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Dancers in a street festival in Winnipeg's Chinatown, September 2009, overlain by a Head Tax certificate issued by the Canadian government in July 1912 and a photograph of the Baldur Lee family, 1920.

Photo credits: Dr. T. Luk & Archives of Manitoba (Chinese Historical Society Collection)

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Early Chinese Settlers in Western Manitoba[1]

by Alison R. Marshall
Department of Religion, Brandon University

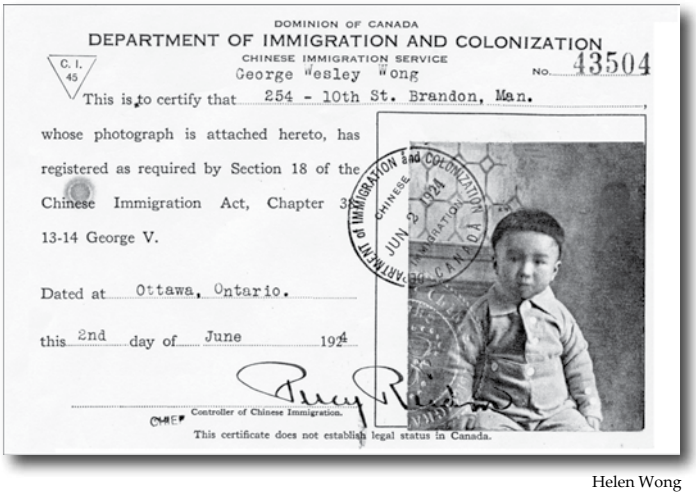
On 4 August 2009 in the Legislative Assembly Chamber, Mr. Philip Lee, formerly First Vice-President of the Winnipeg Chinese Cultural and Community Centre (WCCCC) and leader of the Chinese Benevolent and Lee Associations, was installed as the twenty-fourth Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba. Having come to Canada as a student, His Honour got involved with the Chinese community through the urging of Mr. Charlie Foo (1894–1980), a long-time executive member of the Manitoba KMT (Zhongguo Guomindang), Chinese Benevolent Association and Manitoba Chinese Association. In this article I present a window into the history and customs of Western Manitoba's earliest settlers from China whose own lives and those of their children and grandchildren were made better through the intercultural bridges built by His Honour, Mr. Foo, and current President of the WCCCC, Dr. Joseph Du.

The pictures and archival materials described by this essay help us understand why Chinese were first drawn to Winnipeg in the late 1870s, and later to Brandon and cities, towns, and villages beyond it. By 1884, Mr. Wah Hep, was operating a laundry on Brandon's 8th Street. Like most others in the province, he was from Sunning District (Taishan/Toishan as it was later called), where a combination of successive droughts, earthquakes, epidemics, and uprisings beginning in 1850 made migrant work in this country and others very attractive. We may presume that before 1884 Mr. Hep worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway and then travelled east in search of work in towns, villages and cities. And although this province was an outpost at which many settlers stopped on their way to somewhere else, a few men stayed. They stayed because wages were higher, jobs were more plentiful, and people were less hostile than they were in British Columbia and larger cities.[2] This last point is important. Manitoban populations were comparatively small, and welcoming. While some of them might have preferred those who spoke good English or were from Western European countries, they still appreciated the laundries and restaurants. In the 1901 census, Manitoba had a Chinese population of just 206—all male—30 of whom lived in the Brandon District compared to the 14,885 male and female Chinese people who lived in British Columbia.[3] By the 1911 census the provincial number had more than quadrupled to 885 while the Brandon District's still all-male population was 97.[4]

For much of Canada's early history, only the very rich male family members (or those with wealthy relatives or work contracts) could afford the ocean liner fare and the $50 head tax required to be paid by all Chinese immigrants upon entry to Canada under section four of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885. Most wives and children, therefore, remained in southern China while brothers, fathers, grandfathers and uncles worked here and sent remittances home. In 1900, the tax was doubled to $100, and by 1903, it stood at $500.[5] Immigration was effectively stopped from 1923 to 1947 when the final version of the

Alison Marshall.

Delegates to the ninth national convention of the Chinese Nationalist League of Canada, held in Winnipeg in early June 1943, seen here in a banquet for Liu Shih Shun at the New Nanking restaurant, were reported to have "demanded full franchise for Canadian-born Chinese and relaxation of barriers preventing Chinese immigration to Canada" (*Winnipeg Free Press*, 12 December 1943). They also reminded Canadians of the many men of Chinese descent serving in the Canadian Armed Forces at the time.



DOMINION OF CANADA
DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION
CHINESE IMMIGRATION SERVICE
C. I. 45
George Wesley Wong No. 43504
This is to certify that 254 - 10th St. Brandon, Man.
whose photograph is attached hereto, has registered as required by Section 18 of the Chinese Immigration Act, Chapter 3 13-14 George V.
Dated at Ottawa, Ontario.
this 2nd day of June 1924
Controller of Chinese Immigration.
This certificate does not establish legal status in Canada.

Helen Wong

Chinese registration certificate for Wesley Wong, later Professor of Physics and Vice President of Brandon University.

Chinese Immigration Act excluded all immigrants except merchants, students, and diplomats and their staff.[6] After 1923, all people in Canada of Chinese descent whether they were born here or not were required to register with the federal government within twelve months. Failure to comply would result in a fine of up to $500 and/or imprisonment of up to a year. The boy in the Chinese Registration Certificate shown above was born in Brandon. He graduated from Brandon University, became Professor of Physics, and later Vice President (Academic) of Brandon University.[7]

Being Chinese in Manitoba (and elsewhere in Canada) meant that your life was shaped by such early immigration laws, and that women and children were largely absent until years after 1947. Some of those men who immigrated never married because of this decades long absence. Other married settlers could not return home because the ocean liner fare was beyond their means and they feared being denied entry on their way back. So they spent their lives here as bachelors, never reconnecting with wives, mothers or children before they died. Other fortunate ones did return for an arranged marriage and on successive visits to start a family. But these sojourns came at enormous cost and in addition to supporting themselves and their families in China, they spent years repaying the vast sums they had borrowed to travel by boat and train, and pay the immigration fees too. A few men remarried and started new families in this country. The repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1947 came too late for all of these men and their families.

Dr. Marshall's research and teaching focusses on the political and religious dimensions of Chinese culture. She currently has a SSHRC grant to examine the customs of Chinese Canadians in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. She has written many articles and has a book manuscript under review with UBC press about early Chinese settlers in this province, and is writing another one on the history of the prairie Chinese Canadian community.

In spite of the hardships generated by Canada's early immigration laws, many men led fulfilling and prosperous lives in large part due to the efforts of elders and voluntary associations. Chinese and non-Chinese Associations hosted and organized events such as parties for the Chinese New Year or Christmas. These events provided opportunities for the bachelors to develop relationships and connections to those who could help with immigration issues, be business partners, or friends. The earliest of these groups was the Chinese Freemasons (Hongmen/Zhigongtang) whose 1863 headquarters was established in Barkerville, British Columbia. This and the later the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA) whose Victoria headquarters opened in 1884 were too far away for the community here to be heavily involved. In 1910, Winnipeg leaders opened their own Freemasons office. There would have been a full roster of traditional events the Freemasons hosted throughout the year. In addition to these, the Freemasons organized a visit to Winnipeg by the father of Modern China, Sun Yatsen (1866–1925) in April 1911.[8] After Dr. Sun's visit, men cut their queues. This act showed their dedication to Sun, and Chinese Nationalism, and also their rejection of the Manchurian government in China. They also bought ten dollar bills in support of the revolution that finally took place in the winter of 1911. By 1913, the KMT had over ten offices that were made known to the public and many more

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that were hidden from it.[9] One of these publicly known offices was in the Brandon. It was affiliated with the secret headquarters in Winnipeg.

Chinese elders followed the example of Dr. Sun, and used banquets, picnics, ice cream socials, and teas to bring the Chinese and non-Chinese communities together. Notable among the annual events was the summer picnic hosted in Winnipeg parks that started in 1918. Each year it was advertised in the *Winnipeg Free Press* and up to 2,000 people attended.[10] Local Chinese restaurants and non-Chinese food distributors donated items for the mostly Western menu of sandwiches and drinks.

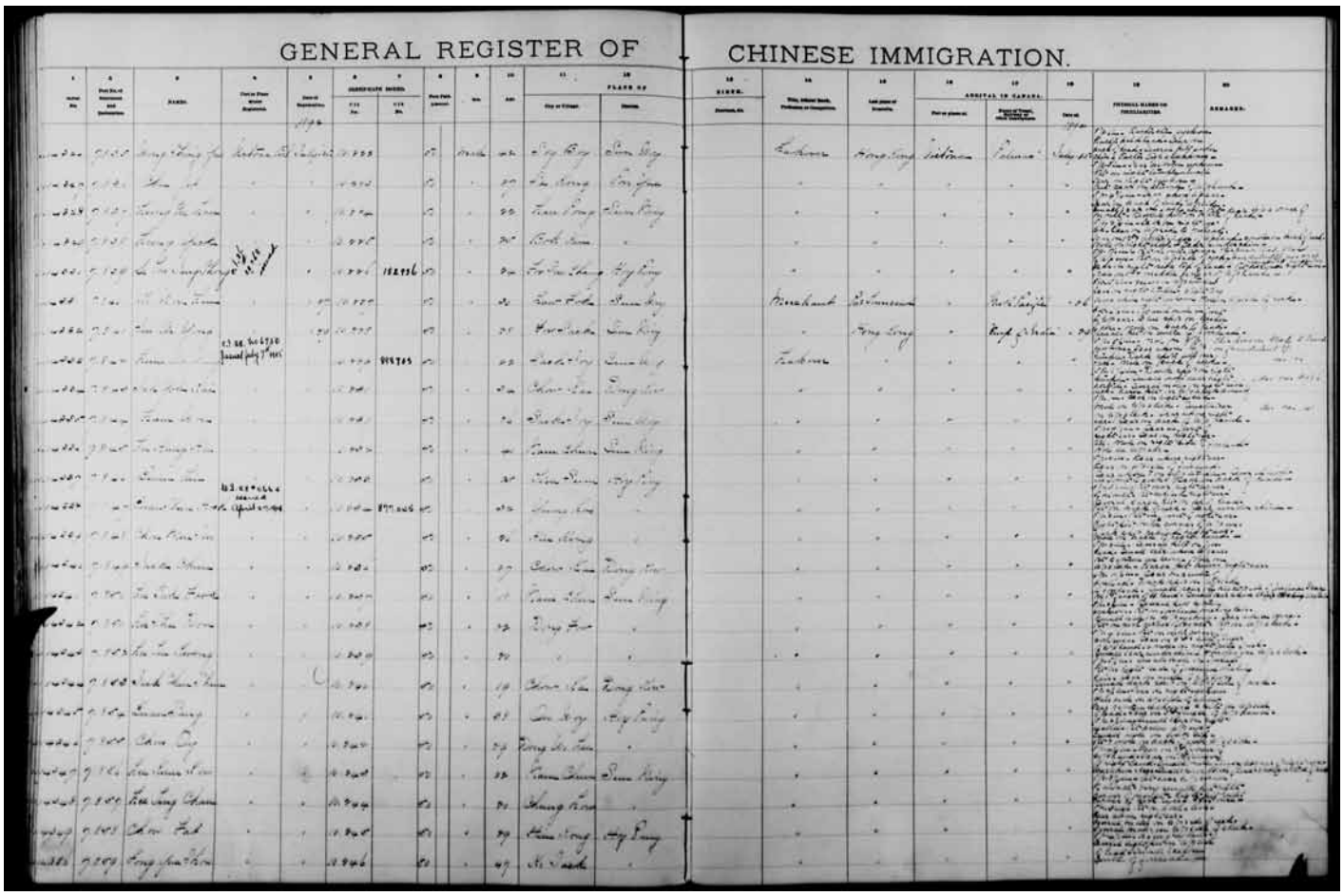
In addition to belonging to the KMT and other Chinese voluntary associations, most of the early settlers were involved with Christian organizations in one way or the other. This involvement no doubt came about through the regular visits to laundries and restaurants by missionary workers. While some men were converted to Christianity through these efforts, others remained only nominal Christians giving this as their religion on official documents such as tax assessment rolls and the census survey that

required an answer. When they needed a religious functionary to perform the ceremony for their wedding or a friend's funeral, they chose a minister. The men appreciated the opportunities to attend missionary and church bible lessons where they could learn English, Canadian values, and make friends. Like the KMT, churches, missionaries and bible groups organized and hosted events throughout the year where the bachelors could eat special foods, play games and socialize.

Most of the people I discuss in this article were involved in either the KMT or Christian organizations or both. Similarly, the majority of settlers were in the washing business before they moved on to work in restaurants. and as travelling salesmen. I begin the discussion of these key professions with a look at one of Brandon's earliest KMT leaders and laundrymen, Mr. George Chong.

George Chong (1870–1940) was a Methodist and early KMT member. Born in the District of Sunning (Taishan) in China,[11] and migrating as a labourer from Hong Kong on 25 July 1892, immigration officials recorded his height at five-foot four and three-quarter inches. Seventeen years after he arrived in Canada, the *Henderson Directory* for 1909 listed him as the operator of Li Men On Laundry at 144-8th Street in Brandon. Unlike most others, George Chong would live out his life in this city, and be buried in its cemetery. But in other ways he typified the experience here, living apart from his wife who remained in China and never joined him. A nominal Christian, he spent much of his free time socializing with his "brother"[12] Tom, and the seventy or more Chinese men living in Brandon at the time. As devoted KMT members, the "brothers" were part of a large network of overseas Chinese throughout North America whose lives of suffering and loneliness away from their homeland were made better by Sun Yatsen's vision of democracy and nationalism.[13]

Mr. Bing Woo (1894–1982) like Mr. Chong was a nominal Christian from southern China. Bing emigrated to Canada with his father and younger brother at the age of eleven. The arc of his life reflects the pattern of poorer prairie immigrants who neither returned home to see their family nor had an arranged marriage. Once Bing arrived in Brandon, he attended elementary school for a period of time leaving it before graduation for work first in laundries and then as a waiter in cafes.[14] Mr. Woo and other bachelors in the region would have lived in the back of laundries, and later in KMT and other dormitories and boarding houses for much of their lives. Without wives and children, they became like family to each other, doing the same jobs and on their days off socializing, and playing games for small amounts of money. In larger cities such as Winnipeg the


GENERAL REGISTER OF CHINESE IMMIGRATION.

Library and Archives Canada, General Register of Chinese Immigration, Serial No. 14328, 1892.

Long Gee Lan "George Chong" arrived in Canada in 1892 and traveled on to Brandon.

Helen Wong

Huang Xianxi "Sam Wong" operated the Carlton Cafe at 121-10th Street in Brandon for almost 50 years, seen here in 1940.

bachelors would have gone to the Chinese Dramatic Society after work ended late at night to sing, and play traditional Chinese instruments until the sun came up.

While Mr. Chong and Mr. Woo laboured in laundries and restaurants, others with better education and English skills worked as travelling salesmen. Employed by Sun Life and Wawanesa Insurance Companies for twenty years, the affable well-spoken Mr. Frank Chan (1901–1952) was one such man. Sometimes driving and at others taking the train, Frank was familiar with Chinese restaurant owners, residents and the terrain of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. He cared deeply for the men and communities outside of Winnipeg, as reflected by his decades long leadership in the Manitoba KMT, CBA, and Chinese Christian organizations. Sadly, his life ended in tragic circumstances when he died from a sudden attack of meningitis. The *Winnipeg Free Press* obituary highlighted his prominent position within the Chinese Canadian community, noting: "His funeral was delayed so that officials of Chinese League branches throughout the dominion might be notified."[15] Owing to the Chinese Immigration Act passed in Canada in 1923, Mr. Chan was able to visit his wife and children in China but they were not allowed to immigrate to Canada until after he died and the Act was repealed.

But the vocation most associated with Chinese immigrants and identity is the restaurant. Restaurants functioned as rural prairie nodes, offering places for people to work, gather and practice their own customs in private dining rooms and after hours. One of the first Western Manitoban restaurants was owned and operated by Mr. Lee Wee Foon in Baldur, located 73 kilometres south of Brandon and just over 73 kilometres north of the American border. Baldur was an important entry point for Chinese immigrants from 1899 to 1909. During this decade, scores of men came to apprentice in the laundry business before settling elsewhere. By 1916, Mr. Lee Wee Foon had bought Charlie King's restaurant and confectionery, renaming it the Baldur Cafe.[16] Three years later, Mr. Lee sponsored the immigration of his wife, Mrs. Yee and son. Mrs. Yee was the second Chinese woman in Western Manitoba (Mrs. Wong Au See discussed below was the first) and together the couple had eight more children in Baldur. Although the modern Mr. Lee spoke English, had cut his queue, and wore western clothes, his wife conversed almost exclusively in Toisanese, had bound feet, and wore Chinese dresses. Mrs. Yee learned very little English and outwardly was very traditional; but her limited English skills and appearance were not barriers to integration into the small community. Years later, when people remembered the grocery, they spoke at length about her kind disposition.

[Chinese] restaurants functioned as rural prairie nodes, offering places for people to work, gather and practice their own customs in private dining rooms and after hours.

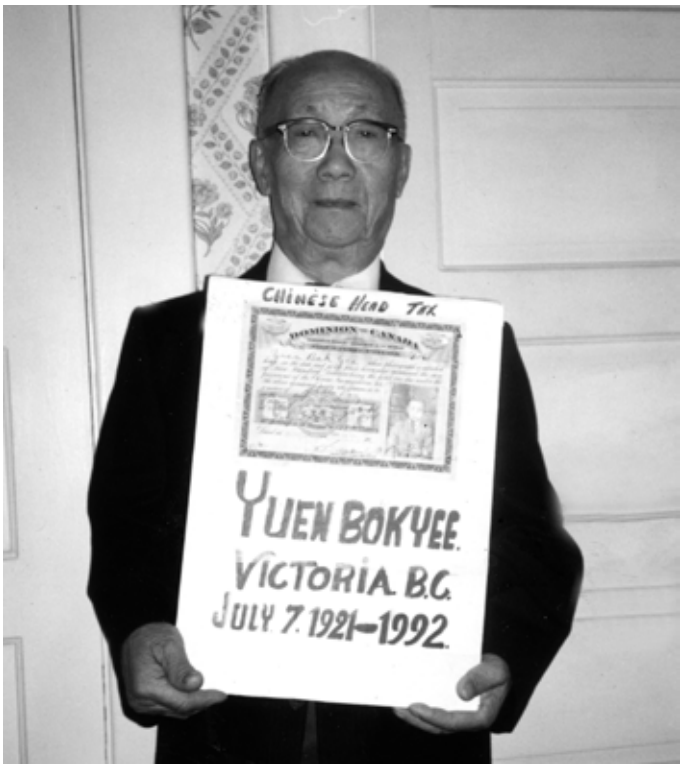
From Baldur, we return to a discussion of Brandon and the Carlton Cafe run by Mr. Sam Wong (Huang Xianxi) (1881–1959) and his family for almost fifty years, from 1923 to 1972 at 121-10th Street. Mr. Wong first attempted to leave China in 1906, applying to join his uncle as a migrant worker in California. His second attempt to leave was successful, and in 1912 he immigrated to Canada initially working in

a Montreal laundry. It was here that he became active in the KMT and made connections that led him to Brandon where he entered the restaurant business. 1918 saw Mr. Sam Wong return to China for an arranged marriage and a few months after the new couple's return, the 27 year-old Mrs. Wong (née Au)[17] became pregnant. Unlike other Canadian Chinatowns of the time, Brandon had no Chinese women or traditional midwives in the vicinity to socialize with or care for Mrs. Wong. By all accounts, there were complications during Mrs. Wong's labour, and she and her infant son died. The cross erected beside Mrs. Wong Au See's gravestone presumably marked the place where her infant son was buried. A year later, a friend of Mr. Wong's said that he had a daughter in China who was the right age for marriage and gave the two permission to marry. Lim Koon Ying (Ying Lim Quang) (1903–1993), who was from Taishan, China, paid the $500 head tax that was then charged to all who emigrated from China to Canada. Boarding the *Empress of Russia* on 8 August, she sailed from Hong Kong to Victoria, arriving less than a month later on 5 September 1921. Mr. Wong was there when her ship landed and shortly after the two were wed in a traditional Chinese ceremony. Ms. Lim was the third Chinese woman in Western Manitoba. The couple went on to have five children. Mr. Wong was a devoted husband and family man. In business, he was a kind, hard working and generous man. During the Depression and World War Two, Sam offered free meals to those in need and to soldiers. When World War Two broke out, several Chinese initially volunteered for the Canadian Armed Forces, and in 1944 Chinese and others in Canada were conscripted. During the war years, the Carlton Cafe became a hub for members of the Canadian Armed Forces stationed in Shilo.[18]

Most of the Chinese community in this province knew Yuen Bak Yee (Yu) who was more commonly known to Westerners as Buddy Leeds, and to those from China without the "ds"—as Buddy Lee. Buddy Leeds was an innovative name. The first part "Buddy" conveyed that he had assimilated (and was a friend) to non-Chinese people. When he encountered a Chinese person, and introduced himself as "Leeds," these people heard the name "Lee" and connected him to the powerful Lee Association. Throughout his life, Buddy contrived an identity between the extremes of East and West.

Yuen Bok Yee was born in 1909 in Taishan, China, and emigrated from Hong Kong to Canada on 7 July 1921 at the age of twelve along with two other boys from the same place and with the same surname. All three took a boat to Victoria, BC and while the other two went to Indian Head, Saskatchewan and Treherne, Manitoba, respectively, Buddy headed to Portage la Prairie, and went on to live in Dauphin and later Brandon.

Often the mention of Buddy Leeds evoked laughter from informants not of derision for his many rumoured dalliances but rather for his courage and bluster. Admired for his English and ease with the "white" community, his success in business and connections enabled him to bring



Doug Sebastion

Yuen Bok Yee "Buddy Leeds" displays his head tax certificate.

Chinese and non-Chinese together to form business and other relationships. For instance every year, Mr. Leeds was given twenty-five ducks by a "white" friend for a Chinese community KMT regional supper that was held in Brandon and Winnipeg in alternating years. Ducks were a special part of these meals because they were symbolic ritual offerings.[19]

Most Western Manitoban towns and villages beyond Brandon had a Chinese café until the 1950s. Carberry's Rex and its owner Mr. Lee Low made important contributions to life there in the small community. A life-long Buddhist, Mr. Lee Low (1896–1958) immigrated to Canada in 1911 from Taishan, China, and nine years later came to Carberry. After working alongside his cousin Wing Low for two years, he became the new proprietor in February 1922 and was eventually joined in business by his brother Tong (aka George).[20] The advertisements for the Rex Cafe read: "Rex Cafe. High-Class. We solicit all the farmer's trade. Hot meals served at all hours. Ice Cream and Soft Drinks, Confectionery and Fresh Fruits. Full line at all times. Tobacco and Cigars."[21]

People recalled Lee Low with fondness. He was a bright, warm, kind and thoughtful man with a broad smile, who not surprisingly had many friends and a successful restaurant that was the centre of the community for almost thirty years. In 1949, toward the end of his time in Carberry, his two sons, Walter and York, joined him. After the boys had spent just one year in Carberry, Lee Low, his brother Tong and the boys moved to Vernon, BC. Ten years later, Mr. Low was finally able to sponsor his wife to come to Canada.

The decades of hard work in the Carberry restaurant took a toll on his health and one year later he died.

Also immigrating from Taishan, China was Mr. Choy Soo (1909–1983) who came in 1923 at the age of fourteen and worked in the CPR restaurant and hotel in Newdale, Manitoba. Seven years later Mr. Choy returned home and married Miss Chan Yook Hai (b 1910). But immigration laws prevented Mrs. Choy's entry into Canada. She remained in southern China and her husband visited every one and one-half years and together they had four children—two sons and two daughters. When Mr. Choy's father (Mr. Choy Him) retired to his village in 1939, Mr. Choy Soo took over as the owner of the Paris Cafe. Like many men, Mr. Choy lived a double life. In Newdale, he worked long hours, lived alone and socialized with other bachelors and relatives in Brandon, Winnipeg, Gladstone and other prairie towns and villages. But in China, he was regarded as part of the gentry class of men who were thriving in Canada or Gold Mountain, as it was called. Four years after the Chinese Immigration Act was repealed in 1947, the family joined many others and escaped to Hong Kong, living there until 1958 when Mr. Choy was able to sponsor his wife and youngest daughter Sue-On to come to Canada. Kenny, her younger son, came a year later in 1959 and both children completed their education in Newdale. Today, Sue-On and Kenny are leaders within the Chinese community of Western Manitoba.[22]

Sue-On Hillman

Choy Soo in front of the Paris Cafe in Newdale, circa 1944.

Minnie Oliver

Lee Low (1896–1958) at his Rex Cafe in Carberry, circa 1940.

Conclusion

In this essay, I have presented a window through which the reader may observe the history and customs of the tiny Western Manitoban Chinese community. In many ways, these settlers had a typically Canadian experience, paying the $500 Head Tax after 1903 to be migrant labourers first in laundry shops and second in cafes. Like other communities in this nation, they got to know one another during the many banquets, picnics and other events hosted by Chinese political and non-Chinese Christian organizations throughout the year. Unlike others who lived and worked in urban Chinatowns, Western Manitoban Chinese Canadians resided and laboured in rural towns, villages and small cities without ethnic enclaves or Chinese women for thirty-three years. The experience was also different because although there was bigotry, prairie communities needing new immigrants and businesses were more welcoming than others in Canada. There was also less racism here because elders such as Mr. Charlie Foo and Mr. Sam Wong consistently worked to build and maintain intercultural bridges among Chinese and non-Chinese communities. His Honour, Dr. Du, Mr. Philip Chang and others continue that work today in Winnipeg while Ms. Sue-On Hillman, Mr. Kenny Choy, Mr. Danny Wong, Mr. Wally Yuen, and last but not least Mr. Kwan Yuen continue to further these goals in Western Manitoba. ☙

Notes

1. This essay is derived from a larger SSHRC funded research program on prairie Chinese history and customs in which I have interviewed hundreds of Chinese Canadians, and, with the help of my marvellous research assistant Sarah Ramsden, have conducted extensive archival research. I am grateful to Mrs. Helen Wong, who provided invaluable assistance and insights into the long history here, and Dr. May Yoh, a retired Associate Professor at Brandon University, who showed me a collection of photographs and other materials she had amassed for a project during the late 1980s. In 2009 Dr. Yoh and I combined some of our best items in a co-curated an exhibition "Windows on Chinese Settlers in Western Manitoba." Many of the photographs from that exhibition are reproduced here. Additional funding has been received from The President and Vice-President Research and Dean of Arts, Brandon University; The RDI New Rural Research Initiatives Grant,

Brandon University, the Brandon University Research Council. I am also indebted to many archives who provided materials: Library and Archives Canada; Archives of Manitoba; Stubbs Archives, University of Manitoba; S. J. McKee Archives; the *Brandon Sun*; the Carberry Plains Archives; and the Daly House Museum.

2. F. Quei Quo, "Chinese Immigrants in the Prairies," *Preliminary Report Submitted to the Minister of the Secretary of State.* Simon Fraser University, November 1977, chapters 1, 2 and 4.
3. For this number I have relied on the table in Harry Con, et al., *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited in association with the Multiculturalism Directorate, Department of the Secretary of State and the Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Supply and Services Canada, 1982, p. 301. See also "Table XII – Nationalities," in *Census of Canada*, 1901, Vol. I. Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1902, p. 406. The information from this table may be misleading because in this year they combined Chinese and Japanese population figures.
4. See "Table VII – Origins of the People by Sub-districts," in *Census of Canada*, 1911, Vol. II. Ottawa: C. H. Parmelee, 1913, p. 173.
5. See David Chuenyan Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1988, pp. 276-277.
6. *Chinese Immigration Act*, 1923, S.C. 1923, c. 33, s. 5.
7. I am grateful to Dr. May Yoh who provided these details.
8. Sun Yatsen visited Canada in 1897 and 1910. He came to Winnipeg on his third visit in April 1911. All of the accounts of this visit come from interviews with old-timers. Thus far, I have been unable to corroborate these with pictures or accounts from Chinese or non-Chinese newspapers. Sun Yatsen is known to have arrived in Vancouver on 8 January 1911, and to have given speeches there and later in Toronto on 29 March 1911. In an email dated 22 June 2009, Mr. Charles Wong, great grandson of Dr. Sun Yatsen, indicated that it is quite possible that Sun came to Winnipeg and noted: "Sun widely travelled from coast to coast in both the United States and Canada raising funds amongst overseas Chinese communities in order to support his revolution. Practically every major overseas Chinese community in North America was visited by Sun. However, records of his visits have been passed down as family stories, rather than clearly recorded and documented events." See C. Millien, E. Woo, P. Yeh, *Winnipeg Chinese*. Printed by the Department of the Secretary of State, Summer, 1971 pp. 20-21. See also Li Donghai [David T. H. Lee], *Jianada Huaqiao shi, A History of Chinese in Canada*. Vancouver: Jianada ziyou chubanshe, 1967, pp. 301-302.
9. Winnipeg, Manitoba's branch existed in secret until 1915. For a list of other offices in Canada, see Harry Con, et al., *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited in association with the Multiculturalism Directorate, Department of the Secretary of State and the Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Supply and Services Canada, 1982, p. 313. See also Alison R. Marshall, "Everyday Religion and Identity in a Western Manitoban Chinese Community: Christianity, the KMT, Foodways and Related Events." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 77.3 September 2009: pp. 573-608.
10. *Winnipeg Free Press*, 7 July 1936, p. 2.
11. After a lengthy search of archival records, it was determined that the name George Chong used when he came to Canada was Long Gee Lan. This was based on information provided in the *General Register of Chinese Immigration*, 1892, Serial Number 14328.
12. Although George Chong's obituary mentioned a brother it is uncertain whether Tom was his sibling, cousin or just another Chinese man. The term "brother" was used quite casually to refer to men who were Chinese. There is no record of a Tom Chong in the *Henderson Directories*, voters lists or 1911 census.
13. For more information about the life of Mr. George Chong, see Alison R. Marshall, "Chinese Immigration to Western Manitoba since 1884: Wah Hep, George Chong, the KMT and the United Church." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 42:3, Fall 2008: pp.28-54.
14. These details about Bing Woo's life were given by Wes and Helen Wong, and Walker Wong to May Yoh in 1988.
15. "Rites Saturday for Frank Chan, Chinese Leader." *Winnipeg Free Press* Friday, 12 December 1952, p. 18.
16. Content relating to Baldur, Manitoba has been compiled during fieldwork, oral history interviews, and from material in *Centennial History of Argyle: Come into our Heritage.* Baldur, Rural Municipality of Argyle, 1981, pp. 527-528. See also *Baldur Gazette*, 15 November 1917, p. 8.
17. The words written in English on her headstone refer to her incorrectly as W. A. See. In actual fact, her maiden surname was Au and according to an old Chinese custom she would be referred to as Mrs. Wong Au See. These details were provided by Dr. May Yoh.
18. I am grateful to Dr. May Yoh who provided background information about Mr. and Mrs. Sam Wong and the Carlton Cafe. Additional details about Mr. Sam Wong's life come from obituaries, oral history interviews, newspaper articles, and fieldwork at the KMT office. Also see the *Brandon Sun*, 6 June 1959, p. 3.
19. Almost everyone I have interviewed has known Buddy Leeds and for this reason all of the accounts in this section originate in oral histories. Facts were corroborated by newspaper articles about Buddy Leeds in the *Brandon Sun* and in the *Winnipeg Free Press*.
20. *Carberry News Express*, 9 February 1922, p. 4.
21. *Ibid*.
22. Details about the Choy family come from fieldwork, interviews, local history books, obituaries in *The Brandon Sun*, and the Chinese Manitoba Historical Society Oral History Project.

Lee Low family

Restauranteur Lee Low and family at Carberry, 1949. L-R: Tong, York, Lee and Walter.

"Assistant to York:" The Ambiguous Role of Flamborough House, 1749–1759

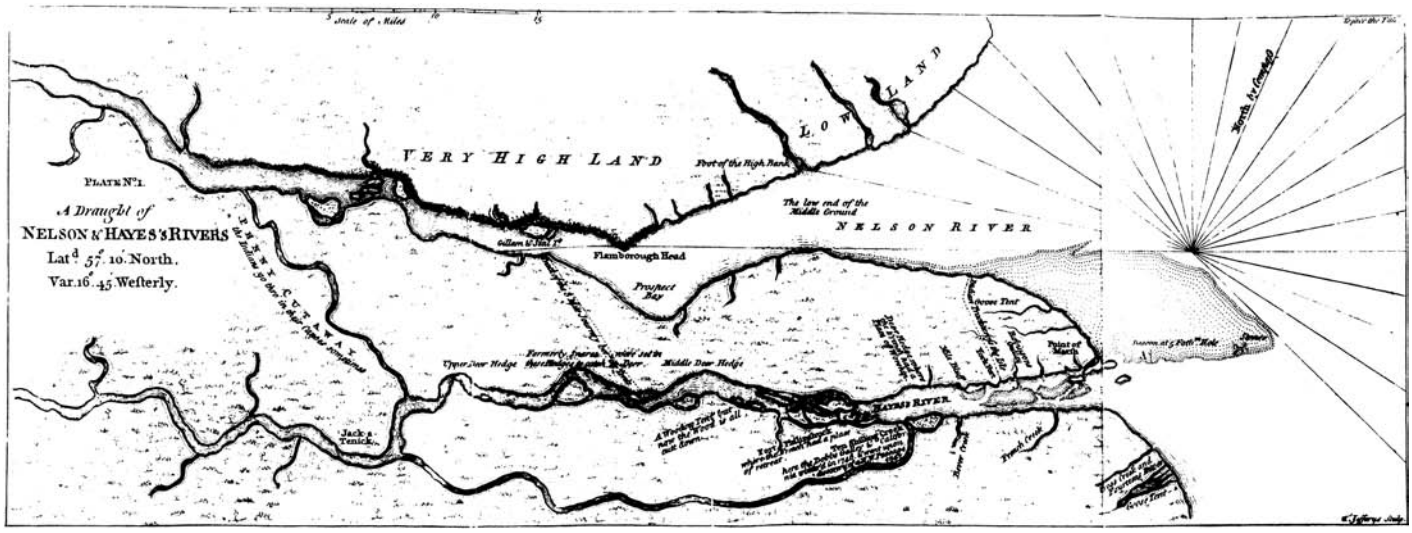
by Scott Stephen
Parks Canada, Winnipeg

York Factory, or York Fort as it was originally known, was founded by the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) in 1684 and soon became the Company's most important fur trade post on western Hudson Bay. Flamborough House was a small outpost of York Fort, built by the Company in 1749 as a result of a serious challenge to their position in North America.[1] In London, rumours abounded of planned interloping expeditions destined for Hudson Bay and designed to challenge the HBC's royally-chartered trade monopoly there. Alert to such rumours, the London Committee instructed their servants on the Bay to be alert themselves. In particular, they instructed Chief Factor John Newton at York to build a small establishment on Nelson River to block any interlopers.[2] None of the rumoured expeditions made their way to Hudson Bay, however, and Flamborough House ended up serving an ambiguous role as a small provisioning outpost with the potential for drawing trade away from York. It also became an arena for conflict between Newton's successor, James Isham, and his subordinates, exemplifying issues of patronage, governance, and control with which the Company and its officers struggled.

John Newton Prepares to Face the "Interlopers"

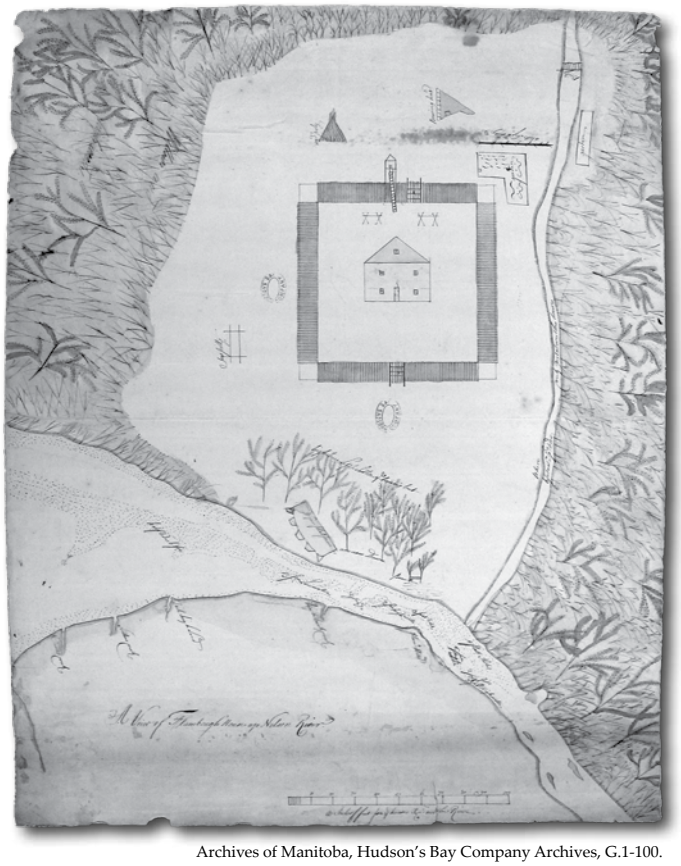
The 1740s had seen a series of attacks on the Hudson's Bay Company's chartered privileges, the most notable adversary being Arthur Dobbs. A pamphlet war in 1743, expeditions to Hudson Bay by the ships *Dobbs* and *California* in 1746–1747, and a Parliamentary Enquiry in 1749 all convinced the Company's London Committee of the strength and perseverance of their opponents. Furthermore, the initial interest in the Northwest Passage had transformed into commercial designs on the fur trade of Hudson Bay. Although Dobbs retired from the field of battle even before the Parliamentary Enquiry began, more than a decade of activity on his part had generated unprecedented interest in Hudson Bay.

Monopolies and royal charters were unpopular in England during this period: the Royal Africa Company, in particular, came under steady attack. Dobbs' battle cries had been taken up by many groups, including the Merchant Adventurers of Bristol, who had opposed the HBC more than once before.[3] Although the Enquiry reported that there was no case for annulling the Company's Charter, London was full of rumours that the Company's opponents would send an expedition to trade in the Bay: they allegedly hoped to provoke a prosecution from the HBC, and thus secure the test-case and the legal verdict which the Law Officers of the Crown had recommended the year before. In 1749, the Committee warned their Bayside factors that Dobbs or others might attempt to infringe upon the Company's trade.[4]



Archives of Manitoba, Map Collection, N8662.

Flamborough House, located on the south shore of the Nelson River opposite Flamborough Head, about 20 miles from York Factory, was not shown on this map "A Draught of Nelson & Hayes's Rivers" contained in Joseph Robson's *An Account of Six Years Residence in Hudson's Bay From 1733 to 1736 and 1744*, published at London in 1752.



Archives of Manitoba, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, G.1-100.

"A view of Flamborough House up Nelson River" by James Isham, 1754, shows a small building occupying open ground by a small stream, surrounded by sparse, scrubby trees.

Port Nelson at the mouth of the Nelson River was seen as the most likely landing point, and John Newton at nearby York Fort (on the Hayes River) received detailed instructions to guard against potential interlopers. The Committee instructed him to send veteran labourer John Hughes and carpenter Richard Ford with four men about twenty miles up the Nelson River to build a log tent on the south shore, across from a point of land called Flamborough Head, and to stake out a suitable spot for a "Factory house" to be built the following spring.[5] A "Factory" was a major post where a factor (or agent) resided, while a "Factory house" (or "house") was a smaller outpost commanded by a "master" of lower rank and pay.

The Committee felt that interlopers would most likely try to establish a foothold a short distance up Nelson River, the lower reaches of which were navigable by sloops. They could thus intercept Native traders bound for York without making themselves inaccessible to their supply ships.[6] In such an event, Flamborough House was to receive a large transfer of men and trade goods from York and to intercept First Nations traders before they reached the interlopers. If the interlopers were adventurous enough to move farther inland than Flamborough, then the new post was to serve as a staging point for other outposts that Newton was to build as far inland as necessary.[7] What role Flamborough House was to play if the expected interlopers did not appear was never made explicit.

A log tent was built in the autumn of 1749 on "a very Convenient Spot near a Creek opposite to Flambro' head," about twenty miles west of York.[8] The following spring, Hughes and Ford began building a "Factory house" of about thirty feet square that was ready for occupation by the end of the summer. Early in 1751, Hughes recorded that the "Distance from the House Door to the Fore Gate is 22 ft: The same from the House to the Stockade on the Back Part. From Corner to Corner of the Stockades is 73 ft: 4 Inchs."[9] Ford was a good carpenter[10] but, given the apparent sense of urgency, he may have concentrated on building the house quickly rather than on building it well. In 1751, Samuel Skrimshire gave his candid opinion of the house: "I must make bold to say, it is at present worse then any Log tent I ever livd, in for smoke & rain." He requested that a carpenter, two sawyers, and a bricklayer be sent from York as soon as possible.[11] Construction continued intermittently over the next several years, and included some fortification. Four cannon were sent out in 1751, and in 1753 Skrimshire spoke of building bastions, though he was worried about a sufficient supply of large timbers.[12]

James Isham and the Definition of Flamborough's Role

Flamborough's first master was to be the experienced trader James Isham (c1716–1761). Isham entered the Company's service as a clerk in 1732 and only five years later succeeded Thomas White as the officer in command of York. Isham was in England to testify before the Parliamentary Enquiry, and returned to the Bay in 1750 with written orders and a full briefing from the Committee. The Committee recommended him to Newton as "the properest Person to send thither for your Assistance as being thoroly acquainted with the Indians the Nature of the Trade and the Country."[13] Isham had already spent six years in charge of York and four years in charge of Prince of Wales Fort (Churchill), and he enjoyed the Committee's full confidence.

Isham arrived at York to learn that Newton had recently drowned while swimming.[14] As the senior officer present, Isham felt it both his duty and prerogative to take Newton's place as Chief Factor. York's Second, Samuel Skrimshire (c1720–1755), and bookkeeper Richard Smith were both recalled to London that year. Newton's Council had consisted only of Skrimshire and the surgeon, William Raynolds (Reynolds), who had given notice of his intention to leave the service the following year. No other man had the skills or experience to present a plausible alternative to Isham. Joseph Isbister at Churchill challenged Isham's

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assumption of power and questioned his right to supplant Skrimshire, but did not know of Skrimshire's recall.[15]

The vacancy at Flamborough House was filled in 1750/51 by John Hughes (c1705–c1772), a respected labourer with some twenty-five years of service. Initially engaged as a makeshift bricklayer for York in 1724, Hughes was a good hunter and netmaker; in 1748, he and two Homeguard Cree families established a new caribou-hunting camp at Flamborough Head.[16] One of those families was probably his own: when Hughes was going to return to England in 1756, Isham complained of "having had some trouble concerning of John Hughs Daughter, who wants her for to go on board for England."[17] Hughes had been given the charge of the construction of Flamborough House on the basis of his familiarity with the area and with the Muskego Cree language.[18] He was replaced in 1751 by Skrimshire, who returned to the Bay with a vote of confidence from the Committee; Hughes remained at Flamborough House as a labourer, spending most of his time hunting and fishing. Both men complained about a variety of problems and frequently clashed with Isham—who, as Chief Factor at York, retained authority over Flamborough.

The number of men sent to Flamborough was a major source of friction. The Committee had provided for Flamborough by increasing York's shipment of provisions by one quarter and its complement from 32 to 40, implying that eight men were to be stationed upriver some or all of the time. However, the Committee only stipulated that six men were to "stay there till the River begins to freeze and is too late for any Indians to come down," and left the specific complement thereafter to be worked out by Newton and Isham.[19] After taking command at York, Isham seems to have appointed only two or three men to Flamborough. As early as August 1750, John Hughes requested one or two extra labourers to man the house while he procured provisions: "I cannot goe any where to Fish, & now is the time or I fail this Season." Isham sent two men to Hughes' assistance and promised that Flamborough's complement would be fixed after the departure of the supply ship, but additional men were not forthcoming.[20] Skrimshire frequently reported that activities such as cutting firewood and plastering the house were hampered by a shortage of men. Isham occasionally sent one or two men to assist with particular tasks for limited periods of time, but never allowed the permanent complement to rise above five. In the absence of interlopers, he saw no need for any more than that.[21]

Flamborough's masters also lamented the quality of men Isham sent them. In September 1750, Hughes complained that the two men recently arrived from York could not row. He would have preferred to have kept the two men recalled to York in their place, William Olson and sailor John Skinner, particularly Skinner: "I like him very [much] for hes willing to work."[22] "I have nobody that knows enything of Hunting," Skrimshire complained to Isham in October 1751, "& but 2 Men to do Every thing else that may be requir'd." In his post journal, Skrimshire commented that his men were "all new hands." The following spring, he accused Isham of sending him York's "refuce."[23]

Skrimshire also complained of shortages of goods. He wrote to Isham almost immediately upon taking command, lamenting his insufficient stores and requesting beer, tar, spoons, cookware, and candlesticks. In August 1752, he acknowledged receipt of a shipment of goods from York by complaining that it lacked cinnamon, cloves, mace, nuts, currants, ink, tar, and beef; he also requested bricks for a new kiln. In March 1753, he sent Isham "an Inventory of such Goods Stores &c as I am and shall be destitute of before we can have an opportunity of water Carriage."[24] In Isham's defence, the London Committee complained of overly large indents from Flamborough and advised Isham to edit them.[25] Flamborough's men were even dependent on York for winter clothing, which was sent out to them from the factory in late autumn and recalled in the spring.[26]

The Committee felt that interlopers would most likely try to establish a foothold a short distance up Nelson River ... They could thus intercept Native traders bound for York without making themselves inaccessible to their supply ships.

A much more divisive issue was the precise role Flamborough was to play. The Committee's initial intention was for Hughes and Ford, while at the log tent, to "take on Shore what Beaver & Furrs the Indians bring down." The house they built was "to hold such furs and Trade as shall yearly be brought down Nelson River by such Indians that Inhabit on the Western Side thereof… and to protect the Persons that shall be Stationed at that House also to hold such European Goods for Trade as shall be sent from York Fort thither." At York, Newton was to "make what Preparation you can…for…hindering the Indians from coming any farther down Nelson River," thus hopefully preventing them from making contact with the anticipated interlopers.[27]

The interloping threat was still considered imminent in 1750, when the Committee informed Newton, "We have now Intelligence & Information of some of our Antagonists Designs We are Apprehensive That the Bristol & Liverpool Merch[an]ts in Conjunction with some Londoners that Attacked the Company in Parliament are fitting Out this year a Ship & a Sloop which…are to…Land and make a Settlement by force on the Companys Territorys either in Hayes or Nelsons Rivers in Order to Intercept and Destroy the Companys Trade."[28] No interlopers ever did appear, however, and after 1750 no such threats were reported in the Committee's annual letters to Hudson Bay. The Committee's intentions for Flamborough House in such

Archives of Manitoba, R. W. Patterson Fonds, #227.

This view of Flamborough Head, taken on 2 September 1924 by canoeists on the Nelson River heading to Port Nelson, probably is similar to the view afforded to occupants of Flamborough House over 160 years earlier.

circumstances were unclear. Was the master allowed to trade with the natives? If not, what purpose did the house serve and how was it to be explained to Cree traders?

Any trade undertaken at Flamborough would be trade lost to York. Isham must have had this in mind when he passed on his orders to John Hughes in 1750. He repeated his own instructions from the Governor and Committee, but added, "in case ye Interlopers should not attempt to come in these parts to Molest or disturb Us you are then to send ye Indns with their furs to York Fort and not to trade upon any acc[oun]t but to do your Uttermost endeavour to procure w[ha]t Country Provisions you can & such of ye Indns & pay them for it as I have sent proper goods for that purpose;" this was repeated almost verbatim in Isham's orders to Skrimshire in August 1751.[29] These additional instructions may have been part of the verbal briefing Isham had received from the Committee before his return to the Bay in 1750. They cannot be corroborated in any of the surviving documents, but after 1750 the interloping threat faded and the Committee clearly thought of Flamborough as a provisioning post. When Skrimshire was sent out in 1751 "to be Master thereof," the Committee commented, "We expect by His diligence yt: [i.e. that] He will Furnish York Fort with plenty of the Country Provisions."[30]

A much more divisive issue was the precise role Flamborough was to play. The Committee's initial intention was for Hughes and Ford, while at the log tent, to "take on Shore what Beaver & Furrs the Indians bring down."

John Hughes and Samuel Skrimshire Trying to Make Flamborough Work

Isham certainly had York's and his own best interests in mind when he barred the Master of Flamborough from trading for skins. However, Hughes and Skrimshire both found that it was difficult to explain to the Natives why they could only trade provisions at the new house and had to go the extra distance to York to trade their skins or settle their debts. Indeed, Hughes and Skrimshire themselves found the distinction difficult to understand. Hughes was censured by Isham on this point almost immediately. "Surely," wrote Isham, "You never rec'd the Orders I sent that You do not know what the Trading Goods are for its very plainly wrote they are purposed for the Men to take [*i.e.* to purchase for their own use] & [to trade] for Provisions as I tould you before, you are not to trade any Furs or other Skins, As for what you did before My Arrival, I know Nothing of."[31] Hughes requested further clarification: "S[i]r if those Indns want to trade Deer skins, may I take any from them, J[ohn] o Gaunt is 16 Beavers in dept [*i.e.* debt],

Trimbush 9 Ditto still in debt may I take deer skins from ym [*i.e.* them], for they do not care to have ye walk, ye Ice & Snow being deeps." Isham responded tersely, "how can you Mention for ye Indns to trade, when I before have gave you strict Orders not to trade…I do not know what you mean by saying, John of Gaunt & Trimbush is so much in debt as you Mention, surely you think I know nothing."[32]

Being only a labourer, Hughes may not have felt comfortable challenging a senior officer, but Skrimshire felt no such reservations and corresponded with Isham on a much more personal level. A clerk and former Second at York, Skrimshire may also have been a cousin or nephew of James Isham: Isham's mother's maiden name was Skrimshire, and both men came from London. Moreover, Skrimshire had spoken with the London Committee before returning to Hudson Bay in 1751 and did not hesitate to address his concerns directly to them after that. For instance, he had returned to the Bay with an understanding of Flamborough House's purpose at odds with the expectations of Isham and of the Committee. He sought clarification on this point almost immediately upon his arrival at his new command.

> Gentellmen I cant but Say I was Very much Surprised at the opening of Your Honours Packquait in not Receiving Sum orders how to prosead when at flamboury House, but more in perticular on in Quiry I was tould Your Honours did Never desire I Should Carray on Eny Trade their only for Provisions allways under Standing Your Hon[our]s; I was Sent on the Same Acctt; as Mr; Isham Came over the Last Year whit I under Stoud at that time was to have bean Supplyd from YF [*i.e.* York Fort] with Such Quantity of Goods as mite be Requasite to Supploy Such Inds; as freaquantly Come Down that Rivr; as well with Goods as Provisions Everay Summer that they mite not have the trouble and featteague yt: Sum times attends them in Going Round the Poynt of Marsh or Carrying their Goods &c [*i.e.* etc.] across the Island.[33]

A few days later, Skrimshire traded goods to some natives who had refused to carry on to York because of bad weather. The storm clouds darkened further when Isham learned of this, and there ensued a hasty and unfriendly exchange of letters, including Isham's admonishment of 18 August—"You say You have rec'd the Papers &c from Jno: Hughes, but I Suppose You never examined them, if You had You would have found you have acted contrary to my Orders from the Company"—and Skrimshire's retort two days later—"I ashure you I had read the orders John had but as Im very sensible We never did know how to proceed in such Casses, I did not think when I traded them Goods I did amiss."[34] Being subordinate to Isham, in the end Skrimshire could do little more than claim his good intentions and subside into a sulky silence. That winter,

Establishment of Flamborough House*

From HBC London to John Newton and Council at York Fort, dated London, 16 May 1749

In case Mr Dobbs or any other Persons doe this year send out any ship or Sloop on the discovery of a Northwest passage ... you are to have regard to those Instructions We sent last year, and that you take Effectual care to prevent any of our Trade from falling into their hands & particularly to hinder them if possible from going up beyond York Fort whereby they might Intercept the Indians from coming down to Our Factory, But for fear that instead of going up Hayes River (if they have any intention to Obstruct our Trade) they should sail up Nelson's River wherefore for preventing their doing us any mischief We do direct that Immediately on our Ships Departure for England you do without delay send up in one of your Boats opposite to Flamborough head which lies higher up Nelson's River than our Factory in Hays River, John Hughes Richard Ford the Carpenter and four more of your Men that you think are proper to Build a Log Tent there and take on shore what Beaver & Furrs the Indians bring down and let 6 Men stay there till the River begins to freeze and is too late for any Indians to come down, Let them be Employed In Searching for and fixing upon a proper place on the Outermost Point of Land as near the River as possible and prepare the Foundation and Cut down Timber and clear the BrushWood in order to Build a small Factory house next Spring of wood of about 30 foot square to hold such furs and Trade as shall yearly be brought down Nelson River by such Indians that Inhabit on the Western side thereof between Flamborough Head & the Forks and to protect the persons that shall be stationed at that House also to hold such European Goods for Trade as shall be sent from York Fort thither, We are told there is Timber Enough on the spot for that purpose & therefore do Direct that Early next Spring you doe send Hughes and Ford with as many proper hands as you can spare to begin upon building the same & if posible to finish it next Summer So as to Serve as an out Factory House to prevent/ Interlopers from doing us any Damage ... We have sent you an Addition of Nails & Spikes Barr Iron and other Necessarys. We pitch upon Mr Hughes for the undertaking being informed that he understands the Indian language and has been very Conversant in those Parts and Capable of performing it with the direction and Assistance of Mr Ford ...

* Archives of Manitoba, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, A.6/8 fos. 15,15d.

however, he was in trouble again, this time for accepting skins in payment of a debt.[35] The Committee never censured him for trading furs: they kept strangely silent on the issue of trade at Flamborough, merely reassuring Skrimshire, "you are Master…in as full a manner as ever we designed Mr Isham should be, which was to be under the direction of the Chief at York Fort."[36]

In the absence of interlopers, Flamborough House was to be little more than a provisioning post for York. Its master was allowed to trade some small items for meat and to offer some small gifts as an encouragement to continue downriver to York, but anything more was outside his prerogative and guaranteed to draw Isham's displeasure. The distinction made little sense to Cree and other Native traders, who would have perceived it as rude and unneighbourly. Skrimshire doubted the wisdom of such a policy, and openly questioned it in an April 1752 letter to Isham.[37] Even as a provisioning post, though, Flamborough caused headaches for York.

In 1750, despite early optimism ("ye Dear [caribou] is as Plenty as can bee"), John Hughes frequently commented on the failure of the hunt. "Muskatucky & Wife came down but brot: no Deer's Flesh but what was dryed;" "the Lads came home. Brought their Bedding w[i]th them. Said there were no Partridges to be got;" "Mistahay & Scotcham. Said there were no Deer, nor had been this fall;" "Archiwick & Stokechuan. Said their Tent Mates were all coming almost starv'd wth Hunger, for there was No Deer, No Fishes, & but few Beaver to be got."[38] Hughes was fairly stoic about his inability to provide York with ample provisions, perhaps because the men of Flamborough were doing reasonably well for themselves. They were able to obtain sufficient "partridge" (willow ptarmigan) and other meat for their table, and could also boast a kitchen garden, two hogs, and even a small brewery.[39]

Skrimshire was more eloquent in despair, and Isham more bitter in response. Early in 1752, Skrimshire was told about a Home Guard Cree named Lucas killing 250 ptarmigans: "I should be obliged to Him," Isham wrote, "if he would kill 250 more, for at Present have not one to my name, and as Flamborough House is not capable of supplying Me according to the Company's expectation, I shall seek for provisions, where it is to be had."[40] Skrimshire replied, "I am sorry You should be so destitute of Partridges, when [there are] shuch [*i.e.* such] numbers along the Eastern Shore, as to Flamborough House not answering the Company expectation, it is not anyways owing to My misconduct." In his own defence, he asserted that there were no deer that year, that Flamborough House had no harbour for "partridge," and that only one of his four men knew anything about hunting.[41]

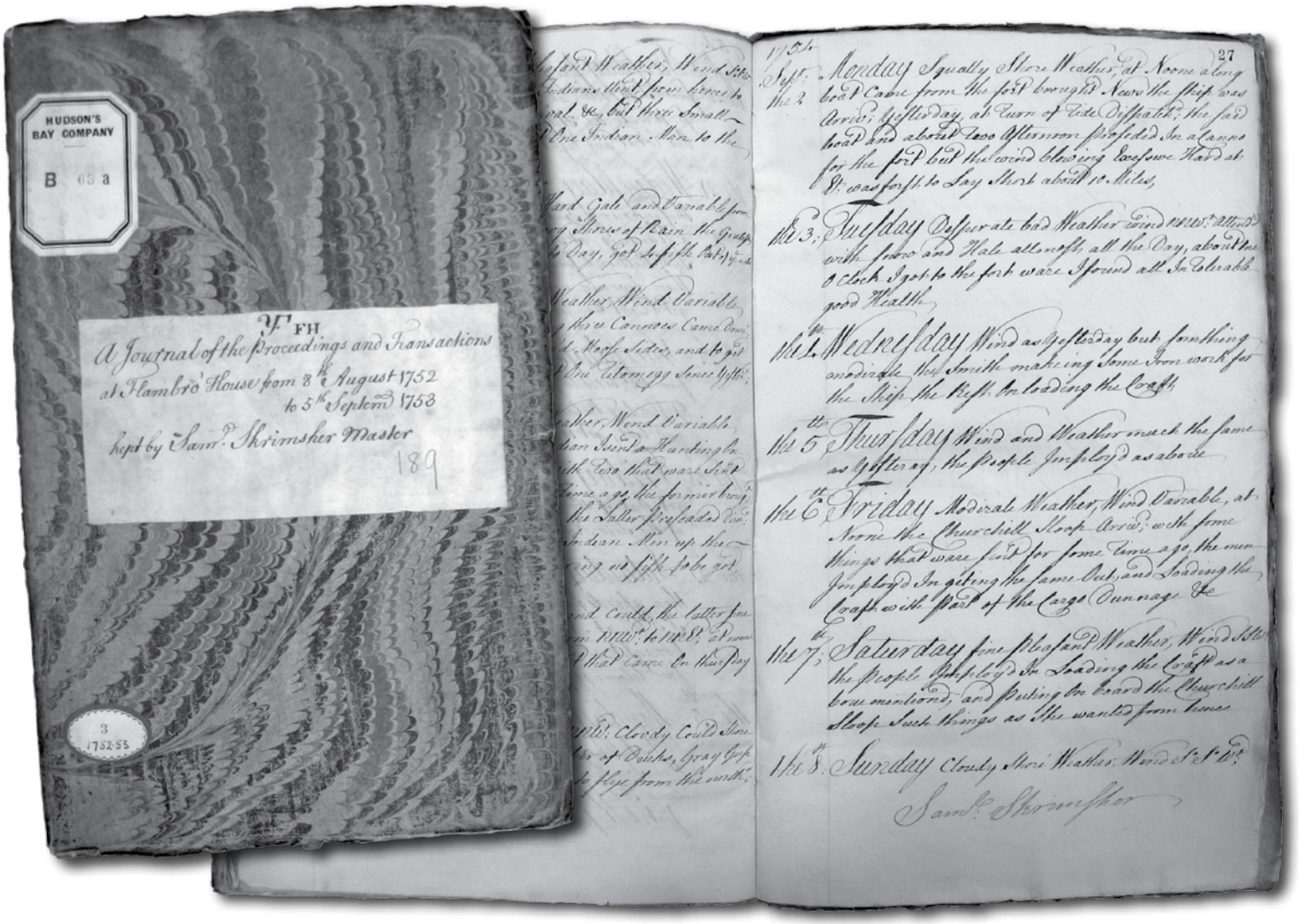
Their disputes became more heated. Isham complained of spoiled meat;[42] Skrimshire reported a remarkably poor goose hunt and was taken to task for not managing his hunters properly;[43] and the two men quarrelled over fishing rights in Hayes River.[44] Even when provisions were aplenty, there was discord. "As to Provisions," Isham wrote in March 1753, "you have more for 5 Men then I have for 35 therefore If You can not make that do, you must go without."[45] A few months later, Skrimshire reported, "Thanks be to God we have had a fine Season of Geese, Salted 1649, could have kill'd as many more if we had, had Cask, Shot, and Salt."[46]

The Committee ultimately lost patience with the situation. In 1753, they gave Isham the option of closing Flamborough House "until he shall judge it Needfull to be again Occupied."[47] But even in calling an end to this adventure, the Committee highlighted the ambiguity with which Isham and his subordinates had wrestled for three years. Skrimshire and Isham received slightly different explanations for the decision. The Committee told Skrimshire it was because "we find that Flamborough House is so farr from being Assistant to York Fort by furnishing it with Country Provisions or Otherways, that you can scarcely maintain your selves,"[48] while they emphasised to Isham that the house "has not Answered our Expectations towards Encreasing our Trade or procuring Country Provisions for York Fort."[49] Ironically, the very next year, the Committee was "glad to find you had Procured so many Geese and some Venison for York Fort [in 1753]… we are now Confirm'd in our Opinion that great part of the Country Provisions Necessary for the use of that Fort, may be in future easily obtained at Flamborough by an Industrious Application thereto."[50] Flamborough House remained open.

The Death of Skrimshire and Flamborough's Final Days

On 16 May 1755, York Fort received word that Skrimshire was "in a sad Condition" at the "North [*i.e.* Nelson] River Goose tent." Isham sent four men to bring him to York, but Skrimshire refused; Isham then sent York's surgeon, Thomas Hopkins, with some "Medicines he Imagined he might want," but Skrimshire died at 3:00 p.m., 18 May 1755, before he arrived. Hopkins, sailor John Skinner, and two unnamed Lowland Cree tried to bring Skrimshire's body home, but their sled broke eight miles short of the factory. Thus, news of his death did not reach York until 23 May, when Isham reported that "Mr Skrimsher got a hurt Across the face, and foot by a dranken [*sic*] Indian, before he Left the house to go to the Goose tent, by a fire Brandy [*sic*]; John Hughes writes me word, he Complained Every day till his death, and that he and Severall More, does think it was the Cause of his death." When the body finally arrived at York the next day, Isham concurred with Hughes' opinion: "found the Right side of his face had Recd a Blow, the Right Eye very Red, Surlled [?] & Clossed, and is our opinion ye blow Got by ye Indian was the Cause of his death." Skrimshire was buried the following day, 25 May.[51] That summer, Richard Ford marked his grave with a monument that read:

> In Memory of Sam'l Skrimsher
> second att York fort and Master of flambro house,



Archives of Manitoba, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Flamborough House Journals, B.68a1-4.

Samuel Skrimshire's last entry in the four volumes of Flamborough House journals, dated 8 September 1754, noted only that the weather was cloudy and windy.

Who died May ye 18th 1755
Aged 34 Years.
Vehement after pleasures
I seek for treasures below
Which Caused My Asshes
Here to Lye in oblivio'[52]

Isham's General Letter to the London Committee that year reported Skrimshire's death, "whose Loss we greatly Regret."[53]

The blow that apparently led to Skrimshire's death was probably accidental. There were no suggestions of foul play in the York Fort journal or correspondence, and no recorded attempt to punish the person responsible. The London Committee felt that Skrimshire's "unhappy Fate," in conjunction with the killings at Henley House later that year , "strongly prove that it is extream dangerous to make bosom friends of them [*i.e.* Natives], for which reason We hereby strictly Order, that no Indian either Man, Woman, or Child, be ever in future lodged within York Fort or Flamborough house, on any pretence."[54] Beyond this, the circumstances of Skrimshire's death remain unclear.

In spite of his almost constant complaining about Flamborough House, Isham kept it open as a hunting camp for HBC men until 1759, when it reached its peak production (three hogsheads of salted venison).[55] That year, however, Isham heard rumours of an impending French attack and ordered Flamborough's complement back to York, "it being a place not of defence." The Committee approved the closure, but advised against destroying the house in case it should be called into use again.[56] It burned down in the summer of 1766, probably by accident. Andrew Graham (then in charge at York) speculated that Homeguard Cree were responsible: "I suppose it to be done by some lazy home Indian as no Trading Indian was down when it happened."[57] Some of Flamborough's accoutrements survived beyond its closure: at Severn River in 1768, Graham mentioned that the shipwright was making him a new armchair and complained that "I have never had any chairs but four old ones that belonged to the late Flamborough House."[58]

More Than Kin and Less Than Kind: Isham and Skrimshire

After 1754, Flamborough faded into the background of the archival record: Skrimshire's 1753–1754 journal is the latest surviving document from that post. Prior to that, however, Flamborough House produced two volumes of correspondence and four post journals,[59] as well as much correspondence and some other transactions recorded in the documents of York Fort. The journals are informative documents, filled with reports of hunting trips, building construction and repairs, some mapping of the surrounding countryside,[60] and the comings and goings of various Natives (mostly Homeguard and Muskego Cree), many of whose names were recorded: Jackatip, Mockapatune, Shannap, Muskatucky, Mistahay, Archiwick, Lucas, Trimbush, and John O Gaunt.

The correspondence between York and Flamborough was both lively and frequent. John Hughes' rhetoric of humility so common among Company servants—"a Just true honest & faithfull Servant to You [Isham] & my most renound Masters"—contrasted with Samuel Skrimshire's expressions of bitterness and frustration,[61] while James Isham was patronising, paternalistic and censorious towards both men. Isham may have felt some special interest in Flamborough, as it was initially meant to be his charge, and he was certainly worried about Flamborough drawing trade away from York. The frequency of the correspondence—letters sometimes only days apart—did not allow Flamborough's masters to forget that they were subordinate to the Chief Factor at York.

The London Committee held Isham in high regard: in 1749, they felt unable to mount an adequate defence to the Parliamentary Enquiry without his testimony. In Hudson Bay, however, the knowledge and experience so valuable in London surely weighed heavily on the shoulders and in the ears of his subordinates. Also, this was late in Isham's career, a time when his aging body was wracked by gout, and he may have been losing patience with younger men who he thought should know better.

[In 1759], Isham heard rumours of an impending French attack and ordered Flamborough's complement back to York, "it being a place not of defence."

There was more to it than that, however. Samuel Skrimshire was probably related to Isham and Isham certainly took an early interest in the young man's prospects, frequently recommending him for advancement. For instance, in 1739 he described Skrimshire as "a very sober diligent young man and I hope will merit your honours' favours."[62] The exercise of patronage was one of the most recognizable manifestations of the social system inherent in the HBC's corporate structure. The patron-client relationship was found in all facets of English society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly in business and politics. In Hudson Bay, newly-arrived young men and boys could benefit greatly from the tutelage and advice of senior men. Given the paternal nature of the master-servant (or master-apprentice) relationship, such senior men might even act as surrogate fathers. Writing in England in 1747, R. Campbell advised the prospective apprentice to "look upon his Master as his Parent," significant advice considering that some boys (perhaps as many as one in four in London) were fatherless by the time they entered service or apprenticeship.[63] The sentimental and practical value of such relationships, when positive, was enhanced by the possibility of vertical mobility. Of course, quasi-parental status could also give rise to quasi-parental conflicts, particularly if Isham was trying to act as a surrogate father to a man only a few years his junior.

Skrimshire was apprenticed to the Company at the age of 14 in 1733, when the Committee described him as a "very Sober well Inclin'd boy."[64] He rose with relative speed to the rank of Second at York, in which capacity he served under Thomas White (1744–1746), Isham (1746–1748), and John Newton (1748–1750). Newton, however, complained that Skrimshire was lazy and unreliable.

> I am very Sorry I cant Speak more in favour of Mr Skrimsher but he certainly is a very Unfit Man for forwarding any Business. I can Assure Your Honours I have ye Mates or Boatswains duty as well as the Masters (I think ye Simile will bear) I at first thought his Remissness and Inactivity to proceed from a Sullenness on Acc[oun]tt of my being advanced to a place he might think himself better Qualified for, but I have been convinced since it is meerly Lazy Habit or Nwt [Northwest] Disposition.[65]

An experienced shipmaster in the Mediterranean trade, Newton had come out of retirement in southern England to take charge of York Fort. His reference to Skrimshire's laziness as the "Northwest Disposition" suggests that he was unimpressed by the men of York, whom the London Committee described as "Lazy enough of themselves without having Bad examples."[66] Alternatively, the "Northwest Disposition" may have been drunkenness. In 1748, Robert Pilgrim at Prince of Wales Fort reported the death of mason John Davenport, who had been drunk on Saturday evening and all day Sunday, and was found dead in his bed early Monday morning: "I was Going to Say that this way of Dying is a Natural Death for a Northwester, but I will Venture to Say itt is a Northwest Death, for sure I am this is the 4th man has Gone this way since I have Known this place, by the force of good Liquor as they call itt."[67] Either way, the men of York were equally unimpressed by Newton's distance and severity. Skrimshire may have had

good reason to feel "sullen" at having been passed over for command in favour of a greenhorn and a martinet.

Despite more than a decade of positive reports from Isham and others, Skrimshire was recalled in 1750 on the basis of Newton's complaints. The Committee wrote to Newton, "We are sorry to find that Mr Skrimshers Remissness is so great, and that he takes so little pains to Acquit himself in his Station to your Satisfaction or that he is not of any service to the Company by his Indolent behaviour and a [illegible] Idleness to execute any thing… [&] by his Lazyness & Inactivity or it may be Wilfulness is a very bad example to others."[68] Skrimshire's position as Second at York entitled him to a private letter of explanation. "As your Conduct has not been of late the most agreable [sic] to Us as we could Wish and have not Exerted yourself In forwarding the Companys Affairs thro wilfulness or Indolence whereby the repairs and buildings are behindhand, by not keeping the Companys Servants strictly to Work who are Lazy enough of themselves without having Bad examples We have therefore thought proper to recall you and Richd Smith."[69]

Skrimshire's recall seems to have soured Isham's attitude towards him, but the exact reasons are far from clear. During Skrimshire's absence, Isham wrote to Joseph Isbister at Churchill, responding to a letter Isbister had written to Skrimshire five months earlier (which is no longer extant). Skrimshire had informed Isbister of Newton's death and asked Isbister's advice about one or more things, which seems to have provoked Isham: "I am Surpris'd Mr Skrimshire who had been so many Years in ye Companys Servis should understand their affairs no better, however I shall take Effectual Remedy as to that point." What "that point" was is uncertain, but it may have been connected to "inticeing and Encouraging Ind[ia]ns to leave one Fort to goe to another," of which Isbister and/or Skrimshire may have accused Newton.[70] Isbister's reply to Isham observed that "You express a Surprise & seem by your Manner of writing to be heat'd with Passion & resentment, for what I know not." He defended Skrimshire, saying "I dont know but yt [i.e. that] he Understands the Company affairs as well or better then Either you or myself," and emphasising his good conduct while in charge of York after Newton's death. Isham petulantly replied, "As to ye Person You mention in your second Paragraph I cannot see that Wee have any reason to Concern Our Selves with Him or any one Else that is absent, I know of no Crimes Hee has been guilty of far from it (but the Company are ye Properest Judges for what they Punctually Ordered Mr Skrimshire home for."[71] Isbister suggested, "it may be that You are offended at his asking a Senior Officers advice… but in My Oppinion…[it is] much to his Credit, & plainly show that His thoughts were Serious concearning His charge & dont doubt but his Sentiments were Foreign & quite different from those Hee entertained when in an Inferiorr Station."[72]

This exchange was part of a renewed conflict between Isham and Isbister. In 1747, while in charge of Albany Fort on James Bay, Isbister had complained to Isham that most of Albany's Homeguard Cree hunters had left the area for York: Isham (perhaps rightly) interpreted this as an accusation that he was enticing hunters away from Albany and responded warmly.[73] On the topic of Aboriginal hunters being enticed to York, Isbister suggested in his January 1751 letter from Prince of Wales Fort that "whether those Practices are unhear'd of or not it may be best Judged from ye Number of Albany & Churchill Indians that now frequent York Fort."[74] Whatever the content of the (now lost) letters between Skrimshire and Isbister, by the winter of 1750–1751 Isbister and Isham were both very angry and offended over the issue.[75] The precise role played by Skrimshire (or by Newton) in this ongoing dispute cannot be discerned from the surviving documents.

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Isham's displeasure with Skrimshire may have had deeper roots. In a cryptic passage in a 1748 letter to Robert Pilgrim at Churchill, Isham hinted at some kind of earlier concern regarding Skrimshire. "As to your private Letter, You can not but be Sensible I am no Stranger to you, and shall take care what you intimate Concerning Mr Samll Skrimshire shall create no Difference in our small family."[76] Neither Pilgrim's "private Letter" nor any other references to it have survived. Isham may have been willing to overlook or to forgive whatever Pilgrim had told him about Skrimshire, or he may simply have been claiming such magnanimity. After Skrimshire's return in 1751, he signed his letters to Isham, "You[r] most Obdt: [i.e. Obedient] & Effectionate Cozn: [i.e. cousin] at Comm[an] d:"[77] but received few kind words and little encouragement in return.

Whatever the nature or cause of the unpleasantness that arose over Skrimshire's conduct, the soured relationship may have had an adverse effect on Isham's attitude towards Flamborough House. Certainly Skrimshire was never convinced that he was being given the support he needed to make Flamborough work. However, there had been conflict when Hughes was in charge as well, and Isham sometimes responded to Hughes' letters with sarcasm. In the autumn of 1750, for instance, he criticised Hughes for allowing the men brandy too early in the season—"by your Actions one would think you had been but one year in ye Country, not to know better"—and went on to scold him, "[I] desire you would write with more discreation, & not truble Me with so much stuff & nonsense when half ye writing will answare ye purpose."[78] Then he chastised Hughes the following spring because he had not written recently.[79] Isham's tongue was as sharp for Skrimshire as it had been for Hughes. Even Skrimshire's requests for ink

fell on unsympathetic ears: "You say you have no Sealing was [wax] nor Ink…the only Remedy I know off is to write less, so what you have will last the Longer."[80]

A House With No Foundation: Some Final Thoughts on Flamborough

Flamborough House and its masters suffered from a lack of precedent. Neither Isham nor most of his colleagues had any experience with an outpost of this kind. Other "factory houses" or outposts (such as Moose, Eastmain, Richmond, and later Severn) were subordinate to Albany or York, but their range of tasks and expectations were similar to those at the factories. Only the Albany outpost of Henley House shared the trading restrictions imposed on Flamborough; however, it enjoyed more independence because of its location, 180 miles inland from Albany, and the Bayside factors may not have seen the two houses as comparable. Although not all of the Bayside correspondence from that period has survived, there is no evidence that Albany's Chief Factors offered Isham any advice based on their experiences with Henley—nor is it likely that Isham would have asked for any, or taken any that was offered.

In general, Flamborough differed from other "factory houses" in three significant ways. It was smaller, never possessing a large enough complement of men to perform all the necessary mundane tasks without assistance and support from York. This placed the master of Flamborough in a more dependent situation than would be the case for York's later and larger outpost at Severn River. Even the primary function of Flamborough—provisioning York Fort—emphasized its dependence on the factory in a palpable way not experienced by other outposts, which were all (except Henley) intended as trading posts in their own right.

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Flamborough was also unusually close to its parent factory. The distance of only about twenty miles between the two kept the masters of Flamborough under Isham's steady gaze at York and deprived them of the practical everyday independence enjoyed by the masters of Albany's outposts around the shores of James Bay. The short distance also allowed Isham to keep Flamborough undermanned and under-supplied (in the opinion of Hughes and Skrimshire), because it was relatively easy to transfer men and/or goods to the outpost on short notice.

Finally, Flamborough suffered from problems of expectations. Once the interloping threat failed to materialize, a new reason for the house's existence had to be found. The investment of human and material resources—as well as Skrimshire's emotional investment in his "second chance" at command—were out of proportion to Flamborough's ultimate role as a glorified goose hunting tent. For John Hughes and Samuel Skrimshire, however, Flamborough represented an opportunity to be a master in their own house—an opportunity stifled by the managerial shadow of James Isham at York and by the ambivalence of the London Committee about the role of this rather anomalous creation. ☙

Notes

1. Although generally known in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as York Factory, most eighteenth-century HBC documents referred to it as York Fort. There is some confusion about Flamborough House's name. On 2 July 1750, Samuel Skrimshire sent word of Chief Factor John Newton's death to "Cumberland Fort," although he was clearly referring to Flamborough: York Fort journal, 2 July 1750, Hudson's Bay Company Archives / Manitoba Archives (HBCA), B. 239/a/33, fo. 37.
2. HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 16 May 1749, A. 6/8, fos. 15-15d. See also John Newton & Council (York) to HBC (London), 12 August 1749, A. 11/114, fo. 133; HBC (London) to James Isham (London), 21 May 1750, A. 6/7, fo. 163; HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fos. 43d-45.
3. For a complete discussion of Arthur Dobbs and the challenges to the Hudson's Bay Company in the 1740s, see E. E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company 1670–1870, Volume I: 1670–1763* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1958), 556-586.
4. Although threats to the Company's trade were to be dealt with as vigorously as possible, if any vessel sent by Dobbs or other parties "on the discovery of a Northwest Passage…should (thro' distress or for other Reasons) Endeavour to Enter Hayes River and come up to our Factory you are to use them Civilly." HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 16 May 1749, A. 6/8, fo. 15.
5. HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 16 May 1749, A. 6/8, fos. 15-15d. See also John Newton & Council (York) to HBC (London), 12 August 1749, A. 11/114, fo. 133; John Newton (York) to HBC (London), private, 12 August 1749, A. 11/114, fos. 135-135d. Newton claimed to have thought of a similar plan himself: "I cant help mentioning I had taken ye Resolution of Sending ye Same Person [Hughes] You have thought proper to pitch on with some few Trifles for trade wth him to Build a Logg tent at Flambro' Head and to Reside there, Months before ye Ships Arrival," John Newton (York) to HBC (London), 12 August 1749, A. 11/114, fo. 135.
6. The lower reaches of the Nelson were easily navigable by sloops: for instance, the *Whale* sloop (Thomas Laws, master) carried goods from York to Flamborough in 1750 (B. 239/b/6, fo. 3d) and in 1751 (B. 68/b/1, fo. 1). A longboat was apparently built for supplying Flamborough (see HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fo. 44d: "the Ships new Long Boat which is Built on Purpose for going up and down Nelson River"), but there seems to have been some dispute over it. In 1753, Skrimshire assured Isham, "You need be under no more consearn of my troubling You a bout the Long boat promis'd in Exchang, only must beg leave to say I always took a Gentlemans word to be his Bond, for admit the Boat Here to be built purposely for this place if I remember well it was chiefly for whaleing." Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 25 March 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 15.
7. HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fos. 43d-45. Also see HBC (London) to James Isham (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/7, fo. 163.
8. York Fort journal, 25 August 1749, B. 239/a/33, fo. 2d. James Isham measured the distance between the factory and the house in December

1750 "wth the Measuring Wheel & Chain," and "Made the Distance 20 Miles." Flamborough House journal, 14 December 1750, B. 68/a/1, fo. 14d. Andrew Graham later gave the distance as 24 miles: Glyndwr Williams, ed., *Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay 1767–91* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1969), 251. John Hughes "Measur'd wth the Chain from the House to Flambro' Head. Made the Distance 2 Miles 3 Furlongs. The House from the Head bears S. & by W." Flamborough House journal, 12 February 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 20. However, in March 1751, Hughes and Magnus Johnston "measur'd from hence [*i.e.* Flamborough House] across to Flambro' Head. We found the Chain to be wrong. The Wheel made the Distance 16 Poles less yn two Miles. The Chain made it 2 Miles & 16 Poles. Chain wanted 3/4 Yard of Measure." Flamborough House journal, 2 March 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 22. In March 1751, Richard Ford was "drawing a Plan of the River from the Tail of the high Land to an Island 16 2 Miles above." Flamborough House journal, 9 March 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 23. Neither this plan nor Ford's account of his surveying activities (mentioned in the York Fort journal, 10 March 1751, B. 239/a/34, fo. 25d) have survived.

9. Flamborough House journal, 14 February 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 20d. A few months later, Isham ordered Hughes to take detailed measurements of the house and area: Hughes sent the measurements to York, but they were not recorded in either post's journal: Flamborough House journal, 2 April 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 25d.
10. Richard Ford was a member of Isham's Council from 1753 until he returned to England in 1756. Ford's departure from the service forced Isham to postpone the establishment of a house at Severn River "for the want of a proper work man." James Isham & Council (York) to HBC (London), 4 August 1756, A. 11/114, fo. 194d.
11. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 13 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 2.
12. HBC (London) to James Isham & Council (York), 16 May 1751, A. 6/8, fo. 69. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 20 January 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 11d. The cannon were supposed to have gone out to Hudson Bay in 1750—HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fos. 43d-45—but were mistakenly left behind.
13. HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fos. 43d-44.
14. Skrimshire's account of Newton's death and the search for his body is in York Fort journal, 28 June - 2 July 1750, B. 239/a/33, fos. 36-37.
15. Joseph Isbister (Churchill) to James Isham (York), 17 January 1751, B. 239/b/6, fos. 17d-18.
16. James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 1750, A. 11/114, fo. 138d. The Committee had been unable to procure a bricklayer for York in 1724 and instead engaged the 19-year-old Hughes, who had "worked with some Bricklayers." K. G. Davies and A. M. Johnson, eds., *Letters from Hudson Bay 1703–40* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1965), 99n, 151n; A. 1/120, fo. 62. A real bricklayer, James Averill, was sent out to York in 1725. In 1732, Hughes' superior, Thomas McCliesh, called him "very serviceable to us in attending and making our nets" (*Letters*, 169) and in 1739 and 1740 James Isham described him as sober, diligent, and useful (*Letters*, 308, 313). In 1752, Hughes was repairing guns after armourer Joseph Russell froze his fingers and toes the previous winter: James Isham & Council (York) to HBC (London), 6 August 1752, A. 11/114, fo. 154. For Hughes' caribou-hunting camp, see Victor P. Lytwyn, *Muskekowuck Athinuwick: Original People of the Great Swampy Land* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2002), 151.
17. Hughes appears to have claimed that the Committee had authorised his daughter's passage to England ("saying it was yr honrs Desire"). "I having no such orders, nor yet the captain, and in Looking back to your honor's [letter] of 16 May 1751 (parh 27) find a strict order to the contrary…therefore stopd her returning to England, Referring such to yr honours." James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 13 August 1756, A. 11/114, fo. 192.
18. HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 16 May 1749, A. 6/8, fos. 15-15d. A year earlier, however, Newton had recommended engaging George Potts (Isham's former personal servant and son of HBC surgeon and factor, John Potts) on the grounds that only Skrimshire and Augustine Frost understood the Cree language: John Newton & Council (York) to HBC (London), 27 August 1748, A. 11/114, fo. 129d. Hughes had sufficient literacy to perform the accounting and journal-keeping tasks of his position adequately. On 1 May 1751, the handwriting in the post journal changed: the new hand was less polished than the previous one (spelling and syntax were more erratic), but the evenness of the handwriting improved, as if the new writer was growing more confident with the pen. The second handwriting appears to have been Hughes' and the earlier writing was presumably Richard Ford's. See entries for 1 May and 7 May 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 29. He also had some competency in surveying: in January 1751, he took "the Bearings of the House & sev'rall other Points of Land by Compass." Flamborough House journal, 16 January 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 17. Two months later, he and Richard Ford "took the Bearings of the Upper Point of Prospect Bay, the Tail of Seal Island &c &c." Flamborough House journal, 3 March 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 22.
19. HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fo. 43d; HBC (London) to James Isham (London), 21 May 1750, A. 6/7, fo. 163.
20. John Hughes (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 25 August 1750, B. 239/b/6, fo. 1; James Isham (York) to John Hughes (Flamborough), 26 August 1750, B. 239/b/6, fo. 1d.
21. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 27 January 1752, B. 68/b/1, fo. 18; Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 12 August 1752, B. 68/b/2, fos. 1d-2; James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 2 February 1752, B. 68/b/1, fo. 19d.
22. John Hughes (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 10 September 1750, B. 239/b/6, fos. 4-4d; also see Flamborough House journal, 11 September 1750, B. 68/a/1, fo. 4.
23. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 29 October 1751, B. 68/b/1, fos. 13-13d; Flamborough House journal, 31 October 1751, B. 68/a/2, fo. 9d; Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 29 March 1752, B. 68/b/1, fo. 26d.
24. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 13 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 2d. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 12 August 1752, B. 68/b/2, fos. 1d-2. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 20 March 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 13d.
25. HBC (London) to James Isham (York), 12 May 1752, A. 6/7, fo. 175d. Also see their chastisement of Skrimshire on this count: HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 12 May 1752, A. 6/7, fo. 176.
26. See John Hughes (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 4 November 1750, B. 239/b/6, fo. 14d; Isham to Hughes, n.d. [November 1750], B. 239/b/6, fo. 15. For problems with this arrangement, see Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 4 February 1752, B. 68/b/1, fo. 20: "[Magnus] Twat is scarse 2 days together well haveing contracted the Country Deistemper, by working in His waistcoat for want of a Leather Toggie."
27. HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 16 May 1749, A. 6/8, fos. 15-15d.
28. HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fos. 43d-45.
29. James Isham, "Orders Appointed for Mr John Hughes to Observe [at Flamborough House] Sept 4: 1750," B. 239/b/6, fo. 2d. James Isham, "Orders Appointed for Mr Samuel Skrimshire Punctually to Observe [at Flamborough House], answarable [*sic*] to the 19 paragraph of the General Letter 1750," 18 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 5d.
30. HBC (London) to James Isham & Council (York), 16 May 1751, A. 6/8, fo. 69; copied in James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 18 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 6.

31. James Isham (York) to John Hughes (Flamborough), 14 September 1750, B. 239/b/6, fo. 5d.
32. John Hughes (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 29 September 1750, B. 239/b/6, fos. 9-9d. James Isham (York) to John Hughes (Flamborough), 30 September 1750, B. 239/b/6, fo. 10d.
33. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to HBC (London), 8 August 1751, A. 11/114, fo. 144.
34. Flamborough House journal, 13 August 1751, B. 68/a/2, fo. 1; Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 14 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 3; James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 18 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 4; Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 20 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 6d.
35. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), n.d. [late January 1752], B. 68/b/1, fo. 18d.
36. HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 12 May 1752, A. 6/7. fo. 175d.
37. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 15 April 1752, B. 68/b/1, fo. 28.
38. John Hughes (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 25 August 1750, B. 239/b/6, fo. 1. Flamborough House journal, 5 September 1750, B. 68/a/1, fo. 3d. Flamborough House journal, 23 November 1750, B. 68/a/1, fo. 12. Flamborough House journal, 25 November 1750, B. 68/a/1, fo. 12. Flamborough House journal, 11 December 1750, B. 68/a/1, fo. 14. The "deer" of HBC documents was actually caribou, though whether the woodland or barren ground species is a matter of debate: see Lytwyn, 228n2
39. For "partridge," see Flamborough House journal, 6 February 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 19d. For identification of "partrige" as willow ptarmigan, see Lytwyn, 110. The exact contents of the garden are unknown, but did include radishes, turnips and colworts. See, for example, John Hughes (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 19 May 1751, B. 239/b/6, fo. 30; also Flamborough House journal, 17 May 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 30. The degree of success which they had with this garden was never reported. For a reference to hogs, see John Hughes (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 23 April 1751, B. 239/b/6, fo. 27d. For references to brewing, see Flamborough House journal, 13 September & 12-13 November 1750, B. 68/a/1, fos. 4d, 10d-11.
40. James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 2 February 1752, B. 68/b/1, fo. 19d.
41. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 4 February 1752, B. 68/b/1, fo. 20. On another occasion, Skrimshire reported a lack of fish, "ther four am apt to beleave their is no fish in the Rivr or at Least they do not Come up so heigh": Flamborough House journal, 26 August 1751, B. 68/a/2, fo. 3. Also see Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 27 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 10.
42. James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), n.d. [August 1752], B. 68/b/2, fo. 2d. For Skrimshire's response, see Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 17 September 1752, B. 68/b/2, fo.3d. Also see James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 20 March 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 14: "Was it possable for the Dead to rise certainly the Geese salted at North River last spring when I had a Cask opened would have flown away."
43. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 22 September 1752, B. 68/b/2, fo. 4d. James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), n.d. [September 1752], B. 68/b/2, fo. 5.
44. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 2 October 1752, B. 68/b/2, fos. 5d-6. James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 5 October 1752, B. 68/b/2, fo. 6d.
45. James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 20 March 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 14.
46. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 5 June 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 17d.
47. HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 23 May 1753, A. 6/7, fo. 182d.
48. HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 23 May 1753, A. 6/7, fo. 182d.
49. HBC (London) to James Isham & Council (York), 24 May 1753, A.6/8, fo. 118d.
50. HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 22 May 1754, A.5/1, fo. 3d; also see HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 27 May 1755, A. 5/1, fo. 10.
51. York Fort journal, 16–25 May 1755, B. 239/a/39, fos. 27d-28d.
52. York Fort journal, 6 August 1755, B. 239/a/39, fo. 36d. I have been unable to find the source of this quotation.
53. James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 2 September 1755, A. 11/114, fo. 190.
54. HBC (London) to James Isham & Council (York), 12 May 1756, A. 6/9, fo. 33. Isham had, in fact, given similar orders early in Flamborough's history: "I order you once more Harbour no Indns but ye lad & another." James Isham (York) to John Hughes (Flamborough), 30 September 1750, B. 239/b/6, fo. 11.
55. York Fort journal, 5 August 1759, B. 239/a/41, fo. 41; also Lytwyn, 151.
56. HBC (London) to James Isham & Council (York), 15 May 1760, A. 5/1, fo. 35d.
57. York Fort journal, 27 July 1766, B. 239/a/54, fo. 49; *Graham's Observations*, 251n. Graham (251) erroneously gave 1760 as the date of Flamborough's closure.
58. Severn River journal, November 1768, quoted in *Graham's Observations*, 342.
59. B. 68/a/1-4, Flamborough House journals, 1750–1754; B. 68/b/1-2, Flamborough House correspondence, 1751–1753.
60. In 1750, the Committee told Newton, "Wee have discoursed with most of Our Servants that have lived at York Fort…and Wee do find them very Ignorant…in knowing the true distances of several places from the Factory and also from one place to another alledging that all the Information they can give us comes from the Indians who widely differ in their Account of Distances or at least Our People did not rightly Comprehend them." They instructed him to rectify this situation whenever an opportunity arose ("without Neglecting things of more Consequence"), "For which purposes we have sent you a Compleat Set of Surveying Instruments and Measuring Wheel which we desire may be Carefully preserved We suppose what were formerly Sent are either Broke lost or Mislaid." HBC (London) to John Newton & Council (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fos. 45d-46d. For examples of men measuring distances, see Flamborough House journal, 14 December 1750, B. 68/a/1, fo. 14d; 16 January 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 17; 12 February 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 20; 14 February 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 20d; 2 March 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 22; 3 March 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 22; 5 March 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 22d; 9 March 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 23; 2 April 1751, B. 68/a/1, fo. 25d. Also see James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 11 January 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 10d. Hughes appears to have been considerably more active in this respect than Skrimshire.
61. John Hughes (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), n.d. [October 1750], B. 239/b/6, fo. 12d. Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to HBC (London), 8 August 1751, A. 11/114, fos. 144-145.
62. James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 29 August 1739, *Letters*, 308. Also see James Isham & Council (York) to HBC (London), 27 July 1740, *Letters*, 312.
63. R. Campbell, The London Tradesman (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969, originally published London, 1747), 313; Margaret Pelling, "Apprenticeship, Health and Social Cohesion in Early Modern London," History Workshop 37 (Spring 1994), 41-42.
64. *Letters*, 308n.
65. John Newton (York) to HBC (London), 12 August 1749, A. 11/114, fo. 134.
66. HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/7, fo. 163d.

67. Robert Pilgrim (Prince of Wales Fort) to James Isham (York), 17 February 1748, B. 239/b/5, fo. 6.
68. HBC (London) to John Newton (York), 24 May 1750, A. 6/7, fos. 161d-162.
69. HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/7, fo. 163d.
70. "Sir, yours of the twelf July we Rec'd here by Mr Skrimshire who had not an oppertunity to answare therfore having Indians at our Fort at Present [available to carry a letter to Churchill], take this Oppertunity to Answare yours of ye 21th July last where I can but Observe yt the first paragraph is partly Expres'd by ye Information you had of Mr Skrimsher abt July ye 2d: 1750 as to ye Second Paragraph I am Surpris'd Mr Skrimshire who had been so many Years in ye Companys Servis should understand their affairs no better, howsoever I shall take Effectual Remedy as to that point, I am sorry to hear yt such practices has and is carried on to the Ruin of the Companys trade and Interest, or inticeing and Encouraging Indns to leave one Fort to goe to another, as to ye latter part of the Said Paragraph, is without any foundation, nay You are so much Mistaken in that point, that I doe not doubt in the least please God to Continue my health but as soon as the Natives has Information of my Arrival but to enlarge the Companys trade, without any of those unhear'd of Practices till late Days. You need not bee under any Concern for theunfortunate Gentlemans Effects, I having taken proper care of the same at my first Arrival." James Isham (York) to Joseph Isbister (Prince of Wales Fort), 30 December 1750, B. 239/b/6, fo. 15d. Isbister's letter of 12 July has not survived, nor has Skrimshire's letter to Isbister (Isham could not even find a copy when he reclaimed command).
71. Joseph Isbister (Churchill) to James Isham (York), 17 January 1751, B. 239/b/6, fos. 18-18d. James Isham (York) to Joseph Isbister (Churchill), 24 Febuary 1751, B. 239/b/6, fo. 21d.
72. Joseph Isbister (Churchill) to James Isham (York), 17 January 1751, B. 239/b/6, fos. 18-18d.
73. Joseph Isbister (Albany) to James Isham (York), 14 May 1747, B. 239/b/4, fos. 10-11d; James Isham (York) to Joseph Isbister (Albany), 12 July 1747, B. 239/b/4, fo. 12. Also see Joseph Isbister (Albany) to James Isham (York), 21 July 1747, B. 239/b/4, fo. 14d, where Isbister denied hoping for poor trade at York and "neither Did I Ever Dispute your sagacity with Respect to the nature of ye Country, than to Let you Know yt all men are Lyable to be deceiv'd, Either by their own Judgt or by other peoples, & yt you are not infallible."
74. Joseph Isbister (Prince of Wales Fort) to James Isham (York), 17 January 1751, B. 239/b/6, fo. 18d.
75. Isbister pulled no punches in his correspondence with Isham, but did declare that "the Cheiff that will Sacrafice the Companys Interest to any Private peek or resentment is no good Officer." "You may think from the Perticular regard I Expres'd for Mr Newton in that letter that I cannot have any respect for Mr Isham, Yes Sr and Mr Isbister would as gladly cultivate a freindly Correspondence with Mr Isham as any Man He knows….I do assure you Sir that it is My Exprest desire to live in Amity with You & all the rest of the Companys Cheifs." He even signed this, his angriest letter, "Dear Sr Your Affectionate freind & most Humb[le] Servant." Joseph Isbister (Prince of Wales Fort) to James Isham (York), 17 January 1751, B. 239/b/6, fos. 19d-21d. By the end of the year, the two men seem to have agreed to put the matter behind them: James Isham (York) to Joseph Isbister (Prince of Wales Fort), 24 February 1751, B. 239/b/6, fos. 21d-22; Isbister to Isham, 12 March 1751, B. 239/b/6, fo. 25; Isham to Isbister, 31 December 1751, B. 239/b/6, fo. 5d; Isbister to Isham, 15 January 1752, B. 239/b/6, fo. 7.
76. James Isham (York) to Robert Pilgrim (Prince of Wales Fort), 22 January 1748, B. 239/b/5, fo. 4d.
77. See, for example, Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough) to James Isham (York), 20 August 1751, B. 68/b/1, fo. 8.
78. James Isham (York) to John Hughes (Flamborough), 30 September 1750, B. 239/b/6, fos. 10d-11.
79. James Isham (York) to John Hughes (Flamborough), 19 June 1751, B. 239/b/6, fo. 36.
80. James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), 20 March 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 14.

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Where the Historiography Falls Short: La Vérendrye through the Lens of Gender, Race and Slavery in Early French Canada, 1731–1749

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Modern historians commonly depict Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, et de La Vérendrye as a noteworthy eighteenth-century explorer who figured prominently in the French penetration and "discovery" of a large part of what is now western Canada.[1] Today, La Vérendrye's name marks Canadian and American monuments, memorials, streets, parks, schools, and decorates prestigious scholarships.[2] He is especially well known and commemorated in Manitoba for arriving at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers on 24 September 1738. In 1938, the cities of Winnipeg and St. Boniface organized a bi-centennial celebration, including a pageant, a parade and the unveiling of a monument in La Vérendrye's honour. The nine-day long event sought to, as stated in the souvenir programme, "pay tribute to the achievements of one of the world's great men—The Pathfinder of the West," who "discovered and opened to civilization" the western half of the North American continent "not by force of arms but by force of character, by fair dealing, by genius in leading men and in making and retaining friendships, by unusual tenacity of purpose and by unrivalled patience, forbearance and fortitude."[3] In many ways, La Vérendrye's accomplishments, especially his courage and determination to make the 2575 kilometre trip by canoe from Montreal to Lake Winnipeg, are remarkable.

Archives of Manitoba, Imperial Oil Collection #8.

The La Vérendrye brothers in sight of western mountains, 1743.

However, the historiographical literature which focuses on his travels and turbulent interactions with Aboriginal peoples is incomplete, for it is marked by a lack of analysis on gender as it intersects with race, and by a tradition of denial and mythology surrounding the French-Canadian slave trade. Unpacking La Vérendrye's involvement in the slave trade, and the ways in which gender and Aboriginal relations characterized his life in the period from 1731 to 1749, the temporal focus of the present study, sheds light on the functioning of early to mid-eighteenth-century French colonial society in Canada. Traditionally, the history of French-regime Canada has been a story about white men, with women, Aboriginal peoples, and blacks cast in a secondary role.[4] In a similar vein to recently published studies, this article will attempt to include more of the peoples of New France within its purview.[5] That being said, it will not delve into larger considerations of religion, nor will it focus on sexuality, violence or the homosocial world of the fur trade in New France. Whereas these subjects have already been explored in some depth, less scholarly attention has been directed to slavery, race and gender as they relate to La Vérendrye, a native of Trois-Rivières, who served in the French army before becoming a fur trader and explorer, had an Anishinaabe wife according to oral tradition, and came to own at least three slaves.

Canadian slavery has long been a neglected area of historical study. In his *Histoire du Canada* (1846), François Garneau promulgated the myth that slavery never existed in New France. He congratulated King Louis XIV and the French colonial clergy for having saved French Canada from this "grand and terrible plague."[6] Following suit, others maintained that there had been no slavery in New

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France, despite the historical evidence of at least 4,000 slaves, two-thirds of whom were Aboriginal. The misconception that Africans first came to the colony as refugees from southern slavery persists in the minds of many Canadians and foreigners alike.[7] While inroads have been made, many still labour under the false assumption that French Canada, because of some combination of climate, limited population and/or Christian morality, opted not to engage in the slave trade. Other works have focused on New France political elites, depicting black slavery as a subsidiary issue within white Canadian life and largely taking Aboriginal slavery for granted as an inevitable consequence of colonization and Aboriginal warfare. This article attempts to illustrate that the idea of slavery has been repressed, couched, and subsumed under the labels of "discovery," "exploration," and "colonization."

With this in mind, a key consideration when reading the letters of La Vérendrye and his contemporaries is the constructed nature of letter writing and reporting. Carolyn Podruchny has suggested that historical analyses must "read beyond the words" and around the overt intentions of the bourgeois class of men writing with the power to disseminate information.[8] It is important to look beyond the biases in these sources, which tend to form assumptions about social hierarchy, gender, and race. Another measure for reading beyond the words of bourgeois male writers is to unpack the meaning in rituals. The trading of slaves was not simply a quaint and sentimental custom. In effect, the ritual exchange of gifts, including slaves, produced and maintained community solidarity in New France. As Podruchny explains, "rituals can create, express, teach, and remind participants of the meanings and values of their community and of their identity."[9] In order to capture the range of relationships that existed in New France in the 1730s and 1740s, I have casted my net as widely as possible in terms of secondary literature and have focused in particular on the works of Carolyn Podruchny and Allan Greer. My analysis attempts to read against the grain in the letters and reports of governmental officials and Church dignitaries in the primary documents on La Vérendrye collected by Lawrence Burpee and Antoine Champagne.

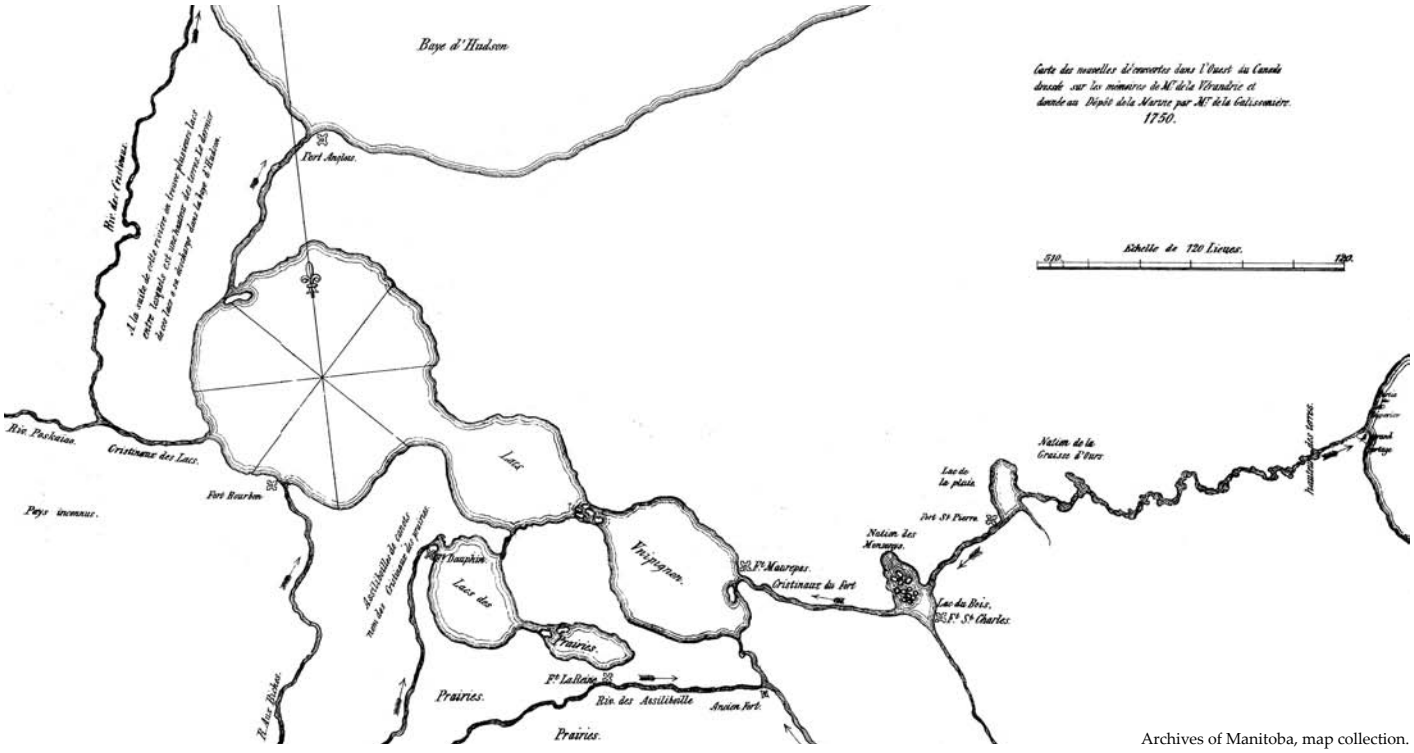
Since the days of Jacques Cartier (1491–1557), explorer after explorer strove to find the route to the Far East, for it was believed that this would greatly shorten trans-Atlantic voyages as well as circumvent Mediterranean trade monopolies, allowing the French to reap tremendous economic benefits. Nebulous at first, the concept of the western sea became more precise by the beginning of the eighteenth-century when the French acquired a clearer picture of the geography of North America.[10] Born in Trois-Rivières on 17 November 1685, La Vérendrye fought with the French in armed struggles between France and England in New England and Newfoundland in 1704 and 1705. In the fall of 1707 he sailed for France to serve in the war of Spanish Succession. Severely wounded by sword and bullet during the battle of Malplaquet, he was left for dead and became a prisoner of war for fifteen months. He returned to New France in 1711 where he was appointed to the rank of lieutenant. In 1712, La Vérendrye married his fiancée Marie-Anne Dandonneau du Sablé and turned to the fur trade, joining a venture with his brother Jacques-René in 1726. La Vérendrye subsequently accepted the second in command position of the Poste du Nord in the Lake Superior region, later becoming Commandant. At this time he began to firmly believe that exploration of Lake Winnipeg and the "great Western river" would ultimately lead to the "discovery" of the Pacific Ocean. In 1727, the slave of an elderly chief named Vieux Crapaud described the land of the Mandan who allegedly knew where the western sea was located.[11] A year later, Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, sieur de La Vérendrye applied to governor Charles de Beauharnois to set out for the West. In 1731, he was authorized by the French Royal Court to travel from Montréal towards Lake Ouinipigon in order to establish trading posts in Western Canada. At the same time, he was to create trade alliances with First Nations, organize the fur trade so that it might compete with the lucrative English system in the Hudson Bay region, and "discover" a route to the Western Sea. In order to finance his expeditions, the Crown gave him a monopoly of the fur trade west of Lake Superior. La Vérendrye's four sons, Jean-Baptiste, Pierre, Francois and Louis-Joseph, along with his nephew, La Jemmeraye, participated in his explorations north of the fortieth parallel and west of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River until his death in 1749.[12]

G. Goldsborough

La Vérendrye guards the east entrance to the Manitoba Legislature in Winnipeg.

The main source on La Vérendrye until the mid-nineteenth century was Louis-Léonard Courville's *Mémoires sur le Canada, depuis 1749 jusqu'à 1760*. La Vérendrye is therein depicted as a man who was motivated by selfish interests and who, lacking education and natural aptitudes, was unsuited for the career of an explorer. The basis for a reassessment was laid by French archivist Pierre Margry who discovered a large quantity of documents concerning La Vérendrye. In 1852, Margry published a short revisionist article, "Les Varennes de La Vérendrye," in *Le Moniteur Universel*. This article, and more particularly the documents which Margry later published, saw La Vérendrye blossom into one of the major figures of the French regime.[13] In the 1960s, a number of authors wrote biographies on La Vérendrye. He is traditionally represented by his two major biographers, Antoine Champagne and N. M. Crouse, as an explorer first and foremost who was misunderstood by the French government at Versailles. Crouse and Champagne reject the thesis that La Vérendrye was mainly preoccupied with the fur trade and discard the doubts in the minds of French officials that he did not care to explore western Canada. Jean-Frédéric Phélyppeaux, Comte de Maurepas, the Minister of Marine in France, continually questioned La Vérendrye's commitment to "exploration" and accused him of placing profit above his duties to the French crown.[14] The governor of New France, Charles, Marquis de Beauharnois, however, was a constant ally of La Vérendrye in his battles with the French Royal Court.

Beauharnois' support of La Vérendrye was perhaps influenced by the profits he earned through the fur and slave trades which Maurepas had advised the colonial officials in New France to trim. According to Brett Rushforth, Beauharnois owned at least eight Fox slaves.[15] In October 1735, Maurepas, angry at the lack of La Vérendrye's progress, went so far as to state that the Western Sea would have been "discovered" long ago had not La Vérendrye's men been more interested in the "sea of beaver."[16] Antoine Champagne blames the negative portrayal of La Vérendrye adopted by Maurepas on the reports he received from jealous fur traders.[17] Overall, Champagne argues that the authorities in Versailles were not adequately grateful to La Vérendrye for the increase in the profitability of the fur trade, the possession of an immense and rich territory for France, his role in opening up the path to the Western Sea, and in having removed "des mains des barbares un bon nombre d'esclaves utiles à la colonie."[18] With unconvincing evidence, Champagne suggests that a more benign form of slavery existed in French Canada; that slaves in New France led a relatively happy life; and that almost all were fond of their masters, who were in turn fond of them.[19] Champagne acknowledges that La Vérendrye was implicated in the institution of slavery, citing for example that La Vérendrye had a slave in his service during the Mandan expedition he presided over in 1738, but simply writes off La Vérendrye's involvement in the slave trade as indicative of a custom of his time.[20] While it is true that in many respects La Vérendrye was simply a Frenchman colluding in a system in which slavery was acceptable, this does not mean that this aspect of his life should be glossed over in the historical record so that his heretofore romanticized legacy can remain a pleasant, unquestioned part of Manitoba's meta-narrative. Similarly, the fact that patriarchy and white



Archives of Manitoba, map collection.

Map of western Canada based on La Verendrye's travels. "Carte des nouvelles découvertes dans l'Ouest du Canada, dressée sur les memoires de Mr. de la Vérandrie et donnée au depot de la Marine par Mr. de la Galissoniére, 1750."

www.ameriquefrancaise.org/media-73/38_timbre_bleu.jpg

In September 1938, a new 5-cent stamp commemorated the bicentenary of La Vérendrye's arrival at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. A nine-day celebration included the unveiling of a monument, a parade and a festival held in Whittier Park. The Winnipeg Canoe Club organized a flotilla of 200 canoes on the Red River.

superiority seem to have prevailed in this period does not mean that we should ignore the racial and gendered perceptions and interactions between Aboriginal people, blacks, and French Canadians.

As of 1731, La Vérendrye and his team of eight came into contact with indigenous peoples of the region with whom they would trade, fight, woo, and seek to ally themselves.[21] As an explorer dependent on Aboriginal guides and geographical information, La Vérendrye's travels are a prime example of the tenuous cooperation between French, almost exclusively white men, and Aboriginal men and women of widely different social classes and statuses.[22] In a letter to Maurepas on 12 May 1742, La Vérendrye brings his reliance on Aboriginal guides to light, stating that "La découverte ne s'est pas faite l'année dernière, faute de guide."[23] French exploration and commerce depended on the cooperation of Aboriginal peoples. They were needed to trap and transport furs, and their help and technical expertise were vital for explorers wishing to travel west.[24] This cooperation also had racial implications often glossed over in accounts of the early French presence in Manitoba.

As La Vérendrye and his fellow "explorers" passed through diverse spaces, they met a wide range of Aboriginal nations who differed dramatically from them in world-view, language, and culture.[25] While earlier generations of historians emphasized the homogenous quality of French Canada, "when we take proper notice of all the people who were not Catholic, not French, or not white, it becomes apparent that New France was, in fact, a multicultural society."[26] The ideology common among European explorers, newly arrived missionaries, and the monarchs who sent them, from the time of Columbus to the end of New France, generally assumed that the Aboriginal "savages" were culturally deficient humans who ought to recognize the "obvious" and assumed value of European tutelage.[27] For instance, Jesuit priest L. F. Nau believed that Aboriginals were incapable of intelligent thought.[28] Similar racist statements were commonplace. New France governor Pierre François de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil, for example, openly opposed interracial marriage, stating that "Bad should never be mixed with good … all the Frenchmen who have married savages have been licentious, lazy and intolerably independent; and their children have been characterized by as great a slothfulness as the savages themselves."[29] It is possible that La Vérendrye was willing to include indigenous people within his categories of reason and humanity. After all, according to oral tradition, he had an Anishinaabe wife.[30] However, the archival records seem to paint a different story. La Vérendrye tells the Marquis de Beauharnois in 1738 that the Assiniboine, his "obedient children," send their respects to their "father."[31] This paternalistic attitude is also evident when he tells the Assiniboine that he wishes "to give them intellect," and informs Beauharnois "I made the same recital to them that I had made to all the others. There was great thankfulness, with many tears and ceremonies, by passing their hands over my head, taking me in your room and place as their father, and our Frenchmen as brothers."[32] That La Vérendrye and his team of explorers subscribed to ideas of white superiority is suggested by their willingness to immediately accept that the Mandan people who purportedly knew where the Western Sea was located were white. When the two Frenchmen that La Vérendrye left with the Mandan to acquire an understanding of their language were told by an Assiniboine chief that a tribe of white men existed among the Mandan, they quickly contacted La Vérendrye and informed him that

> ces gens … étaient blancs comme eux qu'ils avaient de la barbe et priaient le grand Maître de la vie dans les livres, en leur dépeignant … qu'ils chantaient en tenant leurs livres dans de grandes maisons où ils s'assemblaient pour la prière, et qu'il leur nomma souvent les noms de Jésus et de Marie, en leur montrant une croix qu'il avait au col depuis la naissance.[33]

La Vérendrye and his team could easily identify with the description of this alleged white group, for as reported by the Assiniboine chief, "leurs villes et forts sont entourés de bonnes murailles avec de grands fossés remplis d'eau, des ponts-levis, portes de fer et beaux remparts."[34] Moreover, they were told that this white tribe made use of "poudre, canons, fusils, hâches et couteaux," traded with the "sauvages", raised all sorts of animals including lots of horses, worked with cotton and yarn, and wore similar clothing to their own.[35] It seemed logical to La Vérendrye that this "civilized" Mandan tribe, which was presumably Christian in character, had houses, farming technology, and which wore clothing like their own, would hold the answer to the Western Sea.[36] He was thus greatly disappointed when his party reached the Missouri river, and realized that the Mandan village was not white as they had been led to believe by the Assiniboine chief who, it would seem, fooled them so that he might earn goods and profit from their need for guides.

While this example illustrates that considerations of race were prevalent in New France, in some instances clear boundaries did not exist between Aboriginal, black and white people, tied by their land and common community

yet divided into tenuous racial categories. Richard White's concept of "middle ground" as a metaphor for the social space of the broad and shifting border territory between the increasingly European settled east and the distant and still unknown west is applicable, albeit with important limitations, to the rapprochement of French and

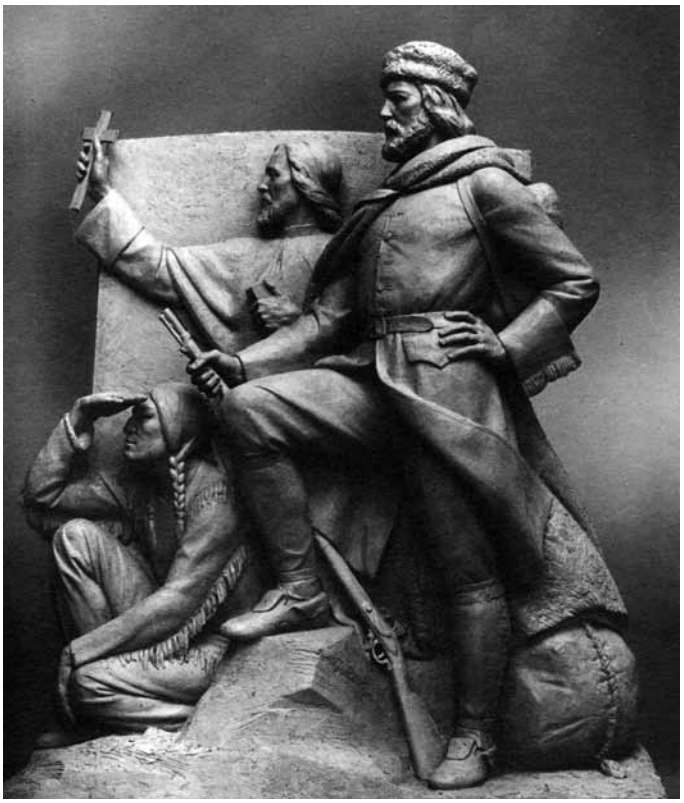
As an explorer dependent on Aboriginal guides and geographical information, La Vérendrye's travels are a prime example of the tenuous cooperation between French, almost exclusively white men, and Aboriginal men and women of widely different social classes and statuses.

Aboriginal individuals in La Vérendrye's world.[37] Through a process of mutual invention, Aboriginal people and French Canadians built up a set of dynamic assumptions reflecting their interests, including the conduct of trade, which slowly assumed the characteristics of a genuine culture. On 7 August 1749, Swedish botanist Peter Kalm (1716–1779) met and dined with La Vérendrye and Governor La Galissonnière in Quebec.[38] Kalm was struck by the elements of Aboriginal culture adopted by French Canadian society:

> Though many nations imitate the French customs, I observed, on the contrary, that the French in Canada in many respects follow the customs of the Indians, with whom they have constant relations … They follow the Indian way of waging war exactly; they mix the same things with tobacco; they make use of the Indian bark boats … they wrap a square of cloth round their feet, instead of stockings, and have adopted many other Indian fashions.[39]

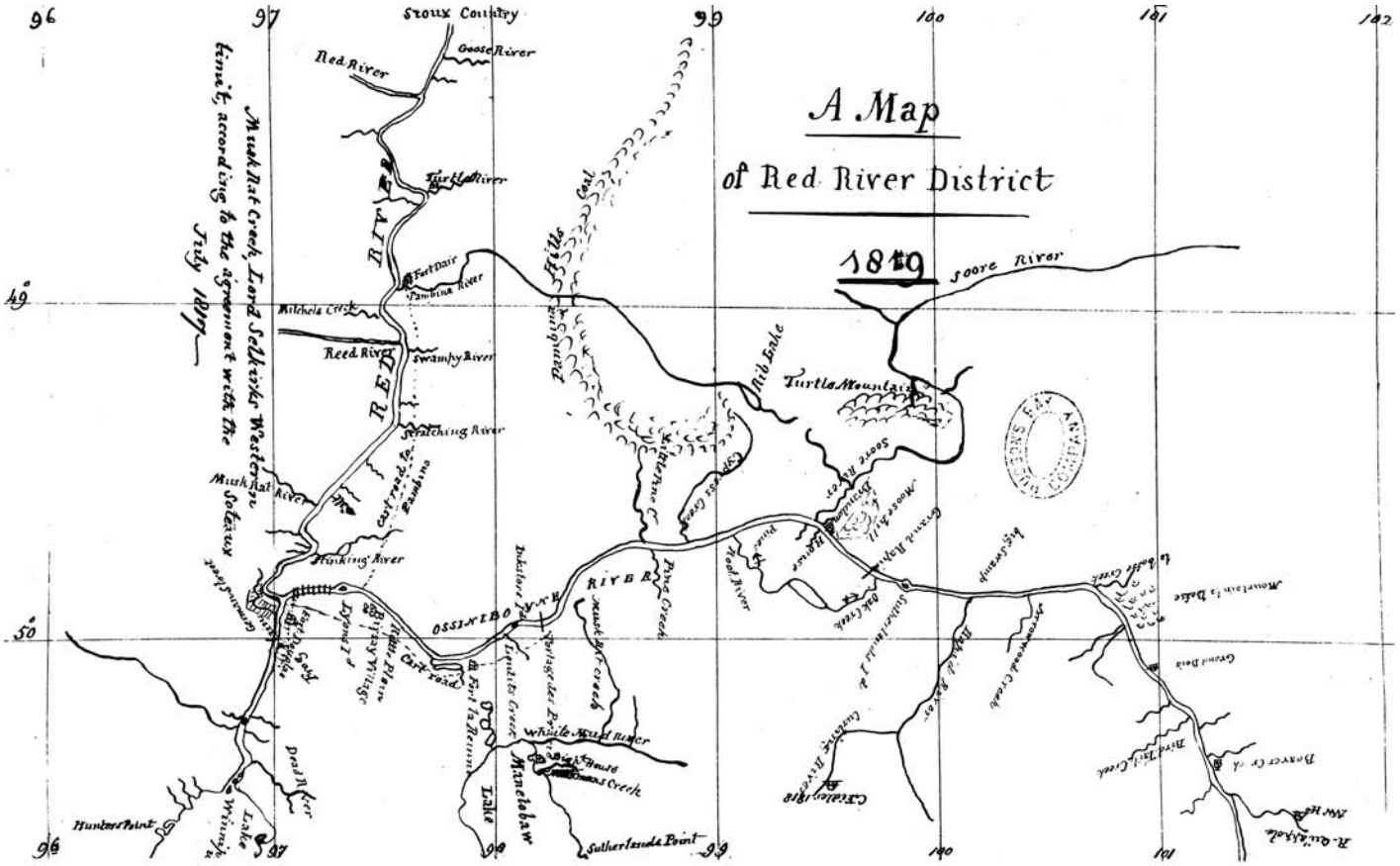
La Vérendrye comments on his willingness to adopt aboriginal customs, and describes his frustration with the Mandan, who in spite of their professed commitment to the French, would not render their services until paid in advance, nor consider it wrong to trade with the French enemy, the English, when they found it to their advantage.[40] For a time, the Aboriginal tradition of gift exchanging worked to cement alliances with the French.[41] In his early years as an explorer, La Vérendrye reports an occasion when he received a slave and a necklace as gifts from the Cree: "In exchange for the slave, I gave a cloak, a shirt, leggings and breeches, a knife and an awl, gun powder and musket balls."[42] To be sure, part of the gift exchanging tradition in New France involved Aboriginal prisoners of war who would become slaves in French-Canadian households.[43]

Allied indigenous peoples, especially the Ottawa and the Illinois, offered captives from their western enemies to French merchants associated with the fur trade as culturally powerful symbols of their emerging partnership, and French officials found that captive exchanges offered one of the most effective means of stabilizing the precarious alliances they forged with indigenous groups.[44] Astute to the cultural dimension of Aboriginal diplomacy which allotted to captives a symbolic power to mitigate effects of warfare and murder, the French strategically worked to forge alliances with indigenous groups who would express their gratitude in the form of violence, fur trading and via captives they could sell as slaves.[45] It should be said that female captives were at an advantage in polygamous societies such as that of the Illinois, where they integrated more smoothly than males.[46] Moreover, captives were not uniquely Aboriginal or black. For instance, in his journal, Antoine Bonnefoy, describes how he was attacked and enslaved by Cherokee Indians from 1741–1742. As he explains, four Frenchmen, himself included, and one black man in his party "fumes saisis par chacun un des ces sauvages qui nous fit son esclave. Mis à terre, nous fûmes attachés séparément par chacun un collier d'esclave gênés par le col et les bras seulement, sans cependant nous ôter la liberté pour manger et pagayer, lorsqu'il nous a été ordonné de faire dans la suite."[47] In this case, men with different colour skin met the same fate at the hands of Cherokee aggressors.



Archives of Manitoba, Historic Sites – La Verendrye St. Bonfiace #1.

Istas Invenit Terras Easque Humanitati et Fidei Aperuit. A sculpture of La Vérendrye unveiled on Taché Avenue during bicentenary celebrations in 1938 featured this Latin inscription meaning "he discovered these lands and opened them to humanity and the faith."



Archives of Manitoba, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B.22/e/1 fo. 1d, N4149.

Peter Fidler's map of the Red River district in 1819 resembled the landscape that La Vérendrye would have seen 80 years earlier.

Racial considerations did, however, play a factor in the way in which men and women were perceived and treated in French Canada. The categories "male" and "female" were well defined in French Canada and in Aboriginal societies, where work, diplomacy, social organization, and family arrangements were divided along gender lines. That being said, ideas about the status of women and the range of power within gender categories differed between French Canadians and Aboriginal peoples.[48] French Canadian women and the men who wrote of their "superiority," inhabited an early modern world in which it was assumed that women, because of their nature, needed to be governed by men. As in France, French Canada was structured around patriarchy, where men ruled women, especially within the institution of the family. For women, more than men, the marital relationship was of critical importance. By European standards, virtually everyone outside the clergy married, and widows and widowers remarried soon after the deaths of their spouses, so that to be an adult woman was, in the overwhelming majority of cases, to be a wife.[49] French Canadian marital mergers did not, however, require a woman to completely subsume her economic identity under her husband's name. Instead, couples such as Pierre de La Vérendrye and Marie-Anne du Sablé formed a two-person "marital community" or communauté de biens.[50] La Vérendrye's Anishinaabe wife from the Winnipeg area was severely slighted by his marriage to Marie-Anne. According to oral tradition, she tried to poison Marie-Anne du Sablé when she accompanied him out West.[51] This marriage, while common knowledge in the Aboriginal communities of Manitoba, has not been legally recognized or even acknowledged in the historical record. Marriage contracts under French Canadian civil law normally required the signatures of both husband and wife. Although this might appear quite egalitarian, the Custom of Paris stated unequivocally that "the husband is master of the community."[52] When Marie-Anne du Sablé signed her marriage contract, the notary surely recorded that she did so with the permission of her husband. The communauté de biens therefore conferred on women equal property rights but not equal marital powers.

Despite their subordination to their husbands, by the early eighteenth century men's absences owing to involvement in warfare, exploration efforts and the fur trade generally gave women in New France more power and greater economic opportunities than they had in Europe. White women in early French Canada also enjoyed access to superior education and roles in leadership and commerce. They were perhaps better educated than their male counterparts, as the mother's responsibility for the education of young children may have encouraged a larger proportion of women to develop their reading skills.[53]

Marie-Anne likely spent time educating her and Pierre de La Vérendrye's four sons and two daughters. French Canadian women also made an incalculable contribution to the early Canadian economy, although it remains difficult to gauge that contribution. Colonial records make it possible to estimate the production of commodities like wheat and furs handled mainly by French men, the amount of butter, wool, or eggs produced by women in New France is unknown.[54] The overall lack of documentation on women's economic contributions reflects the subsidiary way in which they tended to be viewed.

In addition to their own responsibilities, women often contributed directly to their husband's enterprises. La Vérendrye was confident in his wife's abilities to take charge of his affairs during his absences. On multiple occasions, he signed documents giving her power to collect his salary or to manage supplies.[55] According to one expert, before her death in August 1740, Marie-Anne alone took care of La Vérendrye's business affairs, acting as both lawyer and buyer throughout her husband's travels.[56] La Vérendrye repeatedly refers to his wife as attorney and procurator during his long absences, bolstering the contention that the family, rather than the individual, was the main economic actor during the centuries when France ruled Canada.[57] In Greer's words, "The family was a team, albeit with unequal members."[58] Among women, noble and religious women such as Marie-Anne had the most power in New France, while slave women, two thirds of whom were Aboriginal and one-third of whom were black, were the most subjugated. Despite this hierarchy among women, all were subject to men.

Several cursory comments and tidbits in La Vérendrye's letters and correspondence during his encounters with Aboriginal women, many of whom did not marry, hint at the gendered experience in New France. La Vérendrye expresses his surprise that Cree women have the responsibility of carrying male belongings, and that Mandan women are relegated to the same status as slaves and dogs carrying all the supplies while, as far as La Vérendrye can see, "the men only carry their weapons."[59] His constructed notion of what women's work ought to be is again challenged when he recounts his surprise when travelling with the Assiniboine in search of the Mandan nation that "I had all that I wished to carry at that time in a leather bag, which one of our guides' women carried for me."[60] French fur traders, explorers and colonial officers were often shocked by how hard Aboriginal women worked, and sometimes assumed that Aboriginal women were treated as "beasts of burden," forced to do hard labour by Aboriginal men.[61] Describing the Mandan, La Vérendrye notes that "Both men and women of this nation are very laborious."[62] Europeans seem to have cast Aboriginal women as "squaw drudges" to signify Aboriginal savagery and thus help to justify colonization.[63] To all intents and purposes, the "squaw drudge" stereotype reflected the discomfort of French Canadian men with Aboriginal women whose work—e.g. moccasin making, preparing hides, and supplementing diets with fish and small game—seemed to overlap with what they believed to be the male domain. European observers "failed to comprehend the full range of women's economic roles, the extent to which Aboriginal women managed and directed their own activities, and perhaps most importantly, the extent to which women held ownership and distribution rights to things they produced and processed."[64] Like French Canadian men and women, Aboriginal men and women had clearly defined gender roles. However, they did not live in a system of omnipresent patriarchy.

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Women's economic roles and political status within Aboriginal communities are subjects of great debate. Scholars agree that not all Aboriginal societies were egalitarian before contact, and that degrees of equality could vary.[65] However, they all recognize that contact with European traders, missionaries, and settlers led to or intensified the subordination of women. Indeed, in some of their earliest missionary efforts in Canada the Jesuits, notably La Vérendrye's contemporary Père Aulneau, did their best to enforce patriarchal norms, encouraging Aboriginal men to beat their children, humiliate "rebellious" wives, and to dominate their families.[66] In this way, "Canada served an especially important function in early modern Jesuit thought."[67] To Jesuits, Canada was a land of opportunity for the development of self and Christian society. As one letter explains, "When the French of Canada first entered these fur countries, every summer a priest came to instruct the traders and their men in their religious duties, and preach to them and the [Aboriginals]."[68] The Michililmakinac mission registry mentions the baptism of two slaves—Marie-Madeleine and Joseph—who belonged to the La Vérendrye family.[69] Early attempts to re-engineer Aboriginal society met with limited success, however, and missionaries did not succeed in altering the gender norms of some Aboriginal nations, including the Iroquois.

The Iroquois gender regime stands in basic contrast with the French one. Women shouldered the burdens of the domestic economy, but they also enjoyed control over their households, particularly over food. Moreover, because descent was uniquely traced through the female line, only women could bestow the names that men needed when they were elevated to chieftain status. This gave them an influential voice in the selection of chiefs.[70] The declaration of Jesuit missionary and writer Joseph-François Lafitau (1681–1746) serves as a testament to the power of Aboriginal women of the Iroquois community of Kahnawakké:

> Nothing…is more real than this superiority of women. It is of them that the nation really consists… All real authority is vested in them. The land, the fields, and their harvests all belong to them. They are the souls of the Councils, the arbiters of peace and war. They have charge of the public treasury. To them are given the slaves…The children are their domain, and it is through their blood that the order of succession is transmitted. The men, on the other hand, are entirely isolated.[71]

While the paucity of sources on Aboriginal women, and women in New France in general, has traditionally limited scholars, this example is a testament to the prominent role that Aboriginal women occupied in their communities. In the last few decades Aboriginal women's voices have been amplified though the work of feminist historians such as Sylvia Van Kirk whose *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670–1870* describes how Aboriginal women became integral to European traders as marriage partners

Archives of Manitoba, Events 197-198, N10384-5.

La Vérendryes were here. In early 1913, a lead tablet was discovered on the banks of the Missouri River near Pierre, South Dakota. Its Latin inscriptions read on front: "In the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Louis XV, in the name of the King, our thrice illustrious Sovereign, and for Monsieur the Marquis de Beauharnois, Peter Walter de Laverendrye placed (this tablet) 1741" and hand-carved in the back: "Deposited by the Chevalier de la Verandrye, Witnesses, St. Louis de la Londette, A. Miotte, March 30, 1743" (*Manitoba Free Press*, 12 April 1913).

because of their country skills and trading connections.[72] Problematically, Aboriginal voices are still subsumed in texts that "reclaim" race and gender in early Canada. Their role is rarely conceived of through oral and/or material history, but rather through colonial office records and surviving trader diaries and letters. Even fainter than the voices of Aboriginal women and their male counterparts, however, are those of the slaves that toiled in New France. That slavery, the ultimate relationship of subordination, existed in New France is clear, and La Vérendrye's implication in this institution must be addressed and acknowledged.

La Vérendrye's letters and reports point to his acceptance of slavery and interaction with slaves on a regular basis. When travelling with the Assiniboine in search of the Mandan nation, he wrote that "everything useful for my personal needs was carried by my servant and my slave."[73] Moreover, in 1738, he listed those travelling with him, stating that "Notre petite bande était composée de vingt français, M. Lamarque, son frère, deux de mes enfants, mon domestique, un esclave, quatre sauvages avec leurs femmes, nous nous rendîmes aux Mantannes."[74] He also stated that his cousin, Sr. de la Jemeraye, purchased three children and took them to Montréal.[75] Equally pertinent is the dispatch of 26 May 1742, to Beauharnois wherein Father Claude-Godefroy Coquart reported that a war party of Cree and Assiniboine had recently routed the Sioux of the prairies in a four-day battle, killed seventy men besides women and children, and captured such a large number of slaves that they made a line four arpents long.[76] When reporting this to Maurepas on 24 September 1742, Beauharnois explained that "this will not be good for La Vérendrye's affairs for he will have more slaves than bundles of fur."[77] In light of this evidence, Yves Zoltvany and Marcel Trudel, an acknowledged authority on slavery in New France, have adamantly asserted that La Vérendrye gathered and sold a substantial number of Aboriginal slaves. They cite the explorer's memoir of 1744 to Maurepas, in which he states that the colony had benefited from his western activities in three chief ways: "the great number of people my enterprise provides with a living, the slaves it procures to the colony and the pelts which had previously gone to the English," as telling of his activity in the slave trade.[78]

However, the leading expert on La Vérendrye, Antoine Champagne, passionately refutes this, asserting that Yves Zoltvany "ne connaît ici comme preuve que son imagination passionnée…Tout cet alinéa sent l'ignorance du sujet et le fantasme."[79] Champagne's denial of La Vérendrye's complicity in the slave trade does not stand up to critical examination.

In his 1960 foundational study of Aboriginal and African slavery in early Canada, Marcel Trudel makes a case for the La Vérendrye as one of only three names which occupy a singular importance for the slave trade. Trudel is very critical of the reaction of utter shock at the thought of Canadian slavery. In his words,

> Dès que nous abordons ce sujet de l'esclavage, on s'écrie: 'Comment! De l'esclavage au Canada?' Il faut sans cesse recommencer le même exposé: nous avons eu près de 4,000 esclaves, ces esclaves (dont 2 sur 3 étaient des sauvages) ont appartenu à des Canadiens de toutes les classes sociales, on en a fait un commerce pleinement reconnu par les lois…De cette page de notre histoire, le souvenir s'est bien rapidement perdu.[80]

The records show that slaves belonged to Canadians of different social classes and that the religious community to which slaves were donated by figures such as La Vérendrye, was involved in the trade. Trudel contends that La Vérendrye possessed at least three slaves, presents data which confirms that his sons had at least six, and that Louis-Joseph La Vérendrye gave a slave to the Jesuit mission of Michillimakinac as a gift in 1749.[81] Although the number of total slaves owned by La Vérendrye and his family seems relatively small, we can deduce based on his alliance with the Assiniboine – "ces grands rabatteurs d'esclaves" – and his declaration about the number of slaves his enterprises procured to the colony, that he helped to fuel the slave trade.[82] In addition, Trudel's research suggests that La Vérendrye purchased a black slave from the widow of Philibert in 1748.[83] Thus, even women owned slaves. In fact, a family relation to the La Vérendryes, Marie-Marguerite, the founder of the Grey Nuns, owned three or four of the forty-three slaves that belonged to the clergy and religious communities of New France.[84]

The agency of Aboriginal as well as black slave women varied. When read against the grain, one of La Vérendrye's letters highlights that Aboriginal slave women found openings to exercise a degree of action despite their status as property. La Vérendrye describes the attack on Sieur René Bourassa by a group of Sioux. He explains that Bourasssa was tied up and left to be burned when he was saved by the supplications of his "esclave siouse" who he had always treated well and had saved from death.[85] Although La Vérendrye's explanation of Bourassa's escape gives credence to Bourassa for his kindness to his slave woman and depicts this as the fundamental reason for his escape, it is clear that his slave, oftentimes in a situation which prohibited individually motivated actions, made a choice to save him from a painful death.

In Montréal, relatively close to La Vérendrye's home in Trois Rivières, a woman by the name of Marie-Joseph Angélique, disadvantaged by her gender, race, and social position resisted her status as a black slave. She fled her owner several times and possibly set fire to Old Montréal on Saturday, 10 April 1734, a charge for which she was ultimately hung for treason.[86] These examples of the agency of slave women are exceptions to the rule. Nonetheless, they are important for they confirm that such acts did occur, and provide us with a glimpse into the degree to which slaves resisted their oppression and discrimination. Although Marie-Joseph Angélique's complicity in setting fire to Old Montreal was largely acknowledged as fact, reflecting their racial and gender biases, the Superior Council of New France claimed that a mere "négresse" could not have committed such an audacious act entirely on her own.[87] The relationships of early Canadian slavery were thus founded upon an underlying brutality and important gender and racial demarcations that come to the surface in the historical record. Another form of brutality, the brutality of war during the 1730s and 1740s, underscores how precarious and tenuous the "middle ground" could be in French-Algonquian relations.

Numerous instances of violence and interracial murder marked the landscape of New France. Particularly bloody were the murders of Jesuit Missionary Father Aulneau and of La Vérendrye's son Jean-Baptiste by a group of Sioux in June 1736 when a war party at Lake of the Woods killed twenty-two members of La Vérendrye's party.[88] In his report on this tragedy, La Vérendrye conveys his deep sadness, and comments on how the loss of a son affected one mother he saw at the site of the tragedy: "Il n'y a eu que la calice, qu'une femme avait jeté à la rivière parce que son enfant était mort."[89] At the time, many believed that the Sioux wanted to wreak revenge on La Vérendrye's son because he had allied himself two years earlier with the Cristinaux to fight the Sioux.[90] Thus, revenge was an integral motivating force for indigenous groups seeking retribution and La Vérendrye experienced this first hand. While he befriended tribes for economic purposes, and reaped benefits through wars among them, he was deeply dismayed by his failure to maintain peace in the region. In his words, "l'on ne pourra de longtemps pacifier toutes ces nations ayant de mortels ennemis de tout temps."[91] Karl Marx's assertion that men and women "make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please" certainly applies to the New France in which violence, slavery, racial discrimination, and patriarchy existed.[92]

With his death in 1749, La Vérendrye's expedition to "locate" the western sea came to an end. His legacy is felt in many ways, not the least of which is his role as the first European to establish a trading post at the site of what is now Winnipeg, the vibrant capital of the province of Manitoba. La Vérendrye is traditionally judged to be of irreproachable character and presented as the embodiment of all that was finest in early French Canada. According to one biographer writing in 1927, "In the years since La Vérendrye's death there has been full chance for learning if any degree of unworthiness marked his nature. Nothing to his discredit has come to light."[93] Ignoring the turbulent interactions La Vérendrye shared with indigenous populations and the tensions between him and French government officials over his true motivations, Irene Moore believes that his "graces of mind and person and the vastness of his performance earned for this well-nigh incomparable voyageur to the last syllable of recorded time the love and remembrance of the dwellers in this country of his birth and the lands of his discovering."[94] Based on these types of accounts, the master narrative has long hailed La Vérendrye as a bold, heroic

symbol of the early French presence in North America. If we are to restore some sort of balance to the historiography pertaining to this eighteenth-century explorer, however, we need to look closely at his implication in the slave trade and at the gendered and racialized contexts in which he operated.

As this article has emphasized, non-Catholic, non-white elements formed an indispensable and influential part of French Canadian colonial society and culture. In a general sense, men ruled in New France. Indeed, outside Iroquois and other indigenous enclaves, where Aboriginal women did not submit to male authority, a basic early modern patriarchy prevailed. In Canada at the time, however, the basic principle of patriarchy left room for all sorts of complexity, diversity, and contradiction in the real-world relations of men and women, especially when men like La Vérendrye were absent for lengthy periods of time. That being said, New France was far from an egalitarian society. Slavery was institutionalized there just as it was across Amerindia. Finally, as evidenced by La Vérendrye's experiences, French-Canadians were thrust into a situation where it was vital that they cooperate and negotiate an often precarious, ever-changing middle ground with Aboriginals. The first inhabitants of Canada thus had an important, enduring presence in New France as they continue to do so throughout Canada today. ☙

Notes

1. Thank you to the following individuals for their insightful feedback during the early stages of this project: Adele Perry, Brittany Luby, Carolyn Podruchny, Paul Lovejoy, and Tom Peace. I have put the term discovery in quotes in order to highlight that land was discovered and trade routes were established long before La Vérendrye's arrival. Histories which suggest otherwise need to be studied, but not replicated. The terms encounter and colonized are more accurate terms than discovery. I would like to acknowledge the need to deconstruct terms such as "discovery" and "explorer," which constitute part of the ideology run by entrepreneurs, merchants, and proto-capitalists under the auspices of the church, military, and colonial government's stated aims of noble enterprise that are extremely problematic in and of themselves.
2. Irene Moore lists two pages worth of Verendryean Memorials alone in *Valiant La Vérendrye*. Quebec: King's Printer, 1927. A number of Verendryean sites, tributes and images can be found on the Encyclopédie du patrimoine culturel de l'Amérique française website under "La Vérendrye d'hier à aujourd'hui" and "documents complémentaires."
3. *Programme of the bi-centennial celebration of the arrival of Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, Winnipeg and St. Boniface, September 3rd to 11th, 1938.* Winnipeg: S.N., 1938, pp. 23, 26.
4. For the purposes of this paper, black and white are considered to be adjectives insensitive to the differences between groups and national identities. They are therefore un-capitalized.
5. See, for example, Allan Greer, *The People of New France*, ed. Craig Heron and Franca Iacovetta. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998 and Robin Winks, *The Blacks in Canada* 2nd ed. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997. Not everyone we consider white today was perceived as white in New France at this time. There were significant divisions amongst Greeks, Jews, Finns, etc., not to mention the big divide between English speaking whites and French speaking whites in the same terrain.
6. Marcel Trudel, *L'esclavage au Canada français: histoire et conditions de l'esclavage*. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1960, pp. 331-333.
7. See Maureen G. Elgersman, *Unyielding Spirits: Black Women and Slavery in Early Canada and Jamaica*. New York: Garland, 1999, xi, and Brett Rushforth, "A Little Flesh We Offer You: The Origins of Indian Slavery in New France," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 2003 vol. 60, no. 4,
8. Carolyn Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World: Travelers and Traders in the North American Fur Trade*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006, p. 7.
9. *Ibid*, p. 54.
10. Yves F. Zoltvany, "Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye, Pierre," In *Dictionnaire biographique du Canada*, vol. III. Sainte-Foy: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1974, p. 266.
11. *Ibid*, p. 267. Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de La Vérendrye and his Sons With Correspondence Between the Governors of Canada and the French Court, Touching the Search for the Western Sea*, ed. Lawrence J. Burpee. Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1927, "Report of La Vérendrye (1730), p. 50. Also see Donatien Frémont, *Les aborigenès du Nord-Ouest canadien au temps de La Vérendrye*. Ottawa: Société Royale du Canada, 1949, p. 15.
12. For a fuller, more detailed overview of La Vérendrye's life and expeditions, see Nellis M. Crouse, *La Vérendrye: Fur Trader and Explorer*. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1956; Antoine Champagne, *Les La Vérendrye et le poste de l'Ouest*. Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1968; and Martin Kavanaugh, *La Vérendrye: His Life and Times: a Biography and a Social Study of a Folklore Figure, Soldier, Fur Trader, and Explorer*. Brandon: Martin Kavanaugh, 1967.
13. Zoltvany, "Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye, Pierre," pp. 272-273.
14. See, for example, Archives Nationales de Paris, Col., B, vol. 58, fol. 411.
15. Brett Rushforth in "A Little Flesh We Offer You: The Origins of Indian Slavery in New France," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 4 October 2003, p. 53.
16. Crouse, *La Vérendrye*, p. 98. See La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters*, "Maurepas to Beauharnois, April 22, 1737", pp. 269-271. Although suspected of being more prone to fur trading and the "sea of beaver" than exploring, La Vérendrye died a poor man. His sons sold part of their property in Eastern Canada in order to pay off the debt incurred by their father. Moore, *Valiant La Vérendrye*, pp. 126-127.
17. *Fonds Antoine Champagne* 10/56, Société historique de Saint-Boniface.
18. Champagne, *Les La Vérendrye et le poste de l'Ouest*, p. 312.
19. *Ibid*, p. 358. While the Creole populations in early French Canada are unique, their experience of slavery is analogous to that of other groups across Amerindia, a topic that needs to be further examined. During this period, all populations of people were small and slavery in New France should not be seen as peripheral.
20. *Ibid*, pp. 358-359.
21. Greer, *The People of New France*, pp. 120-121.
22. Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 51. As White explains, until the 1730s, relatively few French women ever came out West.
23. *Fonds Antoine Champagne* 10/81/39, Société historique de Saint-Boniface.
24. Conrad E. Heidenreich, "French Exploration out of the St. Lawrence Valley," In Germaine Warkentin and Carolyn Podruchny eds. *Decentring the Renaissance*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001, p. 249.
25. Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World*, p. 302.
26. Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 76.
27. *Ibid*.

28. White, *The Middle Ground*, p. 69.
29. *Ibid*, p. 70.
30. Brittany Luby, interview with Karlee Sapoznik, 7 May, 2008.
31. Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye, *North-Western Explorations: Journal of La Vérendrye in the forms of a letter, from the 20th of July, 1738, date of my departure from Michilimakinak, to May, 1739, sent to the Marquis de Beauharnois, Comander of the Military Order of St. Louis, Governor and Lieutenant Governor of whole of New France and country of Louisiana*. Canadiana House, 1967, p. 2.
32. *Ibid*, pp. 3, 5.
33. La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters*, p. 369.
34. *Ibid*.
35. *Ibid*, pp. 369-370.
36. Georges Dugas, *The Canadian West: Its Discovery by the Sieur de la Vérendrye; Its Development by the Fur-Trading Companies, Down to the Year 1822*. Montréal: Librairie Beauchemin, 1905, pp. 57-58. Dugas argues that "civilization" made Aboriginals more exacting. Also see La Vérendrye, *North-Western Explorations*, p. 6.
37. See White, *The Middle Ground*, pp. 50-93. Also see the limitations to White's concept of a middle ground presented by Brett Rushforth in "A Little Flesh We Offer You: The Origins of Indian Slavery in New France," October 2003, and Germaine Warkentin's piece, "Discovering Radisson: A Renaissance Adventurer between Two Worlds," in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native American History*, eds. Jennifer S. H. Brown and Elizabeth Vibert. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1996, p. 48.
38. La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters*, 27. Also see Champagne, *Les La Vérendrye et le poste de l'Ouest*, 296. La Galissonnière wrote a letter to Maurepas on 23 October, 1747 defending La Vérendrye. See AN, Col., C11E, vol. 16, pp. 300-301.
39. Peter Kalm, *Peter Kalm's Travels in North America*, trans. Adolph Benson, New York: Dover, 1937. Quoted in Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 84.
40. Burpee, *Journals and Letters*, "Report of La Vérendrye [October 31, 1744], pp. 454-455, and Frémont, *Les aborigenès du Nord-Ouest canadien au temps de La Vérendrye*, pp. 15, 18.
41. Rushforth, "A Little Flesh We Offer You," p. 59.
42. Denis Combet, *À la recherche de la mer de l'Ouest: Mémoires choisis de La Vérendrye*. Winnipeg: Great Plains Publications, 2001, p. 57.
43. Brett Rushforth, "Slavery, the Fox Wars, and the Limits of Alliance," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 2006, vol. 63, no. 1, p. 8.
44. *Ibid*, 27. In provoking the depletion of resources, the fur trade increased rivalry and wars between Aboriginal groups. See André Champagne, *L'histoire du régime français*, (Québec: Éditions du Septentrion et Société Radio-Canada, 1996, p. 90.
45. *Ibid*, pp. 14, 34.
46. Rushforth, "A Little Flesh We Offer You," p. 12.
47. Antoine Bonnefoy, *Fonds Antoine Champagne* 10/87/1-2, Société historique de Saint-Boniface.
48. Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World*, p. 249.
49. Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 64.
50. *Ibid*, p. 69.
51. Luby, Interview, 7 May, 2008.
52. Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 70.
53. *Ibid*, p. 67.
54. *Ibid*.
55. See for instance, *Fonds Antoine Champagne*, 10/79/24 and 10/80/22 "Procuration de M. de La Vérendrye à son épouse, 11 juin 1735" as well as 10/79/30-31, Société historique de Saint-Boniface.
56. Combet, *À la recherche de la mer de l'Ouest*, p. 117.
57. Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 68.
58. *Ibid*.
59. Combet, *À la recherche de la mer de l'Ouest*, 63 and 105. Also see La Vérendrye, *North-Western Explorations*, p. 6.
60. *Ibid*, p. 103.
61. Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World*, p. 251.
62. La Vérendrye, *North-Western Explorations*, p. 10.
63. Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World*, p. 251.
64. *Ibid*. Produchny has taken this idea from Priscilla Buffalohead.
65. *Ibid*, p. 250.
66. Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 63.
67. Peter A. Goddard, "Canada in Seventeenth-Century Jesuit Thought," in *Decentring the Renaissance*, eds. Germaine Warkentin and Carolyn Podruchny. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001, pp. 197-198.
68. See David Thompson, *Fonds Antoine Champagne* 10/40, Société historique de Saint-Boniface.
69. Mgr. Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes* (Montréal, 1887), III, p. 606.
70. Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 62.
71. Joseph F. Lafitau, *Mœurs des sauvages américains comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*. Paris, 1724. Quoted in *The People of New France*, p. 62.
72. Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670-1870.* Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer Publishing, 1980.
73. Combet, *À la recherche de la mer de l'Ouest*, p. 103.
74. La Vérendrye, *North-Western Explorations*, 5. Also see *Fonds Antoine Champagne* 10/87/30, Société historique de Saint-Boniface.
75. *Ibid*, 10/79/42-43.
76. Zoltvany, "Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye, Pierre", 6. An *arpent* is roughly equivalent to an acre, or one third of a hectare. See La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters*, "Beauharnois to Maurepas, September 24, 1742," pp. 380-382.
77. *Ibid*. Also see Combet, *À la recherche de la mer de l'Ouest*, p. 129.
78. See Marcel Trudel, *L'esclavage au Canada français: histoire et conditions de l'esclavage*. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1960, pp. 72, 333. Zoltvany, "Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye, Pierre", 8; La Vérendrye, Journals and Letters, "Report of La Vérendrye [October 31, 1744], pp. 451-452.
79. *Fonds Antoine Champagne* 10/43, Société historique de Saint-Boniface.
80. Trudel, *L'esclavage au Canada français*, p. 333.
81. *Ibid*, p. 145.
82. *Ibid*.
83. *Ibid*, p.121.
84. *Ibid*, pp. 154-156.
85. Champagne, *Les La Vérendrye et le poste de l'Ouest*, 181. See La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters*, "Beauharnois to Maurepas, October 14, 1736," p. 212.
86. See Afua Cooper's *The Hanging of Angélique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montreal*. Toronto: Harper Collins Ltd., 2006.
87. *Ibid*, p. 88.
88. Crouse, *La Vérendrye*, pp. 107-108. See La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters*, "Affair of the murder of twenty-one voyageurs at the Lake of the Woods, in the month of June 1736," pp. 262-266.
89. *Fonds Antoine Champagne* 10/89/14, Société historique de Saint-Boniface.
90. *Ibid*, 10/80/30.
91. *Ibid*, 10/97/32.
92. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. New York, 1963, p. 15.
93. Moore, *Valiant La Vérendrye*, p. 13.
94. *Ibid*, p. 131.

Commemorating Thomas Alexander Crerar (1876–1975)

by Parks Canada
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Thomas Alexander Crerar is a Canadian of national historic significance for several reasons. He served as an influential architect of the Canadian grain trade before 1930. He also led the Progressive Party and transformed Canadian politics by bringing an end to the federal two-party system and demonstrating the potential of third parties. Finally, he became a valued member of the federal cabinet and a vocal leader of the Senate.

Crerar grew up in Manitoba at a time when Prairie farmers were forming marketing organizations to counter

Parks Canada

The Crerar plaque unveiling ceremony was held in Russell, Manitoba on 9 October 2009 during the community's Beef and Barley Festival. Attending were (L-R): Dr. Robert O'Kell, Manitoba member of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada; Inky Mark, MP for Dauphin-Swan River-Marquette; Kelly Crerar, great great nephew; Robert Muir, RM of Russell Reeve; Frieda Klippenstein, Parks Canada historian; Merril Kilwinik, Town of Russell Mayor; and Jack Crerar, grand nephew.

University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections, Winnipeg Tribune Collection.

Thomas Alexander Crerar (1876–1975) was born in Ontario but, at the age of 5, he moved with his parents to a homestead near Russell, Manitoba. In addition to his interests in the grain industry and his political activities, Crerar served as President of the Canadian Club of Winnipeg from 1928 to 1929, and a Director of the Great-West Life Assurance Company from 1928 to 1964. He was the first politician made a Companion of the Order of Canada, and was inducted into the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Manitoba (1954) and the Centennial Medal of Honour (1970) by the Manitoba Historical Society.

the power of grain dealers, millers and railways. From 1907 to 1929 he was head of the farmer-owned Grain Growers' Grain Company (after 1917 the United Grain Growers) which he developed into an influential prairie grain company. In the 1920s he helped to organize co-operative grain marketing organizations or pools. Although he supported co-operative marketing, he was unsympathetic to compulsory, or government operated, marketing systems.

During the First World War, Crerar joined Robert Borden's Union Government as Minister of Agriculture. After the war he and other western Members of Parliament formed the Progressive Party as a voice for rural and western concerns. The Party won 65 seats in the federal election of 1921 and for several years it held the balance of power in parliament. However, it could not reconcile the goals of its moderate wing, led by Crerar, who hoped to realign parties on the basis of the tariff, with its radical wing which wished to replace the party system with representation based on occupational categories. By 1929 the Party had collapsed and Crerar joined the Liberal government. Although the Progressive Party was short-lived it undermined the two party concept in Canada and demonstrated the potential of regionally based third parties.

Crerar's administrative abilities made him a valued member of Mackenzie King's cabinet from 1935 to 1945 although he was uncomfortable with deficit financing introduced in 1938. In 1944, he joined other senior ministers in forcing Mackenzie King to introduce conscription. He resigned from the cabinet in 1945 and was appointed to the Senate, where until his retirement in 1966, he opposed the growth of public debt and social programs.

Plaque Text

Thomas Alexander Crerar
(1876–1975)

Following his early career as an agrarian reformist in Russell, T. A. Crerar achieved prominence through his contributions to national economic development and politics. As head of the Grain Growers' Grain Company, he helped shape the structure of Canadian grain marketing. Championing a better deal for Western farmers, he led the Progressive movement to a position of great political influence in the 1921 election, thus ending the federal two-party system. He later proved a valued member of Prime Minister Mackenzie King's cabinets (1929–1930 and 1935–1945) and an active leader of the Senate before retiring in 1966.

Approved by the Board, 7 December 2008

Thomas Alexander Crerar
(1876–1975)

Après une carrière de réformateur agraire à Russell, T. A. Crerar s'illustra par son apport à l'économie et à la politique canadiennes. À la tête de la Grain Growers' Grain Company, il contribua à établir une structure nationale de commercialisation des céréales. Lors de l'élection de 1921, ce champion d'un meilleur traitement pour les agriculteurs de l'Ouest mena le Mouvement progressiste à une position de grande influence, mettant fin au système fédéral bipartite. Éminent ministre au sein des cabinets de Mackenzie King (1929–1930 et 1935–1945), puis leader actif au Sénat, Crerar se retira de la politique en 1966.

Approuvé par la Commission le 7 décembre 2008

Gazette

A Conversation with Winnipeg's Chinese Canadian Duet

by Alison R. Marshall
Department of Religion, Brandon University

Dr. Joseph Du is the President of the Winnipeg Chinese Cultural and Community Centre and the Honourable Philip S. Lee, Patron of the Manitoba Historical Society, is his former First Vice-President. For decades, the two men have been the leading force of the Chinese-Canadian community in Winnipeg. Both have been named to the Order of Manitoba for meritorious public service. Dr. Marshall spoke with them following Mr. Lee's installation as the 24th Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba in August. Editors.

On 22 September 2009, I had the pleasure of interviewing the Honourable Mr. Philip Lee and Dr. Joseph Du at Winnipeg's Manitoba Club. As 2009 is the centary of Winnipeg's Chinatown, it seemed appropriate to ask them about the circumstances under which they immigrated to Canada, met, and began to work together. I was also interested to know how His Honour became acquainted with Mr. Charlie Au Foo (1894–1980), a leader of the Winnipeg Chinese community for over five decades.

What is your date of birth and where were you born?

Lee: I was born on 5 May 1944 at the end of World War Two in Hong Kong.

What were the circumstances under which your family came to live in Hong Kong?

Lee: Well, my father Mr. Sam Lee was orphaned at the age of ten. Our family was from Sunwoi Township, thirty miles away from Taishan. My father went to become a houseboy for a scholar, who was a private tutor. He worked for him for four years and while there he also received a traditional Chinese education. After that, he went to Hong Kong where he went to work for Wing On Company. It was a department store but the owner also owned banks. My father became totally integrated into the business, becoming a salesperson at the front counter and eventually the top salesperson. Within two to three years, at the age of twenty, he was so well-liked that he was promoted to be supervisor of the Draperies and Fabric Departments. Sam was very articulate in Chinese and many of the ladies who were his customers came to the store to buy fine jewellery. Over time he came to buy jewellery from these clients. He was the middle man in this new venture.

My father was not a spender and, making the wages of five employees and being a single person, he saved a lot putting away seventy cents of every dollar he made. Therefore, he accumulated a large amount of savings. Having been away from China since he was ten years old, he was eventually summoned back to China by his grandmother to get married. He took a leave of absence and returned from Hong Kong.

Before I was born my father began to amass condominiums and apartments and gradually entered the import-export business. Throughout his life, however, he remained loyal to his first boss Mr. Kwok of Wing On.

The Honourable Philip S. Lee, C.M., O.M., 24th Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba

Philip Lee came to Canada to further his education at the University of Manitoba. He then began a career as a research chemist with the City of Winnipeg, working in the area of water research, supply, and quality. He retired as Branch Head Chemist in charge of the city's Industrial Waste Control Program.

He has been active in the Chinese-Canadian community, playing a key role in organizing its pavilion in the first Folklorama, and being a driving force behind the construction of the Dynasty Building, Chinese Gate and Garden, and Mandarin Building in downtown Winnipeg. He served as Vice President of the Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg, a member of the Multiculturalism Council of Canada, and was a board member of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the Alumni Association of the University of Manitoba. He also served on the Human Rights Council of Manitoba, the Refugee Assistance Committee, and chaired the Policy Review Committee for Human Rights.

He has received the City of Winnipeg Community Service Award and the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal. He is Chancellor of the Order of Manitoba, and a member of the Order of Canada.

Philip S. Lee

Charlie Foo (centre) and Philip Lee (right) present a plaque of appreciation from the Chinese-Canadian community to Winnipeg Police Chief Norm Stewart, circa 1972.

Even until the day he died he was loyal to him as a mentor and became a millionaire himself.

I am the ninth member in the family. I had a special relationship with my father that developed out of our shared love of stories and history. Being at work from nine o'clock in the morning to six o'clock each day, he would return home too late to hear the radio show broadcast each evening from five o'clock to six o'clock. One particular radio show would hire a story-teller named Mr. Wing Fong who would select and then retell an account from Chinese history, such as the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), for one hour, with an intermission. This show had many listeners. I remember my father saying to me "Why don't you listen to the broadcast and tell me about it afterward." I became a second-hand storyteller. I would say to him, "Today they talked about the Three Kingdoms (220–265 CE)." And then I would recite the details to him almost verbatim. Through the telling and retelling of historical tales, our relationship became the closest in the family.

When I was in secondary school, my father at the age of fifty-five became ill with tuberculosis and almost died. At the time I was already a Catholic having been to a Jesuit school. I asked him to consider becoming one too when I learned of his illness. I recall him snapping his fingers and saying with enthusiasm, "Yes! Ask your priest at school and see how I can become a Catholic." They arranged to send a teacher to my house to give my father and mother Catechism classes during the school's off hours. My Buddhist mom and dad threw away the urns and incense and became Catholics, and were baptized within two months. And suddenly in my house there were four Catholics instead of just me and my brother. By some miracle, he got better and healthy again, dying from something else five years later. This gave me another five years to spend time with him.

What were the circumstances under which you came to Canada and Winnipeg?

Lee: In 1962 when I finished matriculation in Hong Kong, my sister was working in the Department of Education and doing post-graduate courses in Winnipeg where she was married in 1960. Two years after that she felt lonely and said to me "Why don't you come over to join me in Canada. Your matriculation would be recognized here." So I sent her the transcripts and she connected me with the University of Manitoba admissions department and then before I knew it I was admitted to first-year studies. I came to Winnipeg in August 1962, just a month before school started. In those days only sixty students were at the University from China, two of whom were women. If I needed a date, I would have had to wait for thirty days. Being Catholic, St. Paul's College wanted me to join them, and complete my degree from there. I would have to do three courses at St. Paul's and then two courses at the University proper. If I was affiliated with the University of Manitoba the reverse would be true. In the end I decided not to become a St. Paul's student because doing so would have required that I take two Religious Studies courses with no credit. I took three courses at the University —physics, chemistry, German—and then took English and math at St. Paul's. That

Dr. Hermann Lee

Philip Lee reviews military personnel attending his installation as Lieutenant-Governor at the Legislature on 4 August 2009.

year I spent more time at St. Paul's, however, and became close to Father Discoe, S.J., my Chaplin, and served at his mass. I also found that some professors at St. Paul's were very diligent (that's not to say that others at University of Manitoba were not). Dr. Giesinger taught chemistry and was a fine scholar who also tutored me in physics and math, and I respected him for that. So during my second year I changed my focus. I took chemistry at St. Paul's instead. Under him I did very well. He guided my progress as a student, monitoring me and stopping to answer questions during a lecture if these were asked. In most classes, you were on your own if you missed class. With Dr. Giesinger, if you missed class either another student could give you detailed notes, or he would give you his own notes. In that way, I finished my first degree.

By the time I finished my degree, I had started dating Anita who was living in Hong Kong. We decided I should come back to Hong Kong where we would get married (which was in March 1968) and use my first degree to be eligible to write the exam to become a lawyer. So my business plan was to become a lawyer. My mother was living with me then. I was selling investment bonds. There were riots, things escalated, and there was a persistent rumour that the British would return Hong Kong to China. It was hard to live under that kind of shadow and political instability. Life was nice and vibrant in Hong Kong but we chose to leave and come to Canada and Manitoba where my sister lived.

As a result, my plan to become a lawyer had to change, and once in Manitoba I looked for a job here in the field of chemistry. In those days, there was the Metropolis of Greater Winnipeg that controlled the superstructure and they put an advertisement in the newspaper for a chemist. I sent a letter applying for that job and a week later I was delighted to receive a phone call inviting me to interview for the position. I met with the head chemist who told me that my English was very good and asked why. I told him that I had been trained in Hong Kong by nuns and Jesuits. The interview went well and he said I would hear from him within a week; but I waited and waited and nothing happened. Impetuous, I called the research engineer and he told me that his boss had just been tardy and that I would eventually receive a letter offering me the job, which I did shortly after the conversation. I came to work in the area of water research and limnology studies for the city.

What were the circumstances under which you came to Canada and Winnipeg?

Du: I was born in Laokay, Vietnam in 1933, and was the youngest of eleven children. In 1954, when the Geneva Conference resulted in Vietnam being divided into North and South, the government tried to evacuate the students. As a result, I became among the first of many who chose to leave the country to study in Taiwan. My initial few months in Taiwan were very scary. I cried and was so lonely and what was worse was that I could only speak Vietnamese and

Winnipeg's Chinatown: A Century in the Making

2009 marks the centennial year of Winnipeg's Chinatown. In a recent issue of the *Manitoba Chinese Tribune*, Tina Chen explained the significance of key moments within the history of Winnipeg's Chinatown and its remarkable importance today:

> One of the most recognizable features of today's Winnipeg Chinatown is the gate over King Street. Similar to other Chinatowns, building of the gate in 1986 signalled a renewed investment in and recognition of the vitality and importance of Chinatown to the City of Winnipeg and of Chinese residents to the multicultural mosaic of the city. The revitalization of Winnipeg Chinatown since the 1980s can be seen in the construction of the Dynasty building, housing complex, and Mandarin building, alongside the establishment of organizations including the Winnipeg Chinese Cultural and Community Centre and the Chinatown Development Corporation. Building upon the diversity, talents, and needs of established and more recent Chinese immigrants to Winnipeg, as well as Canadians of ethnic Chinese heritage, today's Winnipeg Chinatown continues to be a recognizable area of Chinese stores, restaurants, residences, meeting places.
>
> Winnipeg Chinatown is rooted in a century of history that has seen many different groups of Chinese come to Winnipeg under a range of circumstances and from many different areas of Asia with substantial Chinese populations. Some entered Canada during the era of the discriminatory Head Tax and Chinese Exclusion Act legislation, as refugees from Indochina, as professionals recruited to Winnipeg in the 1960s and in recent years, and others in search of new life opportunities in Canada. The 100-year history of Winnipeg Chinatown is the history of these individuals, their businesses and social organizations, and the ways in which community ties have been forged and maintained within the Chinese community, as well as between the Chinese and non-Chinese communities of Winnipeg.[1]

Cantonese. While many others dropped out of the medical program in which I had enrolled, I persisted, relying on my dictionary and studying for long hours in the library. By 1961 I had graduated from Taiwan's national medical school, and now had to choose a country in which to get accreditation. I chose Canada, first coming to Regina and later to Winnipeg where I met my wife Jeanine and became a paediatrician practicing until my retirement in 2002.

How did you meet Mr. Charlie Foo and Dr. Du?

Lee: My sister introduced me to Charlie Foo when I arrived in the community the second time around 1969. Mr. Foo was the most senior Chinese Canadian in Winnipeg, well-connected to government departments and officials. But he spoke broken English and was concerned that he would have no successor who could continue his work. He said to me "You are the person I need because you can speak both English and Chinese." Then as time passed he proceeded to introduce me as the community's future spokesperson." Shortly after that I met Joe Du. Together we worked as a team in the Manitoba Chinese Fellowship. It was a group established by different families and the meetings took place in homes and restaurants.

The first event in which we were involved was the 1970 Manitoba Centennial celebrations that the students celebrated with performances in Chinatown. So by 1970, we had joined forces to organize this event. There were gatherings, and flea markets around Hudson's Bay on Portage Avenue. We called upon eight different groups to put on displays. It was a successful event that people liked and in which many took part. The city's ethnic leaders had decided to choose a week in August and call it Folklorama as part of the Centennial Celebration for Manitoba**.** We would do it on the street, along King Street and Pacific Avenue for one block. On the south side of Alexander Avenue we rolled out a carpet for the performers.

Du: "It would have been a real mess if it had rained. But it didn't."

Lee: Joe Du was the doctor for my daughter. And being a well-known doctor in both Chinese and non-Chinese communities, the Manitoba Chinese Fellowship grew through his network of friends and patients. And so we expanded the role of the Fellowship. We became good friends with the Secretary of State. We learned how to deal with ethnic and government programs to promote culture. Since then I have become his first Lieutenant. We reached out to the non-Chinese community and in doing so became the envy of other communities in the country.

What did it mean to be Chinese Canadian when you arrived?

Lee: The brother of Mrs. Winnie Chan who was born in Winnipeg was trained in Winnipeg as a physician but he

Archives of Manitoba, Chinese Historical Society Collection, P7072, 8/3.

A Lion Dance. Members of Winnipeg's Chinese-Canadian community perform in Chinatown, 1949.

In 2001, Edgar Wickberg (1927–2008) proposed a framework for understanding Chinatowns that began to emerge throughout North America during the late 19th and early 20th Century. He noted in particular that Chinatowns, though places where Chinese born settlers could live and work, were "extensions of China," where customs were preserved through the organization and hosting of traditional events. To outsiders, Chinatowns were seen to be both "exotic" and "sinful."[2]

The earliest Chinese Canadians were mostly men who came in the late 1850s to mine for gold in the Fraser River Valley, and after that to swing picks to build Canadian Pacific Railway lines and or to cook for its gangs. Once the lines were completed in 1885, Chinese moved east and began to settle on the Canadian prairies and were naturally attracted to Winnipeg. Others, including Winnipeg's earliest Chinese residents Charley Yam, Fung Quong, and an unnamed woman came from the United States in 1877. The story of their arrival was front-page news in the 19 November 1877 issue of the *Manitoba Daily Free Press*:

> … This trio of Celestials have been in America for some time—one of them six years and they can speak the English language in a fractured manner, although they discount any Winnipegger in talking Chinese. They come here to enter into the washee clothes business for which there appears to be an excellent opening for "the honourable members for China." Hoop-la![3]

In 1879, there were not only Chinese laundries but also Groceries and Tobacco shops on Main Street.[4] By the 1901 Census, Manitoba had a Chinese population

had to go to Ireland to practice medicine. That wouldn't happen today.

Du: In those days, it was still hard for us to get our families over to Canada. In 1947 there was the repeal of the *Chinese Immigration Act*. But it was still a long time before immigration policy opened up.

What does it mean to be Chinese Canadian now?

Lee: In 2009, Chinese Canadians are considered to be a dominant visible minority group.

Du: Our children don't feel discrimination.

Lee: There are no barriers in terms of job opportunities.

Could you tell me a story about Dr. Du that captures your relationship?

Lee: Dr. Du specialized in paediatrics and was one of the few doctors who did that in the city. Everyone with a young child needed such a specialist for general check-ups, immunization or pneumonia. Dr. Du joined the Manitoba Chinese Fellowship and his practice grew quickly. He became the most popular doctor at the Winnipeg Clinic. Through new clients and new friends, the Chinese community benefitted.

So together we made things happen in Chinatown. People considered us a "working twin." Whatever he said, I supported it. Whatever I said, he supported it. People found it difficult to find a crack in our relationship. And that became very beneficial to both our partnership and to the vision we had for Chinatown.

Archives of Manitoba, Chinese Historical Society Fonds, P7071, #116.

Charlie Foo (left) and Steve Juba inspect a commemorative plate for the twinning of Winnipeg and Taichung, Taiwan in 1971.

Could you tell me a story about Mr. Charlie Foo that captures your relationship?

Lee: Charlie Foo was the leader of the Chinese Community long before my time. He was close to Mayor Stephen Juba,

of just 206—all male—in contrast to the 14,885 male and female Chinese people who lived in British Columbia.[5] At this time, Winnipeg had Chinese owned and operated laundries, groceries, restaurants, rooming houses and apartments that radiated out from a core area at King Street and Alexander Street, and extended to northern and southern borders defined by Logan and Rupert Avenue, and western and eastern ones defined by Princess and Main Street.[6] The number of Chinese businesses continued to grow in this area, eventually coalescing in 1909 as Chinatown.[7] In Winnipeg's Chinatown, you could find traditional foods, as well as medicines, porcelain vases, silk and other Chinese items. The heart of the new Chinatown at 259 King Street was the location of the Chinese Freemasons who opened a Winnipeg branch in late 1910, and hosted Sun Yatsen's visit to the city in 1911. Large hand-written signs in Chinese were posted on Chinatown storefront windows along King Street to announce news and events to the Chinese community.[8] ☙

Notes

1. Tina Chen, *Manitoba China Tribune*, June 2009.
2. Edgar Wickberg, *"Vancouver Chinatown: The First Hundred Years."*A presentation at the workshop "The Vancouver Chinatown: Past, Present, and Future" held at the Institute of Asian Research, UBC, 21 April 2001.
3. *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, Monday 19 November 1877, p. 1.
4. Alexander Begg and Walter Nursey. *Ten Years in Winnipeg: A Narration of Principal Events in the History of the City of Winnipeg from the Year AD 1870 to the Year 1879 Inclusive.* Winnipeg: Winnipeg Times Printing & Publishing House, 1879.
5. For this number I have relied on the table in Harry Con, et al., *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited in association with the Multiculturalism Directorate, Department of the Secretary of State and the Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Supply and Services Canada, 1982, p. 301. See also "Table XII – Nationalities," in *Census of Canada*, 1901, Vol. I. Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1902, p. 406. Note that the data here combines Chinese and Japanese population figures.
6. Lovell's *Classified Business Directory*. Manitoba Northwest Gazeteer, 1901, p. 846.
7. Paul Yee, *Chinatown: An Illustrated History of the Chinese Communities of Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax*. James Lorimer & Company, 2005, p. 67. Kwong and Baureiss note that it was the increasing number of Chinese grocery stores that finally created the core area known as "Chinatown" in 1909 at King and Alexander. Julia Kwong and Gunter Baureiss, *The History of the Chinese Community of Winnipeg*. Winnipeg: The Chinese Community Committee, September 1979.
8. Joseph E. Wilder, *Read All About It: Reminiscences of an Immigrant Newsboy*. Fred C. Dawkins and Micheline C. Brodeur, eds. Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers Limited, 1978, p. 56.

Dr. Joseph H. N. Du, C.M., O.M.

Joseph N. H. Du has been a successful pediatrician for over thirty-five years, serving the people of Winnipeg and northern Manitoba. An active member of the Chinese-Canadian community, he arranged a donation of pandas for a six-month exhibition at the Assiniboine Park Zoo in 1989. He chaired the 50th anniversary celebration for the repealing of the Chinese Exclusive Act in 1947. He was instrumental in having a sculpture by Leo Mol, commemorating Chinese workers on the Canadian Pacific Railway, unveiled in 1998. An ardent advocate of multiculturalism, he is active in refugee and immigrant assistance agencies such as the Manitoba Joint Refugee Coordinating Committee and the Canadian Foundation for Refugees. He became a Member of the Order of Canada in 1985 and a member of the Order of Manitoba in 2003.

a Ukrainian Canadian who served as this city's mayor from 1957 to 1977 and who had crowned Mr. Foo as the Mayor of Chinatown. If someone employed in restaurants or in other Chinatown businesses had a problem, Charlie would become their big brother and help out using his English skills and connections to government. In those days having those skills was a huge plus. He was a daring person. Hung Lee of the Shanghai restaurant was also a big supporter. With his wealth, he would help Mr. Foo with whatever project or event he tried to organize and support him. Hung Lee treated Charlie as his mentor. There was a man named Mr. Shi, as well, who was a scholar and had good knowledge of Chinese literature and history; but he spoke very little English. While Mr. Shi could do things to help in the background and network in the Chinese community, he could not communicate with the non-Chinese community. That's where I fit in. Charlie Foo said to me: "Now I have someone who can do both." And then I discovered Joseph Du. He was a good liaison with the community outside Chinatown and was powerful within it. There were those who wanted to fracture our union. They tried and could not.

As some of my research on Chinese prairie history examines food ideas and customs, I thought I would conclude the interview by asking you about some of your favourite foods?

Lee: I love ordinary sandwiches. We go back to China for authentic dishes. Shark fin, Abalone. These are high quality items you don't have every day. It takes a well-trained chef to prepare these foods. Joe and I enjoy eating these foods together when we go. We look for friends to take us to the good places. Joe likes the same food. ☙

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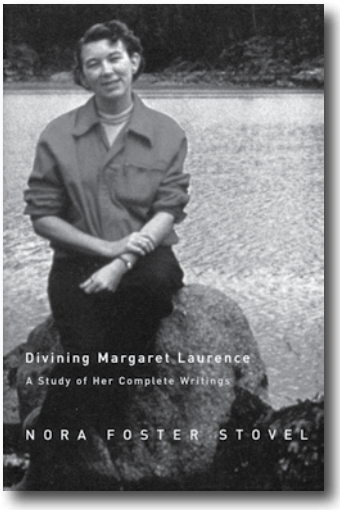
Reviews

Nora Foster Stovel, *Divining Margaret Laurence: A Study of Her Complete Writings*
Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008, 432 pages.
ISBN 978-0-77353-437-7, $29.95 (paper)



Margaret Laurence is best known and most admired for her five Manawaka novels. Her readers may be unaware that her first book, *A Tree for Poverty*, was a collection of Somali poems and folk tales she had translated while living with her husband in Somalia. It was published in 1954 in Nairobi. Her last book, *Dance on the Earth: A Memoir*, was published in 1989.

Laurence's three decades of writing have given scholars a vast field for research and analysis. No study has been as comprehensive as Nora Foster Stovel's recent *Divining Margaret Laurence*. Stovel addresses not only the Manawaka cycle but Laurence's entire oeuvre: juvenile writing, poems, African stories and translations, essays and travel writing, memoir, children's stories and even her unfinished novel. She draws extensively on what other critics have written as she attempts to show how Laurence's various works reflect or prefigure each other and how they illustrate the author's expanding sympathies and artistic development.

In Somalia, Stovel writes, Laurence "[c]learly...learned much about language and metaphor, characterization and dramatization from translating Somali folk literature, both poetry and prose, that enhanced her own writing, both African and Canadian" (106).

Thematically too the African and Canadian writings are linked, Stovel argues. The female protagonists in the Manawaka novels must free themselves from patriarchy, pride and fear, and must acquire self-knowledge and identity. These themes are foreshadowed in the author's African writings, where she portrayed the darker side of colonialism of which she said bluntly, "I'm against it."

Stovel notes the influence on Laurence of French psychologist Olivier Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* (1950) which according to Laurence "...opened up to me an understanding of some of my own feelings and experiences in east and west Africa, and in the end, perhaps, taught me as much about my own land and the terrible injustices and outrages committed by imperialism against *our* native peoples..." (8). Her empathy for 'our native peoples' is abundantly evident in the Manawaka novels, as is her insistence on self-determination for women. Stovel shows how Laurence's later writings reveal that her sympathies grew to include the welfare of planet earth.

Though in most of Laurence's African fiction the protagonists were male, her sympathy was with the women. This is strongly evidenced in her non-fiction writing where she tackled such topics as female genital mutilation, child prostitution and oppression of 'the other.' Stovel notes that, "her sympathy with the plight of African women translated into her portrayal of the self-empowerment of Canadian women in her Manawaka cycle" (152). She undergirds this assertion by quoting Barbara Pell, a Laurence scholar from Trinity Western University: "Laurence's Canadian heroines were born in Africa" (152).

The chapters on the five Manawaka novels may be the most attractive section of this book to non-academic readers. Stovel's discussion of the autobiographical nature of these stories adds little that is new: Margaret Laurence admits to basing Manawaka on the town of Neepawa where she grew up, and which she left, like her protagonists. The stern grandfather and the Scots Presbyterian morals she knew found their way into her fiction.

In claiming archetypal stature for Hagar, the 'holy terror' of *The Stone Angel*, or commenting on Laurence's recurring images of birds, horses and flight, or interpreting Vanessa's and Morag's stories as "portraits of the artist," Stovel is not so much shedding new light as summarizing the accumulated wisdom offered by a variety of scholars and critics, whom she rarely challenges.

Stovel notes the ways Laurence employed memory in developing her novels structurally. In *The Stone Angel,* Hagar's memories provide backstory to her final adventure. Morag's "memory bank" sequences are a postmodern plot device employed to reveal the protagonist's artistic progress in *The Diviners.* And in *A Bird in the House,* the adult Vanessa's memory sheds light on the thinking and character of the child Vanessa as she relates to an Aboriginal friend, rebels against her strict grandfather or finds a role model in a favourite aunt.

The chapter on *The Diviners* with its focus on the editing process will be of special interest to writers, who may be surprised to learn that the original typed manuscript contained nearly 700 pages, and that the American Knopf editor requested more than 100 excisions! Stovel quotes from Margaret Laurence's notes defending these passages, and for the most part seconds the defense, pointing out what is lost in the edits. In most cases Laurence bowed to the editor.

Stovel also links Laurence's little-known, largely-ignored, and sometimes out-of-print children's books

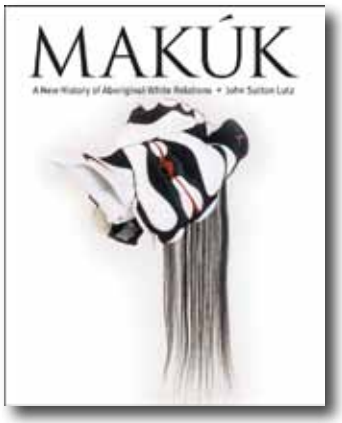
with her adult novels. The plot and theme of *Jason's Quest,* for instance, parallel the physical journeys that take the Manawaka women away from home (usually west) and also their spiritual search for freedom and self-realization. *The Olden Days Coat* reflects *The Diviners* in its focus on time, specifically the continuity of past, present and future. It further demonstrates the fuller understanding of the past that all the Manawaka protagonists acquire over time and through life's hard knocks. Stovel further points out the progression in the children's books from patriarchy in *Jason's Quest* (as in her African stories) to matriarchy in *The Olden Days Coat* (as in the Manawaka cycle).

For biographical details of the author's life, Stovel refers frequently to James King's *The Life of Margaret Laurence.* Laurence's posthumously-published *Dance on the Earth: A Memoir*, she notes, is less forthcoming than King's work and has left readers unsatisfied. The title of the memoir was intended as the title of a new novel Laurence started but set aside to write the memoir. Notes for the unfinished novel became available when Laurence's archived papers at McMaster University were released in 1997. With access to this material, Stovel could include in her book a discussion of the unfinished manuscript and inform her readers that the image of the dance, which now concludes her memoir, was originally intended as the conclusion of the novel (282).

This book succeeds in gathering together between its covers pretty well everything Margaret Laurence has written and essentially everything critics have said about her writing. A notable achievement. With its chapter notes, full list of books cited, and a detailed index, this volume will be appreciated and welcomed most by scholars. But lay readers should not hesitate to read it too. They will likely find themselves wanting to reread their favourite Laurence novel and then sample the less familiar writings of this Canadian icon.

Sarah Klassen
Winnipeg

John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations*
Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008, 431 pages.
ISBN 978-0-77481-140-8, $34.95 (paper)



Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations is an important book that strikes deep at the heart of one of British Columbia's most enduring and loaded historical and historiographical assumptions. The concept of the "lazy Indian," John Sutton Lutz argues, is a pervasive cultural and colonial construct that has worked to erase Aboriginal people, both rhetorically and in practice, from the arena of paid work in this province. With fresh sources and an innovative interpretive eye, Lutz demonstrates that Aboriginal people were active participants in the capitalist wage economy well into the 20th century. Aboriginal presence in the paid work force did not signal assimilation. They could not fully dictate the terms of their participation, and in a tragic twist of colonial fate Aboriginal people contributed, through their wage labour, to their own displacement. Mamook, or "work for pay" (p. 4), was subsumed to Aboriginal priorities and prerogatives and functioned as an "adjunct" to existing subsistence and prestige economies (p. 83). It was not until the 1950s, when the confluence of (re)settlement, industrialization, mechanization, and intersecting policy and legal restrictions combined to severely circumscribe Aboriginal economic opportunities, that relief and welfare were injected into this "mixed-mode" hybrid (p. 23). As with wage work, Aboriginal people incorporated state assistance into their own cultural, political, social, and economic systems. By the 1970s, however, welfare was one, if not the single, dominant feature of what Lutz terms "moditional" (at once traditional and modern) Aboriginal economies in British Columbia (p. 281). The "white problem," Lutz argues, not "lazy Indians," was to blame (p. 233).

This argument presents a long overdue rebuttal to Robin Fisher's lingering assertion that Aboriginal people were ushered into irrelevance with the 1858 gold rush and subsequent (re)settlement of British Columbia.[1] Drawing on an impressive and wide-ranging evidentiary base, both qualitative and quantitative, Lutz also expands on Rolf Knight's suggestive, if somewhat speculative, *Indians at Work*.[2] Lutz's analysis is more than additive, however. Beyond illustrating Aboriginal work for pay, Lutz has something important to say about the nature of Canadian, and more specifically British Columbian, colonialism. The contested question of wage labour, Lutz argues, lies at the core of the colonial project and the Canadian model of "peaceable subordination" (p. 8). There are places, though, where he overstates the degree of self-awareness with which settlers invoked the "lazy Indian" paradigm as justification for colonial dispossession, e.g.: "Europeans had to call 'Indians' lazy in order to legitimate the occupation of their land" (p. 47). As Lutz's own nuanced discussion of racialization reveals, colonialism lives and breathes as much in the taken-for-granted everyday as the machinations of formal strategy.

In some ways, *Makúk*'s structure lends insight into such dynamics, while in others it detracts from them. Lutz characterizes his text as an "expanded ethnohistory," with dialogue as its "overarching methodology" (p. 16). He employs Chinook jargon, that liminal "middle ground" idiom, as an effective hook throughout. The chapter title, "Pomo Wawa: The Other Jargon," gesturing towards his theoretical influences, is especially evocative. *Makúk* moves through several "levels of magnification" and layers of analysis (p. 11). The microhistories of the Lekwungen, whose territory is located in the core of what became the capital city of Victoria, and the Tsilhqot'in, located in the (not coincidentally) more remote inner reaches of what became British Columbia, function as effective counterpoints and help establish the texture of local life in the contact zone. The former welcomed opportunities for paid work early and enthusiastically, while the latter rejected them, and settlers and (re)settlement, with force. That the Lekwungen and the Tsilhqot'in, with their widely divergent engagement with wage work, faced similarly dire economic prospects by the mid to late 20th century demonstrates the pervasiveness of the "white problem" and the power of the "peaceable subordination" tool kit.

As Lutz pans out to the broader regional and national levels, we lose some of the dynamism he aims to capture with his "telescopic" structure (p. 11). Through discussion of competing tensions between the Department of Indian Affairs and fisheries and gaming offices, Lutz usefully demonstrates our inability to speak of "the state" as any single or stable entity. And he offers ample and convincing evidence of Aboriginal participation in the wage economy (although he focuses predominantly on the northwest coast, a function, he acknowledges, of extant sources). In parsing Aboriginal action and state strategy out into separate chapters, however, he diminishes the complexity of the discursive process of Aboriginal-settler interaction. The "new history of Aboriginal-white relations" signaled in his subtitle is, thus, subdued. Also absent is an explicit engagement with class as a category of analysis. And while we hear about male and female workers (a critical balance, to be sure), gender is less central.

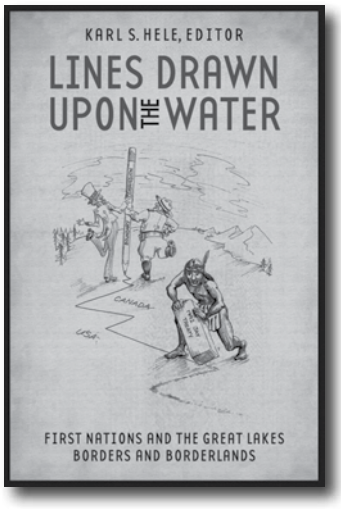
While *Makúk*'s dialogic framework may not be entirely satisfying to those familiar with the politics and poetics of intercultural encounter, it stands to reach new and important audiences. The book's expanded format, which includes maps, photographs, and excerpts from primary sources, will likely attract students and a broader non-academic readership. Lutz's focus is British Columbia, but his treatment of "moditional" economies, "peaceable subordination," and the "white problem" has much broader relevance. As he argues passionately, we are still living with the stereotype of the "lazy Indian" and its very real, very harmful implications. It is only through meaningful and engaged dialogue that Aboriginal and settler societies in Canada can move forward, together, in a good way.

Chelsea Horton
University of British Columbia

1. Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890.* (2nd edition, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992).
2. Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1978).

Karl S. Hele (editor), *Lines Drawn Upon the Water: First Nations and the Great Lakes Borders and Borderlands*

Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008, 378 pages.
ISBN 978-1-55458-004-0, $85.00 (paper)



Unlike the borderlands between the United States and Mexico (the Spanish Borderlands), comparatively little scholarly interest has been paid to the Canadian-American borderlands. Americans have had a long fascination with Mexico—the exotic, the other, the dangerous, the object of American expansionism (the US gobbled up thousands of miles of formerly Mexican territory in the 19th century) and, more recently, the source of covert immigrants. Canadians, for their part, have been more insular, more interested in nation-building (existing more in spite of its geography than because of it), and in how it has escaped becoming part of the American union. That the Canadian-American borderlands have been a blind spot in nationalist historiographies is the result of all this cultural and historic baggage.

History is not found, but certainly constructed. Borderlands are constructions, and contested constructions at that. People on both sides use boundaries tactically. In North America, Aboriginal peoples, while retaining a strong sense of their own identities, used the boundary tactically. Examples can be drawn from all over the Canadian-American borderlands: Sitting Bull and his Sioux followers fled the United States after the Little Bighorn for southern Saskatchewan to evade the US Army; Gwich'in people from Forty Mile, Yukon, moved *en masse* to Eagle, Alaska, in the early 20th century because the latter had a hospital; Iroquois reserves made the front page of national

newspapers at the end of the century as hotbeds of cigarette "smuggling," using provisions in the Jay Treaty to refute the authority of the border.

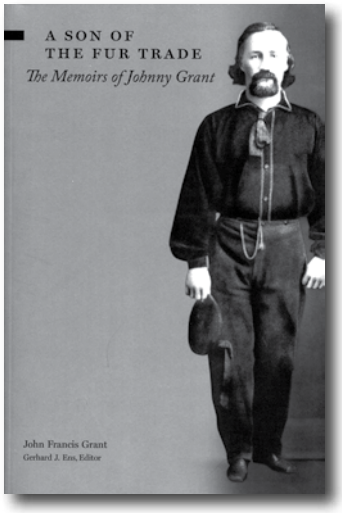
Western boundary studies have been appearing over the past decade. Aboriginal peoples as players in the colonial struggles in the East have burgeoned, but companion pieces from the Eastern borderlands are much rarer. This book is a welcome start. *Lines Drawn upon the Water* collects papers from twelve mostly emerging scholars from an emerging field. The essays examine the impact of the Canadian-American border on individuals and communities, highlighting efforts of the Canadian and American governments to enforce the boundary while Aboriginal peoples steadfastly defended their interests and contested the artificial divisions imposed by the boundary.

This is an interesting and eclectic collection of papers about the lived experiences of individuals and communities in the Great Lakes borderlands. Mark Meuwese writes about the Flemish Bastard, a Mohawk leader who mediated between the Mohawks and the French, Dutch and English in the 17th century. Phil Bellfy looks at Anishinabeg who lived on both sides of the boundary and who signed treaties with both American and British officials. Catherine Murton Stoehr shows how the participation of Anishinabeg in colonial conflicts south of the Great Lakes ultimately contributed to their decision to embrace Methodism. In doing so, she also effectively demonstrates how such transboundary histories are unrecognized and untold in nationalist historiographies. Karl Hele, in mapping out the persistence of Aboriginal cross-border movement in the Sault Ste. Marie area, nonetheless shows how the Canadian and American governments used policy, legislation, mineral leases and timber licenses to turn this borderland into bordered land. Other contributions take a broader view of borderlands -- exploring metaphysical and epistemological borderlands, the boundaries between concepts and intellectual space, and the space where law, politics, gender and race intersect. At times, the link between these essays and the borderlands becomes a little tenuous. The two papers on the Baldoon community (which are certainly important both intellectually and topically) examine events that occurred near the line, but which had little to do with it. The essays are weighted rather heavily toward the Canadian side of the border. Most of the authors are Canadian or working at Canadian universities, and most of the essays look at people, places and events in Canada.

Edited and with an introduction by Karl S. Hele, a member of the Garden River First Nation and director of the First Nations Studies Program at the University of Western Ontario, *Lines Drawn upon the Water* is an important contribution to Native and newcomer relations. It will be of interest to scholars and students in the interdisciplinary fields of Aboriginal Studies and Canadian-American boundary studies and will be of significant comparative interest to scholars studying the international colonial borderlands.

David McCrady
Winnipeg

John Francis Grant, *A Son of the Fur Trade: The Memoirs of Johnny Grant* Gerhard J. Ens (editor), Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2008, 468 pages. ISBN 978-0-88864-491-6, $34.95 (paper)



Johnny Grant lived an interesting life in eventful times. He was born to a Métis mother and a fur-trader father at Fort Edmonton in 1833, and until his death in 1907 he lived all around the borderlands of western North America in territories that would be reorganized in his lifetime as Montana, Idaho, Manitoba, and Alberta. Here, historian Gerhard J. Ens publishes Grant's detailed memoir in its complete form, carefully annotated, illustrated and introduced.

Grant's memoir is itself a complicated document. Ens writes that it was "Dictated by Johnny to his wife Clothilde Bruneau sometime between 1905 and 1907" (viii) and revised significantly by her thereafter. Yet Bruneau's preface seems to give herself the status of author rather than recorder. "I will endeavour," writes Bruneau, "to do my best in the following pages to relate the incidents in my husband's life" (xlv). Grant himself did not read or write English. Whether Bruneau should be acknowledged as an author of some kind, not simply of the preface but the memoir itself, seems a question worth asking.

However and by whom it was created, this memoir documents a remarkable period of change in north-western North America and one person's role in some of it. At 317 pages not including notes, it is a lengthy reminiscence and rich in personal, political, and social detail. The memoir is divided into seventy-five chapters whose explanatory titles emphasize Grant's geographic location and role in events that were, by the early 20th century, acknowledged as historically significant. Grant's birth and family history, his upbringing by paternal relatives in Lower Canada and his return to the fur trade in his teens absorb the first part

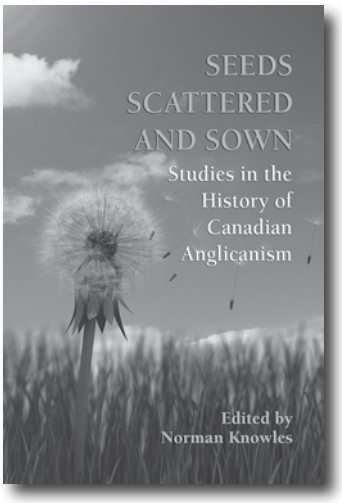
of the memoir. It then turns to Grant's time as a relatively wealthy independent trader in present-day Montana, married in to Shoshone kin networks through his wife Quarra. In middle age Grant moved to Red River, travelling with sixty-two wagons, twelve carts, one hundred and six men and unnumbered women and children. Among these were some of the twenty-four children that would be born to Grant by eight different partners and the seven he would adopt.

Grant arrived in Red River in 1867 to join a Métis community with a rich social life and mixed seasonal economy. There he married Bruneau, an orphaned eighteen-year-old daughter of an elite Métis family. Grant's memoir recalls Red River in the late 1860s as egalitarian and prosperous. He recalled, "One pleasant feature of the country was the general friendship that existed between all classes, rich and poor, and of any nationality or creed" (157). The annexation of Red River to Canada and the resistance that followed in the winter of 1869–70 changed that. Grant ended up opposed to Riel, and began what would be a modest and largely backroom role in Manitoba politics that would last for another twenty years. Grant was a farmer, a shopkeeper, and later a mill-owner. He was also heavily involved in speculation of lands granted to Métis, including himself and his children, under Section 31 of the Manitoba Act. In 1891 Grant and Bruneau moved to Alberta, where he died in 1907.

Grant was a wheeler-dealer who loved women, dancing, horses, and was "kind hearted" towards children (182). His politics and his racial identity were fluid and situational, and lived out in a backdrop of massive social change and shifting boundaries. Grant's memoirs can be interpreted by historians in a number of ways. For Ens, Grant is an exemplar of the rise and fall of a particular Métis identity and economy, one that moved strategically between Indigenous and settler worlds as opportunity arose. This argument is a version of the one presented in his influential 1996 book, *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing World of the Red River Métis in the Nineteenth-Century*. Grant's memoir also sheds light on the questions of family, kinship, and identity raised by Heather Devine in her recent, prize-winning book, *The People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family*. Read through a different lens we might see Grant's memoir as evidence for a 19th-century Métis reckoning of masculinity, one that emphasized an expressive heterosexuality, fatherhood, generosity, care, and the affective ties of kin and community, both lived in proximity and across geographic space. Perhaps this was another of the gendered and intimate possibilities challenged by the process mapped by Sarah Carter in her *The Importance of Being Monogamous: Marriage and Nation Building in Western Canada to 1915* (2008). But whatever we make of it, Johnny Grant's memoir and Ens' careful editorial work and painstaking research provide historians with a valuable and accessible resource.

Adele Perry
University of Manitoba

Norman Knowles (editor), *Seeds Scattered and Sown: Studies in the History of Canadian Anglicanism,* Toronto: ABC Publishing, 2008, 376 pages. ISBN 978-1-55126-499-8, $34.95 (paper)



This volume is an important contribution to the study and writing of the history of the Anglican Church of Canada and will, one hopes, be a step towards the writing of a new and sorely needed comprehensive history of the Church. The last such history, as the anonymous author of the Introduction reminds us, was Archbishop Philip Carrington's *The Anglican Church in Canada* published in 1963, almost fifty years ago. Not only does the history now need to be brought up to date, but the questions which contemporary historians ask of their material need to be answered. It is one of the strengths of this collection of essays that some of these questions, such as the role of women in the church and relations of the Church with Anglicans of the First Nations, are indeed addressed. Wendy Fletcher addresses the topic of the role of women in her paper, "The Garden of Women's Separateness: Women in Canadian Anglicanism since 1945," and Chris Trott that of relations with Aboriginal people in his fine paper, "I suggest that You Pursue Conversion: Aboriginal People and the Anglican Church of Canada after the Second World War." These questions have been addressed in previous works of Anglican Church history such as histories of the Women's Auxiliary or accounts of missionary labours and societies, but these studies enlarge their perspective, as in the case of Dr. Trott's essay, by taking into account the views of Aboriginal people.

The volume contains nine chapters written by eight authors. There is also a foreword written by the Most Reverend Michael Peers, eleventh Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, and an anonymous introduction. The authors are a distinguished group which includes, for example, the former General Synod Archivist (Terry Reilly), the principal of a theological college (Wendy Fletcher), a professor of Native studies (Chris Trott), academics and

clergy. The chapters cover a lengthy period of time: from 1578 when the Rev. Robert Wolfall celebrated the first recorded Anglican Communion service in Canada to the present. In geography, the chapters attempt to cover all of Canada but, as we shall see, not too successfully.

The first section of three chapters surveys the establishment of the Anglican Church in colonial Canada. The two chapters by M.E. Reisner, "Who shall go over the sea for us? First Anglican Ventures into Present-Day Canada (1578-1867)" and "According to the Measure of the Rule: Laying the Foundations of the Church in Eastern Canada (1816-1867)" examine the establishment of the Church in central and eastern Canada, and one chapter by Myra Rutherdale, "Some Moral Effect on the population at Large: Western and Northern Canadian Anglicanism (1820-1914)," the establishment of the Church in western and northern Canada.

The next section, also of three chapters, continues the story from 1867 to 1945. As Canada grew and developed her identity, so also did the Church. Paul Friesen explores the role of citizenship, worship and mission in the development of Anglican identity in this period in his paper, "Citizenship, Worship and Mission: Three Sources of Anglican Identity during the National Era." Norman Knowles focuses on mission and social service in his essay, "By the Mouth of Many Messengers: Mission and Social Services in Canadian Anglicanism (1867-1945)." And Terry Reilly and Norman Knowles co-author an interesting and important essay, "A Union not for Harmony but for Strength: The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada (1892-1992)," on the growth of the General Synod as seen through the eyes of successive primates in their addresses to General Synod.

The third section, again of three chapters, takes the story from 1945 to the present. William Crocket examines the changes that the Anglican Church has not survived especially in the area of liturgy in his chapter, "Uncomfortable Pew: The Church and Change since 1945." Wendy Fletcher surveys the role of women such as clergy wives and women ministers and the introduction of the ordination of women in her paper, "The Garden of Women's Separateness: Women in Canadian Anglicanism since 1945." Chris Trott's task in his paper, "I suggest that You Pursue Conversion: Aboriginal People and the Anglican Church of Canada after the Second World War" is to show the evolution of relations between the Church and her Aboriginal members, and he does this extremely well. These three essays deal with matters that are still very much alive in the life of the Church.

The introduction places this volume of essays within the context of a renewed interest in the history of religion in Canadian academic circles in the last two decades. It is no coincidence then that most of the authors of this volume are academics. Many of them are also committed Anglicans. As Anglicans and historians, they face "questions of identity and authority and the challenges of diversity and inclusion" (pxvii). The author of this introduction suggests that a cause of the previous lack of interest in religious history among academic and professional historians was a lack of "critical perspective" among those who had previously practised this trade. By implication, then, he hints that the authors of these papers possess the quality of critical perspective. A critical perspective means not only an ability to examine critically the assumptions of previous and present generations of Church people and their historians, but also an ability to keep all sides of a debate in a fair balance. This is especially important in the difficult matter of change in liturgy and the role of women which has been bitterly divisive in the last three decades. Here two authors fail to provide a fair balance. William Crocket dismisses the work of the Prayer Book Society of Canada in one sentence and a footnote which refers the reader to a website. This is a society that, through its submissions to General Synod, as well as its publications and those of the *Anglican Free Press*, has played a major role in liturgical discussions in Canada. Similarly Wendy Fletcher, in her account of the implementation of the ordination of women and the experiences of the first women ministers, fails to give any account of the fate of those women and men who did not accept the ordination of women. In fairness to Dr. Fletcher, to do this was not part of her intention for her paper but still it is an omission of a significant part of the story. As a result, both present incomplete histories, and incomplete histories are misleading histories. The volume contains another weakness. It contains very little about the growth of the Church in the prairie provinces in comparison with the amount of space devoted to central and eastern Canada.

This volume is, as I said, an important contribution to an understanding of the history of the Anglican Church of Canada. I hope that it will be the first in a series of volumes. Much needs to be done.

Stephen Sharman
St Andrews, Manitoba

Thanks ...

The Editors wish to thank the following people who assisted in the preparation of this issue of *Manitoba History*: Phyllis Fraser (Office of the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba), Chris Kotecki (Archives of Manitoba), Dr. Hermann Lee, and Blair Philpott (Parks Canada).

Future History

In upcoming issues of *Manitoba History* ...

- Memories of Winnipeg Beach
- Simpson's and the Hudson's Bay Company
- Commemorating Gabrielle Roy
- Manitobans As They Saw 'Em: 1908 and 1909
- Book reviews & more

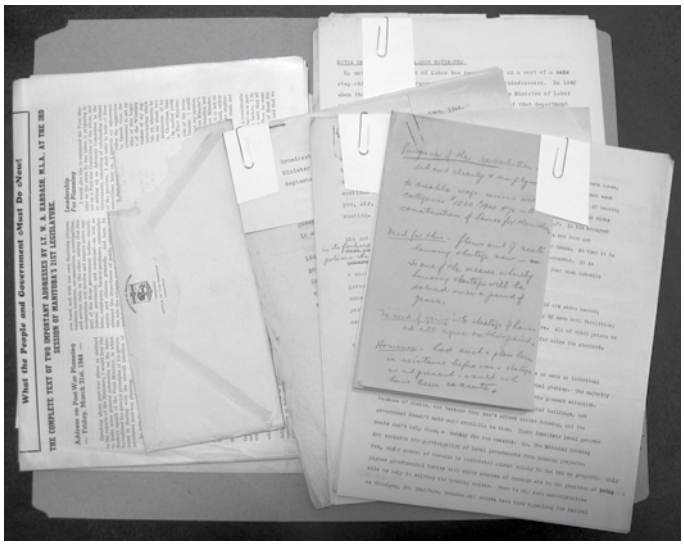
Cool Things in the Collection:

William Kardash and People's Co-operative Limited

by Rachel Mills, James Gorton and Carmen Lowe
Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg

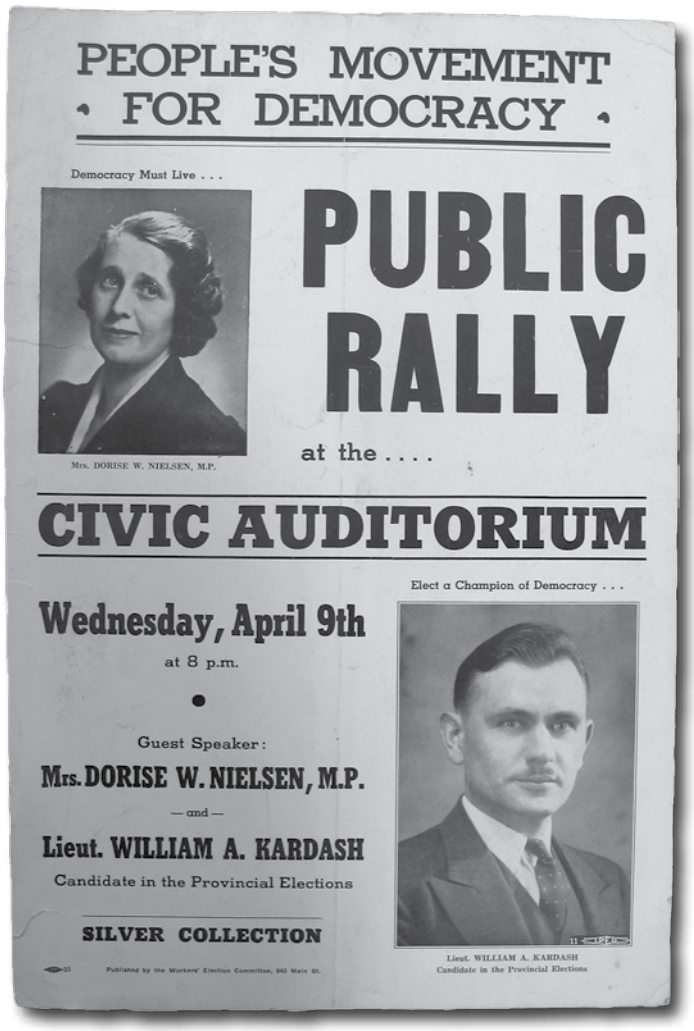
The first records to highlight in this new column are two new and related acquisitions to the Archives of Manitoba's private records holdings: the records of the People's Co-operative Limited and the records of William Kardash. Many of you will be familiar with both the People's Co-op, as it was known, and William Kardash, the Co-op's long-time general manager and a Manitoba MLA.

The People's Co-op was a Winnipeg and North End institution which began in 1928 as the Workers and Farmers Co-operative Association with the aim of uniting people, providing jobs and saving money. To achieve these aims, the Co-op operated a fuel yard, a lumber yard, a public garage and two dairy plants among other things during its long history. The Co-op changed its name to the People's Co-operative Limited in 1938. Beyond its commercial endeavours, the People's Co-op was an active participant in politics and the local community. The Co-op spoke out on issues such as government subsidies, labour practices and international affairs. The Co-op publicly supported the Communist Party of Canada and its successor, the Labour Progressive Party. During World War Two, this resulted in the arrests and internment of a number of managers and the seizure of some of the Co-op's records by the RCMP. The People's Co-op operated until the early 1990s when it began the process of dissolution. A wind-up committee was formed to ensure the equitable dispersal of funds. The committee also oversaw a history project which resulted in the publication of *The People's Co-op: The Life and Times of a North End Institution* (Jim Mochoruk with Nancy Kardash, Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2000).



Archives of Manitoba, William Kardash fonds, P7149/19.

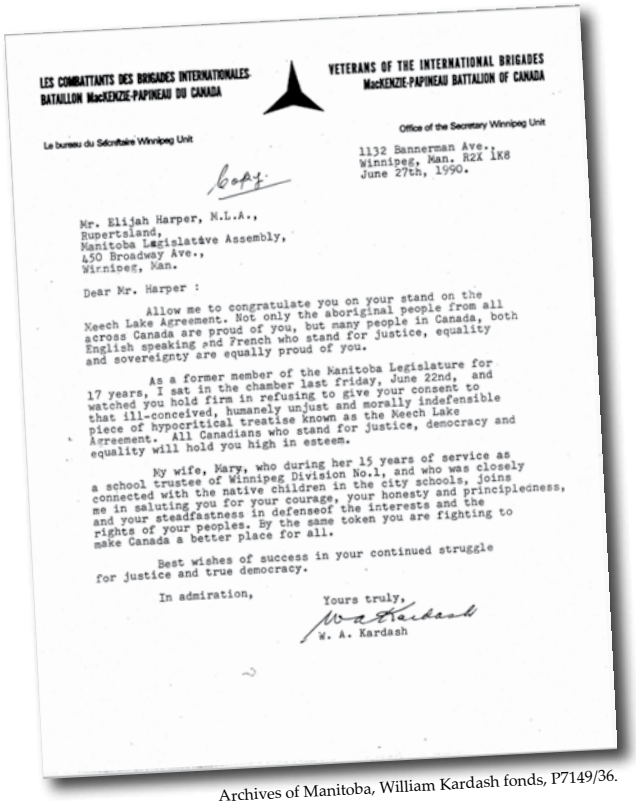
A sampling of documents in the William Kardash fonds.



Archives of Manitoba, William Kardash fonds, P7132/8.

William Kardash was heavily involved in the People's Co-op. Kardash was the general manager of the People's Co-op from 1948 to 1982 and, after his retirement, was the president until the Co-op's dissolution. Kardash was born in Saskatchewan in 1912 and as a young man was an organizer for the Farmers' Unity League and a member of the Communist Party of Canada. With the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, Kardash joined the International Brigades. He was wounded at the battle of

Rachel Mills is Acting Head of Archival Records and Access Services, James Gorton is an Archivist with the Hudson's Bay Company Archives and Carmen Lowe is an Archivist with Archival Records and Access Services, all at the Archives of Manitoba.



LES COMBATTANTS DES BRIGADES INTERNATIONALES
BATAILLON MacKENZIE-PAPINEAU DU CANADA

VETERANS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADES
MacKENZIE-PAPINEAU BATTALION OF CANADA

Le bureau du Sécrétaire Winnipeg Unit

Office of the Secretary Winnipeg Unit

1132 Bannerman Ave.,
Winnipeg, Man. R2X 1K8
June 27th, 1990.

Copy

Mr. Elijah Harper, M.L.A.,
Rupertsland,
Manitoba Legislative Assembly,
450 Broadway Ave.,
Winnipeg, Man.

Dear Mr. Harper :

Allow me to congratulate you on your stand on the Meech Lake Agreement. Not only the aboriginal people from all across Canada are proud of you, but many people in Canada, both English speaking and French who stand for justice, equality and sovereignty are equally proud of you.

As a former member of the Manitoba Legislature for 17 years, I sat in the chamber last friday, June 22nd, and watched you hold firm in refusing to give your consent to that ill-conceived, humanely unjust and morally indefensible piece of hypocritical treatise known as the Meech Lake Agreement. All Canadians who stand for justice, democracy and equality will hold you high in esteem.

My wife, Mary, who during her 15 years of service as a school trustee of Winnipeg Division No.1, and who was closely connected with the native children in the city schools, joins me in saluting you for your courage, your honesty and principledness, and your steadfastness in defenseof the interests and the rights of your peoples. By the same token you are fighting to make Canada a better place for all.

Best wishes of success in your continued struggle for justice and true democracy.

In admiration,

Yours truly,
W. A. Kardash

Archives of Manitoba, William Kardash fonds, P7149/36.

In a 1990 letter to Elijah Harper, then Member of the Legislative Assembly for Rupertsland, William Kardash congratulated Harper for his stand on the Meech Lake Accord, noting that those who stood "for justice, equality and sovereignty" were proud.

Fuentes de Ebro and lost a leg. Upon his return to Canada, Kardash embarked on a speaking tour to alert people to the possibility of a world war. In 1939, Kardash moved to Winnipeg and ran in the 1941 provincial election as a Labour Progressive Party candidate in North Winnipeg. Kardash won this seat and successfully held it for the next 17 years, until 1958. Throughout his adult life, Kardash was active in Winnipeg's Ukrainian community and campaigned on behalf of veterans of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion. Kardash died in 1997.

The records of both the People's Co-op and William Kardash document many of the activities described above. Both groups of records provide wonderful insights into Winnipeg's Ukrainian community, the North End, the city and the province during the course of the twentieth century. Kardash's records document his work as MLA and include speeches, radio scripts, notes and correspondence which address such diverse issues as health care, education, unemployment, natural resources, pensions, international affairs and social welfare. The records also include Labour-Progressive Party and Anti-Fascist Committee pamphlets, newsletters, handbills, posters and speeches as well as correspondence and publications documenting Kardash's involvement in the Spanish Civil war and his life-long work for recognition for its veterans.

In addition to documenting the veterans' activities at a national level, Kardash's records also provide insight into what happened locally. Contained in the collection

Archives of Manitoba, Peoples Co-operative Limited fonds, P7144/4.

Horses decked out in their millinery apparel wait at the loading dock of the Peoples Co-operative to begin morning deliveries of dairy products, circa 1938.

are the records of the Winnipeg Branch of the Veterans of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion [AM, P7151/22]. These original records, many handwritten by Kardash himself, provide unique insight into the Branch's contributions to the struggles and activities of the Canadian veterans of the Spanish Civil War.

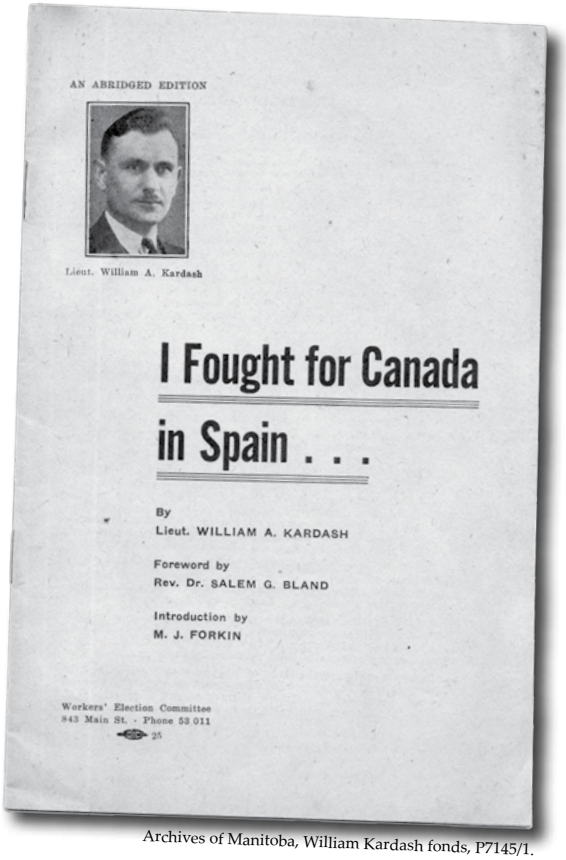
Like most of the material contained in this collection, Kardash's MLA records capture his views, opinions and beliefs on the political and social issues that were facing the people of Manitoba through much of the twentieth century. One of the interesting events documented in the records is the 1956 trip of the Province's MLAs to Northern Manitoba [AM, P7149/5]. This file includes background information, itineraries and correspondence which document the controversy surrounding Kardash's potential visit to radar and military installations. Through the records researchers can explore whether he was banned from certain sites or whether he chose not to go.

The People's Co-op records include minutes, financial statements, annual reports, union agreements and correspondence which document the operations of the Co-op including the fuel yard, lumber yard, creamery, garage, etc. from its beginnings in 1928 to the work of the Wind-Up Committee in the 1990s. The records also document the work of the history book project which includes 21 oral history interviews (on audiocassette) with past employees of the Co-op and many photographs of the employees and activities of the Co-op during its long history.

The business activities of the People's Co-op are a central theme in the records and a significant portion document the creamery industry. Beyond the many photographs, cash books, and files related to the development of the Winnipeg, Glenella, and Minnedosa plants, there are files relating to various milk boards and commissions. These records illustrate the Co-op's work to keep dairy products affordable through subsidization and are an example of how they incorporated their political views into their business activities [AM, P7140/1–20].

Archives of Manitoba, Peoples Co-operative Limited fonds, P7144/8.

Dairy goodness. By the 1970s, the Co-op offered a diverse selection of products, including their legendary cream cheese.


AN ABRIDGED EDITION

Lieut. William A. Kardash

I Fought for Canada in Spain . . .

By
Lieut. WILLIAM A. KARDASH

Foreword by
Rev. Dr. SALEM G. BLAND

Introduction by
M. J. FORKIN

Workers' Election Committee
843 Main St. - Phone 53 011

Archives of Manitoba, William Kardash fonds, P7145/1.

Fighting fascism. Around 1938, Kardash wrote about his service with the Mackenzie-Papineau (Mac-Pap) Battalion in the Spanish Civil War, during which he lost his right leg.

The WWII internment of Co-op personnel and the efforts to have them released are documented in correspondence. Letters to and from the internees and petitions to the federal government illustrate the effects the incarceration had on the Co-op, the families, and those interned [AM, P7141/27]. ☙

These two very rich collections of records are now available at the Archives of Manitoba. For more information, search "People's Co-operative Limited" or "William Kardash" in Archival Descriptions in the Archives' Keystone database:

www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/keystone

You can also contact the Archives about these and many other "Cool Things in the Collection":

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archives@gov.mb.ca

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