

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY AND
THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY IN RUPERT'S LAND,
1821 TO 1860, WITH A CASE STUDY OF
STANLEY MISSION UNDER THE
DIRECTION OF THE REV.

ROBERT HUNT

by

N. JAYE GOOSSEN

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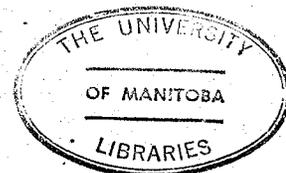
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INTRODUCTION

The history of the Canadian North-West is traditionally an account of the clash of the fur trade and "civilization." As E. H. Oliver so dramatically stated the case:

. . . Alexander Mackenzie was a dreamer. His dreams carried him far, to Arctic and Pacific, the full length of the River he himself named Disappointment but others named Mackenzie and across what were then the Stony Mountains. He had visions of a world-wide fur monopoly Selkirk, too, was a man of visions But Selkirk . . . was more interested in men than in beaver skins.¹

The fur trade is depicted as a primitive, loosely structured economic system unhindered by elaborate legal or social structure, a system which depended upon the migratory hunting life of the Indian inhabitants. In contrast, "civilization" represented a sedentary population requiring a more highly diversified economy, and a relatively elaborate legal and social organization for the regulation and protection of mutually interdependent people. In examining the "inexorable" advance of civilization and the "inevitable" retreat of the fur trade, it is customary to emphasize

¹E. H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Its Early Development and Legislative Records (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1914), Vol. I, p. 30.

the obvious conflict which occurred.² Certainly conflict is an important characteristic of the development of the North-West.

Into this traditional fur trade-civilization dichotomy both contemporaries and historians have placed their considerations of missionary activity in the North-West. Clearly missionaries, as active advocates of a Christian civilization, were an important part of the general development of a more complex society. More importantly, missionaries deliberately sought to civilize not only the European inhabitants but the aboriginal people of the fur trade empire. Because this posed a direct threat to the continuation of the fur hunter's way of life, it was feared by people with an economic interest in the trade.

During the years of monopoly, after the Deed Poll of 1821 which amalgamated the North-West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, until the transfer of land to Canada in 1870, the London-based Hudson's Bay Company was the major effective fur trade interest in the Canadian North-West. In that period one of the chief civilizing agents was the Church Missionary Society of the Church of England,

²This conflict is seen to characterize the internal dissension of the Hudson's Bay Company, Beckles Wilson, The Great Company (Toronto: Copp Clark Co. Ltd., 1899), p. 375; the development of Red River, John Parry Pritchett, The Red River Valley, 1811 - 1849 (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1942), p. 2; and expansion afield, John S. Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company as an Imperial Factor (Berkeley, University of California, 1957), p. 12.

the only missionary organization in the fur trade territory of Rupert's Land effectively directing its efforts to the conversion and settlement of the Indians.³ Fitting well into the customary framework of Western Canadian history, the relationship between these two monolithic London-based organizations has been characterized as one of conflict.

The image of the Hudson's Bay Company as an adversary of the Church Missionary Society is easily seen in the missionary and fur trade literature of the nineteenth century. As the most vociferously hostile of this society's agents expressed it,

³Missions in the North-West can be divided into several categories in terms of their ultimate purpose. Some missions were devoted to reinforcement or maintenance of European Christians removed from the centres of worship. Others were devoted to the conversion of pagan peoples to Christianity. Among the missions of conversion, some preferred to leave unaltered the aboriginal migratory way, while others aimed at reorganizing the converts into a sedentary village. The various missionary branches of the four churches active in the North-West may be classified within these categories. In the Church of England, there were three missionary societies in Rupert's Land, two of which, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, concentrated their efforts on missions of reinforcement among the Europeans. The third, The Church Missionary Society conducted missions of conversion and settlement. Two other Protestant Churches, the Presbyterian and the Methodist, each established one mission of conversion designed also to settle the converts, but neither mission lasted any length of time. The Roman Catholic Church preferred to maintain the migratory existence of its many Indian converts.

. . . in the Fur Trade are enemies to Christianity and Civilization. The Fur Trade can only be a lucrative concern while the inhabitants are in a state of barbarism.⁴

A fundamental conflict was also recognized by the traders, who cautioned that

The Fur trade and Civilization can never blend together, and experience teaches us that the former invariably gives way to the latter. Indians and Whites can never amalgamate together, and although every exertion may be made to secure the trade it seldom or ever proves profitable.⁵

It was in the eighteen-forties and fifties, however, that the Hudson's Bay Company faced extensive public accusations of less than humanitarian activities such as mistreatment of Indians and suppression of any efforts designed to ameliorate the condition of the Indian. A leader in these attacks was Alexander Kennedy Isbister, former Rupert's Land resident and Company servant, who left the Company's employ in 1841 to live in England.⁶ With

⁴Church Missionary Society Archives (hereafter CMS)/A78, William Cockran to Church Missionary Secretaries, Red River, 1 August, 1840.

⁵Peter Skene Ogden, as cited in Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company as an Imperial Factor, p. 12.

⁶H. C. Knox, "Alexander Kennedy Isbister," Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Series III, No. 12 (1957), 17 - 28. Born at Cumberland House, ca. 1822, he was the son of Thomas Isbister, an Orkney Island man, and Mary Kennedy, daughter of Chief Factor Alexander Kennedy. Isbister's maternal grandmother was an Indian woman. He went to Scotland for his early schooling, and then spent a few years in the Church Missionary Society School at Red River, before entering the Company's service. Upon leaving Rupert's Land, he embarked on a career of university studies, teaching and textbook writing.

some three years of fur trade experience and a pride in his Indian heritage, Isbister became a self-appointed spokesman, first for the Indian population and later for dissatisfied traders against the Hudson's Bay Company. In one series of communications to Earl Grey, secretary of state for the colonies, he argued that

What little has been done for the religious and moral improvement of the natives is wholly due to the persevering exertions of the Church Missionary Society, and since the year, 1839, of the Wesleyan Society in London. The Church Missionary Society receives no assistance whatever from the Company and owing to the heavy expenses attending the establishment of Indian missions its operations are necessarily very circumscribed.⁷

Instead of encouraging missionary activity, the Company was accused of keeping the Indians in a state of drunkenness, malnourishment, and nakedness with the free flow of liquor and the exorbitant prices of everything else.⁸ Containing testimony of one unidentified Anglican missionary and other selected observers in the North-West, the petition claimed to represent the sentiments of the Indian population.

Isbister's cries fell on sympathetic ears. Although the accuracy of his charges ~~was~~ later denied, they were initially heeded by humanitarian government officials

⁷Memorialists, A Few Words on the Hudson's Bay Company, with a Statement of the Grievances of the Natives and Half-Caste Indians, addressed to the British Government through their delegation now in London (London: C. Gilpin, 1846), p. 5.

⁸John S. Galbraith, "The Hudson's Bay Company Under Fire, 1847 - 62," Canadian Historical Review, Vol. XXX, No. 4 (Dec., 1949), p. 323.

and "champions of backward peoples" who had not yet lost the zeal of the anti-slavery campaign.⁹ They were also eagerly received by those anxious to revoke the Company monopoly in Rupert's Land and open the territory to settlement. From both perspectives the Hudson's Bay Company was viewed as a bar to progress.

The charges culminated in an official parliamentary enquiry into the activities of the Hudson's Bay Company. Through the summer of 1857, the committee heard testimony from former and current fur traders, Company stockholders, government officials from Canada and Britain, independent American and Canadian merchants, and missionaries. Virtually anyone having a connection with or knowledge of Company operations was questioned. Ultimately the Company was vindicated of the charges concerning Indians and missionaries, and retention of the fur trade monopoly was upheld because of a need for law and order in Rupert's Land, the fatal effects to the Indian of free trade and traffic in spirits, and the probability of indiscriminate destruction of fur-bearing animals if trade were not controlled. At the same time, the Company was found guilty of unnecessarily hindering settlement in the fertile belt (Red River region) and was forced to make a land settlement with

⁹Ibid., p. 322.

Canada.¹⁰

The role of the Hudson's Bay Company as a bar to Christian civilization has been frequently reasserted among historians of the Anglican Church in Canada. The work of the first Anglican clergyman to enter Red River, has been analyzed as "a study of the conflict between civilization and the fur trade."¹¹ Thomas C. B. Boon, in his very complete chronology of the church's progress, has few kind words for "The Little Emperor," Sir George Simpson,¹² and elsewhere records Simpson's conflict with Archdeacon William Cockran.¹³ More recently, in an effort to explain the failure of the C.M.S. missions in Rupert's Land, Fritz Pannekoek has again emphasized the opposition of the Company, particularly Simpson, although pointing out that this opposition had little effect on missionary work and was not entirely responsible for the slow pro-

¹⁰Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons. Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company; together with the proceedings of the Committee, minutes of Evidence, appendix and Index, 31 July and 11 August, 1857, p. iv.

¹¹Arthur N. Thompson, "John West: A Study of the Conflict between Civilization and the Fur Trade," Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society, Vol. XII, No. 3 (Sept., 1970), 44 - 57. See also Arthur N. Thompson, "The Expansion of the Church of England in Rupert's Land from 1820 to 1839 under the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1962.

¹²Thomas C. B. Boon, The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1962), p. 55.

¹³Thomas C. B. Boon, "The Archdeacon and the Governor," The Beaver, Outfit 296 (Spring, 1968), 41 - 49.

gress.¹⁴

Certainly the emphasis on conflict points to a very real aspect of the historical experience of both fur trader and missionary; at the same time, however, it ignores the fact that considerable co-operation did exist between the two, and that this co-operation was equally significant in the development of Rupert's Land. It is not unreasonable to believe that the two could exist simultaneously, or that a variety of motives, too complex to be labelled simply "profit" and "humanitarianism" could be at work. To set up such a dichotomy and then force all actions within its boundaries is to distort the situation by oversimplification.

Because both organizations possessed similar structures, it is possible to examine their relationship on three levels. Both the London Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Parent Committee of the Church Missionary Society, based in London, formulated policy and directed activity in the North-West for their respective organizations. That policy-making in each case reveals specific attitudes to the other, and indicates ways in which they found each other useful as well as disruptive. Each organization also delegated most of its administrative

¹⁴Fritz Pannekoek, "Protestant Agricultural Missions to the Canadian West to 1870," unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Alberta, 1970. See also "Protestant Agricultural Zions for the Western Indian," Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society, Vol. XIV, No. 3 (Sept. 1972), 55 - 66.

detail to a supervisor in Rupert's Land; for the Hudson's Bay Company, in this period, this man was Governor George Simpson, and for the Church Missionary Society, after 1849, it was Bishop David Anderson. These two men found it necessary to work with one another in carrying out the policies of their superiors. The third level at which a relationship occurred, and probably the most interesting level, was that of the individual fur trader and missionary, whose proximity frequently made co-operation essential, not only to stabilize their contacts with the Indians, but at times to insure their own survival.

For an analysis of this last relationship, one particular mission-post has been chosen. Because it enjoyed a relative stability of personnel in the period when the superior officers also remained constant, the combination fur trade post and mission station at Stanley on the Churchill River has been selected to illustrate the elements of co-operation. Staffed by Rev. Robert Hunt, who arrived with Bishop David Anderson in 1849 and departed in 1861, one year after the death of Sir George Simpson, the mission experienced both conflict and co-operation in its connection with the fur trade post under the supervision of Mr. Samuel McKenzie. Admittedly this long-term stability was not present in many of the mission posts, but an understanding of the relationship under such stability might provide insights into the briefer associations which occurred more frequently. It is not the

purpose of this thesis to claim that all traders and all missionaries experienced precisely the same degrees of conflict and co-operation. The study is, however, intended to suggest an alternative way of viewing what has traditionally been considered a relationship of unmixed antagonism.

In a limited way, the missionary's debt to the fur trader has already been recognized. It is understood that previous white contacts, particularly by the fur traders who promoted a limited culture change among the Indians, facilitated the proselytizing work of the missionary. With sustained contact, the Indian population became less hostile to Europeans. This approach, however, does not explain the impact of the simultaneous contact of fur trader and missionary on the Indian whose changing pattern of life focused around a combined fur trade post and mission station. For a possible explanation of the dynamics of this three-way exchange which occurred with the coming of the missionaries to Rupert's Land, it is instructive to look to recent anthropological literature.

Anthropology has long devoted itself to the study of culture change, particularly, but not exclusively, among less highly-developed societies. The term culture change is used in this study to mean a "change in the knowledge, attitudes and habits of the individuals who

compose a society."¹⁵ This change is induced by one or more of the following factors: ecological change, contact between two societies of different cultural patterns, and the internal evolution of a society. Culture change that is initiated by contact between two or more autonomous cultural systems is called acculturation.¹⁶ It is this form of culture change in which fur traders, missionaries, and Indians are involved.

The principle of limited acculturation occurring in Indian-trader contacts is easily discernible. The indigenous peoples immediately prior to contact with whites lived in a subsistence economy adapted to their natural environment. This habitat supplied all of their material necessities. It also influenced the social and political organization of individual tribes or groups.¹⁷ With the onset of European contact, the aborigines' way of life was dramatically altered. While cultures are not static but ever-changing systems, at certain points, the change is more pronounced. The shift from a subsistence economy

¹⁵Ralph Linton, "Acculturation and the Process of Culture Change," in Ralph Linton, ed., Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1963), p. 468.

¹⁶Social Science Research Council, "Acculturation: an Exploratory Formulation," American Anthropologist, Vol. LVI, No. 6 (Dec., 1954), p. 974.

¹⁷A. D. Fisher, "The Cree of Canada: Some Ecological and Evolutionary Considerations," Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology, Vol. I, No. 1 (1969), p. 10.

to dependence upon trade goods produced such a change. This manifested itself in the modification of not only the existing material artifacts, but also the social and political organization associated with the subsistence cycle.¹⁸ The religious system, on the other hand, remained relatively unchanged because it had no connection with the fur trade and was usually not interfered with by the trader.

The white trader underwent a limited degree of acculturation himself. Thrust into a new ecological and sociological environment, he found certain elements of Indian culture better suited to his new situation, and accepted them for his own use. This was particularly true in areas of immediate necessity such as the preparation of foods, clothing and shelter, and in methods of transportation.¹⁹

With the coming of the missionary to the Northwest in the nineteenth century, Indians of the Woodlands and Plains had already experienced two hundred years of relatively constant contact. When the missionary set upon his program of directed culture change, actively interfering with the Indian culture for the purpose of replacing

¹⁸Julian H. Steward and Robert F. Murphy, "Tappers and Trappers: Parallel Processes in Acculturation," Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol. IV (1955 - 56), p. 336.

¹⁹Robert Michael Ballentyne, Hudson's Bay; or, Everyday Life in North America (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, n.d.), pp. 33 - 36.

not a few elements, but the entire cultural system and its manifestation in social organization and material artifacts,²⁰ he met not with a strong indigenous culture, but with one which had begun to adopt some aspects of European cultures. Without the trader's having initiated this early Indian-white communication, it might be speculated that many more missionaries would have met rejection from hostile Indians.²¹

The missionary, upon arrival in Rupert's Land, had to deal not only with Indians already acquainted with some aspects of European culture, but also with a newly-evolved social structure which directly incorporated the fur trader. While the missionary might have felt the trader to be inadequate to or even harmful to a purposeful plan of cultural change, he could not ignore the reality of the fur trader's presence in the social organization. In this context, the relationship between the individual resident postmaster and the Indians frequenting the post becomes a significant consideration for the incoming missionary and for the observer attempting to understand the relationship between postmaster and missionary.

²⁰Ralph Linton, "The Distinctive Aspects of Acculturation," in Linton, ed. Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes, pp. 501 - 520.

²¹Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., Salvation and the Savage, An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787 - 1862 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), pp. 89 - 106.

Recent anthropological literature has provided some useful ways of analyzing such a relationship in small frontier communities. In 1959, R. W. Dunning argued for the concept of the fur trader as a representative of his parent organization, yet marginal to that social system by virtue of geographic isolation.²² At the same time, although the trader lived among the Indians, his identity as a European, and the fact that his purpose derived primarily from his parent society, made him marginal to the indigenous population. Hence Dunning attributed the trader's high status among the Indians and the Europeans to his marginality in both groups.²³

Like historians such as T. C. B. Boon and Arthur N. Thompson, writing at the same time,²⁴ Dunning argues for the unavoidable conflict between a trader and any other high status, marginal figure in the community such as a missionary. The two, according to Dunning, would necessarily rival one another for a superior position among the Indians.

More recently and more usefully, Robert Paine has

²²R. W. Dunning, "Ethnic Relations and the Marginal Man," Human Organization, Vol. XVIII, No. 3 (Fall, 1959), pp. 117 - 122.

²³Ibid.

²⁴T. C. B. Boon, The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies, and Thompson, "The Expansion of the Church of England in Rupert's Land from 1820 to 1839 under the Hudson's Bay Company and The Church Missionary Society," were completed in 1962.

further refined the concept of the marginal man in a frontier society. According to Paine, the trader, rather than being marginal to the two different groups, is "separate from and yet dependent upon them."²⁵ His own power is dependent upon his relationship to the Indians and to his parent society, and also upon "the relationship these parties keep with each other."²⁶ In this sense the trader is less significant as a marginal man than as a middleman between the two parties.

In the framework developed by Paine, the trader is middleman to a patron-client relationship. A patron is defined as "the ostensible source of decisions and favours,"²⁷ the disseminator of specific values.²⁸ At the receiving end is the client, who accepts the values of the patron.²⁹ This relationship is established when the aspiring patron reveals himself as the source of items or

²⁵ Robert Paine, "Brokers and Patrons in the Canadian Arctic: a reappraisal of the case of the Marginal Man," Unpublished paper presented at the Scandanavian Ethnographic Congress in Bergen, June, 1967.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Robert Paine, ed. Patrons and Brokers in the East Arctic, Newfoundland Social and Economic Papers, No. 2, Institute for Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 5.

²⁸ Robert Paine, "Brokers and Patrons in the Canadian Arctic: a reappraisal of the case of the Marginal Man," p. 9.

²⁹ Ibid.

services new to the receiving culture. Although at first he places no stipulation on his gifts, once a need for them has been established, he teaches the client that in order to continue the supply of the new necessities, he must act in a certain way or provide certain things of himself to the patron. In this way the patron dictates the terms of the exchange. While the exchange of goods and services is a starting mechanism for a patron-client relationship, the ultimate demand is for the client's loyalty to his patron. This need not be a one-sided relationship, i.e., with consistent superior and inferior parties, but might be reciprocated, not within any one exchange, but through a series of exchanges.³⁰

The middleman has two possible roles within this relationship. If he faithfully purveys the values of the patron, his is a simple go-between. If, however, in purveying the values from one group to the other, he purposively makes changes of emphasis and/or content; he is a broker.³¹ In this latter situation, he interprets the patron's values and desires to the client population, and the client population's desires to the patron.

In terms of Paine's analysis, the presence of more

³⁰Robert Paine, "A Theory of Patronage and Brokerage," in Paine, ed., Patrons and Brokers in the East Arctic, pp. 10 - 17.

³¹Robert Paine, "Brokers and Patrons in the Canadian Arctic: a reappraisal of the case of the Marginal Man," p. 9.

than one middleman does not inevitably produce conflict. On the contrary, it produces interdependence because of an absence of consensus in the community about priority or superiority of the rights and values represented by the various middlemen.³² While the trader may have a certain priority by virtue of a longer residence, once the missionary has established his own relationship with the Indians, co-operation on both sides will become all the more imperative.

Although derived from observations in contemporary frontier societies and most frequently applied in the anthropological literature to existing communities such as the Eskimo and Indian communities of North Labrador,³³ the theory of patrons and brokers has also been applied in an historical context to the Moravian missions among the Labrador Eskimos in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,³⁴ and may also prove a useful framework for the examination of Stanley Mission at Lac la Ronge. The Moravian study, although dealing with a different place

³² Ibid., p. 6.

³³ George Henriksen, "The Transactional Basis of Influence: White Men Among Naskapi Indians," and Milton Freeman, "Tolerance and Rejection of Patron Roles in an Eskimo Settlement," in Paine, ed., Patrons and Brokers in the East Arctic.

³⁴ James Heller, "Early Patrons of the Labrador Eskimos: The Moravian Mission in Labrador, 1764 - 1805," in Paine, ed., Patrons and Brokers in the East Arctic, pp. 74 - 97.

and period, examined the missionaries as patrons to the Eskimo, and their use of secular techniques to secure a congregation. In applying the theory to Stanley Mission, it is hoped to further illuminate not only these techniques of the missionary, but the ways in which the missionary and fur-trader established a relationship which acknowledged their respective purposes in Rupert's Land. While there are dangers in taking a framework devised from contemporary anthropology and using it too rigidly in the analysis of an historical situation, there are nevertheless benefits to be gained in allowing such a framework to reveal relationships not superficially obvious from a reading of the documents.

In the following chapters, the three levels of relationship between the Church Missionary Society and the Hudson's Bay Company will be examined separately, and the patron-client framework used only in the third level, that of individual postmaster and missionary in the isolated communities of Rupert's Land. The other two levels of London-based and Red River-based administration are carried out in much more complex societies and do not lend themselves to analysis in the frontier framework. An examination will be made of the initial motives present on each side in the formal association between Society and Company, and the way in which expectations were modified by the Rupert's Land situation. An anticipated close relationship failed to materialize, perhaps largely because of the contrary

personality and independent spirit of John West, the first chaplain, and in its place a less united but nevertheless interdependent association evolved. This latter arrangement culminated in the 1849 appointment of Bishop David Anderson, a man acceptable to both Society and Company, to oversee Church of England activity in the Hudson's Bay territories. The most crucial sphere of the relationship, however, will be seen to have existed not in the more highly-developed areas of London or even Red River, but in the isolated mission posts where the most significant missionary activity was occurring. As indicated earlier, the third and fourth chapters will examine the specific mission-post of Stanley on the Churchill River. These chapters will study the strategic considerations for the presence of both the Company and the C.M.S. in that area, and the nature of the Indian cultures with whom both were dealing. This case study will make no claim to generalize about other mission-posts, but will suggest a way in which similar situations might be approached.

At each level of the relationship between the Company and the Society, emphasis will be placed, not on the conflict, but on the co-operation which necessarily existed. This must not be confused with amiability, which may or may not have characterized the co-operative relationship. Much of the hostility, or absence of amiability, which appeared between the traders and missionaries, obscures the underlying interdependence which made mutual

co-operation a necessity. Often the very fact of interdependence produced hostility in both trader and missionary, who were frustrated by their own lack of independence.

This does not mean, however, that they were unwilling to work together for their mutual benefit. Sometimes grudgingly, sometimes eagerly, they saw ways to benefit from each other's presence. It is this co-operation which will be examined.

CHAPTER I

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY: FIRST ATTEMPTS AT CO-OPERATION

In 1821, both the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society envisioned a close co-operative relationship in the Hudson Bay territories to be possible and mutually beneficial. Although placing emphasis on different aspects of the relationship, both anticipated that the newly-stabilized commercial activity of the H.B.C.'s monopoly, and the ameliorating influence of the Christian religion would combine for the greater strength and prosperity of Rupert's Land. To this end, a Church of England Chaplain was appointed by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, and his missionary activities placed under the auspices of the C.M.S. in 1822.

(i) The Missionary Vision

By the end of the eighteenth century, British churches had begun to view the world as a vast mission field. The evangelical revival of the mid-eighteenth century had substantially increased popular interest in religion, and had qualitatively altered the emphasis of the Anglican, Methodist, and Baptist Churches from preservation of a self-contained unit to proselytization of the

Gospel beyond the immediate congregation. At first, the churches restricted their activities to other English-speaking peoples, but they soon developed a sense of responsibility to the multitude of non-English speaking heathen races under the Empire's jurisdiction and beyond.¹ As benevolent rulers of less fortunate peoples, and the leaders, in a world-wide aspiration to material progress, the British considered it their obligation to share the benefit of Christianity and civilization which they believed would lessen the suffering of the non-Christian world.

In the Church of England, this new approach to Christianity manifested itself in the formation of the Church Missionary Society in 1799.² Organized primarily by men of the Clapham sect of the Evangelical clergy, it was first known as the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, and changed its name to Church Missionary Society

¹Stephen Neill, Anglicanism (London: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 323.

²This coincided with the rise of missionary societies in other British churches. Wesleyan Methodist missions were begun as early as 1769, although the Wesleyan Missionary Society was not formed until 1817. In addition there were the Baptist Missionary Society of the English Baptist Church (1792), the London Missionary Society of the English Congregationalists (1795), the Scottish Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church (1795), the Religious Tract Society (1799), and the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804), the latter two being interdenominational Protestant organizations. Stephen Neill, Christian Missions (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1966), p. 252, and Stock, The History of the C.M.S., Vol. I, pp. 154 - 155.

in 1812.³ This Society was the focal point for evangelical interests in the Church of England throughout the nineteenth century.⁴

The basic tenets of evangelical Protestantism were easily comprehensible. The doctrine upheld salvation through Jesus Christ by means of a personal and individual conversion. Instrumental in an individual's spiritual life were the Scriptures; only through the Bible would come the complete understanding which preceded conversion and enabled the individual to approach God in prayer.

The theology of the Evangelicals was in general simple and direct . . . and was intended not to satisfy man's intellectual curiosity, but to save his soul⁵

In a missionary context, this meant teaching the Scriptures to heathen peoples to bring them to the level of understanding which would make possible their salvation.

³For a complete account of the C.M.S., see Eugene Stock, The History of the Church Missionary Society, Its Environment, Its Men and Its Work (London: Church Missionary Society, 1899), 4 Vols. Although other missionary societies were formed in the Church of England, such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the Colonial and Continental Church Society and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, only the C.M.S. seriously involved itself in missions of conversion. For a study of missions of reinforcement see C. F. Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of the S.P.G.: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701 - 1900 (London: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1901).

⁴Neill, Anglicanism, p. 238 and p. 323.

⁵L. E. Elliott-Binns, The Early Evangelicals: A Religious and Social Study (Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1953), p. 383.

Early in the nineteenth century, the attention of the C.M.S. was drawn to the extensive regions of North-West America reportedly populated by one of the most pagan and uncivilized cultures in the Empire. Although a number of British people had traversed the area in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company or the North-West Company, and some, such as retired traders and the French and Scottish settlers of Red River, actually resided in the territory, no concerted effort had been made to bring the Protestant Christian religion to the aborigines. With the conclusion of the fur trade war in 1821 and the promise of stability in the Company lands, the C.M.S. perceived an opportunity to ameliorate the condition of the aborigines and to prevent the further spread of Roman Catholicism in the North-West. Thus in 1822, the Society established the first Protestant Mission in North West America at Red River.

The C.M.S. approached the Plains and Woodlands Indians of the Hudson's Bay region with more than an evangelical theology; it brought also a vision of substantial social and cultural change. While the aborigine had invariably undergone a degree of acculturation in his contact with other Europeans, the missionary was the first to attempt an aggressive program of directed culture change.⁶ He attempted to introduce the ideas and institutions which characterized Victorian society. Ethnocentric to the core,

⁶Berkhofer, Salvation and the Savage, pp. 105 - 106.

he believed all races in the human family, once freed from their ignorance, could share the greatness of Christian civilization as it existed in Britain.⁷

To attain this height, the Indian must acquire not only the doctrine of Christianity, but the social structure and cultural values of nineteenth century England. Central to this society was the "elementary assumption that civilization consisted of material goods diffused by commercial transactions."⁸ Clearly the most reliable measures of civilization, in the missionary's view, were the amount of "buying and selling of the market place," and the use of European material goods.⁹ Not only did commerce offer the increased wealth and personal property necessary for the Victorian vision, but it carried ethical commitments to the parties of a transaction. Commerce supplied not only medium but content to the acculturation process.

Of a similar dual nature was the Victorian work ethic. Recognized as important for the material reward which it supplied, work was also a "self-contained moral

⁷For a complete elaboration of the aims and ideas of the C.M.S. see Jean Usher, "Apostles and Aborigines: The Social Theory of the Church Missionary Society," Social History, Vol. VII (April, 1971), pp. 28 - 52.

⁸H. Alan C. Cairns, Prelude to Imperialism, British Reactions to Central African Society, 1840 - 1890 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 22.

⁹Ibid.

virtue."¹⁰ Habits of industry were a key element to civilization; indolence signified immaturity or decay. A third important element of the Victorian vision was the concept of a society structured and regulated by law in the British tradition.¹¹ Law gave strength to the commercial and moral values. It organized society and eliminated uncertainty as to place and function among its members. In addition, it protected both the individual and his property. Law and order ranked with prosperity and industry as the cornerstones of civilization.

The missionary also had other particular elements of Victorian society to emphasize. Representing "a sub-culture within a culture,"¹² he stressed theology and moral taboos more than would his fellow Victorian. Manners, dress, eating habits, health, sexual behaviour and family life all acquired moral connotation in the missionary's view.

Combining theological and moral concerns with secular values, the missionary presented them to the Indian as an integrated whole. Evangelical theology became the guidebook for transmitting not only a religion but an

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 79. See also Jean Usher, William Duncan of Metlakatla: A Victorian Missionary in British Columbia, Publications in History, No. 5. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974, p. 41.

¹¹ Cairns, Prelude to Imperialism, p. 152.

¹² Gordon G. Brown, "Missions and Cultural Diffusion," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. L (1944 - 45), p. 214.

entire culture.

There was a marked propensity of missionaries to attribute to Christianity those facets of western growth and progress which seemed beneficial to the prestige of the religion they wished to disseminate.¹³

It is important to understand these two facets of the missionary vision. Indeed the missionary tried to separate them, in so far as to establish a causal relationship between the religious doctrine and the secular sphere.

It was believed that the introduction of basic Christian theology would inevitably produce not only respect for the moral virtues of the religious life, but would inculcate the entire spectrum of Victorian values.¹⁴ Yet while such inevitability existed in theory, in practice the missionary devoted much effort to the details of civilization, often lamenting that such tasks kept him from his higher calling. He found it necessary to do so because teaching the gospel did not create the desired society, and because much of his progress had to be measured in the concrete results of material progress and social reorganization, rather than in the less tangible degrees of faith inspired in the Indians.

The C.M.S. therefore formulated a specific plan of action to further both civilizing and evangelizing. In North West America, the ideal society which it strove to

¹³Cairns, Prelude to Imperialism, p. 201.

¹⁴Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines, 1836. British Sessional Papers, 1836, Vol. 7. Testimony of Dandes on Coates, C.M.S. Secretary.

introduce was based upon the model of the small self-sufficient agricultural community, modified by circumstances to include fishing and hunting for supplementary food.¹⁵ By setting the aborigine into an agricultural community, the missionary could segregate him from his fellow heathens and maintain a constant contact which was most effective in the process of acculturation. Farming would teach him the methods and rewards of providence, would require foresight as well as labour, and would provide the security from starvation which was seen as a basic requirement of civilized society.

Education was deemed to be the best method of furthering the aims of evangelism and civilization.¹⁶ By a process of formal classroom instruction, the Indians would be taught the doctrine of Christianity, the manners and morals of Victorian society, and the manual and mental skills which would enable them to become useful members of a civilized society. Every new mission was to have its own school house, second only in importance to the church, where the orderly business of learning could be carried out. The recipients of this education would be children,

¹⁵For a study of the problems of the model agricultural communities, see Fritz Pannekoek, "Protestant Agricultural Missions in the Canadian West to 1870." Pannekoek attributes the C.M.S.'s ultimate failure to an unrealistic agrarian idealism.

¹⁶C.M.S./A75, p. 9. Joseph Pratt to George Harbidge, London, 10 March, 1824.

because children were thought to be more impressionable and less confirmed in the uncivilized life than adults. While conversion of the soul was aimed at all ages, it was in the children that the C.M.S. invested most of their hope for secular progress.¹⁷

One further aspect of the education program must be considered. In the mid-nineteenth century, the long range plan of the Society, and the aim with which it entered every mission field, was the eventual establishment of a native ministry to carry on the teaching of the gospel. Missionaries were instructed to keep an eye on promising adults as well as children, particularly those "educated to be Native teachers or Assistants in the Mission."¹⁸ It was recognized that "everywhere the put work of evangelizing a country must ultimately be effected by the Natives."¹⁹ While this proposal was advocated by the first two secretaries of the C.M.S., Joseph Pratt to 1824, and Edward Bickersteth to 1840, it was Henry Venn who prided himself in fully elaborating the "Native Church Policy."²⁰ Under his direction, the C.M.S. hoped to establish an independent Indian church organization, and to this end

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ CMS/A75, p. 29. Edward Bickersteth to David Jones, London, March, 1825.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Usher, William Duncan of Metlakatka . . ., pp. 44 - 46, 63.

it promoted the study of Indian languages, the training of Indian teachers and ministers, and the creation of self-sufficient church congregations.

Thus the missionary viewed his work as a transitional phase in the development of a Christian civilization in North West America. As soon as the institutional framework of church, school and farming community could be established, and the Indians taught to operate within its boundaries, the missionaries could withdraw and allow the self-sufficient Christian community its autonomy. The missionary role was paternalistic, and once the childlike aborigine had been nurtured to maturity, the Christian parent would no longer be needed.

Within this vision of Victorian society in the North-West, the existing commercial and social structure of the one hundred and fifty year old Hudson's Bay Company played a significant part. The presence of a powerful, well-regulated commercial enterprise consisting of people who performed the economic and legal functions of society would be instrumental in teaching the Indians the fundamental operations of such a society.

Hence the missionary supported the concept of the fur trade in the North-West, as he had come to welcome gold discoveries and other commercial ventures in other British mission fields.²¹ By outfitting the Indian with traps and

²¹Cairns, Prelude to Imperialism, p. 223.

guns at the beginning of each season, and exchanging the fruits of his hunt for European goods at the end of the season, the Company was teaching the Indian what the missionary conceived to be an essential principle of higher civilization.²²

In addition to contractual agreement, other principles vital to the missionary scheme were being applied. Private property and the acquisition of wealth were seen to be established in the increasing dependency of the Indian upon European trade goods. The principle of work appeared to operate in a trading economy while it seemed absent in the subsistence life-style of the non-fur-trading Indian. The Indian who acquired a desire for the material benefits of European civilization soon learned that if he kept industriously hunting furs all year, he would be rewarded in trading season.

Certainly the C.M.S. in 1820 understood that its aims ought to be worked out within the context of the fur trade. In its consideration of a possible mission for North West America, it acknowledged that it was

²²Because they failed to recognize the larger political significance of traditional Indian barter and ceremonial gift exchange, the early Anglican missionaries dismissed it as unprincipled, preferring to substitute it with what he considered to be the morally superior contractual trade agreement of the fur trade. For a discussion of Indian concepts of trade, see Abraham Rotstein, "Trade and Politics: an Institutional Approach," Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology, Vol. III, No. 1 (1972), pp. 1 - 28.

Of great importance, that the Young Men, who are educated at the proposed Establishment, should be conspicuously superior to those who have not had the benefit of instruction. They must not therefore, be allowed to forget those accomplishments of savage life, without which they would be despised:

Toward that end, skills such as the mending of a gun should be emphasized along with reading and writing, because where the latter had little significance in the Indian culture, the former would make him a highly respected individual, and would lead others to desire similar skills.²³

Thus when the Church Missionary Society was approached by a Chaplain of the Hudson's Bay Company about expanding its mission field into the Company's territories, the C.M.S. assumed that a close relationship between the two organizations would not only be desirable but necessary.

(ii) The Company's Decision to Introduce Missionary Influence into Their Territories

For a century and a half the Hudson's Bay Company had controlled the vast area of unsettled land in the North-West, but had expressed no interest in civilizing or evangelizing the aborigines with whom they traded. The Royal Charter of 1670 had made no mention of civilizing or

²³"Proposal for an Establishment, in the Territories of the Hudson's Bay Company, in British North America, for the Instruction of the Indians," Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, 1819 - 20, p. 371.

or religious obligations, and had instructed the Company to provide settlement only as was necessary for traders in its territories.²⁴ At the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, the men of the London Committee of the H.B.C. were also moved by the new evangelical and humanitarian climate in England to consider their role as civilizing agents of the British Empire. This attitude, coupled with developments in Rupert's Land up to 1821, induced the Committee to introduce clergymen into the territory.

Three men on the London Committee were instrumental in changing the Company's policy. Benjamin Harrison, a member of the Committee from 1809, was a member of the Clapham evangelical sect.²⁵ Nicholas Garry, in Rupert's Land in 1821 to oversee the union of the North-West Company and the H.B.C., also possessed a religious interest, as

²⁴Hudson's Bay Company, Charters, Statutes, Orders in Council, etc. relating to the Hudson's Bay Company (London: Hudson's Bay Company, 1931), p. 19.

²⁵The Clapham sect was a group of evangelical laymen who held themselves in close association without organization and devoted themselves to pious works. They hoped, by appealing to the conscience of a Christian nation, to bring about legislative reforms for the betterment of British society. To this end they published the quarterly Christian Observer, founded in 1801, which was devoted to commentary on contemporary issues. One of their foremost projects was the abolition of West Indian slavery. Among the well-known members of this group was William Wilberforce, House of Commons leader against slavery, Sir John Shore, former Governor General of India, Zachary Macaulay, former Governor of Sierra Leone, and Henry Thornton, a wealthy banker. For a detailed discussion of the sect's theology, see Neill, Anglicanism, pp. 238 - 41.

manifested in his support for the establishment of an Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society at York Factory. Most important of the three was Andrew Colville,

moving spirit of the Committee, . . . gifted with much of the humanitarianism of the time, and endowed with a rare combination of shrewdness in business, judgment in choosing the means of accomplishing his ends, and consideration for those whose fate lay in his hand.²⁶

As early as 1815 these men had recommended the introduction of religious instruction in Rupert's Land, but at first nothing came of their efforts.

By 1821, two social realities confronted the Company. One was the weakened state of the Woodlands Indians such as the Cree and Ojibway in the centres of most intense competition during the fur trade war between the H.B.C. and the North-West Company. Over-trapping of these areas had initially increased the Indians' dependence on trade, and then had left them suffering from privation as the fur-bearing population was severely depleted. Traders such as David Thompson were describing this problem at the end of the eighteenth century,²⁷ but it was not until the competitive phase came to an end that the Hudson's Bay Company acknowledged the impact that a shortage of fur-

²⁶ Arthur S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd., 1939), p. 631.

²⁷ J. B. Tyrell, ed., David Thompson's Narrative of his Explorations in Western America, 1784 - 1812 (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1916), pp. 205 - 206.

bearing animals was having on the Indians, who were starving because of their inability to purchase ammunition. In addition, overhunting of game had drastically depleted their available food supply. Trade in liquor, a prominent feature of the competition, was also blamed for increased violence and destruction. According to Sir George Simpson, the population in these areas of competition was being measurably diminished.²⁸ These problems were not found among the Plains Indians who enjoyed a greater independence from the fur trade.

The second condition which caused the Company concern was the presence of a group of Scottish settlers transplanted into the heart of the fur trade empire by Lord Douglas, Earl of Selkirk. This white settlement was being augmented by retired traders and the large population of half-breed children abandoned by traders returning to Canada or England without their country families. Regarding the removal of this latter group to Red River, Governor George Simpson remarked that they were a burden to the Company, and if neglected would become dangerous to the peace and safety of the trading posts. He considered it wise to

²⁸E. E. Rich, ed., Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department by George Simpson, 1820 and 1821, and Report (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1938), pp. lv - lvi, and Frederick Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire: George Simpson's Journal Entitled Remarks Connected with the Fur Trade in the Course of a Voyage from York Factory to Fort George and Back to York Factory 1824 - 25 (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 1968), pp. 333 - 39. George Simpson to Gov. J. H. Pelly, London, 1 Feb., 1837.

incur some Expense in placing these people where they may maintain themselves and be civilized and Instructed in Religion.²⁹

In addition to these internal conditions, external pressures were being brought to bear on the London Committee. In England at this time monopolies had declined in popularity. The experience of the East India Company, whose continued involvement in the slave trade and refusal to admit religious agents into its territory had been successfully overruled by William Wilberforce, evangelical member of the House of Commons, had cautioned other chartered monopolies against such a stand.³⁰ In the British Parliament this sentiment had for the first time been reflected in legislation regarding a renewal of the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly. In "An Act for Regulating the Fur Trade, and Establishing a Criminal and Civil Jurisdiction within certain parts of North America," 1 and 2 Geo. iv c 66, 2nd July, 1821, the promotion of moral and religious improvement in the Company territories became a legal obligation.³¹

These pressures are reflected in Andrew Colville's

²⁹Hudson's Bay Company London Committee to George Simpson, 27 Feb., 1822, quoted in A. S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West, p. 632.

³⁰Arthur N. Thompson, "The Expansion of the Church of England in Rupert's Land from 1820 to 1839 under the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society," p. vi.

³¹Hudson's Bay Company, Charters, Statutes, Orders in Council . . ., p. 95.

counsel to Governor Simpson.

It is incumbent upon the Company . . . to have a chaplain in their country & at least to allow missions to be established at proper places for the conversion of the Indians, indeed it wd be extremely impolitic in the present temper & disposition of the public in the Country to show any unwillingness to assist in such an object.³²

Given problems both internal and external, the admitting of missionaries to fur trade territories was considered a prudent move.

At the same time the Company could expect some direct advantages from a plan of evangelizing the Indians. Simpson himself argued that because the converted Indian would seek to imitate the European in manner and dress, his consumption of European produce and manufacture would increase, benefitting the trade. An increased need for trade goods would require more serious attention being paid to the business of the hunt. Moreover, he reasoned, traders would enjoy greater safety in travel through Indian lands, and could draw from provisions at Indian communities. Indians so civilized would also be an excellent source of runners and boatmen for Company transportation. Even to the often skeptical eye of Sir George Simpson, the Christianizing of the Indians was certainly not without its advantages to the Company.³³

³²Andrew Colville to George Simpson, London, 11 March, 1824, Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, p. 205.

³³George Simpson, Journal, Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, p. 108.

(iii) Chaplain and Missionary: The Appointment of Reverend John West

The dual appointment of one man as both Hudson's Bay Company Chaplain in 1821 and Church Missionary Society representative in 1822 is an important first step in the developing interdependence which would characterize the relationship of the two organizations throughout the period of Company rule.

The selection of an Anglican clergyman, Reverend John West, former Curate of White Roding, Essex,³⁴ as the first Chaplain of the H.B.C. in Rupert's Land has not been clearly explained. In 1816 the Committee had approached Governor Semple of Red River for advice on the prospects of a ministry to both white and Indian people of Rupert's Land, and Semple had advised them to appoint an Anglican to the task, apparently feeling that he would prove least offensive to the large Roman Catholic element in the area.³⁵

West, before his appointment, was an active member of the C.M.S.,³⁶ and according to at least one of his biographers, he came to Rupert's Land with the attitude that his Chaplaincy with the Company could be viewed as a

³⁴Stock, History of the Church Missionary Society, Vol. I, p. 246.

³⁵Maurice P. Wilkinson, "The Episcopate of the Right Reverend David Anderson, D.D., First Lord Bishop of Rupert's Land 1849 - 1864" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1950), p. 29.

³⁶Stock, History of the Church Missionary Society, Vol. I, p. 246.

vantage ground from which to minister to the Indians.³⁷ Whether this be true or not, once in the North-West, he came to realize the need for missionary activity among the heathen aborigines of the interior. Thus it was that he appealed to the C.M.S. for funds to establish an Indian school.

He was supported in his bid for the Society's assistance by Benjamin Harrison and Nicholas Garry. In a Minute to the Church Missionary House, London, Harrison explained that

it had long been a subject of great anxiety to offer religious instruction and to better the conditions of the inhabitants and native tribes of Indians, in Hudson's Bay.³⁸

He went on to explain that since amalgamation of the two trading companies had restored peace to the North-West, only a lack of adequate financing had prevented their bringing the blessings of the Gospel to the people. While Mr. West had been able to do a considerable amount with his Company stipend, the assistance of the Society would enable him to make much greater progress. As an added incentive, he remarked that the Catholics had already built a church at Red River. Therefore it was time to

³⁷William Bertal Heeney, "John West," in Leaders of the Canadian Church, ed. W. B. Heeney (Toronto: Masson Book Co., 1920), Vol. II; p. 8.

³⁸CMS/A79, p. 1. Benjamin Harrison to Church Missionary Society, London, 1822.

establish a Protestant missionary station to halt the spread of Catholicism in the North-West.³⁹

The Society hesitated, not yet convinced. Although interested in West's appeal, it felt a strong obligation to retain its full strength for its other established missions. Unable to afford the full cost of starting a new mission, the Secretaries felt it would be unwise to sacrifice funds which would probably be ineffective in the North-West.⁴⁰ It was the added encouragement of Nicholas Garry which overcame their fears. He promised that the Company would provide the transportation and lodging for missionaries travelling among the Indians, a service which would have presented the Society with considerable expense. If the Company were willing to bear that part of the financial burden of the mission, the Society would agree to direct aid to West as well.⁴¹ Thus from the very outset, the C.M.S.'s presence in Rupert's Land owed a great deal to the Hudson's Bay Company.

With the formation of this association between the two London organizations, each side anticipated a close and co-operative relationship. Each saw the other as

³⁹Ibid., pp. 1 & 2. See also CMS/A77, "Minute of Benjamin Harrison, Esq. on the formation of a Mission among the Indians in the Hudson's Bay Company Territories," London, 28 January, 1822.

⁴⁰CMS/A75, Josiah Pratt to John West, London, 13 Feb., 1821.

⁴¹CMS/A75, Josiah Pratt to John West, London, 8 March, 1822.

fitting well into its plans for the North-West. While the C.M.S. believed that the presence of a corporate commercial enterprise would facilitate the civilizing process among the Indians, the H.B.C. saw the missionaries as employees who would add to stability in the fur trade society and would indirectly encourage trade by increasing the Indian's dependency on European trade goods. Shared costs, at least for the C.M.S., increased the possible extent of missionary activity. From London, the arrangement seemed to please all concerned.

CHAPTER II

REALITIES OF RUPERT'S LAND: MISSIONARY DISAPPOINTMENTS AND COMPANY FEARS, 1822 - 1860

When by 1857 both Sir George Simpson and Bishop David Anderson could testify to cordial relations and mutual co-operation, they were speaking of a system which evolved from experience. The rapid development of civilization and Christianity in Rupert's Land envisioned by the Church Missionary Society had failed to materialize. Similarly, the close co-operation and mutual reinforcement anticipated in an association of the C.M.S. and the Hudson's Bay Company proved less than practical when applied to Rupert's Land. The history of this relationship from 1822 to the creation of the Anglican Diocese of Rupert's Land in 1849 is one of disappointed expectations on both sides as adjustment continued toward a workable arrangement.

The harsh reality of missionary activity in the North-West fell far short of the missionary vision. The migratory patterns of the Saulteaux, Cree, and Chipewyan made formation of settlements extremely difficult, and without a sedentary population, civilization was impossible. As Bishop Anderson later described the problem:

. . . the migratory character of our most settled Indian populations . . . weakens parishes, and very materially checks

education, rendering it more difficult and expensive to be extended at all. It keeps the masses in a state of great poverty, and prevents their growth and rise. It lessens the amount of public spirit and local attachment, and perpetuates many of the habits of Indian life. It parts and separates where, if united all would be combination and strength.¹

Only in a stationary life could the Indian partake of the advantages of civilization. Yet the Indian persisted in wandering, joining the hunt in the fall, and with the onset of winter, returning, frozen and starving, to the white settlement in search of food.²

A willingness on the Indian's part was usually not sufficient to make him a successful settler. One of the greatest problems was the disease to which he fell prey because of his inexperience with the sanitary precautions necessary for a settled existence. In his own culture, constant migration, sparse clothing and physical activity had kept him healthy. Once settled, he became more susceptible to diseases which his own medicines could not help.³

¹David Anderson, as quoted by Henry Youle Hind, Narrative of the Canadian and Red River Exploring Expedition of 1857 and of the Assinaboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition of 1858 (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1860), Vol. I, p. 202.

²CMS/A77, John West, Journal, 4 January, 1823, and David Jones, Journal, December, 1823, January - February, 1824 and 1825.

³Archdeacon Tim, "Health Conditions Among the Indians," Centenary Addresses and Sermons, ed. William Bertal Heeney (Winnipeg: n.p., 1922), pp. 103 - 115, discusses the persistence of these conditions in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Even when settled into an agricultural life and set on the road to civilization, the Indian retained habits which combined with the white man's customs to the further detriment of the Indian. It was lamented that the Indian's peculiar weaknesses led him astray in temporal rather than spiritual matters. His "fickleness" and "love of change" kept him constantly on the move so that half his time was "wasted in journeys from one place to another" His starvation was attributed to "extravagance & mismanagement in domestic affairs." One of the Indian's greatest failings in the missionary's point of view was his love of luxuries "such as pertain to the middle and higher ranks in civilized life." In an attempt to imitate the higher class of settlers, many Indians sold their oxen and cattle to enable them to purchase horses.⁴ Such incidents seemed to make even more remote the possibility of bringing the Indian to understand the ways of civilized society.

The desire to educate young Indians in relative isolation also proved to be a cause of difficulty for which the missionaries often felt definite guilt. William Cockran was particularly concerned with this, feeling that John West's "Native Indian School Establishment" had

⁴John Smithhurst, as quoted by Michael Peter Czuboka, "St. Peters: A Historical Study with Anthropological Observations on the Christian Aborigines of Red River (1811 - 1876)," Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1960, p. 74.

"commenced upon an erroneous plan."⁵ To illustrate the nature of the problem he cited two examples of students from the School who had returned to their people. One of these was Thomas Hesel, who returned quite earnestly desiring to share with his friends his new knowledge.

He soon found that he had too little of the stamina of religion, to endure the trials presented every day. He wrote to one of his Companions that he felt as if he were in Hell.⁶

He started back to Red River, but at York Factory he fell into debt and found himself obliged to enter the service of the Company. Quite different was the case of Spogan Garry who

went across the mountains to visit his relatives. But being always a boy of the world, a lover of a good horse, and a fine coat, he is now selling that which he freely received to the highest bidder. I heard that he had gained 200 horses by preaching.⁷

It appeared that a single Indian did not possess the strength to overcome old ways unless he were completely separated from them. It weighed heavily on the missionary conscience that if the Indians were educated in the ideas and beliefs of the European and then returned to their homes, they would then sin in full awareness, powerless

⁵CMS/A86, William Cockran to Church Missionary House, Red River, 30 July, 1833.

⁶Ibid. The name might be spelled Haul.

⁷Ibid. Spogan is also spelled variously, Spokan, Spokane.

to resist. The missionaries were filling the Indians' minds with restless anxiety.⁸

Indeed, all measurable aspects of the C.M.S.'s activities in the North-West confirm the impression that progress was painfully slow. In 1849, when the Diocese of Rupert's Land was created, and Bishop Anderson assigned to administer it, there was an estimated population of 47,000 natives within its boundaries. Of these, the C.M.S. claimed 13,000 already under its influence. A look at the number and size of its missions, however, leads one to question that claim. There were four stations at Red River: the Upper Settlement, the Middle Settlement, Grand Rapids and the Indian Settlement.⁹ Yet few Indians were actually being influenced by the missionaries at these places. Class registers, and baptism, marriage and burial records contain significantly few Indian names.¹⁰ The only Indians strongly influenced by the C.M.S. were at the Indian Settlement, and these required such intensive care that William Cockran, founder of the settlement, had no time for other Indians in the area. At its peak in 1839, it claimed a church congregation of 200, two school rooms regularly attended, ten acres of cultivated land and ten

⁸Ibid.

⁹Stock, History of the Church Missionary Society, Vol. II, p. 314. For a map of the region see Map I.

¹⁰Racial background was given for each entry.

head of cattle,¹¹ but with Cockran's absence, after 1839, it quickly disintegrated.

Beyond Red River, progress was equally slow. The Red River Mission had been established by the C.M.S. with a view to expansion in the North-West.¹² In its first thirty years, however, only three new missions were established: Cumberland Station (The Pas) in 1840 by Henry Budd, Fairford (Partridge Crop) in 1842 by Rev. Abraham Cowley, and Lac la Ronge (Northern Saskatchewan) in 1845 by James Settee.¹³ The Native Church program had by 1850 produced only one ordained Indian minister, the Reverend Henry Budd, and one catechist, James Settee (later Reverend). Because the missionaries were reluctant to trust an Indian convert, neither of these men was given much proselytizing responsibility at first.¹⁴

The missionaries were constantly frustrated by their lack of progress, and searched for an explanation. While

¹¹CMS/A84, William Cockran to Church Missionary House, Red River, 2 August, 1839.

¹²S. Gould, Inasmuch: Sketches of the Beginnings of the Church of England in Canada in relation to the Indian and Eskimo Races (Toronto: Church Missionary Society, 1917), pp. 97 - 117.

¹³Stock, History of the Church Missionary Society, Vol. II, p. 314.

¹⁴For an explanation of C.M.S. ambivalence toward the Indian missionary, see Katherine Pettipas, "A History of the work of the Reverend Henry Budd conducted under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, 1840 - 1875," Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1972.

occasionally yielding to a sense of doubt that the Indian could ever be elevated, they believed for the most part that their goal was realistic and that it was ordained by God. Consequently they looked to external factors for the cause of their difficulty. Time and again they laid the blame not upon the aborigines, but upon other Europeans in the North-West: the settlers, who set poor examples of Christian conduct, the Roman Catholics, who they believed preached an erroneous doctrine, and the fur traders, who for reasons of profit did not want the Indians to leave the hunt in favour of settlement.

Of the three, the traders, who after 1821 were almost exclusively of the Hudson's Bay Company, have most frequently borne the blame for the Society's problems. As Beckles Wilson explained it in an anecdote of two Easterners on their first trip to the North-West:

'Tell us my friend,' they said, 'what those three letters yonder signify. Wherever we travel in this country we encounter 'H.B.C.' We have seen the legend sewn on garments of Indians; we have seen it flying from rude forts; it has been painted on canoes, it is inscribed on bales and boxes. What does 'H.B.C.' mean?'

"That's The Company," returned the native grimly, "Here Before Christ."¹⁵

This was the stark reality for the Anglican missionary in Rupert's Land, and the C.M.S. did not always accept it graciously.

¹⁵Beckles Wilson, The Great Company (Toronto: Copp Clark Co. Ltd., 1899), preface.

The tone of hostility between the Church Missionary Society and the Hudson's Bay Company was set in the first three years of the Society's presence in Rupert's Land, when both organizations shared the services of Rev. John West. Through his outspoken criticisms of the traders and the Company, West asserted an independence which had not been anticipated in the plan of the London Committee of the H.B.C.

When West was appointed Hudson's Bay Company Chaplain at Red River in 1821, he became part of the well-organized hierarchy which connected London and the territories. Reorganized at the amalgamation to overcome the weaknesses of control from distant London, the Company had incorporated a strong chain of command within Rupert's Land.¹⁶ Central authority still resided in London, where the Governor of the Company, John H. Pelly, the deputy governor, Nicholas Garry, and a committee of seven directors together formed the "Honourable Committee."¹⁷ In North America, however, centralization had led to the creation of several powerful positions. Jurisdiction was divided into four departments. The Northern Department (also known as Rupert's Land) extended from the Arctic Ocean on the North, the United States on the South, Hudson's Bay on the East, and the Rocky Mountains on the West, added to which

¹⁶Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, xxxix.

¹⁷Selection of these officials was controlled by the stockholders at an annual meeting in London.

was New Caledonia west of the Rockies. The Southern Department extended from James Bay to the Canadas and included East Main. The Canadas were known as the Montreal Department and the valley of the Columbia River became the Columbia Department.¹⁸ Initially there were two Governors, William Williams in the South and George Simpson in the North. By 1826, however, Simpson was Governor-in-chief of all the territories in America.

Within Rupert's Land (Northern Department) itself, the structure was also centralized. Under Governor Simpson there were sixteen chief factors, each in charge of a district, and collectively forming the Council of the Northern Department, twenty-nine chief traders, and sixty-seven post masters. In addition the Company employed five surgeons, eighty-seven clerks, twelve hundred permanent servants, five hundred voyageurs or trippers, and one hundred and fifty officers and crews of ships.¹⁹

It was into this hierarchy that John West, the Company Chaplain was inserted in 1821. He would probably, as a salaried servant, rank with the postmasters, subordinate to the shareholding Chief Traders and Chief Factors.²⁰

¹⁸Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, xxxviii.

¹⁹Great Britain, Report from the Select Committee, 1857, p. 57. Testimony of George Simpson.

²⁰For an elaboration of the relative social status of various positions in a fur trade community, see John Foster, "The Country-born in the Red River Settlement: 1820 - 1850," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Alberta, 1973, Chapter I.

As such he would be expected to conform to the authority of his superiors in the Company. He had been placed there

for the purpose of affording religious instruction and consolation to the Company's retired servants and other Inhabitants of the Settlement, and also of affording religious instruction and consolation to the servants in the active employment of the Company upon such occasions as the nature of the Country and other circumstances will permit.²¹

The aid of the C.M.S. had been solicited primarily as supplementary support, with the understanding that the Company would retain the upper hand.

From the outset, John West reacted negatively to the fur trade environment into which he was placed. His first impressions of Red River indicate his disgust with the "frontier" character of the settlement.

On the 14th of October we reached the settlement, consisting of a number of miserable looking huts widely scattered along the margin of the River. In vain did I look for a cluster of Cottages where the hum of a small population at least might be heard as in a village-- and saw but few marks of human industry in the cultivation of the soil. Every inhabitant you passed generally bore a gun upon his shoulder and all appeared in a wild and hunter state without arrangement or tending towards improvement, and the comforts and advantages of civilized life.²²

²¹Cited in Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870, p. 632.

²²CMS/A77, "Rev John West's Report to the Hon^{ble} Com^{te} of the Hudson's Bay Com^y."

In order to improve both tone and appearance of this society, West set upon a plan of education and religious instruction as was recommended by the Church Missionary Society. His first priority was the construction of a church building and the collection of a congregation.²³ Schools were his second major concern. He planned at least three separate programs, a Sunday school for the "half-caste"²⁴ adult population, a day school for the children of settlers and traders,²⁵ and a boarding school for Indian children known as the Native Indian School Establishment.²⁶

From the bulk of John West's complaints during his brief three-year stay at Red River come two basic accusations against the fur traders. One was their refusal to live by the moral and legal principles of their Christian homeland. The other was their active or passive opposition to the civilization of the Indians. "The grand bar to an immediate victory," wrote West, "is European depravity and apathy in the country."²⁷

²³CMS/A77, John West, Journal, 7 March, 1823.

²⁴"Half-caste" here would refer to the English-speaking halfbreed population.

²⁵John West, Substance of a Journal during a Residence at the Red River Colony and frequent excursions among the North-West American Indians, in the years 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823 (Longon: L. B. Seeley & Son, 1824), p. 26.

²⁶CMS/A77, John West, Journal, 6 March, 1823.

²⁷CMS/A77, John West to Church Missionary Secretaries, 25 Oct., 1823.

What most concerned West in the category of "European depravity," was the casual manner in which traders took "country wives" when convenient and abandoned both women and children when they left Rupert's Land. He saw the formal religious and civil marriage contract as a solution.

. . . if a colony is to be organized, and established in the wilderness, the moral obligation of a marriage must be felt. 'It is the parent' says Sir Wm. Scott, 'not the Child of civil society.' Some form or religious rite in marriage is also requisite, and has generally been observed by enlightened and civilized nations.²⁸

In this stand he had the support of Nicholas Garry, who commended West for persuading many traders to marry their "country wives."²⁹ He, however, received no co-operation from Sir George Simpson, who had no intention of marrying Margaret Taylor, the half-breed daughter of a Company servant, although he allowed West to baptise their daughter.³⁰

More grievous to West, however, was the opposition

²⁸ John West, "The British Northwest American Indians with free thoughts on the Red River Settlement, 1820 - 23." Typewritten manuscript in St. John's College Library, University of Manitoba, p. 9.

²⁹ Nicholas Garry, "The Diary of Nicholas Garry, 1823 - 25." Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Sec. II (1900), p. 137.

³⁰ Hudson's Bay Company Archives, (hereafter HBC) E4/1a, 27 August, 1822. See also Merk ed., Fur Trade and Empire, p. 108.

he perceived in his plans to evangelize and civilize the Indians of Rupert's Land. He acknowledged that the intentions of the London Committee were honourable, and he gratefully accepted the Committee's expressed hope that a foundation had been laid "to extend the blessings of Christianity, Religion, morals, and education, wherever the Representative of the Company may set his foot."³¹ At the same time, however, he wrote that "nothing can be done without the active co-operation of the HB men in the Country."³²

Their opposition seemed to West to stem from an unwarranted insecurity regarding the future of the fur trade.

I find a cold indifference on the part of the Chief Officers resident in the Country, or rather, I ought to say, that they view what exertions I make with a glorious object before us with jealousy, and cannot conceal their fears lest the plans which we have in view in seeking to civilize and evangelize the poor Indian will be the means of lessening the quantum of fur and consequently gain-- 'our craft is in danger.' I assure them I can see no ground whatever for these alarms,³³

It is difficult to determine from West's records the precise nature of this opposition. Response to his specific programs in Red River, such as the building of a

³¹Quoted by West, "The British Northwest American Indians . . .," p. 18.

³²CMS/A77, John West to the Northern Council, York Factory, 5 June, 1822.

³³CMS/A77, John West to Rev. Henry Budd, Red River, 26 Nov., 1822.

church, and the creation of the Native Indian School Establishment received support. Company servants from various quarters sent him potential pupils.³⁴ In fact West himself reports only rumours of opposition from some of the chief factors and traders.³⁵ Probably the greatest source of disagreement occurred in West's proposals to establish similar Indian boarding schools at fur trade posts throughout Rupert's Land. While schools at Red River were considered beneficial, it was feared that an attempt to create similar institutions in the isolated Bay and inland posts would place a considerable burden on Company supplies. It was also feared that West would interfere with schedules during the short season on the Bay.³⁶ At this point the Company was not prepared to support institutional expansion such as West was envisioning.

Undoubtedly John West's independence of spirit was disconcerting to Sir George Simpson and the Northern Council, whose main pre-occupation after amalgamation was instilling some stability into the fur trade empire. West had been

³⁴West, "The British Northwest American Indians . . .," p. 11.

³⁵Ibid., p. 17. For speculation that Simpson was the source of these rumours, see Thompson, "John West: A Study of the Conflict between Civilization and the Fur Trade," pp. 47 - 48.

³⁶George Simpson to Andrew Colvile, Fort Garry, 20 May, 1822, Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, p. 182.

placed in Red River as a further stabilizing influence on the population, and had instead proved a disruptive force in the community. Not only were some of his ideas more ambitious than Simpson felt Rupert's Land to be ready for, but his personality brought him into conflict with the Scottish settlers for whom he had great contempt, the Roman Catholic clergy and the resident fur traders. For the most part this had little to do with his policies; there was agreement in Red River that he had a difficult personality and readily antagonized people.³⁷ It might be argued that his outspoken criticism and lack of conciliatoriness were characteristics of a Protestant missionary, but the more agreeable nature of his successors would dispute that. Arthur Thompson explains the difference by saying that while David Jones, William Cockran and others were

local village boys who received a call to the mission field under the spiritual guidance of an Evangelical vicar, . . . West on the other hand, was a graduate of Oxford, an English gentlemen,³⁸

³⁷Thompson, "John West: A Study in Conflict between the Fur Trade and Civilization," p. 55. Simpson found West's successor more agreeable. "I am in great hope," he wrote, "that Mr. West will not return; he would not have a single hearer. Mr. Jones fully comes up to the opinion I had formed of him; his church is well attended and he is most zealous in the discharge of his duties" Quoted in Pritchett, The Red River Valley . . . , p. 234.

³⁸Thompson, "John West: A Study in Conflict between the Fur Trade and Civilization," p. 55.

As a result of the dissatisfaction generated on both sides by West's presence, he was removed as both chaplain and missionary in 1823.

The legacy of John West's clash with the Company was important for future development of the Church Missionary Society in Rupert's Land. It set the mission slightly apart from the Company, by claiming an interest independent of the fur trade. It has been suggested that John West won for future missionaries the right to a private sphere of activity, and the right "to comment in an appropriate manner, on public and private behaviour."³⁹ While this is probably overstating the impact of West's challenge, it cannot be denied that the Hudson's Bay Company was forced to confront the possibility of an independent missionary activity.

Certainly this first experience with a missionary in the Hudson's Bay territories resulted in a clearer formulation of missionary policy among the Company's officials in Rupert's Land. Appearing in the minutes of Council of the Northern Department for July 5, 1823, and for subsequent years, were the following resolutions reflecting a new sense of responsibility for the religious tone of the fur trade society:

³⁹Foster, "The Country-born in the Red River Settlement, 1820 - 1850," pp. 115 - 116.

#96 That all those in charge of Districts be directed to afford every assistance in order to facilitate and promote the humane and benevolent intentions of the Church Missionary Society

#97 That the Indians be treated with levity and forbearance and every mild and conciliatory means resorted to, for to encourage industry, repress vice and inculcate morality,

#124 That . . . every Sunday divine service be publicly read . . . at which every man, woman and child resident will be required to attend together with any of the Indians who may be at hand

#125 That for this purpose, the requisite supply of Religious Books will be furnished from time to time by and at the Expense of the Company.⁴⁰

In his official stance, Simpson expressed like sentiments regarding the missionary presence in Rupert's Land. Writing to the Governor and Committee from York Factory in 1822, he acknowledged the Act of Parliament for Exclusive Trade in 1821 as conferring religious obligations upon the Company. He not only commended John West for his

⁴⁰R. Harvey Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821 - 31 (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1940), pp. 90 - 95. An annotated copy of these resolutions is found in CMS/A77. They were criticized for lacking an "executory principle." Sabbath observances would be ignored when inconvenient. Bibles could be obtained free of charge from the British and Foreign Bible Society in London. In general, the "depraved" character of the people at the posts would render the resolutions useless. The author of these comments is not identified, but the handwriting appears to be that of John West, and similar sentiments are expressed in West's Journal, 14 Sept., 1823, CMS/A77.

activity among settlers and Indians, but recommended the establishment of schools "where provisions are easy of procurement."⁴¹ One of the best locations for this purpose was Red River, once a few good crops could be harvested.⁴²

Yet whatever Simpson might publicly declare his position to be, there were many reasons to suspect his intentions. Everyone who knew him, and those who have since studied him, seem to concur with E. E. Rich's observation that

It is difficult, if not impossible, to find in his vast correspondence any evangelizing impulse, or indeed any genuine religious conviction.⁴³

In fact, there is no denying the hostility of Simpson's often-quoted remark that an "enlightened Indian was good for nothing except filling the pockets and bellies of some hungry missionaries and school masters"⁴⁴

The apparent contradictions are best understood by examining Simpson's attitudes in terms of his position

⁴¹George Simpson to Governor and Committee, York Factory, 16 July, 1822, quoted in Fleming, ed., Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821 - 31, pp. 352 - 353.

⁴²Severe crop failures through locust damage had sent the Red River Settlers Pembina each winter that West had been in the settlement.

⁴³E. E. Rich, The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670 - 1870 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960), Vol. III, p. 528.

⁴⁴George Simpson to Andrew Colvile, Fort Garry, 20 May, 1822, Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, p. 181.

as a leader of the Company, responsible for the economic welfare of the inhabitants of Rupert's Land. He believed that "every mission, if successful must be considered the germ of a future village," and that therefore care should be taken to prevent these potential villages being a heavy burden to the Company.⁴⁵

The reality of famine weighed very heavily on Rupert's Land in the years after amalgamation and Simpson felt it imperative to delay any schemes for concentrating a population at any of the fur trade posts. The absence of buffalo on the plains, and the crop failures at Red River, coupled with the agricultural poverty of the posts along the Bay and the general shortage of animals, created severe hardship.⁴⁶

Hence he feared that the proposal to introduce missionaries and create mission schools at various posts would only further tax the meagre food supply. On the other hand, he supported missionaries in the Columbia district where food was plentiful and the population stable.⁴⁷ It was this fear of having to support the missions once they had been established which caused Simpson to oppose West's plan of expansion.

⁴⁵George Simpson as quoted by Rich, The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, Vol. II, p. 528.

⁴⁶George Simpson to Andrew Colvile, Fort Garry, 20 May, 1822, Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, pp. 180 - 181.

⁴⁷George Simpson, Journal, Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, p. 106.

As a result of the clash between John West and George Simpson, Simpson grew more concerned with the Company's right to control the activities of missionaries within its territories. It would appear that his thoughts on missionary activity in the Columbia are a direct result of his experiences with Mr. West.

The Society should place the Clergyman in a certain degree under the protection of the Coy's representative (say the Chief Factor in charge of the District) and direct him to look up to that Gentleman for support and assistance in almost everything as a superior; on the contrary if he attempts to dictate or act independently of, or in opposition to the views & wishes of that Gentleman it is to be feared they will not draw together. The Missionary ought to be cool and temperate in his habit and of a mild disposition even tempered and not too much disposed to find fault severely with any little laxity of Morals he may discover at the Coy's establishment otherwise 'tis to be feared he would find his situation uncomfortable and it might even interfere with the objects of his Mission.⁴⁸

He went on to emphasize that the success of the mission depended so much upon "the character and disposition of the Missionary." A man who could make himself agreeable to the principal officers of the Company would be likely to find himself supported on all occasions.⁴⁹ Clearly the missionary had a place in George Simpson's view of a stabilized fur trade society, if only the missionary would

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 108.

⁴⁹Ibid.

recognize that place!

While official policy from the two levels of authority, London and Rupert's Land, often seems elusive and contradictory, the fact cannot be ignored that a good deal of C.M.S. financing for the expansion of the North West America Mission field came from the Hudson's Bay Company. Salaries, grants, buildings, and transportation were all part of a substantial monetary assistance to the meagre fund of the Church Missionary Society.

Since the first Anglican chaplain, John West, had been appointed, the Company had contrived to retain a chaplain at several of its posts. First David Jones and then William Cockran acquired West's position of Red River chaplain. William Cockran as chaplain was receiving £150 per year, while chaplains at smaller posts were paid £50 (not an inconsiderable addition to the £100 per year salary paid by the C.M.S).⁵⁰ In fact, when a serious financial crisis disturbed the affairs of the Society in 1841 - 42, Cockran, determined not to abandon his missionary activity, continued to work in Red River for two years on his Company salary.⁵¹

The Hudson's Bay Company also provided other essentials for the development of the mission field. Missionaries

⁵⁰Great Britain, Report from the Select Committee, 1857, p. 63. Testimony of Sir George Simpson.

⁵¹A. G. Garrioch, The Correction Line (Winnipeg: Stovel Co. Ltd., 1933), p. 130 - 131.

travelling to their posts were given free passage and a freight allowance when entering Rupert's Land or when relocating within the country, although other transportation taken on Company boats had to be paid.⁵² Buildings were supplied for residences until missionaries could prepare their own quarters. Because the Society in London did not allow funds for the construction of church buildings but considered that a responsibility of individual congregations, the Company in some instances built new churches at their posts.⁵³ In support of school activities, the Company also granted £100 per year to the Red River Academy, a boarding school for sons and daughters of fur traders established by David Jones in 1833.⁵⁴ These were no small additions to the Society, whose annual expenditure for the North West America Mission had by 1849 grown to only £1,789.⁵⁵

⁵²Ibid., confirmed by a statement of Henry Venn, Church Missionary Society Secretary, entered as evidence, p. 233.

⁵³David Anderson, "Memorial to the Hudson's Bay Company," entered as evidence in Great Britain, Report from the Select Committee, 1857, p. 237.

⁵⁴Minutes of Council, Northern Department of Rupert's Land, 3 June, 1835, as quoted in Oliver, The Canadian North-West, Its Early Development and Legislative Records, Vol. II, pp. 721 - 722.

⁵⁵Great Britain, Report from the Select Committee, 1857, p. 232. Testimony of David Anderson.

Perhaps the greatest direct grant to the Anglican clergy in Rupert's Land came from the estate of Mr. James Leith, a Scottish-born Chief Factor of the Company.⁵⁶ At his death in 1838, he had bequeathed £10,000 toward the propagation of the gospel in Rupert's Land. Although the family contested the will, it was ultimately decided by the Courts that the trustees of the will, including members of the Hudson's Bay Company, should invest the money and use the profits to finance the establishment of a new Bishopric of Rupert's Land. To this fund, the Company added £300 per annum in perpetuity and agreed to furnish the necessary buildings and land for the Diocese.⁵⁷ In view of the fact that the North West American Mission was still a low priority to the Church Missionary Society, whose main concerns were in Africa, India and China, Hudson's Bay Company financing made possible expansion which would not otherwise have been undertaken by the Society.⁵⁸

⁵⁶James Leith had come to Canada in 1801 as a partner in the XY Company, and was later a wintering partner in the North West Company. In 1821, he was appointed Chief Factor of the Athabasca District in the Hudson's Bay Company.

⁵⁷For a detailed explanation of the creation of the Bishopric of Rupert's Land and the selection of Bishop David Anderson see Wilkinson, "The Episcopate of the Right Reverend David Anderson, D.D., First Lord Bishop of Rupert's Land, 1849 - 1864," Chapter III, pp. 63 - 86.

⁵⁸Eugene Stock's History of the Church Missionary Society, 4 Vols., gives an excellent indication of the relative unimportance of North America as a mission field.

It might be speculated at this point that the Company saw considerable benefit in the establishment of the new Bishopric. The Anglican clergymen between 1839 and 1849 had begun a program of expansion to Company outposts in an effort to reach more of the Indians in the territory. Simpson, ever concerned about his ability to control the missionaries' activities, had found it necessary to deal with each man individually or appeal through their London headquarters, because the clergy had formed no central organization in Rupert's Land. As the number of Anglican clergymen and assistants increased (by 1849 there were six clergymen, two native catechists and a collection of servants), his problem was compounded. Thus with the creation of the Bishopric and the appointment of David Anderson as first Bishop of Rupert's Land, organization of the Church's activities was centralized under a single authority responsible to the Church of England in London.

Although strictly speaking the Church Missionary Society was independent of the official church body,⁵⁹ as men ordained by the Church of England, the clergymen acknowledged the authority of the Bishop. Because the C.M.S. had been consulted by the Archbishop of Canterbury and selection of a man congenial to both parties was made, support for the Bishop in Rupert's Land was further in-

⁵⁹Thompson, "The Expansion of the Church of England in Rupert's Land from 1820 to 1839 under the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society," p. 317.

sured.⁶⁰ Thus in most further negotiations between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Anglican clergy, Simpson corresponded directly with Bishop Anderson.

The arrangement seemed to prove satisfactory to both sides. Somewhat to the chagrin of church historians, David Anderson co-operated well with the Hudson's Bay Company.

Brought up in a family associated with the great Trading Company of the East, he had little difficulty in fitting himself to the domain of the great Trading Company of the North West. If at times he seems unnecessarily sympathetic with the problems of the Hudson's Bay Company administration, it must be remembered that he was very much dependent upon its good will in carrying out his work; that he appreciated the assistance he was consistently given; and that he had formed the opinion that immigration in the prairies of Rupert's Land should be for a time, at least, restricted to small groups so that the economic prosperity of the country might be developed in an orderly way.⁶¹

Clearly this was a man in whom Simpson could place a great deal of confidence.

The degree to which co-operation was achieved is evident in the cordial correspondence between the two men. Simpson was able, through Anderson, to make known his will regarding expansion of missions, choice of sites, and

⁶⁰Wilkinson, "The Episcopate of the Right Reverend David Anderson, D.D., First Lord Bishop of Rupert's Land, 1849 - 1864," pp. 77 - 78.

⁶¹Thomas C. B. Boon, "The Institute of Rupert's Land and Bishop David Anderson," Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Series III, No. 16 (1961), p. 110. Anderson was the son of Captain Archibald Anderson of the Honourable East India Company.

selection of personnel. The expansion and development of mission sites beyond Red River, which had caused so much strife in 1839 when the C.M.S. went to Cumberland in defiance of Simpson, was after 1849 being negotiated in an orderly manner. Proper channels had been established for the application for mission sites to be handled by the London Committee of the H.B.C., and if these proper channels were taken, Simpson was satisfied.⁶² If he considered a plan unwise, such as the proposal to establish missions at posts on the Bay, he advised Anderson of the difficulty of life on the barren coast and the perpetual shortage of any but imported food.⁶³ He also commented upon the suitability of personnel selected for the proposed missions, not hesitating to object to a person not

qualified to . . . Command that respect which should be enjoyed by the Company's Chaplain at a place of such importance⁶⁴

By carefully controlling expansion and personnel of missions, Simpson hoped to lessen the danger of new missions being used as rallying points for free traders who penetrated the territory.⁶⁵ In this he had the full support of Anderson

⁶²HBC/D4/46, George Simpson to the Bishop of Rupert's Land, York Factory, 30 June, 1853.

⁶³HBC/D/45, George Simpson to the Bishop of Rupert's Land, York Factory, 2 May, 1852.

⁶⁴HBC/D4/46, George Simpson to the Bishop of Rupert's Land, York Factory, 30 June, 1853.

⁶⁵Ibid.

who believed that "to throw open the trade to free competition would tend to the speedy ruin of the Indian."⁶⁶

Of course they were not without their differences. Shortly after the Bishop's appointment, Simpson wrote to Eden Colvile that Anderson was being unduly influenced by William Cockran's "schemes," making it difficult for Simpson to give him any advice.⁶⁷ This probably refers to a dispute concerning the location of a mission at Portage la Prairie planned in 1850. Nevertheless, when Simpson protested to Anderson, William Cockran was recalled to the Indian Settlement.⁶⁸

In short, the Hudson's Bay Company and the Anglican clergy had by 1849 achieved in Rupert's Land a modified form of the co-operation which had been envisioned by their London organizations in 1821. The Hudson's Bay Company, rather than simply hindering growth, as is often assumed, was instrumental in the financial and institutional growth of the new mission field. Because it perceived advantages for itself in the presence of the Anglican clergy, it

⁶⁶David Anderson, "Memorial to the Governor and Committee of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company," admitted as evidence in Great Britain, Report from the Select Committee, 1857, p. 238.

⁶⁷HBC D5/30, George Simpson to Eden Colvile, 22 May, 1851.

⁶⁸Pannekoek, "Protestant Agricultural Missions in the Canadian West to 1870," p. 42. The mission was later developed with Simpson's approval.

consciously supported that body. At the same time, the Church Missionary Society representatives in Rupert's Land, while not happy with the restrictions placed upon them, recognized that they were dependent on the good will of the Company, and attempted to work within Company guidelines.

CHAPTER III

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY EXPANSION INTO THE ENGLISH RIVER DISTRICT OF RUPERT'S LAND

In the years following the establishment of the Red River Mission, the problems of expansion afield continued to remind the Church Missionary Society of its dependence on the good will and support of the Hudson's Bay Company. Initially C.M.S. expansion had been opposed by Sir George Simpson. A variety of factors, however, including Indian migrations to Red River, and Roman Catholic pressure for permission to extend their own missions, persuaded Simpson of the strategic value of more than one Protestant mission station. The C.M.S. also had strategic considerations in mind as it mapped out expansion with an eye to Indian populations, fur trade patterns, and Roman Catholic activities. This chapter will examine the process of C.M.S. expansion in Rupert's Land between 1821 and 1849, at which time new missions had been established at The Pas, Fairford and Lac la Ronge,¹ and will focus primarily on the factors which influenced its move into the Company's major trading district of English River.

Between 1822 and 1839 the Red River Mission had itself grown considerably and two additional stations

¹See Map I.

established along the river. Included were the Upper Church built by John West in 1823 near the Red-Assiniboine junction and later known as St. John's; Middle Church built by David Jones at Image Plain in 1825 and later known as St. Paul's; the Lower Church, built by William Cockran at the Grand Rapids Station in 1829 and later known as St. Andrew's; and the church at the Indian Settlement, Cook's Creek, built by William Cockran in 1833 and known as St. Peter's.

The decision to expand to the Cumberland District in 1839 was influenced by a variety of factors. Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan River was a major focus of Indian trade and of transportation, located as it was on two major trade routes, the Saskatchewan River to the south-west and the Athabasca route to the north-west. The area had already proven itself agriculturally suitable, as John McLean noted in 1822.

Here I was cheered by the sight of extensive corn fields, horned cattle, pigs and poultry, which gave the place more the appearance of a farm in the civilized world, than of a trading post in the far North-West;²

A third factor in the choice of Cumberland House which made the move particularly urgent in the eyes of the C.M.S. was the anticipated movement of the rival Roman Catholics missionaries. John Smithhurst, then in charge of the Indian

²W. Stewart Wallace, ed., John McLean's Notes of a Twenty-Five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1932), p. 134.

Settlement, wrote that he had "received information that the Catholic Bishop was about to send a Priest for the purpose of fixing himself there."³

It is interesting to note that Sir George Simpson had some serious thoughts of his own on the anticipated Catholic expansion. The issue of Company preference for Protestant or Catholic churches in the North-West has not been seriously examined by historians. It would appear, however, that at least in the early years of the Company's missionary policy, distinct favouritism was shown the Anglicans. Roman Catholic clergy had begun building a church at Red River upon their arrival in 1818, and in 1822, the year after John West's appointment, Father Provencher was sent to Red River as Bishop of Juliopolis. They were in no way employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, and had come to Red River to minister to the large Catholic and Metis population. When the Council of Assiniboia was created as the governing body of the district in 1832, it contained no clergymen. In 1835 this was changed, but the first clergyman appointed was not the Roman Catholic Bishop who spoke for a large segment of Red River, but David Jones, the Anglican clergyman in an essentially Scottish Presbyterian and French Roman Catholic community.

³CMS/A96, John Smithhurst, Journal, 9 June, 1840. For a brief biographical sketch of Smithhurst, see Boon, The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies, pp. 47 - 49.

Provencher was asked to join the Council in 1837.⁴

Financial assistance to St. Boniface Mission appeared to be equal to that given the Anglican missions; between 1825 and 1830 it received £50, and after 1830, £100.⁵ At the same time, it received nothing comparable to the grant which financed the creation of the Anglican Diocese of Rupert's Land. As George Simpson pointed out in reply to David Anderson's accusation of favouritism to the Catholics:

. . . it was at H.B.C.'s solicitation & in great part at their expense the Bishopric of Ruperts Land was established, in order to increase the efficiency and secure the footing of the English Church in the Country & this was done while it was well known that of the white & half caste population not a tenth part belonged to the communion; had the Company consulted the predelections of the majority of the inhabitants the Church of Rome & Church of Scotland would have been those to receive their support.⁶

In the early 1840's, Simpson began to express stronger opinions on the Roman Catholic presence, as both Catholics and Anglicans looked toward Cumberland House and other areas for possible expansion. Writing to the Governor and Committee in London, he urged that although the Catholics were displeased with the Company's preference for Protestants, it should be "a measure of policy" that

⁴A. G. Morice, The History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada From Lake Superior to the Pacific, 1659 - 1895 (Toronto: Masson Book Co., 1910), Vol. I, pp. 151 - 153.

⁵Ibid., p. 153.

⁶HBC/D4/46, George Simpson to Bishop of Rupert's Land, Red River, 1 Dec., 1853.

"every endeavour should be used to check the Roman Catholic influence," ⁷ Elsewhere he indicated his basic opposition to stem from their connection with France, and French political power. ⁸

This attitude does not appear to have been translated into official policy in the 1840's, however, and by the 1850's, no attempts were being made by Simpson to curtail Catholic activity. By this time, he had stated repeatedly that the Company had "adopted a policy of perfect toleration of all creeds," ⁹ and could not officially favour anyone.

In 1840, Simpson further complicated the Catholic-Protestant rivalry by introducing a second Protestant missionary society, the British Wesleyans, into Rupert's Land. Concerned about the Indian migrations from Cumberland House, York Factory and Norway House to the Red River Settlement, Simpson saw the advantages of creating a settlement at Cumberland House to draw the Indians away

⁷ Glyndwr Williams, ed., London Correspondence Inward from Sir George Simpson 1841 - 42 (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1973), p. 25. George Simpson to the Governor and Committee, Red River, 20 June, 1841.

⁸ Ibid., p. x/vii. French Catholic priests in Hawaii were believed to have used their influence in political coercion which, it was feared, would lead to a move by the French to annex the islands.

⁹ HBC/D4/48. George Simpson to Bernard R. Ross, Fort Simpson, 24 Nov., 1858. The Company's policy toward Catholics is given a rather uncritical examination by Gaston Carrière, "L'Honorable Compagnie de la Baie-d' Hudson et les missions dans l'Ouest canadien," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, Vol. 36 (1966) 16 - 39, 232 - 257.

from Red River. He had already advised William Cockran that the Indian Settlement at Netley Creek could not be expanded, and had threatened to have it disbanded completely.¹⁰ He had also forbidden the employment of Red River Indians as trippers for Company boats, to discourage the migration.¹¹ A mission at Cumberland House might be a strategic replacement for the Indian Settlement at Red River, and the Anglican clergy would be the logical choice to establish that mission. When Cockran refused to accept Simpson's orders regarding the Indian Settlement, however, he decided that their lack of discipline could not continue. Blocking their request for passage for two missionaries to go to go to Cumberland House, he instead invited the Wesleyans to that place.¹²

The C.M.S. at Red River refused to accept Simpson's decision. Claiming the prior assurance of Benjamin Harrison that they might "locate, evangelize and civilize the

¹⁰CMS/A84, William Cockran to Church Missionary Secretaries, Indian Settlement, 23 Oct., 1834.

¹¹Thompson, "The Expansion of the Church of England in Rupert's Land from 1820 to 1839 under the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society," p. 312.

¹²For a detailed examination of the brief Methodist association with the H.B.C., see William Howard Brooks, "Methodism in the Canadian West in the Nineteenth Century," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Manitoba, 1972, Chapters I and II. See also, Pannekoek, "Protestant Agricultural Missions in the Canadian West to 1870," Ch. I.

Indians" in the Cumberland district, the Anglicans proceeded to do so. Although the co-operation between the Company and the Wesleyans was short-lived, Cumberland House was still officially Wesleyan territory when the C.M.S. arrived there. Only after the fact, and as relations between Simpson and James Evans, the principal Wesleyan missionary, began to deteriorate, did Simpson give his consent to the C.M.S.'s presence at the inland post.¹³ Simpson's primary concern appears to have been his ability to regulate the movements of missionaries in Company territories. Only in that way could he ensure that they were serving the purpose for which they had been invited to Rupert's Land, to further stabilize the fur trade society.

The Cumberland Mission Station was a significant first in the history of the Church Missionary Society in Rupert's Land. Not only was it the first Indian mission in the interior of the Company's territories, but it was established by the first fruit of the Native Indian School Establishment at Red River. Henry Budd, one of the two young Indian boys brought by John West from York Factory to be his first pupils, became the first and most promising Indian catechist and in 1850 the first Indian ordained by

¹³CMS/A78, William Cockran to Church Missionary Secretaries, Indian Settlement, 4 Aug., 1841.

the Anglican Church in North America.¹⁴ In its early years, Cumberland station was under the auspices of the Rev. James Hunter.

Missionary expansion in Rupert's Land was never again to be so painful for both the Church Missionary Society and the Hudson's Bay Company. The precedent had been set and the Company had accepted the principle of permanent inland missions beyond Red River. When the decision was made to establish a mission to the Saulteaux Indians on the northwest shore of Lake Manitoba, and Reverend Abraham Cowley sent in 1842 to select a suitable site, no opposition was given. Having selected a place called by the Indians "Pinaymootang," and known to the traders as "Partridge Crop," the C.M.S. received permission from Sir George Simpson to establish the Fairford Mission.¹⁵ Similar co-operation was given in 1845 for the Church Missionary Society's proposed expansion into the English River District.

The decision to establish a mission in the English River region appears to have been influenced by a variety

¹⁴For a biographical sketch of Henry Budd, see Thomas C. B. Boon, "Henry Budd: The first native Indian ordained in the Anglican Church on the North American continent," Christian Churchman, Vol. 84, No. 10 (May 16, 1957). See also Katherine Ann Pettipas, "A history of the work of the Reverend Henry Budd conducted under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society 1840 - 1875." Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1972.

¹⁵For a brief outline of Cowley's work at Fairford, see Boon, The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies, pp. 51 - 53. No detailed examination of this mission exists.

of considerations. Historians of the mission field claim that requests from Indians in the area of Lac la Ronge encouraged Rev. James Hunter and Henry Budd at the Pas to send out first one of their best Indian students, James Beardy, and then a native catechist from Red River, James Settee, to investigate the area's potential for missionary work.¹⁶

More strategic explanations, however, are to be found in a consideration of the history of the English River District and of the Indian bands trading within it. Of primary consideration were the Company's organization of the District, the activities of the Roman Catholic Church, and the accessibility of a new group of Indians, the Chipewyans.

The organization of the English River region into a fur trade district had begun with the first informal co-operation among the free traders in opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company, prior to the formal establishment of the North-West Company in 1775.¹⁷ In 1776, Joseph Frobisher built a fort on the Missinnippi or English River,¹⁸ about

¹⁶Ibid., p. 62.

¹⁷W. Stewart Wallace, Documents Relating to the North-West Company (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1934), pp. 3 - 8.

¹⁸Now known as the Churchill River, it was called the English River because Frobisher, an Englishman, was the first trader to travel the river. Kaye Lamb, ed. Sixteen Years in the Indian Country, The Journal of David William Harmon 1800 - 1816 (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Can. Ltd., 1957), p. 113.

190 miles from Cumberland and 750 miles from Hudson's Bay.¹⁹ He called it Fort du Traite or Trading Portage, because at that spot he had met "a considerable band of the Natives whose canoes were loaded with Furs which they were taking to York Factory (Hudson Bay)" ²⁰ He offered them rum and soon prevailed upon them to trade their beaver. He then built a fort and continued to intercept furs bound for the Hudson's Bay Company. The following winter Thomas Frobisher built a trading post on the west shore of Isle a la Crosse.²¹

After the organization of the North-West Company, development in the region continued and competition intensified. In 1781, Peter Pond established a Fort on the west shore of Lac la Ronge for the Nor-Westers. Simon Fraser wintered there in 1795 - 6, and David Thompson in 1798. In the 1790's the Hudson's Bay Company established a post in opposition to it on the north shore of the lake.²² A second Nor' Wester fort was built on the west side of Isle a la Crosse in 1791 in competition with a Hudson's Bay

¹⁹Ernest Voorhis, Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime and of the English Fur Trading Companies (Ottawa: Department of the Interior, Natural Resources Intelligence Service, 1930), p. 22.

²⁰Lamb, ed., Sixteen Years in the Indian Country, p. 113.

²¹Voorhis, Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime and of the English Fur Trading Companies, p. 22.

²²HBC/B106/a/1, Post Journal, Lac la Ronge, 19 Sept. 1797.

post established the year before. In 1808 and again in 1817, the Nor' Westers seized the Company's post, burning it the first time so that it had to be rebuilt, and imprisoning the occupants the second time.²³ When Simpson travelled through the area in 1820, he anticipated another year of hectic competition.²⁴

As trade increased and the North-West Company grew in size, a greater degree of organization was needed. By at least 1806, the Nor' Westers' territory had been divided into departments each with a headquarters and a few lesser posts. Assigned to the English River Department for that year were wintering partners Donald McTavish and J. D. Campbell, along with nine clerks, two of whom served as interpreters, and two guides.²⁵ In addition there were over fifty boatmen, almost all of whom were French Canadian.²⁶ This arrangement, with minor variations in personnel and a rotation of wintering partners, appears to have persisted to 1821.

²³Voorhis, Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime and of the English Fur Trading Companies, pp. 84 - 85.

²⁴E. E. Rich, ed., Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department by George Simpson 1820 and 1821, and Report (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1938), p. 31.

²⁵Wallace, ed., Documents of the North-West Company, p. 219.

²⁶L. R. Masson, Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest (New York: Antiquarian Press Ltd., 1960), p. 400.

With amalgamation in 1821, the Hudson's Bay Company as explained earlier, adopted the strong departmental organization of the North-West Company. English River District remained intact. Appointed to the District were George Keith as Chief Factor, and Joseph Felix La Rocque and John McLeod as Chief Traders.²⁷ All three men were former Nor-Westers who had considerable familiarity with the district. They were responsible for trade at Isle a la Crosse and the minor post of Lac la Ronge.

Extensive trade during the years of competition had begun to take its toll on the English River District. When Simpson recorded a poor return for the area in 1820 - 21, he attributed it to mismanagement in the Department.²⁸ Between 1821 and 1831, however, fur intake vascillated considerably from year to year, averaging a much lower level than in former years.²⁹ Writing from the Lac la Ronge post in 1831, the postmaster reported a gloomy season.

Tuesday 20 . . . news from Ile a al Crosse.
It is their as well as hear nothing in the
way of trade. But this we cannot help.

Saturday 24 Mirasty aman who has a large
Dept [Debt?] arrived with nothing.

²⁷Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, p. 2. Joseph Felix La Rocque is probably the same Jos. Larocque who was a clerk of the district in 1806. Wallace, ed., Documents of the North-West Company, p. 219.

²⁸Rich, ed., Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department . . ., p. 28.

²⁹Fleming, ed., Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, pp. xxxvi & lxi.

Thursday 24 the Petit Couquin arrived this morning But like all others is not payed half their debts. . . . what we will do with such as him the nixt autumn I do not know. (sic)³⁰

Hence the English River District was one of the Company's concerns in its post-amalgamation program to strengthen impoverished areas. At the Northern Council of June, 1826, a quota system was adopted for the entire territories, and the quota adjusted to the state of each district. English River, along with Fort Assiniboine, Cumberland, Lesser Slave Lake and all the posts below Norway House were reduced by one-half their normal quotas. As a further conservation measure summer hunting of beaver was discouraged and sale of traps restricted. Cultivation around the forts was recommended as a way of alleviating the burden of importing food, and also as a way of keeping the Indians from hunting in the summer. More Indians were employed in other aspects of Company activity, particularly as trippers, to further reduce the summer hunt.³¹ The use of liquor in the trading ceremony was discontinued in the District in 1827.³² There was a general concern not only with refurbishing the beaver population, but also with strengthening the Indian population,

³⁰HBC/B 106/a/z, Post Journal, Lac la Ronge, 1831.

³¹Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, p. lx.

³²The Crees of Lac la Ronge retaliated by refusing to hunt large animals for other than their own use. Ibid., p. lxi.

It was into this slowly recovering department that the first Roman Catholic missionaries ventured in 1843. The Roman Catholics had been planning an extension of their mission field north to the Athabasca region, but had been unable to carry out the plan because of a shortage of personnel. Nevertheless, one priest, Rev. John Baptiste Thibault, ventured as far as Isle a la Crosse, baptising five hundred children, mostly Chipewyan, before returning to Red River.³³ He visited the area again the following spring and reported a good reception from the Chipewyan Indians. By the time Fathers Taché and Laflèche set out to establish a permanent mission at Isle a la Crosse, however, the Anglican Church had made a counter move. As Taché later wrote of his trip to Isle a la Crosse:

Il passa par le lac Laronge, où il s'arrête quelques jours. Malheureusement, un maître d'école protestant était déjà rendu,³⁴

The Protestant school teacher was the Indian catechist, James Settee.

One of the most interesting aspects of the English River District which appealed to both churches was the accessibility of two Indian groups, the Chipewyan and the Woodlands Cree.

³³ A. G. Morice, History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada from Lake Superior to the Pacific, 1659 - 1895 (Toronto: Musson Book Co., 1910), Vol. I, p. 199.

³⁴ Alexandre A. Taché, Vingt Années de Missions dans le Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique (Montreal: Eusèbe Senecal, 1866), p. 2.

The Indians with whom missionaries had had the most experience in Rupert's Land were the Cree of the eastern and central Woodlands region. The Cree language, of which there are four dialects, is typed as Algonkian. Culturally, the majority of Cree peoples are of Woodlands type, with the exception of the Plains Cree, who migrated from the Woodlands in the late seventeenth century and developed a Plains culture.³⁵ The Woodlands Cree inhabit the northern forest area from Labrador to the Rockies west of the Peace River country. This subarctic region is fairly uniform throughout in climate and terrain.

Forested with spruce, poplar, pine and birch, it is subject to periodic forest fires. It is relatively flat, with numerous ponds, sloughs, muskegs, lakes, and slow moving meandering streams. It has specific and limited animal resources. Its seasons are four: winter, which predominates, including all but three months a year; a brief summer, break-up; and freeze-up.³⁶

Specific wildlife resources within a vast territory produced a social organization best suited for subsistence within that environment. The migratory family hunting band,

³⁵Canada, Linguistic and Cultural Affiliations of Canadian Indian Bands (Ottawa: Dept. of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1970), p. 3, and Walter M. Hlady, "Indian Migrations in Manitoba and the West," Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Series III, No. 17, pp. 24 - 31. This migration is interpreted as a response to the pressure of numbers and was facilitated by the introduction of firearms on the Bay.

³⁶Fisher, "The Cree of Canada: Some Ecological and Evolutionary Considerations," p. 13.

consisting of two or three related nuclear families formed the basic unit of Cree society.³⁷ Only during the summer fishing season did several hunting bands assemble to facilitate fishing and to celebrate religious feasts.³⁸ Political unity was virtually non-existent. Within the family hunting band the oldest male was usually recognized as head, but his authority was minimal. In the larger band gatherings, the medicine man might take leadership over a religious ceremony. In times of war, leadership would fall to an outstanding warrior. In hunting season, it would be assumed by a respected hunter. In each case, his authority would be temporary, dissolving when the particular undertaking came to an end.³⁹

This migratory subsistence life style was reflected in Cree material culture. High mobility necessitated the development of a wide variety of transportation methods such as the canoe, the snow shoe and the toboggan. It also required easily portable shelters such as birch bark or hide tents. Foods were confined to what nature offered each season: wild game, fowl, fish, leaves and berries. Clothing was fashioned from the deer, elk, moose

³⁷Ibid., p. 14.

³⁸Ibid., p. 16.

³⁹Leonard Mason, The Swampy Cree: A Study in Acculturation, National Museum of Canada, Anthropology Papers, No. 13, January, 1967, pp. 39 - 40.

or caribou skins. A simple stone technology supplied all of these necessities.

With the coming of the fur trade, this material culture was drastically altered. Initially traders brought only a few items to trade. Guns, powder, shot, brass kettles, knives and hatchets were quickly incorporated into the Cree culture. As trade increased the number and variety of trade goods did, too. Other metal implements such as cooking utensils, traps and small tools, became popular. Cloth, woolen blankets and European clothing soon supplied the complete summer costume of the Cree.⁴⁰ A wide selection of decorative beads, brooches, paints and thread were in considerable demand.⁴¹

The coming of the fur trade also altered the social structure of the Cree. The gathering of larger bands came to correspond with trading seasons, and religious festivals held at these times were modified to become trade ceremonies.⁴² Political leadership on such occasions came from a proficient hunter or an Indian with more familiarity with

⁴⁰Ballantyne, Hudson Bay: or, Everyday Life in North America, p. 33.

⁴¹For a list of goods traded in the English River District, see the Hudson's Bay Company Indent for Isle a la Crosse, 1814. Table I.

⁴²Sandra Nekich, "The Feast of the Dead: The Origin of Indian-White Trade Ceremonies in the West," Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology, Vol. IV, No. 1 (January, 1974), pp. 1 - 20.

European trade procedures. Speaking of the breakdown of traditional leadership among the English River Cree, a postmaster of the district wrote in 1823 that

Properly speaking there are no Chiefs in the District. Chieftian (sic) powers began to decline with the commencement of a plurality of Indians in the Country, which opened a wide field for independent feeling and activity and the more a diversity of Interests prevailed the greater temptation and facility were afforded for shaking off the yoke. A few Heads of Families still however retain some shadow of former power, but this shadow is merely respected from motives of desiring personal advantage and operates more by means of a Gentleness and persuasion than hereditary or assumed claims.⁴³

Clearly the trader recognized the fur trade to be a strong influence in this changing social structure.

One of the traditional leadership figures whose power was slower to weaken was the religious leader, because the Cree religion itself was altered little by the fur trade. The Cree recognized two deities, the "kitci manitu" or "Master of Life" and giver of all good things, and the "matci manitu," the source of all evil. Most of their offerings and supplications were directed to the latter. Even more greatly feared were a variety of anthropomorphic spirits such as the cannibalistic "witiko" and the spirit of death, "pahkuk." In addition, rivers, lakes, winds and all birds and animals were endowed with

⁴³HBC/B89/a/8, English River District Report, 1823/24.

spirits.⁴⁴

Although believing in a form of after life, the Cree concentrated most of their religious activity on securing temporal rewards.

Long life and health, success in hunting and in war, medicine power, prosperity, fame, happiness, and the gift of happy children--these were the things for which the Indians prayed,⁴⁵

In mediating between his people and the spirits, the shaman acted as conjuror, exorcist and medicine man.

The importance of the conjuror to Indian society cannot be underestimated. Conjuring presents a "tangible validation" of beliefs and values, providing sounds, images and processes which give reality to the abstract.⁴⁶ Social control is enforced by the belief that dangers such as illness result from a violation of the accepted code of conduct; conjuring becomes the only atonement. In addition, security and public entertainment are derived from the conjuring ceremony. Because of its wider social implica-

⁴⁴Mason, The Swampy Cree: A Study in Acculturation, p. 57 - 64.

⁴⁵Diamond Jenness, The Indians of Canada, National Museums of Canada, Bulletin 65, 1932, p. 167.

⁴⁶A. Irving Hallowell, The Role of Conjuring in Saulteaux Society (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1942), p. 85. The substance of the following paragraph is abstracted from Hallowell, pp. 85 - 88.

tions, conjuring persisted long after other aspects of Cree culture had adapted to European contact. In this facet of Indian acculturation, the missionary received no assistance from the fur trade, which had posed no threat to the Indian religion, and he found it necessary to concentrate much of his effort on converting the conjuror, or at least improving upon his powers.

In many respects the Cree tribe is very similar to its north-western neighbour, the Chipewyan, but, at least from the seventeenth century they had been bitter enemies. When the Hudson's Bay Company traders moved into the district in 1797, they reported that the two tribes were hostile to one another.⁴⁷ Wrote one trader:

I much wished to engage some of my Indians to conduct me to Deer's Lake, but notwithstanding all my intreaties he leant a deaf ear owing principally to the terror these Indians and the Chipewyans live with each other⁴⁸

The Cree would agree to go as far as Opothrecatow or Lac la Ronge, and because this was already a lucrative North-West Company trading area, the Hudson's Bay man apparently decided to establish his own post there. Initially trade

⁴⁷Active hostility between the tribes is thought to have begun when Europeans first traded weapons on the Bay in the 1600's. Fighting had ceased with the coming of the fur traders inland in 1778, but a tradition of enmity lingered on, producing sporadic attacks.

⁴⁸HBC B 106/a/1, Post Journal, Lac la Ronge, 15 August, 1797.

was carried out at this post primarily with the Chipewyan Indians, although a few Crees did frequent the post.⁴⁹

The Chipewyan Indians are an Athapaskan-speaking people inhabiting the Mackenzie River System and woodlands area north of the Churchill River.⁵⁰ Geographically and culturally they are what Jenness has termed an "edge of the woods" people.⁵¹ At one time the most numerous of the Athapaskans, they occupied

the vast triangle enclosed by a line from Churchill to the height of land separating the headwaters of the Thelon and Back rivers, another running south past the eastern ends of Great Slave and Athabasca lakes to the Churchill River, and a third east to the coast a little south of Churchill.⁵²

While their population may have at one time been extensive, the smallpox epidemic of 1781 had destroyed a large percentage of the people, reducing their number to 1,000.⁵³

⁴⁹HBC B106/d/1a, Account Books Lac la Ronge, September 1807, 1809. In 1807 there were 132 Chipewyans on the post accounts, and 22 Crees and Canadians.

⁵⁰Canada, Linguistic and Cultural Affiliations of Canadian Indian Bands, pp. 3 & 5. The Athapaskan peoples are also referred to as Dené or Tinné. The name Chipewyan is a Cree word meaning "Pointed skins," referring to the way in which the Chipewyan dried their beaver skins.

⁵¹Jenness, Indians of Canada, p. 386.

⁵²Ibid., p. 385.

⁵³Ibid., p. 385, quotes Hearne that some 90% had been destroyed. See also Helen Buckley, J. E. M. Kew, and John B. Hawley, The Indians and Metis of Northern Saskatchewan (Saskatoon: Centre for Community Studies, 1963). According to the 1954 census, there were approximately 1500 Chipewyans.

Living in a region which was primarily subarctic woodland similar to that of the Cree, subject to even more severe climatic conditions and marked seasonal variations in game, the Chipewyan peoples developed the migratory subsistence economy typical of woodland peoples. Although they carried on hunting expeditions into the "Barren Grounds" to the North, their culture is essentially woodlands.⁵⁴

Chipewyan material culture reflected this environment. Clothing was primarily fashioned from caribou skins, but because caribou were difficult to obtain, shelters were usually made from birch bark rather than skins. Fish was the mainstay of their diet, supplemented by game and fowl when available. Transportation resembled that of the Cree, with minor variations in style distinguishing a Chipewyan sled, canoe or snowshoe from that of its neighbours.⁵⁵ The infrequent use of dogs had produced a belief that Chipewyans were descended from a dog.⁵⁶ Implements were fashioned from bone or antler more often than from stone, and the Chipewyans were reputedly skilled

⁵⁴Kaj Birket-Smith, Contributions to Chipewyan Ethocology Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition, 1921 - 24, Vol. VI, No. 3, Copenhagen: Syldendalske Boghandel, 1930, p. 16.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 36 - 44.

⁵⁶J. B. Tyrrell, ed., David Thompson's Narrative of his Explorations in Western America, 1784 - 1812 (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1916), p. 131.

in the art of carving in these materials.⁵⁷

Social organization also resembled that of the Cree in reflecting a migratory life style. The family hunting bands formed the basic social unit, travelling over the vast territory for most of the year and claiming no right to any particular part of it.⁵⁸ Individual independence appears to have been even more pronounced, with few occasions of larger assemblies having been observed. Regarding leadership, one early visitor remarked with scorn that

. . . the idea of a chief with these people is merely nominal as those who have attained to the rank have not the least power of influence over their followers

Their government resembles that of the patriarchs of old, each family making a distinct community and their elders having only the right of advising but not of dictating--however in affairs of consequence the old men of the whole camp assemble and deliberate on the subjects which have caused their meeting.⁵⁹

The leader of the family hunting band did appear to have some say in who joined his band, but by the same token members were always free to separate from any band if they

⁵⁷Diamond Jenness, "The Chipewyan Indians: An account by an early explorer," *Anthropologica* III (1956), p. 21.

⁵⁸Birket-Smith, Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology, p. 109.

⁵⁹Jenness, "The Chipewyan Indians: An account by an early explorer," pp. 26 - 27.

chose.⁶⁰

The Chipewyan religion, less elaborate than that of the Cree, and therefore less visible to a European, has been little noted. The missionary found these Indians to be simply "profoundly superstitious."⁶¹ Although the Chipewyans recognized no deities, they believed that both men and animals had souls.

Simply by thought alone, the soul could bring happiness or misfortune to another person. At death the soul was thought to leave the body and to appear as a ghost with the power to harm or help the living.⁶²

Charms were frequently used to ensure hunting success and good luck in life. Each man carried a small leather bag containing personal charms such as beaver tails and otters teeth which were considered sacred.⁶³ This bag was always with the man, either at his side or hanging above him in his tent.⁶⁴ Shamanism appeared to be less significant to the Chipewyans than to the Cree. Sir John Richardson observed that

⁶⁰James W. Van Stone, The Changing Culture of the Snowdrift Chipewyan (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1965), p. 75.

⁶¹Morice, History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada, Vol. I, p. 196.

⁶²Van Stone, The Changing Culture of the Snowdrift Chipewyan, p. 104.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Jenness, "The Chipewyan Indians: An account by an early explorer," p. 18. If touched by a woman, this bag lost its power.

there were

men in the nation, with the reputation of sorcerers, who profess to have power over spirits; but they have but little personal influence, and are generally of small repute⁶⁵

The lack of ritualism in the Chipewyan religion made it almost imperceptible to David Thompson.⁶⁶ Perhaps this would explain why the missionaries, in comparing Chipewyan and Cree on first meeting, found the former to be more receptive to Christianity.

Comparisons of Cree and Chipewyan were inevitably made by both traders and missionaries. In physical appearance the two peoples were clearly distinguishable, for the Chipewyan seemed not so "pronouncedly Indian"⁶⁷ as did the Cree, failing to conform to the image of the tall, dark-skinned savage in quite the way the Cree did.

⁶⁵ Sir John Richardson, Arctic Searching Expedition: A Journal of a Boat-Voyage through Rupert's Land and the Arctic Sea in Search of the Discovery Ships under the Command of Sir John Franklin (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1852), p. 255. See also Bishop Taché's argument that this shamanism was a recent adaptation of foreign origin. Presumably he means it was a product of contact with the Cree culture. Gaston Carrière, "Bishop Alexandre Taché, O.M.I., and the Chippewa Nation," Études Oblates, Vol. XXII (October - December, 1973), p. 230. This article is a letter from Taché to his mother, written from Isle a la Crosse, 4 January, 1851.

⁶⁶ Tyrrell, ed., David Thompson's Narrative, p. 130.

⁶⁷ Birket-Smith, Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology, p. 7.

The Cree were considered to be finer of figure, countenance and carriage.⁶⁸ In manner, too, the Cree seemed superior, possessing a "much more lively and frivolous but engaging address and disposition,"⁶⁹ Clearly the meeker of the two, the Chipewyans were quicker to imitate peoples to whom they felt inferior, whether it be the neighbouring tribes, the missionary or the fur trader.⁷⁰ They were of a more timid and pacific nature. Less amiable and hospitable, less inclined to share yet always begging, and prone to lying, the Chipewyans were considered to be less congenial companions by many who travelled among them.⁷¹

At the same time, the Chipewyans were thought to be more trustworthy traders. Sir John Richardson characterized them as impeccably honest with property around the European camps.⁷² To men trading with both tribes simultaneously, Chipewyan behaviour seemed more in keeping with trader expectations. Quicker to imitate, and possessed of

⁶⁸Richardson, Arctic Searching Expedition, p. 267.

⁶⁹HBC/B89/a/8 Report English River District, 1823/24.

⁷⁰Morice, History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada, Vol. I, p. 196.

⁷¹Wallace, ed., John McLean's Notes, p. 135; Jenners, "The Chipewyan Indians: An account by an early explorer," p. 21; Richardson, Arctic Searching Expedition, p. 267.

⁷²Richardson, Arctic Searching Expedition, pp. 253 - 254.

a greater manual dexterity and mechanical ingenuity, they adopted European trade goods quickly.⁷³ More importantly for the fur trader, they seemed to understand the seriousness of failing to complete a trading agreement. Reporting from Isle a la Crosse in 1823, the postmaster explained that

The Crees of this Post are a very degenerate people. A Chipewyan arriving in their present circumstances with no furs would display all his rhetoric in deploring in bad success and representing his conduct as blameless, referring to any laudable part of former conduct, and finally conclude with a humble request to be supplied once more with a few necessaries, with a view to enable him to amend or retrieve his former good character.⁷⁴

Encouraging reports such as these were being sent by the traders to the Anglican missionaries. Rev. James Hunter at the Pas, who spoke with almost every trader travelling from the north to the Bay or to Red River, recorded requests from postmasters in the English River and Mackenzie River Districts to send clergymen to the Indians in their areas.⁷⁵

The existence of a new nation of aborigines untouched by the Gospel excited the Church Missionary Society's evangelizing ardour. Certainly the English River District had other strategic advantages, because it

⁷³HBC/B89/a/8 Report, English River District, 1823/24.

⁷⁴HBC/B89/a/5 Post Journal Isle a la Crosse, Oct. 4, 1823.

⁷⁵CMS/A91, James Hunter, Journal, the Pas, 13 June, 1847, 28 June, 1847, 26 Dec., 1850.

contained two major transportation routes and was the scene of considerable commercial transaction. An important fur trade area, it was still being nursed by the Hudson's Bay Company in the 1840's. The Roman Catholic Church, already recognizing these advantages, had begun its mission in 1844, and the C.M.S., ever conscious of the movements of its rival, realized that the Catholics had beaten them to this new field. The Chipewyans or "Northern Indians" were an important step in the C.M.S.'s plan to take the Gospel to the "Esquimaux."⁷⁶ When the Catholics made the first move, they had to act quickly.

The selection of Lac la Ronge as the specific location of the new mission station was also by no means arbitrary. The English River District contained five trading posts by 1846: Lac la Ronge, Green Lake (South West of Lac la Ronge), Deer's Lake (North-East), Frog Portage (East) and its headquarters at Isle a la Crosse (West).⁷⁷ The Catholics had already approached the Company posts at Isle a la Crosse, Frog Portage and Deer's Lake for permission to establish missions. Since Green Lake was off the main supply route, Lac la Ronge was the only logical choice for an Anglican mission.

Thus on July 8, 1846, the Church Missionary Society

⁷⁶CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, 10 August, 1850, p. 10.

⁷⁷Ibid., October, 1850, p. 27. See Map II.

sent out its second native catechist, James Settee, to establish a mission school at Lac la Ronge.⁷⁸ Doubtless he received orders similar to those of three years earlier on his departure for another potential mission site, at which time he was instructed to get a house built as quickly as possible, in order to receive children for instruction. Parents of the pupils must supply leather for clothing, while the C.M.S. would supply a blanket in the winter and a cotton shirt or gown in the spring.⁷⁹ A year later, Rev. James Hunter noted that Settee had built a two-room schoolhouse and collected fifty-three students, had planted barley and corn on freshly-cleared land, and had visited Isle a la Crosse, Cumberland and Rapid River. Prayers were being held twice daily and services twice on Sunday,

⁷⁸James Settee was a Swampy Cree, born about 1816 at Nelson River, who had been sent to the Native Indian School Establishment by Chief Factor John Charles in 1824. Not the outstanding student that Henry Budd was, Settee nevertheless showed promise, and remained at the Indian Settlement after most of his fellow students had returned to their own people. In 1839 he became schoolmaster at Park's Creek. In 1842 he was sent to establish a mission at Fort Ellice, Beaver Creek, but this failed. Thus in 1846 he was moved to Lac la Ronge. He trained for ordination with Henry Budd and was ordained deacon in 1853. In 1856, he was ordained priest. He was then appointed to Fort Pelly and Scanterbury, and in 1878 returned to Lac la Ronge. Moving to Prince Albert in 1880, he retired four years later. He died in Winnipeg, 1902. Thompson, "The Expansion of the Church of England in Rupert's Land from 1820 to 1839 under the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society," pp. 484 - 86.

⁷⁹CMS/A96, John Smithurst to James Settee, 2 Oct., 1843, "Copy of Mr. Settee's Instructions."

attended by from 30 - 100 Indians. When Rev. Hunter visited Lac la Ronge in June, 1847 he baptised 48 adults and 59 children under Settee's care.⁸⁰ On the basis of this encouraging start, the Church Missionary Society decided to send a clergyman to the Mission, and in 1849 selected the Rev. Robert Hunt.

⁸⁰CMS/A90, James Hunter, Report of Lac la Ronge Mission, 1847.

CHAPTER IV

FUR TRADER AND MISSIONARY IN THE FIELD: A PRACTICAL RELATIONSHIP

The real measure of the Church Missionary Society's debt to the Hudson's Bay Company is not to be found in the official negotiations of London or even of Red River. It is to be found, instead, in the practical, day-to-day relationship of fur trader and missionary in the isolated posts of Rupert's Land. This aspect has for the most part been ignored, or, more recently, dismissed as a relationship of disinterest.¹ Testimony from missionary journals, however, would indicate that such was not the case.

Much as the fur trader and the missionary may have wanted to ignore one another, the fact that they were the only white men for a radius of up to two hundred miles in some cases made it necessary that they look to one another for companionship and assistance. In acknowledging each other's influence over segments of the native population, they at times found it advantageous to cooperate in dealing with the Indians.

¹Pannekoek, 'Protestant Agricultural Missions to The Canadian West to 1870, pp. 30 - 31,' argues that traders and missionaries virtually ignored one another, while their wives eyed one another in jealousy of the other's social position.

Nevertheless, the missionaries did at first try to ignore their neighbours. They believed it imperative to locate stations as far from trading posts as possible, reasoning in the manner of Henry Youle Hind that

It is very desirable that a Missionary station should not be situated near a fur trading post, a settled life is diametrically opposed to the fur trade, whose stability rests upon the hunters and trappers in its employ. It has happened in Rupert's Land, that when a missionary has succeeded, after years of anxiety and toil, in establishing a station, and gathered round him a little band of Indians who have embraced Christianity, a fur-trading post has been established close by, tending to unsettle and demoralize those who would otherwise have remained quiet and stationary Christians.²

The Red River missionaries similarly recommended to the Reverend Robert Hunt in 1850 that he

should not permanently settle at present very near to the Company's Fort at Lac la Ronge; but to make a good fishing station and good land the first consideration in connection with the possibility of transporting other supplies from England and Red River³

The idea of following the Company into an isolated region such as Lac la Ronge and then expecting to be

²Henry Youle Hind, Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition of 1857 and the Assinaboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition of 1858 (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1860), Vol. II, p. 199. He does not indicate to what place he is referring.

³CMS/A89, Robert Hunt to Henry Venn, 28 January, 1850.

independent of it soon proved quite unrealistic. The experiences of Robert Hunt in his several attempts to found a permanent mission at Lac la Ronge and later along the English River indicate how necessary the Company was, not only to his evangelizing activity but to his personal survival. At the same time, the Hudson's Bay Company recognized particular advantages in the proximity of a mission station, and therefore encouraged close association between trading post and station at Lac la Ronge.

Prior to Hunt's arrival at Lac la Ronge, the fur trade community consisted of several traders, and several hundred Indians. The Hudson's Bay Company personnel remained constant through most of his term in the Northwest. The postmaster of the Rapid River Fort on Lac la Ronge for all but two of the years was Samuel McKenzie, son of Roderick McKenzie, Sr., Chief Factor of the District from 1830 to 1850.⁴ Little is known of Samuel McKenzie other than that he spoke fluent French, Cree, Chippewa (Ojibway), and English.⁵ He was married to an Indian woman, and their children were all of school age during this time. His superior officer was Chief Factor of English River District, George Deschambeault, a Quebec-born, French Roman Catholic. Hired as a clerk in 1819, Des-

⁴Rich, ed., Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department . . . , p. 454.

⁵CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, Nov., 1858, p. 1.

chambeault had an inauspicious record with the Company, being most frequently characterized as "heavy," "indolent," and "stupid."⁶ Promoted for his experience in the English River District, he was a Chief Trader in 1847, and became Chief Factor in 1851, remaining in charge of the District until 1869.⁷ He was married to a sister of Mrs. Samuel McKenzie. The other H.B.C. officer of the district was Charles Thomas, postmaster of Deer's Lake. Little is known of the man. He appears to have remained at Deer's Lake throughout the period under examination. It is probable that by 1849 the Indian population of English River District had changed little from the last available H.B.C. statistics. In the Report for the 1823/24 outfit, it was recorded that

The Northern or Chipewyan Tribe resorting last season to Ile a la Crosse and Deers Lake are Computed at 87 male adults 106 Female d^o 136 Youths and Boys and 140 Girls. The Cree Tribe, who resorted principally to Green Lake and Lac la Ronge is computed at 64 male adults, 76 female d^o 45 Youths and Boys and 50 girls-- forming a population collectively of about 704 souls.⁸

This was the population which Robert Hunt encountered when he reached Lac la Ronge.

Upon his arrival in Rupert's Land with Bishop David Anderson in the summer of 1849, Reverend Robert Hunt was as ill-equipped as the average C.M.S. missionary for the

⁶HBC/A31/1, Staff Records.

⁷Fleming, ed., Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, p. 436.

⁸HBC/B89/a/8, Report, English River District, 1823/24.

environment into which he was being sent. Born December 10, 1806 and educated in London, Hunt had first served missionary duty in Patagonia, South America with Captain Allan Gardiner of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Hence he was considerably older than most of his fellows in the North West when he completed his C.M.S. training at Islington, the Society's training College, was ordained and sent to Rupert's Land in 1849.⁹ He was a former school teacher, of rather poor health, and quite unaccustomed to the strenuous physical labour he would encounter.¹⁰

Another facet of his new environment for which he

⁹Biographical sketch compiled by Dr. Alice B. Hamilton, University of Winnipeg. He shared his lower middle class background with most of the C.M.S. men in Rupert's Land. Until the arrival of Bishop Anderson, John West was the only man with a university degree and connection with the landed gentry. Thompson, "The Expansion of the Church of England in Rupert's Land from 1820 to 1839 under the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society," p. xxvi.

¹⁰Islington College was established by the C.M.S. in 1825 to train its own missionaries because of difficulties in obtaining candidates suitable for ordination. The content of the training course followed classical lines, with ". . . the academic element . . . distinctly subordinate to the spiritual element." Stock, History of the Church Missionary Society, Vol. I, pp. 244 and 265 - 266. The quotation is from p. 266. Subjects listed at the first annual examination held in 1826 were divided into two categories. In "Classical and General Knowledge and Theology" there were Latin, Greek, Divinity, Critical Interpretation of the Greek Testament, and Logic. In "Oriental Classes" there were Hebrew, Arabic, Bengales, and Sanskrit. Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, 1826, p. 48.

he was unprepared was the extreme isolation of the Lac la Ronge mission. Hunt wrote a sensitive description of the situation:

My Parish (English River District) is certainly a large one, about 600 miles by 400 miles, with authority from the Bishop over and above what my licence contains, to preach the Gospel in "the regions beyond." But what I have seen of the country while coming hither forces the conviction upon me that there are few spots in the district that I can visit for this purpose. All is either forest through which none but an Indian can find his way, or naked rock, or swamp, or lake or river; without a solitary pathway through any part of it, except those short ones made by the voyageurs at the portages, while passing, once or twice a year, from one lake or river to another.

Over the 200,000 square miles of my district, all its aboriginal inhabitants who do not remain at the Station, or even near the forts of the H.B.C. are hunting for the greater part of the year; and in general each party consists of only one man and his family averaging . . . not more than one adult to 100 square miles of surface.¹¹

In such isolation, one chooses a mission site with consideration for the existing lines of communication. While the C.M.S. might recommend choosing a site not "very near"¹² the Fort at Lac la Ronge, the very fact that the missionaries travelled 200 miles from the nearest

¹¹CMS/A89, Robert Hunt to Major Hector Straith, 23 November, 1852.

¹²CMS/A89, Robert Hunt to Henry Venn, 28 January, 1850.

mission station at Cumberland¹³ to find a location in the vicinity of the Fort testifies to the emptiness of such claims of independence. Hunt travelled into the English River District with a Company brigade bound for the Athabasca District, at the expense of the Company,¹⁴ and was allowed to remain at Lac la Ronge Fort until he had prepared a suitable location for the mission. Given his lack of knowledge of the country and his lack of independent transportation, Hunt could not have reached the territory without Company assistance.

Another factor forced him to remain within a reasonable distance of the Fort; all of his supplies would be carried by the Company on its regular summer brigade and winter express from the Pas to the Athabasca District. To stray from this transportation route would be to lose all communication with England until the C.M.S. might be able to establish its own life line to Lac la Ronge.

Selecting the specific location, however, was no easy task. The C.M.S. had obtained permission from Company Officers at Red River, Chief Factor Ballenden and Chief Trader Black, to build a mission station, but the choice of a site would be subject to the approval of Sir George

¹³CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, October, 1850, p. 23. It was a 10 day trip by water.

¹⁴£20/annum was granted per station for missionary travel.

Simpson.¹⁵ The location proved to be less than obvious, with James Settee and Hunt each trying several spots on the shores of Lac la Ronge and along the banks of the English River. The first site selected by Settee was beside the Hudson's Bay Post at the mouth of the Rapid River on Lac la Ronge. When this proved incapable of agricultural development, Settee selected a spot some forty miles from the Fort, but still along the lakeshore. Within two years this site was also found to be too rocky and poorly drained. At this time the Station was removed to the banks of the English River, and built on a spot with better agricultural prospects, still about forty miles from the Fort. First designated Church Missionary Point, it was later named Stanley Mission.¹⁶ The Mission has remained at this location to the present day.

During this time the Hudson's Bay Company Fort also underwent relocation. After the arrival of the missionary in 1850, the Fort, which had formerly closed its storerooms in the summer and left a minor clerk in charge, began to open for trade on a constant basis. Summer hunting of most fur-bearing animals had resumed, although quotas were still being applied, and the officer in charge

¹⁵CMS/A89, Robert Hunt to Ballenden and Black, Fort Garry, 10 May, 1850.

¹⁶Bishop Anderson selected the name in honour of Mrs. Georgianna Hunt's home, Stanley Park, Gloucester, England.

was remaining there throughout the summer.¹⁷ Although there had been talk of moving Rapid River Fort before missionaries entered the vicinity,¹⁸ it was not until 1853, after the C.M.S. had fixed on the site of Stanley Mission, that the Fort was relocated directly across the river from the Mission.

Of this move by the H.B.C., Hunt remarked that "their Fort has followed us here."¹⁹ Indeed, this appeared to be the case, because during the same period new forts were also established beside C.M.S. missions at the Pas,²⁰ and at Fairford.²¹ The necessity of such close proximity developed with an increased threat from independent traders who were defying the Company's monopoly of trade. Although Metis traders had been successfully contravening the H.B.C. monopoly for some time in Red River, by trading with Americans to the south, monopoly control was more successful in the isolated regions of Rupert's Land. Nevertheless this threat by free traders in the 1850's was greeted with

¹⁷CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, August, 1850, p. 11.

¹⁸CMS/A89, Robert Hunt to Henry Venn, 28 January, 1850.

¹⁹CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, June, 1857, p. 30.

²⁰HBC/D4/51, George Simpson to Adam McBeath, York Factory, 11 June, 1856.

²¹Voorhis, Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime and of the English Fur Trading Companies, p. 66. Fairford House was established in approximately 1856.

apprehension. The Company, fearing that these men would take advantage of Indians collecting at the Mission, moved their own men into a position of more careful observance.²²

Clearly proximity of fur trade and mission stemmed from practical considerations on both sides. If the Mission needed to keep within reasonable distance to ensure the communication and transportation necessary for survival, the Company wanted it close at hand so that it could be kept under proper surveillance.

In the development of the Mission Station, close co-operation of the Hudson's Bay Company was also required. In particular, its transportation system proved invaluable. Although the C.M.S. attempted to establish its own supply network from England to the various stations, a lack of familiarity with the territory led to several calamities. By 1859, the C.M.S. had chartered eighteen ships to take supplies into Hudson's Bay, and on no less than three occasions these ships were lost at sea, although not one of the Company ships had met such a fate in the same period.²³ While this could no doubt be credited to inexperience, it meant that all supplies and letters were

²²The free traders in the English River District did not appear to be associated with the Red River Metis; most had Scottish names such as Bruce and may or may not have been half-breed. No mention is made of these details in the Company records.

²³CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, Nov., 1859, p. 57.

lost and the missionaries left at the mercy of the Company for food and other necessities.

Even when the Company's ships carried C.M.S. freight across the ocean and the missionaries attempted to distribute it themselves from York Factory, difficulties detained these supplies for one or two years en route. It was difficult for the C.M.S. to hire Indian trippers because most of the skilled and reliable men were in the employ of the Company.²⁴ If a crew could finally be assembled at Lac la Ronge to retrieve supplies from York Factory, it was often so late in the season that the canoes would be caught by winter freeze-up, and abandoned, cargo and all, on some lake shore or river bank.²⁵

In general, the transportation of supplies was effected by a combination of C.M.S. and H.B.C. effort. The Company freighted supplies from England to York Factory, where they were stored in Company warehouses at a cost to the Society. Hunt, for example, received his share of the shipment either via Red River and Norway House, or via the Pas. The last lap, from Norway House or the Pas to English River, was a frequent source of contention between Hunt and the Company, which would carry C.M.S. supplies on its Athabasca Brigade only if it had room. Frequently Hunt was forced to transport his supplies through

²⁴Ibid., May, 1856, p. 29.

²⁵Ibid., April, 1852, p. 41.

this last stage. In such cases the shipment's travelling time from England to Stanley Mission was no less than two years.²⁶

If some package went astray, it took considerably longer. Having received some roofing felt for the Church, Hunt remarked that it had spent its first winter in the North West at York Factory, the next at Norway House, the next at Red River, "having been sent thither by mistake;" the next at Norway House again and the next in the store-room at Stanley Mission. After five years en route, it was finally being put to its intended use.²⁷

The degree of dependence on Company transportation is reflected in the missionary's reaction to a move by the H.B.C. to increase the tax charged on freight. Hunt claimed that the increase would effectively reduce by half the amount of supplies they could obtain, indicating that the Company was their sole life line to areas of settlement.²⁸

Letters, magazines and other mail were not always so long on the road, because, being light, they were more readily carried on all Company expresses and brigades.

²⁶For some of the problems of transportation to Lac la Ronge, see the following entries in Hunt's Journal, Ibid., April, 1852, p. 41; May, 1856, p. 29; October, 1852, p. 2.

²⁷Ibid., August, 1858, p. 30.

²⁸CMS/A89, Robert Hunt to Joseph Ridgeway, 24 Dec., 1853.

Letters are delivered to us gratis by the H.H.B. Co. at least they make no charge for transporting them through their territory but what a priceless comfort England would lose if she could exchange the speed and punctuality of her penny postage, for the costless comfort of the conveyance of our correspondence.²⁹

Of course they, too, could go astray.

An important letter containing the professional advice of a Physician reached us from England the summer after having been sent past us in the Spring in a parcel addressed to Athabasca Of two letters I sent to meet Archd. Hunter on his way hither this spring, neither had reached him when he arrived here.³⁰

In October of 1860 Hunt was lamenting that for the third year in a row he had received no letters from England.³¹ In an organization which depended heavily upon detailed instructions and reports and the benefit of spiritual comfort from fellow missionaries, a lengthy breakdown in communication was a serious impediment.

Whenever letters or supplies were not delivered, according to plan, Robert Hunt accused the Hudson's Bay Company men of deliberately refusing to carry Mission goods. He particularly suspected the intentions of George Deschambeault, who, being a Catholic, was grouped in Hunt's mind with the Catholic missionaries as an enemy of the

²⁹CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, August, 1858, pp. 30 - 31.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid., October, 1860, p. 30.

Protestant Mission.

It is difficult to know whether Hunt's charges were justified or not. Certainly George Simpson urged that Hunt's supplies be transported regularly, because, as he admonished Deschambeault,

Hunt is rather disposed to find fault and on that acct it is well to try and keep on good terms with him; as, indeed, you must endeavour to do with all the missionaries with whom you come into communication.³²

At the same time Deschambeault did not seem to have any basic objections to the Protestant Mission, when he wrote in 1853 that "both the Missions in this District are doing well and their exertions and Labour in the cause of Christianity deserves great praises" ³³ But when time and again Hunt's supplies were left in the Company storehouses, because there was no room in the boats, he could not help but suspect the officers of plotting against him.

Even when Hunt undertook limited expeditions on his own, he was indebted to the Company. Canoes were usually bought from the Company.³⁴ More importantly, the pemmican which, because of its compact nature and preservability, provided the basic diet of trippers, was

³²HBC/D4/53, George Simpson to George Deschambeault, 12 November, 1857.

³³JBC/D5/36, George Deschambeault to Governor, Chief Factors, Chief Traders, Northern Department, Isle a la Crosse, 20 January, 1853.

³⁴HBC/B106/1, Lac la Ronge Fort to Robert Hunt, 10 July, 1850.

purchased primarily through the Company. Account books for the Station show a standing order at York Factory for two 112 lb. bags of Buffalo Grease and three 90 lb. bags of "Common Pemican."³⁵ In addition pemmican could be obtained en route at various forts. So dependent on the Company was the missionary in English River District, that Hunt regretfully observed, "they could probably disable you, by simply letting you alone."³⁶

Even having received his foodstuffs, building supplies and written instructions, Hunt found himself indebted to the previous experience and advice of the postmasters when he attempted to develop the station. It was the C.M.S.'s desire to create as nearly as possible the self-sufficient agricultural community outlined above, and in an effort to effect this, Hunt relied on the agricultural experience of the H.B.C. men. The more northerly latitude of English River made it impossible to rely on the agricultural experience of Red River; instead Hunt benefited from the fact that the Company had already tested these isolated locations for their ability to support a post. Knowing, for instance, that crops had failed consistently on the north shore of Deer Lake, Hunt refused to locate a mission there in spite of requests from the postmaster.³⁷

³⁵HBC/B89/2/1, Miscellaneous Papers, Isle a la Crosse.

³⁶CMS/A90, Robert Hunt Journal, February, 1858, p. 14.

³⁷Ibid., September, 1858, p. 38.

Agriculture was a difficult enterprise at Stanley Mission. Hunt despaired of ever making the Station self-sufficient when he wrote:

. . . we must begin to put the spade into the ground as soon as it is a little dry after the melting of the snow; at this time we must hurry on, that we may not that we may not (sic) be left far behind the short-lived summer; here we can scarcely (sic) say we have a Spring and Autumn distinct from Summer; far from snow 6 or 7 months old we suddenly pass through a little flood to a sunny and hot season, soon succeeded by heavy and prolonged thunderstorms, and almost immediately after we must hurry everything off the ground and bury it in cellars lined with hay or rushes, and trench and ridge our ground if we wish to be ready to advance with the next summer; . . .³⁸

Clearly such conditions left little chance for trial and error. Few plants would grow, and for that selection, the missionary relied on seed supplies by the postmaster.³⁹

Experiments had to wait until some crops had been established.

In spite of the difficulties, however, agriculture was encouraged by the Hudson's Bay Company because it reduced the amount of imported food required to support even the smallest settlement. Simpson applauded Samuel McKenzie for his interest in gardening. By the same token,

³⁸Ibid., March, 1860, p. 17.

³⁹Ibid., March, 1851, p. 42. Potatoes, oats, wheat and barley were grown.

if the Mission Station could supply most of its food needs, it would not be dependent on the Company for food.

In the construction and maintenance of buildings Hunt had the prior example and aid of the Company. Weather-proofing buildings in the north proved the most difficult task. Occasionally carpenters employed by the H.B.C. were loaned to the mission in exchange for the labour of the mission carpenter when needed by Mr. McKenzie. Because carpentry was, next to agriculture and fishing, the third essential secular task of the community, Hunt found much of his time occupied in building. Therefore he appreciated the occasional personal assistance of Mr. McKenzie in the erection of houses, a school house, an ice house, a carpenter's shop and particularly a church.⁴⁰

Although Hunt scarcely acknowledged the fact, his greatest debt to the Hudson's Bay Company and particularly to Samuel McKenzie was the way in which the postmaster had established lines of communication with the native population of the English River District. The Hudson's Bay Company had established itself as a patron of the Indians, with its traders as middlemen in the relationship. It was the Company's intention to create client-dependency on the goods and services it offered, and then control behaviour of its clients by regulating the sources of these goods and services. As Simpson outlined it to Andrew

⁴⁰Ibid., February, 1859, p. 9.

Colville

I have made it my study to examine the nature and character of the Indians and however repugnant it may be to our feelings, I am convinced they must be ruled with a rod of iron, to bring, and keep them in a proper state of subordination, and the most certain way to effect this is by letting them feel their dependence upon us.⁴¹

In this way the Company obtained powers over the natives to command acceptance of certain actions such as regular trading agreements and employment as trippers and labourers. The Company's influence over the Cree and Chipewyan was noted by Hunt, who described them as obeisant

towards the officers of the H.H.B.C. whose servants they call themselves and whose servants they make themselves by almost always being in debt.⁴²

By being allowed to associate their work with the Company, the missionary benefited from this influence.

Although to the Company, Samuel McKenzie was a go-between for its interests, McKenzie and the Indians would probably perceive his position quite differently. Because it was McKenzie who distributed gifts and trade items, dispensed medication, and controlled native access to the higher authorities in Rupert's Land, he was perceived as

⁴¹George Simpson to Andrew Colville, Fort Garry, 20 May, 1822, Merk, ed., Fur Trade and Empire, p. 179.

⁴²CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, December, 1853, p. 16.

a patron in his own right,⁴³ and given due respect by the Indians. It was he who controlled movement of the Indians with accounts at his post, determining whether they could travel to other areas, either in the employ of the Company or the C.M.S. or for purposes of trade. Similarly, he could regulate Indian contacts with other Europeans by cutting off supplies of guns and other items not elsewhere available, should the Indian displease him by associating with a free trader.⁴⁴ It was in his power to control Indian associations with the missionary by similarly withdrawing supplies, had he chosen to do so. McKenzie, however, chose to support the missionary.

To what extent his support was in line with Company policy, and to what extent it was his own particular interest is difficult to determine. Company policy in the 1850's required that traders be helpful and courteous to missionaries, and give them lodging in transit, and facilitate their contact with the Indians of the region. It required,

⁴³Jean Briggs, "Strategies of Perception: The Management of Ethnic Identity," in Paine, ed., Patrons and Brokers in the East Arctic, pp. 55 - 73.

⁴⁴CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, September, 1856, pp. 53 - 54. "The Indian must look to them for certain articles that they cannot always get from the unorganized body of the Free Traders; because these articles such as guns, axes etc; all absolutely necessary to the Indian as he now is, do not bear from 500 to 700 per cent profit in exchange for furs: . . . Now anyone that should sell his furs to a free trader, would, when obliged to apply to the Co. for a gun or any such article, be told to go to the trader to whom he sold his furs on such & such an occasion: and any Indian who displeases the Co. of whom they do not favour, is in a like position."

too, that they not discriminate against any particular religion, but assist all equally. At the same time, Simpson declared that postmasters and officers were free to give additional aid to the religion of their choice if they so desired. The Company

would not interfere with the religious convictions of any person in their service, nor prevent them, in their private capacity, exhibiting the preference they might feel for their own creed.⁴⁵

When McKenzie sanctioned Hunt's religious activities passively, and assisted him with secular needs such as transportation, food and lodging he was complying with Company policy. When he actively participated in religious ceremony, he did so out of his own interest.

McKenzie made his support obvious to the Indians of the district by arranging the first religious meeting between Hunt and the Indians. Upon Hunt's arrival at Lac la Ronge he spent two days at the Fort as a guest of McKenzie and his family. Introduced to Jacob Bird, an acknowledged leader of the Lac la Ronge Cree, Hunt was forced to rely upon interpreters in order to establish even the very simplest dialogue. The first services conducted at the Fort were made possible through the interpreting of McKenzie, who was well-versed in the Cree dialect of the region.⁴⁶

⁴⁵HBC/A12/10, George Simpson to Governor and Committee, York Factory, 21 June, 1859. Cited in Carrière, "L'Honorable Compagnie de la Baie-d'Hudson et les missions dans l'Ouest Canadien," p. 30.

⁴⁶CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, July, 1850, p. 4.

Samuel McKenzie had done much, prior to the arrival of Settee, and Rev. Hunt, to teach the Protestant religion to the Cree Indians, following the example set by his father, Roderick Mackenzie.⁴⁷ Hunt acknowledged this fact shortly after his arrival.

I found Mr. S. MacKenzie apparently disposed to assist our efforts to instruct the Indians and I ought to mention what I hear of his own past labours for their good. I was met at the Pas, the Rev^d Mr. Hunter's station, by two of the Lac la Ronge Indian men, Abraham* and Paul.* This Abraham while still a heathen and a conjuror, was taken by Mr. S. MacKenzie's Father, Rod^k Mackenzie Esq., late Chief Factor of the English River District, to Norway House about eight years ago, in order that he might be instructed in the Christian religion. He returned a few months later and taught what he knew to his fellow Indians, and these Mr. Sam MacKenzie invited to the Fort and taught them to read and write in Mr. Evan's Cree characters; they now correspond in this character and repeat and attempt to sing many Cree hymns which Mr. MacKenzie taught them.⁴⁸

This prior instruction would most certainly facilitate Hunt's endeavours. The efforts of Samuel McKenzie to teach

⁴⁷Rich, ed., Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department, pp. 453 - 454.

⁴⁸CMS/A89, Robert Hunt to Major Hector Straith, Stanley Mission, 25 July, 1850. It is interesting to note that although the McKenzies appeared to be of Protestant faith, the Roman Catholics in English River District reported a very friendly relationship with Roderick McKenzie during his latter years as Chief Factor at Isle a la Crosse. See Gaston Carrière, "The Oblates and the Northwest: 1845 - 1861," The Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Study Session No. 37 (1970), p. 46.

the syllabic system were particularly significant because it was upon the syllabic system that Robert Hunt placed the greatest emphasis during his eleven years at Lac la Ronge. Realizing rather quickly that Stanley Mission could not become an agricultural settlement after the style of the Indian Settlement at Red River, he advised the London Secretaries that to encourage settlement upon land which could not support them would be harmful.⁴⁹ Since the Station found daily existence an uncertainty when the population was small, it could not hope to support any large number of natives. Thus Hunt hoped to find a method of evangelizing which could accommodate the migratory life of the hunter. It was to this end that he simplified the syllabic system of James Evans. If a hunter could not stay near the Church for regular worship and guidance, he could carry with him the prayer books, catechisms, and biblical passages which had been printed in Cree syllabics. The "Mission of the CMS" was to "evangelize chiefly by teaching to read, that the Bible itself may be the portable preacher."⁵⁰

The beauty of the syllabic scheme, according to Hunt, was its versatility and the ease with which it could be learned.

⁴⁹ Ibid., June, 1857, p. 28.

⁵⁰ Ibid., June, 1857, p. 30.

. . . a printed sheet containing the Decalogue, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, etc., with a few sheets of ruled paper, a lead pencil and a copy of a [illegible] alphabet and a single day's instruction would nearly or quite suffice to enable them to qualify themselves to read.⁵¹

If the C.M.S. would adopt his few modifications to the Evans scheme they would have the simplest yet most precise form of recording any spoken language.⁵² It could be used for all languages of the Old as well as the New World.⁵³ Hunt had even devised a system by which the blind could read syllabics which had been embossed on tin.⁵⁴

In his work with syllabics, Hunt faced the constant opposition of Archdeacon James Hunter, who, with the aid of his wife, did many Cree translations in transliteration, i.e., using the Roman alphabet. Hunter believed that the syllabic system confused the Indian unnecessarily, while Hunt argued that although Roman characters were an advantage to the European,

. . . with any Indian that is a stranger to them the case is very different: they are complex, and no leading principle exists to aid him in the acquisition of

⁵¹Ibid., p. 31.

⁵²Ibid., January, 1858, p. 4. See also CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Syllabic Scheme.

⁵³CMS/A90, Robert Hunt Journal, Sept., 1861, p. 39.

⁵⁴Ibid., April, 1858, p. 26.

their powers: the forte of his mind exists not so much in form, as in locality.⁵⁵

The Roman alphabet is based on form, or shape of letters, while the syllabic scheme is based on position. This debate on Indian perception was never resolved.

Nevertheless, knowledge of Indian languages, and preparation of scriptural texts in those languages, were an important task for the northern missionary. In his study of Cree, and in his laborious translations for the natives, Hunt was constantly aided by McKenzie, who received, in exchange, lessons in English Grammar.⁵⁶ McKenzie also taught the modified Cree syllabics to Hunt's students when he was free to join the classes at the Mission,⁵⁷ and supported Hunt's attempts to extend the syllabic system to the Chipewyan language.⁵⁸

McKenzie signified his approval of the missionary's endeavour in many other ways. In his personal life, he observed the moral requirements of the missionary's "civilized society." He was married to his Indian wife in a religious ceremony shortly after Hunt arrived in the district. He became a communicant of the church,⁵⁹

⁵⁵Ibid., December, 1855, p. 56.

⁵⁶Ibid., January, 1856, p. 6.

⁵⁷Ibid., February, 1855, p. 5, and April, 1858, p. 35.

⁵⁸Ibid., October, 1860, p. 29.

⁵⁹Ibid., March, 1851, p. 43.

attending services at the Fort and frequently visiting the Station to attend church services and dine with the Hunt family.⁶⁰ His children were all duly baptized at birth,⁶¹ and when one child died, it received burial in the churchyard.⁶² In addition, McKenzie actively assisted Hunt, using his knowledge of French to proselytize to the French-speaking Company servants at the post.⁶³

Support was also given in secular mission activities. Three of McKenzie's daughters, along with two daughters of Charles Thomas, Postmaster of Deer Lake, attended school at the mission Station under the instruction of Mrs. Hunt. Twice a week, Mrs. Hunt also held school classes at the Fort.⁶⁴ On special occasions both Fort and Mission combined for a feast or celebration to foster community spirit. During Easter festivities, for instance, McKenzie offered some of the prizes at the regular shooting competitions held at the Mission.⁶⁵

Operating with the approval of Samuel McKenzie,

⁶⁰HBC/B174/a/1, Post Journal, Rapid River, 14 April, 1861.

⁶¹CMS/A90, Robert Hunt Journal, May, 1856, p. 29.

⁶²Ibid., July, 1855, p. 4.

⁶³Ibid., May, 1851, p. 51.

⁶⁴Ibid., January, 1856, p. 6.

⁶⁵Ibid., April, 1860, p. 24.

Robert Hunt was able to establish his own position of influence among some of the Lac la Ronge Cree. Hunt presented himself to the Indians as a middle-man for the Church Missionary Society in England, and also as a middle-man for Christ. In the latter instance he offered the Indians the doctrine of Christian theology, and in the former instance the accompanying trappings of a civilized Christian society. Because these two roles were intertwined in the missionary's own perception of himself, they were naturally not separated by the receiving clients. Nevertheless, it was to the former rather than the latter that they responded initially. Because the religion being offered was alien to the local environment, and challenged traditional concepts of morality and patterns of behaviour, the Indians were attracted to the mission more by the European goods and services to which they had already become accustomed at the trading post.⁶⁶

Material goods were an important part of Hunt's approach to the Indian peoples. Quite in keeping with traditional Indian symbolic gift exchange were the small packets of tobacco or tea which he offered a newcomer, a token of good will which the Indian considered an integral part of any meeting.⁶⁷ According to Indian custom each

⁶⁶James Hiller, "Early Patrons of the Labrador Eskimos: The Moravian Mission in Labrador, 1764 - 1805," in Robert Paine, ed., Patrons and Brokers in the East Arctic, p. 84.

⁶⁷Rotstein, "Trade and Politics: An Institutional Approach," p. 1.

person was to receive a gift, and Hunt complied, explaining that

. . . . we also gave the whole party various things, as is our custom, when they come to remain any time, and show themselves attentive at least, if not desirous of instruction:⁶⁸

It was, however, the use of larger gifts, and promises of repeated gifts in return for frequent visits to the station, which illustrate the mechanism of patronage. To mission adherents, Hunt distributed warm winter clothing, prized by the Indians during severe winters.⁶⁹ School children and elderly people in particular received the most clothing. When newcomers expressed an interest in visiting the Station again, Hunt would hold out the promise that "if they would bring their wives & children to see Mrs. Hunt, she would give them some children's clothes."⁷⁰ This had gone beyond the realm of symbolic gift exchange.

A wide variety of material goods were distributed to the Indians, some in exchange for labour promised, others gratuitously. Many were donations from private individuals in England, while others were C.M.S. purchases or items of the Hunt family's personal supplies. Fish hooks, twine for nets, blankets, cooking utensils, foodstuffs, and small agricultural implements were all popular goods. Ammunition,

⁶⁸CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, May, 1853, p. 39.

⁶⁹Ibid., September, 1854, p. 48.

⁷⁰Ibid., September, 1854, p. 41.

purchased from the H.B.C., was given to each hunter, usually on the understanding that he would sell to the Mission a portion of the meat he killed.⁷¹ This proved to be an effective drawing card for Indians at a distance, such as the Chipewyan band who told Hunt that they "had heard that when he first came to Lac la Ronge he gave away a good deal, and they had come to see what he was doing," ⁷²

The missionary's second attractive feature was his medical knowledge, and he used it to good advantage. Since the H.B.C. employed only twelve medical men for their entire territory, and the average postmaster, while having a supply of medicines, had little knowledge of their use, Simpson's claim that "every trading establishment was in fact, an Indian hospital," and that free medical attention was available to all Indians, is somewhat exaggerated.⁷³ Having had albeit a short medical course prior to his service

⁷¹HBC/B89/c/1, George Simpson to the Bishop of St. Boniface at Isle a la Crosse, Norway House, 12 June, 1854. Missionaries were not allowed to import ammunition from England, but had to obtain it from the H.B.C. Store at Isle a la Crosse, because it was a staple article of trade, and the Company wanted to control its distribution. The C.M.S. was allowed to purchase meat from the Indians, but no leather or furs.

⁷²CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, May 53, 39.

⁷³George Simpson to Sir John H. Pelly, London, 1 February, 1837, submitted as evidence in Great Britain, Report from the Select Committee, 1857, p. 421.

in Patagonia, Hunt was an avid proponent of the controversial Homeopathic treatment whereby illnesses were treated with minute doses of the disease-causing poison.⁷⁴ He was also quite successful at restoring partially severed fingers and toes. Thus whenever accident or illness occurred at the Fort or within travelling distance of the Mission, Hunt's medical knowledge was called upon. Even McKenzie and his family came to rely upon the missionary's knowledge. Indeed, Hunt recognized the advantage obtaining from his medical service. "We hope," he remarked after restoring a severed finger on a young Chipewyan boy, "the many bad wounds all quickly and well cured, by God's blessing in Arnica chiefly and care, will increase our influence for good."⁷⁵

In the medical sphere, Hunt was challenged chiefly by the Cree medicine men, and it was in restoring to health people whom they had failed to cure that he acquired his greatest influence. Cree medicine was practised in two parts, the application of herbs, roots and specific treatments such as bloodletting and sweating, and the conjuring of spirits. Although the two are integrally related in the Cree religion, to Hunt they could be separated, and

⁷⁴The other method favoured at the time was known as allopathy, whereby remedies producing effects different from those produced by the disease are applied.

⁷⁵CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, May, 1857, p. 7. Arnica was used primarily to treat open wounds, although it could be taken internally.

he could remark with some measure of relief that Abraham Roberts, one of the first Christian Indians of Lac la Ronge did not attempt any "superstitious application" of the old medicines although he continued to administer them.⁷⁶ In modifying Indian medicine to this degree, Roberts was probably imitating Hunt.

Robert Hunt's third and least effective method of establishing his influence over the Indians was in the hiring of servants and workmen. Since the most effective labourers and trippers among the Lac la Ronge Cree and Chipewyan had at one time or another worked for the Company, Hunt attempted to attract them by offering a higher wage than was available from the Company. While at the Fort a workman received 10 beaver per month and a ration of whitefish, Hunt offered 12 beaver per month, and in addition to whitefish, a half-bushel of potatoes per working day.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, he could not overcome the Indians' loyalty to the Company, and in his efforts to outbid McKenzie for workmen, he met with strong opposition. Proposals were put forward by McKenzie and Deschambeault whereby the Company would hire all servants for the Mission, but this was never put into practice. In the system finally established, however, Indians with any debt at the Fort needed

⁷⁶Ibid., July, 1853, p. 11.

⁷⁷Ibid., March, 1857, p. 9.

the permission of the postmaster to contract any term of employment at the mission. By attempting to outbid the Company, Hunt also led the Indians to expect more of the Mission, more food, higher wages, more free time.

. . . what the Co. who use & profit by their hunting & trapping abilities, will not grant them, viz the right to claim liberty to live upon them, when where & how they please; they assume & act upon in the case of the C.M.S. . . . ; because we give all we can for their spiritual, mental and bodily welfare, they assume that they are at liberty to take from us what we cannot afford to spare them--.⁷⁸

While this was certainly a logical outcome of his approach, it was contrary to the C.M.S. ideal of exchanging goods only for services rendered. Having caught himself in the situation, however, Hunt continued a liberal distribution of goods.

While not as successful at collecting a reliable labour force, Hunt was able to develop a religious following. While the company might interfere with employment, it did not oppose conversion, which was also liberally rewarded by the missionary. To his group of converts, Hunt became a patron in his own right, a religious leader whose approval was sought. While conversion might initially stem from economic motives, it developed into a more direct relationship between patron and client whereby Hunt's will need no longer be reinforced with material goods.

⁷⁸Ibid., December, 1857, p. 35.

A member of the congregation who had accepted Christian doctrine saw Hunt as controlling the means of grace, and would not wilfully alienate himself from the minister. Hence Hunt had become not only a secular patron but a religious patron.

In approaching Indians throughout the English River District, Hunt relied greatly upon the social structure which had evolved in a trading economy. As mentioned earlier, traditional political leadership among the indigenous peoples had to some extent been replaced by leaders who excelled in the fur trade. European traders frequently made "chiefs" of the outstanding hunter, and accorded them special treatment.⁷⁹ It was to these fur trade chiefs that Hunt appealed when he first contacted the Indian people. Jacob Bird, "chief" of the Lac la Ronge Cree, had apparently distinguished himself as a hunter,⁸⁰ and had thus acquired some influence among his people. It appeared to be a very limited power, however, for there is no indication that he exerted it to any great degree. Nevertheless, it was to Hunt's advantage to employ whatever influence Jacob Bird may have had in the interests of missionary activity. It was also important to have a spokesman who could act as a go-between for Hunt in his relationship with the Cree.

⁷⁹James Parker, "The Fur Trade and the Chipewyan Indian," Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology, Vol. III, No. 1 (1972), p. 48.

⁸⁰CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, December, 1853, p. 6.

Thirdly, because the clergyman believed in the separation of religious and legal powers, and did not consider it the church's place to assume any governmental powers, he encouraged an orderly system of governmental authority among the Indians themselves. He made it clear to Jacob Bird that

The only secular authority [he] assumed was over the affairs of the Station in which [he] should be as careful not to allow impertinent interference as [he] should be careful not to interfere impertinently with the authority & influence God had given [Bird] as chief of the Lac la Ronge Indians.⁸¹

Although not enjoying as close a relationship with the Chipewyan "Chief," he was careful to reinforce the position accorded the Chipewyan by the fur traders.

I gave him my own new beaver hat (to complete his European dress) which is an article such chiefs covet; He had with him a more efficient crew than I can muster for my Mission trips; . . . and when he embarked in his canoe he wore his Doe-skin gloves somewhat ostentatiously, as if to say you see I do not paddle myself . . . , but in his own lands he has to lay aside the gentleman and most of the substantials of the Chief⁸²

Such an action would increase the "chief's" influence among his own people by making him the middle-man to another source of European patronage. At the same time it would increase the chances of Hunt's obtaining a favourable

⁸¹Ibid., August, 1851, p. 18.

⁸²Ibid., June, 1858, p. 8.

reception from the distant Chipewyans when he visited them.

The social structure of the fur trade also influenced missionary activity at other levels. Many of the regular Indian servants at the Rapid River Fort also appear to have become mission adherents. With the exception of the French-speaking servants in McKenzie's post journal for 1861, all of the carpenters, fishermen and hunters for the fort appear regularly in the Mission journals as either part of the Christian community or potential converts.⁸³ Most highly acculturated, most frequently accessible, and most strongly under McKenzie's influence, these Indians would be the most receptive to Hunt's proselytizing.

Once Robert Hunt had acquired a personal influence among the Christian Indians, it was in McKenzie's best interest not to alienate the missionary and the Christian community. In fact, McKenzie frequently used Hunt as a middle-man in negotiations with the Christian Indians. When there was a dispute concerning furs, McKenzie sent for Hunt to "induce some Indians to give up to him some furs that they had over and above what they owed the Co.: . . .,"⁸⁴ and Hunt used his influence to settle dispute. Hunt, in this position, was able to obtain even further co-operation

⁸³HBC/B174/a/1, Post Journal, Rapid River, 1861.

⁸⁴CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, June, 1861, p. 1.

from the postmaster, who recognized the advantages of retaining the good will of this middle man.

The process also worked in reverse. When the Christian Indians had a particular request to make of the postmaster, and could get no co-operation from direct petition, they channelled their request through the missionary.

. . . Jacob Bird, the Chief; requested me to tell the chief officer here, that if these articles flour, tea, sugar could be furnished them at the Fort in moderate proportions to other goods, they would promise to dispose of all their furs to the Co. I did not wish to interfere . . . but . . . I thought it would be doing a good office to both parties if I so far complied with the chief's wish⁸⁵

In matters of the fur trade, however, Robert Hunt had to be very careful with his words and actions, because, while McKenzie sanctioned Hunt's missionary activity, he was ever watchful for signs that Hunt was infringing upon his control of trade. Church Missionary Society instructions to new missionaries were very explicit on the subject, warning that they "were absolutely forbidden to trade with the Indians either for furs or leather or indeed for skins in any form or shape," and that they were not to have "anything to say to the Indian respecting their trade." Should the Indians complain of the trade, Missionaries were to give no opinion; their business was to "teach the word of God and not to judge between the trader and the

⁸⁵Ibid., June, 1861, p. 1.

Indians."⁸⁶ This advice was given to all Rupert's Land missionaries by the C.M.S., and is probably a result of experience gained with trading companies in African or Eastern societies. In the Hudson's Bay Territories, the increasing challenge to Company monopoly from the Red River region and hostile London businesses made missionary non-interference particularly urgent. Robert Hunt was very careful to follow his superiors' advice.

Nevertheless, most of the conflict between Robert Hunt and the Hudson's Bay Company in the English River District stemmed directly from the Company's concern for their monopoly. During the 1850's, free traders from Red River were threatening to enter the District, and a few did indeed reach Lac la Ronge. At this time both Deschambeault and McKenzie were feeling pressure from Sir George Simpson to be on the lookout for free traders, to follow their every movement, and to compete with them whenever possible.⁸⁷ Simpson wanted all information concerning them: "their names, where they came from, what Indians they traded with, what goods they bring--whether they use liquour in trade or as presents"⁸⁸

⁸⁶CMS/A96, John Smithhurst to James Settee, 2 October, 1843.

⁸⁷HBC/D4/49, George Simpson to George Deschambeault, 6 December, 1853. HBC/D4/50, George Simpson to George Deschambeault, 17 June, 1855; and HBC/D4/51, George Simpson to George Deschambeault, 14 June, 1856.

⁸⁸HBC/D4/47, George Simpson to George Deschambeault, 6 December, 1853.

Missions were a particular problem when it came to enforcing the Co.'s monopoly. In 1853, Simpson wrote to Bishop Anderson that

Several missions have during the past winter proved very injurious to the Company's commercial interests, by being allowed to become the rendezvous of the traffickers who are infringing the Company's rights of Trade,⁸⁹

A similar letter went out to the Roman Catholic Bishop of St. Boniface at Isle a la Crosse.⁹⁰ Neither in these letters nor elsewhere did Simpson give a suggestion that he found either the Catholics or the Anglicans more responsible for the situation, even though in the Red River region, at least, the greatest threat came from the Catholic Metis. He appealed to both churches equally, to use their influence against the free traders.

But it was the particular responsibility of the postmaster to see that the mission in his vicinity did not aid the free traders. Thus when Peter Bruce, a Red River trader, arrived in the Mission boat one October day in 1855, it precipitated a crisis in relations between the mission and the post. Hunt was careful to confiscate Bruce's goods, and to contact McKenzie immediately, but he had difficulty establishing that he had not been

⁸⁹HBC/D4/46, George Simpson to the Bishop of Rupert's Land, York Factory, 30 June, 1853.

⁹⁰HBC/B89/c/1, George Simpson to the Bishop of St. Boniface at Isle a la Crosse, York Factory, 12 June, 1854.

responsible for the free trader's arrival. For a time the English River Brigade refused to carry Hunt's supplies, and hostility between the two camps mounted. While McKenzie advised Hunt to go to Norway House for the supplies normally carried by the H.B.C., he also engaged a number of the Mission's regular trippers on his own boats, and bought up all available canoes, so that in effect Hunt was helpless.⁹¹ Only after appealing to Simpson, did Hunt manage to vindicate himself in the affair, and Simpson advised Deschambeault to resume normal services.⁹²

Having to accept the reality of the free trader at Lac la Ronge, McKenzie then enlisted Hunt's help in controlling him. He recommended that the Station hire Bruce as a carpenter to work on the new church and schoolhouse, so that he might be watched "with less trouble and expense to the Co., than if they had to send a person about with him while he wandered about in search of the fur hunters."⁹³ When a second free trader arrived in 1857 this same solution was proposed, but the man refused to work at either the Mission or the Fort.⁹⁴

⁹¹CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, May, 1856, p. 27.

⁹²HBC/D4/51, George Simpson to George Deschambeault, York Factory, 14 June, 1856.

⁹³CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, January, 1856, p. 6.

⁹⁴Ibid., September, 1857, pp. 10 - 12.

At times, Robert Hunt himself was accused of infringing upon the Company's trade monopoly. Neither the missionary nor mission servants were permitted any traffic in furs with the Indians. When for instance, the carpenter bought a fur skin from an Indian to make a cap, the post-master, upon hearing of it, approached Hunt with "a great deal of unpleasantness & uncourteous language," demanding the return of the fur.⁹⁵ Even more of an issue were the furs obtained by Indians while in the employ of the Mission. Hunt argued that these furs should be credited to the Mission account, because the C.M.S. had paid for the Indian's time and "all the mental & bodily work that the man is capable of doing,"⁹⁶ McKenzie, on the other hand, credited the furs against the individual Indian's debt, because the C.M.S. was not allowed to hire Indians as fur hunters, and if it hired them as fishermen, it had no right to the furs.⁹⁷ When Hunt planned to sell to the Company a bearskin obtained by a Mission servant, McKenzie had the skin taken from the servant's house, because he felt the Mission had no right to it.⁹⁸ In his role as go-between for the H.B.C. and therefore guardian of the Company monopoly, Samuel McKenzie suspected all men equally.

⁹⁵Ibid., August, 1851, pp. 52 - 53, Note 1.

⁹⁶Ibid., November, 1860, p. 35.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid., January, 1861, p. 8.

Hunt, however, had no reason to challenge the Company's monopoly. In fact, he strongly supported it, and counselled his Indian community to support it as well.

They [the Indians] had asked . . . "If it was consistent with their Christian duty and Christian progress to be so much away from the means of grace afforded at the Station, while they were hunting furs for the Co." I answered by giving a brief history of their tribes before and since they had availed themselves of their trade with the Hon. Co. for clothes, etc. in exchange for furs, in order to illustrate their duty to man as well as to God; and strongly advised them to keep up private and family worship during their wanderings and not to hunt or journey on the Sabbath unless mercy to themselves or others absolutely required.⁹⁹

While trade in itself was good, free trade would be the ruin of the Indians. Not only liquor, but the general excitement of competitive trading would distract them from divine grace.¹⁰⁰ In addition, the stationary trading methods of the Company were more compatible to missionary methods than were the transient ways of the free traders.¹⁰¹ For these reasons, Hunt used his influence to support the Company's monopoly in Rupert's Land.

A second important sphere in which the postmaster

⁹⁹CMS/A89, Robert Hunt to Henry Venn, Stanley Mission, 28 November, 1850.

¹⁰⁰CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, October, 1855, p. 39.

¹⁰¹Ibid., April, 1858, p. 22.

and the missionary occasionally found themselves at odds was in the administration of British law in Rupert's Land. By its charter in 1670, the Company was given extensive civil power whereby it might assemble and make laws and ordinances for the good government of the Company and its forts and might impose penalties, provided they were reasonable and not repugnant to the laws of England. It had the right also to try civil and criminal cases and to employ an armed force for the protection of its trade.¹⁰² This authority was vested in the Governor in council, rather than any single person.¹⁰³ While specific reference was made to jurisdiction over both Hudson's Bay Company people and to other Europeans such as the Nor' Westers, no mention was made of indigenous peoples. In this respect Robert Hunt felt that the Hudson's Bay Company was failing to do its duty.

The Company argued that it had no authority over the Indians. As Simpson explained to the Parliamentary Committee in 1857, it possessed the right of soil over the whole of Rupert's Land, but exercised no jurisdiction over the indigeneous peoples of that soil unless they committed crimes upon Europeans. It was not the Company's desire to

¹⁰²Oliver, ed., The Canadian North West, Its Early Development and Legislative Records, Vol. I, p. 22.

¹⁰³Ibid., Lord Selkirk to Miles Macdonell, 13 June, 1813, p. 179.

"meddle with their wars."¹⁰⁴ In practice, few Indians were tried by Company courts, because the Company could seldom arrest the offender. Instead, argued Simpson, they were usually punished by their own tribe.¹⁰⁵

The missionary, however, was anxious for the presence of a recognized judicial and legislative authority which might attend to the secular regulation of society in the way that he attended to religious regulation. The two, while ever distinct branches of social regulation, were nevertheless mutually necessary to the Victorian civilization. When a serious crime, such as murder, occurred within the Christian Indian community, this need became more pressing in the eyes of the missionary.

Murder had apparently decreased among the English River Indians, and Company officers attributed this to the influence of both Catholic and Protestant missionaries in the area.¹⁰⁶ The missionaries had not been successful, however, in removing the Indian beliefs which made many deaths a necessity. This was particularly true of the Cree belief in cannibalism. A person chronically ill, upon whom conjuring had failed, was believed to be under the influence of an evil spirit.

. . . because she will not eat what they give her (which indeed she cannot) she is believed, according to another of their

¹⁰⁴Great Britain, Report from the Select Committee . . . , 1857, p. 92.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 61.

¹⁰⁶HBC/D5/36, George Deschambeault to Governor, Chief Factors, Chief Traders of Northern District, Isle a la Crosse, 20 January, 1853.

superstitions, about to become a Cannibal, . . . and when delerium follows upon they suppose she is pointing at & counting them & determining which of them she shall kill & eat first.¹⁰⁷

For her frightened companions, the only defence was to kill the person before she underwent this transformation, and to cremate her, so that her spirit could not return to her body.

It was this fear which motivated one of the members of Hunt's church to have his wife killed. John Cook, while at a distance from the Station, had grown fearful for his wife's life, but when conjuring failed to revive her, he asked his brother Benjamin to shoot her. All the family agreed to the necessity of it, and no secret was made of the act.¹⁰⁸

Upon learning the details of Emma Cook's death, Hunt immediately notified McKenzie to take responsibility for the "civil question" of murder, while he himself approached it as a matter of church discipline. McKenzie, however, refused to take responsibility, and preferred to leave the issue with the missionary.¹⁰⁹ Hunt then appealed to George Deschambeault, who, as Magistrate of the district, might have the authority to act, but Deschambeault merely replied that

¹⁰⁷ CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, April, 1858, p. 22.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., April, 1858, p. 30.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

There is no law in this country, so that those fellows fearlessly walk about with their hands in their pockets and feathers in their caps, and if they had been meddled with it might have caused more bloodshed.¹¹⁰

This was probably a realistic concern; in isolated posts, the Indians far outnumbered the Company men, and attempts to impose an alien judicial system upon them might have provoked Indian violence against which the traders had little defence. Moreover, in cases of non-directed culture change, such as characterized the exchange between traders and Indians, Indian murders would make no difference to the trader unless they hurt trade in some way. The Company was not prepared to go beyond its trading role in its cooperation with the missionaries. It was not prepared to become the civil counterpart to their religious authority.

Thus the only recourse left to Hunt was to withdraw church sanction from the members involved, and to attempt to impress upon his congregation the enormity of the crime. In this he felt he had little success, because few of his people withdrew "from their usual friendly intercourse with the guilty parties." He felt that had the Indians had even a simple rebuke from the Company, such as a temporary suspension of pay in advance for furs, they might have been properly chastized.¹¹¹ But no support from the

¹¹⁰ Ibid., September, 1858, p. 33.

¹¹¹ Ibid., May, 1858, p. 1.

Company was forthcoming.

Similar refusal to become involved in civil and criminal control of the Indians was expressed by the Company in a case of alleged insanity. When a young Chipewyan claiming to be the Messiah visited Stanley Mission, declaring that a voice had revealed to him the will of God, and threatening to kill several members of the Mission, Hunt pronounced him insane.¹¹² Insanity being under criminal jurisdiction in Victorian society, Hunt considered it a matter for "the chief secular authority of the district."¹¹³ But while Mr. Deschambeault thought that the Chipewyan should be put in irons, and Mr. McKenzie considered it unwise to leave him at liberty, both pleaded a lack of authority in their positions as go-betweens for the Hudson's Bay Company, and no action was taken by either man. In such cases, Hunt could only lament ". . . if the Co.'s

¹¹²The Chipewyan had gathered a following from among most of the Roman Catholic Indians at Isle a la Crosse. His messianic claims were based on what Hunt called a mixture of "scriptural facts" and "many absurdities." CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, June, 1859, p. 24. Such messianic cults are not uncommon among Indian peoples confronted with the new culture of the European. When there is an antagonism between two different cultures, or internal conflict between forces within the same society, cults occur containing both aboriginal and alien elements. These cults produce a "religious synthesis designed to meet the needs of a native society seeking a solution to an unprecedented dilemma and striving to find a new road to survival." Vittorio Lanternari, The Religions of the Oppressed: A Study of Modern Messianic Cults (New York: Mentor Books, 1963), pp. 116 - 132. Quotation from p. 132.

¹¹³CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, June, 1859, p. 27.

Charter was good for anything it should secure proper respect for British laws made by the Queen and Parliament "114

In times of crisis both Robert Hunt and Samuel McKenzie could put aside their roles as representatives of two separate organizations, and work together for their mutual survival. Food was always a concern at Stanley Mission where some 300 lb. of fish was required each day to feed both residents and dogs, and even the fish supply was uncertain in some seasons.¹¹⁵ In times of dire need, McKenzie and Hunt shared what few potatoes or what little wild game they could spare. Fear of starvation was undoubtedly the greatest single preoccupation of the inhabitants of Stanley Mission who, unable to make agriculture a successful venture, and unskilled in the Indian arts of hunting and fishing, were dependent on the Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company for most of their staple foods.

Other hazards also brought Station and Mission together. Threatened by a violent forest fire, all members of both places fought side by side to protect life and property.¹¹⁶ When epidemic disease struck either the animal or the human population of the area medical supplies

¹¹⁴Ibid., September, 1858, p. 34.

¹¹⁵Ibid., January, 1854, p. 26. At times fishing intake was less than 50 pounds per day.

¹¹⁶Ibid., June and July, 1857.

and knowledge were pooled to combat it.¹¹⁷ In the event of a serious accident such as drowning, all hands were mustered to search for the missing bodies.¹¹⁸ Ready response to any emergency was demonstrated in one accidental false alarm. As Hunt explained:

I rang the bell for services much longer than usual, by way of making the call as earnest & solemn as I could: and this was understood at the Fort as an alarm bell & call for help, and the officer and his men kindly & promptly hurried to the spot but finding all safe here they joined us in the service and remained for the end."¹¹⁹

Thus it may be seen that in a practical trader-missionary relationship in the field, co-operation was not only possible but in many instances essential. Physical conditions placed the missionary very much at the trader's mercy from the outset, and made his aid in transportation, communication, lodging and food a very important contribution. The most essential aspect of his assistance, however, occurred in relationships with the Indians who frequented the post. When approaching a group of Indians to whom the fur trader was already an integral part of the social structure, and a person wielding a great deal of influence, the missionary recognized the necessity of winning the trader's good will. At the same time the trader, seeing a useful

¹¹⁷Ibid., May, 1857, p. 19, and September, 1858, p. 36.

¹¹⁸Ibid., November, 1858, p. 54.

¹¹⁹Ibid., October, 1858, p. 48.

function for the missionary, offered his co-operation. No doubt this might have caused the Indians to perceive the two men as essentially representatives of the same culture. Particular issues, however, established their separate interests. The net result was a community in which the two white men of influence, rather than vying for one position, learned to accommodate one another's different interests for their mutual benefit.

CONCLUSION

The complexity of the relationship between the Hudson's Bay Company and the missionaries in Rupert's Land in the nineteenth century cannot be denied. This study has attempted to examine one facet of that relationship, the interdependence of the Church Missionary Society and the Company between 1821 and 1860. At its three levels of operation, the focus has been on the necessity of co-operation for mutual benefit.

From London, an ideal form of co-operation had first been formulated. When the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society embarked on their association with the appointment of John West as Chaplain and Missionary, they had envisioned a form of co-operation in which each organization actively furthered the aims of the other. The Company, desiring the stabilizing influence of a religious leader in the growing Red River settlement, and fearing the hostility of public opinion, hoped to increase its strength both at home and in Rupert's Land by hiring the services of an Anglican Chaplain. The C.M.S., on the other hand, expected the Company's assertion of commercial principles among the aborigines to be of considerable benefit in furthering its evangelizing and civilizing aims. The experiences of Reverend John West soon disappointed expectations on both sides.

It was then necessary to reformulate a workable relationship for the two parties in terms of the realities of Rupert's Land. Hudson's Bay Company desire to control the missionaries as it controlled all its salaried employees conflicted with C.M.S. ideas of an independent sphere of activity. While the Company found it could not control the movements and words of the Anglican clergy as completely as it might like, the missionaries discovered that physical, economic, and social conditions of the territory did not permit them the independence to which they aspired. In the face of these circumstances, a practical form of co-operation evolved. With the formation of the Bishopric of Rupert's Land and the creation of a central authority among the Anglican clergy, centralized policy was facilitated.

Missionaries and traders at isolated posts throughout Rupert's Land also learned to co-operate with one another to their respective advantages. Because each held a particular sphere of influence over the band of Indians frequenting a mission post, it was frequently necessary for one to solicit the support of the other in obtaining from the Indian the desired response. Conflict occurred on specific issues, when one felt he was not receiving sufficient co-operation from the other. It was the importance of the co-operative relationship which made incidents of conflict so critical to both trade and missionary activities.

In view of proposals made by David Anderson's

successor in 1866, missionary-trader experiences at a variety of missions similar to Stanley must have been equally beneficial to the aims of the C.M.S. Addressing a meeting of the Corresponding Committee of the C.M.S. at Red River on October 30, 1866, Bishop Robert Machray proposed a program in which even more use would be made of the Hudson's Bay Company. He advocated that important H.B.C. posts be selected as the location of future Catechists, to facilitate the obtaining of food, fuel, and shelter which would free the Catechist for purely religious duties. Because the Post was the centre of the district, it would attract all Indians within travelling distance. In addition, the mixed-blood children of a post should be given the benefit of religious instruction because, as future H.B.C. employees, they would provide an important contact with "the whole of the heathen population."¹

He also stressed the importance of a "friendly connection with the Officer in charge" of the post, such as was presently being enjoyed at central points such as York Factory, Fort Simpson, Fort Youcon, and Fort Great Bear Lake. Not only secular but religious tasks could be carried out in full co-operation.²

¹Rupert's Land Archives, McRoberts Collection, Minutes of Meeting of Correspondence Committee, Red River, 30 October, 1866, p. 63.

²Ibid., p. 64.

On the basis of these considerations Bishop Machray formulated a plan whereby missionaries and catechists should be given accommodation at or near a number of forts, and necessities such as food, fuel and transportation of supplies be left solely to the responsibility of the Hudson's Bay Company.³ Interestingly enough, this plan was proposed by Robert Hunt at Lac la Ronge eight years earlier. Recognizing the futility of the self-sufficient agricultural mission, and lamenting the time he was forced to spend in secular concerns such as the obtaining of shelter, food and transportation, he advised the Church Missionary Society that a closer dependence on the Hudson's Bay Company for secular needs would in the long run further the Society's religious aims.⁴ By 1866, the experiences of Robert Hunt and other missionaries in Rupert's Land were being more firmly consolidated into Church Missionary Society policy.

The question of the typicalness of Robert Hunt's experience with Samuel McKenzie and the H.B.C., however, requires considerably more study. The voluminous archives of both the C.M.S. and the H.B.C. contain a great deal of information which would help to clarify the issue. The purpose of this thesis was not to generalize from the

³Ibid., pp. 65 - 67.

⁴CMS/A90, Robert Hunt, Journal, August 58, p. 22.

specific example, but to suggest a way of approaching future studies of this nature. A lack of amiability between members of the two organizations is not in itself a sufficient characterization. The patron-broker model offers a way to look beneath the surface impression for possible evidence of a deeper interdependence. This may be accompanied by friendly attitudes, but such attitudes are not essential to co-operation.

Several other areas of future research have become evident from this study. In the field of trader-missionary relationships, it would be beneficial to examine the apparently hostile clashes of Anglican and Roman Catholic clergy in the Hudson's Bay territories, and to determine to what extent the Church of England was, both officially and unofficially, the favoured church of the Hudson's Bay Company. There was much partisan commentary from both churches in the nineteenth century, but no attempts have been made by a neutral party to assess the charges.

A second and very important area for further consideration in the field of Indian-white contact is the impact of the missionary on Indian cultures and societies throughout the North-West. While the impact of the trader and the fur trade is receiving intensive study at present, the effect of the missionary presence has yet to be thoroughly explored. If the claims of this thesis are valid, the two should be studied together, in the context of a three-way relationship.

It is hoped that in shifting the primary focus of missionary-trader relationships from one of conflict and antagonism to one of interdependence resulting in necessary co-operation, it is possible to see how institutions and men with different purposes in mind can understand the mutual benefits to be gained from working together. It is obvious that two London-based and essentially monolithic organizations such as the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society, sharing a given territory in North-West America and working within an alien culture, will unavoidably have as much in common as in conflict. It is a mark of their practicality that they recognized this fact.

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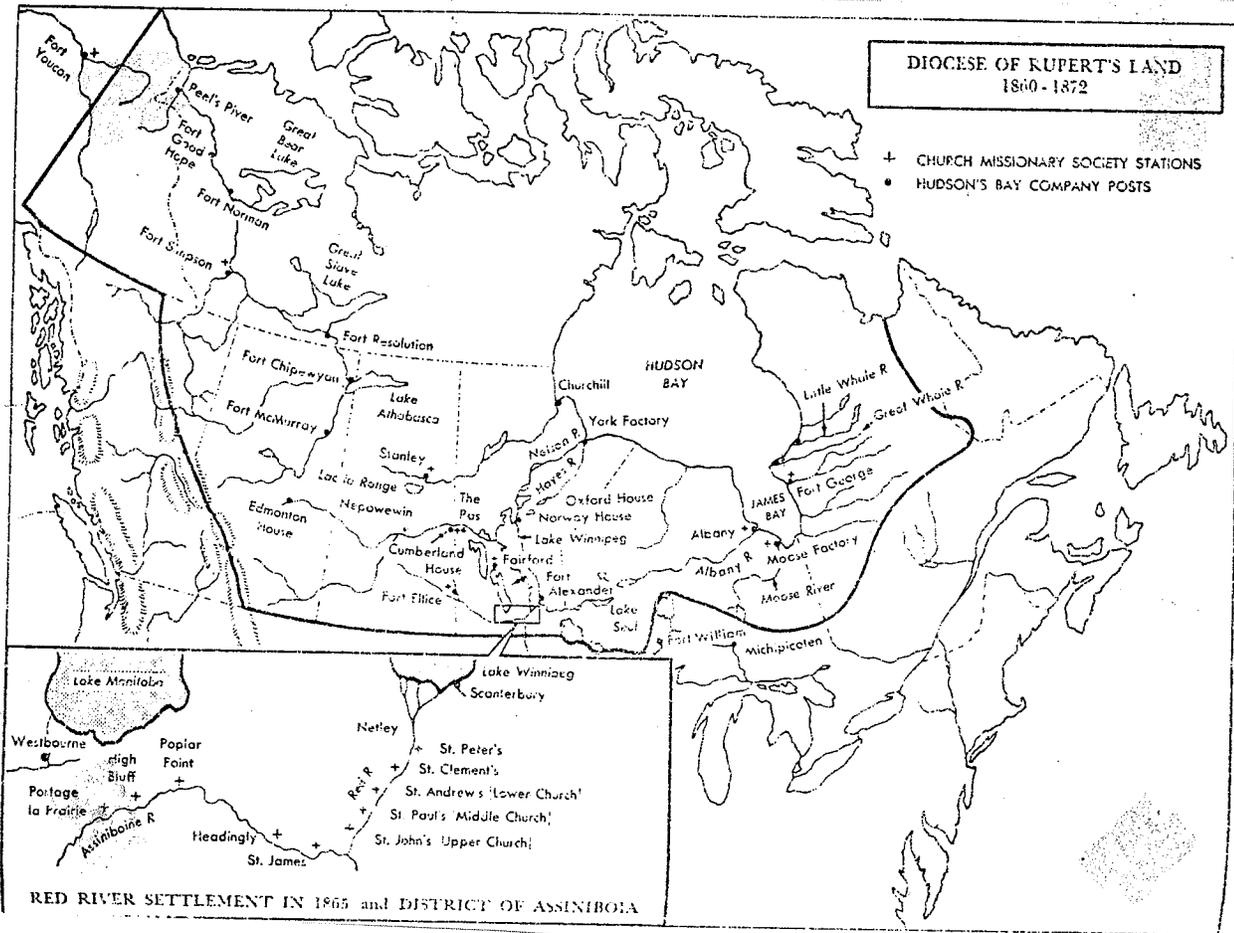
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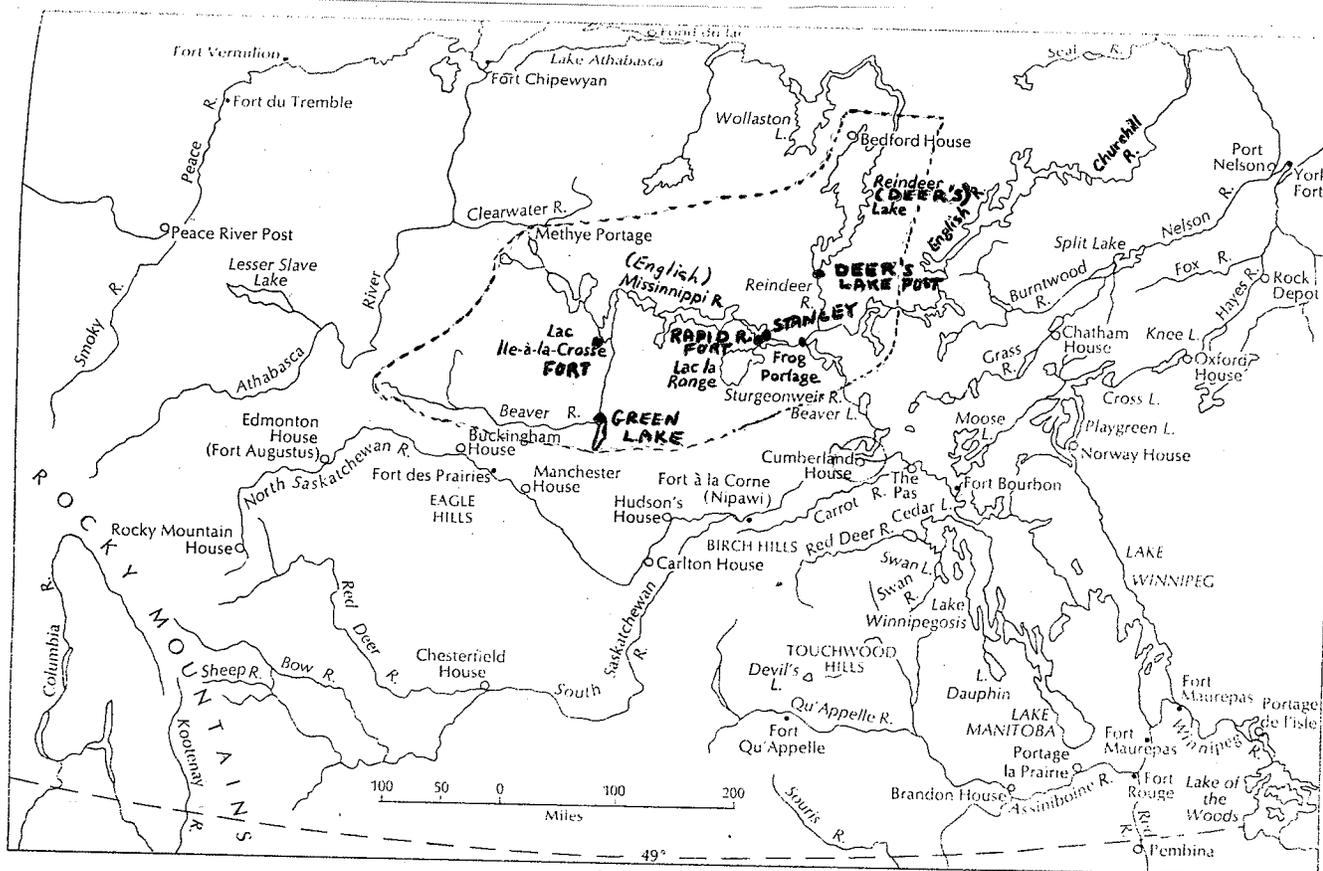
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MAP I



T. C. B. Boon, The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies, p. 84.

MAP II



English River District, 1850.

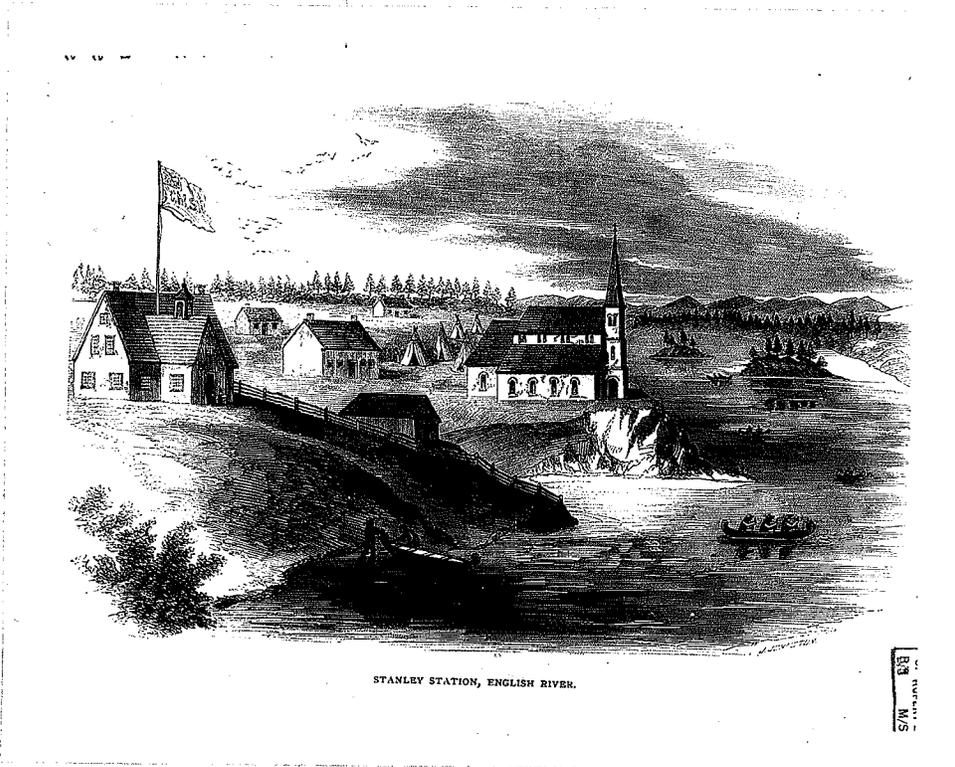
TABLE I

Indent for Ile a la Crosse Dept. 1814

Trading Goods

Aw blades-----500	Handkf Silk Bandana-----Doz. 2
Beads Com ⁿ Assorted lb. 50	Fancy ----- 2
Blankets 1 Pt. ----- 50	[illegible] ----- 2
$\frac{1}{2}$ Pt. ----- 50	Hats mens silk bound ---- No.12
2 Pt. ----- 50	Common ----- 50
$2\frac{1}{2}$ Pt. ----- 100	Fine w ^h Bands etc. ----- 10
3 Pt. ----- 50	Hatchets large ----- 100
" Large Striped ----- 150	Meddling ----- 100
Buttons Gilt Plain coat	Small ----- 100
doz. ----- 12	4 lb. each ----- 24
w. coat ----- 12	Hooks cod ----- 500
Cloth blue plain --- yd.500	Horns powder $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.----- 12
cord ----- 300	$\frac{3}{4}$ lb. ----- 12
Mixed ----- 50	Kettles copper ----- ?
Red plain ----- 50	Knives clarp ----- Doz. 12
Red cord ----- 50	Roach ----- 20
White ----- 150	Yew ----- 15
Combs horn large -- doz. 6	Moltens blue ----- yd.100
small ----- 6	white ----- 100
Ivory ----- 6	red ----- 50
Duffle striped ---- yd. 100	Needles Glover ----- No. 250
Files [illegible]	Quilting ----- 200
8 Inch ----- 100	
10 ----- 100	

Flannel ----- yds.	100	Pipes Hunters ----- Groce	3
Flints -----	300	Pots Japanned 1 qt. ----- No.	6
Sort ^r belt H. M.		1 pt. -----	24
Lace - Groce -----	4	1/2 pt. -----	6
broad scarlet		1/4 pt. -----	12
striped - Groce ---	4	Tin 2 qt. -----	12
Glasses looking book No.	50	1 pt. -----	12
Guns of 3 1/2 feet -----	50	Powder gun ----- lb.	1200
3 -----	50	Rings finger brass-Groce --	6
Rum Seward Island		Tobacco -----	1500
Gall ^s -----	700	Trousers Duck 18/No. -Pairs	24
Shirts Cotton		19/No. -----	24
Striped ----- No.	150	Twine #1 ----- Skanes	350
Linen Checked -----	24	2 -----	100
Flannel -----	100	Sturgeon -----	50
Shot BB	No	#9 -----	300
Duck	Quantity	Vermillion ----- lbs.	6
Low India	Given	Vittry -----yds.	150
Spoons metal ----Doz.-	3		
Steels fire ----- No.	200		
Thread coloured lbs.	6		



STANLEY STATION, ENGLISH RIVER.

W. & A. G. B. S.
M/S

Stanley Mission, English River. 1875.

Photo Credit: Manitoba Archives



Holy Trinity Church, Stanley Mission,
English River, 1920

Photo Credit: Public Archives of Canada



Looking South, Stanley Mission Settlement,
English River, 1920

Photo Credit: Public Archives of Canada