hunting...for experience shows, that men addicted to hunting never can make good farmers.⁷³⁹

Then he described the return of the buffalo hunters and their families with their impressive cavalcade, reminiscent of the Langlois cart train to the Hair Hills described by Henry, but much longer:

Their return afforded us a spectacle that was really novel and interesting: their march a triumphant one, and presented a much greater concourse of men, women and children than we had expected to meet in those distant prairies. The procession consisted of 115 carts, each loaded with about 800 pounds of the finest buffalo meat; there were 300 persons, including the women. The number of their horses, some of which were very good, was not under 200. Twenty hunters, mounted on their best steeds, rode in abreast; having heard of our arrival, they fired a salve as they passed our camp.⁷⁴⁰

Keating described the men's dress in detail, a blending of Indian and European elements: the men wore blue wool capotes with hoods (coats), a Quebec-style sash in bright colours (usually red was the dominant colour), a shirt of printed calico or muslin, mocassins and leather leggings fastened by ornamented garters. Their hats were decorated with feathers and ornaments. These details of Métis material culture was common in descriptions of voyageur communities from the Great Lakes to the Saskatchewan and Athabasca. While much of men's clothing came from French Canada, the decorations (such as quills, beadwork and feathers) were Aboriginal.

⁷³⁹ William H. Keating, *Narrative of an expedition to the source of St. Peter's River, 1823*, reprint by Ross & Haines, Minneapolis, 1959: 39-40.

⁷⁴⁰ Keating: 40.

The leader of the military expedition, Stephen Long, noted that their style of living was similar to the Indians, but their habitations were “more comfortable and more skillfully constructed”. Keating had reported counting sixty log cabins, but likely some Pembina Métis were living in skin lodges; when they were hunting on the plains, they all used these portable tents, but at the settlement, Métis tipis were still reported at Pembina in the 1850s. As a result, Keating may have underestimated the population if he did not notice or account for the Indian-style habitations. Long noted: “there is scarcely an individual who does not grow more or less of wheat, Indian Corn, Potatoes, Barley, Oats, Beans, Peas, Turnips, Pumpkins, Carrots, onion, cabbage, tobacco, mellons, etc. Tobacco is said to succeed very well.”⁷⁴¹

Keating noted the Ojibwe name for the Pembina River was *anepeminan* [[*Viburnum oxycoccus*] from the High-bush Cranberry, and he reported that at Pembina the freemen were called *Gens libres* to distinguish them from the servants of the HBC who were called in French: *Engagés*. “Those that are partly of Indian extraction are nick-named *Bois brûlé* [Burnt Wood] from their dark complexion.”⁷⁴² Keating made the assumption that was common in the 19th and 20th centuries that skin colour was an indication of Aboriginality, when in fact most of these Pembina Métis had Aboriginal ancestors even if they looked white. Skin colour was probably not so significant for Red River residents as in the minds of the racially-sensitive newcomers.

Racism also coloured Keating’s ideas about the potential of part-Indian people for agriculture. It was usually assumed by people who believed that the Aboriginals were inferior

⁷⁴¹ Stephen H. Long, *The Northern Expeditions of Stephen H. Long*, ed. L. Kane, J. Holmquist, and C. Gilman, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1978.

⁷⁴² Keating: name of Pembina: 38; *Gens libres* and *Bois Brûlés*: 40.

that they were hunters because they were lower on the evolutionary scale and could not adapt to farming. So they may have been surprised to see the abundant gardens of their hosts, showing that they took advantage of both country produce and gardening to supplement their diet, as Henry had done twenty years earlier. The fact that their hunting skills saved the community and the visitors from starvation should have been worth more appreciation than the American scientist was willing to admit. Like other Pembina visitors like ethnographer and linguist Lewis Henry Morgan in 1861, Keating did not allow his own observations to detract from the racist views he applied to these people of mixed ancestry. When historians and other writers use these sources, it is important to discount the racial stereotypes and value judgements such as discounting Métis agriculture and use the facts that give insight into the positive aspects of the buffalo hunters' culture.

7f) The Centripetal Force of Settlement: the Jeromes and the Collins Settle in Red River

After 1821, we have noted that large numbers of displaced fur trade employees migrated to the Red River Settlement, mostly from the north and the Jeromes and Letendres from the Saskatchewan area were typical of the Métis newcomers to Red River. Pierre Jerome, the NWC Cree interpreter, who lived most of his life along the Saskatchewan died on November 28, 1821, as reported in the Carlton House Journal.⁷⁴³ The same journal writer also reported on the activities of two young men he called "Samart Gerome" and "Battoshes son". For example: on

⁷⁴³ HBCA: Carlton House Journal, 1821-22, B.27/a/11: November 28, 1821. "He has been many years in the service of the NWC as Interpreter [for the] Crees and I should suppose he must be upwards of 80 years of age, one man employed making a coffin and 2 digging a grave and two others arnaging the corps for interment. He was buried in the afternoon." If he was 80 years old in 1821, he was born about 1740, but readers should remember that these dates are approximate as there were no birth records.

January 30, 1823, the Carlton House writer observed: "Samart Gerome and Battoshes son arrived from Dog Rump Creek House, but brought no letter from Edmonton House."⁷⁴⁴ Battosh's son was Jean Baptiste Letendre Jr and these two families, the Jeromes and the Letendres, were friends over several generations, beginning in the buffalo camps on the Saskatchewan, and later intermarried and remained close.

Letendre and Gerome both had accounts in the NWC Leger before the consolidation of the fur companies in 1821.⁷⁴⁵ These accounts show some of the ethnic markers of the classic Métis buffalo hunters as described by Keating and Long at Pembina in 1823. They had bought horse bells and bridle, a blue capot, corderoy trousers, 2 cotton shirts, several silk handkerchiefs, beaver hat, imported shoes (for special occasions), hat cover, razor and cloth. Letendre had ordered some cotton cloth, thread, needles and ribbons, suggesting that he already had a country wife. They had a son Jean Baptiste born in 1819.⁷⁴⁶

Letendre's father, Jean Baptiste Sr, came from Sorel, Quebec, which provided many men for the voyageur brigades, and was in the North West by the 1780s. His country wife was Josephte Crise, a member of the Cree nation.⁷⁴⁷ In 1825, the Letendre extended family and young

⁷⁴⁴ HBCA: Carlton House Journal, 1821-22, B.27/a/11: January 30, 1821.

⁷⁴⁵ HBCA: NWC Ledger: F.4/41, 1821: J. Bte. Letendre Jr. was on page 47 and Martin Gerome was on page 83. Note that this Letendre was a brother of the young man killed at Seven Oaks. His father, Jean Baptiste Letendre Sr., was the man who lamented his son's death to HBC John Peter Pruden at Carlton House after the battle. For the father's biography, see Appendix B by Harry Duckwork, *The English River Book*, Montreal/Kinston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990:158.

⁷⁴⁶ Sprague and Frye, *Genealogy of the First Metis Nation*: Table 1: #2939.

⁷⁴⁷ Diane Payment, "Jean Baptiste Letendre, dit Batoche", *DCB* v. 6: 398.

Martin Jerome/Jerome moved to Red River Settlement and, on June 5, 1825, several of the Letendre siblings married at St. Boniface, including Angelique Letendre to Martin Jerome.⁷⁴⁸ The Jeromes had four children by 1829 when Angelique died: they were Angelique, Martin Jr., Jean Baptiste and André who was the great-grandfather of Edward Jerome of Hallock, Mn. Martin Sr. then married a second wife, Elizabeth Wilky, the sister of the captain of the Pembina Buffalo Hunt, Jean Baptiste Wilky, and had a second large family with her for a total of thirteen children. By marrying a Wilky, Martin Jerome also inherited a large extensive family of Pembina kin who were influential leaders in the community to the south.

The Jerome and Letendre families can be traced through Red River Census Returns starting in 1827, when Martin was 25 and Jean Baptiste was 41. The Letendres and the Jeromes lived on river lots in the Saint Boniface area until Martin Jerome moved his family to Pembina in the early 1840s. Pembina then became the base of the Jerome family, showing how the Métis moved to take advantage of economic opportunities. When Martin's sons grew up, at least one, André Jerome dit St. Matte, lived on the Manitoba side of the border north of Emerson while most of the family was in Pembina or St. Vincent (across the Red River in Minnesota). There are still Jerome descendants in Minnesota, North Dakota and Manitoba, including Edward Jerome who did much of the primary research on his family tree along with his cousins, Frank Jerome and Dorothy Kalka. Their second cousin, Dan Jerome of Belcourt, N.D., also contributed family history to the local parish history book.⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁸ Payment: 398. See also Société Historique du St. Boniface: St. Boniface Marriages.

⁷⁴⁹ *St. Ann's Centennial: 100 Years of Faith*, Belcourt: Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation, 1885-1985: 385-390. The research of the other cousins is unpublished.

7g) Cree Dominance in the Language and Culture of the New Immigrants from the North:

Linguists like Peter Bakker have shown that classic Michif was based on a combination of French nouns and Cree verbs and he speculated that this new language probably developed in the buffalo hunters' camps of the 1840s.⁷⁵⁰ This mixed language probably developed much earlier in places like the Saskatchewan River, Qu'Appelle, Dauphin and Brandon where there were families like the Jeromes and Letendres for several generations before they moved to Red River. Wherever the fur trade posts were in close proximity to the plains (Figure 6), the freemen turned buffalo hunters and their families built communities that were part-Aboriginal and part-French.

Before 1821, the Aboriginal language in the Red River Valley which was most common in the fur trade families was Ojibwe because they were the beaver trappers. After 1821, when large numbers of former NWC employees retired to the Forks, the dominant Aboriginal language was Cree because it was the most common in the North as well as on the plains. This must account for the dominance of Cree in Michif (French/Cree) and Bungee (English/Cree). Cree was thus the common language of the Red River Settlement. J.J. Hargrave reported in his book about the settlement that if an Orkneyman met a French Metis, they conversed in Cree as neither knew the other's European language.⁷⁵¹

⁷⁵⁰ Peter Bakker, *A Language of Our Own*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997: 160.

⁷⁵¹ J.J. Hargrave, *Red River*, Montreal: John Lovell, 1871: 181: "Thus a man whose usual language is English, and one who speaks French alone, are enabled to render themselves mutually intelligible by means of Cree, their Indian mother tongue, though each is totally ignorant of the civilized language ordinarily used by the other." For the multilingualism of Red River natives, see Eleanor Blain, *The Bungee Dialect of the Red River Settlement*, Winnipeg: MA thesis, University of Manitoba, 1989: Preliminaries.

Linguist David Pentland argued that Michif and Bungee were the original languages of the Red River Settlement.⁷⁵² The problem with Michif and Bungee was that they were insider languages not used with outsiders, so they were not documented historically and only “discovered” by linguists in the late 20th century. Another problem in studying the historical development of this language is that Metis children were taught in school that it was “bad French” and descendants of the Orkneymen were taught in places like Lockport, Manitoba, to lose their “Indian accented English”, so they learned to be ashamed of this important ethnic marker of their fur trade cultures. Michif was probably used more widely and spoken in more communities and has lasted longer than Bungee, another reason to argue that it was the dominant language of the buffalo hunters and their families.

As the migration towards the Red River Settlement continued in the 1820s, it attracted voyageurs from the Great Lakes such as Jean Baptiste Collin of Thunder Bay. His father was the famous canoe maker of Grand Portage and Fort William who came from a long line of fur trade voyageurs. The descendants of Antoine and his son Michel who stayed in the Fort William area became status Indians are part of the Fort William First Nation at Thunder Bay, an Ojibw band.⁷⁵³ The descendants of Jean Baptiste Collin who settled in Red River in the 1820s became Métis buffalo hunters. His country wife was Betsy Henry, the daughter of Alexander Henry the

⁷⁵² David Pentland, “Métchif and Bungi: Languages of the Fur Trade”, *Voices of Rupert’s Land Colloquium*, Linguistics, University of Manitoba, March 9, 1985. The most detailed analysis of Bungi is by Eleanor Blain, “The Bungee Dialect of the Red River Settlement”, MA thesis, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1989.

⁷⁵³ Ruth Swan & Edward Jerome, “The Collin Family at Thunder Bay: A Case Study in *Métissage*”, *Papers of the 29th Algonquian Conference*, ed. David Pentland, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba: 1998: 311-321.

Younger, born at Pembina around 1801. Her mother was the Daughter of The Buffaloe, one of the Pembina Ojibwe trading group.⁷⁵⁴ They raised a large family, most of whom sttled in the St. Norbert Parish, but Antoine Collin, grandson of the canoe maker, and his sister Isabelle Laplante settled at Pembina. Their parents had lived there from the 1840s to 1860s during the competition between the HBC and the American Fur Company.

The Collin family represents the Ojibwe connections to the Métis buffalo hunters. Betsy's mother was Ojibwe and her father, Alexander Henry. They left Pembina in 1808 and moved to Saskatchewan. After her father's death in 1814, her family were under the protection of John Rowand at Fort Edmonton, one of her father's colleagues, and later with her uncle, Robert Henry, at Ile à la Crosse where her sister Julie met Jean Baptiste Lepine. The younger siblings were reported on the census of that district in 1824, but Betsy Henry was already married according to the custom of the country and living with her handsome voyageur on January 19, 1823. After that date, there are numerous references to this couple in the Winnipeg post journals.⁷⁵⁵

Jean Baptiste Collin is a good example of a voyageur from the Great Lakes who made the transition from voyageur to buffalo hunter. While he and his wife both spoke Ojibwe, perhaps they also quickly learned Cree as the newcomers arrived from the north and Michif, made up of French and Cree, became the dominant language of the buffalo hunters' camps. Within the

⁷⁵⁴ Ruth Swan and Edward A. Jerome, "A Mother and Father of Pembina: A NWC Voyageur Meets the Granddaughter of The Buffaloe", *Actes du 32eme Congrès des Algonquintes*, ed. John D. Nochols, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 2001: 527-551.

⁷⁵⁵ HBCA: Winnipeg Post Journal B.235/a/5, Winnipeg account books, Fork Alexander Post Journal and Red River Census returns.

family, Ojibwe may have continued as their mother tongue, but one of the characteristics of Red River Métis was their fluency in several languages and their linguistic ability. By the time the granddaughter of Jean Baptiste and Betsy Collin married Alexandre, the son of André Jerome and Margeurite Gosselin in the 1890s, French Cree was their family language.⁷⁵⁶

The final link in the chain of the Pembina Métis involves the descendants of the famous Baptiste Roy (or Le Roy), interpreter for the NWC at Pembina, Heney's potato supplier at the Forks, and one of the earliest Métis settlers in Red River. One Peter Fidler's 1819 list, he had one wife, a son and three daughters. Two of his daughters became matriarchs of Pembina. Magdeleine Roy had a daughter named Isabelle MacDonell (McDonald) who did not know her father's first name, calling him a Scotchman. She was born in the early 1820s and later married Louis Godin, probably related to "Old Godin" mentioned by Hugh Faries at Lac la Pluie.⁷⁵⁷ One of their daughters, Marguerite Godin, married Antoine Collin of Pembina.

In the 1870 Red River Census, Antoine and Marguerite Collin's family lived near Emerson with her mother and grandmother, Isabelle Godin [née MacDonell] and Magdelline Isaac, suggesting the matrilocal residence pattern which may have been inherited from their

⁷⁵⁶ Personal communication, Edward Jerome, Hallock, Mn. His father, Edward Jerome Sr, told him that their background was French and their language was Cree. He could converse with French speakers by responding in English as he did not speak his Michif language since 1929, but he could still understand the French words. He stopped speaking Michif when he was about 25 years old according to his son, Edward Jerome. This is oral history from the family.

⁷⁵⁷ Her affidavit for HB scrip gives her parents' names and her birth date. See "The Diary of Hugh Faries", ed. Charles Gates, *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1965: p. 203: "Old Godin and Azure went down the river to make wooden canoes" p. 203: August 25, 1804: "Old Godin came up for some Grease and a Saw." This evidence gives the link between voyageurs and Métis descendants. Isaac was the name of Magdeline Roy's second husband; MacDonell was the first, but his first name was not listed.

Algonquian relatives. Isabelle's granddaughter, Mary Jane Collin, born in 1872 in West Lynne (the HBC reserve next to Emerson) married Alexandre Jerome. Alexandre was the grandson of Magdeleine Roy's sister, Marie Roy, who had married Antoine Gosselin at Pembina. Their daughter, Margeurite Gosselin, was the wife of André Jerome, son of Martin Jerome and Angelique Letendre.⁷⁵⁸ So the great-grandson of Marie Roy married the great-granddaughter of Magdeleine Roy and they all lived at Pembina and vicinity for at least five generations by 1900. Since Manitoba joined Canada in 1870, most of the French Métis at Emerson moved across the border to North Dakota and Minnesota after they lost their river lots in Manitoba after 1870.

It is through following families like the Jeromes and the Collins, the Nolins, the Pangmans and the Bottineaux, the Roys, Godins and Gosselins, that we can trace out the evolution of the Red River Métis. The new sense of Métis identity that emerged in the Fur Trade War with Cuthbert Grant's cavalry did not come with the traders like Francois Jerome on the Saskatchewan. It was with the freemen on the fringes of the plains after 1800 who learned that they could survive with their families outside the fur companies' control by hunting buffalo to make pemmican while growing their potatoes and vegetables on their river lots in the summer. These freemen, or *Gens libres*, were one step and one generation removed from the fur traders.

Voyageurs from the forested areas like Jean Baptiste Collin from Lake Superior or Orkneymen from the HBC posts like James Monkman and James Short had to learn plains skills before they could join the freemen on their annual hunts on the plains, a new and challenging environment with a harsh climate of extreme temperatures. The development of these skills of

⁷⁵⁸ For the story about André Jerome's and Louison Letendre's role in the Fenian Raid of 1871, see Ruth Swan and Edward A. Jerome, "The Métis in O'Donoghue's Raid", *Manitoba History*, spring-Summer 2000: 24-38.

horseriding and building carts, tipis and pemmican did not happen overnight. When assigned to posts on the margin of the plains, like Pembina or Brandon House/La Souris, they had an opportunity to adjust. If their children married French Métis, *tant mieux*. Most of the early freemen were former employees of the Canadian companies and French names dominated the earliest censuses. XYC freemen appeared after 1804, and were augmented by desertions and the expiration of contracts. After 1821, the migration from the north and west of voyageurs' families to Red River formed the core group of the Red River buffalo hunters which congregated at Pembina in the 1820s.

Outsiders perceived the influence of Aboriginal culture on these Pembina Métis who acted a little more defiant of convention and resented the control of the "powers that be". Sometimes, they disparaged them for their racial background, suggesting they were not "real settlers", although they were living in a settlement with designated river lots. Newcomers brought the idea that settlement was linked to agriculture and Christianity. Although the Métis were Christian, went to mass, built cabins and spoke French, they were not considered as good as the Scots from the old country or the French from Canada. Racist attitudes persisted and hardened, and resulted in economic marginalization for many, so they were called "the Road Allowance People" during the Depression in the 1930s. Dealing with the hostile attitudes of outsiders and the stereotypes and discrimination that they imposed on the indigenous residents of the Red River Valley on both sides of the border became the biggest challenge for the Valley's earliest settlers.

Conclusions: Pembina as Crucible of the Red River Métis

Pembina was the crucible of the Red River Métis because the first major fur trading posts were established there in the late 1700s (after the La Vérendrye family left the North West in the 1740s) and it continued as the major trading centre on Red River until the NWC moved its operations to the Forks in 1810 with the erection of Fort Gibraltar. Pembina was attractive because it was close to the buffalo migration route and at that time the Red River Valley was a rich environment both for fur-bearing animals such as beaver as well as food resources like wild game, fish and wild fruits. The problem with it was the geographic border between hostile Aboriginal groups, the Dakota to the south and their enemies the Ojibwe east of Red River and the Plains Cree and Assiniboine west of that river. The Red River was the “war road” and Canadian fur traders were discouraged from using the southern route from Fond du Lac on Lake Superior [Duluth] through Minnesota to the Red River Valley. Consequently, they discovered it was safer to use the longer northern route through Rainy Lake, Lake of the Woods, Winnipeg River and Lake Winnipeg to reach the Red. Nevertheless, fur trade post sites such as Rainy Lake, Red Lake, Red Lake Falls and Pembina were part of linkage based on Aboriginal routes that were not necessarily good for the transshipment of goods, but could be used for rapid or personal travel. Transportation and communication followed the water routes and Aboriginal technology and expertise were used by the fur traders in their explorations for new areas of exploitation.

Jacqueline Peterson brought forward the idea that the origins of the Red River Valley Métis could be found in trading centres established by French Canadian traders from Quebec

around the Great Lakes. In communities like Detroit, Michilimackinac, Green Bay [on Lake Michigan] Fond du Lac, and Grand Portage, ethnic markers such as separate residence patterns from whites and Indians as well as examples of material culture (dress and decoration) and language blending suggested that a mixed culture of French and Indian traders evolved in French/Indian trading communities in the late 1700s and early 1800s. She called this development a “prelude to Red River”.⁷⁵⁹ The problem with her argument was that these “Indianized French people” did not articulate a separate identity of being Métis as happened in the Red River Valley during the Fur Trade War and their descendants either blended into the dominant American white settlements or into the Aboriginal communities. For this reason, many of the people living on Indian reserves and reservations in the USA and Canada around the Great Lakes still bear French names as do the people on Ojibwe reservations in Wisconsin and Minnesota, part of their fur trade legacy, but Peterson was able to link many of the voyageur families from these trading towns to later fur trade sites in Red River, especially Pembina, suggesting that second generation voyageurs continued to move west and brought their fluency in Ojibwe and knowledge of Aboriginal cultures with them in their pioneering efforts to explore and exploit the fur resources of the Red. Although Peterson more than most scholars was aware of the importance of Pembina as the site of the earliest fur trading activity on Red River, she did not do any archival research to identify the more detailed history of that community.

My study shows that the origins of the Pembina Métis were not just from the Great Lakes, but also from the North West, along the Saskatchewan River, and probably other fur trade centres

⁷⁵⁹ Jacqueline Peterson, “Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis”, *Ethnohistory* 25:1: Winter 1978: 41-67.

on the fringe of parkland and prairie, such as Qu'Appelle and Brandon. As the fur trade spread to the North West and Athabasca along the major river routes, those close to the plains allowed the traders to access the huge food resource of the bison which became the basis for the provisioning trade. John Foster theorized that the freeman culture of the buffalo hunters originated in these areas where the early Canadian fur traders penetrated as "outsider males" to go *en déroutine* to live with the local bands of Indians.⁷⁶⁰ Here they married native women *à la façon du pays* and traded with their male kin, creating children of mixed background and families whose descendants would become Métis when they moved to the Red River Settlement. Foster was not able to name more than one family, the Dumonts, ancestors of the famous Gabriel's uncle, whom he could trace to the Saskatchewan. Other authors like Olive Dickason have pointed out that there was this pattern of intermarriage in the fur trade between French Canadian voyageurs and Indian women, for example, in Quebec and along the fur trade routes which did not result in the articulation of a separate ethnic identity and new language as happened with the Red River Métis.⁷⁶¹ As Gerhard Ens has suggested, it was the special of conditions of Red River during the fur trade war which probably led to that evolution and Métis ethnogenesis.⁷⁶²

The research on Francois Jerome, the famous Franceway of Mathew Cocking's journal, demonstrates that there were some French men who were part of La Verendrye's original

⁷⁶⁰ John Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Metis", *Prairie Forum* 19:1: Spring 1994: 1-13.

⁷⁶¹ Olive Dickason, "From 'One Nation' in the Northeast to 'New Nation' in the Northwest: A Look at the Emergence of the Métis" in *The New Peoples*, ed. Peterson and Brown, 1985: 19-36.

⁷⁶² Gerhard Ens, *From Homeland to Hinterland*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996:4.

explorations who stayed in the west and took advantage of the opportunity to become fur traders based in the Great Lakes after New France was lost to France in 1763. Since Alexander Henry the Elder published his famous memoir about his own trading adventures in the *pays d'en haut*, Canadian anglophone historians like A.S. Morton assumed that British "pedlars" who were based in Montreal developed the large partnerships that resulted in the North West Company and XY Company organized by Sir Alexander Mackenzie. Although historians suspected that there might have been a connection between La Vérendrye's time and the later fur trade, it was difficult to document because of the lack of information. If one imagined there were Métis in Western Canada before 1812, how could they be identified and named?

The method that I have used was through genealogy and ethnohistory. Genealogy involves recreating family trees from modern descendants of Red River Valley Métis like Edward A. Jerome of Hallock, Mn., who shared his extensive research with me as well as other friends in Manitoba, North Dakota and Minnesota. Edward Jerome's cousin Frank Jerome had made contact with the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in London, England, and they helped identify some of the sources that described the references to the Jerome family such as Francois, Pierre and Samart Gerome in the vicinity of Carlton House along the Saskatchewan River, suggesting that there were several generations of this family in the North West before they moved to Red River in the 1820s. To what extent were they Métis before they arrived in Red River?

Ethnohistory is a method which combines the approaches of anthropology and history in providing a more complete picture of Aboriginal culture and history. Consequently, I found that information from anthropologists such as ethnologists, archaeologists and linguists particularly

helpful in deconstructing the origins of the Red River Métis. Native history by scholars such as Laura Peers and Lauren Ritterbush helped to unravel the differences among Aboriginal groups, showing that Pembina was a meeting place for different Aboriginal cultures as well as European and French Canadian ones. Archaeologists such as David MacLeod have explained some of the “ethnic markers” used by their science in analyzing Métis fur trade sites and habitations to portray their material culture. Linguists such as Peter Bakker, David Pentland and Eleanor Blain have explored the history of the two Red River languages, Michif and Bungee, to provide insights into the cultural history of the Red River Métis. I also benefitted from the insights of contemporary anthropologists in their post-modern quest to dissect scientific racism and have applied this knowledge in using historical primary and secondary sources.⁷⁶³

Because the Métis did not produce many documents in this period, most of their history has been written by outsiders bringing their own cultural biases to the picture that they constructed. The methodology of ethnohistorians is useful in approaching these sources within the context of the author’s background, so that biases can be identified and ignored while useful primary source information can still be utilized. While recent social historians have rejected some of the biases of writers like Giraud, Stanley and Morton, it is important to recognize that much of their primary research was useful when the stereotypes and racist adjectives and value judgements (ascribing inferiority to people of a different ethnic group) are identified.

Consequently, the information that William Keating provided in 1823 is useful when focussed on

⁷⁶³ Robert Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indians: 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986. Jennifer Brown, “Métis, Halfbreeds, and Other Real People: Challenging Cultures and Categories”, *The History Teacher*: v. 27: #1: November 1993.

facts like the size of the population and his descriptions of their dress and habitations. His observation that they did not make good farmers because they were hunters is rejected, knowing that the one does not preclude the other.

In the process of archival research, I identified three important dates in the history of the Pembina Métis: 1) after 1804 with the amalgamation of the XYC and the NWC; 2) the establishment of the Selkirk Colony and 1812; and 3) the consolidation of the NWC and the HBC. A detailed examination of the fur trade in the Pembina region suggests that the formation of the freemen communities who were voyageurs that became buffalo hunters was a critical factor in the development of a separate Métis identity. The establishment of the colony at the Forks and the resulting fur trade war drew the mixed-blood sons of the freemen to Red River, stimulating the formation of the Métis cavalry and competition over the buffalo resource and food supplies precipitated by the sudden influx of settlers led to the evolution of new rules concerning the hunt as well as the imposition of military discipline and an egalitarian social structure based on the election of officers instead of appointment by a remote colonial administration. The European class system and colonial values did not find acceptance with men who were used to being their own boss and the name *Gens libres* or freemen suggested that Aboriginal values were more acceptable to people who resented the control of their fur trade bosses. The Fur Trade War brought hundreds of young *Bois Brûlés* to the Red River from most of the NWC posts along the margin of the plains and they formed a military organization to counter the threat of the HBC and Lord Selkirk's colony on their territory. The deaths at Seven Oaks were a tragic result.

Alexander Ross, a former Nor'Wester who was out in the far west at the time, wrote so graphically about the incident at Seven Oaks in 1816 that he entrenched the blame and shame onto subsequent generations.⁷⁶⁴ Historians writing in the nationalist tradition like Giraud, Stanley and W.L. Morton perpetuated this tradition, suggesting that the events of 1816 foreshadowed the resistances of 1869-70 and 1885 when the Métis led by Louis Riel would resist the imposition of Canadian authority in the North West before the local residents were consulted.⁷⁶⁵

The racist attitudes of nineteenth century writers like Ross influenced the historical writing on the Métis into the twentieth century. Marcel Giraud employed the hierarchical view of human development that was in intellectual vogue in his era (1930s), arguing that Métis were morally degenerate and their nationalism was flawed because outsiders (the North West partners)

⁷⁶⁴ Alexander Ross, *The Red River Settlement: Its Rise, Progress, and Present State*, London, 1856. Republished by Helen Doherty, Winnipeg: 1984. Ross included a "List of casualties...the violent or sudden death of no less than 26 out of the 65 who composed the party" at Seven Oaks; p. 37-40, but there are some errors. #5: Battosh, shot dead by an unknown hand in Red River Colony. This probably refers to young Battoche Letendre, the son of Jean Baptiste Letendre, who complained about the death of his son to James Bird at Carlton, House, HBCA: B.27/a/6: December 14, 1816. Battoche was the only Métis killed and young Joseph Trottier was the only Métis wounded. Ross suggests that there was an element of spiritual retribution in the violent ends of these men rather than conflicts with the Dakota/Sioux or other more logical reasons. He thus equates the Presbyterian idea of fate and retribution on the side of the Scottish. This theme was popular with 19th and 20th century historians.

⁷⁶⁵ M.A. MacLeod & W.L Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1963: "In this organization [of the buffalo hunt], lay the strength which was to make them the decisive element in Red River in the rebellions of 1849 and 1869, under the elder and the younger Riel.... What [Grant] had done was to shape, for the livelihood and defence of his people and Red River, the instrument the Riels were to use to win self-government for the Métis and for Manitoba." Here MacLeod and Morton link the events of 1816 with the Free Trade Movement of 1849 and the Riel Resistance.

had spurred it.⁷⁶⁶ Giraud's view of the hierarchy of races influenced later Canadian historians like W.L. Morton who described the organization of the buffalo hunt with its elected captains "a primitive but effective government."⁷⁶⁷ Although Giraud dismissed Métis nationalism as weak when Selkirk arrived in 1817 with his Des Meurons troops, it would be better to suggest that Métis nationalism did not fail in the face of military opposition, but realistically the *Bois Brulés* realized that they might not have military superiority against Selkirk's mercenary soldiers.

Cuthbert Grant's supporters had wisely resisted Nor'Wester orders to attack Selkirk's troops as they proceeded westward from Fort William. The Métis explained in depositions to Commissioner Coltman that they felt coerced and threatened into acting in the North West Company interests. While they downplayed their nationalistic tendencies when faced with arrest, the songs of Pierre Falcon, the bard of the prairies, suggested that the conflict with the HBC did inspire Metis nationalism and it was undoubtedly stronger in the decades after the conflict, spurred on by the resentment and clannishness of the Scotch settlers. It is clear that the Métis chose to separate themselves from both Indians and whites in response to the racism they encountered both in the fur trade companies and in the Red River Settlement itself.

⁷⁶⁶ Marcel Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*, vol. 1: 475: "The Fragility and the Fate of Metis Nationalism:the North Westers had been obliged constantly to stimulate among the Métis a feeling of national pride that was always ready to flicker or even to go out." Giraud linked the weakness of Métis nationalism and will to their moral degeneracy resulting from miscegeneation, a human hybrid incapable of the cultural development of other national groups. This style of historical interpretation was an off-shoot of the scientific racism of 19th century authors.

⁷⁶⁷ M. MacLeod and W.L. Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963: 113. Generally it should be acknowledged that MacLeod and Morton's treatment of Cuthbert Grant is generally fair and their biggest defect is in the use of lurid adjectives.

The first years of the colony showed that the freemen and their families wanted to be settlers and saw the establishment of the Selkirk Colony as threatening to their interests only when they were not treated respectfully for their expertise and their customs by the colonial leaders like Miles McDonell, Colin Robertson and Robert Semple.⁷⁶⁸ As Miles McDonell wrote in 1814: "About 12 free Canadians came today in a body to learn the terms on which they can have land. They conclude chiefly on taking lower lots."⁷⁶⁹ These comments do not describe the wild nomads of the plains portrayed by later authors.⁷⁷⁰ They wanted to be settlers and join the colony as long as their rights and self-worth were respected. This did not happen until after 1821 and the union of the two fur trade rivals.

⁷⁶⁸ MacLeod and Morton: 75-76. When Grant and Shaw ambused Colin Robertson at Grand Rapids in 1819, and Robertson made a sarcastic remark about the "murderers of Red River" employed in the execution of an arrest warrant, Grant shouted: "Don't insult the half-breeds, or I'll shoot you!" The authors suggested that Grant was defending the honour of the Métis as a group rather than defending himself.

⁷⁶⁹ PAM, Selkirk Papers, p. 16892, Miles' MacDonell's journal at Fort Daer, April 12, 1814.

⁷⁷⁰ For example, when the Long Expedition arrived at Pembina August 6, 1823, to survey the border between Canada and the USA, the expedition's scientist, William Keating, gave a detailed description of the Pembina Métis. While it was somewhat laudatory in its description, he also ascribed features of scientific racism to this group, suggesting that they "do not appear to possess the qualifications for good settlers; few are farmers; most are Halfbreeds who have been educated by their Indian mothers, have imbibed the roving, unsettled and indolent habit of Indians...have acquired no small share of cunning and artifice. These form at least 2/3 of the male inhabitants. The rest consist of Swiss and Scotch settlers....as unfit for agriculture pursuits as the Halfbreeds themselves." Keating also concluded his scientific observations of humans of mixed background by suggesting: "experience shows that men addicted to hunting never can make good farmers." Many Canadian historians shared this view. See William Keating, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River*, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1959: II: 39.

After 1821, the leader of the newly-organized HBC, George Simpson, accommodated the desire of these Métis freemen to become settlers and take up river lots along with the immigrants because it was desirable to build up the population of the settlement rather than have them scattered in small communities around Rupert's Land or south of the 49th parallel at Pembina . One reason was the danger of Indian attacks and the other was that the HBC did not want the freemen trading outside the control of the company, especially at Pembina which was found to be in the USA. Consequently, the HBC pressured the Roman Catholic mission and the Pembina Métis to move to the new parish of St. Francois-Xavier with Cuthbert Grant.

Many did not move and continued to lobby for priests from the USA as well as petty traders who could provide a market for their furs and pemmican. Thus, although the history of the Pembina Métis was not well documented in the 1820s and 1830s, it is obvious from hints in the fur trade and missionary sources that people continued to live at Pembina, as the earliest settlers in the area, despite the fact that the area was politically unorganized and they had no way to obtain title to their lands.

It was during this period after 1821 when the Jeromes and the Collins moved to the Red River Settlement and linguists suggest that this large migration of unemployed voyageurs brought the dominant Cree influence to Red River. Up to this point, many of the Pembina freemen had married Ojibwe women and that was probably the mother tongue of their children, but the linguistic analysis of Michif suggests that its origins were French and Cree, suggesting that the people from the North West such as the Jerome and Letendres brought the Cree influence with them and it became the dominant culture of the Red River until Confederation. The Ojibwe

language which probably dominated the lower Red River fur trade from the 1780s to 1821 lost ground to Cree, the *lingua franca* of the fur trade.⁷⁷¹

So what about the origins of the Red River Métis? Peter Bakker's study of Michif suggests that it was a very old language and he speculated that it developed in the buffalo hunters camps of the freemen in the 1840s or possibly as early as the 1820s, but my study suggests that it was much earlier, in the camps of the French Canadian freemen along the border of the plains and parkland at places like Fort des Prairies, Cumberland and Carlton, Qu'Appelle and Brandon as well as Pembina which was located in the late 1700s where the Cree and Ojibwe met as the Ojibwe moved west.

John Foster was on the right track when he suggested that the freemen culture began with the French Canadian voyageurs who married native women and became "Indianized Frenchmen". That was the first step and a trader like Francois Jerome is a good example. The second step occurred with the next generation of children who grew up in a multilingual environment where French and Cree were of fairly equal importance.⁷⁷² This must have been in places where the freemen lived separate from Indians and whites on the plains, but near a post where there were large numbers of French speakers, so that the children heard both Cree and French often.

While it appears as if Pierre Jerome did not have an Indian mother if he was born in Quebec, he lived along the Saskatchewan River for most of his life and worked as a Cree

⁷⁷¹ Peter Bakker, *A Language of Our Own: The Genesis of Michif, the Mixed Cree-French Language of the Canadian Métis*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

⁷⁷² Linguist Robert Pappen, personal communication, Kingston, Algonquian Conference, October 2002.

interpreter for the Montreal-based companies. By the time of the third generation, with Martin Jerome Sr. and Samart Jr., they were probably already speaking a mixed language of French/Cree with their buddies of similar background as Martin Jr. did with Jean Baptiste Letendre Jr. So by the 1820s when Jerome and Letendres moved to Red River, the Michif language was already commonly used in certain areas outside of Red River, and the social divisions of the settlement, between HBC and NWC, or later between Protetants and Catholics, continued the impression to the Métis that they were outside the social structure of the settlement and a language which they used among themselves, French/Cree or Michif, continued to play a useful role in identifying their separate ethnic identity.

The fact that Bungee, a dialect of Cree and English, also emerged in the 19th century, suggests that the Orkney freemen and their mixed-blood children considered themselves a separate ethnic group from the French Métis. My own encounters with descendants of these British Protestant Aborigines suggest that most of them did not adopt the term “métis” until the last twenty or thirty years, i.e. the late 20th century. If some Orkney freemen did desert or retire outside of the HBC structure, they either settled in the British Protestant parishes of Red River or intermarried with the French Catholics and became part of the buffalo hunting culture, which ended up as the lower end of the Red River social structure.

As a result, the culture of the French Canadian freemen and buffalo hunters dominated the buffalo camps and the mixed-bloods who joined them probably learned Michif. For example, people like Peter Erasmus who grew up in Red River did not learn buffalo hunting from his

family, but as an adult after he left home and made a living on the plains.⁷⁷³ When the unemployed servants of the HBC migrated to Red River from northern posts after 1821, they had to learn the plains skills of the plainsmen, like the immigrant colonists, and to some extent religion and their British background kept many of them separate from the Michif buffalo hunters. This resulted in some conflict later in the history of the settlement.⁷⁷⁴

My theory is that Michif was the dominant language of the buffalo hunters' camps and the story of the Jerome family on the Saskatchewan suggests that it developed much earlier than linguists had postulated i.e. not in the 1840s, but the late 1700s.⁷⁷⁵ As a result, the ethnic markers of a mixed culture evident in the Great Lakes was also happening in the North West and the special conditions of the colony and the fur trade war brought the new identity to articulation as "The New Nation" in 1816. It is through genealogy and the back tracing of family trees that historians can pinpoint when Métis ancestors arrived in Red River, the role they played in the fur trade and the cultural influences they experienced.

The stories of people like the Jerome and the Collins, the Letendres and the Bottineaux, help pinpoint the process of ethnogenesis more precisely and identify names of the lower level voyageurs whose descendants became the Pembina Métis. This group developed in the crucible of the Red River Valley at Pembina and it is exciting to document the fact that some of their

⁷⁷³ Peter Erasmus, *Buffalo Days and Nights*, Calgary: Fifth House Publishers for Glenbow Institute: 1999.

⁷⁷⁴ See the work of Frits Pannekoek, *A Snug Little Flock: The Social Origins of the Riel Resistance of 1869-70*, Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1991.

⁷⁷⁵ Without written examples of Michif, it is difficult to document the history of the language. Some names, such as "Jarlee" for Desjarlais and "Auzee" for Auger suggest a Michif accent in the late 1700s.

descendants, like the Jeromes, have lived in the valley and can trace their roots back to the Pembina fur trade over two hundred years ago. Even though they could not document their history themselves or get title to their river lots, they left a legacy in their families, their descendants and their culture, making them the earliest settlers of the Red River Valley on both sides of the border.

Their Métis descendants did not want their ancestors to be known as merely “part-Indian nomads” of the western plains. People like Edward Jerome and his relatives wanted to know the story of where they came from as accurately as possible. When their relatives told them they came from the North West, they were right as the oral tradition reflected their migration from the Saskatchewan River to the Red River Valley and into North Dakota and Minnesota. Through historical research, the Pembina Métis can reclaim their history which was based in the Canadian fur trade in Rupert’s Land.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Archival Sources

Archives Nationales du Québec à Montréal - Voyageur Contracts.

British Museum, London: *Jonathon Carver Manuscript*.

Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Account Books

NWC Account Book: Messrs. John Sayer & Co., 1795, F.4/1

NWC Account Book: Red River & Lac Ouinipic Equipment Book, 1820, F.4/22.

NWC Account Book: Fort William & St. Mary's, F.4/25.

NWC Account Book, 1811-12, F.4/32.

NWC Account Book: Servants Accounts, 1821, F.4/40.

NWC Account Book: Fort des Prairies Equipment Book, 1821, F.4/41.

Pembina Accounts, B.160/d/1-6, 1811-1857.

Red River and Lac Ouinipic Equipment Book, B. 235/d/2a.

Censuses: E5.1, E.5/2; E.5/3; E.5/5. Red River Settlement.

Correspondence Inward from Albany to York, A.11/2, 1749.

District Reports

Edmonton House, B.60/e/2, 1816.

Fort Carlton, B.27/e/2, 1818-19.

Fort William, B.231/e/5.

York Factory, B.239/e/1, 1815.

Post Journals

Brandon House, B.22/a/1-5: 1793-98. B.22/a/19, 1815-16.

Carlton House, B.27/a/6, 11-12, 1816-17, 1821-23.

Fort William, B.231/a/4, 1817-18; B.231/a/16-17; 1836-38.

Lac La Pluie, B.105/a/4, 1796-97.

Pembina, B.160/a/1-4, 1808-1813.

Point au Foutre, (Fort Alexander) B.4/a/2, 1798-99.

Severn House, B.198/a/10, 1767-68.

Winnipeg [Pembina], B.235/a/1-2, 1797-1800.

Winnipeg, B.235/a/3, 1814-15, Peter Fidler's Journal.

Winnipeg, B.235/a/5, 1822.

York Factory, B.239/a/56-61, 1766-69.

York Factory, B.239/a/69: 1772-73.

Miscellaneous

F.3/2 - NWC Correspondence, 1800-27.

E.8/5.- Red River Settlement Papers Re: Disturbances, 1815-19.

Search files

Gerome [sic] family.

John Newton, Master at York Factory, 1749.
Pembina - notes on Thomas Miller.

McGill University, Redpath Library:

Masson Collection, Alexander Henry's Trip to the Mandans.
North West Company Collection: George Monk Papers.

Minnesota Historical Society.

Axel Lindegard Photograph Collection
Voyageur Contracts in *Rapports de l'Archiviste du Québec*
Grace Lee Nute correspondence
Calhoun Diary

National Archives of Canada, Ottawa (NAC).

RG 15:, v. 1505, General Index to Manitoba & NWT Halfbreeds & Original White Settlers, 1885.
Department of Interior: Affidavits for Half-breed Scrip.

Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg (PAM).

McLeod, John Journal.
Fort William Collection.
Provincial Police: District of Assiniboia, General Quarterly Court, Sheriff's Book.
Selkirk Papers, copy of copy in NAC. Originals burned in house fire in Scotland.
Rev. Charles Bourke's Journal.
Alexander Macdonell's Journal.
Miles Macdonell's Journal.
Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, Fort William Journal, 1823-24.

Genealogy Sources

Archives Nationales du Québec (ANQ)

Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec (RAPQ).

Chesebro, James W., *A Genealogy of the Ancestors and Descendants of Pierre Bottineau*, compiled by the author, Annadale, Virginia, 1989.

Father William Maurice, Ste. Anne's Church, Fort William First Nation, Thunder Bay.

Jetté, René, *Dictionnaire Généalogique des familles du Québec des origines à 1730*, Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1983.

Morin, Gail, ed., *Manitoba Scrip*, published by the author, Rhode Island.

Société Historique de Saint Boniface (SHSB)

Family Genealogies.
 Father Picton's notes.
 Parish Files.
 Computer notes on Halfbreed Affidavits: alphabetical lists.

Sprague, D.N. & R.P. Frye, *Genealogy of the First Métis Nation*, Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983.

Tanguay, C., *Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles Canadiennes*, Montreal: 1887.

Published Primary Sources

Bardon Richard & Grace Lee Nute, ed., "A Winter in the St. Croix Valley, 1802-03"; George Nelson's Reminiscences, *Minnesota History* 18:1: 1-14; 2: 142-159; and 3: 225-240, 1947.

Birk, Douglas, ed., *John Sayer's Snake River Journal, 1804-1805: A Fur Trade Diary from East Central Minnesota*, Minneapolis: Institute for Minnesota Archaeology, 1989.

Carver, Jonathan, *The Journals of Jonathan Carver & Related Documents, 1766-1770*, ed. John Parker, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1976.

Cox, Ross, *Adventures in the Columbia River*, London 1831, v. 2.

Harmon, Daniel, *Sixteen Years in the Indian Country*, ed. W.K. Lamb, Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1957.

Henry, Alexander the Elder, *Travels & Adventures in Canada & the Indian Territories*, Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig, 1809.

Henry, Alexander, the Younger, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry*, ed. Elliott Coues, first edition 1897, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1965, two volumes.

Henry, Alexander, *The Journal of Alexander Henry the Younger: 1799-1814*, ed. Barry Gough, Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1988, two volumes.

Gates, C.M., *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1965.

Keating, William, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River, Lake Winnipeek, Lake of the Woods, etc.*, first edition 1824, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1959.

Kohl, Johann Georg Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway*, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1985.

- Lart, Charles, ed., "Fur Trade Returns", *Canadian Historical Review*, v. 3, 1922: 351-358.
- Long, Stephen, *The Northern Expeditions of Stephen H. Long*, ed. L. Kane, June Holmquist & Carolyn Gilman, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1978.
- Mackenzie, Alexander, *The Journals & Letters of Sir Alexander Mackenzie*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- Masson, L.R., ed., *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, first edition: 1889-90, New York Antiquarian Press, 1960, two volumes.
- Nute, Grace Lee, *Documents Relative to Northwest Missions, 1815-1827*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1942.
- Perrault, Jean-Baptiste, *Jean-Baptiste Perrault, marchand, voyageur, parti de Montreal le 28e de mai 1783*, ed. Louis Cormier, Montreal: Boreal Express, 1978.
- Report to the House of Commons, *Papers Relating to the Red River Settlement, 1815-1819*, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND) Collections, v. 4.
- Rich, E.E., and H. Fleming, *Colin Robertson's Correspondence Book, 1817-1822*, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1939.
- Ross, Alexander, *The Red River Settlement: Its Rise, Progress, & Present State*, London: 1856; republished by Helen Doherty, Manitoba, 1984.
- Selkirk, Thomas Douglas, Lord, *The Collected Writings of Lord Selkirk: 1810-1820*, ed. Jack Bumsted, Winnipeg: Manitoba Record Society, 1987.
- Tanner, John, *The Narrative of the Captivity & Adventures of John Tanner*, ed. Edwin James, first edition 1830, Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1956: 62-63.
- Sage, Walter N., "Notes and Documents: Two NWC Documents", *CHR* 11: 1930: 129-131.
- Shanley, Rev. John, Bishop of Fargo, "The Founding of the Catholic church in North Dakota", Report of the North Dakota State Historical Society, NDSHS *Collections*, Bismarck: v. 2: Appendix: 3-34.
- Thompson, David, *David Thompson's Narrative: 1784-1812*, ed. Richard Glover, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1962.
- Woods Report, *House of Representatives Executive Document #51, 31st. Congress, 1st. Session, Washington, DC, USA.*

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Allaire, Gratien, "Charles Chaboillez, Sr.", *DCB* 5: 1983: 177-178.
- Allaire, Gratien, "Charles Chaboillez, Jr.", *DCB* 7: 1988: 178-9.
- Arthur, Elizabeth, *Thunder Bay District, 1821-1892, A Collection of Documents*, Toronto: Champlain Society, University of Toronto Press, 1973.
- Axtell, James, *The Invasion within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America*, Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Backhouse, Constance, *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada: 1900-1950*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- Baker, Lee, *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1998.
- Bakker, Peter, *A Language of Our Own: The Genesis of Michif, the Mixed Cree-French Language of the Canadian Métis*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Battiste, Marie & James Youngblood Henderson, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage, A Global Challenge*, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Purish Publishing, 2000.
- Bieder, Robert, "Scientific Attitudes Toward Mixed-Bloods in Early 19th Century America", *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 8: 2, 1980: 17-20.
- Bieder, Robert, *Science Encounters the Indians, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986.
- Bieder, Robert, "The Representations of Indian Bodies in 19th Century American Anthropology", *American Indian Quarterly* 20: 2: Spring 1996: 165-179.
- Birk, Douglas, "John Sayer & the Fond du Lac Trade: The NWC in Minnesota & Wisconsin", *Rendezvous: Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981: Grand Portage & Old Fort William*, ed. Thomas Buckley, 1981: 51-61.
- Birk, Douglas, "John Sayer", *DCB* 5: 1983: 814.
- Bishop, Charles, *The Northern Ojibwa and the Fur Trade: An Historical and Ecological Study*, Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Canada, 1974.

- Blain, Eleanor, "The Bungee Dialect of the Red River Settlement", MA thesis, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1989.
- Boas, Franz, *Race, Language and Culture*, Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada, 1894: 138-148.
- Bolus, Malvina, "The Son of I. Gunn", *The Beaver* 302:3, Winter 1971: 23-26.
- Bontemps, Arna, ed., *Five Black Lives*, Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1971.
- Brasser, Ted, "Bo'jou, Neejee!" *Profiles of Canadian Indian Art*, Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1976.
- Brasser, Ted, "In search of métis art", *The New Peoples: Being & Becoming Métis in North America*, J. Peterson & J. Brown, eds., Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985: 221-230.
- Brown, Jennifer, *Strangers in Blood*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1980.
- Brown, Jennifer, "Woman as Centre & Symbol in the Emergence of Métis Communities", *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3: 1983: 39-46.
- Brown, Jennifer, "Diverging Identities: The Presbyterian Metis of St. Gabriel Street, Montreal", *The New Peoples: Being & Becoming Metis in North America*, ed. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer Brown, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985: 195-206.
- Brown, Jennifer, "Duncan Cameron", *DCB* v. 7: 1988: 139.
- Brown, Jennifer, "A Parcel of Upstart Scotchmen", *The Beaver*, February/March 1988: 4-11.
- Brown, Jennifer, "Ethnohistorians: Strange Bedfellows, Kindred Spirits", *Ethnohistory* 38: 2, Spring 1991: 113-123.
- Brown, Jennifer, "Fur Trade as Centrifuge": Familial Dispersal & Offspring Identity in Two Company Contexts, *North American Indian Anthropology*, ed. Raymond De Mallie & Alonzo Ortiz, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1995: 197-219.
- Brown, Jennifer, "Partial Truths: A Closer Look at Fur Trade Marriage", *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed. T. Binnema, Gerhard Ens, and R.C. Macleod, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 59-81.

- Brumble, H. David, *American Indian Autobiography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
- Burley, Edith, *Servants of the Honourable Company*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Camp, Gregory, "The Chippewa Fur Trade in the Red River Valley of the North, 1790-1830", in *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, ed. Virginia Heidenreich, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1990:33-46.
- Camp, Gregory, "Commerce & Conflict: A History of Pembina, 1797-1895", *North Dakota History*, v. 60:4.
- Campbell, Susan, *Living & Working at the Fort*, Fort William Archaeological Project, Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Culture & Recreation, 1976.
- Champagne, Antoine, "Louis Joseph Gaultier de la Vérendrye", *DCB* v. 3: 242.
- Champagne, Antoine, "Pierre Gaultier de la Vérendrye, Jr.", *DCB* v. 3: 244-245.
- Champagne, Lynne, "Jean-Baptiste Lagimonière", *DCB* v. 8: 534-535 (French edition).
- Cherry, Conrad, ed., *God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Clarke, Margaret, *Reconstituting the Fur Trade Community of the Assiniboine Basin: 1793-1812*, MA Thesis, University of Winnipeg, 1997.
- Clifford, James & George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics & Politics of Ethnography*, Berkeley: University of Manitoba Press, 1986.
- Clifford, James, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Clifton, James A., *Being and Becoming Indian: Biographical Studies of North American Frontiers*, Chicago: The Dorsey Press, 1989.
- Coutts, Robert, *The Forks of the Red & Assiniboine: A Thematic History, 1734-1850*, Report #383, Winnipeg: Parks Canada, n.d.: p. 85, citing the article of C.N. Bell, *The Old Forts of Winnipeg*, Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba.
- Coutts, Robert, *The Road to the Rapids*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2000.
- Coutts, Robert & Richard Stuart, eds., *The Forks & the Battle of Seven Oaks in Manitoba*

History, Winnipeg: Manitoba Historical Society, 1994.

Craig, Joan, "John Newton", *DCB* v. 3: 482-483.

Dabney, Virginius, *The Jefferson Scandals*, New York: Dodd, Mead, 1981.

Danziger, Edmund, *The Chippewas of Lake Superior*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978.

Deloria, Vine, Jr., "Comfortable Fictions and the Struggle for Turf: An Essay Review of *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies*", *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing About American Indians*, ed. Devon Mihesuah, 1998: 65-83.

De Roche, Constance, "Exploring Genealogy", *Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects for Ethnographic Data Collection*, ed. Michael Antrosino, Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press.

De Trémaudan, A.H., *Hold High Your Heads (History of the Métis Nation in Western Canada)*, translated by Elizabeth Maguet, Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1936, 1982.

Devine, Heather, "Les Desjarlais: The Development & Dispersion of a Proto-Métis Hunting Band, 1785-1870", *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 129-158.

Dick, Lyle, "The Seven Oaks Incident & the Construction of a Historical Tradition: 1816-1970", *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 1991: 91-113.

Dickason, Olive, "From 'One Nation' in the Northeast to 'New Nation' in the Northwest: A Look at the Emergence of the Métis" in *The New Peoples*, ed. Peterson & Brown, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985: 19-36.

Dickason, Olive, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992.

Dugast, I.; Abbé G. Dugast, *The First Canadian Woman in the Northwest*, Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba, #62, Winnipeg: 1901.

Duckworth, "The Last Coureurs de Bois", *The Beaver*, Spring: 1984: 4-12.

Ens, Gerhard, "After the Buffalo: The Reformation of the Turtle Mountain Métis Community,

1879-1905" in *New Faces of the Fur Trade: Halifax Fur Trade Conference, 1995*, ed. Jo-Anne Fiske, Susan Sleeper-Smith & William Wicken, East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1998: 139-152.

Ens, Gerhard, *From Homeland to Hinterland*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.

Fabian, Johannes, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

Fierst, John, "Return to Civilization: John Tanner's Troubled Years at Sault Ste. Marie", *Minnesota History*: 36: Spring 1986: 23-36.

Fierst, John, "Strange Eloquence: Another Look at the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner", in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*, ed. Jennifer S.H. Brown & Elizabeth Vybert, Toronto: Broadview Press, 1996: 220-241.

Fleischner, Jennifer, *Mastering Slavery: Memory, Family and Identity in Women's Slave Narratives*, New York: New York University Press, 1996.

Foster, John, "The Métis: The People & the Term", *Prairie Forum* 3:1, 1978:

Foster, John, "Some Questions & Perspectives on the problem of métis roots", *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985: 73-91.

Foster, John, "The Plains Metis", in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, ed. Bruce Morrison & Roderick Wilson, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986:375-403.

Foster, John, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Metis", *Prairie Forum* 19:1: Spring 1994: 1-13.

Francis, Daniel, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*, Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1993.

Friesen, Gerald, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984.

Friesen, Gerald, "The Imagined West" in *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed. Theodore Binnema, Gerhard Ens, & R.C. Macleod, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 195-200.

Gaffield, Chad, "Theory and Method in Canadian Historical Demography" in *Clio's Craft: A Primer of Historical Methods*, ed. Terry Crowley, Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1988.

- Gilman, Carolyn, *Where Two Worlds Meet*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1982.
- Gilman, Carolyn, *The Grand Portage Story*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1992.
- Gilman, Rhoda, Carolyn Gilman & Deborah Stultz, *The Red River Trails: Oxcart routes between St. Paul & the Selkirk Settlement: 1820-1870*, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1979.
- Giraud, Marcel, "A Note on the Half Breed Problem in Manitoba", *Canadian Journal of Economics & Political Science* 3: 1937: 541-9.
- Giraud, Marcel, *The Métis in the Canadian West*, translated by George Woodcock, Edmonton, University of Alberta Press, 1986, 2 volumes.
- Goulet, Agnès, *Marie-Anne Gaboury: Une femme dépareillée*. Sainte Boniface: Editions des Plaines, 1989.
- Grant, John Webster, *Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries & the Indians of Canada in Encounter Since 1534*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984.
- Innis, Harold, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1930, 1984.
- Hallowell, A.I., *Contributions to Anthropology: Selected Papers of A. Irving Hallowell*, ed. Raymond D. Fogelson, Fred Eggan, Melford Spiro, George Stocking Anthony Wallace and Wilcomb Washburn, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.
- Hamilton, Scott, *The Social Organization of the Hudson's Bay Company: Formal and Informal Social Relations in the Context of the Inland Fur Trade*, MA Thesis, University of Alberta, 1985.
- Hartman, Sheryl, *Indian clothing of the Great Lakes, 1740-1840*, published by author, 1988.
- Harris, Cole & Geoffrey Matthews, eds., *Historical Atlas of Canada*, vol. 1, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.
- Harrison, Julia, *Métis: People Between Two Worlds*, Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985.
- Healey, W.J., *Women of Red River*, Winnipeg: Women's Canadian Club, 1923.
- Hickerson, Harold, "The Genesis of a Trading Post Band: The Pembina Chippewa", *Ethnohistory* 3:4, Fall 1956: 289-345.

Hickerson, Harold, "The Journal of Charles Jean Baptiste Chaboillez, 1797-98", *Ethnohistory* 6: Summer 1959: 265-316; and 6:4: Fall 1959: 363-426.

Hickerson, Harold, *The Chippewa & their Neighbours: A Study in Ethnohistory*, Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1970. New edition ed. Laura Peers & Jennifer Brown, 1988.

Historical Atlas of Canada, v. 1, Cole Harris & Geoffrey Matthews, eds., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.

Historic Resources Branch, *The Fur Trade in the Scratching River Region*, Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Winnipeg.

Historic Resources Branch, *Pierre Falcon*, Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1984.

Howard, James H., *The Plains Ojibwa or Bungi*, reprinted through the University of South Dakota, Vermilion, S.D., 1977.

Howard, Joseph Kinsey, *Strange Empire*, Toronto: James Lewis & Samuel, Toronto: 1952, 1974.

In collaboration [sic], "Peter Pangman", *DCB* v. 5: 656-657.

Innis, Harold, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1930, 1984.

Jacobs, Harriett, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Jenkins, Keith, *The Post-Modern Reader*, London: Routledge, 1997.

Jennings, Francis, "A Growing Partnership: Historians, Anthropologists and American Indian History", *Ethnohistory* 29: #1: 1982: 21-34.

Joseph, Alvin, *The Artist was a Young Man: The Life Story of Peter Rindisbacher*, Fort Worth, Texas: Amon Carter Museum, 1970.

Judd, Carol, "Native labour & Social Stratification in the HBC's Northern Department, 1770-1870", *Canadian Review of Sociology & Anthropology* 17:4: 1980: 305-314.

Kay, Jeanne, "The American Fur Company & the Decline of the Green Bay Trade", *Rendezvous: Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981*, Thomas Buckley, ed., 1981: 73-82.

- Kaye, Barry, "Birsay Village on the Assiniboine", *The Beaver* Winter 1981:18-21.
- Kaye, Barry & John Alwin, "The Beginnings of Wheeled Transport in Western Canada", *Great Plains Quarterly*, Spring 1984: 121-134.
- Keesing, Roger, "Young Dick Attack: Oral and Documentary History on the Colonial Frontier", *Ethnohistory* 33: #3, summer 1986.
- Kelsch, Anne, "Bringing Crofters and Clans to the Red River Valley", *North Dakota History* v. 63:1, Winter 1996: 21-32.
- Kent, Timothy, *Birch Bark Canoes of the Fur Trade*, published by author, 1997.
- Krech, Shepard, III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1999.
- Kuper, Adam, *The Invention of Primitive Society: Transformations of an Illusion*, London: Routledge, 1988.
- L'Abbé Georges Dugast, *The First White Woman in the Northwest*, Winnipeg: Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba, trans. 62, 1902.
- La Vérendrye, Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de, *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye and his Sons*, ed. L.J. Burpee, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1927.
- L'Association des artisans de ceinture fléchée de Lanaudière, *Histoire et origines de la ceinture fléchée traditionnelle, dite de l'Assomption*, Sillery, Quebec, Editions du Septentrion, 1994.
- LaRocque, Emma, "Native Identity and the Metis: Otepayimsuak Peoples" in *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st Century*, ed. David Tars & Beverley Rasporich, Canada: Nelson Thomas Learning Centre, 2001.
- LaVallée, Guy, "The Michif French Language: Historical Development and Métis Group Identity and Solidarity at St. Laurent, Manitoba", *Native Studies Review* 7, #1, 1991: 81-93.
- Lepore, Jill, "Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography", *Journal of American History*, v. 88: #1: June 2001: 129-144.
- Lewis, Malcolm, "Indian Maps: their Place in the History of Plains Cartography", *Great Plains Quarterly*, 4: Spring 1984: 91-108.
- Lewis, Malcolm, "La Grande Rivière et Fleuve de l'Ouest: The Realities and Reasons Behind a

Major Mistake in the 18th Century Geography of North America", *Cartographica* #1, Spring 1991: 54-87.

L'Heureux, Jacques, "Hugues Heney", *DCB* v. 7: 1988: 393-4.

Lussier, A.S., *Louis Riel and the Métis*, Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1979.

Lytwyn, Victor, *The Fur Trade in the Little North*, Winnipeg: Rupert's Land Research Centre, University of Winnipeg, 1986.

MacEwan, Grant, *Marie Anne: The Frontier Spirit of Marie Anne Lagimodière*, Saskatoon: Western Producer Books, 1984.

Maclaren, I.S., "Paul Kane and the Authorship of *Wandering of an Artist*", in *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed. T. Binnema. Gerhard Ens, & R.C. Macleod, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 225-248.

Macleod, M.A. & W.L. Morton, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963.

Madill, Dennis, "Riel, Red River and Beyond: New Developments in Métis History" in *New Directions in American Indian History*, ed. Colin Calloway, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992: 49-78.

Martin, Calvin, ed. *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Mays, Herbert J., "John McDonell", *DCB* v. 7: 557-8.

Mihesuah, Devon, "Commonality of Difference: American Indian Women and History" in *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998: 37-54.

Milloy, John, *The Plains Cree: Trade, Diplomacy and War: 1790 to 1870*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1900.

Morantz, Toby, "Old Texts, Old Questions: Another Look at the Issue of Continuity and the Early Fur Trade Period", *Canadian Historical Review* 73:2, 1992: 166-193.

Morgan, Lewis Henry, *The Indian Journals: 1859-62*, ed. Leslie A. White, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959: 120-130.

Morrison, Jean, "Peter Grant", *DCB* v. 7: 1988: 356-7.

- Morrison, Jean, *Superior Rendezvous Place: Fort William in the Canadian Fur Trade*, Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2001.
- Morrison, R.B. & C. Roderick Wilson, eds. , *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986.
- Morton, A.S., "Forrest Oakes, Charles Boyer, Joseph Fulton and Peter Pangman in the North West, 1765-1793", *Transactions, Royal Society of Canada (TRSC)*, 1937: 87-100.
- Morton, A.S., *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1939.
- Morton, W.L., *Manitoba: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957, 1979.
- Morton, W.L. "Guillaume Sayer", *DCB* 7: 1988: 840-841.
- Nanda, Serena, "Using a Museum as a Resource for Ethnographic Research", in *Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects for Ethnographic Data Collection*, ed. Michael Angrosino, Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 2002.
- Nicks, John, "William Tomison", *DCB* v. 6: 775-7.
- Nicks, Trudy, "Mary Anne's Dilemma: The Ethnohistory of an Ambivalent Identity", *Canadian Ethnic Studies* XVIII, #2, 1985: 103-144.
- Note, Grace Lee, "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-Trading Area, 1660-1855", *Minnesota History* 11:4, 1930: 353-385.
- Pannekoek, Frits, "Historiography of the Red River Settlement: 1830-1868", *Prairie Forum*, v. VI, Spring 1981: 75-85.
- Pannekoek, Frits, *A Snug Little Flock: The Social Origins of the Riel Resistance of 1869-70*, Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1991.
- Pannekoek, Frits, "Metis Studies: The Development of a Field and New Directions", *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed.T. Binnema, Gerhard Ens & R.C. Macleod, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001: 111-128.
- Payment, Diane, "Jean Baptiste Letendre, dit Batoche", *DCB* v. 6:398.
- Payment, Diane, "*Les Gens libres - Otipemisiwak*": *Batoche, Saskatchewan: 1870-1930*, Parks Service, Environment Canada, Ottawa: 1990.

- Payment, Diane, "Plains Métis", in "Plains", v. 13, *Handbook of North American Indians*, Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 2001: 661-676.
- Peers, Laura, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1994.
- Pelletier, Jean-Guy, "Jean Baptiste Amable Adhémar", *DCB* v. 4: 5-8.
- Pentland, David, "Métchif and Bungi: Languages of the Fur Trade", Voices of Rupert's Land Colloquium, Linguistics, University of Manitoba, March 9, 1985.
- Peterson, Jacqueline, "Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis", *Ethnohistory* 25/1, Winter 1978: 41-67.
- Peterson, Jacqueline, "The People in Between: Indian-White Marriage and the Genesis of a Metis Society and Culture in the Great Lakes Region: 1680-1830", Ph.D. dissertation, Chicago: University of Chicago, Chicago Circle, 1981.
- Peterson, Jacqueline, "Ethnogenesis: The Settlement & Growth of a 'New People' in the Great Lakes Region, 1702-1815", *American Indian Culture & Research Journal* 6:2, 1982: 23-64.
- Peterson, Jacqueline & Jennifer S.H. Brown, *The New Peoples: Being & Becoming Métis in North America*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985.
- Peterson, Jacqueline, "Gathering at the River: The Métis Peopling of the Northern Plains", *The Fur Trade in North Dakota*, ed. Virginia L. Heidenreich, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1990: 47-64.
- Poyer, Lin, "History, Identity and Christian Evangelism: The Sapwuhfik Massacre", *Ethnohistory* 35: #3, Summer 1988.
- Pratt, Mary Louise, "Fieldwork in Common Places", in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, eds. James Clifford and George F. Marcus, University of California Press, 1986.
- Pritchett, John Perry, *The Red River Valley: 1811-1849*, New York: Russell & Russell: 1942, 1970.
- Ray, A.J., *Indians in the Fur Trade*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.
- Ray, A.J., "William Holmes", *DCB* v. 4: 365-366.
- Reardon, J.M., *George Anthony Belcourt, Pioneer Catholic Missionary of the North West*,

1803-1874, St. Paul: North Central Publishing Co., 1955.

Rich, E.E., *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870*, 3 volumes: London: Hudsons Bay Record Society, 1958-59.

Richling, Barnett, " 'Very Serious Reflections': Inuit Dreams about Salvation and Loss in Eighteenth Century Labrador", *Ethnohistory* 36: #2, Spring 1989: 148-169.

Ritterbush, Lauren, *The Fur Trade of Northeastern North Dakota: The 1990 Fur Trade Sites Project*, Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1991.

Ritterbush, Lauren, *Culture Change & Continuity: Ethnohistoric Analysis of Ojibwa & Ottawa Adjustment to the Prairies*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1990.

Ross, Eric, *Beyond the River & the Bay*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970.

Rowe, John Carlos, *Literary Cultural & U.S. Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, 2000.

Russell, Dale, *Eighteenth Century Western Cree and their Neighbours*, Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization: Archaeological Survey of Canada, Mercury Series Paper 143, 1991.

Said, Edward, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York, Knopf, 1993.

Said, Edward, *Out of Place: A Memoir*, New York: Knopf, 1999.

St. Onge, Nichole, "The Dissolution of a Metis Community: Point à Grouette, 1860-1885, *Studies in Political Economy* 18, 1985, 149-72.

St. Onge, Nicole, "Variations in Red River: The Traders and Freeman Metis of Saint Laurent, Manitoba", *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 24, 2: 1992: 149-72.

Sanjek, Roger, ed., *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990.

Schenck, Theresa, "The Cadottes: Five Generations of Fur Traders on Lake Superior", *The Fur Trade Revisited: Selected Papers of the Sixth North American Fur Trade Conference, Mackinac Island, Michigan, 1991*, ed. Jennifer Brown, W.J. Eccles & Donald P. Heldman, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, Mackinac Island: Mackinac State Historic Parks, 1994: 189-198.

Schenck, Theresa, *"The Voice of the Crane Echoes Far": the Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa: 1640-1855*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1997.

- Schoolcraft, Henry R., *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers: 1812-1842*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1851.
- Schwartz, Stuart B., ed., *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Shore, Fred, "The Origins of Métis Nationalism and the Pemmican Wars, 1780-1821", *The Forks & the Battle of Seven Oaks in Manitoba History*, ed. Robert Coutts & Richard Stuart, Winnipeg: Manitoba Historical Society, 1994.
- Siggins, Maggie, *Riel: A Life of Revolution*, Toronto: Harper Collins, 1994.
- Sioui, Georges, *Pour une autohistoire amérindienne: Essai sur les fondements d'une morale sociale*, Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1989. *For an Amerindian Autohistory: An Essay on the Foundations of a Social Ethic*. Translated by Sheila Fischman. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992.
- Sleeper-Smith, Susan, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press: 2001.
- Slobodin, Richard, "Subarctic Metis", *Handbook of North American Indians*, v. 6, ed. June Helm, Washington: Smithsonian Institution: 361-71.
- Sprague, D.N., *Canada and the Métis, 1869-1882*, Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1988.
- Stacey, C.P., "Fables and Foibles: History and the Human Animal", in *Clio's Craft: A Primer of Historical Methods*, Toronto: Copp, Clark Pitman, 1988:11-24.
- Stanley, George, "Marie-Anne Gaboury (Lagimodière)" *DCB* v. 10: 296-297.
- Starling, Marion Wilson, *The Slave Narrative: Its Place in American History*, Washington: Howard University Press, 1988.
- Stocking, George, ed., *Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983.
- Stocking, George, ed., *Colonial Situations: Essays on the Contextualization of Ethnographic Knowledge*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991.
- Stoler, Ann Laura, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Compaision in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies", *Journal of American History*, v. 88, #3: December

2001: 829-865.

Swan, Ruth, "*Ethnicity & the Canadianization of Red River Politics*", MA Thesis, Winnipeg: University of Winnipeg, 1991.

Swan, Ruth, "The Pembina Métis and the Myth of the Selkirk 'Visitors' ", paper delivered to the Northern Great Plains History Conference, Bismarck, N.D., September 25, 1997.

Swan, Ruth, "The Pembina Métis Cemetery: Conflicts and Partial Solutions", *Sacred Lands: Claims, Conflicts and Resolutions*, ed. Jill Oakes, Rick Riewe, Kathi Kinew, and Elaine Maloney, Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute, University of Alberta, 1998: 293-304.

Swan, Ruth & Edward A. Jerome, "The Collin Family at Thunder Bay: A Case Study of *Metissage*", *Papers of the 19th Algonquian Conference*, ed. David Pentland, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1998: 311-321.

Swan, Ruth & Edward A. Jerome, "The History of the Pembina Métis Cemetery: Inter-Ethnic Perspectives on a Sacred Site", *Plains Anthropologist* 44: 170, 1999: 81-94.

Swan, Ruth & Edward A. Jerome, "Unequal Justice: The Métis in O'Donoghue's Raid of 1871", *Manitoba History* 39, Spring/Summer 2000: 24-38.

Swan, Ruth & Edward A. Jerome, "A Mother & Father of Pembina: A NWC Voyageur Meets the Granddaughter of The Buffalo", *Actes du 32^{ème} Congrès des Algonquinistes*, ed. John Nichols, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba 2001: 527-551.

Swenson, Fern & Paul Picha, *Investigations at Dumoulin Mission & Cemetery Site (32PB100)*, Pembina County, N.D.: Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, October 1998.

Tanner, Helen Hornbeck, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986.

Tanner, Helen Hornbeck, "Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin (1903-1988), Founder of the American Society for Ethnohistory", *Ethnohistory* 38: #1: Winter 1991: 58-72.

Taylor, Robert and Ralph Crandall, eds. *Generations and Change: Genealogical Perspectives in Social History*, Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1986.

Taylor, Yuval, ed., *I Was Born a Slave: An Anthology of Classic Slave Narratives: v. 1: 1770-1849*, Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1999.

- Thistle, Paul, "The Twatt Family: 1780-1840: Amerindian, Ethnic Category or Ethnic Group Identity?", *Prairie Forum* 22: 2: Fall 1997: 193-212.
- Thomas, Audrey, *Isabel Gunn: A Novel*, Toronto: Viking Press, 1999.
- Tooker, Elizabeth, "Lewis H. Morgan and his Contemporaries", *American Anthropologist* 94: 1992: 357-375.
- Trigger, Bruce, "Ethnohistory: Problems and Prospects", *Ethnohistory* 29: 1982: 1-2.
- Trigger, Bruce, Toby Morantz & Louise Dechène, *Le Castor Fait Tout: Selected Papers of the Fifth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1985*: Montreal: Lake St. Louis Historical Society, 1987.
- Vachon, André, "Antoine Adhémar de Saint Martin", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography (DCB)*, v. 2: Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969: 10-11.
- Van Kirk, Sylvia, "*Many Tender Ties*": *Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670-1870*, Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1980.
- Van Kirk, Sylvia, "George Nelson's Wretched Career", in *Rendezvous: Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981*, ed. Thomas Buckley, Grand Portage & Old Fort William, 1984; published by the North American Fur Trade Conference, Saint Paul: 207-213.
- Van Kirk, Sylvia, "Towards a Feminist Perspective in Native History", *Papers of the 18th Algonquian Conference*, ed. William Cowan, Ottawa: Carlton University, 1987: 377-389.
- Vibert, Elizabeth, "'The Natives were Strong to Live': Reinterpreting Early Nineteenth Century Prophetic Movements in the Columbia Plateau", *Ethnohistory* 42: #2: Spring 1995.
- Voorhis, Ernest, *Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime*, Ottawa: Department of Natural Resources, Department of Interior, 1930.
- Vansina, Jan, *Oral Tradition as History*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.
- Wallace, Anthony, *Jefferson and the Indians, The Tragic Fate of the First Americans*, Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Wallace, W.S., *The Pedlars from Quebec*, Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954.
- Wallace, W.S., *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1968.

- Watts, Jim & Allen F. Davis, *Generations: Your Family in Modern American History*, New York:Knopf, 1978.
- Warren, William, *History of the Ojibway People*, Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1984.
- Williams, Glyndwr, "The Hudson's Bay Company and the Fur Trade, 1670-1870", *The Beaver*, Autumn 1983.
- Wheeler-Voegelin and Harold Hickerson, *The Red Lake and Pembina Chippewa*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1974.
- Wood, Raymond, & Thomas Thiessen, *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967.
- Wheeler-Voegelin, Erminie & Harold Hickerson, *The Red Lake and Pembina Chippewa*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1974.
- Whidden, Lynn, ed., *Metis Songs: Visiting was the Metis Way*, Regina: Gabriel Dumont Institute.
- White, Bruce, " 'Give Us a Little Milk': The Social & Cultural Meanings of Gift-Giving in the Lake Superior Fur Trade", *Minnesota History* 48:2, 1982:60-71.
- White, Bruce, "Montreal Canoes and their Cargoes", *Le Castor Fait Tout: Selected Papers of the Fifth North American Fur Trade Conference*, 1985, ed. Bruce Trigger, Toby Morantz & Louise Dechène, Lake St. Louis Historical Society, 1987.
- White, Bruce, "A Skilled Game of Exchange: Ojibway Fur Trade Protocol", *Minnesota History* 50:6:1987.
- White, Richard, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Williams, Glyndwr, "The Hudson's Bay Company and the Fur Trade: 1670-1870", *The Beaver*, Autumn 1983.
- Williams, Vernon, *Rethinking Race: Franz Boas and his Contemporaries*, University Press of Kentucky, 1996.
- Wyman, Walker, D., *The Chippewa: A History of the Great Lakes Woodland Tribe over Three Centuries*, University of Wisconsin-River Falls Press: 1993.
- Young, Robert, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*, London: Routledge, 1995.

Young, Kathryn & Gerald Friesen, "La Vérendrye & the French Empire in Western North America", in *River Road: Essays on Manitoba & Prairie History*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1996: 13-16.

Zoltvany, Yves, "Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography (DCB)*, v. 3: 1974: 24-254.

Videos and Music

Medicine Fiddle, Great Lakes Traditional Culture Film Series, Sociology Department, Northern Michigan University, n.d., Marquette, Michigan, USA.

Anne Lederman, *Old Native & Métis Fiddling in Manitoba*, record set, 1986, 1987.

Dictionaries

John D. Nichols & Earl Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.