
Manitoba Metis Communities Historical Overview

**Edited and Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
With contributions from Audreen Hourie, Senator Ed Head and
Rosemary Morrisette-Rozyk**

Baie St. Paul, «Saulteaux Village» Manitoba:

Baie St. Paul was a French-Metis parish of the Red River Settlement located west of Fort Garry on the Assiniboine River between the French-Metis parish of St. François Xavier and the English-Metis parish of Poplar Point to the west. Baie St. Paul was located about eight kilometres east of today's St. Eustache, Manitoba. This community dates back to 1832 when Father George Antoine Belcourt established a mission on the south side of the Assiniboine River.

In July of 1832 Father Belcourt selected a site for his mission along the Assiniboine River where a large number of Indians and Metis gathered in the spring. The mission was to be named under the protection of Saint Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles. Belcourt then returned in the spring of 1833 with Bishop Provencher's approval. He erected a chapel during the summer, but in September the site, sixty kilometers west of Red River was attacked by a group of Gros-Ventres Indians from the south. Bishop Provencher, concerned for the safety of the priest and the continued success of his work, had the mission re-located closer to St. Boniface.¹

The new mission, Baie St. Paul, was established in 1834 at "Prairie Fournier" (Baker's Prairie) on the left bank of the Assiniboine River, about thirty-seven kilometres from St. Boniface and about eight kilometres east of today's St. Eustache, Manitoba. The site included a tract of land with eight kilometres of river frontage three kilometres in depth, a gift from Governor George Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). Baie St. Paul was to be Belcourt's official residence as long as he remained under Bishop Provencher's jurisdiction.

¹ The exact location of the first mission, known as St. Paul des Saulteaux, is difficult to pinpoint. Two reliable sources locate it on the left bank of the Assiniboine, some eighty to ninety-five kilometres from St. Boniface. If measured in river distance, the site would have been situated somewhere near St. Eustache, but if measured as-the-crow-flies, it would have been located in the vicinity of Portage la Prairie.

Baie St. Paul, Belcourt once again set out to build a chapel and a residence for himself and gradually began to develop the foundations of a community for the Indians and Metis who gathered in the area. He was convinced that once the Indians had adapted to "civilized" life and were enjoying greater material comfort, they would adhere to Christian principles more readily.

Bishop Provencher had plows and oxen sent to the mission, while Belcourt helped the Natives to build dwellings near the chapel and to plant crops such as potatoes, corn and oats. Father Belcourt opened a school and engaged Miss Angelique Nolin and her sister Marguerite as teachers. In 1834 they began teaching at Baie St. Paul (St. Eustache). Bishop Provencher assigned the sisters to assist Father Belcourt in learning the Native languages to communicate with the Indians. Angélique and Marguerite were fluent in French, English, Ojibwa and Cree. Both sisters worked for the next decade with Father Belcourt.

Despite their cultural differences, Belcourt and the Indians and Metis with whom he worked gradually developed a close association, and his influence over the Native population was probably greater than that of any other white man in Red River. In September of 1834, when a group of angry Metis gathered to protest an attack on one of their number by a Hudson's Bay Company clerk, it was Belcourt that Governor George Simpson called upon to calm the situation.

Stories of Belcourt's work at Baie St. Paul spread quickly among the Aboriginal people of the West. In 1836 a group from the Rocky Mountain Saulteaux tribe journeyed all the way to Red River to meet the priest who was said to be a man of great wisdom and kindness. They were favourably impressed by his facility with their language and the work he had done among the Saulteaux. The delegates left, assuring Belcourt those members of their tribe would return to Baie St. Paul in the spring. Indians from other regions also travelled to and from the mission, carrying with them stories about the priest whose heart had been made by the "Great Spirit".

While at Baie St. Paul, Father Belcourt also assisted Mr. Poire at the nearby mission of St. Francois-Xavier. When the Metis were away on their semi-annual hunting expeditions, Belcourt and the Nolin sisters worked on the Saulteaux-French dictionary he was compiling. His first few winters were spent in St. Boniface, where his expert skills as a turner were put to good use in the construction of furnishings for Bishop Provencher's cathedral. Belcourt spent most of his subsequent winters in the diocese, teaching the basics of the Saulteaux language to newly-arrived missionaries.

In February of 1847, Father Belcourt prepared a petition to the Queen regarding the Metis grievances with regard to the HBC fur trade monopoly. Nine hundred and seventy-seven Metis signed it and James Sinclair took it to England. In retaliation, George Simpson and the HBC trumped up fur trading charges against Belcourt and had the Archbishop in Quebec remove him from Red River. Belcourt immediately began lobbying to return and in June of 1848, Bishop Lorus of Dubuque assigned him to Pembina. Many of his parishioners from Baie St. Paul followed him to Pembina. He eventually moved his mission and school 30 miles west to St. Josephs in 1853.

In 1882 there was extensive flooding and part of the cemetery at Baie St. Paul slid into the river and many houses were destroyed. Many of the residents became discouraged and followed their parish priest, Cyrille Saint-Pierre in relocation to North Dakota. Later Bishop Tache sent missionary Thomas Quevillion to find a new location

for the church. The new location was St. Eustache established in January of 1898. This name was chosen because St. Eustache is the Patron saint of hunters.

Reference:

Reardon, Rev. James M. "George Anthony Belcourt: Pioneer Missionary of the Northwest." *CCHA Report*, 18 (1951) pp. 75-89.

Bas de la Rivière, Pine Falls, Fort Alexander, Manitoba:

This Metis community, originally known as Bas de la Rivière, became known as Fort Alexander and then Pine Falls, Manitoba. It was located on both shores of the Winnipeg River from Pointe au Foudre (the portage around Pine Falls) right down to Traverse Bay on Lake Winnipeg. The community was established in 1732 as a wintering post and depot for the NWC traders operating on Lake Winnipeg. The area also possessed soil suitable for agriculture. In 1792 Simon Fraser and Lesieur Toussaint established a large post at Bas de la Rivière (also called Sieurs Fort). It was ideally suited for the fishers utilizing the Traverse Bay whitefish fishery. In October of each year the whitefish spawn on the gravel bottom of Traverse Bay. When agriculture failed at Red River, the settlers made use of the fall fishery at Bas de la Rivière. Since the big game of the area had been hunted out by the late 1700s, fish, grains and garden vegetables were the staple foods of the area. By 1812 the Bas de la Rivière gardens were selling vegetables to the incoming Red River Settlers. By 1817 the Metis staff of the Northwest Company was farming wheat, barley, peas, oats and potatoes at this location and were supplying the Red River Settlement with seed grain. In 1815 a horse-powered flour mill was built. By 1821 they had a large ranch here for hogs, horses and cattle. The nearby meadows provided plenty of hay for the livestock and the marshes provided marsh grass for thatching the roofs of the Metis homes. After the amalgamation of the HBC and NWC in 1821, Bas de la Rivière lost its importance as a major provisioning post and transportation transfer point.

Berens River, Manitoba:

The mouth of the Berens River on the east shore of Lake Winnipeg was a stopping point for Metis boat men and traders as early as 1765. The first post was built there in 1814 (named after HBC governor Joseph Berens). It moved briefly to "Old Fort Portage" in 1816, then to Pigeon River a few miles south until HBC employee John Robertson moved it back to the original site in the mid 1820s. This was a thriving Metis community until fishing was banned on Lake Winnipeg in 1970 due to mercury contamination. All but 50 to 60 fishermen moved and those that remained became dependent on partial government compensation through a work program.

In 1767 William Tomison (founder of Fort Edmonton for the Hudson's Bay Company) made his way up the Severn River from Hudson Bay and crossed over to the headwaters of the Berens, which he descended to its outlet in Lake Winnipeg. It was not, however, until 1814 that a post was established at the mouth of the river and called Berens River after Joseph Berens, Governor of the Company. This post was occupied by men sent from Jack River House, as Norway House was then called.

Two years later (1816) the post was moved upstream to the third lake, probably to the place now known as Old Fort Portage, where in September 1816 Donald Sutherland erected a house. At the same place were the remains of an old house built by the Albany traders, and also an abandoned North West Company post. The Nor'Westers built a new house on the same lake in 1818 but occupied it for only one season, leaving the H B C in possession.

Soon after the union of the two companies in 1821 the post was re-moved to nearby Pigeon River, becoming an outpost. It is referred to in the District Report of Norway House for 1823 as: "Berens River better distinguished by the name of Pigeon River, is the only outpost in this District". A year later, however, it was returned to the lake on Berens River and in 1825, when John Robertson, clerk, was in charge, was once more cited as a post and subsequently continued as such. Berens River post was first included in the Winnipeg River District, until the abandonment of that District in 1832, when it became part of the Norway House or Jack River District.

Birds Hill, Manitoba:

The Town of Birds Hill and the modern day Birds Hill Provincial Park were named after the Bird family who owned land in the vicinity. Their family history is representative of those who settled along the Red River in the early 19th century.

James Curtis Bird came to Rupert's Land in 1788 to work as a writer with the Hudson's Bay Company. During his 36 years in service, he moved up in rank to become Chief Factor of the Red River District and by 1819 it was said that he had more knowledge of the country than all the Hudson's Bay Company officers put together. James Bird married several times, fathering 15 children. When James retired in 1824 he received a land grant from the company of 1,215 hectares (3,000 acres) on the east side of the Red River. Registered as River Lot 95, the property extended east from the river for about 6.4 km (4 mi.), taking in the hill area now known as the town of Birds Hill. On the banks of the Red, James built his home which came to be called "the White Cottage." The Red River served as the main transportation route at that time.

The park area was referred to as "the Pines" or "Pine Ridge" by the Bird family, as well as other settlers along the Red River. The river lots north of the Bird property extended into what is now the western edge of the park and provided settlers with abundant game and a wealth of natural materials. Roof trusses and fences were built from the oak, ash, spruce, cedar and tamarack trees. It was here, too, that settlers, fur traders and wildlife found refuge from spring flooding in the Red River valley. During the great floods of 1826 and 1852, which threatened the very survival of the Red River settlement, entire families camped on high ground with their livestock and possessions.

Birsay Village or Orkney Town:

When Peter Fidler (1769-1822) made a map of the Red River District, he recording the settlement of Birsay Village west of Fort Douglas on the Assiniboine River which was built by a group of Metis freemen, some of whom had previously lived in the Brandon House area. Birsay Village is along the Assiniboine River midway between Lyon Island and Kettle Plain. The vast majority of the freeman were Orkney-Cree Michif

who worked for the French trading companies. Many of the freemen had lived long enough in the North West to be free of their company's contracts, and to be regarded as permanent inhabitants of the region. Some had been in the North West trade since 1770. The Hudson Bay Company freemen were far fewer as the company policy was to return servants to Europe when their contract expired. A few former H.B.C. servants, however, had settled in the vicinity of Brandon House, living with the Cree nearly in the same manner as the free Canadians of Red River did with the Ojibwa. Not surprising, most of the Hudson Bay freemen are natives of the Orkney Isles which had supplied the HBC with 75 percent of the servants by 1800.

Peter Fidler suggested that these Orkney freemen were servants who had been dismissed for various misdemeanors and acts of insubordination, rather than servants whose contracts had expired. For example, John Lyons was set free in August 1816 for refusing to accompany James Inkster on a trip to Indian Elbow on the upper Assiniboine. Humphrey Favel was set free on account of his bad behaviour toward John McLeod at Red River in 1815; Thomas Favel, a Metis (1780-1848), was released because of his refusal to go with Peter Fidler to Jack River at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg in 1815; Magnus Spence, in service since 1783, became free in 1815 as well. Jack Spence, son of Magnus Spence, was sent to explore Red River for possible sites for an Orkney Colony. He was the one who selected the Birsay site, three miles above the White Horse Plain, or twenty-two miles above the forks.

Magnus Spence, in the service of the Company since 1783, became free in 1815 and appears to be the leader and eldest of this group. Birsay was the home parish of Magnus Spence in the Orkneys. This group moved from Brandon house to the Assiniboine, just three miles north of the White Horse Plains, during the winter of 1817-1818 to adopt a more sedentary way of life. Peter Fidler, in the spring, had counted eight males, two females and thirteen children: six boys and seven girls. Only Magnus Spence and James Monkman had a wife and family listed against their names. Later in the year, more Metis came in from the buffalo hunt, having laid up a good stock, and some of them are moving to the spots where they intend to build.

Whooping cough and measles hit Orkney Town, and James Sandison lost two children on August 4. Owman Norquay b-1775 lost one child, and -Oman Norquay (1773-1820) died. To add to their misery, swarms of grasshoppers destroyed their crops. Orkney Town was abandoned by mid-September, 1819. The 1827 census suggests they were absorbed into the main Red River Colony. The French Canadian Freeman and Metis of Pembina quickly moved in to the settlement at Orkney Town.

Reference:

R. Dick Garneau, "Metis Culture 1818-1820."
<http://www.telusplanet.net/dgarneau/metis38a.htm>

Brandon House, and Fort Assiniboine Manitoba:

From: A.E. Brown, "The Fur Trade Posts of the Souris-Mouth Area" *Manitoba Historical Society Transactions*, Series 3, 1961-62.

John Macdonell's Journal, written as he traveled inland with bourgeois Cuthbert Grant Sr. records the details of the push west in the fall of 1793:

"Thursday 5th September - (1793) - Overtook D. McKay and his Hudson's Bay Party in the Rapid of Sault a la Biche St. Andrew's Rapids.

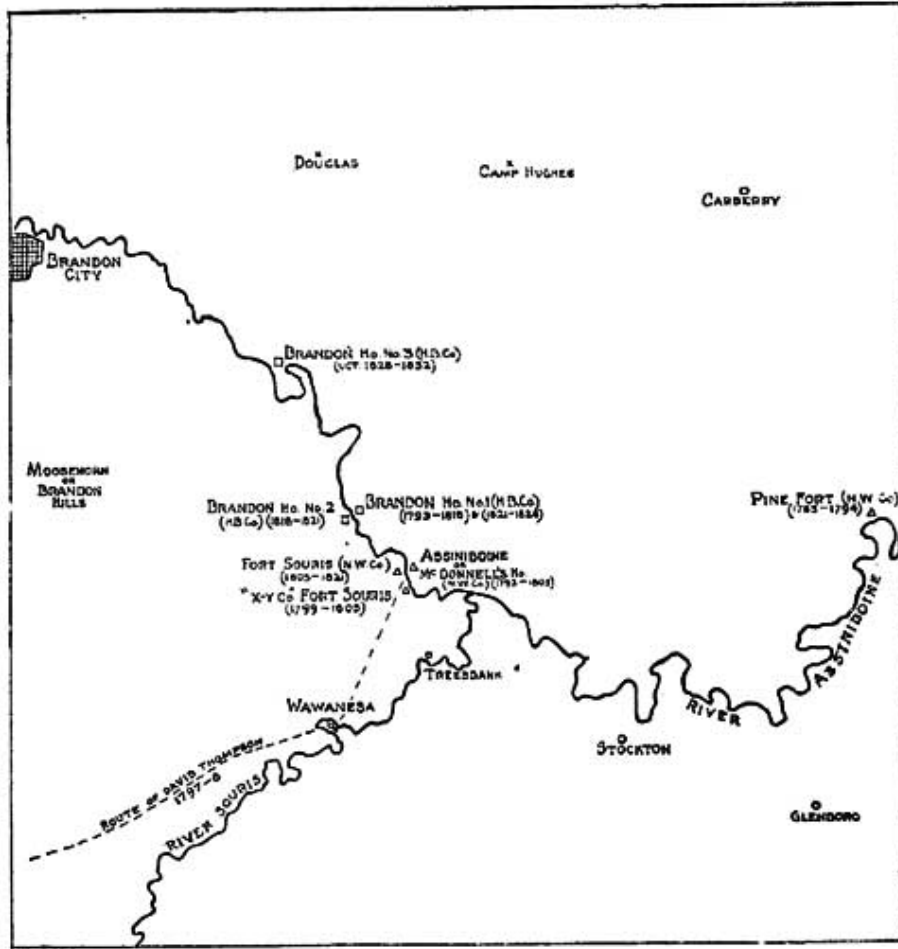
September 11th, Wednesday - The Strip of Wood that lines the River has now got so large that we remain in the canoes as it might be troublesome to find them when required. Passed the site of an Ancient Fort de La Refine. The spot on which it stood can scarcely be known from the place being grown up with wood.

Saturday 21st ... I set out on foot for Fort (Pine Fort) distant ten leagues and arrived at it, two hours before sunset. Starvation worse at the Fort than along the road. The people who were out in various directions looking for Indians with provisions returned on the 26th with nine lodges of Assinibouans well loaded the pieces of meat ...

Monday, September 30th - Left the Pine Fort on foot having a few horses to carry our provisions and bedding, for we are not to sleep with the canoes any more ...

Tuesday, 1st October - Mr. C. Grant placed Auge in opposition to Mr. Ranald Cameron, whom Mr. Peter Grant settled at a new place two miles above the mouth of the River La Sourie; a small river from the S.W. that empties itself into the Assinibouan River."

As Macdonell and Grant proceeded west to the Qu'Appelle, Donald McKay of the Hudson's Bay Company was pressing hard towards a favourable location for his fort. The Hudson's Bay Company records show that the foundations of the new post were laid on October 16, 1793, and at five the same afternoon it was "baptized Brandon House".



MAP OF THE ASSINIBOINE RIVER IN THE SOURIS-MOUTH AREA SHOWING THE SITES OF EARLY TRADING POSTS

from Stewart

The exact location of the Brandon House founded this day is in some doubt, but we know that it was on the northeast bank of the Assiniboine. The Brandon House of Peter Fidler's day (1816) was several miles upstream from the original North West post for which we have a precise distance of two miles from the Souris mouth in John Macdonell's Journal quoted above, as well as a latitude reading from David Thompson's Journal of 1797. It is plain that so great a distance, as well as difficulties of terrain along the north bank, simply do not jibe with three separate items of written evidence. In May, 1794, the spring following the establishment of these posts, John Macdonell was returning east with Cuthbert Grant, Sr., the bourgeois in charge of the spring brigade. Macdonell's journal relates:

"May 6, 1794, arrived at Auge's River la Souris Fort; sun an hour high. Auge has sad complaints against his H.B. opponent, Mr. Donald, alias "Mad" McKay ...

By order of Mr. Grant I took down three or four or five declarations of his own men against Mr. Donald McKay, in consequence of which we took him prisoner for firing at Auge and laying in ambush for his life. I was his guard and slept with him at night.

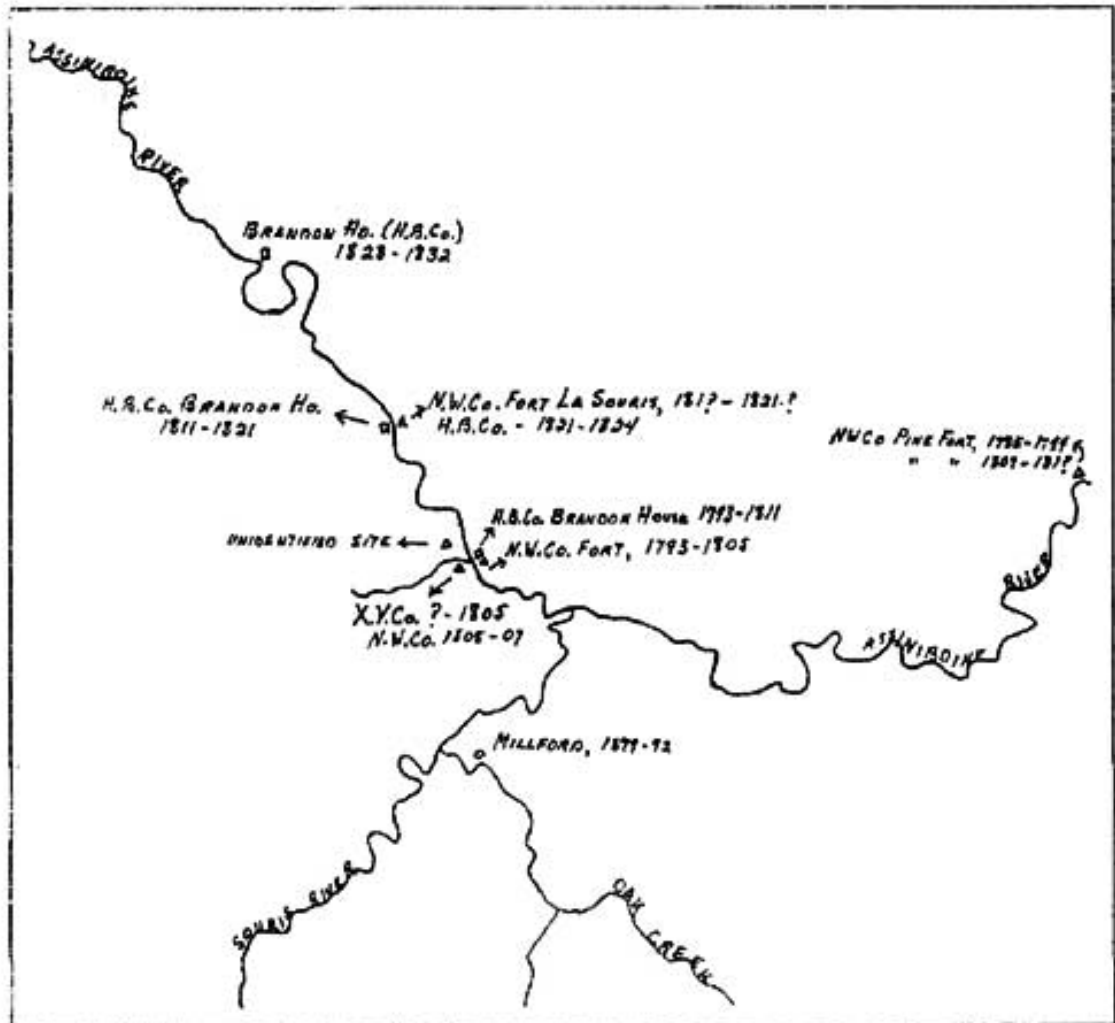
Mr. Grant allowed Mr. McKay, le malin, to go home, seal his journal and write to his chief, Mr. McNabb. I went with him and, according to his promise, came back quietly with me. .

Left River la Sourie after breakfast with 14 canoes and 3 boats. Mr. Grant thought proper to release Mr. Donald McKay, so we did not embark him, and he was so pleased with recovering his liberty that it was at his house we breakfasted by his particular request."

These entries clearly imply that Auge's North West post and McKay's Brandon House were in close proximity. This was a brief stop, yet Macdonell takes a declaration from McKay's "own" men with little inconvenience. Further, they breakfasted at Brandon House on McKay's invitation before embarking. This would have been impossible if the Hudson's Bay post had been three or four difficult miles upstream. The following winter, Robert Goodwin, who succeeded Donald McKay in the position of Post Master at Brandon House writes on January 6, 1795: "We are four houses here, and very little made at any of them yet."

William Yorstone was the man in charge at Brandon House in mid-May of 1810 (when the journal begins), at which time, the postmaster, John McKay, lay dying. McKay's death and burial are duly recorded in the entries for July 5, 6 and 7. Yorstone continued in charge of the post; and his daily journal, faithfully kept, continues until May 23, 1811 when the Selkirk Papers copy ends. From it we learn that the North West Company did not return to compete in the area until sometime after the spring of 1811, but remained at their Pine Fort location to which Larocque had transported them in 1807. This post is mentioned frequently in this 1810-11 Brandon House Journal, and their gregarious Mr. John Pritchard was a visitor at Brandon House on several occasions. The rival companies seemed to enjoy an era of peace and co-operation in these years, for a Hudson's Bay official for the district wrote directing the men at Brandon House to have some work done by the blacksmith at Pine Fort, as the Nor'westers owed them a favour. For purposes of clarifying the proper location of the site of the Brandon House of 1816, this journal is of the utmost significance; for in it we have a detailed account of a move upstream and across the river which took place in the spring of 1811. There are many references to moving buildings, ferrying supplies, and to men making bales at the "old house" or laying out new buildings at the new. It would seem that this journal does, in fact, give a full account of the move from the original location on the north bank opposite the mouth of Five Mile Creek, to the big site in Morgan's field-more than three miles upstream, and on the southwest bank. This would mean that the North West Company's Fort La Souris of 1816 must have occupied the site on the northeast side of the river that was for so long believed to have been the site of Brandon House from 1793 to 1818. Fidler's account of the post's location reads: "Brandon House - 6 miles above the Souris River on the south side ..." In providing further details about the establishment, he says

that it is in "a ruinous state occasioned by the war brules in 1816", and goes on to say that "a small new house was built here last summer 30 x 14 ft. There are a smith and coopers shops also a trading room, provisions stores and 2stables with houses for men and Indians when they came to the Houses to trade."



Map to illustrate the position of the several Souris-mouth posts according to the author's research.

Evidence concerning the exact location of Brandon House in 1816 is to be found in Peter Fidler' deposition on its capture by the Nor'westers as a prelude to Seven Oaks:

"That on the evening of the 31st day of May last 1816, Alexander Macdonell, a partner of the North West Company accompanied by Several Canadians and men commonly called halfbreeds (that is the sons of Canadians by Indian Women and born in the Indian Countries) arrived at

the Trading house of the North West Company called Riviere la Sourie, and situated opposite Brandon House at the distance of about two hundred yards. That on the following morning a body of about 48 men composed of Canadians, Halfbreeds and a few Indians armed with Guns, Pistols, Swords, Spears, and Bows and Arrows, appeared on Horseback in the Plain near to the Hudson's Bay Company's trading house (called Brandon House) of which he the deponent was then Master and Trader for the said Hudson's Bay Company, that this body of men, beating an Indian drum, singing Indian Songs and having a Flag flying rode towards the North West Company's trading house, that on a sudden the said body of men turned their horses and rode on a gallop into the yard of Brandon House, where they all dismounted, erected their flag over the gate of the house and deliberately tied their horses to the stockades. That then Cuthbert Grant, a halfbreed and clerk in the service of the North West Company who appeared to be the leader of the party come to the Deponent and demanded the keys of the House that on the deponent refusing to deliver up the keys, a halfbreed called McKay (son of the late Alexander McKay formerly a partner of the North West Company) assisted by several of his companions broke open the doors of the Hudson's Bay Company's Warehouse and plundered the property consisting of trading goods, furs and other articles to a considerable amount, which together with two boats belonging to the H.B.Co. They carried away. The deponent further saith that when the said McKay and party had finished plundering the Houses of the Hudson's Bay Company the whole body of Canadians, halfbreeds and Indians, crossed the River and went to the North West Company's House taking with them the plundered property ..."

After the amalgamation of the companies, Chief Factor John McDonald reported that Brandon House operated on the north side of the river from 1820 to 1823. It seems from this that when the companies united, they moved into the North West Company's buildings which may have been more serviceable and better preserved, or more in keeping with the amount of business that was then being done in the area.

Their tenure in this north-side location was brief, for by 1824 Brandon House was closed out as part of the retrenchment which followed amalgamation. Thus ended a trading existence of some thirty-one years in the Souris-mouth district. Another north-side post bearing the name opened briefly five years later, but it was almost ten miles farther up the Assiniboine on Section 29-9-1 W.1.

At the place where the early group clustered only one site is clearly identifiable on the north side, although there are two known locations on the south side. This single north-side site is large, long-used, well located, undisturbed, and comparatively little-decayed or overgrown. Whose fort was it? From a comparison of the size of the founding parties as they are reported in John Macdonell's journal, we can see that Brandon House was almost certainly larger from the outset, and from Larocque's comments it was larger and better staffed in 1806-07 when Macdonell ordered the Nor'westers to pull out and relocate at old Pine Fort.

Further, this first Brandon House was in full-time operation for eighteen years, while the original North West Company establishment was active for only fourteen years. Also, this big site could very accurately be described as being "a gunshot away" from the site that fits the description of John Pritchard's X Y post. There is also the probability that the original Brandon House site was not completely abandoned even by 1816; for in that year Peter Fidler refers to a buffalo robe being brought from the "old house". From such accounts, which suggest greater size and indicate longer occupancy, one would expect the surviving traces of the first Brandon House to be more in evidence than those of the first North West Company post.

It would seem that the big site opposite the mouth of Five Mile Creek, that has always been thought to be the first North West Company post (sometimes called Fort Assiniboine), is actually the site of Brandon House No. 1.

Camperville, Manitoba:

Camperville and Duck Bay, on the northwest shore of Lake Winnipegosis, are inseparable in their history. Swampy Cree and Saukteaux inhabited the area. It was an ideal place to trade, fish and hunt. Later, York boats and barges replaced canoes on these inland waterways. These were manned by Indians and Metis from Red River and Metis settlements in the south, at St. Ambroise and St. Laurent. The Hudson's Bay Company requested Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries to accompany employees on their long journeys ministering to their spiritual needs. Early missions in the Camperville and Duck Bay area were Roman Catholic, but to the north, at Shoal River, and the east, at Fairford, the Anglicans established missions in 1855 and 1842 respectively.

The earliest of the Camperville and Duck Bay Settlements can be traced back to families of the Metis who at one time lived in Red River and the more western districts such as St. Francois Xavier (then known as la Prairie du Cheval Blanc or White Horse Plains), St. Ambroise and St. Laurent. These people, in quest of work and adventure became employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, and gradually found permanent places in small settlements along Lake Winnipegosis.

Salt deposits are located eight miles north of the present-day town of Winnipegosis and also across the lake at Salt Point. It was here that some of the Metis remained to prepare salt by an evaporation process for the Hudson's Bay Company. This area was given the name La Saline, and some present residents remember evidence of the "cribs" at Flett's Point in the 1920s. Early permanent settlement resulted from this enterprise, as many of these Metis married Cree and Saukteaux wives and remained there. On August 28, 1871, an Indian treaty was signed at Manitoba House, which created Pine Creek Reserve.

One of the early missionaries, who traveled in this area, using St. Laurent as a starting point, was the Rev. C. J. Camper. By that time the Hudson's Bay Company had established a post at present-day Camperville on what is now Lot 6, under the management of a Mr. McKenzie. Isaac Cowie, in his book *The Company of Adventurers*, states that in 1867, "there was an outpost of Shoal River at Duck Bay on Lake Winnipegosis." With the encouragement of Father Camper, more Metis from the St. Laurent area began to settle there. Eventually this settlement became known locally as Camperville in honor of the ministrations of Father Camper. However, it wasn't until

around 1914 that this name was used on the map rather than the previous designation as Pine Creek.

Under the direction of Father Camper, a small wooden building was erected for church services and school. The first resident priest was the Rev. J. A. Dupont O.M.I., and on September 8, 1886 the first parish register was begun, with the baptism of a Metis-Sioux named Herman McKay. On January 22, 1894, the little settlement saw the arrival of the Rev. St. Germain, accompanied by the Rev. Adelard Chaumont, who began work on a residential school for the Indian and Metis children.

Cold Lake: Road Allowance Community:

From an interview with Senator Ed Head:

Ed Head's parents were married in The Pas. They went to Cranberry Portage and from there walked to Cold Lake, Manitoba (just south of Sherridon). "The place we lived was nicknamed 'Moccasin Flats.' That's where the Métis lived, and it was always the way the Métis lived. They called us 'Road Allowance Indians'," Ed explains. They had settled there because Ed's grandfather had moved there. His father did odd jobs for Sherritt-Gordon then was hired as a miner. Ed's grandfather had a guiding business and guided the Sherridon Mine Manager into the mine, overland from Cumberland House. Cumberland House was the main juncture going into the North in the late 1800's," says Ed. "Eldon Brown, the prospector who discovered the ore body at Sherridon came through Cumberland House and needed a guide. My great-grandfather was busy, so my grandfather, James Sayese, met up with Brown and became his guide. He worked for Brown as a personal guide for a long time. Later he went to work for Sherritt-Gordon."

Ed recalled that often they would be asked to move from the road allowance but would just move further down the road and cut more logs to rebuild their homes.

Duck Bay, Manitoba:

Duck Bay is located on the northwest shore of Lake Pittowinipik (Winnipegosis). For centuries this location was a fall gathering place for Aboriginal people. The neighbouring marshes provided for spring and fall migratory bird hunts and there was also a large fall fishery. The salt springs of the area were also a developed economic asset. In the 1800s Duck Bay became a wintering area for Metis hunters, fishers and traders. In 1839, Father Belcourt made his first visit to the community.

Fairford Settlement, Manitoba:

Independent fur trader Duncan Cameron (1764-1848) wintered in 1795-96 west of Lake Winnipeg at Partridge Crop, on the Fairford River (Man.), having as rivals John Best at Dauphin River and two independent traders, Joseph Rhéaume and Gabriel Atina Laviolette. Trade relations were tense; on 31 March 1796 Best wrote that Cameron was "constantly at variance with me concerning trade, that it is almost Impossible to get ye furs without fighting for it." The HBC operated Fairford Post from 1871-1913.

Fond du lac, now St. Laurent, Manitoba:

Originally called Fond du Lac, this Metis community was established in 1824 on the shores of Lake Manitoba. Many Metis moved there after it was found that Pembina was actually in the United States. By 1850, twelve families were established at St. Laurent, including the Lamberts, Chartrands, Lavallees, Pangmans and Ducharmes. More Metis moved there after the Resistance of 1869-70. St. Laurent was originally a fishing, trapping and trading community with small-scale farming. The Metis traded up to the Camperville area on Lake Winnipegosis and would go as far the Summerberry Marsh near The Pas to catch muskrats in the spring. A Roman Catholic mission was established here in 1862. The community was renamed by Father Camper after St. Lawrence, a Christian martyr.

St. Laurent History: By Audreen Hourie.

St. Laurent is located on the south-eastern curve of Lake Manitoba, forty-seven miles northwest of Winnipeg. The population of St. Laurent is approximately 1,100, about three-quarters of whom are Metis. In 1824, a group of Metis, forced to leave Pembina as it had become American territory, settled at what is now St. Laurent. Other Metis families driven out (of Winnipeg) by the Red River flood of 1826 also chose to settle in this area. By 1850, twelve Metis families resided in the vicinity; among them were Charles Lambert, Norbert Larance from North Dakota, a Chartrand from Duck Bay, and the Lavallées and the Ducharmes. Many Metis settlers were attracted by the abundance of fish and the wooded land nearby that abounded in game and wild fruit.

In 1826, a priest from St. Boniface, Father Destroismaisons, went to the settlement to celebrate Christmas. St. Laurent had no resident priest, but St. François Xavier, thirty miles south had a resident priest since 1823, so it was possible for the St. Laurent people to go to that church. In 1861, St. Laurent received a resident priest, Father Simonet, who became the first pastor. The first church or chapel was a small thatch-covered structure which served as a church and rectory. There was already a small cemetery, but generally the dead were taken to St. François Xavier for burial. In 1895, a new church was built and the following year a convent for the Sisters from the Order of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary who were to arrive in 1897. Traditionally the Metis of St. Laurent have been very religiously oriented. Although the community is Roman Catholic, a few families attend the Evangelical Mennonite church. On May 30, 1961, a thunderbolt struck the old Catholic church and in six hours it was reduced to ashes, all that was left were four stone walls. By 1964, a new church was built on the same site.

As early as 1862, Father Simonet had begun a small school, but the first real school was opened in 1870 by Brother Mulvihill who came to St. Laurent from Ireland to join Father Camper who had arrived from France, and Father Simonet, the vicar. The school operated under Brother Mulvihill's direction until the arrival of six nuns in 1897, who

were to take charge of the school. This school served until 1902 when another building was erected to serve as a school and convent for the nuns. In 1907 or 1908, a large school was built and attached to the existing building, which was given over entirely to the nuns. This building served its purpose for 62 years.

In 1902, Father Peron became Pastor of St. Laurent. On a trip to France he brought back several Breton families. In 1907, a Mr. François Calvez returned to Brittany to bring out his wife and five sons. Family names such as Leost, Abgrall, Legoff, Combot, Calvez and Ollivier were added to the village. Prior to 1902, St. Laurent was populated by Metis and some Indian families. The spoken languages were Michif French and Saulteaux. Upon the arrival of the “Bretons”, the French language was introduced and greatly affected the community. St. Laurent continues to maintain its Metis identity and French Michif survived the pressures from the church, the nuns, and the “Bretons” who attempted to replace Michif French with the new French language. The Saulteaux language did not survive as few people now speak it.

Fort Alexander, Manitoba: (1793 - 1801, 1822 - 1860)

Fort Alexander was built by the Hudson's Bay Co. on the Winnipeg River to counter the North West Co.'s Fort Bas-de-la-Rivière that was nearby. It was originally located upriver at and known as Pointe au Foudre House (on the north bank). It was palisaded for defense in 1796 and relocated downstream in 1798 closer to the NWC post.

During the fur trade era, La Vérendrye built a trading post, named Fort Maurepas, on the north side of the Winnipeg River; this post was abandoned near the end of the French period. In the year 1792, a clerk for the North West Company, Toussaint Lesieur, built a post on the south side, which became an important provisioning post for the canoe brigades. Bags of pemmican, brought from the North West Company's posts on the upper Assiniboine, were stored here and taken as needed by the canoe brigades passing between Grand Portage (later, Fort William) and the far northwest. This post was usually referred to as Fort Bas de la Rivière, because of its location at the bottom of Winnipeg River, and it seems to have functioned as the capital of the NW Company's Lake Winnipeg district. The Hudson's Bay Company operated its own post here for a few years between 1795 and 1801. In 1807, the North West Company partner Alexander Mackay rebuilt the post on a nearby site. Beginning in 1808, the new post was known as Fort Alexander. After the Northwest and Hudson's Bay Companies merged in 1821, Fort Alexander was operated as a trading post for the Natives in the region.

Fort Dauphin:

La Vérendrye's records on May 12, 1742, the establishment of Fort Dauphin, which was founded in the autumn of 1741 at the west side of the mouth of the Mossey River. This site is in the present day town of Winnipegosis “Little Muddy Water,” Manitoba. The founder of this fort was La Vérendrye's son, Chevalier. The latter also founded about the same time, Fort Bourbon at the mouth of the Pasquia (Saskatchewan River). Later this Fort Bourbon was removed to the west side of Cedar Lake.

This post was attacked by Indians in 1743 and rebuilt on a site further upriver. It was abandoned by the French about 1758. A second Fort Dauphin was built in 1767 on the north shore of Lake Dauphin, so both the fort and the lake had the same name. Alexander Henry joined the North West Company (NWCo.) in 1791, trading at both the Whitemud River and Fort Dauphin. He then went to Pembina in 1801.

Peter Fidler, Hudson's Bay Company fur-trader, explorer and cartographer died at Fort Dauphin on December 17, 1822.

In 1886, the first general store and post office for the region was established at "Dogtown," so named for the pack and sled dogs which were the hallmark of First Nations and Métis settlements. By 1893, Dogtown had so many immigrants from eastern Canada that the old Métis community had become distinctly British-Canadian.

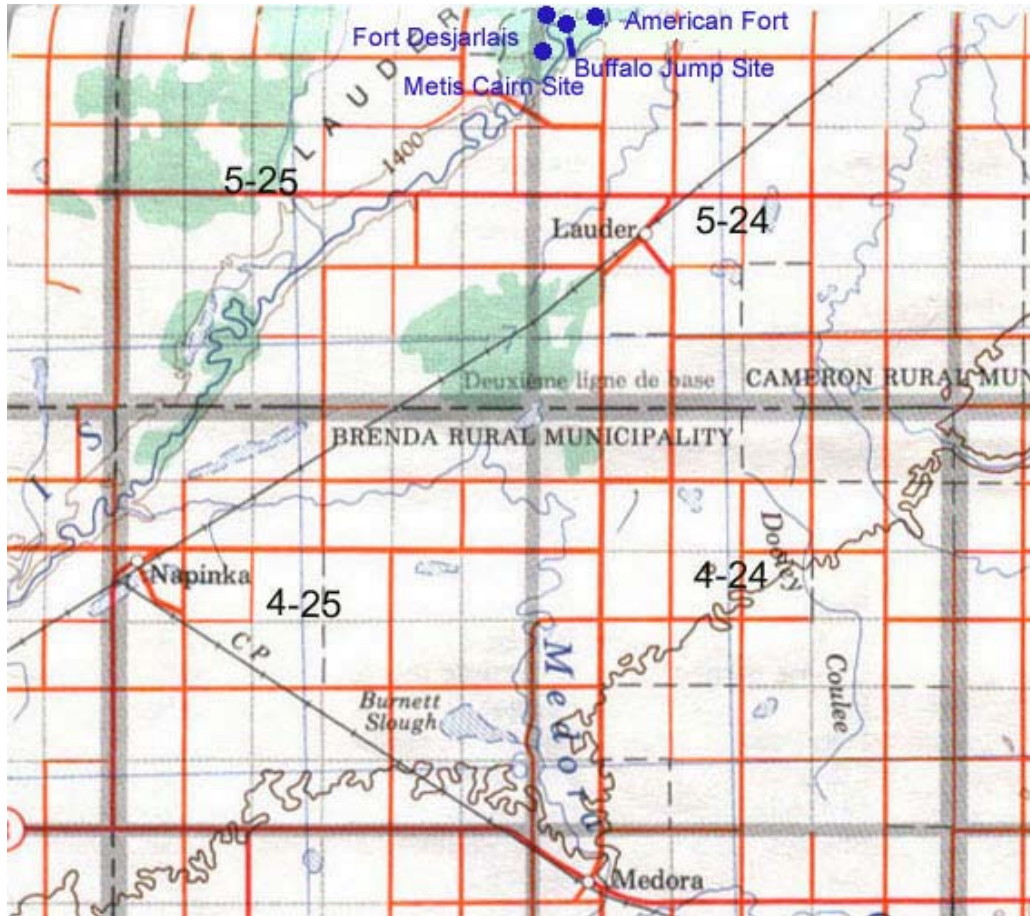
Fort de la Rivière Tremblante (Grant's House,Aspin House).

Robert Grant a partner of the North West Company built this post in 1791. It was located on the Upper Assiniboine River on the left bank near where the Rivière Tremblante enters the Assiniboine. In 1793, Cuthbert Grant Sr. took over the post when he was placed in charge of that district. It was his favourite residence. It was both a source of furs and a provisioning post for the brigades traveling to Athabasca country. Grant departed in 1798 because of the intense competition from 14 posts in the region. The ruins of the fort are located at the bottom of the Assiniboine Valley about 500 yards east of the Assiniboine just above the point where Rivière Tremblante enters. It is close to the present day Saskatchewan village of Togo, and nine miles south of Kamsack.

Fort Desjarlais:

Fort Desjarlais was built in 1836 by Joseph Desjarlais. Joseph "Mitche Cote" Desjarlais was born in 1806 in Lac la Biche. Joseph had met and married LaLouise Josephte Richard in 1834 in Baie St. Paul. She had been the daughter of Joseph Richard and her mother had been named Isabelle (Chippewa). Joseph had started the fur-trading store on the Souris River in 1836, providing the much sought after Pemmican for many travelers. He had also stocked his trading post with whiskey. The Indians had known Joseph by the name of "Misigade". It had been Joseph (1806) that had built Fort Desjarlais, when he had enclosed his trading store within an Oak Palisade on the Souris River near present day Lauder. Joseph had enclosed his fur trading store because of the many attacks by the aggressive Sioux.

Fort Desjarlais was located on the Souris River to the north-west of present day Lauder, Manitoba (Section 31, Township 5, Range 24). It was located about five miles from Fort Mr. Grant.



Joseph Desjarlais was the son of Jean Baptiste Desjarlais² born 1787 at St. Paul des Saulteaux (Saulteaux Village) and Lizette Charlotte Cardinal and was the grandson of Joseph Desjarlais Sr. from Contrecoeur, Quebec (b. 1764)³ and his Chippewa/Metis wife Okimaskwew. They married in 1785 in Manitoba. The Desjarlais family established one post on the Souris River, near Lauder, and another small post on the Souris near present-day Minot, North Dakota. The northern post was operated by Joseph and Antoine (b. 1793)⁴ with their brother Marcel (b. 1803)⁵, brother Baptiste⁶ and sons-in-law Charles DeMontigny, Eusebe Ledoux and Simon Blondeau. The elder Joseph may have been a fur trader; licences for 1783 included one for a Joseph "Desjarlais."

² Baptiste 'Nishecabo' Desjarlais was born ca 1787. Baptiste 'Nishecabo' died in Little Fork, Qu'Appelle Lakes, NWT, in winter 1871; he was 84. In 1815 when Baptiste 'Nishecabo' was 28, he first married Charlotte "Lizette" Cardinal, in Baie St. Paul, Red River Settlement.

³ Joseph died in Swan River, Manitoba, on 22 Oct 1833; he was 79. Joseph also had a son called Joseph (b. 1791). On 4 Nov 1844 Joseph married Josephette Cardinal, the daughter of Joseph "Matchi-Pa-Koos" Cardinal and Louise "Maskekostkoesk" Frobisher, in Lac La Biche.

⁴ Antoine died in Mar 1870. Antoine first married Suzanne "Catherine" Allary born ca 1787. Suzanne "Catherine" died in Lebrét, Saskatchewan, on 17 Jan 1878; she was 91. Jean-Baptiste Desjarlais, Antoine's son, who was with his Uncle Joseph at the post, married Cuthbert Grant's daughter Julie.

⁵ Marcel "Gwiwisens" married Brigitte Cardinal.

⁶ Baptiste 'Nishecabo' Desjarlais was born ca 1787 in Lac La Biche, NWT. Baptiste 'Nishecabo' died in Little Fork, Qu'Appelle Lakes, NWT, in winter 1871; he was 84. In 1815 when Baptiste 'Nishecabo' was 28, he first married Charlotte "Lizette" Cardinal, in Baie St. Paul, Red River Settlement.

Chippewa names have survived for two of the Desjarlais sons. Marcel was called “Quewezas” and Joseph “Mitche Cote,” or “Hairy Legs.” Antoine Desjarlais, the middle son, entered the service of the Hudson’s Bay Company. He operated a post in the Turtle Mountains as an interpreter from 1848 to 1855.

Joseph Desjarlais Jr. chose a site in the Lauder sand hills for his trading post. The site was about thirty feet above the level of the Souris, which ran past the south wall. Within the stockade—perhaps as large as one hundred fifty feet square—there stood one long log building and several smaller ones.

Fort Desjarlais, as it came to be known, was serviced more by Red River carts than by canoes. The Yellow Quill Trail, running from a point twenty miles from Fort Garry up the Assiniboine and Souris Rivers, served both Fort Cuthbert Grant and Fort Desjarlais before splitting into independent branches serving North Dakota and the Turtle Mountains. In addition to this, there was the Hudson’s Bay Trail that ran north through the sand hills from Fort Desjarlais.

Peter Garrioch, who operated a post on the Souris River south of the American border briefly in the 1840s, passed through Fort Cuthbert Grant in January 1846. He recorded in his journal that “Mr. Grant had seized the goods and furs of several of the traders.” One that he called “Quewezas”—the Indian name for Marcel Desjarlais, Joseph’s brother—was foremost on the list. Since Garrioch did not mention him, it is likely that Joseph was not in the post at the time. Garrioch also noted that the magistrates had “the good sense to refuse to have anything to do with this business.”

It is possible that Grant’s 1846 action against Fort Desjarlais was in response to Governor Christie’s 1844 crackdown on independent traders. Christie had forbidden the import of goods in Company ships by settlers who would not sign a declaration that they did not deal in furs; and, in addition, ordered that the sender’s name be printed on each envelope sent so that the mail of anyone suspected of illicit trading could be seized.

Antoine’s son-in-law, Charles Demontigny, was also at the fort. One would assume from Garrioch’s comment that the third Desjarlais brother, Marcel, was also there periodically. Father Picton, in his papers in the St. Boniface Historical Society, notes that Antoine and Marcel were in the Turtle Mountains in the 1850s. Either Demontigny or Marcel could have controlled the operation when Joseph was absent.

References:

Bruce Wishart, “Fort Desjarlais”, 2010, first published in the *Souris Valley Echo*, June 29, 1987 and July 6, 1987.

Fort Ellice, Manitoba:

This fort was established on the Qu’Appelle River upstream from the fork with the Assiniboine in 1794. In 1817 it was rebuilt on the south bank of the Assiniboine at

Beaver Creek. In 1862 a new post was constructed a short distance from the original fort and in 1873 it replaced Fort Pelly as the headquarters for the Swan River District. It closed in 1892. Many famous Metis traders were in charge of this post, namely, John Richard McKay, James McKay and William McKay Sr.

Fort Gibraltar:

Fort Gibraltar was built the Forks of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers near the previous location of Fort Rouge. It was built by Cuthbert Grant's brother-in-law John Wills. Fort Rouge was built in 1738, at the south point of the present site of the Forks of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers, by Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye's and was used as a trading post for the local Aboriginals. The fort may have operated for only one season, and by 1809, Fort Gibraltar was built across the river from this site, on the north side, by the North West Company.

The sites of the two forts Gibraltar (I: 18010; II: 1816) and the first Fort Garry (1822) have been identified adjacent to the present day Union Station, while the site of Fort Rouge is believed to be on South Point, immediately south across the Assiniboine River. From this location guns on the top of the walls could control traffic on both the Red and Assiniboine rivers.

John Wills was active in the fur trade well before 1798. He was a wintering partner of the X.Y. Company. He became a partner of the North West Company in 1804 when it amalgamated with the X.Y. Company. In 1810 he started the construction of Fort Gibraltar. Jean Baptiste Roi was one of the men employed to construct the fort. At the time he was living across the river. He noted that the fort was built about fifteen paces from the shore of the river. Wills remained in charge of the North West Company's Red River Department until he was relieved of his duties as a result of ill health, in 1814. Mr. Wills married Cuthbert Grant's sister, Josephthe. He died at Fort Gibraltar on Friday, January 6, 1815. On August 30, 1812 the first of several contingents of Selkirk settlers led by Captain Miles Macdonell arrived to establish a colony. Although Wills was initially regarded by the Selkirk settlers as supportive, he resisted Miles Macdonell's Pemmican Proclamation, regarding it as an "indignity". Macdonell also ordered all NWC agents to leave the territory. In June of 1814 Macdonell sent sheriff John Spencer, trader Joseph Howse and three men up the Assiniboine River and they seized the NWC pemmican being stored at Fort la Souris (34 tons of goods in total). They carried most of this across the river to HBC fort Brandon the rest they shipped to fort Douglas, a mile below Fort Gibraltar. Duncan Cameron retaliated by arresting Joseph Howse preparatory to sending him for trial at Montreal.

In April of 1815 Cameron lured a number of settlers with promises of transportation to Upper Canada and free land. They left the colony and moved to Fort Gibraltar taking the field guns of Fort Douglas with them. Upon return from a visit to Fort Daer, Macdonell was arrested and sent to fort William. Later the rest of the settlers were ousted and left for Norway House on Jack River. Later, in August Colin Robertson returned with these settlers who were then joined by a party of 180 new settlers along with the new Governor, Robert Semple.

On March 17, 1816, Fort Gibraltar was captured and destroyed by HBC employee Colin Robertson, a former NWC employee who became a leader of the colony.

This then culminated in the Battle of Seven Oaks on June 19, 1816 when Semple attacked Cuthbert Grant's party trying to bypass Fort Douglas with pemmican for the brigades from Fort William who were further down the Red River.

Later, the 1816 capture of Fort Douglas was ruled illegal by British authorities and the North West Company was given permission to rebuild the fort in 1817. Before eventually amalgamating with the Hudson's Bay Company, North West Company had 97 trading posts compared to the 84 in Manitoba that flew the Hudson's Bay Company standard.

On March 26, 1821, The North West Company was merged with its rival under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company. The site of the fort was designated a National historic Site in 1924.

- 1822 Fort Gibraltar's name is changed to Fort Garry.
- 1835 Fort Garry is abandoned but its warehouses are still used.
- 1852 Fort Garry is destroyed by the Red River flood.
- 1978 Fort Gibraltar is rebuilt across the Red River at Whittier Park by Festival du Voyageur.

Fort la Reine, now Portage la Prairie, Manitoba:

La Verendrye and his sons established this fort in 1738. It was on the edge of Long Plain, a site of buffalo and deer hunting. This was also the starting location for the portage from the Assiniboine River to Lac des Prairies (now Lake Manitoba). Fur traders would use this portage for their journey up the lake to the Dauphin River and Fort Dauphin. The location on the river was also the site of a good sturgeon fishery. The Metis community of High Bluff was established nearby. Portage was the home of Metis Chief Peichito Tanner. He and his sons operated 250 Red River carts between St. Paul, Minnesota and Edmonton.

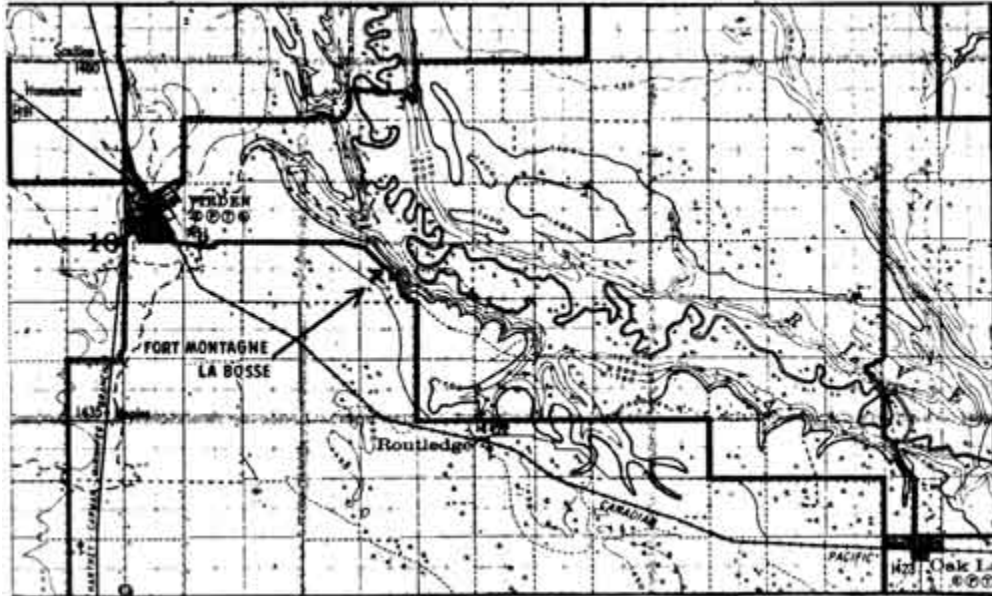
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Fort Montagne à la Bosse.

This fort was built by the North West Company in 1790. It was located on the Upper Assiniboine River close to the buffalo wintering grounds. In the history books and journals of the explorers, the fort has been given many names: Moose Head Fort, Rivière

Fort de la Bosse, Mont à la Bosse, Rivière aux Bois Fort. However, the name commonly known for many years has been Fort La Bosse. Due to competition it was closed after a few years, then reopened in 1794 by John MacDonell. The fort is located on the bank of the Assiniboine River three and one half miles east of present day Virden, Manitoba. The fort operated from 1790 to 1805.



Daniel Harmon, in his journal entry of October 26, 1804 says:

October 26th, Friday - 1804 - Agreeable to Mr. Chaboillez's instructions on the 6th Inst. in company with Mr. La Roque & an Indian who served as Guide, left this place a Horse back to go to Montagne a la Basse, our course being nearly South over a Plain Country and on the 9th we reached Riviere Qui Appelle (Qu'Appelle River) where the North West & X.Y. Coys. have each a fort and where we passed one night with Monsr. Poitras who has charge of the Post, and the next morning we continued our march, always in beautiful Plains till the eleventh in the afternoon when we arrived at Montagne a la Basse where we found Messrs. C. Chaboillez & Charles McKenzie &c. &c. This is a well built Fort and beautifully situated on a very high bank of the Red River (the Assiniboine River is meant), and the Country all around a level Plain, but as the Fort stands on a much more elevated place than the Country on the opposite side of the River we can from the Fort Gate (as I am informed) at almost all seasons of the year see Buffaloe Grazing or Deer & Cabri bounding across the Plains. All of which cannot fail to render this a very pleasant situation. And here I passed eight Days in the company of the above mentioned Gentlemen, and had not a little satisfaction in their conversation. At times all of us would mount our Horses to take a ride out into the Plain, and frequently try the speed of our Beasts. However on the 19th I left that enchanted abode, accompanied by Messrs. Chaboillez & McKenzie &c. & the Day following arrived at Riviere qui Appelle, where we found our people waiting our arrival and as the Canoes go no further up the River, owing to the shallow water this Season, the Goods intended for Alexandria will be taken there on Horses backs. We therefore gave out such things as we thought necessary and

sent the People off and the Day following Mr. Chaboillez &c. returned home and I accompanied by Mr. McKenzie, and a Mr. Allen McDonell (my X.Y. Neighbor) set off for this place where we arrived this afternoon, after making a pleasant jaunt of twenty one Days. Here I have to pass the Winter with me, Mr. Goedike two Interpreters, twenty labouring Men fifteen Women & as many children.

On April 10, 1805, Harmon reports:

April 10, Wednesday - 1805 - On the 24th Ult. I accompanied by one Man a Horse back sat off for Montagne a la Basse, and when we were arrived there we were not a little surprised to find the Gates shut and about eighty Lodges of Crees & Assiniboins encamped about the Fort, who threatened to massacre all the White People who were in it, and those blood thirsty Savages had the boldness to throw Balls over the Palisades & tell our People to gather them up, as they might probably want them a few Days hence. I after having past several Days there sat off to return home but as I got out of the Fort Gate, three rascally Indians stepped up towards me, one of whom laid hold of my Horses Bridle and stopped my Horse, in saying that he belonged to him and added that he would take him from me. However I told him that he had sold the Beast to Mr. Chaboillez, and he had given him to me, therefore he must go and speak to that Gentleman about the Horse as I had nothing to do with him, but the rascal would not let go of the Bridle, and when I saw that, I gave a pretty good blow with the butt end of my whip on his knuckles and then another to my Horse, which made him spring forward & leave the Indian behind, & so I continued my route. But the villain with one of his companions followed us nearly half of the Day, but after that we saw them no more. On my return I remained four Days at Riviere qui Appelle where I passed my time very agreeably in the company of Messrs. John McDonald & Thomas McMurray (both for the X. Y. Company) and Andrew Poitras - but in leaving that place I had the River to cross, and at that late Season the ice was bad, so much so that my Horse with me upon him fell through twice, and the last time I was very nigh going under the Ice, but kind Providence spared me once more.

Fort Mr. Grant

Fort Mr. Grant was built by Cuthbert Grant after the Hudson's Bay Company closed Brandon House in 1824. It was located on the Souris River about two miles south of present day Hartney, Manitoba (Section 7, Township 6, Range 23).

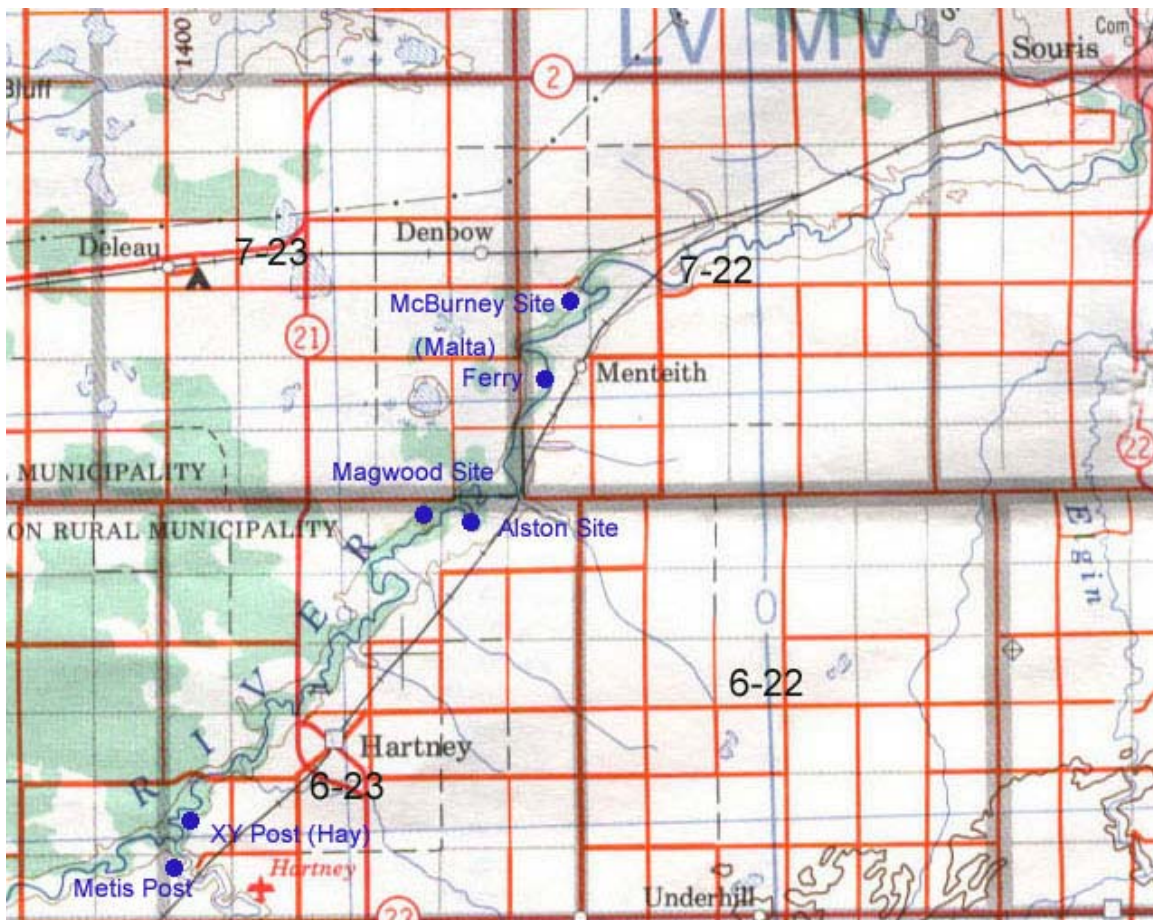
In 1828 the HBC put Grant on salary and gave him the title, Warden of the Plains. Grant then spent the winter of 1828-29 at Fort Grant. Governor George Simpson then supplied Cuthbert Grant and Louis Guiboche with an outfit to trade from Turtle Mountain to Qu'Appelle and to compete with the illicit traders on the Souris.

In reporting this action to London three years later, Simpson wrote: "...as they have a number of Indian and half-breed relations and are intimately acquainted and

connected with all the different tribes in that quarter and are not directly in the service of the Honourable Company they have it more in their power to harass our opponents than we could with a formidable establishment.”

At one point, American traders threatened to destroy Fort Mr. Grant, claiming it was on American soil. The HBC sent George Taylor, a surveyor, to place the 49th parallel, and it was found that Grant’s fort was a full 33 miles (53 kms) north of the border. This gave Grant the authority to seize persons and their property not authorized to trade outside the United States. In 1824 Grant also had trouble with some Assiniboine who threatened to destroy his fort. He was able to defuse the situation, so that trading could resume.

Cuthbert Grant died in 1854 after falling off a horse. The next year Fort Mr. Grant became a wintering post only, operating under the management of his descendants and other relatives. By this time business was greatly reduced, consisting of buffalo robes, wolf skins and a few muskrats. After 1861 there is no further mention of the fort in HBC records.



Grand Marais, Manitoba: (By Audreen Hourie)

The community of Grand Marais lies along the east shore of Lake Winnipeg, about 60 miles from what is now the City of Winnipeg. Many Metis families were already living in this area in the early 1800s, and then up until the mid-1950s, Grand Marais would have maintained an almost exclusive Metis identity. Metis family names such as Knott, Thomas, Linklater, Sayer, Orvis, Hourie, Sinclair and Irvine; peoples of Orkney, Scottish and Welsh descent were prominent and the few Metis families who continue to live in Grand Marais are descendants of those early settlers. Grand Marais existed in a local economy of farming, fishing and trapping. A traditional life-style of sharing and caring ensured continuity and security for the Metis families for many years. After 1900, and the coming of the railway, the economy shifted. Horse and buggy trails became highways and the rail line allowed access to people from outside the community who were interested in the long stretch of sandy beach area now known as Grand Beach. Over the years, the Metis community would be overwhelmed by tourists and the tourist industry. Eventually, the area became a Provincial Park, exclusive to tourism. The local Metis economy barely exists and the Metis families have not participated in the tourist industry. Gone, except for memories, are the sounds of the Metis fiddle, traditional Metis jigs and dances, and the sound of the horses and caboose leaving for the days fishing on the lake, the howl of the wolves on a cold winter evening. Thus while there are still some Metis families in the community of Grand Marais, much of the Metis history lies only in the hearts and minds of the Elders.

Grand Rapids, Red River:

The first community of Grand Rapids in Manitoba was north of Winnipeg on the west side of the Red River near the rapids, now submerged because of the dam and locks at Lockport. This community was formed after 1823 when many of the English-speaking Half Breeds took land grants north of Point Douglas, through Frog Plain and at the rapids. In 1840, Reverend Cockran reported that of the children registered in his school 39% of the fathers were Metis and 97% of the mothers were Aboriginal (35% Metis and 62% Indian). This was basically the population of the Parish of St. Andrews. The families of the Rapids had a mixed economy farming, hunting, fishing, and trapping as well as freighting and buffalo hunting. After the Resistance of 1869-70 many of the French speaking Metis left and moved on a permanent basis to their traditional wintering quarters at Batoche, St. Laurent and the Qu'Appelle Valley. Many of the English Metis of the parish left and set up new settlements at Grand Rapids (on the north end of Lake Winnipeg), Prince Albert and Fort Edmonton.

Grand Rapids, Saskatchewan River

Grand Rapids is geographically located at the mouth of the Saskatchewan River⁷ where it enters Lake Winnipeg at its north eastern end. Grand Rapids was a base for many Metis “free traders” or “pedlars” from Canada during the mid 1700s through mid 1800s who intercepted Indian fur traders on route to Fort York. The HBC had positioned a fort to the west at Cedar Lake in 1857, however, to further counteract the activities of “free traders”, the HBC relocated this post to Grand Rapids in 1864. The rapids were a

⁷ In the 1770s called Riviere de Bourbon, Pasquayah or Sascatchiwaine River.

gathering place for seasonal sturgeon fishing.

From the late 1600's, "Indian" fur traders passed through Grand Rapids on-route to the HBC's York Factory depot on Hudson's Bay, although many were intercepted at Cumberland House and Grand Rapids by North West Company. As early as 1741, the French built Fort Bourbon near Grand Rapids in order to intercept Cree and other north and western tribal trading partners of the HBC before they began their journey to York Factory. Grand Rapids was the fur trade gateway to and from the northwest interior and was a highly strategic location for various fur traders throughout the late 1700s and early 1800s. From 1864 to circa 1909 the Grand Rapids post functioned primarily as a transportation and provisions depot.

In 1862 When Pere Emile Petitot, a representative of the OMI (Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate), passed through Grand Rapids in 1862 en route for the Mackenzie District Roman Catholic missions, he reportedly saw a large camp of "Savanais" (Swampy Cree) on the south shore of the Saskatchewan River. McCarthy writes that free traders were also beginning to congregate at Grand Rapids at that time, and suggests that their presence may have attracted some of the Cree. McCarthy quotes Petitot as saying he found groups of "Sauteux Catholics, from Duck Bay and Swan River, who had come to Grand Rapids to fish for sturgeon."⁸

1872: A census of the Cumberland District in the HBC report on the Saskatchewan District indicates that at Grand Rapids there were eight adult "Halfbreeds" and thirteen "Indian" children at the post establishment. In addition, there were 20 adult "Halfbreeds" living around Grand Rapids and 67 "Indians," 20 of which were said to be adults. At the Moose Lake Post establishment there were 2 adult "white" persons, 8 adult "Halfbreeds" and 20 "Indians" four of which were said to be adults. There were also two "Halfbreeds" living in the surrounding area as well as 181 "Indians," 92 of which were said to be adults.⁹

Grantown, Manitoba:

This community was named after Metis leader Cuthbert Grant. It was located in St. François Xavier Parish 18 miles west of Winnipeg. Grant built his house on the *Couteau des Festins*, the northeast corner of a loup in the Assiniboine River. His friends and relatives followed him here from Pembina and their Saulteaux relatives established a camp just to the west. The Metis were employed as buffalo hunters, traders, fishers and farmers. Due to the good wood in the area and the Metis carpentry skills Grantown became the industrial centre for construction of the large dished wheels for Red River carts. The hunters would assemble on white Horse Plains prior to moving south to North Dakota and the Missouri Coteau on their great buffalo hunts. Grant and his men also

⁸ Emile Petitot, *En route pour la mer claciale*, (Paris: Letouzey et ane):1887:229 CMS A83 cited in Martha McCarthy, Papers in Manitoba History, p 18; Ibid.; Ibid.

⁹ Glenbow Archives. Richard C. Hardisty fonds, Papers relating to the Saskatchewan District Posts, Series 10, file Census 1871-72:2 .

made annual trips to York Factory to obtain trade goods. For many years he traded and freighted on his own account. As Warden of the Plains, Grant patrolled all of Manitoba south west of the Red River from the Turtle Mountains to the Qu'Appelle Valley. He and his Metis troops also protected the Red River Settlement from attack by the Sioux. Almost 100 families settled at Grantown in 1824, by 1849 the census showed 914 people living at Grantown. This parish was established in 1824 by Father Boucher. The community was later called La Prairie du Cheval and White Horse Plain until being renamed after its patron Saint, St. François Xavier. A reconstruction of Grant's original water mill further east on Sturgeon Creek can be seen now in St. James (now part of Winnipeg). This mill failed due to frequent dam bursts and Grant then established a wind powered grain mill at Grantown.

Lane's Post—St. François Xavier:

William Lane (brother of Richard Lane) took charge of Lower Fort Garry as a clerk in 1850-54 and later managed a post on the Assiniboine River near St. François Xavier parish. He was clerk-in-charge at the White Horse Plains post from 1856 to 1862 and Chief Trader from 1862-1872. This post was built at Pigeon Lake in the 1850s and first appears in the HBC records in 1856. It was established primarily for its farming operations and was located about five miles past the St. François Xavier church.

In 1860 Lane married Mary Bird a Métisse and after her death he married Eliza Lee Lewis (b. 1837), the Métisse daughter of chief trader John Lee Lewis and Jane Ballendine on March 12, 1872 at St. Andrews. Lane died in 1882 and his wife died in 1897.

William Clark ran the post from 1874-75 and E. W. Gigot was the clerk from 1875-77. Henry Moncreiff was salesman there from 1877-1883.

Lane was apparently involved in the plot to capture the Dakota refugee leaders in 1864. On January 14-18, 1864 a plot to capture the Dakota is hatched by John McKenzie of Rat River west of Portage la Prairie; William Lane; and Onisime Giguere, as translator. McKenzie used Mr. Lane to encourage the Dakota into a trap. Andrew Bannatyne provided drugged wine for Little Six and Medicine Bottle. D.L. Kingsley was hired to assist in tying and carrying the Indians to Fort Pembina. Andrew Bannatyne also had some of his friends waiting to assist. McKenzie and Kingsley started out for Pembina with Little Six. Medicine Bottle is over powered by Jaguish, Giguere and others. He is bound and transported to Fort Pembina.

NAME: LANE, William Douglas PARISH: France ENTERED SERVICE: 1843 DATES: b.19 May 1819
 d. 28 Jan. 1882

Appointments & Service Outfit Year*	Position	Post	District	HBCA Reference
<i>*An Outfit year ran from 1 June to 31 May</i>				
1843-1844	Apprentice steward	Rupert's River	Moose	B.135/g/27
1844	Apprentice clerk	Fort George	Moose	E.185 ; Corr. 29 March 1844.
1844-1846	Postmaster	Moose Factory	Moose	B.135/g/28;B.135/k/1,p.253
1846-1848	Postmaster	Norway House	Norway House	B.239/k/2,p.408
1848-1851	Postmaster	Lower Fort [Garry]	Red River	B.239/k/2,p.429,459,482
1851-1856	Postmaster in charge	Lower Fort [Garry]	Red River	B.239/k/3,p.9,33,53,78,106
1856-1862	Clerk-in-charge	White Horse Plains	Red River	B.239/k/3,p.127,147,168,188,208,228
1862-1872	Chief Trader*	White Horse Plains	Red River	B.239/k/3,p.250,272,293,315,336,358, 383,413,439

*letter in W.D.Lane Collection indicates his appointment was in 1872.

Father: John Lane (b. Ireland)
 Mother: M. Lane in St. Omer, France
 Brother: Richard Lane

1859 letter from Simpson to Mactavish refers to wishes to be married while at Lower Fort and then at White Horse Plains (S.F.'Lane, William D.')

Wife (1): Gibeault [possibly] died pre-1870, Lane listed as widower (PAM, 1870 Census)

Children: [E]douard Gibeault, writing from College St. Boniface in 1872-1873 signs himself "your child", and Lane provides clothing etc. but he mentions his mother and father in one letter, 18 Feb 1873 (PAM, M101)

Lizzie [Eliza] b.ca. 1862 (PAM, 1870 Census; PAM, M101; Request for assistance in RG2/7/451)

Wife (2): Eliza Lee Lewes (b.30 Nov.1837, d.12 Oct.1897), daughter of John Lee Lewes, m. 13 March 1872 (B.235/a/16, Lane Family Bible)

Children: Baby born & died 20 May 1873 (Lane Family Bible)

Maria Jan Laura Lewes (21 Spr.1875-ca. 1961) m. Kirby (Lane Family Bible)

Annie Alberta Alexandrina (4 March 1877-ca. 1970) m.Wilks (Lane Family Bible)

Lillian Georgina Ballendine (31 Mar.1879-Nov.1957) m. Valentine Gerald (Lane Family Bible)

Quinn, 21 Dec.1903 (Lane Family Bible)

William Douglas Lane Collection, 1843-1875 in University of British Columbia Archives (3 lin.ft.).
 Includes alpha index. (Microfilm copy PAM, MG 1 D11 Reels M99-M102 and PAC, MG 19 A40)

Search file: 'Lane, William D'



Filename: Lane, William Douglas (1819-1882) (fl. 1843-1872) JHB/Dec.1988; rev. JR/Jan.2002

Little Britain, Manitoba:

Little Britain was the name of the village of Lockport in the early days, so named by a Mr. Stevens, father of the man for whom Stevens Ave. was named. However, the first post office there was called North St. Andrews. The school was also named North St. Andrews. The meeting house built by the late Hon. Donald Gunn for services of the Presbyterian Church was called Little Britain, and the name continued in Little Britain Presbyterian Church built between 1872 and 1874. Donald Gunn settled in the area in 1826. He noted that the whole area was settled by Orkneymen retiring from the HBC and moving there with their Half Breed families. The settlement extended as far north as Lower Fort Garry. Initially, the original congregation was served by Reverend John Black. He was the first Presbyterian minister at the Selkirk Settlement. The church was constructed by John Clouston and Duncan McRae. They were two of the most important stonemasons of the era.

Manitoba House:

In the mid-1790s the North West Company was established in this area at the narrows of Lake Manitoba. The HBC established a post here in 1797 under the name "Doubtful Post." In 1828 Manitoba House was moved further south, below Ebb and Flow Lake, to what is now Kinosota. It was opened there to oppose the operation of the independent Metis hunters who were seriously cutting into the HBC trade. The first

families established at Kinosota were Tanner, Demarais, Pruden, Moar, McDonald, and Garrioch.

The Manitoba House North West Co Trading Post was established in 1797 on the west shore of Lake Manitoba, about fifteen miles north of the Narrows. This post was located near the outlet of Ebb and Flow Lake at "The Narrows" of Lake Manitoba; it was taken over by the Hudson's Bay Co. in 1821. Its original name was *Doubtful Post*, likely because of a lack of confidence in the survival of the post at the time of its establishment. The Metis people of this community were all descendants of employees of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Trading Company of French, English, and mostly Scottish extraction, who had intermarried with the Indians. The Ebb and Flow Indian Reserve was nearby and the Dog Creek Reserve was directly opposite on the east shore of the lake. From these sources the post derived its trade. Treaty Two was signed on August 21, 1871, at Manitoba House. The Metis settlement adjacent to the trading post was referred to as simply the Manitoba House Settlement until 1889 when the name Kinosota was suggested by John Norquay for the local post office. The settlement consisted of a number of long narrow lots strung out along the shore of Lake Manitoba.

Metis Island, Manitoba:

Metis Island is north of Ross Island at Cross Lake, Manitoba. This was the site of Metis settlement in the area prior to its relocation to the east bank of the Nelson River in the Community of Cross Lake.

Minnedosa, Manitoba: See entry under Tanner's Crossing.

Moose Lake, Manitoba:

Moose Lake is a small community located on the northern limits of the Saskatchewan River delta on the western shore of South Moose Lake about 74 km Southeast of The Pas in Manitoba. There is both an Indian reserve, home to the Mosakahiken Cree Nation, and a non-treaty community on adjacent land.

Northern Manitoba Metis Road Allowance Communities:

The Northern Halfbreed Association was formed in Manitoba in the early 1930s to represent the Metis and Non-Status Indians of the Metis settlements near The Pas, Moose Lake and Cedar Lake. The settlements were: The Thomas Settlement, Wooden Tent (Metikewap), Pine Bluff, Moose Lake, Big Eddy, Young Point, Rall's Island¹⁰ and Umphreville.

¹⁰ Laura Hyrich, a current Board Member of MMF from The Pas Region, informs us that Rall's Island was founded by her grandfather Charles who homesteaded there in 1915. He was a northern prospector (from Red River) who when passing through the area, felt it would be a good place to build a home. He later returned with his wife Elizabeth (Knight) and did just that.

Talk of a railway to Hudson Bay began in the 1870s with the earliest charter issued in 1881. Political manoeuvring between the federal and provincial governments delayed further activity until the commercial demands of the Finger Lumber Company, and its owner, provided the impetus for a branch line from the Canadian Northern Railway to The Pas in 1908. Herman Finger, an industrialist from Wisconsin, pushed for the development of a townsite at The Pas for his lumber mill as well as for the relocation of the Pas Band's mill to the north side of the river. This had the effect of putting the Band's mill out of business. Finger and his cronies owned considerable land in the townsite and benefited from the subsequent survey of the land into lots.

The treaty with The Pas Band, an adhesion Treaty Number 5, was signed in 1876 registering 599 persons. By 1906, prospects for an economic boom became apparent. The Canadian government purchased land on the south bank of the river for the future town site from the Indians who were then moved across the river to the present site. In 1910 a town site plan was laid out and lots were placed on the market. The Crown declined to survey the nearby Metis communities. The white population consisted of six families. By the time of incorporation in 1912 there were about 500 people, and in a Board of Trade census one year later the total was 1,509.

The first Chief of the Northern Halfbreed Association was Robert Thomas. The Association was active in protesting the leases the government was giving to the HBC and the Lamb family for muskrat ranching at the Summerberry Marsh, on the land they traditionally trapped. They also lobbied to have the Crown land surveyed so they could gain title to their land and homes. When the town of The Pas was incorporated, the nearby Metis road allowance communities of Big Eddy, Young Point, Rall's Island and Umphreville were left outside its boundaries, thus denying the Metis services such as water and sewer.

Norway House and Rossville, Manitoba:

Norway House and Rossville are Metis communities located where the Nelson River enters Little Playgreen Lake (north of Lake Winnipeg). This was a HBC fur trade post as well as a storage and transshipment depot during the heyday of the fur trade.

Present day Norway House is located 30 km (19 miles) north of Lake Winnipeg, on the bank of the eastern channel of Nelson River. In 1816 Lord Selkirk sent out a band of Norwegians to build a road from York Factory to Lake Winnipeg and a series of supply posts. They built Norway House at Mossy Point (west side of outflow) in 1817 replacing the former Jack River post¹¹ at that location.

¹¹ Jack River (1801 - 1814), a Hudson's Bay Co. post replaced by Norway House. In 1756, the HBC sent two men (Joseph Smith and Joseph Waggoner) inland from the Bay. They camped at the site termed Jack River, Jackfish River, and later Norway House. This was a stopping point before making the crossing westward over the northern end of Lake Winnipeg, to the mouth of the Saskatchewan River at Grand Rapids, thence on to Cumberland House.

In 1825 or 1826 much of the post was destroyed by fire. In 1826 the Hudson's Bay Company abandoned its position on Mossy Point in favour of its present position on the East River, or as it is now known, the Jack River in order to be nearer to the fishery, the food supply of its population. In 1830, Cumberland House, formerly the most important post in the interior, was supplanted by Norway House. From the 1830s, the Councils of the Hudson's Bay Company, (a gathering of the Chief Factors) met at Norway House rather than York Factory.

Oak Lake (Lac des Chênes, also Flat Creek) and Fort Mr. Grant, Manitoba:

Oak Lake, the Lauder Sand Hills and the Souris River plain to the south were traditional Metis wintering places since the buffalo were numerous on the plains here. Oak Lake was a watering stop thirty-two miles west of Brandon. Along time Metis wintering stop, the Metis permanently settled it by the late 1860s. In 1824, Brandon House on the Assiniboine River was abandoned and Fort Mr. Grant was established to the south, on the Souris River in 1826. Here Cuthbert Grant and Louis Guiboche were to trade with the Metis and Indians between the Turtle Mountain and Qu'Appelle. This fort closed in 1861. Fort Desjarlais was established by the American Fur Company to the south of Fort Mr. Grant by Joe Desjarlais in 1856. It was destroyed by fire in 1856. Both of these posts were staffed by 50 to 100 Metis men.

Oak Point:

Oak Point is located on the east shore of Lake Manitoba north of St. Laurent and south of Lundar, Manitoba. In early days it was a wintering place for the HBC cattle. Many Metis employees took HBC lots here. It is located on the northern border of the old "postage stamp" province of Manitoba.

Opaskweyaw now The Pas, Manitoba:

For many centuries this location on the Saskatchewan River was a meeting and rendezvous place (just before spring breakup) for the Cree hunters and gatherers operating on the Saskatchewan River delta. They would wait here for the spring waterfowl return and the onset of the major fish spawning runs. Their fish weirs were maintained into the summer when sturgeon became a major food source. The first permanent settlement in the area was constructed in 1741. The sons of the explorer La Verendrye established Fort Paskoyac, an important fort that was at the confluence of three rivers (Carrot, Oskatask Sipi in Cree, literally "river of the wild carrot", Pasquia and Saskatchewan rivers). The fort served the local trappers and fur traders for decades. Seeding a few acres of grain around the fort in 1754, Captain de la Corne became Manitoba's first farmer. With the advent of fur trade posts Metis settlements were established at Carrot River Valley (Pasquia Settlement), Young's Point, Big Eddy, Umpherville, and Ralls Island. Big Eddy and Umpherville are small settlements located north of The Pas. The Young's Point settlement is located just south of the Pas in the Pasquia Settlement. Ralls Island lies east of the Town of the Pas, and was settled in the early 1900's as a farming area. In 1743 Laverendrye built the first Fort Paskoyac on

behalf of the French on the southwest shore of Cedar Lake. A fort was also built in 1749 at the location of present day Town of The Pas and named Fort Pasko yak. Another major influence in the change of way of lifestyle of the Band's ancestors came with the coming of the Missionaries. In 1840 the Church Missionary Society established Devon Mission at The Pas. The Reverend Henry Budd (a Metis) established the mission and from that date forward The Pas area has had a resident priest. The Reverend Budd and his successors drew a good number of Indian people from the area to their mission and by the late 1960's there was a sizeable settlement at The Pas. There continued to be seasonal migration to areas where hunting and fishing was good. The Northern Halfbreed Association was formed in the early 1930s to represent the Metis and Non-Status Indians of the Metis settlements near The Pas, Moose Lake and Cedar Lake. The settlements were: The Thomas Settlement, Wooden Tent (Metikewap), Pine Bluff, Moose Lake, Big Eddy, Young Point, Rall's Island¹² and Umphreville. The first Chief of the Association was Robert Thomas. They were active in protesting the leases the government was giving to the HBC and the Lamb family for muskrat ranching on the land they traditionally trapped. They also lobbied to have the Crown land surveyed so they could gain title to their land and homes.

Petit Point de Roches, Manitoba:

Petit Point de Roches was a Metis community located on the Red River just north of the present town of Ste. Agathe (previously called Pointe à Grouette and Petite Pointe à Saline). From the mid-1800s the river lots in this area were inhabited by Metis buffalo hunters, freighters and farmers.

Petit Point du Chenes now Lorette, Manitoba:

Lorette was settled in the 1850s by Metis from St. Boniface, St. Norbert and St. Vital. It was first known as Petit Point des Chênes and was settled by Metis farmers, freighters traders and buffalo hunters.. The name was apparently changed by Bishop Taché to honour a priest in France who had made a considerable gift to the St. Boniface Cathedral.

Pine Bluff, Manitoba:

Throughout the 1800s the Metis of Fond du Lac used the entire Interlake region of Manitoba for their hunting trapping and fishing economy. They utilized the Duck Bay area extensively and travelled from there to the muskrat marshes just east of The Pas, Manitoba (part of the Territory of Keewatin at that time). This Pine Bluff camping site appears as a named site on a map in 1884. Around 1910, some of these Metis families decided to permanently settle at Pine Bluff, 50 miles southeast of The Pas along the Saskatchewan River. This gave them easy access to the resources of the Summerberry Marsh and the trapping areas right down to Grand Rapids on the Saskatchewan River. It is reported that the Metis had a fine sturgeon fishery on Cedar Lake. This high ground

¹² Laura Hyrich informs us that Rall's Island was founded by her grandfather Charles who homesteaded there in 1915. He was a northern prospector (from Red River) who when passing through the area, felt it would be a good place to build a home. He later returned with his wife Elizabeth (Knight) and did just that.

was also a stopping point when travelling between the Pas and Cedar Lake. The family names common to Pine Bluff were, Campbell, Chaboyer, Chartrand, Ducharme, Nabess, Azure, Lambert, Bourgoise, Lagimodiere, Beauchamp and Lavallee. The community had a small school from 1938 to 1942. The building of the Grand Rapids Dam meant the demise of this community since the flooding destroyed the fishery and trapping along the river and Cedar Lake. Many Metis lost both their fishing nets and all of their traps when the fore bay flooding began. The Metis had never received title to their land because the province refused to survey that area.

Pointe Coupée now St. Adolphe, Manitoba:

St. Adolphe located on the Red River south of the Red River Settlement was founded by the Metis in the early 1800s and originally known as Pointe Coupée. It was renamed after Adolphe Turner made a large donation to the church there. Pointe Coupée features in the 1869 Metis Resistance. In June of 1869, John Snow and his survey party went there to cut wood, dig a well, and make survey measurements in defiance of a Metis warning that the land belonged to them. In July, the Metis pulled out all the survey stakes, burned the wood and filled in the well.

Pointe à Grouette, previously Petite Pointe à Saline now St. Agathe:

From the mid-1800s the river lots in this area were inhabited by Metis families who were buffalo hunters, freighters and farmers. There was also a salt making enterprise there. Prior to 1872 the community was known as Pointe a Gouette and the 1870 District of Assiniboia census lists only two non-Metis inhabitants out of 157 people. However after 1870, due to government mismanagement of the scrip system and the transfer of title to those Metis who held Hudson's Bay company river lots most of the Metis were disenfranchised. Sainte Agathe was inaugurated as a parish in 1876. By 1900 the community was known as the village of Sainte Agathe and most of the Metis had moved to the United States or further west in Canada. The present-day community of Ste. Agathe is located on the Red River about 20 miles south of Winnipeg. The Metis property owners prior to 1865 were: Berthelets, Houles, Larocques, Morins Vennes, Vandals, Laberges, Landrys and Lafertés.

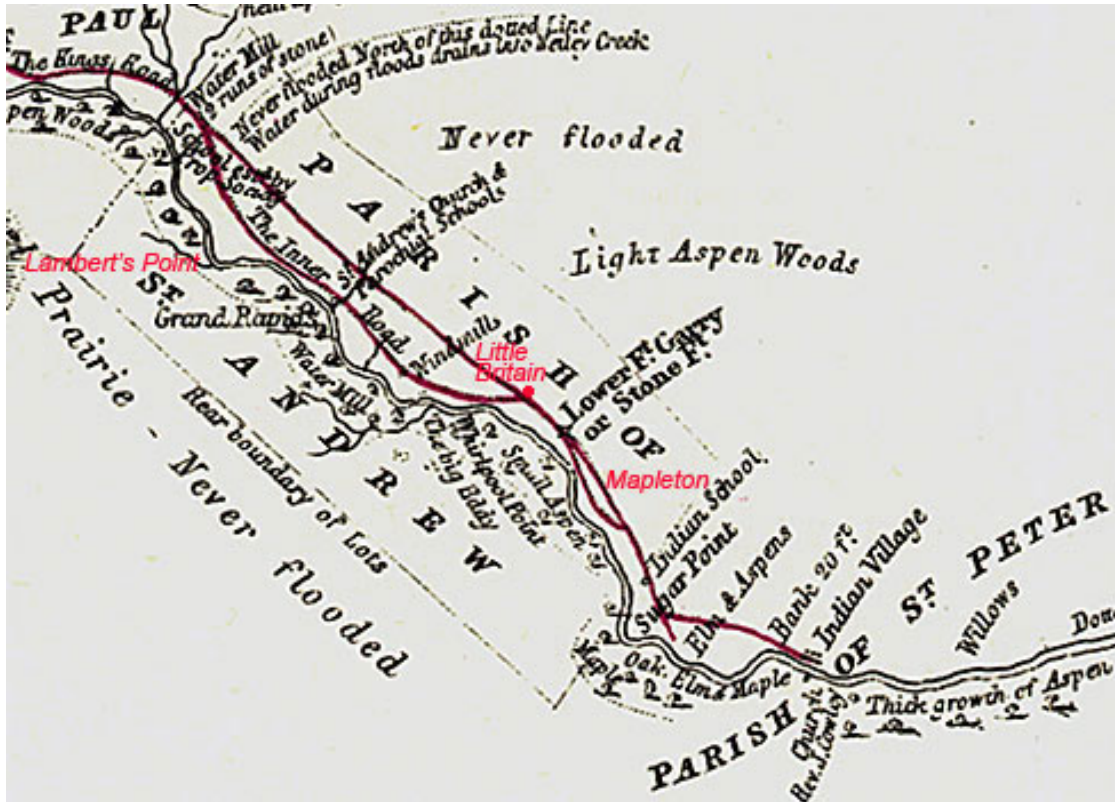
Pointe des Chênes or Grande Pointe des Chênes now Ste. Anne de Chênes:

This area was purchased by Metis and French settlers in 1852 from Na-sa-kee-by-ness (Flying Down Bird) also known as *Grands Oreilles* the Chief of the Roseau River Band. This was a preferred location for woodcutting because of the large oak groves along the banks of the Seine River. Father LeFloche, the priest from St. Boniface who ministered to the Metis at this location changed the name to Ste. Anne, a patron saint in Brittany, France.

Rat River, Manitoba:

After the boundary line left Pembina in the United States many of the Metis relocated in Canada. When it was clear they could not get a U.S. missionary they had the Bishop of Juliopolis, on March 2, 1825 write to Robert Pelly the Governor of Assiniboia for land at Rat River near la Saline.

Red River Settlements North of Upper Fort Garry:



Part of Henry Hind's Map based on his observations of 1857.
 Narrow river lots extend two miles east and west of the river.
 West is at top of map, East to the bottom, North on right.

Rivière Gratchias now Morris, Manitoba:

This Metis community, originally known as Rivière Gratchias (in Michif) or Scratching River. Its location, where the Gratiass River enters the Red, was a resting point for the cart trains making their way south along the Red River to St. Paul, Minnesota. It was named Gratiass or Gratchias after the type of burdock that grew in abundance all along this river. Every year the people from this location would join the Metis from St. Norbert to journey up the Rivière Sale and on to the buffalo hunting groups along the Missouri River.

Rivière aux Islets de Bois now Carman, Manitoba:

This river once called Rivière aux Islets de Bois now called the Boyne River was on the route to the plains followed by the Metis buffalo hunters. This Metis settlement of

Islet de Bois began in the early 1800s and it is certain that the Metis from St. Francois Xavier had established a settlement here in 1825. The location was good for shelter, fuel and timber and the soil was good for growing potatoes and barley. It had long been a location where the Metis from Grantown had their sugar lots. Even Metis from as far away as St. Andrews Parish had sugar lots in this area. They had utilized these maple groves along the river near the present day Carman since the early 1830s. Maple sugaring takes place in the spring of each year (mid-April) and starts before the snow has melted. Each family had its own sugar bush and would leave their pots and kettles on these lots until their return the following season. In 1868, a number of Metis from Johnny Grant's Montana group staked claims in the area. Grant reports: "As soon as spring opened I went in search of a place to locate. I selected the Carman District which was then called Rivière aux Islets de Bois. Three other families who had come from Montana with me also settled there. The men were Alex Pambrum, Thomas Lavatta, David Contois and Bill Cosgrove. I took up land that I thought would suit myself and family and located [land] also for two boys whom I had adopted."¹³

Rivière Sale now St. Norbert, Manitoba:

This area south of the Red River Settlement at the point where the Rivière Sale (Dirty River) enters the Red River was, in the 1700s, a seasonal gathering place for Metis because it was the best fishing area in the country. In July and August it was swarming with burbot, jackfish, carp and catfish. The community became a year-round establishment between 1822 and 1825 by former fur trade employees who settled there with their Metis families. For many years their primary occupations were the buffalo hunt, subsistence farming and cartage via the cart routes that radiated out in all directions from the Red River Settlement. Every year the people from the surrounding area would join the Metis from St. Norbert to journey up the Rivière Sale and on to the buffalo hunting grounds along the Missouri River. They would travel as far as the first range of the Rocky Mountains. They would then return along the Cheyenne River in North Dakota and at the point it joins with the Red River head north again. In the winter this same group would travel to the west to the Lauder Sand Hills on the Souris Plain, a wintering spot for bison. Many of the St. Norbert families also had homes at Oak Lake, just north of the sand hills. In 1857 Msgr. Tache established the St. Norbert area as a parish, which he named in honour of Msgr. Norbert Provencher, the first bishop of St. Boniface. It was in St. Norbert that Louis Riel organized the first Metis resistance movement of 1869-70. The Rivière Sale was also renamed as the La Salle River after René Robert Cavalier de la Salle who explored in the Louisiana area and up the Mississippi River.

Rivière Esturgeon now St. Charles, Manitoba:

St. Charles was the Metis community of Rivière Esturgeon until 1854. It was located on the north and south banks of the Assiniboine River to the west of Sturgeon

¹³ Lyndel Meikle (Ed.) *Very Close to Trouble: The Johnny Grant Memoir*. Pullman, Washinton: Washinton State University Press, 1996: 184-185. When Grant left Montana there were 62 wagons and twelve carts with 500 head of horses (200 belonging to Grant). There were 106 men in the party besides the women and children. The men were divided in squads often with a captain over each squad. (pp. 171-172)

Creek. Currently it is a community within Winnipeg. By the early 1850s there were 200 French Metis and a smaller number of English Metis living at St. Charles. After the flood of 1852 more people moved to this location in search of higher ground. There was a buffalo crossing and later a ferry at this location. From the early 1800s hunters would gather at this location on a seasonal basis to get buffalo as well as for the sturgeon fishery. This parish had a population of about 200 Metis in the 1840s, the original community was formed by about 60 families of Plains buffalo hunters. By 1856, the parish of St. Charles had a population of 348, two-thirds Roman Catholic and one-third Protestant. Bishop Taché changed the name to honour his superior, Monseigneur Charles de Mazenod (OMI).

Rooster Town:

The last known road allowance community in Winnipeg was situated at Grant Ave. and Waverley St., it was known as Rooster Town. In the book *Reflections, Yesterday and Today* (MMF Press 1979), Jim Day of St. Laurent says, “I was born and raised on the outskirts of Winnipeg in a place known as Rooster Town. This place was situated where Grant Avenue is today.” This community existed until the late 1950s.

“In the early years of the depression of the 1930s a number of homeless families, many of whom were destitute Metis built small shacks illegally on the Canadian National Railway property adjoining city owned land just off Grant Boulevard. As well, as suburban development advanced in River Heights, other shack dwellers re-located to this area. The area, now roughly between Wheatherdon Avenue and the tracks from Cambridge to Rockwood Streets became known as Rooster Town.

Over the next quarter century the number of squatters varied with economic conditions. By the 1950s at least 30 to 50 people clustered there in more than a dozen shacks. Many owned their homes, but some paid \$15 to \$20 per month rent. Most of the men worked as seasonal labourers, cutting sod, delivering coal, or performing other casual work, and collected relief from the city when unemployed. Their wives raised their children in two to three room shacks without running water, sewer connections or other services.

After 14 children came to school with the skin disease impetigo in late 1951 the Winnipeg Tribune reporter wrote: “Whatever you do... don’t touch the Rooster Town children. You might get a skin disease. So the teacher calls for a group game and tells the children to join hands. Nobody would dare join hands with the Rooster Town children.”¹⁴ In response the City directed Public Health nurses and social workers to the community. Alternate housing was found for six or seven families in 1952, but many preferred to stay where they were. In the summer of 1959, the city offered the last families cash payments of \$50 to \$75 to move or face eviction proceedings. With the school opening of Grant Park School in September 1959 and plans for a surrounding park area Rooster Town and its social problems had no place in Winnipeg’s suburbs.”¹⁵

Sault à la Biche, Deer Rapids, now St. Andrews, Manitoba:

¹⁴ *Winnipeg Tribune*, December 20, 1951. “Heard of Rooster Town? Its Our Last Suburb.”

¹⁵ David G. Burley, *City and Suburb Housing in 20th Century Winnipeg*. Winnipeg Real Estate Board, 100th Anniversary, 2003.

The limestone rapids on the Red River south of Selkirk was the site of early Indian and Metis settlements since this is higher ground than at the forks, and not subject to flooding. The Selkirk Settlers changed the name to honour the patron saint of Scotland.

St. Adolphe, Manitoba: See entry under Pointe Coupée.

St. Andrews, Manitoba: See entry under Sault à la Biche.

St. Anne de Chênes, Manitoba:

This community is along the Seine River about 50 kilometers southeast of Winnipeg. To the east of Pointe des Chênes is a large swamp and forest, called l'épinetière by the Metis, which extends east to Lake of the Woods. This area provided good game hunting as well as lumber for the Metis people who were the early residents. Many of these families were itinerant buffalo hunters. A permanent settlement began in the 1850s and this increased after the 1852 flood when many Metis moved to the higher ground at Pointe des Chênes. The early families were headed by Jean Baptiste Perrault *dit* Morin, François and Charles Nolin, J.B. Sapoint, and August Harrison. In 1861 Taché founded the Mission of St. Alexander at Pointe des Chênes. A chapel was opened in 1866 and a church was built in 1867. within six months the church was renamed St. Anne because Père Lefloch suggested that St. Alexander would be a more appropriate name for the mission at Fort Alexander. It should be noted that Père Lefloch was a Breton and St. Anne was the patron saint of the Bretons. Metis from this community were the labourers on the construction of Dawson road from Lake of the Woods to Red River. In 1868 John Snow was hired to construct this road. He enraged the residents by ignoring the property boundaries laid out by Roger Goulet for the Council of Assiniboia. Further, he claimed to have bought the land on which they lived from the Saulteaux. The residents evicted Snow and he was charged with two counts of selling liquor (for land) to the Saulteaux at Pointe des Chênes.

St. Boniface, Manitoba:

This community takes its name from the parish named by Bishop Provencher. It is named after an English missionary who worked among the Germans and was martyred. Provencher said of his Metis parishioners, "It would take the faith of a Boniface to work among these people."

St. Charles, Manitoba: See entry under Rivière Esturgeon.

St. Eustache formerly Baie St. Paul:

In July of 1832 Father Belcourt selected a site for his mission along the Assiniboine River where a large number of Indians and Metis gathered in the spring. The mission was to be named under the protection of Saint Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles. Belcourt then returned in the spring of 1833 with Bishop Provencher's approval. He

erected a chapel during the summer, but in September the site, sixty kilometers west of Red River was attacked by a group of Gros-Ventres Indians from the south. Bishop Provencher, concerned for the safety of the priest and the continued success of his work, had the mission re-located closer to St. Boniface.¹⁶

The new mission, Baie St. Paul, was established in 1834 at “Prairie Fournier” (Baker’s Prairie) on the left bank of the Assiniboine River, about thirty-seven kilometres from St. Boniface and about eight kilometres east of today’s St. Eustache, Manitoba. The site included a tract of land with eight kilometres of river frontage three kilometres in depth, a gift from Governor George Simpson of the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC). Baie St. Paul was to be Belcourt’s official residence as long as he remained under Bishop Provencher’s jurisdiction.

In February of 1847, Father Belcourt prepared a petition to the Queen regarding the Metis grievances with regard to the HBC fur trade monopoly. Nine hundred and seventy-seven Metis signed it and James Sinclair took it to England. In retaliation, George Simpson and the HBC trumped up fur trading charges against Belcourt and had the Archbishop in Quebec remove him from Red River. Belcourt immediately began lobbying to return and in June of 1848, Bishop Lorus of Dubuque assigned him to Pembina. Many of his parishioners from Baie St. Paul followed him to Pembina. He eventually moved his mission and school 30 miles west to St. Josephs in 1853.

In 1882 there was extensive flooding at Baie St. Paul and part of the cemetery slid into the river and many houses were destroyed. Many of the residents became discouraged and followed their parish priest, Cyrille Saint-Pierre in relocation to North Dakota. Later Bishop Tache sent missionary Thomas Quevillion to find a new location for the church. The new location was St. Eustache established in January of 1898. This name was chosen because St. Eustache is the Patron saint of hunters.

St. François Xavier, Manitoba:

St. François Xavier, was one of the western parishes of the Red River Settlement. It is located on the Assiniboine River. Cuthbert Grant established this community in 1823. Many of his Metis friends and relatives followed him here from Pembina. The village was called Grantown until 1854. Father Destriosmaisons held Church services in the Grant home from 1823 to 1827. In 1828, a log chapel was built and in 1834 the mission became a parish. In 1850, the Grey Nuns of St. Boniface arrived to start a school. On July 16, 1854, Cuthbert Grant died and his ashes were buried under the alter of the chapel. The Hudson’s Bay Company had Lane’s Post located nearby. This post opened in 1856 and closed in 1883. St. François Xavier was the first industrial site in Manitoba. Because of the abundance of oak wood, Red River Carts were constructed there.

St. Laurent, Manitoba: (By Audreen Hourie)

¹⁶ The exact location of the first mission, known as St. Paul des Sauteaux, is difficult to pinpoint. Two reliable sources locate it on the left bank of the Assiniboine, some eighty to ninety-five kilometres from St. Boniface. If measured in river distance, the site would have been situated somewhere near St. Eustache, but if measured as-the-crow-flies, it would have been located in the vicinity of Portage la Prairie.

St. Laurent is located on the south-eastern curve of Lake Manitoba, forty-seven miles northwest of Winnipeg. The population of St. Laurent is approximately 1,100, about three-quarters of who are Metis. In 1824, a group of Metis, forced to leave Pembina as it had become American territory, settled at what is now St. Laurent. Other Metis families driven out (of Winnipeg) by the Red River flood of 1826 also chose to settle in this area. By 1850, twelve Metis families resided in the vicinity; among them were Charles Lambert, Norbert Larance from North Dakota, a Chartrand from Duck Bay, and the Lavallées and the Ducharmes. Many Metis settlers were attracted by the abundance of fish and the wooded land nearby that abounded in game and wild fruit.

In 1826, a priest from St. Boniface, Father Destroismaisons, went to the settlement to celebrate Christmas. St. Laurent had no resident priest, but St. François Xavier, thirty miles south had a resident priest since 1823, so it was possible for the St. Laurent people to go to that church. In 1861, St. Laurent received a resident priest, Father Simonet, who became the first pastor. The first church or chapel was a small thatch-covered structure which served as a church and rectory. There was already a small cemetery, but generally the dead were taken to St. François Xavier for burial. In 1895, a new church was built and the following year a convent for the Sisters from the Order of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary who were to arrive in 1897. Traditionally the Metis of St. Laurent have been very religiously oriented. Although the community is Roman Catholic, a few families attend the Evangelical Mennonite church. On May 30, 1961, a thunderbolt struck the old Catholic church and in six hours it was reduced to ashes, all that was left were four stone walls. By 1964, a new church was built on the same site.

As early as 1862, Father Simonet had begun a small school, but the first real school was opened in 1870 by Brother Mulvihill who came to St. Laurent from Ireland to join Father Camper who had arrived from France, and Father Simonet, the vicar. The school operated under Brother Mulvihill's direction until the arrival of six nuns in 1897, who were to take charge of the school. This school served until 1902 when another building was erected to serve as a school and convent for the nuns. In 1907 or 1908, a large school was built and attached to the existing building, which was given over entirely to the nuns. This building served its purpose for 62 years.

In 1902, Father Peron became Pastor of St. Laurent. On a trip to France he brought back several Breton families. In 1907, a Mr. François Calvez returned to Brittany to bring out his wife and five sons. Family names such as Leost, Abgrall, Legoff, Combot, Calvez and Olivier were added to the village. Prior to 1902, St. Laurent was populated by Metis and some Indian families. The spoken languages were Michif French and Saulteaux. Upon the arrival of the "Bretons", the French language was introduced and greatly affected the community. St. Laurent continues to maintain its Metis identity and French Michif survived the pressures from the church, the nuns, and the "Bretons" who attempted to replace Michif French with the new French language. The Saulteaux language did not survive as few people now speak it.

Ste. Madeleine, Manitoba:

For many decades prior to 1938, Ste. Madeleine was a traditional Metis community with over twenty large families. The Metis had homesteaded the land at Ste. Madeleine and the nearby Pumpkin Plain, north of St. Lazare, Manitoba since the 1870s.

A mission had been set up there in 1902. However, under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, this land was designated to become community pasture, thus the community lost its town. Historically, the town was formed when Metis left the Red River area due to the actions of Wolseley's Red River Expeditionary Force. Other Metis moved to the area from Saskatchewan and Alberta after the Resistance of 1885.

In 1935, in the midst of the "Dirty Thirties," the Canadian government set up the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. The town of Ste. Madeleine and surrounding area called Pumpkin Plain was designated as pastureland. The Metis families who had their taxes paid up to date were to be compensated and relocated. However, because of the economic conditions of the time, few families had their taxes paid. The Metis were again forced to find a new home and they lost everything they had; their homes were burned, their dogs were shot, their church was to be dismantled and the logs sold to build a piggery. The priest from St. Lazare also sold the church bell and statues. When confronted by community members he said the money would not be returned and he was using it to build another church at St. Lazare. The plan to dismantle the church was foiled by Joe Venne and other community members armed themselves with rifles and confronted the crew sent to dismantle the church thus saving it. They then moved the family of Caroline and John Vermette into the building to protect it. By 1938, the once vital community had all but vanished. Today, all that remains of Ste. Madeleine are the stone foundations of the Belliveau School and the cemetery encircling the mound of grass where the church once stood. The wood from the schoolhouse was salvaged and now constitutes a major portion of the kitchen of what was the home of Yvonne and Fred LeClerc of Victor, Manitoba.

St. Pierre, Manitoba:

This settlement located on the Rat River was an early fur trading location. It was also a wintering location for cattle from St. Norbert and St. Vital. It was later renamed St. Pierre-Jolys in honour of the first resident priest, Father J.M. Jolys. See also the entry under Rat River.

St. Vital, Manitoba:

This area was the site of early Metis river lots of the boatmen and buffalo hunters. After 1824, the Metis population spread south of St. Boniface along both sides of the Red River. About eight kilometers south of the Cathedral the parish of St. Vital developed along the broad elbow of the Red River. The Metis asked Archbishop Tache named the school and parish St. Alexander after his own patron Saint but he preferred to name it St. Vital in honour of auxiliary Bishop, Rev. Vital Julian Grandin. The Grey Nuns opened a school in St. Vital in 1860. The most famous residents of St. Vital were the Riel, Nault and Bruce families. Up until 1856 these residents attended church at St. Boniface but subsequently went to St. Norbert. A small school and chapel were established on September 12, 1860, but there was no resident priest until 1912. Sister L'Esperance Youville was the first teacher at the school.

Stony Mountain, Manitoba:

Stony Mountain, known as “Snake Indian Hills,” was a significant area for Metis and other settlers seeking refuge from the many floods that plagued the Red River Valley in the late 1700's and early 1800's. The Native tribes had established well-traveled paths through the area that eventually became fur trading and cart trails used by settlers. The Faith Trail led from Winnipeg to Stony Mountain, and brought settlers into the region by ox-drawn Red River carts. The first recorded homestead in the area was that of James Isbister, who located in Stony Mountain in 1870. Building upon century's old cart trails, the railway opened up the region to settlement by connecting Teulon, Stonewall, Stony Mountain, Gunton and Balmoral to a direct line to Winnipeg.

Swan River, Manitoba:

In 1790, the HBC had Charles Isham (the family now called Asham) open a post a few miles upstream on the Swan River above its outlet into Swan Lake. Its main purpose was to trade for birch bark for canoe-making. Cuthbert Grant also built a trading post here. The names of the men operating this post reflect present day Metis families living in the Lake Manitoba area—James Whitford, William Sebastian, Thomas Halcrow, William Garrioch, James Sutherland, Charles Goulait, Francois Houle, Antoine Desjarlais and Baptiste Lavallee.

Swan River House:

William Bruce trading out of Montreal first established a post on the Shoal River outlet of Swan Lake. In 1787, the NWC moved in and Robert Grant built Swan River Fort on the north bank of the Shoal River, eleven miles above Swan Lake. In 1790 the HBC sent Charles Isham¹⁷, the Metis son of James Isham (who had been Chief Factor at York Factory) to establish Swan River House one-half mile above the NWC fort. As trademoved toward the prairies, Isham outdistanced the competition by establishing another post across the short portage to the Upper Assiniboine River, and built Marlboro House near the elbow of the Assiniboine River. Cuthbert Grant Sr. of the NWC in competition built Bird Mountain House fifty miles upstream from Marlboro House near the mouth of Thunder Creek in 1793. By 1795 the NWC had established posts next to HBC Swan River House and Somerset House. In response to this Charles Isham and Peter Fidler went 15 miles west of this to establish Carlton House. The Swan River valley was trapped out by the late 1790s and the HBC closed Swan River House. However, it was briefly reopened under Peter Fidler in the 1807-08 season.

¹⁷ Charles Thomas Price Isham (or Asham) was born around 1754, probably at York Factory, the son of James Isham and Ruehegan (Cree Homeguard). In May, 1789 Isham: Contracted as “Inland Trader & Supervisor of Canoes in Swan River” at £30 annually plus “premium on all the made Beaver I can procure.” From 1789 to 1797 he was Master at Swan River House, Marlborough House (near Fort Pelly) and, Somerset House (near Swan River). From 1797 to 1799 he was at Jack River House south of Playgreen Lake on the Nelson River. In 1812 he became an interpreter for the Selkirk Settlers under Miles Macdonell at Red River.

Tanner's Crossing, now Minnedosa, Manitoba:

In 1869, John Tanner built a ferry across the Little Saskatchewan River on the Carlton Trail. He also operated a store and post office at this location. The area was a centuries old trapping and hunting area for the bison that wintered at Riding Mountain and moved down the valley to the plains in the summer. In 1877, Tanner and J.S. Armitage accumulated land and laid out a town site in the river valley. Armitage changed the name to Minnedosa in 1883. (1839-1932)

John Tanner, the son of Reverend James Tanner, was a veteran of the American Civil War. John was born on August 17, 1839 at Torch Lake (Lac du Flambeau), Wisconsin. John had just started farming in Tearn County near his home at St. Joseph when the Civil War started. In August of 1862 he went to St. Cloud to enlist as a private in the Union Army's Ninth Regiment of the Minnesota Voluntary Infantry. He fought for three years before taking an honorary discharge at Fort Snelling near St. Paul, Minnesota.

While he originally lived in Minnesota, following the war he found that his family had moved across the border and were living near Portage la Prairie. At the time his father's half brother, Picheito Tanner was an important chief of the Red Lake tribe located in the Portage-Delta-White Horse Plains area. Thus John came to Manitoba around the time of his father's death, and with his wife Catherine, and his mother, Poopee, took up residence along the Little Saskatchewan River, near the Fort Ellice Trail. Here he established a ferry, post office, and store at Tanners Crossing. This was the beginning of what was to become the Manitoba town of Minnedosa. During the early 1880s, white agriculturists from Ontario were populating the area around Tanner's Crossing. Like other mixed-bloods who were not comfortable with this, the Tanner family left Manitoba in 1881 to settle further west at Prince Albert. They lived there until 1912. When this area became more densely populated with agriculturists from the East, John Tanner again moved, this time back to Manitoba, to the Metis community of Kinosota. He lived there until his death in 1932, leaving no direct descendants.

While scouting near Fort Abercrombie in 1863, John had sustained a serious rupture and as a result of complications he could not father children. In 1869, he married Catherine Trottier, daughter of Joseph Trottier of St. Mary's and the widow of HBC Factor John Sinclair.

The Pas, Manitoba: See entry under Opaskweyaw.

Weak City, Manitoba: Metis Road Allowance Community

Metis Genealogist Rosemary Morrisette-Rozyk who works for Manitoba Metis Federation is a descendant of the Branconnier and Morrisette families who lived at Weak City. It was Rosemary who brought the existence of this road allowance community to our attention.

Weak City was a Metis road allowance community in St. Charles, Manitoba located close to the present day Perimeter Highway bridge on the west side of St. Charles,

it had existed there since the 1820s, located next to a buffalo crossing that later was the site for the ferry. It was situated on what was later surveyed as River Lot 73.

Many Metis families lived here but the primary families squatting there were those of Jean Baptiste Branconnier and Pierre and Adelaide Morrissette. The community history recorded by the La Fleche family says: "Many Metis families lived here, and they worked for the surrounding farmers, especially during harvest. Some of them were ferrymen at St. Charles." Branconnier had lived as a squatter in a log cabin near the river on Lot 73. Jude LaFleche (living on Lot 74) bought the squatters rights to the Branconnier property on part of lot 73 in 1885. Branconnier then moved further south on Lot 73. At that time the Morrissettes were already living there.

Louis LaFleche recalled that old Mrs. Morrissette remembered the flood of 1826, when the only dry areas were Bird's Hill, Stony Mountain and St. Charles. The Metis families had livestock, chickens and pigs. They cut cord wood to supplement their income. By the 1940s most of the Metis families had sold their land and moved to Charleswood.

White Mud River Settlement, Rat Creek, and Totogan:

The 1870 census of these communities counted 150 Metis residents. Westbourne was first named "White Mud River Settlement", later changed to "Wahputunestee Seepee," then named for the area's first missionary, Reverend John West. The Whitemud River is a small winding river in southwest Manitoba. It begins at the junction of Stony Creek and Boggy Creek in and flows east to Arden, Gladstone, Westbourne and enters Lake Manitoba at Lynch's Point. Its total drainage area is about 2,500 square miles (6,500 km²). Other major streams feeding the river include the Big Grass River, Pine Creek, Squirrel Creek, Westbourne Drain and Rat Creek.

Alexander Henry (1799) referred to it as Rivière Terre Blanche meaning White Earth or Mud River. Geographic Board of Canada correspondence from a Mr. Garrioch of Portage la Prairie in 1905 indicates that White Mud River got its name from the colour of the clay and soil along its banks.

In the 1870s, Totogan was a community at the junction of the Whitemud River and Willow Bend Creek (formerly Rat Creek and before that Musk Rat Creek), approximately 25 kilometres northwest of Portage la Prairie and some six kilometres west of Lake Manitoba.

Totogan met the need for the establishment of a suitable depot on the southern shore of the lake to process the fall fishery in bulk by either drying, smoking or salting. It also provided opportunity for the shipment of salt from the salt springs on Lake Winnipegosis to Totogan and onward to Winnipeg, as well as the movement of limestone building material from the north shore to the south shore of Lake Manitoba.

The site was first frequented by Indian and Metis hunters and their families. The Metis once occupied a small village with a church and burial ground on the banks of Rat Creek near Totogan. It was once touted by developers as the future "New Chicago," a title that was later pinned upon Winnipeg by equally enthusiastic civic boosters. An appreciation of one of the drawbacks of the community comes from the translation of its

name. First Nations people originally called the place near where the Whitemud enters Lake Manitoba at the extreme west side of Delta Marsh, *Totoganung*, which in English means “low, swampy land.” This was later Anglicized as Totogan. In 1881, 1882 and 1883, flood-waters rose on Lake Manitoba and northerly winds drove water over the banks of the Whitemud at Totogan. The flooding inundated some buildings and caused others to float away. It was at this time that the lumber mill was abandoned and many settlers decided to pull up stakes and leave while they could.

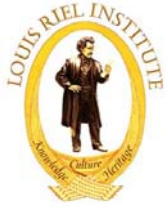
MacDougall's Illustrated Guide reported in 1882 that Totogan's population was just 30, though it still possessed a saw mill, a church, a store, a hotel and a post office. Further blows to Totogan came when a bridge was built over the Whitemud River at Westbourne in 1878, followed by the arrival of the Westbourne and Northwestern Railway, now the CPR, in Westbourne in the early 1880s. More importantly an even bigger blow to Totogan was when the steamboat builder Peter McArthur established a landing on the Whitemud upstream from the village near Westbourne for his vessels. The new steamboat port gained a further advantage when the Manitoba and North Western Railway built a spur to McArthur's Landing. Steamers such as the 125-foot *Saskatchewan* built by McArthur in 1883, made their home at McArthur's Landing and by travelling down the Whitemud to Lake Manitoba bypassed Totogan.

York Factory:

From the 17th through late 19th century, the depot at York Factory and its predecessors were the central base of operations for the Hudson's Bay Company's control of the fur trade. York Factory is situated on a low-lying narrow peninsula that separated the mouth of the Hayes River from that of the Nelson to the northwest, York Factory was built in 1684.

The first three HBC posts were established on James Bay. In 1684 Fort Nelson was established at the mouth of the Nelson River. The company also built a second fort on the Hayes River, naming it after the Duke of York. Between 1788 and 1795 the company constructed an octagonal star fort of stone and brick on the site. The choice of material was poor, however, as the stone and brick could not stand up to heaving permafrost, and in 1831 the stone fort was razed. The three-story center section of the current compound was completed that same year, with the two-story wings finished within the two years that followed.

The establishment of these forts provoked a response from New France via the Hudson Bay expedition of 1686. The French marched overland from Quebec and captured all the posts on James Bay. During King William's War France several times sent a naval force to Hudson Bay to capture or destroy the fort. In 1694 Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville captured the factory and renamed it Fort Bourbon. English forces returned the next year and retook the fort from its small French garrison. In 1697, d'Iberville won the Battle of Hudson's Bay the largest northern naval battle in North American history. Fort Nelson was held by the French until 1713, when it was returned to the British in the Treaty of Utrecht. After 1713, the headquarters was relocated to the current site on the mouth of the Hayes River. The post was finally closed in 1957.



Edited and Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
Coordinator of Metis Heritage and History Research
Louis Riel Institute